



THE PURIFICATION OF AID

Jilles van Gastel

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An ethnography of Dutch partnership policy and (broken) dreams of development.

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'what do we tell the minister?'

'society loses commitment'

'No!'

'what does it mean?'

'we need to be connected'

aid needs partnership'

'it's not about selling policy'

we have to cal



'aid runs on solidarity'

'Why?'

'this is unethical'

'aid needs ownership'

'enroll private companies in aid?'

'Yes.'

culate what is needed



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Jilles Nathalie van Gastel

Thesis committee

Thesis supervisor

Prof. dr. L.E. Visser
Professor of Rural Development Sociology
Wageningen University

Thesis co-supervisor

Dr. ir. M.C.M. Nuijten
Associate professor, Rural Development Sociology Group
Wageningen University

Other members

Prof. dr. B.J.M. Arts, Wageningen University, The Netherlands
Prof. dr. J. Gould, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
Prof. dr. O.J.H.M. Salemink, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Prof. dr. H.C. Wagenaar, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

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CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCTION

An ethnography of partnership in Dutch development aid

It is October 2003. In the Netherlands, the new Minister for Development Cooperation, Agnes van Ardenne, presents her policy document *“Mutual Obligations, Mutual Responsibilities”* (Tweede Kamer 2003, 29 234 nr 1, 3 oktober 2003). Soon after that, she received the following a memorandum from a ministerial official in one of the Dutch embassies¹:

Dear Mrs. Van Ardenne,

First of all my congratulations with your policy document, “Mutual Obligations, Mutual Responsibilities”, which manages to reduce poverty alleviation into a handy format of three MDG’s [Millennium Development Goals] and declares important key words such as partnership, good governance and complementarity as new spearheads of policy. And yes, also for you, just as for your predecessors, it is all about quality and effectiveness, and just like your predecessors you believe you can accomplish that by drastically changing course every few years.

Of course, as loyal civil servants we will execute the policy document to the best of our ability.

[...]

You say to strive for even more partnerships beyond only [those] with [other] governments. Yet, the[se] long-term, ongoing partnerships that we committed to a long time ago are thus disrespected by us. You ask us to devote ourselves to good governance and a good business climate. Yet, you have no difficulty in breaching the written agreements and signed contracts [that we have with governments]. You want more donor coordination and complementarity, but yet you do not hesitate to jump into sectors in which donors tumble over each other. Let me leave it at that: there is after all nothing to do about it. Who knows, there will be another minister in four years who again will want something different, and then we will proceed to the order of the day. Time enough: poverty is for the time being not defeated. [...]

Yours faithfully...

P.S. In [the monthly internal magazine], your previous and current deputy DGIS [Director-General of International Cooperation] mentioned the fact that they are barely challenged on development cooperation within the Ministry. One should wonder why that is: conformism, de-motivation, fatalism, or also anxiety for the consequences.

In this letter, the official articulates her deep disappointment with Dutch development aid. She criticizes the Ministers for Development Cooperation for frequently changing the course of development aid, the simplicity of their policies, and the incoherence between their policy statements and their actions. In addition to that, the writer denounces the Ministry for having created employees who are in different and conform to whatever policy, have lost their motivation to question and criticize policy, have lost hope that things will change, and are afraid to speak up. The cynicism that we read in this letter is not unique. A larger group of academics, politicians, and practitioners has lost faith in the ability of development aid to realize its promises. These people explain the failure of development aid as resulting from vague and simplistic policies, hidden agendas, a lack of knowledge, morals and reflectivity among aid practitioners, and institutional problems (see for example, Easterly 2006; Boekestijn 2009; Moyo 2010).

I contend that these critiques do not help us to understand the workings of development aid. They are too simplistic and one-sided and they do not pay attention to the practices of aid practitioners. In this thesis, my aim is neither to criticize nor to defend development aid. The question I address here is how practitioners try to realize development through aid. To answer that question, this thesis studies the practices of aid practitioners, particularly those within the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During several periods from 2001 until 2006, I participated in the work of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This Ministry houses the Minister for Development Cooperation² and is responsible for most of the government spending on development aid³. It consists of the ministerial headquarters, which is organized in various departments that deal with a region, a policy theme, or multilateral institutions, and of various Dutch embassies around the world. Development aid is not centered in one place in the ministerial organization. Hence, the aid practices described in this thesis are situated in different sites and levels of the organization. What brings them together is that most of these practices concern, above all, partnership. Since 2002, partnership appears in Dutch policy documents as a central policy notion and is an important form of cooperation between the Ministry and (Dutch) companies to provide aid and realize development. Then, this thesis shows how aid practitioners relate to, make sense of, and shape development aid by exploring their practices around partnership policy.

Partnership debated in academic circles

Before I set out my theoretical approach, let me explain how the academic literature discusses partnership. First, I should note that it was in the 1990s that partnership became a popular policy (Linder 1999; Weihe 2008). Hence, there is a substantial body of literature on this approach. Here, I will focus mainly on those works that discuss partnership in relation to development aid. This debate addresses some issues that also arise in the general debate on partnerships, while other issues are typical for the debate on partnerships in development aid (see for example, Kolk, Tulder, and Kostwinder 2008).

In this stream of literature, we find works that describe various definitions of partnership and categorize types of partnerships (see for example, Buse and Walt 2000a; Buse and Walt 2000b; Reed and Reed 2009). These books and articles point out that the

term partnership refers to many different types of relations. A number of them study the forms of cooperation between the state and NGOs and/or private companies, labeled as public-private partnerships, prevalent in different sectors such as health, water, and education. Others talk about the relation between western donor countries and recipient developing countries that donors call partnership. Though the literature on (public-private) partnerships describes relations between distinct actors in different places in a particular sector, some common threads can be discovered in how they analyze these relations and conceive of development aid.

Many studies see partnership as an adequate policy instrument to realize development. Above all, these works celebrate the effectiveness of partnerships for health promotion (Gillies 1998), advocate public-private partnerships (PPPs) as a solution to realize development (Loevinsohn and Harding 2005), and claim that PPPs are essential to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (Ardian *et al*, 2007). For example, Chataway and Smith (2006) analyze the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), a public-private partnership that seeks to further vaccine research and to ensure delivery of that vaccine to developing countries. They point out that although the IAVI has not yet produced a HIV vaccine, IAVI's expenditure of large amounts of money helped to make science and technology work for the majority of the world's population.

Writings include case studies of public-private partnerships that try to identify best practices, lessons learned, and ways to improve PPPs (see for example, Samii, Van Wassenhove, and Bhattacharya 2002; Shortell *et al* 2002; Ramiah and Reich 2006). For instance, Samii, Van Wassenhove, and Bhattacharya (2002) studied a public-private partnership between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the multinational automaker FIAT, and a number of other partners to improve the automotive components industry. The authors point at the importance of close interaction among the partners in defining and accomplishing the objectives of the partnership. Moreover, they provide mechanisms to align the various incentives of the partners to make PPPs successful. Shortell *et al* (2002) claims that for partnerships to achieve their objectives there needs to be a well-articulated, shared vision between the partners. Likewise, Buse and Harmer (2007) show the importance of support from the aid organization for its employees who set up partnerships. They suggest providing appropriate incentives for staff engaging in partnerships. Still other studies try to measure the extent of partnership between agencies by calculating the level of trust, equality, and/or participation (see for example, Morse and McNamara 2009).

There is also a growing body of literature that calls attention to PPPs in relation to neo-liberal policies, privatization, and service delivery. They point out that public-private partnerships bring in new actors and resources that influence existing relations. For example, MirafTAB (2004) describes PPPs as a "Trojan Horse" since governments of developing countries do not have the will or the ability to stand up against private companies in favor of the interests of the community. Furthermore, MirafTAB points out that due to conceptual inconsistencies underlying PPPs, they can generate results that are the opposite of what they promise. Farah and Rizvi (2007) point out that PPPs in the education sector in Pakistan have increased children's access to schools particularly for girls. However, they have also shifted the costs for education to families and communities. They conclude that, "such

transitory partnerships are an inappropriate and unlikely strategy for poverty reduction or for improving the educational status of poor communities and disadvantaged groups” (2007: 340). Prasad (2006) argues that privatization is increasingly being repackaged in new forms, such as public-private partnerships, while evidence shows that it has not led to increased efficiency in delivering water and sanitation services. Kumar (2011) points out that those public-private partnerships in developing countries often result in public pays and private profits.

Most critical studies on the relation between western donors and recipient developing countries as partnership(s) adopt a neo-Marxist model, emphasizing power differences in these relations. Crawford (2003) points out that contrary to what partnership promotes, namely encouraging locally formulated reform strategies, international agencies still determine the reform agenda. He argues that the notion of partnership “simultaneously disguises and legitimizes the interventions of international agencies in domestic reform processes, serving to mystify power asymmetry” (2003: 139). Yet, Abrahamsen (2004) argues that the power of partnership does not lie in domination, but rather in techniques of cooperation and inclusion. Harris (2008) shows that aid practitioners in developing countries feel that their relationships with donors do not correspond with the rhetoric of power sharing and collaboration of these donors. However, he stresses, aid practitioners articulated the wish for collaborative relationships with western donor organizations. In general, these works critique the use of the label partnership to describe the relations between donor and recipient in development aid.

How these debates fail to understand development aid in practice

These studies of partnerships in development aid can be divided into interventionist writings and critical writings. These two approaches not only characterize the debate on partnership but on development aid in general. These works have serious theoretical shortcomings for understanding how development aid works in practice due to how they conceive policy, policy processes and the aid organization.

Interventionist writings are particularly concerned with the gap between policy models and the practices of development aid. Many of these writings conceive the policy process as consisting of two parts; policy design and policy implementation (Lancaster 2006; Easterly 2008; Riddell 2008; Haan 2009). They suggest improving policy models and/or providing incentives to smooth the implementation process in order to bridge the gap between goals and results. Yet, the separation of policy, implementation, and outcomes hides a much more complicated set of processes that involve the reinterpretation and transformation of policy (Long 2001: 25). There is not a straight line from policy to outcome.

Secondly, both interventionist and critical writings conceive policy as an instrument or technique to guide action. On the one hand, interventionist writings conceive partnership as an instrument to solve the problems of declining public resources in the western world and failing government service delivery in developing countries. On the other hand, critical writings see partnership as a disciplinary technique and rationalizing discourse, which hides the actual processes of power and control and legitimizes development aid. These approaches understand aid practices as literal, instrumentally rational, strategic, and

intentional. Yet, as Yanow says, too much policy analyses, implementation studies, and descriptions of the policy process assume that all human action is literal and instrumentally rational (1996: 8). Furthermore, Latour points out that “strategy is an invention of vulgar sociologists [...] [a]ctors don’t have a strategy; they get their battle plans, contradictory ones, from other actors” (1996: 162). Hence, rather than being instrumental, development aid is contingent.

Likewise, both interventionist and critical writings portray the aid organization as a functional machine with compartmentalized, mechanic divisions between hierarchical levels and functions (Morgan 2006) that work together to achieve a collective goal. However, there is no singular goal or intention (Quarles van Ufford 1988; Harrison 2003, Li 2007). As Li points out, development aid “draws upon and is situated within a heterogeneous assemblage or *dispositif* that combines forms of practical knowledge, modes of perception, practices of calculation, vocabularies, types of authority, forms of judgment, architectural forms, human capacities, non-human objects and devices, inscription techniques, and so forth” (2007: 6).

Both writings see policy notions, also called “buzzwords” (Cornwal 2007; Rist 2007) as problematic. Interventionist writings believe that the many different views on and connotations of such policy concepts are a problem when carrying out policies. Therefore, these writings often try to reach a definition that stipulates the precise and correct meaning of these policy notions. However, interventionists forget that the power of such policy notions lies in their potential to accommodate multiple meanings (Yanow 1996: 9). Critical writings point at the disjuncture between rhetoric and actions that take place in the name of such policy notions. Therefore, these writings suggest doing away with such concealing concepts. Instead of debating whether or not we should use these concepts and trying to find definitions that satisfy all (which is an impossible task as Gould (2007) notes), I argue that the study of policy should explore what these notions mean for whom, when and where and how they play a role in policy processes.

In sum, while studying policy both interventionist and critical studies have been obsessed with policy notions and their definitions, rules and regulations, and instruments. They perceive development aid as the result of calculation and intentionality. Both approaches talk about the gap between intentions and outcomes, between text and action, and between policy and implementation. Yet, these writings forget that policies are always interpreted and transformed when put into action. If we look closely we will find that there is no gap. Therefore, we need to develop a theoretical framework that helps us to understand policy processes in development aid that pays attention to human actors and their practices.

Studying development aid, theoretical notions of policy

Policy plays a central role in our society. Hence, different academic fields focus on policy as an object of study. However, there is still little agreement in academia on what exactly is policy. Answering the question, “What constitutes a policy?” Shore and Wright (1997: 5) point at the different foci of policy as a language, rhetoric and concepts of political speeches and party manifestos, as written documents produced by government or company officials,

as embedded in the institutional mechanisms of decision-making, and as what people experience in their interactions with street-level bureaucrats. My aim is not to come up with a definition of the notion of policy. As Wedel *et al* (2005: 35) explains, an anthropology of policy is less concerned with assigning abstract and undisputable definitions of the term policy than with understanding how policy functions in the shaping of society.

Obviously, I take a distance from purely instrumental views on policy. As Yanow explains, “the social world needs an understanding of the policy process not only as an instrumental process. It is also about the inculcation of values and the validation of status, things that cannot be measured according to rational techniques, especially since the latter require that everything be made explicit and unambiguous –whereas legislative and organizational processes require ambiguity at times, and tacit knowledge, which cannot be made explicit, is an important and very real part of human life” (1996: 6). For that reason, I take an interpretive approach towards policy. Such an approach broadens our understanding of policy in terms of rationality, and includes emotive, cognitive, and moral aspects of policy (Yanow 1996).

This interpretive approach needs to focus on the practices of human actors as meaning-making beings. The focus on practices in policy analyses is also stressed by Wagenaar (2004), who states that most public policy textbooks largely ignore the practices of public administrators. He points out that, “the decisions, reports, negotiations, standard operating procedures, and -on a higher level of institutional abstraction- the structures, legal rules, lines of authority, and accountability of the everyday world of public authority are effectuations, enactments of the hidden, taken-for granted routines: the almost unthinking actions, tacit knowledge, fleeting interactions, practical judgments, self-evident understandings and background knowledge, embodied standards and warrants, shared meanings, personal feelings, and small rituals” (2004: 643). The focus on practices allows us to see both the constraining and enabling dimensions of policy. It also helps us to understand what it means to be a public official in a large, bureaucratic organization in a particular field of policy.

Then, to study the policy processes of development aid around partnership in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs, I use the concepts dreams of development, translation, and purification. These concepts acknowledge the emotive, cognitive, and moral aspects in policy processes. Furthermore, in combination with a focus on practices they help us to understand how particular beliefs, ideals, values, feelings, and meanings of aid practitioners shape development aid.

Unlike conventional theories, I do not perceive development aid as a singular, rational and coherent set of policy ideas and policy goals. Rather, I claim that there are as many different dreams of development and plans on how to realize these dreams as there are aid practitioners. By dreams of development, I refer to the imaginary, alternative order of an ideal world in which life is good. Dreams of development imagine a world without hunger, suffering, war, loneliness, and fear, to name just a few. That imaginary world is a total order that is pure, coherent, and whole. These dreams of development are utopias in the sense that they are images of an alternative organization that might instigate plans to remedy the perceived shortcomings of a particular present age (Parker 2002: 2). These dreams and are expressed in policy practices. Though there are many different dreams of

development, this does not mean that development aid is fragmented. Instead, various dreams seeking to be realized (Latour 1996) come together in development initiatives and, so, shape development aid.

Policy processes consist of translation. Dreams turn into collective dreams, dreams into policy texts, policy texts into projects, and projects into action. For this to happen, the mobilization of support is essential. The mobilization of support implies the mutual enrollment and the interlocking of (various) interests (Mosse and Lewis 2006: 13). Thus, translation is the mobilization and tying together of people, things, and interests (Latour 1996). Translation usually implies transformation. As Latour notes, “[t]o translate is to betray: ambiguity is part of translation” (1996: 48). Hence, any attempt to realize dreams of development also means the transformation of intentions, plans and projects.

We can only understand translation if we also look at purification. While the realization of dreams requires the enrollment of people and organizations with different interests, I noticed that aid practitioners heavily debate which people, organizations, and interests should or shouldn't be included in development aid. Some aid practitioners do not see the inclusion of private companies as a problem. Yet, others believe that development cannot be realized when aid involves (particular types of) self-interest. These aid practitioners try to make and keep aid pure. This purification of aid resembles the purification practices of with scientists as described by Latour (1993) in his book *We Have Never Been Modern*. He describes how scientists separate the natural world from the social world and create two ontologically different universes -nature and society- each its own inherent behavioral characteristics. Likewise, aid practitioners make a clear distinction between altruism and self-interest and categorize people and organizations in one of the two. Yet, whereas scientists mix the two categories of nature and society after their work of purification –although they deny doing so-, aiding practitioners try to keep people and organizations they categorize as self-interested apart from development aid.

Studying up and studying through

The study of policy combines both the approach of “studying up” (Nader 1969) and “studying through” (Reinhold 1994; Shore and Wright 1997; Wedel 2006). In the early 1970s Nader called upon anthropologists to study powerful institutions and bureaucratic organizations, “for such institutions and their network systems affect our lives and also affect the lives of people that anthropologists have traditionally studied all around the world” (1974: 292-93, cited in Wedel *et al* 2005: 33). Later, anthropological analysis shifted their object of study from particular groups to networks and connections between different sites. This implied a more “mobile ethnography” (Marcus 1995). Reinhold called this methodology “studying through”, which is “tracing ways in which power creates webs and relations between actors, institutions and discourses across time and space” (Reinhold 1994: 477-9, cited in Shore and Wright 1997: 14). Wedel (2001) has used the same concept of studying through as she examined the interactions of donors and recipients in order to explore the social organization linking the overlapping arenas of activity navigated by actors.

In this thesis “studying through” implies following of the trajectory of partnership from being a policy notion in the ministerial headquarters to being a development project in country Z. Thereby, I focus on the translation and purification processes that make travelling possible or may hamper it. As Shore and Wright point out studying through implies the tracing of “connections between different organisational and everyday worlds, even where actors in different sites do not know each other or share a moral universe” (Shore and Wright 1997: 14). These connections are not fixed and stable. Rather, they are contingent, unstable, unequal, and shaped by friction (Tsing 2005).

As part of this trajectory of partnership is situated in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this is also a study of a “professional elite” (Shore 2002). The inclusion of elites in this study has implications on its methodology. Before I discuss these implications I will first explain what makes officials of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs an “elite” group.

An elite society

My first encounter with the Ministry was in 2001. I wanted to study policy practices for my master thesis and had applied for an internship. I can still remember the excitement I felt about working for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Dutch *Buitenlandse Zaken* or “BZ” to most of its employees. The organization had an aura of supremacy and élan. It was only a few decades ago that the “Corps Diplomatique” consisted only of nobility. Though times have changed, the Ministry is still considered “elitist”. It is not that ministerial officials consider themselves an elite, but they do have a degree of self-recognition and consciousness that characterizes elites (Shore 2002).

The headquarters of the Ministry is located in The Hague. The building was designed by the architect Apon and was constructed from grey bricks between 1979 and 1985. Two small revolving doors make up the entrance of the headquarters. In the morning, its many employees ride the single narrow escalator to the first floor where there is a reception desk. Security personnel behind this desk need to authorize all visitors that want to enter the building by checking their passport and contacting the person they want to visit. Employees pass this desk without giving notice, hold their security pass in front of the pass scanner and step into the electric revolving door. Once inside the ministerial boundaries one sees a television in the lobby that displays the world news headlines. Employees are not just watching the changes in this world on tv-screens, they are “close to where it happens” as an employee expresses his position and that of his colleagues. The slogan stresses this by saying that the Ministry is “24 uur per dag wereldwijd actief” or “active, worldwide, 24 hours a day”. The various departments are located in one of the five arms of the building. The most important is corridor D on the fourth floor where the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation work. It is here that, according to employees, the centre of power is located. Then again, others claim that the real centre of power is on the eleventh floor where the personnel department, which can make or break careers, is housed.

