



# The Netherlands

Annual Pathfinder Progress Report  
May 2022- April 2023

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## Annual Progress Against Netherlands' Roadmap Priorities

### 1. Since May 2022, what progress has been made to your #1 national roadmap priority?

#### **Priority 1: Encourage businesses and offer instruments to tackle child labour and labour exploitation in their supply chain, nationally and internationally**

##### *A. Progress made on implementing an area based approach and supply chain activities:*

###### - **Fund against Child Labour (FBK) - NEA and MFA**

FBK, a program carried out by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (NEA) and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), supports Dutch and local entrepreneurs with subsidy and expertise to analyse the prevalence and root causes of child labour in their production chains, followed by interventions aimed at the prevention of child labour at local level and due diligence. In 2022, 13 project proposals were granted subsidies. At the end of 2022, FBK had a total of 50 projects focused on the agriculture sector, the clothing and textile sector, tourism, natural stone and mining. Most projects are based in Africa and Asia. Over half of the projects have finished their impact study and are now at the phase of implementing measures to address child labour.

###### - **Work: No Child's Business Alliance (WNCB)**

The 5-year project WNCB, supported by the MFA, consists of alliance partners UNICEF Netherlands, Save the Children Netherlands and the Stop Child Labour Coalition. WNCB works on an area-based approach with local stakeholders to tackle root causes of child labour; to strengthen local child protection systems; and work towards a social norm that is against all forms of child labour.

In its six focus countries (Cote d'Ivoire, India, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam) the WNCB joined forces with local communities, private sector schools, governments, civil society organizations, trade unions and private actors, to achieve sustainable solutions for children and their families. The overall objectives include *Child Labour Free Zones*, the strengthening of local child protection systems, the improvement of the quality of education to ensure that children stay in school, and providing decent work opportunities/economic empowerment of youth and parents.

In addition, during the reporting period, WNCB engaged in lobby & advocacy activities in all partner countries and managed to collaborate with national governments. Examples:

- A MoU signed with the Ministry of Labour in Jordan. This resulted in a *National Child Labour Framework* and *Standard Operating Procedures* which facilitates the application of labour standards and an adequate response to child labour cases.
- In Vietnam the WNCB supported Ho Chi Minh City's Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs to roll-out the local child protection strategic plan for 2020–2030, which helped with the establishment of school-based counselling positions to provide psycho-social support for students.
- In Cote d'Ivoire the national child protection system was strengthened, with an emphasis on the quality of social services and the skills of local actors, including grassroots community structures, to effectively perform their functions of identifying, preventing and caring for children at risk and/or victims of child labour.
- In Mali, the WNCB helped strengthen the capacity of public servants through a series of training sessions to take over the programme on child labour, set up in collaboration with 8 ministries, the commitment of political authorities, administrative authorities, school authorities and other local actors, beyond the implementation period.
- In Uganda, WNCB together with the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social development, organized a workshop for key stakeholders to draft the *National Programme Action* proposal and a cabinet memo on the reduction of child labour, school dropout and children on the streets in august 2022.

- **Responsible Mica Initiative - Terre des Hommes (TDH)**

TDH is a civil society organisation devoted to the protection of child rights. During the reporting period, TDH's renewed its collaboration with a big German automotive brand on the Responsible Mica Initiative, aimed at eradicating child labour and improving working conditions in India's mica mining regions. This project will continue for the next three years in which the parties aim to double the number of communities in India covered by the initiative. The evaluation of the first phase of this project showed the sustainable removal of children out of the Mica mines and into schools.

- **Social Partners**

The Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW) is the largest employers' organisation in the Netherlands. VNO-NCW is the founder of *PUM*, aimed at facilitating Dutch professionals and entrepreneurs who offer their knowledge and experience to local entrepreneurs in the Global South to set up their business and achieve inclusive, sustainable economic growth. Subsequently through PUM VNO-

NCW also helps to strengthen employer associations and social dialogue. Looking forward, it's worthwhile mentioning that VNO-NCW organises a training for its members on tackling child labour in supply chains end of June 2023.

The Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (FNV) and AOb (trade union for Education professionals) support the Global Union Education International-program (EI) in six African countries: Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Togo, Uganda, Zimbabwe. It aims at total eradication of child labour using an area based approach, by training local teachers in strategies to combat child labour and prevent school dropout. EI also helps to facilitate social dialogue to gain the support of local and national stakeholders.

Furthermore, through the *TruStone*-Initiative FNV is involved in several projects in India to help establish Child Labour Free Zones and facilitate social dialogue between employers and workers working in the natural stone sector. Considering the progress made in India there are now plans to start similar projects in Turkey and Brasil with TruStone partners.

- **Accelerating Action for the Elimination of Child Labour in Supply Chains in Africa (ACCEL) – ILO and MFA**

This ILO program, financed by MFA, aims to eliminate child labour in key supply chains (cacao, coffee, cotton, gold and tea) through the following prospected outcomes:

- (1) improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks;
- (2) institutionalizing solutions that address root causes of child labour in supply chains;
- (3) strengthening partnerships and knowledge sharing among supply chain actors in Africa.

