The Dutch government has been supporting higher education in developing countries through cooperation between Dutch higher education and training institutes and partner organizations in the developing countries since the late 1960s. Various programmes have been implemented but the aim in all of them has been to build and strengthen the education and training capacity of organizations/institutes and to promote human capabilities in developing countries through collaboration with Dutch (knowledge) organizations.

Cooperation in the earlier programmes was restricted to universities and institutes of international education in the Netherlands and their counterparts in developing countries. Gradually, participation on the Dutch side was broadened to include universities of applied sciences and private training and consultancy firms as well. And in developing countries, ministries, national agencies and NGOs were also able to be partners. Over the years, the partner countries have changed as a result of Dutch government policies, as have some of the programme priorities. Since the launch of the NPT programme in 2002, projects have been expected to support the aims of Dutch bilateral cooperation programmes in partner countries. Gender equality and a clear link between education and the labour market have to be demonstrated in all projects.

The graph presented here is based on the programmes implemented in Africa between 1996 and 2013. It shows the funding spent in each partner country (in € million) and per sector (as % of the total country expenses) and also the number of projects that have been undertaken in each country, the number of African organizations and the Dutch partners (organizations/consortia) involved.
African Studies Centre
Dutch cooperation programmes to strengthen education and training capacity in developing countries in the period 1996 - 2013

**Brief description of the programmes**

**MHO** Joint Financing Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education; 1996 - 2004

The aim of this cooperative programme was to strengthen a limited number of universities (12) in partner countries through broad linkages with Dutch partner universities (mainly universities). Each linkage consisted of a number of projects aimed at strengthening the academic, administrative and managerial capacities and the facilities of the institutions in the South. The joint funding arrangements and long-term commitment were expected to also result in lasting academic partnerships. The programme was officially launched in 1993 and project implementation began in 1996.

**SPP** SAIL Projects Programme; 1996 - 2004

SPP aimed to contribute to the broad sustainable development, improvement and strengthening of institutions and organizations in developing countries engaged or involved in higher education (institutional development). It also aimed to contribute to an increase in the quality and quantity of educated professionals (human resource development). Expertise was mobilized from selected institutions for international education (IE) institutions in the Netherlands.

**HOB** Programme for Cooperation between Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences and Education Institutions in Developing Countries for the Benefit of Primary Education; 1996 - 2004

The HOB programme assisted institutions in developing countries responsible for training teachers and educating management staff and for developing primary education curricula. The education faculties and teacher-training colleges at five Dutch universities of applied sciences (hogescholen) participated in this programme.

**NPT** The Netherlands Programme for Institutional Strengthening of Post-secondary Education and Training Capacity; 2002 - 2008

The NPT programme aimed to contribute to the broad sustainable development, improvement and strengthening of institutions and organizations in developing countries engaged or involved in higher education (institutional development). Special attention was given to teacher training, capacity building for developing institutions and the promotion of qualification programmes. The programme was in line with the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science’s New Development Policy (NDC) as well as the Dutch Cooperation Programme for the Benefit of Primary Education (HOB) and the programme for the Netherlands in Latin America (HOB LA). The funders were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Nuffic Board of Directors.

**NICHE** The Netherlands Initiative for Capacity Development in Higher Education; 2008 - present

The NICHE programme aims to support capacity strengthening in the four priority areas of Dutch development cooperation: food security, water, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and security and the rule of law. The NICHE programme is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, TNO, NUFFIC and the Netherlands University Council for Development Cooperation.

**SPP** SAIL Projects Programme; 1996 - 2004

SPP aimed to contribute to the broad sustainable development, improvement and strengthening of institutions and organizations in developing countries engaged or involved in higher education (institutional development). Project activities in the SPP programme had to be relevant to the sectors and themes targeted by the Dutch bilateral support given to the countries in question. The SPP programme has supported capacity strengthening in the four priority areas of Dutch development cooperation: food security, water, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and security and the rule of law. The programmes have supported organisations in the South that play an important role in the development of post-secondary education and training capacity. These include institutes for post-secondary education, government ministries, national commissions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

**NPT** was implemented in 14 countries. The NICHE list of partner countries included 23 countries, but this currently stands at 15 (2014).

Both NPT and NICHE aim to spend at least 50% of their funds on projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. At least 35% of NICHIE funds are intended to benefit food security, which is another priority area.

Additional information on the NPT and NICHE programmes, projects and participating organizations can be found at www.nuffic.nl and www.nuffic.niche

For specific questions please contact niche@nuffic.nl.

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**Visting Fellows**

Eight African academics are invited to Leiden every year on three-month fellowships to promote effective academic dialogue between Africa and the North. These scholars use their stay in Leiden for data analysis and writing.

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**Research Masters in African Studies**

The ASC offers a two-year Research Masters in African Studies in cooperation with Leiden University’s Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences. About 60% of the students on this course come from outside the Netherlands.

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**Publications**

ASC researchers publish in many different journals and with well-known publishing houses. The Centre also has five publication series of its own: a Yearbook, African Studies Abstracts Online, an Annual Report and a Newsletter.

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**Library**

The ASC’s Library, Documentation and Information Department has the most extensive and specialized collection on Africa in the Netherlands in the fields of the social sciences (including law and economics) and the humanities. The library, which is open to the general public, has more than 80,000 books, 1500 documentaries and feature films from and about Africa, and subscribes to nearly 750 periodicals. African Studies Abstracts Online offers some 10,000 abstracts and journal articles and webdossiers provide background information on specific topical events and themes.

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**Contact**

For specific questions please contact niche@nuffic.nl. **E**: asc@ascleiden.nl  **W**: www.ascleiden.nl