An important constitutive of this elite status are the recruitment strategies (Shore 2002). The Ministry is a popular employer in The Netherlands, and it is difficult to get in. The official qualifications are many compared to other ministries; one needs an academic

education at a Masters level, to speak at least two foreign languages one of which is French⁴, to have several years work experience with at least a few years served abroad, and to be willing to travel. The selection process takes at least half a year, which is considered a long time by most applicants. This process involves a first selection on the basis of one's curriculum vitae, an interview with staff members of the personnel department, a language test, a personality test, and a final interview with a number of senior officials of the Ministry.

Hierarchy is important in the Ministry, where officials refer to themselves as "schaaldieren" or "scale animals" and the Ministry as the "apenrots" or "Monkey Rock". Many ministerial officials aspire to make a career and move up in rank within the Ministry, in which the position of ambassador is considered the highest achievement. This may be seen for example in officials' talk about the "The Boulevard of Broken Dreams", which is how they refer to a corridor that accommodates officials who got stuck in a high scale or rank on their way to become an ambassador and who now spend their days on unimportant projects. The importance of ranks can also be observed in meetings, where those with the highest rank usually talk first. Most officials know the rank of their colleagues, and it plays a role in how decisions are made within the Ministry.

Working in the Ministry entails much travelling and moving from one place to another. This is not only a job requirement; employees see their lifestyle as adventurous and nomadic. Every three or four years, employees have to apply for a new job within the Ministry. Someone could spend four years in the headquarters in The Hague, move to cosmopolitan New York City to work at the United Nations, and then go to Pakistan for a position in the Dutch Embassy in Islamabad. The life abroad is very different, employees live the expat life. Their work not only consists of meetings and projects, but also representing The Netherlands at receptions and dinners. They reside in large houses, often with staff to do the cleaning, cooking and, if necessary, secure the property. Their friends are often the staff of other embassies and top officials of the host country they work and live in. Remuneration in the Ministry is relatively high and when stationed abroad it is even higher with extra payments such as housing, schooling for children, and allowance for the partner. In developing countries where living costs are low, ministerial staff can live a comfortable life. Though this life might seem luxurious, uncertainty where the next placement will be, limited job opportunities for partners, having to make new friends, learn a new language, and getting used to local customs every three to four years makes being an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tough at times.

It should be noted that though the organizational chart of the Ministry does not distinguish between diplomats and development staff (which includes thematic experts), in practice there are divisions between these employees. Educational background plays an important role in this division. All employees working as policy officials in the Ministry hold a university degree. Yet, their type of education differs. Many of them, usually working in departments that are typified as "foreign affairs" departments, hold a degree in the field of law. A small number have a master degree in language and culture studies, such as Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, Slavic languages and cultures, or Sinology. Most people working in the thematic departments -such as the department for sustainable economic development and the department for social and instructional development- that are considered the development aid departments in the ministerial headquarters,

have studied tropical forestry, rural development studies, tropical land use in Wageningen University or anthropology in Leiden. When one walks through the corridors of the building, one can notice that people dress differently in different departments, though the dress code is formal in the Ministry. The garments vary among departments from grey, blue or black smart suits for people whose work is typically regarded as foreign affairs, to less conventional and sometimes outdated trousers and shirts worn by employees concerned with development aid.

Since the reorganization in the 1990s, official regulations state that ministerial staff can be placed in any Dutch post in the headquarters or abroad. Yet, in practice, people often follow certain diplomat- or development-related career paths. You will find few officials who go from being cultural attaché in Buenos Aires to being health expert in Dhaka. Most thematic experts circulate through jobs handling various development issues from health to education to good governance. Some also move up in the hierarchy and become Head of Development or even ambassador. However, since many aspire to be ambassador, those cases in which an expert makes it to ambassador are rare.

The reader might have noticed that I mentioned departments that are referred to as typical “foreign affairs” departments and departments that are considered to do development aid. Again, the Ministry as a whole does not differentiate between departments that engage in foreign affairs and those that engage in development aid. Yet, the employees of the Ministry do. They regard the thematic departments as that part of the organization that does development aid, while for example they view the department for security policy as a typical “diplomat department”.

In the Ministry many different officials are involved in development aid. But they do not all have the same way of doing development aid. In the Ministry people classify others that do development aid as “diplomats” or “project peasants”. When one is classified as being a “diplomat”, it is to say that this person is only interested in his or her career, in moving up the hierarchy whatever it takes. When one classifies another person as being a “project peasant”, it means to say that the work of this person is about helping people and doing good at the micro-level, without taking into account the politics at the macro-level and trying to change that. Thus, officials use these labels to classify colleagues and disapprove of the way that they do development aid.

Participant observation as in/outsider

For nearly three-and-a-half years I inhabited this world of Ministry employees. Prior to my PhD, I worked in various positions in different departments in the ministerial headquarters in The Hague. I did an internship while I studied how policy on “good governance” was shaped. I then had a temporary job as junior policy official on a project team that tried to improve the policy process in terms of planning, monitoring and evaluation. And finally, I worked as junior researcher in the policy and operations evaluation department (IOB). In these jobs, I carried out a wide range of tasks. I answered questions from parliamentarians. I had to gather success stories from departments and embassies that would be collected in a booklet and sent around the Ministry. I participated in many meetings. I studied policy documents, archives of projects, and conducted interviews with aid practitioners for the evaluation of the Netherlands’ Research Policy 1992-2005.

During this period I took part in the many discussions among aid practitioners on matters such as how to bridge the gap between development promises and concrete results, what is the best way to provide aid, and whether or not there should be a separate Ministry for Development Cooperation. As colleagues, we discussed the meaning of development and how to realize development through aid. We talked about meetings that we had attended, shared joy about projects that had been successful, expressed our frustration about projects that did not progress, and discussed our bosses. They told me about their career aspirations and how they tried to get a good position in the next placement. In my time at the Dutch Ministry, I participated in many aspects of the work and lives of ministerial officials.

When my application for a research grant was awarded, I exchanged my job at the Ministry for a PhD-position at the university. From an insider I turned into an outsider again. In this position, it was suddenly difficult to study policy. No longer did I have access to the ministerial meetings, policy documents, personnel magazines, lunch meetings and so on. My only sources of information were interviews with ministerial officials and stories of a few friends who worked in the Ministry. The material I got from those interviews and the stories was partial and fragmented and concentrated more on perceptions than on practices. Furthermore, people were hesitant to talk openly to outsiders about their work and sensitive issues.

Finding a research location

At the time I was writing my grant application the Ministry was still fascinated by ownership as a leading principle for development aid. My aim was to study how recent policy shifts had changed the organization of aid. I proposed to focus on the shift from “donorship” to ownership. As all 30 Dutch embassies in developing countries had to work by this principle of ownership, any of these locations would make an interesting research site for my study. Despite my contacts in the Ministry, it was not that easy to find an embassy that was willing to let me in. First I approached two embassies where I knew someone. Later I also contacted another two embassies through my network of former colleagues and friends in the Ministry. I sent them an e-mail telling them that I wanted to study the effects of recent policy changes on the organization of aid. I wanted to study development aid in practice, but also wanted the embassy to benefit from my presence there. Thus, I proposed to work for the embassy for two or three days a week by assisting technical experts or carrying out a short study for the embassy. I had hoped that they would be interested in my research and see my offer as a way to get some extra work done. Furthermore, I hoped that the embassy would be encouraged when they heard that the Dutch Scientific Organization (NWO) supported my research with a scholarship.

This hope was in vain. The embassies never said “no” to my request, but they did not invite me either. Instead, they pointed to issues that made my research in their embassy difficult. One embassy concluded their list of objections with the remark that the embassy was overrun with missions and evaluation delegations. Another said that the embassy was overloaded with work and “now is not the right time” for me to do an internship. Despite my offer to do some work for them, they saw my stay at the embassy as an extra burden on the staff that already had too much work to do.

Another problem that was raised was that the embassy wanted me to do research that could benefit their work. This also implied that they defined what kind of research would achieve that purpose. One ambassador e-mailed me saying, “you can only seriously study this subject if you juxtapose it to the reality here [in the developing country]”. She claimed that it would make no sense to study the practices of the embassy if I did not weigh these practices against the reality of the country. To do so, she argued, I needed to speak the local language which she knew I didn’t (like most of them probably).

Another embassy did not want me to study a policy that was not yet working successfully. This embassy had just started with a new approach in aid. They suggested I carry out my study in an embassy that was more “grown up”, that is, where this new approach had been working for a while. They suggested that for my research it would be better to study a successful policy.

Most of the requirements of the embassies can be understood as practical matters. Yet, I believed that these practical issues weren’t problems or could easily be overcome. As an independent researcher, my stay in the embassy would not ask for as much time of the staff as missions and delegations did. As for the language problem, I could hire a translator. Also, as an anthropologist, I would relate the embassy’s practices to the “local reality”. However, I felt that it was not because of all the obstacles mentioned that these embassies did not want me there. Rather, I believe that the embassies did not want to facilitate research that could be a potential threat to their work and their careers. Denying access to their work is also a way of maintaining their elite status. As Shore points out, “the degree of control a group has over the way it is represented is part of the measure of elite power” (2002: 11). Hence, elites do not want anthropologists to study them or if so, only on their terms and conditions (ibid.). They rejected my request, albeit implicitly, because they feared the consequences and wanted to remain in control. I believe they were afraid that research *of* their work, instead of research *for* their work, would mean that they would be observed, narrated, and possibly... judged.

Choice of extended case study

When I had nearly lost hope, I received an e-mail from the Head of Development (HoD) of the Dutch Embassy of country Z. He let me know that I was welcome and so I became an intern at his Embassy. Why did this Embassy want to take me in while other embassies did not? I believe that this Embassy hoped that by taking in students they could help create a positive image of country Z in The Netherlands. Despite the fact that country Z received approximately 30 million euro a year from official Dutch development assistance, which made it an average embassy budget wise, there was not much interest in country Z in The Netherlands. Furthermore, parliamentarians, academics and media only referred to country Z when negative events took place, such as regional conflicts, suppression of women, and accidents with tourists. Some people in the embassy saw interns as an opportunity to attract attention on the beauty of country Z and Dutch aid in this country. Besides that, I think another reason for having interns was because they brought new energy to embassy life. In a country where the expat community is relatively small and where life is so different from western ways of living, it is a pleasure to have young, optimistic people coming in from time to time.

Now that I knew I would go to country Z, I thought about refocusing my study from “ownership” to “partnership”. One of the reasons for the shift was that when Minister Van Ardenne⁵ took the seat in 2002, she had announced that partnership would be the leading principle for aid. Like many colleagues, I was puzzled how this new approach should be understood. Another reason to refocus was that one public-private partnership (PPP) caught my attention.

When I encountered difficulties in gaining access to an embassy, I decided to interview ministerial officials at the headquarters. Among other things, I was interested in how ministerial officials handle moral dilemmas in practice. Asking officials to tell me about situations in which the Minister wanted things that they believed were not possible or not the right thing to do, a number of them mentioned a public-private partnership with a Dutch pharmaceutical company. When I learned that they wanted to realize this PPP in country Z, I thought that it would be a good case to study.

During my first days in the Dutch Embassy in country Z, I found out that this PPP-project also stirred emotions among embassy staff. On my very first day in country Z, the health expert of the embassy told me how busy she had been the night before. With irritation in her voice, she explained that late at night she had received a call from The Hague to talk about the PPP with the Dutch pharmaceutical company Pharmaco. “They want impossible things in The Hague”, the health expert complained. When I indicated my interest in the PPP, the health expert said that this PPP is “a story of losers”. In her opinion, there was nothing to learn from this project. Instead, she told me, I should focus on another, successful PPP.

Because the health officer did not want me to study the PPP-project and I did not want to make enemies in the embassy, I decided to leave the PPP and the health sector at rest for a while. Instead, I assisted other embassy staff members in order to learn more about their work. In the meantime, the PPP kept coming up in staff meetings. The fact that this project was full of conflict and controversy convinced me that this case would offer an entrance into the study of practices, sense-making processes, and organization (Nuijten 1998: 25). I knew the health expert was opposed to my study of the PPP, but by then she had made it clear that she didn’t approve of any research of development aid practices. It would be impossible to comply with her wishes and carry out the research for which I had received a grant. Furthermore, others did not see my research as a problem. The ambassador and the Head of Development had approved of my stay at the embassy. Furthermore, the latter saw no problems in me studying the partnership with Pharmaco. He understood that I wanted to focus my research on an issue that was “hot”, something that people talked about. He reasoned that by the time my research was published, the project either existed, in which case no one would be interested in how it came about, or it would have been scratched, and then people would want to forget about it. Some might call him cynical, but for him it was just a pragmatic way of dealing with my research. So, after a few months I decided to study the archives of the PPP-project.

The more I learned about the project from the files, the more I understood why ministerial officials, including the embassy staff, called into question this PPP-project. To the embassy staff I did not hide that I also had my doubts about this project. Whereas at first the health expert did not want me to write about the PPP, she changed her mind later

on. Perhaps she understood my critical attitude towards the project as my support for her struggle over the PPP. Or maybe she acted out of frustration when she said to me that I could write down the whole story, “all of it”. She no longer tried to obstruct the research, but instead tried to influence it.

Collecting material and the importance of documents

For research purposes I talked to most people involved in the partnership policy texts and the PPP-project. Officials in the Ministry were willing to be interviewed by me, although some didn't want to be quoted without their approval. The consultants were hesitant to talk to me at first but when I explained who I was they openly talked about the PPP-project with me. Only the two representatives at Pharmaco's headquarters refused to meet me for an interview. The representative involved in the selection of country Z never replied to my e-mails. The one who was responsible for the PPP-project in Pharmaco's headquarters wrote that he was “not in a position to participate in the interview” (16 July 2008). He had discussed the matter internally and explained that he could not talk about the project because no decision had been taken yet about the continuation of this PPP-project since the company's merger. This did not come as a surprise because he had also told the company's representatives in country Z not to talk to me about the project. Therefore, the reconstruction of Pharmaco's interests in the project and its role in the trajectory of the PPP is based on an interview with a former senior executive of Pharmaco and documents in the ministry of Foreign Affairs.

When I started my fieldwork, I was struck by the many documents that circulated in the Ministry. From National Budgets to policy papers on a development theme, minutes of meetings, memoranda, files, rules and regulations, codes on integrity, organizational charts, the whole Ministry seemed to be captured in documents. Like Riles and other ethnographers, I too felt the “the pull of documents” that flows from the enormous amount of energy that goes into the production, collection and dissemination of such documents (Riles 2006: 8). I learned that documents play an important role for government officials in their work. While studying policy processes around “good governance” in the Ministry⁶ I met Daniel. Daniel would be sent to an African country to work on “good governance” in a few months time. He told me that he had no idea what to do there as there was no policy paper on good governance that was officially approved by the Minister. Therefore, so he continued, he had no clue of what he was supposed to do in his future position. Daniel's account pointed to the importance of policy documents for aid practitioners.

Anthropology has long seen documents as “the most despised of all ethnographic subjects” (Latour 1988: 54, cited in Riles 2006: 2) and thus this discipline has largely neglected to study documents. Yet, documents play a central role in policy processes. To master the world, officials of the Ministry need the world to come to them in the form of inscriptions, that is, “transformations through which an entity becomes materialized into a sign, an archive, a document, a piece of paper, a trace” (Latour 1999: 306). Officials need maps of the world, policy documents on themes, lists that rank countries on poverty, log frames to plan interventions, and formats to evaluate projects to make sense of the world surrounding them, to make plans and determine actions, and to justify and legitimize

actions. These inscriptions both articulate and stabilize particular interpretations and make other interpretations less possible (Mosse 2004). While ministers usually rule for four years until the next elections and government officials have to change jobs every three or four years, documents survive. In the basement of the Ministry one can find stacked to the ceiling rows of carefully numbered cardboard boxes all filled with documents such as policy papers, contracts, reports of projects, minutes of meetings, and memoranda from officials to the Minister. These documents are the institutional memory of the Ministry.

The documents that I quote in this thesis are official as well as unofficial documents. They also include e-mails between officials in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These e-mails were filed in the official archives of the PPP-project in the Dutch Embassy in country Z. The Ambassador and Head of Development granted me permission to do my research and study the PPP-project and so I gained access to the archives of the embassy. I used these e-mail exchanges to show how projects like the PPP are discussed and how practices of translation and purification are negotiated, resisted, and justified in the Ministry.

Ethnography and the secrecy of the state

People in the embassy knew I was a social scientist. When they asked, I told them that I had studied “rural development studies” from an anthropological and sociological point of view. Yet, most people probably did not know that ethnographic work aims to tell about the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of those studied. The health expert was one of the exceptions because of her educational background in anthropology. Because the health expert was overloaded with work, the Head of Development proposed that I assist her. She asked me to take notes during a meeting, but then withdrew this assignment when I did not agree not to use anything I heard or read for my research. She came up with another task, but dropped it a little later because it was “too sensitive” she said. Slowly I got the feeling that she did not want me to study and write about Dutch development aid in practice. This feeling increased when she told me that, if it were up to her, I would not be in the embassy at all. She accused me of writing a thesis about development aid only because I wanted to get a degree. I was the only one who would gain from this, she let me know. Was she worried that I would write a critical manuscript on development aid and the work of aid practitioners? Or was she, as she told me, afraid that my writings could harm the delicate relationship between the embassy and the government of country Z? Whatever reason, she made it clear to me that she wanted to protect her projects. She said to me, “I want to decide what you write”. At one point, the health expert reminded me that I had signed a statement of confidentiality.

When I arrived at the embassy, I was asked to sign a statement saying that I would not disclose any material that was a state secret. It was a standard procedure for all people staying in the embassy. For a moment, I hesitated about signing the statement wondering if it would have consequences for my research. Nevertheless I signed, reasoning that in all those years in the Ministry I had never seen any classified information. Nor did I believe that the information I gathered could be considered classified. Yet, I found out that people had different opinions on what should remain confidential. Some read the statement of confidentiality as applying only to information that was clearly marked as

“classified” by the color of the paper on which the information was written and the words “staatsgeheim” (state secret) on top. Others interpreted that this statement said that nothing I heard, saw, and read could be made public.

For these ministerial officials my statement of confidentiality was equal to the code of honor a ministerial official has to take when they accept a job in the government. This code of honor, or pledge, says he or she will be faithful to the Queen and the Constitution. Furthermore, the official-to-be needs to pledge that he or she will dutifully and conscientiously fulfill the tasks they are assigned. This pledge also says that the official has to keep quiet about all things that he or she takes notice of in confidence in his or her capacity as official or material recognized to be of confidential character. On top of that, the official-to-be pledges, “to behave as a good civil servant, that he will be meticulous, upright, and trustworthy and that he will do nothing that will harm *the status of the office*”. (Staatscourant 1998, nr. 92: 7, italics by author). According to this reading of the statement of confidentiality, ethnographic research would not be possible in the government.

The importance of the statement of confidentiality and the code of honor shows the importance people attach to the secrecy of the state. The secrecy of the state is the public secret of the state, “that which is generally known, but cannot be articulated” (Taussig 1999: 5). Official representations such as organizational charts, policy documents, and budget formats, articulate that the state is a functional, machinelike organization with a clear, singular goal. Many know that in practice state institutions do not work that way. But the actual practices of the state cannot be articulated because it is believed that this would undermine the existence of the state. Hence, ethnographic research that describes the practices of the state and its officials are seen as a threat to the work of the state.

I contend that an ethnography of development aid in the aid bureaucracy of a state institution can make a valuable contribution to the debates laid out in the beginning of this chapter. Ethnography explores what keeps the aid bureaucracy together and how it operates, despite the fact that it is not a homogeneous, coherent entity. It can explain what makes up development if it isn’t a well-defined, singular goal. And, as it does not understand the difference between the official representation and the actual practices as a failure of the aid bureaucracy, it can offer a way out of the much heard cynicism on aid and the overly optimistic praise and promises for development. Therefore, this thesis does not blindly accept the secrecy of the state. It does not reveal any material that is marked as classified in the ministry, but it is about practices in the aid bureaucracy that are considered by many aid practitioners as public secrets.

Confidentiality and writing ethnography

Whereas confidentiality and secrecy make up the ethical codes of government, ethnographic research has its own ethical codes as stated for example, in the Codes of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association or the Ethical Guidelines of the Association of Social Anthropologists. The main principle in any research ethics is that of the protection of research participants. The Association of Social Anthropologists states this as follows, “[a]nthropologists should endeavour to protect the physical, social and

psychological well-being of those whom they study and to respect their rights, interests, sensitivities and privacy” (<http://www.theasa.org/ethics/guidelines.htm>, June 2010). The AAA Code of Ethics states that, “[a]nthropological researchers must do everything in their power to ensure that their research does not harm the safety, dignity, or privacy of the people with whom they work, conduct research, or perform other professional activities” (Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association, Approved June 1998). As with government ethical codes, all anthropological ethical codes are also interpreted in different ways.