For the sake of brevity only a few examples of progress made under outcome 1 are mentioned here. Later in this report the progress made on outcome 2 will be discussed.

- Cote d'Ivoire: ACCEL has been supporting the Labour Inspection Department of the Ministry of Employment to develop, implement and review the strategic plan for child labour compliance. As a result in June 2022, the "Initiative against Child Labour and Forced Labour in Côte d'Ivoire" has been set up by the General Confederation of Companies in Côte d'Ivoire. Ten companies have formalized their access to the network. It serves to mobilize the private sector to take action against child labour.
- Malawi: ACCEL supported Malawi as a pathfinder country in the Alliance 8.7 in the development of their draft roadmap. In this context ACCEL strengthened the capacity of over 600 people of different partners and stakeholders to

advocate for improved implementation of programs and policies on child labour and decent work through training, orientations, workshops and awareness events. As a result, there has been notable adherence to child labour compliance in the global supply chains and ownership of interventions such as an increase in the number of labour inspections conducted and also support from the social welfare office entailing commitment and sustainability.

- Egypt: In collaboration with tripartite constituents ACCEL has worked on improving and enforcing policy, legal and institutional frameworks to address child labour in cotton supply chains. ACCEL helped to mainstream programs to combat child labour in the existing national policies. For example:
  - The Child Labour Centers' bylaw was amended to provide more protection and support to working children;
  - National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual handling case management procedures, monitoring, intervention and referral mechanisms for the different groups of children involved in child labour was amended and validated;
  - Decree No. 215 of 2021 was issued by the Ministry of Manpower (this is an update to the Ministerial Decree No. 118 of 2003). The decree updated the list of hazardous Work and Professions that are prohibited for children to be employed or trained until 18 years.

*B. Progress made in developing tools to address root causes of child labour in global supply chains, with the aim to help companies with their due diligence:*

### **The Oiconomy project – Netherlands Enterprise Agency (NEA)**

In 2022 the Oiconomy project<sup>1</sup> was finalised, funded through the FBK. The Oiconomy project is a fully inclusive PPP-assessment (People, Planet and Prosperity) of the distance-to-sustainability of a product. It is based on what preventing all the negative impacts in the value chain of that product would cost. This prepares for a real price economy, in which the most sustainable product version is also the cheapest and competition automatically focusses on sustainability. During the pilot with the University of Utrecht three FBK-companies calculated the real price of their product with the Oiconomy tool. Verstegen (black pepper Indonesia), Arte (natural stone Spain) and ADMC (iron products Egypt) appreciated the tool as it creates a good incentive to have conversations about sustainability with suppliers.

### **Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) support centre – MFA and NEA**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oiconomy.geo.uu.nl/>

In September 2022, the Dutch MFA in collaboration with the NEA, has launched the Dutch RBC support centre. Since its inception the RBC support centre has already provided support to various businesses in applying due diligence-measures in their operations and value chains, on the basis of the six steps of the OECD guidelines. In this regard, the support centre acts as a starting point, sparring partner and knowledge coordinator for every company (that falls within or outside the scope of future legislation) in the Netherlands that wants to apply appropriate due diligence. The RBC centre plays a pivotal role in the RBC-policy of the Dutch government, since it plays a prominent role in bringing together existing stakeholder instruments and the coordination of knowledge and experience. There is an on-going process of improvement on the coordination of knowledge on guidelines, tools, step-by-step plans, initiatives and training courses for businesses.

### **Subsidy program on due diligence – MFA and NEA**

In September 2022 the subsidy program for sectoral partnerships<sup>2</sup> was published. The programme aims to support Dutch-based companies to collectively conduct due diligence according to the OECD guidelines to improve sustainability in their value chains. Businesses can apply for a subsidy in a partnership and use this subsidy programme to collectively address and prevent child labour in their value chains. The programme also encourages to involve NGO's and trade unions in these sectoral initiatives.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL)**

GMACL is a worldwide network of trade unions, teachers' associations and civil society organisations addressing child labour, slavery and trafficking and ensuring access by all children to free, meaningful and good quality public education.<sup>3</sup>

Together with Cordaid, Verite, MVO, Vernof, Cargill and Wilmar, GMACL had a project to address child labour in the coconut oil supply chain. It's aim is to develop a good practice on how to address child labour in a complex agricultural supply chain. One aspect is on how to make the supply chain more *transparent* to be able to address the root causes of child labour, to which end the *Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS)* was introduced. One of the outcomes so far is that there is a better cooperation between the local stakeholders and the private sector to prevent child labour in the coconut oil supply chain. GMACL is also using the CLMS to assess and prevent child labour in the coffee sector in Uganda.<sup>4</sup>

### **Ondernemen.nl - VNO-NCW**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-programmes/sectoral-partnerships-pillar-1>

<sup>3</sup> <https://globalmarch.org/about-us/who-we-are/introduction/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://globalmarch.org/ending-child-labour-in-supply-chains/>

The Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW) has launched a campaign in collaboration with the NEA (FBK program) and WNCB to set up a website Ondernemen.nl. It's a portal for businesses and branch associations that need support with implementing responsible business conduct and supply chain actions. Through this portal businesses can book a consultation with an independent consultant to make a risk-analysis and set up their Action Plan to address child labour in their supply chains.

### **ACCEL -ILO and MFA**

Under Outcome 2 of ACCEL (institutionalizing solutions that address root causes of child labour in supply chains), the following results were accomplished:

- Mali: ACCEL supported the implementation of a programme to improve the livelihoods of cotton-growing communities in the Sikasso region. The project organized training on business management for locals to run income-generating activities. In partnership with the microfinance institution RMCR, ACCEL facilitated financial access of 273 women to microcredit, and worked with RMCR to adapt their financial service and training tools by integrating child labour indicators.

ACCEL also contributed to establishing 16 *accelerated schooling strategy centres* for the 2022-2023 school year and to providing educational support to 452 out-of-school children (238 boys and 218 girls) engaged in or at risk of child labour. After nine months, the best performers will be transferred to the formal education circuit with the support of competent education services in the project intervention areas.

- Nigeria: In the reporting period up to 1,400 child beneficiaries received basic education support in Ondo, Niger and Osun States. The project also supported 401 children of legal working age through vocational skills training programmes in Ondo and Niger States. Furthermore, ACCEL supported 401 adult/caregiver beneficiaries through economic diversification support. Finally, ACCEL helped establish *Child Education Funds* in twelve communities to support children's education in schools and advocate for the rehabilitation of dilapidated classroom blocks.

### **Program on benchmarking wages - ILO, German BMZ and MFA**

With a view to addressing the root causes of child labour, in 2022 the Dutch MFA joined forces with BMZ of Germany in supporting the implementation of the ILO program for benchmarking adequate wages. Through the program, the ILO supports selected enterprises and social partners in agricultural and garment/textile supply chains to enable wage growth and to promote adequate wages in four pilot countries: Costa

Rica, India, Vietnam and Côte d'Ivoire. The project is currently at the end of its inception phase, which was used to mobilize and engage supply chain actors in the textile industry in Vietnam and India, and supply chain actors in notably tea, coffee, cocoa and bananas in Costa Rica and Côte d'Ivoire. To ensure coherence, existing partners from MFA, BMZ and ILO were stimulated to play a role in this project as well and collaborate with players already active in the respectively relevant field and/or countries.

### **CSR Risk Checker – MVO Nederland and German Agentur for Wirtschaft & Entwicklung**

The Dutch MFA subsidizes the *CSR Risk Checker*, created by MVO Nederland, in collaboration with the German Agentur für Wirtschaft & Entwicklung. It helps businesses, that are importing from or have production facilities in foreign countries, to identify RBC-risks associated with the products they import and trade within their value chains (risk assessment). The tool then advises businesses, in line with the steps of the OECD-guidelines, how to mitigate those risks in their supply chains.

### **Fund Combatting Child Labour (FBK) – NEA and MFA**

In 2022 a start was made with the development of an in-company training on due diligence, with special focus on child labour and living income. During this hands-on training various company departments (purchase, legal, marketing, management) will jointly analyse the risks for child labour and subsequently make an action plan. This assignment is currently being developed by Schuttelaar & Partners and will be finalized in 2023.

#### *C. Progress made at the legislative and procurement front:*

First, in its Coalition Agreement (the basis for the 2021-2025 plans of the Government) the Dutch Cabinet has stated that the Netherlands supports EU legislation on responsible business conduct (RBC). Therefore the government engages with great interest in the negotiations on the proposal of the European Commission for a Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). In national context, the Dutch parliament submitted a RBC initiative bill in November 2022, upon which the Dutch Cabinet has paused the drafting of their own national RBC bill to see whether a proposal with broad support can be reached. Conversations are currently ongoing, also in light of the CSDDD developments. Either way, the ambition is to align potential national legislation with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and of course with the CSDDD.

Second, the Dutch government sets RBC as a condition for participation in central government

procurement above the EU public procurement threshold, in 8 high-risk sectors. Currently the government explores the possibilities of extending this condition to other public procurements categories or products. Therefore, in June 2022 the government presented the 'International Social Conditions Implementation (ISV) Agenda' as part of the National Plan on Socially Responsible Public Procurement. By extending the application of ISV in the procurement of goods for the central government, more suppliers could be requested to provide a risk analysis and to develop an action plan to tackle negative effects, such as child labour and labour exploitation, in their value chains. The implementation agenda consists of nineteen actions to be carried out within the next 2 years. In line with the Dutch RBC policy, the agenda includes endeavours to further align public procurement with the OECD guidelines and UNGPs'.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the *revised National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights* has been published in September 2022. The plan is based on the following three pillars: further incorporation of business and human rights into the Netherlands' national, European and foreign policy coherence; measures resulting from a RBC policy review through sector-wide cooperation; and access to remedy. There is specific focus on various forms of access to remedy and the linkages between them. The NAP will be implemented in the coming years, based on several identified action points mentioned in the action plan.