At various conferences and meetings where I presented some of this material the discussion always moved to the question of what information could be made public. Some people argued that I should disclose what country the project was to take place in so that one could evaluate the project. But also, they believed that the identities of these people did not need protection because they were public figures acting for the state. Because they were in a position of power they should be held accountable, they reasoned, who were mostly non-western researchers that studied state practices and worked closely with the poor. Others argued that I could not reveal any personal information about the people involved in this thesis.

It was also said that I should seek approval from the ministry of Foreign Affairs to publish my written findings. As this is not a common procedure in anthropological research I wondered why this would be needed. Apart from the problem of whom in the Ministry should decide on this; the current Minister, the former Minister Van Ardenne, the ministerial officials who were involved in the project, the legal department? Why wouldn't I have to ask any of the other persons that are in this thesis? What about officials of the Ministry of Public Health in country Z, representatives of the NGO in country Z that was involved in the project, people in the pharmaceutical industry in country Z, the consultants involved in the project, various representatives of Pharmaco? If the Ministry would be given the right to approve or disapprove of parts of this thesis, why wouldn't these people, after all they had also shared information with me and explained their points of view without knowing how it would end up in this thesis.

Therefore, except for the Dutch Ministers for Development Cooperation, I have given the people that I write about fictional names. Furthermore, to protect the embassy staff, I have chosen not to mention the name of the country where the PPP with Pharmaco was to be realized. Instead, I talk about country Z. As this is not an evaluation of the project, that is I do not assess if this project is valuable for country Z, I believe it is not necessary to reveal the country's real name. Furthermore, knowing the real name of country Z would also remove the focus from the processes of translation and purification through which aid practitioners give meaning to development aid. Only where necessary does this thesis provide information about the country. Likewise, the Dutch pharmaceutical company is referred to as Pharmaco. Using its real name would most likely generate discussions about its business practices and though these are important discussions, this thesis does not aim to engage in these debates.

What follows is a thesis that tries to present the people, places, practices and events in a sincere way. I believe this thesis shows the commitment of aid practitioners

to development aid. It explores their dreams of development and explains the practical dilemmas they have to deal with when doing development aid.

Outline of the thesis

In the subsequent chapters, I study how Dutch aid tried to realize development through partnership. The chapters follow the trajectory of partnership through time and space, exploring dreams of development, the translation from policy text into project design and the purification of aid.

Chapter two explores the policy shift from ownership to partnership in Dutch development aid. It reconstructs the life histories of Ministers Pronk, Herfkens and Van Ardenne to explain the dreams of development that the policies of ownership and partnership express. Following that, it takes a look at how they communicate their dreams and share them with others through policy texts. Then, the chapter explains why ministerial officials had so much difficulty making sense of Van Ardenne's development policy.

The third chapter looks into the assembling of a PPP-project. It describes how a ministerial official translates and transforms a project proposal designed to realize the dream of making contraceptives available and affordable worldwide to fit Minister Van Ardenne's dream of development. I explain why the person who designed that initial project feels that his project has been "hijacked" and how he purifies aid to realize his dream of development. Then, the chapter shows how in this project various actors with different dreams of development and aspirations are tied together.

In the fourth chapter, I explore the transportation of the PPP-project from The Hague to country Z focusing on the selection of country Z and of local partners for the project. It explains how aid practitioners in the ministerial headquarters and representatives of Pharmaco mobilize and assess support for the project in three different countries and select country Z because here there is more support for the project. Furthermore, I contend that the actors involved in the PPP do not implement the project in a local context. Instead, they contextualize the project thereby changing the project and the people, organizations, and things that are brought in as context. The chapter also shows that, in selecting a country to realize the PPP-project, the organization of the pharmaceutical market in that country is not considered during the selection process.

Chapter five follows how officials in the ministerial headquarters in The Hague and in the Dutch embassy in country Z discuss the PPP-project. These discussions centers on the questions whether or not this PPP is a *development project* and how it can be made into a development project. In other words, the ministerial officials discuss the translations of the PPP-project. They debate the way in which the project should be purified and elements of self-interest that need to be taken out. It is argued that the translation and purification of aid is shaped by different dreams of development, career aspirations, concerns for reputations, and ideas of what it means to be a good ministerial official.

The sixth and last chapter presents the main findings of this research and their theoretical implications. I return to the debates on development aid and reflect on these with the notions of dreams of development, translation and the purification of aid. I also suggest some ideas for future research.

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- ¹ All passages that were originally in Dutch have been translated to English by the author of this thesis.
 - ² Between 22 July 2002 and 27 May 2003 there was a State Secretary instead of a Minister for Development Cooperation. As of 14 October 2010 the Dutch government does not have a special Minister or State Secretary for development cooperation in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since then, this policy theme falls under the responsibility of a State Secretary who also responsible for European Affairs.
 - ³ The yearly budget for development aid of the Dutch government is around 0.8% of the GNP. This is what the government calls "official development assistance" or ODA. In the budget of the Dutch government one can find the Homogeneous Budget for International Cooperation (HGIS), which shows the areas of expenditure by different ministries on international cooperation each year. Within the HGIS a distinction is made between spending that meets the criteria for Official Development Assistance (ODA) and other, non-ODA, spending on international policy. In 2006, the ODA-budget for development aid was around €5.2 billion.
 - ⁴ This is an official requirement and people have been rejected after failing a French language test. Yet, others who do not speak French have passed this stage of the selection process and, after several more tests and interviews, were employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 - ⁵ Mrs. Van Ardenne was State Secretary for Development Cooperation from 22 July 2002 until 27 May 2003 and Minister for Development Cooperation from 27 May 2003 until 22 February 2007.
 - ⁶ This was during the period that I did research in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs for my Master thesis.



CHAPTER 2 | DREAMS OF DEVELOPMENT

Policy as expressive statement

Many writings explain that the policy of public-private partnerships has been a government strategy to deal with their declining financial resources and decreasing political support for social issues (Grimshaw, Vincent and Willmott 2002; Farnsworth 2006; Barnes and Brown 2011). In other words, these studies argue that partnership is a rational, instrumental policy of the public sector. Although these problems have provided a good environment for partnership to become central in public policy (Tomlinson 2005), I follow Yanow and claim that we should not assume that partnership policy is only literal and instrumentally rational. Instead, policies are statements that express and communicate meaning. As Yanow points out, “[m]eaning is not something that can be taken for granted- [...] the creation, communication, and understanding of meaning require attention” (1996: 111). In this chapter I study the dreams of development expressed by Dutch aid policy, how these dreams are communicated, and how ministerial officials read these policies.

From ownership to partnership

In 2002, the new minister for Development Cooperation, Agnes van Ardenne, states in one of her first speeches that development aid is about partnership. Some ministerial officials read partnership as a buzzword that made the minister politically visible but did not have any practical consequences for their work. Others believed they were expected to change the way they did development aid, but they saw it as a step back in time and had many questions and doubts about this policy. To understand why ministerial officials saw partnership either as a buzzword or as a step back in time we need to explore what Minister Van Ardenne said and how she said it.

In her speeches Minister Van Ardenne stressed that partnership came instead of ownership. With this statement she implicitly said that one could only understand the meaning of partnership in relation to ownership. Ownership was a central policy notion in Dutch development aid until 2002. In the early 1990s Minister Pronk introduced the policy notion of ownership and his successor Minister Herfkens continued using this notion. Because Minister Van Ardenne linked her policy of partnership to the policy of ownership of her predecessors I will begin by exploring what Ministers Pronk and Herfkens expressed by ownership and how they communicated this meaning. Then, I’ll explain what Minister Van Ardenne sought to express with partnership, and how she communicated this message in their policy texts.

Ministers and public policy

Anthropological studies of development largely neglect the role of ministers in the shaping of aid policy. One of the reasons is that scholars in this field of study fear to explain development aid as a product of a single (political) leader's will. However, since anthropology of development asks questions such as "How is development discourse ordered?" and "What are the effects?" these studies should pay more attention to the work of political leaders in development aid.

Newspapers and magazines publish many stories that portray politicians as self-interested individuals. For example, these stories tell us that politicians promote partnerships with private companies because they want to have well-paid jobs in private companies once they leave politics. Another popular theory says that politicians promote public-private partnerships so they can pass projects and assignments to private companies that in turn will support them or their party to remain in power. Such popular theories of political leaders as greedy persons, driven by personal gain can occasionally also be found in academic literature. These books that portray ministers and political leaders as narrowly self-interested offer a simplistic view on policy. They fail to notice that these ministers are also human beings with values, ideals, beliefs, feelings, and dreams.

Political psychologists study policy behavior extensively as an effect of the personal characteristics of political leaders (see Hermann 1980; Chabal 2003). For example, Hermann (1980) explains foreign policy behavior on the basis of political leaders' personal characteristics of which values, beliefs, and ideas are just a component. Along with other characteristics such as motives, decision style, and interpersonal style, Hermann focuses on categorizing and making typologies of individual political leaders and relates these typologies to different types of policy decisions. A potential danger in this kind of political psychological analysis is that the researcher draws up analytical schemes to define and categorize meaning in decisions and statements whereby much of the contextual richness is lost (Dyson 2009).

Biographies of political leaders, often written by journalists, have this richness and so-called "thick description". An example is Brandsma's biography of former Minister of Development Cooperation Jan Pronk, called *Jan Pronk, rebel met een missie* (1996, translated in English *Jan Pronk, rebel with a mission*). This biography describes Pronk's career in politics, his enthusiasm, his political ideas and ideals, his relation with other ministers in the government, and his position in the political party PvdA. Yet, this biography, like most biographies, focuses on the individual, but often does not explain how their personal beliefs, ideals, feelings, and dreams are shared with and become collective beliefs, ideals, feelings, and dreams.

Many analyses of political leaders study their policies through their decisions and viewpoints. They focus how political leaders shape the world and only take into account the thinking and actions of the leaders themselves and fail to look at how political leaders shape the thinking and actions of others. In other words, many studies do not explain how the personal or individual is connected to the shared and collective, and vice versa.

The creation and communication of dreams of development

Policy expresses feelings, beliefs, and values. But more than that, policy expresses dreams of an ideal world in which life is good, complete, pure, and whole. We create our own dreams through earlier events in which we experience emotions such as happiness, belonging, fear, or solitude and encounters with people that teach us about values and beliefs. These dreams are imaginary constructs that are expressed through symbolic language. Then, policy notions such as ownership and partnership are the symbolic language through which imaginary dreams of development are expressed.

To understand the dreams of development of Ministers Pronk, Herfkens, and Van Ardenne express with ownership and partnership respectively, I have studied the policy statements and the policy documents of the Ministers to see what issues were important for them. Then I connected these issues to events and encounters the Ministers themselves describe in interviews and that others bring up in articles about them. That is, I tried to see if the physical and emotional experiences they talked about had left traces in their policy documents. To cross check whether I had fully understood them, I interviewed former Ministers Jan Pronk (10 March 2008) and Agnes van Ardenne (30 September 2008) and put forward my findings. The conversations were crucial for my understanding of their dreams of development and my description of how the key events and encounters in their lives shaped their policies.

The dreams of development of the Ministers for Development Cooperation are based on their own sense of what is right, fair, and good, which is shaped by their individual experiences and encounters. Thus, their dreams of development are highly personal. Yet, for dreams to be realized they need to become collective dreams (Latour 1996). Ownership and partnership are expressive policy notions. Yet, what exactly Minister Van Ardenne wanted to express did not become clear to many ministerial officials. To share dreams with others, policy texts are an important artifact. The policy texts of Minister Van Ardenne were largely incomprehensible for most aid practitioners in the Dutch Ministry. I was also puzzled at first by these texts until I started to interview people close to the Minister, such as her speechwriter, a communications officer, and the special ambassador assigned to promote partnership. I became aware that the puzzlement of ministerial officials came from how Minister Van Ardenne shared her dream with others and how we, academics and aid practitioners, read policy texts.

We tend to see policy texts, whether speeches, documents, or letters, as texts that are logical, coherent, and articulate. We assume that the writer or speaker knows what he/she is talking about or what he/she wants to express. This is how we, academics, read policy texts. Most analyses of policy texts in development aid focus on the policy notions that are used (Alfini and Chambers 2007), the meaning that is given to these notions (Sachs 1992) and on how developing countries are represented in policy documents (Ferguson 1990). All these studies understand policy notions as technical notions. By that I mean notions that are used in development aid to address particular points of view on development aid. These viewpoints arose from debates among aid practitioners and a body of knowledge that is drawn upon in these debates. An example of such a technical notion is "good governance". If this word is used, most aid practitioners immediately link it to David Dollar, the end of the 1990s, the report *Assessing Aid. What Works, What Doesn't, and Why*,

the World Bank, and the idea that aid is only effective when there is good governance. That good governance then acquires different meanings is less important because these too are shared through policy texts and supported by large aid organizations. Thus, aid practitioners are aware of these different uses of the policy notions. It is this technical language that is part of what makes aid practitioners a professional elite (cf. Shore 2002). It sets them apart from those who do not speak this language, even if these are colleagues in their organization. Academics studying these policy texts look for what gives these texts authority and how they shape our reality. Then, they point out the use of technical notions, the construction of a body of knowledge and how statements are turned into facts.

We read policy texts in this way because most policy texts are organized as scientific texts. In his book, *Science in Action*, Latour (1987) describes how scientists construct facts through statements, articles, and books. This scientific style of communicating a dream of development can also be found in the policy texts of Minister Pronk and, to a lesser extent, in those of Minister Herfkens. They communicated their dreams for development in policy documents and letters, in an impersonal way, drawing on and justifying their dreams with facts. But Minister Van Ardenne did not communicate her dreams in such a scientific way. She shared her dream of partnership mostly through speeches, drawing on her identity as a Christian-Democrat. She presented her dream as a viewpoint beside other viewpoints, and justified her dream by drawing upon the support her political party received in the elections. Following on that, I analyze how the way in which dreams are communicated shape how aid practitioners read these texts and, subsequently, if and how personal dreams become collective dreams.

Below I explain the dreams of the three Ministers Pronk, Herfkens and Van Ardenne in chronological order. I present the Ministers' life history in the form of snapshots of meaning-making events and encounters that explain the Ministers' dreams of development. In this part, I also describe how they give meaning to ownership and/or partnership. This includes a description of how they understand the relation between the Netherlands and developing countries and between public and private organizations. Secondly, I describe how each Minister communicates his or her dream to a wider audience. I will look at the following aspects: what type of texts the Ministers use, where they place themselves vis-à-vis the texts, what kind of techniques they use, how they position their dreams in relation to reality. After I have discussed the dreams of all three Ministers and the way in which they communicate this dream, I will explore how ministerial officials "read" partnership and formed an opinion about their new boss.

JAN PRONK

A dream of ownership

In 1989, Jan Pronk became Minister for Development Cooperation. He was delighted with this position. It is where his heart is, he says in his first interview after his appointment. He adds, "[Development aid] is my profession, my life" (Onze Wereld 1989: 6). A few years later, he launched the policy term ownership into Dutch development aid. Ownership expressed Pronk's central ideas and ideals about the world and his dream for development.

Let us look at Pronk's life experiences before he became Minister to see what he means by ownership.

Jan Pronk was born in 1940, two months before the Germans occupied the Netherlands. It was the Second World War and, although Pronk was too young to know the difference between war and peace, he did physically experience what it meant to have nothing to eat. From that time he remembered not getting a slice of bread when he asked for it and queuing for the soup kitchen that last winter of the war (IKON 2007). He can also recall how men were taken from the queue by men in uniforms (ibid.). During this time between war and peace, Pronk emotionally experiences his first feeling of happiness (ibid.). It is June 1945, the Netherlands has just been liberated. He sits on the back of his father's bike, a first since his father had kept the bike in the shed for years to prevent the Germans from taking it. The sun shines through the trees and his parents are happy and laughing while they cycle to the village from which they were evacuated. It is then that Pronk feels what it means to be happy (ibid.). It is not so much his parents' stories about the economic crisis in the 1930s that stick to him, he says (ibid.), but his own early experience of war and peace. Pronk believes that this experience might have shaped how he looked at- and as Minister interfered in- war, violence, and conflict and how he strived for ideals such as freedom, independence, and human rights in other countries.

How Pronk understands his position in the world is largely shaped by his Protestant-Christian upbringing. Being born a stone's throw from The Hague in Scheveningen, Pronk was raised in Protestant-Christian tradition. Religion and the church are important in his life and work. He went to a Christian school and often visited the church, at least twice every Sunday. From his teachers at school and the priest in church, he heard how every person has the obligation to be a good person. The biblical story of the good Samaritan is a reference point for Pronk. He feels that, like the Samaritan, he should give help and sympathy to the people who need it. One could understandably characterize Jan Pronk as an idealist. This, though, would be missing his way of thinking. Pronk does not see himself as an idealist, rather as a realist and, even more, as a pessimist (IKON, 30 December 2007). He fears the domination of evil over good in the world. He imagines an End of Times as described in the Bible in the Book of Revelation. He sees the manifestation of this ending of the world in the climate change, wars, and violence in different places. Pronk believes that it is everyone's duty, and thus also his duty, to avert and postpone the domination of evil and the advent of the end. He says:

It is everyone's task to work a bit on that. Society is makeable. Not believing in the makeability of society is sinful, I would almost say. Because that means that you leave the make-ability, the making of, to someone else. To the dark forces and anonymous powers of the market. You should influence something; that is make-ability. That it is makeable, that you can have a modest success by steering others somewhat in the good direction. That is hope.

(IKON, 30 December 2007)

His pessimism inspires Pronk to work hard. His belief in the ability to create society gives him hope. To fight domination, slavery, and dependency, Pronk aims to create “a contra-society” (IKON, 30 December 2007), based on the principles of freedom, justice, and solidarity. And development aid gives him hope that it is possible to create a better world.

Pronk combines his religiously inspired ethics with what he calls “a rationally chosen philosophy of scientific socialism” (ibid.). He picks up the ideals of socialism during his study of economics in Rotterdam in the 1960s. Here, he meets the renowned economist Jan Tinbergen who will become his teacher and tutor (Pronk’s speech for Honorary Doctorate ISS, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 9 October 2002). Tinbergen and Pronk share the same background, both are born in the municipality of The Hague and have parents who are school teachers. Tinbergen was educated as a physicist, but had turned to economics because he believed it to be more useful for his work in the political party, the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (SDAP, Social-Democratic Labour Party). For Tinbergen, economics is a science that needs to be used to help create a more equal, just, and peaceful society, and this is what he tells his students. His lectures inspire Pronk as they fit well with his religious ethics. Pronk becomes Tinbergen’s assistant and he follows his professor by becoming a member of the political party Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA, Labour Party), a merger of three parties that includes the SDAP. Pronk combines his work in academia with his work in the political party until in 1973 when he becomes Minister for Development Cooperation.

These religiously inspired ethics and socialist ideals are important in Pronk’s work. Pronk understands the problem of development as a problem of unequal power relations in the world. In this line of thinking he sees development aid as the redistribution of power and wealth to give people a better life. In his three terms as Minister for Development Cooperation, from 1973 until 1977, from 1989 until 1994, and from 1994 until 1998, Pronk’s work has been focused on the changing of power relations.

In his first term as Minister in the 1970s, the time of decolonization, Minister Pronk encouraged ex-colonies to determine their own fate. At that time, there were several people, including Tinbergen, who were afraid that the newly independent states would be dominated by western countries. This group believed that ex-colonies should be granted the right to adopt the economic and social system that they considered most appropriate for their development. They should be able to choose what they produce and how they produce it. Moreover, they should also receive fair prices for their raw materials, have access to western markets, not have debts that bankrupt them, and be able to regulate and supervise transnational corporations’ activities in the interest of their national economies (interview with Pronk, 10 March 2008). Pronk calls this self-reliance and promoted and supported this self-reliance in international forums and organizations such as the United Nations and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Because Pronk believes that development is ultimately about people, he promotes the right of every person to basic needs, which include work, health care, access to education, and basic income.