## **2. Since May 2022, what progress has been made to your #2 national roadmap priority?**

### **Priority 2: Promote national and international dialogue on SDG 8.7 in relation to (global) supply chains on the one hand and root causes on the other.**

A. *Series of meetings for business community and other stakeholders, sharing experiences about area based approaches, due diligence and lessons learned.*

#### **Dutch government (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and MFA)**

- Regular meetings of the Focusgroep 8.7 with relevant stakeholders to share insights, monitor progress and develop common activities. The stocktaking of this progress report as well as the update of the roadmap, as follow-up on a round table with the Minister for Trade and Development Cooperation, are examples of cooperation in the Focusgroup.

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<sup>5</sup> ISV Agenda <https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/ronl-978c1dc212108fab6598c643554fe9739fc28478/pdf>

- Together with ILO and SER (social-economic council of the Netherlands), a high-level meeting on Decent Work in Global Supply Chains took place at the SER. A new report was presented by the ILO, containing the results of the European Commission-funded ILO project on 'Sustainable supply chains to build forward better'. The project is based on global supply chains (textiles, electronics, coffee, fisheries, rubber) as a starting point for promoting decent work. These five global chains are crucial for the European Union for a fair, resilient, and sustainable recovery after the COVID-19 crisis, according to the report. Approximately 60 representatives from Dutch companies, employers' organizations, trade unions, government, international organizations, and industry federations participated in the meeting.
- Participated in the Alliance 8.7 strategic workshop in Turin about the future of the Alliance 8.7 and the Supply Chains Action Working Group.
- Participated in several other events, for example the Dutch ambassador spoke at a knowledge sharing event organised by the African Union, on best practices to eliminate child labour in supply chains.

**Global Conference on Child Labour (May 2022):**

- WNCB together with Global March and Education International organized a side event on the area based approach, sharing best practices from partner countries and input of children and their families in the target communities. They also prepared a joint position paper that has been presented at the Conference and used for further mobilizing actions at the national level in the partner countries.
- The Dutch government participated actively in the preparations and the drafting group for the Durban Call to Action to promote the importance of working on root causes to eliminate child labour, and to promote the elimination of child labour through supply chains. The Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation shared a video message on the importance of eliminating child labour in supply chains. The Minister of Social Affairs and Employment participated in the legacy session. Government representatives also participated in several panels and sessions.

- FNV and Aob, a.o. through the delegation from Education International, gave presentations on the project 'Promoting Social Dialogue to eradicate child labour and strengthen quality education', highlighting teacher union initiatives. Combined efforts from the unions led to a number of additions in the Durban Call for Action, such as on gender.
- GMACL represents the Civil Society Organisations in the Global Coordinating Group of the Alliance 8.7. MACL organised the CSO forum in Durban which aimed at a better coordination among different CSOs. In addition, one of the GMACL members represented the CSOs during a high level panel on supply chains.
- ACCEL organised a side event on one of the projects they started in Cote d'Ivoire. This resulted in a company paying the national health insurance premium for the farmers they work with. Supporting farmers in this will decrease the risk of child labour.

### **Activities of social partners**

- FNV participated in various sector covenants between unions, NGO's, branches and individual companies in specific regional projects; leading to a constant social dialogue. In turn, they've found that social dialogue often leads to the adoption of bylaws that strengthen national legislation against child labour at the local level. The fact that these bylaws are adopted by local chiefs or authorities, with locally decided sanctions, implies that they are often more effective than national laws. For instance through IRBC TruStone project (see 1A), FNV stimulates social dialogue in India helping to connect unions of stone quarry workers with employers. FNV is also at the early stages of cooperation with 3 Italian trade unions that are involved in the natural stone collective agreement in Italy, and since a lot of natural stone is imported via Italy, so unions and employers organisations would be a big step forwards.
- Through the Global Union Education International (EI) program (see 1A), FNV and Aob develop social dialogue at the local level to gain the support of all stakeholders for school-age children to attend school. In the tobacco growing area of Chigudu in Malawi, the EI program led to all the social dialogue partners relaying awareness-raising messages about the importance of education and the risks associated with child labour to the community. In Malawi, the improved social dialogue has also led to improved school facilities, such as the

construction of classrooms and toilets, thanks to a financial support by ward councillors.

- In some countries, such as Mali, social dialogue has been formalized through the creation of “spaces for social dialogue” which have been set up by the education union SNEC. In each village, they include representatives of the mayor, of the local education authorities, of the association of mothers of pupils, of the monitoring committee, of the young people, of teachers and of the school management committees. They meet regularly or on ad hoc basis, to discuss the problems of the school, the obstacles to schooling that lead to child labour, and to find solutions together.
- VNO-NCW/MKB-Nederland (The Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers) together with UN Global Compact organized a seminar on living wage in April 2023.