In the 1990s, after twelve years working as a Parliamentarian in the opposition and carrying out tasks for the United Nations, Minister Pronk can continue to realize his dream for development. He changes his policy not because his understanding of development

has changed but, he says, the world has changed. In Africa, decolonization has not led to a better situation for the people in these newly independent states. These countries are now ruled by dictators and elites who profit from the poor rather than improve their situation. In Europe, people in communist countries have been calling for political change since the 1980s and finally, in 1989, the Berlin Wall is taken down. These events make Pronk promote participation, democracy and good governance in his second and third appointment as Minister for Development Cooperation. In practical terms, this means that Pronk now encourages the organization of elections, promotes human rights, focuses on peace building, and supports civil society and non-governmental organizations. In this way, Pronk also tries to reorder power inequalities within developing countries. This includes power relations between the ruling elite and the poor, not only between western countries and developing countries. In the 1970s, Pronk promotes self-reliance and basic human needs. In the 1990s, Pronk launches the term ownership in Dutch development aid. Ownership expresses "the possibility for people to determine their own fate and liberate themselves from poverty" (interview Pronk, 10 March 2008).

To increase the possibility for people to determine their own fate and liberate themselves from poverty, thus to promote ownership, Pronk prefers to give budget and macro support. This implies financially supporting the budget of a ministry, or the government as a whole, within a developing country with the idea that they can use the money in whatever way they think is best for development of the country and its people. To give budget or macro support, Pronk believes that trust is essential. That means the donor needs to trust the recipient government to act in the interest of its people. To find out whether this is the case, the donor and the recipient have a political dialogue. If this donor feels the government is not interested in their people, Pronk says, he does not provide budget or macro support, but rather finances development projects or programs to reach the people (interview Pronk, 10 March 2008). In the end, Pronk wants to give the people in developing countries a better life. However, he believes that, if possible, the donor should provide budget and macro support to increase the local people's ownership of the development process.

Another way that Pronk wants to increase ownership is by giving aid without conditions. Donors, including the Netherlands, often provided development aid in the form of goods or services from the donor country. Or sometimes these donors give money to a developing country under the condition that it should be spent on goods and services from the donor country. For example, the Netherlands would give money to a developing country under the condition that it should buy Dutch contraceptives or hire Dutch consultants. Thus, the developing countries were not free to get the products or expertise from whichever country they wanted. So, they could not buy the cheapest products or hire the best expertise. Nor could they use the money to buy goods or hire services in their own country and, in this way, support their national economies. In other words, aid was tied to goods and services of the donor country. Pronk believes that donors gave aid with such conditions to promote their own economies and at the cost of economies in developing countries. Such aid, he believes, continues and increases the existence of unequal power relations and disproportionate allocation of wealth between the west and developing countries. For that reason, Pronk wanted to provide aid without such

conditions. He used the term “untying aid” to express this dream of development. This term became a technical term that aid organizations used to purify aid and disqualify conditional aid.

With the untying of aid, Pronk wanted to diminish the domination of western organizations. For example, instead of financing Dutch academics to do research in developing countries, he set up a program in which people in developing countries could set their own research agenda and carry out this research in their countries (see IOB 2007). Pronk fears that many Dutch groups and organizations still tried to set the agenda and make decisions for people in developing countries. He believes that Dutch companies only care about making money and, in doing so, they continue to exploit people in developing countries by not giving them good prices for their raw materials, paying low salaries, and unfair competition. It is self-interest that motivates these groups, organizations, and companies to be involved in development aid, he says. And because of the self-interest of these western groups, people in developing countries cannot really develop. Self-interest, Pronk believes, is only acceptable if it is enlightened self-interest (Bijeen 1995). By that he means to say that it is in the interest of all, including the Dutch people, that there is not too much inequality in the world, that there is no war, and that the environment is preserved. Hence, according to Pronk, the only type of self-interests that is allowed in development aid is “enlightened self-interest”.

The real world speaks for itself

To communicate and share his dream with others, Pronk wrote numerous policy documents. Many ministers have text-writers but Pronk used to write large parts of his policy texts himself. He came up with the ideas in the text and guided the writing process. He says, “as a Minister, I did not use text-writers very often. I like to draft my own texts. Of course, I had help, but I think I helped my assistants more than they helped me” (DevIssues 2003: 6). The writing of policy documents was not only a political matter for him, but also an intellectual matter. He greatly enjoyed the mental exercise of trying to control complex issues such as development. Pronk has often been characterized as zealous and determined. He himself wanted rather to be known as an expert.

In his policy texts, Pronk shares his dream by using methods and techniques he learned from Jan Tinbergen. Tinbergen taught Pronk to start by setting political goals and, after he had defined these, he could turn them into collective dreams by creating scientific texts. Many practices used by scientists and described in Latour’s book *Science in Action* (1987) can also be found in how Pronk both explains and justifies his dream for development. Let us see what scientific methods and techniques Pronk uses to create such a text and what they do for the realization of his dream of development.

A technique that Pronk learned from Tinbergen is “to be systematic” (speech by Pronk, 9 October 2002). Being systematic implies that a policy statement logically builds on other statements. In the following passage where Pronk explains what development is, we can see how Pronk constructs a policy text in such a systematic way:

Development is change. That is one. Not all development is change, so development is change that leads to progress. That is the second point. The second dimension. Yes? Well three. What is progress? Two elements; Development is change that leads to progress for more and more people, thus for an increasingly larger part of the society concerned. Because development is a process, is something that describes a trajectory of a society. Yes, okay? For more and more. And then it is the people themselves who it concerns, that decide if it is progress or not.

(Interview with Jan Pronk, 10 March 2008)

Pronk starts with the simple statement “development is change”. If the reader accepts that broad statement that defines development, he adds a second statement that says development is change but only when that change leads to progress. This second statement makes the definition of development given in the first statement more specific and exact. If the reader still follows him, Pronk then makes his third statement saying that “development is change that leads to progress for an increasing group of people”. Yet another element is added to the previous statements to define development in more detail. If the reader agrees with this third statement, he can now bring in his final statement that it is this group of people that decides what progress is. This is his dream for development: a process of change that leads to progress for an increasing group of people as defined by the people themselves. In this text, Pronk carefully builds one statement onto another. Each statement adds to the complexity of the definition of development. And with each accepted statement, Pronk’s definition of development becomes more solid.

A statement is a sentence that someone has said at a specific time and in a specific place. It expresses a feeling, an idea, a thought, an opinion, a belief, or a perception. Hence, a statement is controversial. Political ideals and dreams of development are statements. With scientific methods and techniques, one can reduce the controversy of a statement. For example, Pronk states in his policy document, *A World of Difference* (1990), that development is about human development. With that he expresses that development means the improvement of the living conditions of people. To prove that people’s lives need to be improved he brings in numbers. He calculates the amount of people that need development in his eyes. Then he brings these people into the text of *A World of Difference*:

In the year 1990 more than a billion people live in absolute poverty, almost the double that amount do not have access to safe drinking water, 900 million people cannot read nor write, 800 million go hungry daily, one in three children under the age of five is malnourished, 14 million children under the age of five die every year.

(A World of Difference, 1990)

In the text we see the quantity of people who need development. If one questions Pronk's statement that development is human development, one says to all these people, at least two billion people, that they do not need safe drinking water. It is relatively easy to challenge one person, Pronk in this case, but is more difficult to challenge two billion people.

Numbers are produced through calculation. Calculation is an important method for Pronk to realize his dream for development. Development aid, which is usually considered an expression of the feeling of solidarity, becomes less of a feeling and more of a fact with calculation. We can see how this works when we look at the percentage of the GDP 0.8% that Pronk wanted to spend on development aid. This number was based on econometric calculations in the 1960s. It had been worked out then that this amount was needed to realize development. In the following passage Pronk explains how scientific calculations were used to support and realize political goals:

The size of aid 1% or 0,7% is not only determined on the basis of the thought "you have to do something", "solidarity" or whatever. For the first calculations of what was needed for development aid in the world you have to go back to [...] the 1950s. That led to an amount, depending on the investment that you need to realize your goals. If you want to calculate that amount as the percentage of income of all rich countries, it was around 1% per year. [...] That [number] wasn't just plucked out of the air, a political target.

(Interview with Pronk, 10 March 2008)

From this passage, we can read that the calculations turn a subjective feeling into an objective fact. Because Tinbergen and a number of his respectable colleagues had carefully calculated the exact amount of money that was needed for development, they could then determine the percentage of the national budget that should be spent on development aid. In the 1970s, the OECD-countries agreed to make an effort to spend 0.7% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on development aid. The calculations made the percentage of GDP that each country had to spend on development aid less flexible. As Pronk explains about the calculation in the interview, that turned the discussion on the size of development aid in the 1960s and 1970s into something that was a lot less free-floating. Calculation takes away controversy. To call into question the percentage means to deconstruct the complicated and complex mathematics and statistical methods that are used to determine it. Yet, this is not that easy as it requires knowledge of the methods used. To reject the percentage, one can also call into question the political ideals and targets that were the basis for the calculations. However, this means going against the large group of scientists, politicians, and aid workers who have accepted the percentage as a fact. In other words, the calculations have turned development aid from a "soft" feeling of solidarity to a hard, difficult to resist fact (cf. Latour 1987).

Pronk used systematic reasoning and scientific calculation to spread his dream of development. He produced many policy documents in which he elaborated on

development and development aid, with one document even containing 384 pages. Some of these documents communicated his dreams for development as a whole, others concerned a specific region or country or a theme, such as women and development. By writing new documents, Pronk could repeat and specify his earlier statements or amend them. He claimed that this was needed because the world changed and knowledge on development evolved. Because such documents are cheap and quick to reproduce in large quantities, they are an easy way to share one's dream.

EVELINE HERFKENS

Pragmatism over Dreams

In 1998 Eveline Herfkens succeeds Jan Pronk as Minister for Development Cooperation. Pronk had produced an authoritative script for development in his policy documents. Herfkens explains in an interview that whereas her predecessor thinks about the long-term with his visions and blueprints for the far future, she acts on the short-term and focuses more "on how the real world can be moved half a centimeter forward" (Bijeen 1999: 48). Herfkens sees herself as a pragmatist, as someone who solves the problem of development in a practical way, rather than theorizing about development. She also dreams of development, but she does not have an all-encompassing dream for development. Herfkens does not talk much about political ideals and the meaning of life. As she says, "[we] have wasted the past decennia with absolutely unproductive debates. It dealt with North and South, East and West. About who was to blame, what development was and what exactly the goals were." (FEM 2001: 23). Instead, Herfkens' aid policy is shaped by her previous work experiences.

How did Herfkens become Minister for Development Cooperation? Talking about influential experiences, Herfkens says that she had lived in "The Third World" for a couple of years during her early childhood. Her father worked for Shell as engineer and was posted in Venezuela for a while (FEM 2001). They lived in a Shell compound and she remembers that the few times she left the compound made a huge impression on her. She presumes that, because of this experience of living in Venezuela, she has a more modest view on the influence an outsider can have on processes in developing countries.

Eveline Herfkens was born in 1952 to a Catholic family that is also politically left. Her father, she says, was one of the few people who opposed Shell's presence in South-Africa (GroenLinks Magazine 1999). Her grandfather and father were members of the political parties SDAP and PvdA and listened to the radio station VARA (Bijeen 1999: 47). This was against the will of the Dutch Catholic Church, which did not want its members to listen to this radio station that was originally Protestant and strongly dissuaded or even forbade people to engage in leftist politics. Hence, her grandfather was expelled from the Catholic Church and, later, her father stepped out (ibid.). In the early 1970s, Herfkens follows. In 1975, Herfkens joins the PvdA following in her father and grandfather's footsteps. She says, "I have shifted my energy from the ecclesiastical work to the party-political work. That transition was smooth. Only, in politics you'd use more the word 'solidarity' and in

the churches it was called 'righteousness'. For the rest it is exactly the same, isn't it?" (Bijeen 1999: 47). Herfkens' work is not inspired much by religious ethics. But in her first job, one can see traces of the ideals from the left of the PvdA.

In 1976, Herfkens starts her career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With her law studies from the oldest university of the Netherlands and her membership to one of the most conservative female student associations in Leiden, Herfkens fits in among the ministerial diplomats. Yet, through the PvdA she engages in leftist politics and supports leftist groups in Latin America. In the Ministry, she works in the department that deals with multilateral financial institutions, such as the World Bank. After five years working for the Ministry, she exchanges the Ministry for Parliament. In 1990, Herfkens is appointed by the Ministry as representative of the Netherlands and a number of other countries at the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank. She moves from the Netherlands to Washington where she will stay for six years to work for the Bank. Her World Bank experience sticks to her. She has called it the best years of her life (Opzij 1998: 36). The World Bank aid policy has a great influence on Herfkens' work as Minister. After six years at the World Bank the Ministry places Herfkens in the United Nations for one-and-a-half years. But, contrary to her World Bank experience, these were not the happiest years of her life (ibid.). Then, in 1998, she becomes Minister for Development Cooperation.

Herfkens succeeds her fellow PvdA-party member Pronk as Minister for Development Cooperation. She follows her predecessor by stating that ownership is a central principle in Dutch development aid. Yet, to assume that Herfkens' policy expresses the same ideals as that of Pronk would be a mistake. The work of ministers in shaping and influencing policies cannot be solely explained in terms of organized politics. Political leaders are not merely representatives of the political party to which they belong. They do not only develop policies that express the values of their political party. This becomes clear if we look at how Minister Pronk and Minister Herfkens give meaning to ownership. Though they belong to the same political party, Pronk connects ownership to participation of people in developing countries and increasing democracy. Herfkens, meanwhile, connects ownership to the improvement of state institutions and better financial management in developing countries (Gastel and Nuijten 2005). So, we have to look beyond party politics to understand what policies and policy terms express.

Herfkens increases financial support to the state budgets of developing countries. That is, she increased the budget and macro support. Pronk had wanted to increase this budget or macro-support in the 1990s, but the Dutch Parliament wanted development aid to be accountable. The Audit Commission required that with the application of budget support, the same Dutch accounting criteria should be applied to the recipient developing country, whether it be India, Vietnam, or Bolivia. This meant that the Netherlands had to assess the recipient countries and the recipient country had to accept the Dutch criteria. Pronk comments, "Was that ownership? And what does that have to do with empowerment, with self-reliance? Again, you impose our criteria on them" (interview Pronk, March 2008). Budget and macro support had been Pronk's dream, but he saw the way it would work out in practice as a continuation of existing power relations and the dominance of the West over developing countries. For that reason, he did not increase budget and macro-support.

But Herfkens does. She writes to Parliament that when The Netherlands gives a country budget support ownership will be a leading principle (Tweede Kamer 1999, 26433. nr 1, 26 February). She writes that ownership “denotes the ‘commitment’ and the ‘ability to speak’, or ‘zeggenschap’, of those involved of the recipient country. Without that ‘ownership’ aid does not have a sustainable effect” (ibid.). The increased budget and macro-support entails less development aid in the form of projects.

Herfkens does not want ministerial officials to start their own projects (Bijeen 1999: 51). With this policy statement, she takes a different stance than her predecessor Pronk. He believes that projects are a good way to start something, a pilot, and see if it is replicable to a larger scale. It is also a way to get closer to the people, which he feels is important especially when budget or macro support is not possible. Herfkens, on the other hand, believes that projects only have marginal results because they do not tackle the problem at large. For example, one can set up a project that educates midwives in a particular province or region, but this is something that the government of the developing country should do and this project does not help the government to be able to do this in the future. Instead of carrying out such “stand-alone” or “isolated” project, Herfkens wants her Ministry to finance the World Bank and influence its policy with the Ministry's expertise. The Bank, she says in an interview (Bijeen 1999), has been the most powerful institution in the field of development aid for years. In the 1970s, Herfkens opposed the World Bank and its work. But after the six years in Washington, she now believes that it is better to work with the Bank and try to influence its work.

Herfkens, like her predecessor Pronk, wants untied aid. “I am fundamentally, firmly opposed to tied aid”, says Herfkens in a national newspaper for business and financial matters (Het Financieele Dagblad, 8 May 2000). She also points out in this newspaper that “there have been enough books written to fill libraries, that explain that you need to get rid of tied aid to increase the quality of development aid” (Het Financieele Dagblad, 19 Augustus 1999). She does not want donors to be spending money on western consultants, training and research, known as “technical assistance” in the technical language of development aid. She reasons that, “[t]he presence of so many experts, in Africa in particular, has undermined the confidence of countries in their own abilities. Technical assistance has not done enough to give poor countries the ability to stand on their own two feet” (Eveline Herfkens, Memisa's 75th anniversary congress in Rotterdam, 2000, cited in Action Aid 2005: 24). Hence, she stops financing Dutch technical assistance, which leads to much criticism from developments experts in the Netherlands.

Communicating continuation

Herfkens does not produce many or very detailed policy texts. Rather than philosophizing about development aid in “sweeping papers”, Herfkens wants to do development aid (interview deputy Director-General 2001). The policy texts that see the light during her term are short and concise. Herfkens informs the Parliament with policy letters of few pages, explains and promotes her policies to the general public with a small number of easy to understand policy documents, and provides people working in development with one or two-page fact sheets that give information and facts on different topics.

In her policy texts Herfkens conveys the idea that she continues Pronks' policy. She uses the same policy terms, including ownership, good governance, and untied aid. Furthermore, she explicitly says that she continues with his policy. For example, in an interview she says, "I do not only support the policy of Jan Pronk, I have also vigorously persisted his policy [...] The ideas and initiatives that Jan has introduced, I will carry out concretely in policy" (GroenLinks Magazine 1999: 13). With this message, she gives the reader the impression that she wants to realize the same dream as Pronk. In another interview Herfkens notes that there is a difference between her and Pronk, but the only difference there is between them, she says, is that Pronk is the long-term thinker, while she herself is as a realist who acts in the short-term. In her policy letters to Parliament, Herfkens conveys the same message: that her policy decisions build on the work of her predecessor and are a continuation of Pronk's work. The following passage from one of Herfkens' first letters shows how she communicates this:

A number of policy documents on the Dutch foreign and development policy have seen the light under the previous Cabinet. The document "Herijking" concerned the total foreign policy and had [...] important consequences, also for the organization of the department and embassies. The document "Hulp in Uitvoering" provided an important start to improvement of policy and administration of the Dutch aid efforts. The documents mentioned here form a frame of reference for further improvement of the execution of development cooperation in the forthcoming year.

(Tweede Kamer 1998, 26 200 V nr 8, 11 November)

In this passage we see how Herfkens explains that she does not change development aid but only continues what has been done by the previous Cabinet. She says that her policy builds on the policies elaborated in the two policy documents "Herijking", of 1995, and "Hulp in uitvoering" that saw the light under Minister Pronk. Using the words "further improvement", Herfkens implicitly conveys that she and Pronk have the same dream of development.

AGNES VAN ARDENNE

The dream of partnership

Whereas Minister Herfkens stresses that she continues the work of her predecessor Pronk, Minister Van Ardenne communicates that she breaks with her predecessors Pronk and Herfkens. In her first public appearances, she states that, "instead of ownership, development cooperation will now be about partnership". What dream of development does Minister Van Ardenne want to express with partnership? Let us explore the events and experiences that shaped Agnes Van Ardenne's dream for development.

Agnes van Ardenne is born in 1950 in Maasland, in a region in the Netherlands known for its agribusiness. Her parents are florists who run a nursery. With their hard work

they made a decent living for the family. Growing up in the family business shapes Van Ardenne's understanding of the work of private companies. In Van Ardenne's youth, not only her parents' flower business plays an important role but also Catholicism. Van Ardenne recounts:

Belief was something naturally present in our daily life. During Lent, we were already sitting in Church at seven in the morning. Then off to school. Every Friday we went to Church and twice on Sunday, in the morning the Holy Mass and in the evening The Glory. At home we prayed the Rosary, everyone participated in processions. Everyone played a role, had a place in Catholic society. If I walked to school, a 45 minute walk, there was always an adult that asked on the way; whose are you? You were part of a group, you belonged. Now, if an adult asks something to a child at all, it is at most; what is your name?

(Volzin 2005: 8)

Van Ardenne remembers that in those days, the 1950s, Dutch society was organized in segregated communities based on life philosophies such as Roman Catholicism, Protestantism (different denominations), socialists, and liberals. Each group lived in its own pillar, meaning that they had their own political parties, newspapers, and sports clubs. Van Ardenne remembers that it created a sense of belonging that made her feel comfortable and happy. At the same time, she also felt the boundaries of religion and wanted to break through them. She wanted to connect with other people.

Van Ardenne still wants to connect with other people and create a sense of belonging that, she believes, is missing in our present-day globalized world. She says that our world hankers for justice (*gerechtigheid*) and compassion (*naastenliefde*) (Volzin 2005). Besides that, she believes that by nature people are related and that they need each other (Guest lecture, Minister Agnes van Ardenne, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 16 October 2003). Furthermore, she stresses that society is not only made up of people but also *because of people*. It is by definition marked by "mutual connectedness" and "commitment", according to her. This relational image of human life is a guiding point for Van Ardenne, and can be traced in how she gives meaning to development aid.

Van Ardenne grows up with stories from her cousins and aunts who work in Catholic missions in Brazil and in Congo. After secondary school Van Ardenne follows an education for pharmacist's assistant and starts to work in a pharmacy. During that period she joins the Christian-Democrats (CDA). It is not her family members who represent the CDA in local politics, but a speech by the CDA-politician Willem Aantjes from which she understands that religious ideas can be combined with the harsh profession of doing politics, that inspires her to go into politics (Volzin 2005). She becomes a member of the CDA in 1978 and ten years later, in 1988, she is elected as member of the local council of her hometown, Vlaardingen. She makes a career in local politics and, in 1991, rises to the position of alderman in the local government. All activities related to economic affairs, traffic, harbors and markets in the municipality of Vlaardingen fall under her responsibility. But Van Ardenne's ambitions do not stop here. In 1988, she joins the board

of the CDA-organization. Van Ardenne is director of the women's union of the Christian-Democrats between 1988 and 1992. Besides that, she acts as vice-president of the Roman-Catholic development organization, Cebemo. In 1994, she enters Parliament as a member of the Christian-Democrats, for whom she is the spokeswoman on the dossiers of defense, agriculture and development cooperation.

In 1999 Member of Parliament Van Ardenne uses the term partnership for the first time to tell the Dutch government how the Netherlands should relate to developing countries. She requests that the Dutch government not give *carte blanche* to developing countries, but to have an open talk with these countries to determine the selection of the sectors that will receive aid, the goals of development aid, the population that will be targeted, and the system of accounting, monitoring and measuring results. Van Ardenne believes that an open dialogue between donor and recipient can help bring the Netherlands and developing countries closer together and create mutual interest in and responsibility for development. She expresses this ideal in another Parliamentary debate when she states that, in order to decide which countries to give aid to, the Dutch government should make a selection on the basis of "Dutch ties, relationships, history, interests and concerns" (Tweede Kamer 1999, 26 433, nr 14). Through making the relationship between the Netherlands and developing countries more personal by putting across the interests and concerns of both Van Ardenne wants to increase understanding for each other's lives and create a common interest.

After 1999, Van Ardenne uses partnership more frequently in Parliament. Not only does she use the term to express her dream for development, she also uses it to establish her position *vis-à-vis* the ruling parties. Van Ardenne criticizes Herfkens' policy decisions. She opposes Herfkens' policy of ownership with her dream of partnership. When Van Ardenne is taken off the portfolio of development cooperation because the debates between her and Minister Herfkens have become too fierce, the CDA continues to use partnership to express the party's political ideas for development aid. In 2002, when the Christian-Democrats come to power and Van Ardenne takes seat as Minister for Development Cooperation, partnership becomes official development aid policy.

Minister Van Ardenne launches partnership in Dutch development aid, stating that "for me, partnership is the central attitude, way of working, and means in the development cooperation policy for the next period" (2003, *Chapeautekst voor notaoverleg aan elkaar verplicht*, 17 November 2003). With this statement, Van Ardenne points out that she uses partnership for three different things in development aid: for a way of thinking, a way of acting, and as an instrument for aid. Let me explain partnership as attitude, way of working, and means more in detail.

With partnership as "an attitude", Van Ardenne expresses her idea that people should seek each other out, to create relations, to be connected to other persons. She believes that will make the world a better place to live in. This stems from her belief that, by nature, everyone is related and that people cannot live without each other. Hence, development aid should start from partnership as attitude.

Partnership also expresses how Van Ardenne wants the ministerial officials to do their work. When she had just started as Minister, Van Ardenne was surprised to find the ministerial officials so absorbed in the Ministry's policy. She noticed that they did

not bother about how Parliament works and what people in Parliament think about development aid. Ministerial officials, Van Ardenne says, thought “we have developed a policy here and yes, it is a matter of selling” (interview with van Ardenne, 30 September 2008). She did not like this attitude. Moreover, Van Ardenne believes it is fundamentally wrong. As she explains:

Development cooperation is extremely complex [...] it has to do with power and with interests. And the best way pull people in is, yes, to bend with it. To be flexible. And not to say, “that is it” and “I have a majority, so then we’ll get there”. And I don’t think that is intrinsically right. Because it is so complex. And it concerns everyone.

(Interview with Van Ardenne, 30 September 2008)

In this passage Van Ardenne says that she feels that ministerial officials should not be selling the ministry’s policies to Parliament and others. Rather, they should be developing policy in cooperation with Parliament and others. Aid policy is not the Ministry’s policy, she says: it is everyone’s policy. By that she means to say that as all Dutch people and organizations pay tax, it is their policy too. Van Ardenne feels that development aid lost support because ministerial officials were busy selling aid policy to others rather than including them. That is why she feels partnership is important and states that partnership is a “way of working”.

Besides partnership as a central attitude and partnership as a way of working, Van Ardenne also says that partnership is a means to realize development. By that Van Ardenne expresses that development is not only a problem to be solved by the government. Underdevelopment is everyone’s problem, she thinks. And for that reason, it needs to receive attention from and tackled by all people and groups in society. Van Ardenne believes that if we do not see development as something we have to realize together, development will never be realized. In the following passage she explains this:

Development aid runs on this notion of solidarity [...] Development aid has become too much of a toy of the government. If we do not watch out, society loses its commitment. That 0.8% is simply deducted from your salary. You do not need to do anything for that. Lately we have become all too well aware of the limits of the makeability of society. More government or more market doesn’t make more society. Government intervention doesn’t automatically lead to more security or better education. Absolutely not. For that a civil society is needed. In the past years, development processes have also grown too much and too one-sided to be focused on the state. [...] We have to stimulate civilians and companies to take responsibility for a better world. That is also a role of the government.

(Minister Agnes van Ardenne, Guest lecture Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 16 October 2003)

In the statement above, Van Ardenne says that development aid has become too much a toy of the government. Because people have not been involved in aid, she believes, development aid will lose commitment from people in society. To prevent this, Van Ardenne believes that Dutch society should be included in development aid. She expresses this ideal through partnership as a means. It is a means of providing aid, a joint effort between the Dutch government and Dutch people, groups and organizations to realize development. She also calls this form of cooperation “public-private partnerships”. Then, partnership, as a form of cooperation, is a means to avoid the decreasing support of Dutch society for development aid.

With partnership, Van Ardenne expresses an understanding of the world that is largely shaped by her Catholic background and her experience of growing up in the family business. Her life history is different from that of her predecessors, Pronk and Herfkens. And so is her dream of development. This is most evident in the way the three Ministers relate to the Dutch private sector. Pronk and Herfkens tried to keep Dutch private companies apart from aid; that is, they untied aid. Yet, Van Ardenne believes that these companies should be involved in aid. But the difference can also be seen in how the three Ministers relate to developing countries and to Parliament. Hence, whereas ownership tried to remove Dutch organizations and private companies from aid, partnership aims to increase the role of these organizations and companies in aid.

A Christian-Democratic view on the world

Van Ardenne uses partnership as a metaphor to express and communicate different ideas that are all based on her world image. Unlike Pronk and Herfkens, Minister Van Ardenne shares her dreams with others mainly through speeches and interviews. These types of texts help her to reach a wide audience and instigate groups of people who are not active in development aid to help create a better world.

Van Ardenne believes that she can change people’s thinking and behavior with her speeches. Therefore, she delivers numerous speeches to a wide range of audiences including students, businessmen, and private companies. As she wants people to feel responsible for and be involved in development aid, she uses different words and lines of reasoning in front of different audiences. When she talks to students, she talks about “new forms of solidarity”, “investing in each other”, and “building sustainable relations” to “alleviate poverty”, “restore human dignity”, and “search for peace and justice”. In her speeches for businessmen, she says that we must work on development “not only because of solidarity with the poor but because it is in our own interests”. She states:

Globalization has made the challenges facing poor and insecure countries in Africa our challenges, too. Less poverty means more buying power. And that means bigger markets. But to achieve that, countries have to be more stable and the problem of weak states has to be overcome. That will reduce the scope for terrorism and international crime. Economic and political migration will decline. And all this will benefit an open society and an open economy like that of the Netherlands.

(Speech Minister Agnes van Ardenne, 3 November 2003)

Van Ardenne wants private companies to feel responsible for creating a better world. She believes that it can go together with making profit, and she even uses this to get them involved in development aid. To reinforce her words, she often makes money available for setting up public-private partnerships with companies or to support the organizations that she visits.

In her first years as Minister, Van Ardenne shares and explains her policy for development by contrasting this policy to that of her predecessors Pronk and Herfkens. In one of her first interviews, Minister Van Ardenne talks about her standpoints for the upcoming UN-meeting on sustainable development in Johannesburg. She says that the Americans have to meet their obligations and lend the developing countries a hand. The interviewer of a Dutch national newspaper concludes from the Minister's words that, "Van Ardenne resembles her predecessor Herfkens" (Trouw, 20 August 2002). Upon this, Van Ardenne refutes this statement and distances herself from her predecessor:

There is an intrinsic difference in view, in our approaches to development. [...] That is also the difference between social-democracy and Christian-democracy. Social-democracy is steering and pulling responsibility of the civil society towards itself. We hand over responsibility. That is a fundamental difference. Therefore I also think that the private sector should play an important role.

(Trouw, 20 August 2002)

What is interesting in this passage, and what is typical of how Minister Van Ardenne communicates her policy, is that she stresses the difference in policy as a political-party difference. Her policy, she says, is different because she is from another political party. Thus, she connects her policy to her Christian-Democratic identity. She does this not only in interviews with the press or speeches for the general public, but also in speeches for her own ministerial officials. In a speech for the yearly ambassadors' meeting in The Hague, a meeting for all Dutch ambassadors posted abroad, Van Ardenne states the following:

As a Christian-Democrat, I think that civil society should be central in development policy. Development cooperation: not with governments alone. But also, development cooperation: not with ODA [Official Development Assistance] alone. Also investments of companies and individuals and the corresponding knowledge and capital transfer are necessary and important.

(Van Ardenne, Speech held on the Yearly Ambassadors meeting on 21 January 2003)

In this speech, Van Ardenne positions herself as a Christian-Democratic minister. She tells the ambassadors, the senior civil servants of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that her policy decisions are based on Christian-Democratic beliefs. She implicitly tells these ambassadors that they will need to support and promote Christian-Democratic ideals for the next governmental term. Van Ardenne explicitly links her identity with her policy because she wants people to understand her political choices and ideals.

For Van Ardenne, partnership expresses her Catholic understanding of human life and dream for development. Yet, her policy document, “Mutual Interest, Mutual Responsibilities” states that partnership is not new. Partnership, the document points out, was already used in the 1990s by the World Bank. Also other donors increasingly work with partnership, it says. Let us look at the passage:

Partnership is not a new term within development cooperation. In the early 1990s, the World Bank signed Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to privatize government services. At UN-institutions, the interaction with the private sector grew exponentially in the past five years. Other donors, among which DFID, GTZ, the Swiss SDC and USAID, have preceded [the ministry] several years ago in working with partnerships.

(Partnerschap binnen BZ- plan voor de centrale regie, internal document).

From this passage that links Dutch partnership policy to policies of other donors, partnership only means one thing, namely partnerships with the private sector. This text thus says that public-private partnerships are an instrument used internationally to achieve development. Here, we see yet another way in which the Minister communicates partnership.

Van Ardenne communicates her ideals and ideas for development aid in many different ways. Her way of sharing her dreams differs from her predecessor in the style of reasoning and use of words. Pronk and Herfkens used policy documents and policy letters to explain their policy in a detached way. They used technical language and a scientific style of writing and reasoning, which made their policy the outcome of a rational, logical process. Yet, Van Ardenne primarily uses speeches and interviews and shares her policy for development aid with others by linking it to her identity, thus clearly communicating her policy as a personal and political choice.

“A buzzword” and “a hodgepodge”: readings of partnership

Van Ardenne uses partnership as a metaphor for different ideas that are all based on a single, consistent worldview and dream of development. For her the different ideas she expresses with partnership make up a consistent whole. Yet, her ministerial officials do not see her policy ideas as a consistent whole. They read her texts trying to make sense of what partnership means.

Van Ardenne’s notion of partnership expressed a Catholic understanding of human life. Yet, most ministerial officials are not familiar with Catholic or Christian-Democratic thinking. In the Ministry, few people are members of or vote for the CDA, the Christian-Democrats, as an internet election poll held at that time showed. Van Ardenne was surrounded by ministerial officials who did not read Catholic and Christian-Democratic ideas and ideals in partnership. Ministerial officials that were close to the Minister needed to know what message they had to communicate. To find out what partnership meant, they had a number of meetings. A ministerial official says:

Nobody knew exactly what it meant, neither did she herself. There have been endless discussions between ministerial officials to give a description [of partnership], to give a definition. It was then said, "we are going to use the word, but we don't know what it means yet."

(Interview ministerial official, 19 December 2005)

As this passage shows, ministerial officials had trouble defining partnership. They did not understand what the minister meant with partnership and Minister Van Ardenne could not make clear what she wanted to express with the term. One of the few people who understood Van Ardenne's dream of development was Karen. Karen had work experience in communication in other Catholic non-governmental organizations. Officials close to Minister Van Ardenne who had difficulty understanding her, asked Karen to help clarify the meaning of partnership inside the Ministry. She explained to them what Van Ardenne had meant by partnership. Furthermore, she wrote a plan on how to communicate the Minister's policy to her officials. The plan included working visits of the Minister to the departments and lunch meetings in which the Minister and some guests would discuss a topic and ministerial officials could ask questions.

Despite the efforts, ministerial officials still read partnership as another "buzzword". They understood that the Minister had wanted to do something different than her predecessors. As another official phrased it, "each self-respecting minister throws a large part of the terms and processes that have been established by the predecessor overboard" (interview ministerial official, 17 January 2006). So, officials also read partnership as political rhetoric. That is, they understood that as a politician Van Ardenne had to come up with her own spearheads and notions and, hence, had come up with partnership.

Officials also understood that Van Ardenne wanted to bring Dutch interests back into development aid as this was what her political party wanted. Yet, they did not read Van Ardenne's beliefs about the nature of human life and her dream of development in partnership. Partnership, one official explains, was initially an alternative for ownership. As this official read it, partnership gained another connotation because officials had to define partnership in policy texts. Then, it became the idea that "you sit around the table with various partners to see what you can do jointly to steer development processes". For many officials this idea was nothing new. As this official phrased it:

Now what is partnership then, that is everyone that works together is each other's partner, isn't it? So what does it add? There was cooperation, there still is cooperation, so I absolutely do not see the newness of it. And I don't know....at a certain moment a definition has been made up, but that is just something that has been made up at the drawing table, that doesn't have any consequences for practice.

(Interview ministerial official, 19 December, 2005)

In this statement, the ministerial official expressed what many officials thought, namely that partnership was “just another label”, “a buzzword”, and “something that has been made up at the drawing table that does not have any consequences for practice”. Yet, for Van Ardenne partnership “is no buzzword” and “not old wine in new bottles” (Internationale Spectator 2004, 396-397), but a different way of working that includes more openness and, primarily, also listening to others. As Van Ardenne says about the Ministry, “we have to learn to speak another language, literally” (ibid.).

Ministerial officials speak in the technical language commonly used in development aid. They are educated and trained to think and speak in this language. They know the debates that the technical term hides, the key documents that describe the term, the people and organizations that came up with the term. Partnership had been such a technical term in the 1960s and officials wondered whether Van Ardenne’s partnership was really something new. Also, Van Ardenne had stated that development policy was now about partnership instead of ownership. Because she related the two terms by opposing them, it looked like partnership was also a technical term such as ownership.

For Van Ardenne however, partnership is not a technical term, but rather an everyday metaphor to express her ideals and ideas. Ministerial officials who had worked with the two ministers that used technical language for the previous twelve years did not understand the language of the new Minister. And vice versa, the Minister did not understand the technical language of the officials. Unlike her predecessors, Van Ardenne had not worked in the Ministry or on development issues in academia. So, when she entered the Ministry, she was puzzled by the technical language of ministerial officials. She says it was a “secret language that they spoke” that was “totally incomprehensible” (interview with Van Ardenne, 30 September 2008). The use of metaphorical symbols, such as ownership, good governance, and partnership, had a different meaning for the ministerial officials than for Van Ardenne. For ministerial officials these terms are technical terms that refer to debates in and facts of development aid. Yet, for the Minister these words had a common, everyday meaning. So, the symbols set those who share their meanings apart from other people and groups who do not share them (Yanow 1996: 9). Van Ardenne and the ministerial officials belonged to two different “communities of interpretation” (Yanow 1996: 47). Because the Minister did not understand the technical language, some officials judged, “the development problematique is too complex for her” (interview ministerial official, 17 January 2006). Van Ardenne, one official explains, is very smart politically, but she does not have the ability to analyze. The policy document, “Mutual Interests, Mutual Responsibilities”, was proof of this, ministerial officials pointed out. This document was a hodge-podge of different ideas and statements that lacked any clear vision or rationale.

It was not only that Van Ardenne did not use technical language and scientific narration style to express her ideals and ideas. Also, the Minister’s ideals were not aligned with the expertise gathered over the years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The speechwriter experienced how this affected his work on his first assignment, the writing of the policy document “Mutual Interests, Mutual Responsibilities”. As the Minister wanted Dutch companies to be involved in development cooperation, the speechwriter needed information from the officials in the department for economic development for the policy document. Yet, these officials did not know how to incite Dutch companies to

get involved in development aid and also did not think this was of importance. As long as this department existed, the officials had been concerned with how to promote and support local businesses and stimulate local entrepreneurship in developing countries. Hence, when the speechwriter asked for input for the policy document and for speeches of the Minister, the officials wrote texts that stressed that the Ministry supports the local economy. The officials could not provide the information that the speechwriter needed. But neither could the Minister. Consequently, the speechwriter had to make an appealing story and look for examples himself. Because of the mismatch between the Minister's policy ideas and the official's expertise, the speechwriter worked "twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week" (interview September 2005). The work wore him out, he recounts, "as a speechwriter I had to think up everything myself and it was never good" (ibid.). Eventually, the work was frustrating and it became too much, and so he left the job for another position in the Ministry.

The speechwriter was not the only official who felt frustrated because the work was so unrewarding. The official responsible for promoting partnership and stimulating the set-up of PPPs also left her job. She was appointed as "special coordinator of partnership" by Van Ardenne. She received her own office, special business cards, and all the support from the Minister. The coordinator also had the difficult task of encouraging ministerial officials to set up PPPs on their own. As there were many questions about the meaning of partnership, the coordinator wrote a policy paper. This paper sought to provide a clear definition of partnership and PPPs, to explain the characteristics of PPPs, and to inform officials about plans to put these ideas into action. Making people understand partnership and changing their attitude and way of working that had already proved to be difficult.

The minister had asked the officials to come up with ideas for a PPP, but few ministerial officials did. She invited companies to come up with a proposal for a PPP with the Ministry. For this, she reserved a budget and gave officials the task to set up PPPs with private companies that she had selected. Yet, even with the help and support of the coordinator, few of these ideas were ever realized. The Minister says in our interview that the coordinator just could not get through to ministerial officials. Like the speechwriter, the coordinator also left her job. And no one came to continue the unfinished task.

Despite the efforts of officials close to the Minister, partnership remained a vague and trivial notion for ministerial officials. For many, the only meaning they read in partnership was that the Ministry should cooperate with private companies, like the following official remarks:

I am afraid that it is a word that is interpreted differently by everyone. And ehm the minister devoted all her energy to it, but what exactly she means by it I don't know. In any case, she also means that there needs to be more cooperation with companies. She wants more partners to be involved in development aid. Not only the government, also the co-financing organizations and other NGOs. But, most important, also looking for new actors and with that she has businesses in mind. That is, I think, what the Minister means by it.