### **Fund against Child Labour – NEA and MFA**

- FBK presented in online meetings such as the webinar on child labour organised by VNO-NCW/MKB-Nederland and an online meeting organised for the Ecuadorean government. In those meetings FBK elaborated on the measures companies can take locally as well as in their due diligence systems.
- In December 2022 FBK organised a live meeting for companies and their partners involved in FBK projects and the wider business community. During this meeting experiences and challenges with regard to 5 specific interventions in order to tackle child labour were shared.
- As a result of a round table discussion between Dutch companies, NGO's and the Netherlands Embassy in Abidjan in Ivory Coast, in December 2022 a project was granted subsidy aimed at the collaboration between Dutch FBK companies, NGO's and the Ivorian government in order to address the lack of birth certificates which is a common reason for child labour. UNICEF coordinates the project.
- In 2022 the project on Children's rights executed by VNO-NCW | MKB-Nederland was finalized. In order to disseminate knowledge and expertise on child labour for individual companies and associations, a scan was developed and Platform Kinderrechten was founded. The scan has been used 376 times and the platform

has attracted 47,123 unique visitors in total. Knowledge sessions were organized for different audiences.

### **Terre des Hommes (TDH)**

- TDH presented in the annual event of the Pension Federation, where a break-out session was held on the mica case.
- TDH organised a knowledge session for the participants of the RBC agreement for the metal sector (Metal Covenant), in which the mica case was presented together with the SER (socio-economic council of NL). Topics included: what issues are at play in the sourcing countries (worst forms of child labour), what does the mica supply chain look like and what can companies do to combat child labour in their supply chain.
- Another session was organised with the working group on mica of the RBC agreement for pension funds (Pensiofond Covenant) for a broader Dutch and European target group (mainly business but also politicians and NGOs). Here, the focus was on responsible mineral supply chains with mica as an example, dealing with the question how collective and individual collaboration with automotive brands can lead to concrete impact on the ground. During this session, the perspectives of the SER, TDH and a pension asset manager were presented.

### *B. Awareness raising campaigns and trainings (in addition to those mentioned under priority 1)*

- WNCB organized a (social) media campaign en marge of 12th June 2022, International Day against Child Labour. Focus was to promote the area-based approach to address all forms of child labour and follow up on the Durban Call to Action -outcome document. WNCB shared experiences from partner countries and specific action taken in collaboration with the governments to mobilize more action towards elimination of all forms of child labour.
- In October 2022 the WNCB programme in partnership with the government of Ivory Coast organized a workshop to promote public-private collaboration on birth registration; this represents an important first step to further involve the private sector in preventing child labour and strengthening national systems.

- FBK issued several short movies about child labour, such as the RBC-animation which explains which steps companies can take to address child labour in their production chain. Another example is the film of GoodWeave in which the director of Strategic Partnerships and Advocacy at GoodWeave International, emphasizes the importance of transparency in supply chains.
- GMACL developed and facilitated a training around the CLMS (Child Labour Monitoring System) as a key implementing strategy to be used in different steps of the Due Diligence process, such as Step 3: prevention and mitigation of child labour; and Step 6: remediation. The training was given at the regional level in Asia and West Africa with the participation of different organisations (local and international NGOs, trade unions, RBC consultants, academia representatives and companies). In Asia, the training was held in Thailand in July 2022 with the participation of organisations from 8 countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and India). In West Africa, the training was held in Ghana in September 2022 with the participation of organisations from 8 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal). The regional trainings were part of the Human right's due diligence training of local experts network, funded by the Fonds Verantwoord Ondernemen, in which GMACL coordinated this activity together with other CSOs: in Asia with CNV and in West Africa with FNV and the SER.
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### **3. Since May 2022, what progress has been made to your #3 national roadmap priority**

#### **Priority 3: Ensure effective monitoring and analysis of the impact and progress on 8.7**

- The Dutch government participated in the monitoring working group op Alliance 8.7.
- In general, all programs that receive funding from the Dutch government have to regularly report on their results and are subject to evaluation. The timing of it varies per program. One example is mentioned here:

In 2022 the WNCB Alliance has implemented a participative Midterm review (MTR), a Sensemaker study and a measurement of their Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) to review the programme. Combined, these products have proven to be an important learning opportunity for the countries involved and the programme as a whole. The overall MTR has helped the WNCB country

teams to monitor the progress of their work to date, to learn about what is effective and which aspects of our programme can be improved. Lessons learnt have been shared and discussed with the MFA.

#### 4. What's the status of your next step #1

- Not achieved
- Planned
- Ongoing
- Completed

#### 5. What's the status of your next step #2

- Not achieved
- Planned
- Ongoing
- Completed

#### 6. What's the status of your next step #3

- Not achieved
- Planned
- Ongoing
- Complete

#### What is the status of your next step #4?

- Not achieved
- Planned
- Ongoing

Complete

**What is the status of your next step #5?**

Not achieved

Planned

Ongoing

Complete

**What is the status of your next step #6?**

Not achieved

Planned

Ongoing

Complete

## Progress on the Identified Next Steps

### 7. Please tell us more about the progress of the next steps you've identified.

*In the report of last year, various next steps were identified:*

- Next step 1: Implementation of the revised national action plan for businesses and human rights.

The revised National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP) has been published in September 2022 (see also 1C). Implementation is ongoing.