(Interview ministerial official, 17 February 2006)

For many officials partnership only had meaning in relation to PPPs and the involvement of Dutch private companies in development aid. When the Minister asked them to set up a PPP they did. Partnership had become an instrument. But it did not become a mindset or way of working for ministerial officials, as the Minister had wanted. Some officials used the notion of partnership strategically. They did not change their practices, but described their practices with the notion of partnership. As someone remarked, “the funny thing here is that such a concept is not embraced, but people look at it like ‘okay, partnership is something we have to do, so how can we do it so it fits in with what we are already doing’”. So, through the acts of these officials, partnership also became a buzzword. But most of them did not change their way of thinking or working.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explained the dreams of development of Ministers Pronk, Herfkens, and Van Ardenne through the exploration of their life histories. What becomes apparent from this exploration is that the dreams of development of the Dutch Ministers for Development Cooperation are, to a large extent, inspired by religious beliefs, notions such as “rights and duties” and “the ability to speak” or “zeggenschap”, biblical stories, and stories from family members who worked as missionaries in Africa. Dreams, and the policies that spring from them “encapsulate the entire history and culture of the society that generated them”, as Shore and Wright (1997: 7) point out. Then, development is not only a “quasi-religious conversion” (Salemink 2004) that expresses good intentions (Quarles van Ufford 1999) and hope for a better and more just world (Buijs 2004). But rather, religion is also a driving force in Dutch development.

At the same time, Dutch development aid was also a technical matter for Pronk and Herfkens. They expressed their dreams in technical language using concepts such as “ownership” and “untied aid”. Many officials that work on development issues have entered the Ministry under Pronk. With their educational background and a large number of years of work experience under Pronk and Herfkens, they have internalized the technical language, the beliefs and ideals that they express, and the facts that sustain them. Ministers Pronk and Herfkens had communicated their ideals and interests in technical terms and a scientific style of narrating. For Van Ardenne, the notion of partnership expresses an understanding of human life and a policy for development that is inspired by Christian-Democratic philosophy. Hence, partnership is not a technical term. In the policy texts where she explains her notion of partnership, she uses terminology that refers to ideas about human life that come from the Christian religion. In speeches, Van Ardenne uses terms and sentences such as “solidarity”, “relational citizenship”, and “my point of departure is that people do not want and cannot live without others” to express her dream for development. Her policy texts do not speak of facts, but of feelings, and not of scientific truths, but of political views. Minister Van Ardenne communicated development policy as the outcome of a political process.

Ministers Pronk and Herfkens communicate their policy as *the* representation of reality, while Minister Van Ardenne speaks of her policy as a representation *on* reality.

That is to say, whereas Pronk and Herfkens enact development aid in a scientific-technical way, Van Ardenne enacts development aid in a socio-political way. Through scientific communication of their dreams of development Pronk and Herfkens have presented a reality that exists outside of the political sphere. They narrate the history of development aid as the accumulation of knowledge. Contrary to that, Van Ardenne communicates her dream of development in a political manner in her policy texts. This way she presents a view on the world, not a reality.

All ministers present dreams of development. But, as Mosse and Lewis points out, “powerful actors offer scripts into which others can be recruited for a period” (2006: 13). What makes other actors want to enroll in particular scripts not only depends on the position of the actors. Also, it is the dreams of development that these scripts express and the way in which these dreams are shared with others through policy texts that turns them into attractive scripts. Then, in the following chapter we will see that Pronk’s script is still influential in Dutch development aid. Even though officials are now working under minister Van Ardenne and have to set up public-private partnerships. Pronk’s dream for development is inscribed in the thinking and acting of many ministerial officials and so still shapes Dutch development aid.



CHAPTER 3 | ASSEMBLING A PPP-PROJECT

Assembling as a process of translation and purification

In the previous chapter, I explained that the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, Van Ardenne, imagines a world in which people are connected and feel affective towards each other. She believes that the involvement of Dutch private companies in development aid can help realize this dream of development. That is why she wants ministerial officials to set up public-private partnerships (PPPs) with Dutch companies. One of the partnerships that the Minister wants her officials to design is a project for a public-private partnership with the Dutch pharmaceutical company Pharmaco.

In this chapter, I explore translation practices in the assembling of this project. It explains how the project ties together different actors that are situated in different organizations. These actors do not share a single dream of development. They have different interests that they bring into the project. Then, this chapter looks into how these actors talk about their own interests and those of the other actors and how they feel about the enrollment of these different interests in the PPP-project. It explains how the actors feel about combining development aid and interests of profit and highlights different practices of purification.

Actors with different dreams and aspirations

My eagerness to write about the assembling of the project design was triggered after an interview with one of the actors enrolled in the PPP-project, Alex Smith. I had come across his name in the project files of the embassy. In these documents I read that Alex was hired as a consultant to help realize the PPP-project. According to these documents his work was foremost mobilizing support by talking to those who were wary about the project. But at the same time, Alex was also critical of the project and Pharmaco. Wanting to learn more about his role in the project, I decided to meet him.

One of my interviewees told me Alex would visit the country in November. Because the relation between some of the embassy staff members and Alex was tense (for an explanation see Chapter 5) I decided not to approach the consultant through them. The first time I met Alex he was reluctant to talk to me because Pharmaco had warned him about me. They had portrayed me as a mysterious researcher who could be an industrial spy or investigative journalist. After I had introduced myself as an independent academic researcher, Alex was willing to speak to me about the PPP and his role in the project. We met later in the lobby of his hotel. With him was John White, a free-lance consultant who Alex had asked to be the facilitator in a meeting over the PPP-project. Over the course of a two-hour interview, I slowly began to understand their roles in the project. The interview with Alex and John gave insight into their dream of development and their ideas of how development could be achieved.

As I have discussed in Chapter 1, in the literature on public-private partnerships, we find different and often conflicting views on whether working with private companies is good for development. Whether or not private companies should be included in aid and how to include them is not only a concern of academics. Aid practitioners also struggle with these questions. In this chapter we see that the actors enrolled in the PPP make sense of Pharmaco's business and give meaning to development aid in different ways. Hence, they also differ in their thoughts on whether and how Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs should form a partnership.

In the first part of the following text, I introduce ministerial official Sonja and show how she makes sense of Pharmaco and gives meaning to development aid. I explain how she ties together Pharmaco and the Ministry in the PPP-project. Since the way in which aid practitioners Sonja and Alex view Pharmaco plays an important role in the assembling and realization of the PPP-project, I will also explain Pharmaco's interests in the project. Unfortunately, the representatives of Pharmaco who were involved in the project refused to be interviewed (see Chapter 1). Luckily, during my fieldwork I ran into a former senior executive of Pharmaco, Bas de Wit. Based on his stories I reconstruct the changing relation between the Ministry and Pharmaco over the last twenty years, explain the interests of Pharmaco, and elucidates how he thinks the cooperation between Pharmaco and the Dutch ministry is also good for development. Then, I shift to Alex to explain his role in the PPP-project. We will learn about his dream of development, his plan to realize this dream, what he believes is good aid and how the PPP-project fits in to that. As a final word, I let Sonja speak again to reflect on the assembling of the project.

Making sense of Pharmaco

To realize her dream of development Minister Van Ardenne requested that her officials initiate public-private partnership projects. As few ministerial officials approached companies on their own initiative, the Minister came up with two ideas. First, she called upon companies to submit a proposal for a partnership. Second, she personally chose companies with which she wanted to cooperate and planned to visit them with her officials. One of the companies with which she wanted to form a partnership was Pharmaco. Minister van Ardenne asked policy officer Sonja to connect her with Pharmaco.

Sonja is a senior policy officer on sexual and reproductive health and rights issues. Before she came to the Ministry, she worked for consultancy firms and in UN-organizations in developing countries. In the Ministry, all her previous positions were in Dutch embassies overseas. And so she had spent nearly 20 years abroad before becoming a senior policy officer in the ministerial headquarters in The Hague. Sonja started working for the Ministry in the mid-1990s, under minister Pronk. His ideas can be traced to the way in which Sonja assesses Pharmaco to be an acceptable partner for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

To prepare for the visit to Pharmaco, Sonja composes a file for the Minister with information about Pharmaco. With the information, Sonja gives meaning to Pharmaco and the Ministry and connects them in a way in which they can work on development aid together. Let us look at how Sonja describes Pharmaco in the report for the Minister:

NV Pharmaco, a business unit of multinational Akzo Nobel, is the largest international Dutch pharmaceutical company. Pharmaco develops, produces and sells medicines, with gynecological products having a dominant position. Pharmaco is active in more than 100 countries with, in total, around 13.000 employees in 2004. In more than half of the countries in which Pharmaco is active, the company has a local branch. The sales in 2004 were: EUR 1.975 million. The company has an established reputation in the field of endocrinology and gynecology that dates from its foundation in the nineteen twenties (1923). Pharmaco is a market leader in the development of innovative, prescribed medicines for gynecology, depression, anesthesia and heart and vascular diseases; all products that vitally contribute to the health and wellbeing of people. Parts of Pharmaco, originally founded to extract active medicines from by-products from the meat industry, have today grown into important institutions for research and development. Pharmaco's current portfolio regarding contraceptives contains a wide range of products developed to meet most individual demands. Whether it concerns the traditional contraceptive pill [brand name!] or an estrogen free pill [brand name], innovative applications such as a ring that is brought in monthly [brand name] or a hypodermic implant that provides protection for three years [brand name], Pharmaco remains in the front lines of scientific research in contraceptives. In the past years, Pharmaco has increasingly played a role as an active partner in projects in the field of family planning in various countries. This has stimulated the development of contraceptives with a longer effect such as injectable (...) and intra-uterine products (...) that offer both easy administering and reliability. Also additional information, extension, and communication materials have been developed to support these programs in the field of health planning. The department that is engaged in this has a strong appreciation of social responsibility that is independent of the profit orientation of the other parts of the company.

(Report written by Sonja, underlined by the author)

From this description, we learn that Pharmaco is a company that cares about people's health. We learn, from Sonja's statements, that "all products [...] vitally contribute to the health and wellbeing of people" and "the current portfolio of Pharmaco, with regard to contraceptives, contains a wide range of products developed to meet the most individual demands". In addition to that, the description tells us that Pharmaco's concern for health care reaches many countries, including developing countries where it is involved in family planning projects. We can also read in the description that Pharmaco is a reputable company. Sonja indicates this by writing that it "has an established reputation in the field of endocrinology and gynecology". Furthermore, the reputability of Pharmaco is also enunciated through Sonja's emphasis on Pharmaco's research activities that she places "in the front lines of scientific research". Thus, Sonja describes Pharmaco as a reputable company with a positive contribution to health care in society.

The description of Pharmaco that Sonja presents in this report is one way of making sense of Pharmaco. I learned during the fieldwork that there are also other, more critical, ways to make sense of Pharmaco's work. Yet, Sonja has to set up a public-private partnership with Pharmaco. So, she has to make Pharmaco a good partner for the Ministry and Dutch development aid. In various policy documents it is written that the Ministry and a private company can work together in a PPP if they have shared interests. Thus, a good partner is a partner who has some interests in common with the Ministry. Then, this description shows us how Sonja gives meaning to development aid, namely as an honest activity that contributes to society.

Let us have a look again at the report above. Sonja points out that Pharmaco's work contributes to development. She tells the Minister that in the past years Pharmaco has increasingly played a role as an active partner in the field of family planning in various countries. With this, Pharmaco's interests match the interests of development aid. Sonja also points out that Pharmaco is a commercial enterprise that makes profit. She informs the Minister that Pharmaco's sales in 2004 were EUR 1.975 million. From the last sentence in Sonja's report to the Minister, we learn that this creates a problem for Sonja. In this sentence Sonja stresses that the Ministry will only work with that division of the company that is focused on social responsibility.

Sonja purifies aid. She emphasizes that the company consists of two parts; one of profit-oriented departments, and another department that works on social projects. She connects the Dutch Ministry with the part that works on social projects. In other words, she says the ministry will not work with the profit-oriented departments and, hence, development aid remains free from profit interests. How can we explain this? One could explain the purification practice of Sonja as a way to create shared interests. However, the Minister has never said nor do any policy documents about partnership state that companies that make profit cannot be partners. Furthermore, what commonly characterizes companies is their profit-orientation. So, this does not explain why Sonja separates the profit-oriented division of Pharmaco from the division that concentrates on social responsibility and keeps that apart from the partnership.

Van Ardenne's policy to involve Dutch private companies in development aid was a break with the policy of her predecessors. Ministers Pronk and Herfkens believed that self-interest could not be mixed with aid because then development would never be achieved. They considered profit-making a form of self-interest that conflicts with the altruistic nature of development aid. Hence, they separated Dutch private companies from Dutch development aid and in this way purified aid. Ministerial officials had been working for many years under Pronk and Herfkens and carried out this policy of purification. The belief that development aid should not be profited from did not immediately disappear with the change of minister. We can see that Sonja struggled to enroll Pharmaco, a Dutch profit-making company, in Dutch development aid. By describing Pharmaco in two parts, and suggesting to work only with the not-for-profit part, Sonja solves her problem of working with private companies. She combines aid with profit-oriented interests but denies that she does so.

Assembling a PPP-project that includes Pharmaco

By order of the Minister, Sonja comes up with a project design in which the Ministry and Pharmaco can cooperate. The idea that Sonja proposes comes from the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, an international network that tries to find ways to ensure that people in developing countries have access to and make use of affordable, high-quality products to improve their reproductive health. Representatives from different governmental and non-governmental organizations, among them Sonja and Alex, participate in the Coalition. In one of its working groups, they develop new ideas to make contraceptives available and affordable for people in developing countries. It is from the Coalition's working group that Sonja gets the idea for the partnership with Pharmaco.

The project that Sonja presents is based on the idea that the market for contraceptives in a developing country consists of three segments. She categorizes the different segments on the basis of what people pay for the contraceptives and the type of supplier, either public or private. Sonja pictures these segments as a pyramid and describes these segments as follows:

In developing countries, the total market for commodities consists of different segments. The upper part consists of people who pay the full amount for their products supplied by the private sector in the market, and the lower part, in developing countries, consists of people that claim free products through the public sector. In between, there is a segment of different types of more or less subsidized products.

(Taken from documentation for the Minister to prepare the meeting with Pharmaco)

The three segments represent the total market for contraceptives in a developing country. In many developing countries, most women are positioned the lowest and middle segment. That means they obtain contraceptives from the public sector at highly subsidized prices or free-of-charge. In the report to the Minister, Sonja explains that there are attempts to develop market segmentation in developing countries to stimulate the highest possible "cost recovery" among people, which means that women are encouraged to pay what they can afford for contraceptives. She also explains that countries have huge problems in finding a good system to reach this goal. Following up on that, she suggests a project that includes Pharmaco to help achieve this goal. Sonja writes to the Minister and Pharmaco with the following proposition:

The concrete proposal is to bring about cooperation between [the Ministry], [Pharmaco], and a relevant NGO. The primary goal is to develop/increase the private market and the top segment of the social market so that users [of contraceptives] move from the public social market segment to these segments.

(Documentation for the Minister to prepare the meeting with Pharmaco)

The PPP-project aims to match the users of contraceptives to the different suppliers in developing countries according to their ability to pay through “creating a profitable market” for Pharmaco (Draft Terms Of Reference (03/08/05)). The ultimate goal of Sonja’s proposed plan is that this will decrease the demand for free products in the public sector by women who can afford more expensive products, with the ultimate result that the free products can go to the poorest group of women.

In the plan that Sonja presents to the Minister, we see that she has made a shift in how she combines aid and commercial activities. In Sonja’s description of Pharmaco above, she presented an artificial split in the company to avoid profit-oriented interests from influencing Dutch development aid. Yet, in the plan that Sonja presents to the Minister she combines development aid with commercial, profit-oriented activities. Sonja proposes to encourage women to buy Pharmaco’s commercial products in pharmacies so that the products that governments supply free-of-charge and NGOs supply at subsidized prices will be available to the poorest women in developing countries. Thus, she proposes a project design that makes use of commercial, profit-oriented techniques to meet the Minister’s request. In this way she includes Pharmaco’s interest in profit in the PPP.

Sonja explains her idea for the PPP-project to the Minister who immediately likes it. Sonja says, “she understood it very quickly [she said something] like, ‘How interesting. I have never looked at the market in that way’” (interview, October 2008). The project, as described by Sonja, includes the interests of Pharmaco while it aims to achieve development. Hence, it fits Van Ardenne’s dream for development.

Pharmaco’s interests explored

The Ministry presented the plan to Pharmaco in the spring of 2005. Pharmaco liked it too, and enthusiastically got involved in the PPP-project. I will shed some light on the reasons why Pharmaco was enthusiastic about the PPP-project on the basis of my talks with Bas, former senior executive at Pharmaco. Bas worked for Pharmaco for over 30 years in various countries. At the time we met, he had just retired. Bas was very open, which surprised me as Pharmaco had tried to keep its doors closed to me. Not Bas. He talked openly about Pharmaco’s business practices. He is the kind of person who loves to tell animated stories about his work for Pharmaco in various developing countries and the successes he achieved for the company. His candid stories give a good insight into the business. Bas still has good contacts in the pharmaceutical industry -many people have become his friends, he tells me, but he is not officially involved in the business anymore. We can tell from his stories in which he often refers to the company as “we”, that he still feels like he is a part of Pharmaco.

Bas read about the PPP-project in his local Dutch newspaper. He was happy for Pharmaco, knowing that “Pharmaco wants that very badly” (interview with Bas, November 2006). He tells me how he noticed that the relation between Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry had changed during his career at Pharmaco. In the next paragraph, I will use his experiences and his observations to talk about the changes in development aid, and Pharmaco in particular. In the paragraph that follows, I explain two reasons, given in the interview, as to why Pharmaco is interested in entering a development aid partnership with

the Dutch Ministry. In the last paragraph of this section, I let Bas explain what Pharmaco can do for development through this partnership.

In the past, when Pharmaco wanted to do business in a developing country, there were two options. The first option was with the help of the Dutch embassy and the second option was without the help of the Dutch embassy. In countries where there was no embassy, Pharmaco had to set up its business without the support of the Dutch embassy. According to Bas “that was very onerous” (ibid.). If possible, Pharmaco would approach the Dutch embassy to help them set up a business in the developing country as that eased the process. Bas explains how the embassy helped him to set up the business for Pharmaco in a developing country. He says, “I always went to the Dutch embassy first, [then] with a development expert [from the embassy] to the government, the Ministry of Public Health, for example. And then you would finally find your way to the Minister [of Health]” (ibid.). So, the development experts of the Dutch embassy offered their contacts with local officials to Pharmaco to set up a business in that country.

However, Bas noticed that the relationship between the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pharmaco changed over the years. Slowly the Ministry became less and less willing to let Pharmaco use the contacts of their development experts in the embassy for its business purposes. Bas recalls, “when Eegje van Schoo was Minister [in the 1980s] it was still okay. But after that...” (ibid.). He noted that it became more and more difficult for Pharmaco to get support or assistance from the Dutch government.

What Bas experienced was the effects of the attempts of Minister Pronk followed by Minister Herfkens to remove Dutch companies from Dutch development aid (see Chapter 2). One way in which this was done was through the creation of the position of commercial attaché in the Dutch embassy. The person holding this position is responsible for trade relations and promotion of Dutch economic interests. When Dutch companies want assistance from the Dutch embassy they can contact this person and he or she will support them with their network. With a colleague specialized in commerce, development experts in the embassy no longer needed to put their network at the disposal of Dutch companies. And they did not. Through the creation of the position of commercial attaché, commercial self-interest was removed from Dutch development aid.

In addition to that, the shift from development projects or programs to budget support for governments also led to the gradual separation of Pharmaco from Dutch development aid. In the past, the Dutch Ministry directly purchased Pharmaco’s contraceptives for its own development projects. Now the Dutch Ministry finances the United Nations Family Planning Association (UNFPA), which procures contraceptives from the global market for governments of developing countries. For Pharmaco, this means that, in the past, the budget of the Dutch Ministry would be spent on its contraceptive products. Currently this is highly doubtful, as purchasing depends on the choice of the UNFPA, advised by the World Health Organization (WHO).

On the basis of my talk with Bas, I conclude that there are two main reasons why Pharmaco is interested in working with the Ministry on this PPP-project. The first is for reputational reasons. In the mid-1990s, Bas saw sales of Pharmaco’s contraceptives to developing countries drop dramatically, which, he found out, was the result of the “thrombosis affair” that had damaged Pharmaco’s reputation. In the early 1990s,

the WHO concluded in one of its studies that there was a link between the use of Pharmaco's third phase pill and thrombosis. According to Bas, Pharmaco had said to the WHO that, "this is impossible" and "that is nonsense" without checking properly whether the results of WHO's studies were correct or not. "Afterwards", Bas continues, "it turned out that there was a substantial element of truth in it" (interview with Bas, November 2006). He found out that this affair gave Pharmaco a bad reputation in the WHO, which led to reluctance among WHO staff to do business with Pharmaco. Such a reputation, Bas clarifies, "is life threatening for a company," because the WHO is the organization that determines what products developing countries buy (ibid.). So, according to Bas' account, Pharmaco's misplaced arrogant attitude towards the WHO concerning the thrombosis study has negatively affected the company's reputation and their sales to governments in developing countries. Working with the Dutch Ministry in an aid project could help Pharmaco improve its reputation.

A second reason for Pharmaco to enter into a partnership with the Dutch Ministry was for competitive reasons. The Netherlands had separated Dutch commercial interests from Dutch development aid, but other countries did not. And this creates a commercial advantage for foreign companies competing for a market share. Bas says:

It is so silly to just give money and not to work with your own country's organizations. We [the Netherlands] were "more Roman Catholic than the Pope". We gave money and we did not want Dutch companies to benefit from it. The Americans did it exactly the other way around. They said [Bas puts on an American accent]; "You can have this when you buy our stuff". We never did this. [...] That was absolutely stupid.

(Interview with Bas, November 2006)

To combine Dutch development aid and Dutch commercial interests is not only profitable for Pharmaco, Bas believes. He also says that it is good for the Netherlands and good for development.

What can Pharmaco do for development aid?

Bas does not feel that development aid and making profit cannot go together. He believes that the initiative to set up PPPs is a smart move for Minister Van Ardenne. As he says "I think anybody in his right frame of mind, is interested in working together" (interview with Bas, November 2006). Because Pharmaco is a private commercial company, he says, it can and will invest in developing countries. When Pharmaco starts a business in a developing country, Bas explains, it usually invests in family planning education and education on the use of contraceptives. He believes Pharmaco will also invest in the country or countries where this PPP-project is implemented. He says:

For [Pharmaco] I think that we will be more prepared to put out feelers. On the basis of that, we will also make some money from the private market that

surrounds it, surrounds the social market, and surrounds family planning. In the end, of course we have to make money for our shareholders; that's true. But I do think that we will be willing to make a large number of marvelous gestures. For sure.

(Interview with Bas, November 2006)

Bas points out that, for a big pharmaceutical company like Pharmaco, three years is an acceptable time to reach the break-even point. That is the point at which the company's investments need to equal its profit. Smaller companies cannot make such an investment. Bas is convinced that Pharmaco can and will offer developing countries family planning education through the PPP-project.

Thus, the PPP-project connects Pharmaco and Dutch development aid again. On the one hand, Pharmaco can offer the PPP-project its contraceptive products and marketing and sales expertise. Furthermore, the company will provide family planning education through the project. On the other hand, the project can help build a good reputation for the company, create competitive advantage over companies that do not get support from their governments, and possibly provide a network in countries where Pharmaco wants to enter the market.

Pharmaco brings a new actor into the PPP

The public-private partnership between the Dutch Ministry and Pharmaco was officially launched in a business meeting in June 2005. The Ministry and Pharmaco invited the press to share their excitement. They stated that with the cooperation, both wanted to improve the dissemination of contraceptives by differentiating markets.

In Sonja's proposal for the PPP an international NGO should set up the project and promote and supply Pharmaco's contraceptive products via its local offices in the developing country. She suggests two NGOs in the field of reproductive health with which Pharmaco already collaborates and asks Pharmaco to choose one of them (documentation of minister's visit to Pharmaco on 21 June 2005). Pharmaco asks these two NGOs to make a bid for the project for three developing countries X, Y, and Z (for the country selection process, see the following chapter). However, it also approaches a third organization to make a bid and present its proposal to Pharmaco. For reasons that will later become clear Sonja did not suggest this organization as a partner in the PPP-project. Yet, Pharmaco selects this organization to help realize the project, because its representative Alex made the most convincing presentation.

Alex's organization, located in Europe, is a small subsidiary company that is linked to a large, international NGO, the IORH, working on reproductive health issues. It is an organization that operates in a businesslike way but reinvests its profits into the IORH that uses the money to expand its activities. The board of the subsidiary company consists of volunteers of the IORH. While the IORH carries out more conventional social marketing projects and promotes access to services, the subsidiary organization is involved in developing new ideas such as using market differentiation approaches to realize development.

For Pharmaco Alex' subsidiary organization and its larger IORH are a good partner for the PPP-project. Yet, Alex thinks that Pharmaco is not a good partner for realizing development. Furthermore, he is shocked when he finds out that a plan he has been working on is used by the Dutch Ministry and Pharmaco for the PPP-project. Let's go back to the moment that Pharmaco approaches Alex. Alex told me about his meeting with Pharmaco in bits and pieces during our conversation in November 2006. Based on these fragments, I have reconstructed the encounter between Pharmaco's representatives and Alex, using his quotes and his storyline. This is how I have reconstructed their encounter:

Rob, a representative of Pharmaco, phones Alex telling him, "We are coming to your office tomorrow. We really want to see you". Alex is surprised by the telephone call. He has no idea what Pharmaco wants to talk about, but since he is very critical of Pharmaco's business practices he is suspicious. He tells Rob that they are busy and that Pharmaco cannot just visit them like that. But Pharmaco insists saying, "Please, we beg you. It is really important, and it is really important for you. It is a big thing and we are really excited". Alex tries to hold them off, but Pharmaco "[will] not take 'no' for an answer". And so, a couple of days later, Alex and Rob meet. In Alex's office, Rob explains that Pharmaco has a new project idea and presents it in a power point. When Alex sees the idea he is flabbergasted. What he sees looks just like his own presentation of a project design that he has recently developed. Only his idea would not promote Pharmaco's products but other products that compete with Pharmaco's products. Seeing the absurdity of the situation, Alex and his colleagues burst out laughing. Rob, not aware of the situation, asks Alex what they are laughing about. Then, Alex lets Rob and his colleagues know that the idea Pharmaco presented is actually his. Pharmaco first refutes this saying, "No, we got it from someone in the Dutch Ministry who was talking about it and we put this together". But when Alex again says, "Come on, this is our idea, and everybody knows it," Pharmaco apologizes. In the end, Pharmaco concludes since it is Alex's idea, "That's even better; then you understand [the idea]."

The plan that Pharmaco presents looks just like Alex's plan to tackle the problem of limited availability and affordability of contraceptives in developing countries. Both plans talk about the segmentation of the contraceptive market. They both describe marketing and selling of contraceptives with the aim of persuading women to pay what they can afford for their contraceptives. Finally, both plans have the ultimate goal of allocating free contraceptives to the poorest and most needy women. Hence, Alex calls his plan the Total Market Approach (TMA). If the plan that Pharmaco presented looked like Alex's own plan, then why was Alex so shocked?

To answer this question, I will explain when and why Alex developed his "Total Market Approach" and what this approach is about. First of all, I will make clear how Alex defines the problem of contraceptives in developing countries. Then, I tell how Alex sees opportunities for change. Finally, I clarify Alex's plans, including the TMA, to realize

his dream for development. This will show how Alex makes sense of development aid and the pharmaceutical industry, how he believes development aid and the interest of profit can be combined, and how aid can still be honest. Then, it will become clear why Alex was shocked to see Pharmaco presenting a transformed version of his “Total Market Approach”.

Alex visualizes the total market for contraceptives in developing countries as a pyramid. This consists of two segments; the top segment of the market, or first tier, consists of high-priced, branded medicines that are produced by four big European and Northern American pharmaceutical companies. Pharmaco is one of these companies. Private pharmacies supply their products at commercial prices. These products are bought by the more affluent segment of the population. The bottom tier consists of free-of-charge or low-priced contraceptives supplied by governments and NGOs in their hospitals and health clinics. Governments and NGOs buy these contraceptives from the same big pharmaceutical companies at a high price and have to subsidize them to supply them for free or a low price. In this segment, one also finds so-called “social marketing programs”. These programs, usually carried out by aid agencies, aim to generate acceptance for the use of contraceptives among the poor. To reach that goal, aid agencies use marketing techniques to promote the low-priced contraceptives and, after the program is finished, they measure the outreach.

According to Alex, one of the major problems in the supply of contraceptives in developing countries is that contraceptives are very expensive. The total market consists mainly of high-priced contraceptives from the big pharmaceutical companies supplied through different channels at different prices. Alex explains that the four big pharmaceutical companies sell their products at high prices because they are driven to make high profits though the big pharmaceutical companies argue that their products are so expensive because of high costs for research and development of new medicines. Yet, Alex, believes that the profits these companies make are not invested in research, but go to the top management and the owners of the company. To substantiate this claim, Alex refers to two books written by Angell and Gozner and an article by Hall (see box)

Corrupted business practices of the big pharmaceutical companies

Alex points at two books and an article by reputable people, who have written about the business of these pharmaceutical companies. One of these people is former Editor-in-Chief of The England Journal of Medicine, Marcia Angell, who wrote, *The Truth About the Drug Companies* (2004). The second author is former Chief Economics Correspondent at the Chicago Tribune, Merill Gozner, *The \$800 Million Pill: The truth behind the cost of new drugs* (2004). The third expert that Alex refers to is Peter Hall, former researcher at the WHO. He wrote the paper, *What has been achieved, what have been the constraints and what are the future priorities for pharmaceutical product-related R&D relevant to the reproductive health needs of developing countries?* (2005) for the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health.

Hall points out that the development of the oral contraceptive pill has been “a marketing manager’s dream” (2005: 26) and “a commercial cash cow” (2005: 27). The small oral pill that

women need to take daily for as long as they want to prevent pregnancy, has recovered its R&D costs many times over. The production costs of the contraceptive pill are only a fraction of the price the manufacturing companies ask for these products. A pill, one of the most easily manufactured pharmaceutical preparations, would have a maximum product costs of \$0.20 to \$0.25, which represents 0.5 - 1% of the sales price in the United States (Hall 2005: 26).

Angell's and Goozner's main argument is that the big pharmaceutical companies have misled the public by claiming that they pay for the development of new pharmaceuticals to justify the excessive prices of their products. In addition to that, they point out that the extortionate prices did not benefit the public, but disappeared into the private pockets of some. Angell writes that "the real pharmaceutical industry [...] over the past two decades has moved very far from its original purpose of discovering and producing useful new drugs" (2004: xxv). She points out that there are "dubious practices of the pharmaceutical industry" (Angell 2004: xxiii) that make the big pharmaceutical companies "corrupted by easy profits and greed" (Angell 2004: 237).

One of these practices that Angell and Goozner indicate and explain in their books is the production of so-called "me-too" pharmaceuticals. They argue that, instead of developing new pharmaceutical products, the big pharmaceutical companies have each developed their own version of a well-selling and profitable pharmaceutical, the so-called "me-too" pharmaceuticals. As an example of such "me-too" products, Angell and Goozner point at the production of anti-depressants (Angell 2004: 80-83; Goozner 2004: 209-230). Following the famous anti-depressant, Prozac, of the American company Eli-Lilly, with annual sales that rose to \$ 2.6 billion, other big pharmaceutical companies made their own version of this pharmaceutical. Pharmaco, renowned for hormonal pharmaceuticals, also developed its own anti-depressant. Despite the increasing number of anti-depressants in the market, this did not lead to a reduction in prices (Goozner 2004). Instead, he says, competition was merely based on variation in frequency of doses and method of getting the pharmaceutical into the body (Goozner 2004). And, he adds, companies marketed their pharmaceuticals as having fewer side-effects, though doctors and researchers generally considered these effects to be identical.

Angell, Goozner and Hall also point at the issue of patents. Hall writes that the contraceptive industry has also protected its profitable market share by working on ways of getting new oral contraceptive patents (Hall 2005). One way in which the big pharmaceutical companies have done this, Hall says, is by replacing the hormone that comes off patent with a new version of the hormone. Another way in which companies tried to preserve their market share, he indicates, is by coming up with different administration regimes. These are the combinations of the doses of the different hormones at different times of the monthly cycle. To support his claim that these are tactics to preserve market shares, Hall writes, "Every time a product containing a new [hormone] progestogen or presented in a new regimen is launched, there is a major marketing campaign claiming it to be 'better' or 'safer' than the previous products. There are rarely any studies to back these claims up and there are never comparative trials to support them" (2005: 27). By extending the patent of a product, the pharmaceutical companies keep their exclusive right to produce this product, thus maintain its monopoly position and its profits (Angell 2004).

In sum, all three authors claim that the big pharmaceutical companies have turned into money-making machines. Rather than being interested in improving people's health, these companies are fascinated by the big money. Instead of developing new medicines, these companies have developed dirty tricks to increase or maintain profits.

The contraceptive pill could have been widely available and affordable, Alex believes, if the big pharmaceutical companies would lower their prices and bring them more in line with the production costs. If pharmaceutical companies would lower their prices, many women in developing countries could get contraceptives. However, Alex says, the big pharmaceutical companies “can’t supply at this cost level. Can’t and won’t” (interview with Alex, November 2006). He explains:

As a principle, they won’t because they’ve always resisted it for forty years. It’s very difficult to change the mentality at the corporate level, which is, they are slow to move. And the margins that they would lose even if they could, it would mean this is not something they would want to do.

(Interview with Alex, November 2006)

Alex believes that the big pharmaceutical companies, such as Pharmaco, will not help make high quality contraceptives available and affordable for all people in developing countries. Based on history, he concludes that these companies are only interested in making profit. Pharmaco’s proposal to lower the prices of the contraceptives that are provided through the PPP-project, is seen by Alex as a business strategy to create a market.

A dream of contraceptives available and affordable to all

In the market of contraceptives, Alex saw a silent revolution taking place as new actors entered the pharmaceutical industry. Alex noted, “the pharmaceutical supply of contraceptives is changing, is being revolutionized quietly. This hasn’t happened before in history” (interview with Alex, November 2006). A new group of manufacturers produces copies of medicines of which the patent has expired and offers these so-called “generics” at a fraction of the price of the original products of the big pharmaceutical companies. Many consumers shifted to generics that had the same chemical composition but were much cheaper. According to Alex, in their biggest market, the United States, the big companies have lost two million dollars a year to generic manufacturers, which is half of their sales on hormonal contraceptives alone. Alex can conclude nothing other than “in their biggest profit making part of their business [the United States], [they] were getting hit very hard” (ibid.).

Alex has seen western generics change the market for pharmaceuticals in Europe and America. He foresaw the effect western generics would have on the public health care in developing countries. Yet, Alex imagines that if non-western generic manufacturers could enter the market, they would further diminish the prices. He knows that many developing countries have their own pharmaceutical industry and produce generics. Yet, the problem is that the governments and NGOs there are not aware of these manufacturers. Besides that, the quality of these non-western generic drugs is often unknown. Alex expects that, if these problems could be solved, these non-western generic manufacturers could make a huge difference for public health programs in developing countries. Governments and

NGOs currently buying their medicines from western companies, could then buy these medicines from non-western generic manufacturers at much lower prices.

To achieve this, Alex designed two projects, outlined in a concept paper “Bridging the gap between supply and demand”, which he presented to the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, where Sonja represents the Netherlands. The first project is to map non-western companies producing contraceptives in developing countries, test the quality of their products and manufacturing process, and get the products certified. Alex had started to undertake the first project. With funding of UNFPA and Alex’s social entrepreneurial company, a consultant named John carried out the mapping exercise. While this consultant was mapping companies, Alex hired an expert to carry out an in-depth investigation of those companies that were producing and selling to various countries. This exercise gave Alex and John a list of companies that could produce contraceptives. The next step of Alex and John was to test the quality of the products that these companies produced. John approached his former employer, the World Health Organization. The WHO could guarantee the quality of the contraceptives if they passed the tests making use of its established reputation. The WHO had done a similar testing and qualification for generic anti-malarials and for medicines that treat tuberculosis at the request of the Global Fund and the Gates Foundation. These organizations had paid the WHO for this work because they wanted to increase the availability and affordability of these medical treatments in developing countries. Alex and John were able to obtain financial support from the Gates Foundation to pay the WHO to test a small number of contraceptive products.

At the time of my research, the WHO was still in the testing process. However, according to Alex the expected outcome is that, with the results of these tests the WHO could produce a list of certified contraceptives from non-western generic manufacturers. Governments and NGOs would no longer need to buy the high-priced contraceptives of the big pharmaceutical companies. Instead, they would be able to buy the much cheaper, certified generic contraceptives of the non-western pharmaceutical companies. This way, these organizations could buy more contraceptives with the same budget and could supply more people or use the money they save on other projects. This first project provided the first step to improving the availability of contraceptives in developing countries.

While the first project is still running, Alex plans a second project to make contraceptives available and affordable for the poor in developing countries. He calls this project the “Total Market Approach” (TMA). The Total Market Approach is based on the organization of the supply of contraceptives in developing countries and aims to create a third segment that provides cheap generics in the private market. This third segment will be positioned in-between the commercial high-priced, branded products in the private market and the low-priced and free-of-charge contraceptives in the public sector. With the use of marketing techniques, Alex wants to encourage women who get their contraceptives in the public market, but could afford to pay a bit more for contraceptives, to buy generic contraceptives at low prices in the private market. This way, the project would make products and therefore money, available to the public market that could be used to help the really poor. He imagines that the money could be used to set up new clinics in other parts of the country that are not yet covered by the government or NGOs. This is Alex’s

idea of the Total Market Approach that will help him realize his dream for a world in which contraceptives are available and affordable for everyone.

Transformation of the Total Market Approach

Alex had presented his Total Market Approach in the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition. Sonja, who was also a member of this network organization, took the idea from the Coalition and delivered it to the Ministry. She translated the plan to make it fit for a public-private partnership with Pharmaco. She kept the idea of using marketing techniques to encourage women to buy contraceptives in the private market. Yet, instead of marketing generic contraceptives, as the TMA had intended, Sonja planned to promote Pharmaco's contraceptives.

The use of the Total Market Approach in the PPP-project changed the meaning of this Total Market Approach. Through marketing techniques people had to be persuaded to buy commercially-provided contraceptives instead of subsidized contraceptives. What had changed after translation was that Pharmaco had replaced generic manufacturers as the central player in the design. Alex's idea was to move people up the pyramid, from free distribution to social marketing, and from social marketing to low-priced, commercial, generic contraceptives of non-western manufacturers. Sonja proposed to pull people up the chain to high-priced, branded contraceptives of big, western pharmaceutical companies.

Alex hears of Sonja's plans when he and Rob from Pharmaco meet in London. He finds it ironic that Rob now presents a plan to make contraceptives available and affordable for people in developing countries by promoting Pharmaco's high-priced products, while in the past this company has hampered the availability and affordability of contraceptives in developing countries. He felt that the Dutch Ministry had "hijacked the idea" (interview with Alex, November 2006). The Dutch Ministry and Pharmaco used his idea of the Total Market Approach to promote contraceptives that, Alex believes, are unreasonably high-priced and are produced by a company whose business practices are questionable. Even though Pharmaco has stated in the press release that it will offer its products at a reduced price, Alex predicts that once the project is operating and Dutch funding is finished, Pharmaco is going to increase its prices again. At that time, the project has created a group of consumers for Pharmaco's contraceptives. And that, Alex judges, is improper.

Seeing its market share rapidly decreasing, Alex believes Pharmaco must have been very happy that the Minister came up with the idea to promote Pharmaco's contraceptives in developing countries. This PPP-project will support Pharmaco's business by promoting its contraceptives, he says, and the highly regarded Dutch Ministry will validate its dubious business practices. Alex also believes that was the reason Pharmaco asked his organization to participate in the project. The involvement of Alex's organization in this PPP-project, he says, would make others think that "this is an honest straightforward project and it isn't just supporting [Pharmaco]. Because [my organization] has a good reputation, then it must be alright" (ibid.).

So, Pharmaco asks Alex to participate in a project that he feels is improper. In spite of that, Alex says to Pharmaco, "Yes, of course I am interested" (ibid.). He wants to be involved to see what can be negotiated in the project. He hopes that, somehow, he is able

to shape the project once he is included. He cannot tell the Dutch Ministry that the project is wrong, Alex says. But, as a consultant, he can advise the Ministry and others involved to include generic manufacturers in the project to make it work. Alex still hopes to realize his dream for development.

Reflections on the PPP-project and the role of Pharmaco

Alex had sketched the political-economic struggle between the big pharmaceutical companies and generic companies. He had pointed out that the big pharmaceutical companies, and Pharmaco in particular, had developed dubious practices to keep their market share. My talk with Pharmaco's former senior executive confirmed these practices, and showed that Pharmaco had its own business ethics. Nevertheless, I wanted to hear from this pharmaceutical company how they spoke about the project and its meaning.