- Next step 2: Research on new forms of child labour

In April 2023, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment send the report (conducted by Regioplan) on new forms of child labour, such as *kidfluencers*, to parliament. The follow-up of recommendations is described in the Cabinet's response. The regulations on child labour will be modernized, clarified and tightened. The starting point is the protection of the child, which also looks at positive aspects of work for children. The follow-up is in progress. The parliament will be informed on the new regulations in early 2024.

- Next step 3: RBC support office

The RBC support office has become operational (kindly refer to 1B).

- Next step 4: Implementation of new forms of sectoral cooperation

We kindly refer to the results described under priority 1 (1A and 1B).

- Next step 5: Certification of temporary employment agencies (Roemer Commission)

This step is in progress. The coalition agreement 2021-2025 of the Dutch Cabinet has adopted the Roemer Commission's recommendations on the protection of migrant workers. Part of these recommendations is establishing a certification system for temporary employment agencies, together with social partners and other key stakeholders. In December 2022, the Cabinet agreed on the draft bill which has then been sent to the Raad van State (Council of State, advisory body on legislation and highest general administrative court) for legal advice. Currently, that advice is being incorporated in the draft bill, which is planned to be send to parliament in Q3 2023. The government aims for the new system to come into effect as early as possible, but presumably no earlier than 2025.

Furthermore, in December 2022 the second yearly report on the position of migrant workers has been published.

- Next step 6: Revision of article 273f of the Criminal Law (Wetboek van Strafrecht)

In the coalition agreement 2021-2025 of the Dutch cabinet it is reaffirmed that the fight against human trafficking and labour exploitation remains a priority for the Dutch government. The program 'Fight against human trafficking' will be continued.

It includes the modernisation of the criminalisation of human trafficking contained in section 273f of the Penal Code. The formal consultation and internet consultation on

the legislative amendment started at the end of February 2023. In the meantime the Guideline for Criminal Procedure in Human Trafficking to article 273f Sr, has been amended in 2022. In the new Directive, the penalties to be imposed for all forms of trafficking in human beings have been increased. The guiding principles of the Directive no longer corresponded to the seriousness of the crime, and the need arose to bring the Directive into line with practice.

## Overall Progress in the Last 12 Months

### 8 How would you rank your progress made on your roadmap priorities?

No progress  **Great progress (four stars)**

### 9. Considering the progress on your national priorities and next steps, what are the main successes between May 2022 and April 2023?

We kindly refer to all results mentioned under priorities 1-3. In addition, some of our stakeholders and partners of the Focusgroup Alliance 8.7 would like to highlight a few of their successes here:

- **WNCB:** The most important result achieved by WNCB is a reduction in child labour in areas in which we work. More children in these areas attend school. This was done through an area based approach, mobilising all actors to work towards the norm 'no child should be working – every child should be in school'. WNCB also uses a rights-based approach to call on all involved parties to take responsibility: parents, teachers, employers, governments, and the children themselves. If everyone takes action based on this belief, then change is possible. Government authorities and companies can strengthen this development and keep it going on a larger scale, by providing good education and better protection for children as well as better working conditions and a living wage for adults.
- **Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TDH):** TDH is playing an active role in the working group on mica of the Pension Fund Covenant / Dutch Pension Funds Agreement on Responsible Investment. We contributed to the preparation of a report on lessons learned related to the mica engagement case conducted under the Dutch Pension Funds Agreement on Responsible Investment. In March 2023 the agreement / covenant on renewable energy was signed, including by TdH NL.

- **FNV:** Through the IRBC *TruStone*-Initiative FNV is involved in several projects in India to help establish Child Labour Free Zones and facilitate social dialogue between employers and work working in the natural stone sector. In Mali, social dialogue was formalized through the creation of “spaces for social dialogue” which have been set up by the education union SNEC. In Malawi, the improved social dialogue has also led to improved school facilities, such as the construction of classrooms and toilets, thanks to a financial support by ward councillors.
  
- **ACCEL (ILO-MFA):** The project supported the fourth collective bargaining agreement in the tea industry for the period of August 1, 2022, to 31st July 2024, which resulted in an increased wage. The maternity leave has also been adjusted from 8 weeks to 12 weeks every three years for eligible female employees.  
  
Furthermore, the project facilitated the participation of representatives of the Government, Workers and Employers organisations of Uganda at the Durban conference. The participation of the Government by the Hon Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development at the Fifth Global Conference and her active participation was considered an important contribution of the project considering her special role as Chair of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.
  
- **MFA:**
  1. The launch of the RBC support centre in September 2022.
  2. The publication of the ISV implementation agenda in July 2022 as an element of the National Plan on Sustainable and Socially Responsible Public Procurement.
  3. The adoption of a General Approach on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) by the Council (EU).

**10 Were there any other meaningful successes as a result of efforts made to achieve target 8.7?**

Please also consider aspects of SDG 8.7 that are not covered by your roadmap (i.e., Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking).

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

## 11. What were these meaningful successes?

- **Netherlands Labour Authority:** Within the framework of EMPACT (European Multidisciplinary Platform against criminal threats of Europol), the Dutch Labour Inspectorate has taken the lead together with France, Italy, Romania and the UK in organising joint action days of labour authorities and police forces throughout Europe in June 2022. The 29 participating European countries have organized multidisciplinary actions to detect and combat labour exploitation.

Particular progress that has been made:

- New Member States that have joined this week of action, such as Malta and Ukraine.
  - European Labour Authority (ELA) has become co-leader of EMPACT and has thus also supported the action week.
- **Amendment of the Guideline for Criminal Procedure in Human Trafficking to article 273f Sr**, in which the penalties to be imposed for all forms of trafficking in human beings have been increased.  
Update of the section 273f of the Penal Code (please refer to question 7, next step 6) is in progress.

- **Ministry of Justice and Security: Reassessment of the programme 'Together against Human Trafficking'.** This program puts a focus on integral cooperation: with other Ministries, but especially together with implementing partners such as municipalities, the Public Prosecution Service, the police, the NLA (Netherlands Labour Authority), the KMar, the IND, reception and care institutions, youth services, schools, NGOs, private parties, and international partners. Based on its success between 2018 – 2022, resulting in improved cooperation and results with all relevant partners, the Cabinet has decided in its coalition agreement to continue this program after reassessing its governance and finance (allocation of €2 million per year). The new program is planned to be sent to parliament in Q3, after which implementation can start.  
In December 2022, the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking and Sexual Violence against Children (hereafter: National Rapporteur) published her report 'Perpetrator Monitor on Human Trafficking 2017-2021'. The Perpetrator Monitor maps the nature and size of the group of perpetrators of human trafficking in the criminal justice chain. The monitor shows that 893 investigative investigations into human trafficking (Section 273f of the Criminal Code) were launched in the period 2017-2021.

Based on the figures put forward, the National Rapporteur concludes that the criminal law approach to labour exploitation lags behind. The National Rapporteur considers a proactive role of the Netherlands Labour Inspectorate in signalling labour exploitation essential. In addition, the monitor shows that

the recidivism of perpetrators of domestic sexual exploitation often occurs at a young age and is high, rapid and severe. Several recommendations have been made to improve this, which were all accepted by the Cabinet in March 2023 and currently in progress by the Dutch government.

## **12. What challenges did you face when implementing your roadmap priorities and next steps? &**

### **13. How did you overcome the challenges? What are the lessons learned?**

Some of our stakeholders and partners in the Focusgroup Alliance 8.7 have elaborated on the challenges faced:

**WNCB** The biggest challenge we encounter is that a supply chain approach is often viewed as being separate from an area-based approach, when in fact the two reinforce each other. Child labour is mostly found in the deeper layers of the chain, in the informal sector or in home-based work. The children working in these areas are often invisible and difficult to reach. Companies can use their influence to create better working conditions and collaborate on an area-based approach to take action on their responsibility for the whole supply chain. Doing so will mean that children who have been excluded from one part of the supply chain are not able to return to work elsewhere, and that we can be sure that all forms of child labour are tackled. If we truly want to take responsibility as a consumer country then an integrated approach is essential.

In the past programme period, as an Alliance we have built our partnership and strengthened our governance and cooperation. Following our internal consultations and the recommendations from the Mid Term Review, we seek to strengthen collaboration with the private sector. Collaboration with the private sector in all its forms (including international supply chains, domestic supply chains and the more informal private sector) will be further strengthened, to encourage responsible business conduct by improving due diligence processes and implementation of Children's Rights and Business Principles. The Alliance recognises that the work with the private sector deserves more attention, in particular the mapping of supply chains in programme countries. Activities in this area have been included in the 2023 Annual Plan. We will focus on a broader supply chain approach linked to an area-based approach, including child labour free zones and community-based child protection system strengthening, to tackle all forms of child labour. Moreover, in each country we aim for more national level impact. This means consciously connecting local interventions to the national level and vice versa, to inspire and inform national policies and programmes as well as to activate existing nationally owned commitments. To further scale up action and have larger impact, we will continue our approaches and integrate our lessons learned, as well as develop and contextualise specific approaches at country level.

**lobal March:** We saw that it is difficult for companies to start working on the issue of child labour in their supply chain if they cannot connect to an already existing initiative. There are lots of initiatives in for example the garment and cocoa sector but there is nothing for the coconut oil sector for example. The agricultural sector is complex and comes with specific challenges. One lesson we have learned is that we need to link companies in the Netherlands with already existing initiatives in the sourcing countries and with producing companies who are front runners in their respective countries.

**VNO-NCW:** The subject sometimes turns out to be challenging for SMEs. We are able to tackle this by awareness raising. However, turning knowledge and awareness into willingness and into action remains a challenge sometimes. Our approach is aimed at getting businesses to take the first step (even if this is a small one). Also, our research (now ongoing) will provide us with further insights.

**Dutch government:** Aligning Dutch central public procurement policy on the International Social Conditions (ISV) with the OECD Guidelines and the UNGPs as well as with anticipated EU procurement policies: varying definitions and translating them into practical procurement policies.

## Assessment of Achieved Progress in the Last 12 Months

### 14. Which of the following formal evaluation tools were used to assess the progress of your national priorities?

Please select all that apply.

Surveys

Case studies

Focus group discussions

Interviews

- Not applicable
- Other

## 15. Please tell us more about the formal evaluation tools that you used to assess the progress of your national priorities.

In general, in order to measure progress on our roadmap priorities for this report, we have tried to link the results achieved to specific actions/results in our roadmap. This has been based on received input and discussions in the focus group. Moreover, several programmes/projects that get financial support from MFA have to fulfil the reporting cycle and perform (midterm) evaluations. Furthermore, some of our partners and stakeholders in the Focusgroup have elaborated on the evaluation tools that they use in their programs:

**FNV:** The EI programme is monitored by Global Union Education International according to criteria agreed upon at the start of the project, which is published in yearly reports. It includes numbers of children prevented from drop out, children returned to school, but also case-specific stories.

Members of TruStone report on their due diligence and working through the guidelines, the projects are being monitored by the participants from Flanders and the Netherlands. Reports are published on the TruStone website as are risk analysis: <https://www.imvoconvenanten.nl/en/trustone>.

### **MFA:**

1. RBC Helpdesk: as the RBC support centre is a newly set up instrument, progress has not been evaluated yet. For the components to be measured on the short term, the support centre will on the one hand use constant/more frequent and real-time monitoring activities, in order to collect and analyse data on accessibility, services and short-term impact on companies. On the other hand on the long term, umbrella and periodic evaluations will also be used to analyse in depth long-term trends in supply, demand and the general functioning of the support centre, and whether or not behavioural change has taken place within companies.
2. International Social Conditions (ISV): Various studies and evaluations have taken place since the introduction of the current ISV policy framework. These studies have shown that the application of ISV can be improved within the Government Procurement Department, which is why the commitments, set out in the ISV implementation agenda, have been made. To gain more insight into the extent and the manner in which ISV is applied in government tenders and what results this yields in the contract phase, improvement of the current monitoring is necessary. That is why one line of action of the ISV implementation agenda focuses on the improvement of monitoring. All in all, progress on the ISV implementation agenda is being monitored on a yearly basis and reported on in the Central Government Annual Report on Operational Management (JBR).

**Ministry of Justice and Security:** In the previous cycle of the programme 'Together against Human Trafficking', it was not possible to measure the progress made, because there had not been conducted a baseline measurement in the beginning.

Currently, for the reassessment of the programme, we are discussing in which way we can track the progress in the most efficient way.

### **16. What other types of evidence have you considered in the assessment process?**

Please select all that apply.

- Anecdotal evidence
- Information from third parties
- Not applicable

### **17. Please tell us more about the other types of evidence that you considered in the assessment process.**

N/A

### **18. Please tell us the challenges you have encountered (if any) in gathering evidence to assess your progress.**

N/A

### **19. Please specify the names of other stakeholders and their involvement, if any, in assessing your progress.**

All the stakeholders that are involved in the Dutch Roadmap are involved in assessing the progress. This report is also been created together with to the focus group members.

## **Collaboration with International Partners**

### **20. Did you collaborate with any international partners?**

Please select all that apply.

- Other Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder countries.
- ILO
- United Nations Agencies (other than ILO)
- International civil society

organizations

**21. Please specify the name and describe the collaboration with your international partners.**

ILO through Alliance 8.7 and ACCEL

And see all other partners previously mentioned under questions 1-3.

**22. Have you supported any sub-regional/regional/global initiatives, including South-South initiatives, on the elimination of child labour, forced labour, and human trafficking?**

Yes

No

Don't know

**23. Please tell us more about the sub-regional/regional/global initiatives you've supported.**

Please kindly refer to all mentioned under Priority 1 (progress made on results 1A and 1B).

## Collaboration with Domestic Partners

**24. Did you collaborate with any domestic partners?**

Domestic employers / private

sector

Domestic employer

organizations

Domestic worker organizations

Domestic civil society

organizations

National statistical offices

Ministries within your government

**25. Please specify the name and describe the collaboration with your domestic partners.**

We cooperate in the Focus group, as well as in specific programs, as described in questions 1-7:

- Work: No Child's Business Alliance
- Global March Against Child Labour
- Terre des Hommes
- CNV Internationaal
- FNV
- VNO-NCW / MKB Nederland
- Netherlands Enterprise Agency (NEA)
- NLA (Netherlands Labour Inspectorate)

**26. Compared to last year, do you think there was increased collaboration with domestic stakeholders?**

Yes

No

**27. Please tell us, what has improved in your collaboration with your domestic collaborator(s) and efforts?**

Cooperation with our domestic collaborators takes form through various platforms, including a focusgroep on Alliance 8.7. The cooperation was already good and therefore we do not note an increased collaboration compared to last year.

### **28. Was the pathfinder process considered useful?**

N/A

## **Future Prospects**

### **29. Is there a need to revise your country's roadmap priorities?**

Yes

No

### **30. What needs to be updated?**

Please select all that apply.

- Need to update the priorities
- Other
- Need to update roadmap goals/targets

### **31. Until April 2024, what are the next steps for your country to achieve the roadmap priorities?**

The updated Roadmap, in which several actions have been completed and others added, will be send as soon as possible.

### **32. Which challenges would you anticipate in this process?**

N/A