Pharmaco was not keen to talk to me. After my study of the project's archives in the Dutch embassy, I decided to visit the local representatives of Pharmaco in country Z. As soon as I had phoned one of the representatives to make an appointment for a meeting, he contacted Pharmaco's headquarters in the Netherlands. The headquarters instructed the local representatives not to say anything about the PPP-project and not even to mention the project at all in their talks with me. Later, I found out that the local representatives did not know that much about the project as they did not handle the project. However, the representatives followed the instructions. They welcomed me kindly but did not want to talk about the project. Instead, they talked about general issues and problems of doing pharmaceutical business in country Z. They took me to some wholesalers who sell their products, and organized a visit to the partly state-owned pharmaceutical factory that produces different kinds of pharmaceuticals but no hormonal contraceptives. I learned a lot about the pharmaceutical industry in country Z, but not about the PPP-project.

Pharmaco's local representatives had not only informed the headquarters but also their direct superior, Pharmaco's regional representative, Mahir, about my upcoming visit. The next day, when I was with Pharmaco's local representatives, Mahir called from abroad to talk to me. I did not need to introduce myself, he was well-informed about who I was. As the local representatives would not tell me anything about the PPP-project, I asked Mahir if we could meet for an interview. I assumed he would know more about the project, and I hoped that he was willing to talk. Unfortunately, he would not visit country Z in the time that I was there. However, it turned out that we could meet up on my way back to the Netherlands. Coincidentally, he had to work a couple of days in the place where I had a stop-over. As I wanted to hear what Pharmaco's representatives had to say about the PPP-project, I took this chance to meet him. And so it happened that we agreed to meet at the airport.

During my fieldwork in country Z, I got to know many people working for NGOs, UN organizations, and the local government on reproductive health issues. Many of them had worked for big pharmaceutical companies before they got their current position. When I told several of them about my planned meeting with Pharmaco's regional representative Mahir, they envisaged how the meeting would go and explained the techniques of representatives of the big pharmaceutical companies. For example, they told me that

a standard training for people working for a pharmaceutical company is to learn how to make and use psychological profiles of the persons they deal with, such as doctors. They use these techniques to control the conversation and to influence the thoughts and decisions of that person. My newfound friends also predicted that Mahir would make me feel smart and important in comparison to himself. This, too, is a standard technique used by representatives in the industry, they said. And, one of them added half-serious, half-joking, "if he is really smart he will offer you a job."

Alex and John predicted that he would take me out shopping and buy me something, as this was a strategy that companies like Pharmaco often used. Actually, Mahir had already mentioned a shopping session twice on the phone. The first time we talked and made the interview appointment, he told me he knew where the good shopping was in the city, as he had lived there. The second time we spoke on the phone -he had called me out of the blue late in the evening- he asked me if I had my shopping list ready. He then told me that he had also been shopping with ministerial officials from the headquarters and had helped them get some good deals. I kindly declined his offer to shop together.

When Mahir and I met for the interview things went just as people had envisaged. As we stepped into the taxi to go drop off his luggage in his hotel, Mahir had already offered me a job at Pharmaco. After he had dropped off his luggage and we went on our way to have lunch, we ran into two colleagues of his who asked us if we were going shopping. Taking the people they deal with out for shopping, indeed, appeared to be a standard business practice. Mahir and I had lunch in a nice restaurant, which he insisted on paying. Until then we still had not talked about the PPP-project. Mahir told me that he has worked for years in the pharmaceutical industry, first for Pfizer, then for Roche, briefly for Johnson & Johnson, before moving to Pharmaco. I raised the issue the PPP-project again and he told me about the problems with the local culture in country Z: the fact that it is relatively easy to register a product, and that their biggest competitor is the number 1 seller in the region, who has put a lot of staff here. We also briefly talked about the money involved in the project, he told me 5 to 10 million Euro's. Up to this point, I heard nothing new. All this was information known by the others in the PPP-project. It was factual and did not say anything about how Pharmaco perceived this project.

Again, I tried to ask him where the idea for the project came from and how Pharmaco thought this project would help development. Instead of answering these questions, Mahir said with a sharp voice to stress his point, "it [the PPP-project] is our proposal, it is our baby. If someone wants to do something similar, okay. But they can't take it from us, no". In other words, he told me that the PPP-project is Pharmaco's project and other pharmaceutical companies should keep their hands off this project. And ever so slowly, he brought the conversation back to me asking me about my work and career aspiration and my interests and hobbies and suggesting books and places to buy things which he thought I would like. After lunch he suggested going for a coffee somewhere else and took me to one of the big malls in the city. As we sipped our coffees I tried to bring the conversation back to the PPP-project for the last time, without success. Talk about the PPP was closed for him. He invited me once more to go shopping together, but I kindly declined. I had seen enough and realized that I would not get more information from him. I paid for the coffees and that was it.

Back in the Netherlands, I contacted Pharmaco's headquarters to ask the two representatives involved in the project for an interview. One of them never replied. The other person wrote back after a long time. He informed me that he had to discuss this internally first before he could answer me. As the company was in the middle of a takeover all the family-planning activities were being screened, he wrote. Since there had not been any definitive decision taken about the future of the activities, he was not able to talk to me about this topic.

How Sonja justifies and legitimizes the PPP

Back in the Netherlands, I visited Sonja in the ministerial headquarters. Alex had accused the Ministry of hijacking his idea of a Total Market Approach to promote Dutch high-priced contraceptives produced by a company with a questionable reputation to poor people in developing countries. I wanted to hear from Sonja how she reflected on her role in assembling the project. I interviewed Sonja twice. At the time of the first interview, early 2007, she still worked in department D. When the second interview took place, one and a half years later, Sonja had another job in the headquarters and the PPP had been abandoned. Both times Sonja justified and legitimated the PPP with Pharmaco.

In our first interview, Sonja tells me how the PPP started. She says that the Minister had met Pharmaco's representative, Rob, a long time ago in Asia. There he told the Minister about Pharmaco's business. In 2004, the Minister decided to visit Pharmaco and its factory to explore if there were any opportunities to start a public-private partnership. Both sides were interested in working together, Sonja says. Ministerial officials sat down with people from Pharmaco to brainstorm how a PPP could work for both partners. Of course, the Minister had certain ideas about this partnership, Sonja points out, but she needed the thematic expertise of the officials who know about reproductive health issues and know the partners in this field. Sonja explains that her job was to identify "what makes sense" and "what is possible".

In our interview, Sonja explains that there is a Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition and that within this Coalition there is a working group on market development. Next, she describes how the market is divided in different segments. And then, she tells me where she got the idea for the PPP from:

Thus, within that Coalition, market segmentation studies are worked with, the categorizing of those countries that might possibly qualify for market development approaches, the role of social marketing is also looked into, the role of the private sector, etc. In short, one is active in a very innovative way there [in that Coalition] and I am co-chairman of that Coalition and I am also part of, I am a member of, that particular working group. Thus eh...[long silence] at a certain moment, I used that idea ehm....because during a visit of Minister Van Ardenne to [Pharmaco] eh...a very clear wish of the Minister could be sensed, one that she later also articulated, "[department D] could you look for a meaningful cooperation in the form of a partnership with [Pharmaco]". [...] At a certain moment I thought, to make it meaningful, because it's not for

the sake of public-private partnership and there should thus be a clear ground of cooperation and the cooperation should be meaningful and contribute to ... what we are working on internationally and nationally. Ehm...so I have clearly searched for our interests in that.

(Interview with Sonja, February 2007)

We can see that Sonja stresses that the project has to be “meaningful” several times in this passage. Herewith she wants to justify the project. She also describes the project in terms of “thinking out-of-the-box”, “learn and develop”, “dare to take risks”, and “have guts and want to take away walls”. This terminology is also used by the personnel department to describe the desired work attitude of officials in the Ministry. She was right that the proposed project was very uncommon in development aid. Yet, I felt that she also used these words to say that because it was uncommon, or “innovative” as she called it, it could not be judged yet. What she did not tell me was that Alex is a member of this working group, or that he presented a plan that described the problem with contraceptives in developing countries, his critique of the big western pharmaceutical companies, and his idea to bring generics into the market, promote and sell them with the goal of making contraceptives widely available and affordable through the creation of a third segment in the market.

When I asked her if it was difficult for Alex to work in a project that did not intend to promote generics, Sonja immediately raised the problems of generics. She points out that there was still a problem with capacity of generic manufacturers, the quality of the generics, and the continuity in supply. Alex, on the other hand, had pointed out that he had started a project with the help of the WHO and other organizations to test the quality of generics. Yet, Sonja had another point to make. She stressed the righteousness of Pharmaco. First of all, she brought up that Pharmaco invested a lot in research. Secondly, she stressed Pharmaco’s involvement in creating a better world by saying she had witnessed the company’s social responsibility when she and Pharmaco visited various countries (see Chapter 4). Pharmaco had donated products to various organizations and trained doctors on how to insert and remove implants. For Sonja this illustrated the company’s commitment to development.

Throughout both interviews, Sonja defends the project by pointing out that Alex’s idea to promote generics is premature. She points out that the production of generic contraceptives is still not optimal and that Pharmaco is doing good things for society. When I ask her if development money was used to promote Pharmaco’s contraceptives, Sonja is quick to point out that the Minister did not feel it was a problem. She continues by pointing out that, in her words, “supporting Dutch commerce isn’t dirty” (interview February 2006). Furthermore, she stresses that already in 1994, international donors have acknowledged at the international conference in Cairo that the public sector has to cooperate with the private sector as it cannot supply the required reproductive health products alone. Thus, Sonja justifies this project by averting questions on this particular PPP-project and pointing at the international acceptance of PPPs in general.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the assembling of a project design for a public-private partnership between the Dutch Minister and Pharmaco. This PPP-project was an initiative of Minister Van Ardenne, who wants the Ministry to work together with Pharmaco in a development project. One of her ministerial officials, Sonja Dijkstra, has been asked to come up with a project proposal.

I have reconstructed how Sonja uses the idea of the Total Market Approach designed by Alex Smith. He has designed this idea to achieve his dream of a world in which contraceptives are available and affordable for everyone. I narrate how Alex's Total Market Approach planned to introduce and promote non-western generic contraceptives in developing countries. This idea was based on Alex's belief that the current market is dominated by a group of big pharmaceutical companies, including Pharmaco, whose products are too high priced. Through the introduction and promotion of generics he wanted to try to encourage the relatively better-off women who obtain contraceptives from the public sector to buy low-priced generic contraceptives in the private market so that the public sector could distribute contraceptives to the really poor. I have showed how Sonja transformed this idea to make Alex's plan fit the Minister's requirements. Sonja kept the original idea of promoting contraceptives in the private market in developing countries, but replaced the generic contraceptives with Pharmaco's contraceptives in the plan. Thus, the project that Sonja suggests promotes Pharmaco's contraceptives in the private market. Through the transformation of the Total Market Approach Sonja ties together the Dutch Ministry and Pharmaco and mobilizes the support of both the Minister and Pharmaco's representatives.

In the assembling of the project many different actors are tied to the PPP-project. These actors each have their own dreams and aspirations that they try to realize through the project. Up to this moment, the project does not have an essence yet; it only has an essence when it is realized (cf. Latour 1996). Thus, the project still has many different meanings. For the Minister, it is a project that can realize her dream of development and, more practically, make Pharmaco care (more) for development. For Sonja, it is a project that she put together for the Minister. For Pharmaco, it is a project that can restore its good reputation and can increase its market share.

Alex's role in the project is a special one. His idea is used to design a proposal for the PPP-project without his approval. Pharmaco is not aware of how Sonja has assembled the project from Alex's idea and asks Alex and his organization to join the project. The trajectory of the project then depends on whether these actors are willing to make concessions to the project (Latour 1996). Alex has seen his project transformed into a project that he believes is improper. Yet, when Pharmaco asks him to join the partnership, he gladly accepts the invitation. What does Alex want from this project that has, in his words, "hijacked" his idea? Will Alex go along with the project? Or will he try to change and purify it? And if so, how will he do so? These questions will be answered in the next chapter where we will also see what it takes to transport the project to a developing country.

¹ All brand names mentioned here have been deleted from this passage for the reason of confidentiality.

² First, second, or third generation pills indicate the type of hormone(s) and combination of hormones used in the pill. The risks for thrombosis are higher for the 3rd generation pills than for the second ones.



Mobilization, contextualization, and transformation

In the previous chapter, we saw the assembling of the project design for a partnership between the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch pharmaceutical company, Pharmaco. In this chapter, I zoom in on the PPP-project's journey from the ministerial headquarters in The Hague to country Z.

Many books on policy studies and project management divide policy process into phases of policy design and implementation. Likewise, books on development aid talk about the implementation of development projects within a specific context (see for example World Bank and Manor 2006; Cohen and Easterly 2009). These books assume that there is something like a pre-established context (cf. Latour 1996). Yet, following Latour I argue that aid practitioners do not implement a project in a context. Instead, they give a project a context. If we want to understand the trajectory of a project we need to explore the work of contextualization. Contextualization involves the practices of the mobilization of support and enrollment of new actors in the project that make travelling journey possible (Latour 1996; Mosse 2005). These new actors bring their own dreams of development and their personal aspirations into the project. It follows that "there is no transportation without transformation- except in those miraculous cases where everybody is in total agreement about a project" (Latour 1996: 119). Thus, instead of talking about implementation, which conceives the project as an established and stable object, we should be talking about transportation of a project.

Then, this chapter explores the mobilization of support, contextualization of the project, enrollment of new actors, and the transformation of both the project and the actors that are enrolled in the project. It is divided in three different parts. In the first part, I describe how the Ministry and Pharmaco select country Z, and explain how the PPP-project is contextualized. For the reconstruction of this selection process, I used the assessment reports, e-mails about the selection process that were in the files of the PPP-project in the archives of the Dutch embassy, and my interview with Sonja, the ministerial official who completed the selection process along with representatives of Pharmaco. Following that, I explore Pharmaco's interests in country Z. I uncover Pharmaco's problematic relation with its representing agent and its dwindling market share in country Z, and I explain why this part of the story is left out of the official records and accounts of the partners in the PPP-project. Finally, I show that the PPP-project, because it was a source of hope for organizations in country Z, caused conflict between two key local actors.

The selection process

Sonja has assembled a PPP-project that both the Minister and Pharmaco support. The project hasn't been put together for a particular country. Instead, it is a general design assembled in the ministerial headquarters that should now be realized in a developing country. Hence, Sonja needs to select a developing country. She divides this selection process into two stages. First, she makes a selection at her desk in The Hague leading to an option of three countries. Then, she visits the countries, along with a representative from Pharmaco, in order to select one of these three countries.

First, Sonja starts with the list of so-called "partner countries", countries that receive Dutch bilateral development aid. The PPP-project would need to be carried out in one of these countries in order to build support and justify the project to the Ministry and Parliament. And Sonja explains, "Of course, you want [the project] to contribute to the goal of development cooperation" (interview with Sonja, October 2008). Next, Sonja selects only those countries that receive Dutch aid in the area of health. This leaves her with twelve "partner countries". Out of these twelve countries, Sonja selects three countries, X, Y, and Z. These countries, Sonja says, face problems with reproductive health products, which is measured by an so-called unmet need, which signifies the difference between women's wish to use contraceptives and their actual use, and by the reproductive health commodity security, which indicates the availability of a steady supply of affordable, varied, and quality reproductive health products, or commodities. Country X has the highest unmet need and a very weak reproductive health commodity security, country Y has weak reproductive health commodities security, and country Z has a weak to moderate reproductive health commodity security (from a file on the Minister's visit to Pharmaco). With three countries left, Sonja starts the second phase of the selection process.

To see if the PPP-project can become a success in (one of) the three countries, Sonja wants to visit them. She asks a Pharmaco employee to accompany her on the field trips. Pharmaco sends Rob, the representative for Pharmaco's projects in sub-Saharan Africa, to countries X and Y, and his colleague Eva to country Z. In September and October 2005, Sonja and the Pharmaco representatives undertake a five- to six-day visit to each of the three countries. The conclusions gathered during these visits are written down in the assessment reports. On the basis of these visits, Sonja, Rob, and Eva select country Z. Let us look at the selection process more closely and explore the assessment team's work in each of the three countries.

Country X: lack of support from government and population

The assessment reports show data on the reproductive health situation in the three countries. The numbers are drawn from reports of various international organizations such as United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Health Organization (WHO), and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). Each report includes, among other data, the number of total population, number of women of reproductive age, the percentage of women between 15-49 years who are using or whose sexual partners are using any form of contraception (the "contraceptive prevalence rate" or CPR), the percentage of women between 15-49 who are using or whose sexual partners are using any form of modern

contraception such as pills and condoms, Intra-Uterine Devices (IUDs), injectables, oral hormonal pills or implants, and the percentage of unmet needs for family planning.

The reports points out that the use of modern methods of birth control, including the pill, is lowest in country X (the modern method contraceptive use is 6.8 %, which is lower than country Y where it is 17% or country Z where it is 9.8% as the assessment reports state). Furthermore, in country X, the unmet need for family planning is stated to be high and estimated around 35-36% of a total population of more than 70 million, while in country Y it is only 22 % of a population of 36 million. Though the unmet need in country Z is largest (38.6 %), with only 20 million people, in total there are fewer people with unmet needs for contraceptives. If Sonja and Pharmaco's representatives would select the country where the number of people that use modern contraceptive methods is lowest, and the number of people with unmet needs is the largest, they would have chosen country X. Sonja and Rob also conclude that an average of 5.9 children born to a woman over her lifetime signals "a great need for expansion and improvement of family planning efforts" (Assessment Report, October 2005). Yet, the team states after its six-day visit that country X "does not qualify for the implementation of a Public-Private Partnership Plan as yet. Data suggests that conditions for successful implementation of a PPP plan cannot be met in the near future" (Assessment Report, 23 October 2005). Why did they draw this conclusion?

The main reason for Sonja and Rob's conclusion is that they experienced a lack of interest in reproductive health issues among two important actors in country X. First, they conclude that the government of X pays little attention to reproductive health commodity security. The government has no central budget allocated to the purchase of contraceptives, as it believes priority should be given to HIV/AIDS issues instead of reproductive health issues. For the procurement of contraceptives the government of X depends on donors such as the United States and Germany, the report states. The assessment report also notes that the government has refused a loan to purchase contraceptives from the World Bank. Sonja and Rob conclude that if the government is not keen on tackling reproductive health issues, it will not likely be supportive of the PPP-project.

There is another actor that can make or break the project. This actor consists of the potential buyers of Pharmaco's contraceptives in country X. Their support for the project is measured by their willingness to pay for contraceptives. Sonja and Rob take another study which says that a 10% price increase will lead to 85% less sale. These numbers signify that the potential buyers are not very supportive of a project that wants to market and sell contraceptives at commercial prices. They conclude that with the government providing all family planning services free-of-charge and pharmacies, private hospitals and NGOs selling heavily subsidized oral contraceptives at less than 0,09 euro cents, the PPP-project is unlikely to succeed.

So, despite the highest unmet need for contraceptives and the very weak reproductive health care system in country X, the two main actors in country X, the government and the potential buyers, do not support the project. That led Sonja and Rob conclude that country X was not an option for the PPP-project.

Country Y: the Dutch embassy says the project is not suitable

Next on the list of countries to visit is country Y. To mobilize support, Sonja and Rob link the PPP-project to social marketing projects. In general, social marketing projects market contraceptives and sell them at a low price to raise awareness on and increase the use of contraceptives. Often, social marketing projects create a brand name especially for the project to market and sell the contraceptives and measure the impact of the project. These types of projects are commonly considered to be successful in spreading contraceptives and improving reproductive health care. Sonja and Rob point at the success of these social marketing projects. They state that these projects “have made important strides in increasing the awareness and utilization of reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention products, particularly the condom” (assessment report, 17 November 2005). They present the PPP-project as a “social marketing *plus* project”. The report concludes that the project “is to join that success [of the social marketing projects], if all partners are committed and willing to enter into further analysis” (ibid.). By representing the PPP-project in this manner the assessment team hopes to convince agencies and people in country Y of the project’s future success and encourage them to join this success.

During the visit, Sonja and Rob see possibilities for the project (interview with Sonja, February 2007). They perceive that the government supports the project, and acknowledges the role of the private sector in mobilizing resources, since recently public-private partnerships had been actively encouraged as part of the Health Sector’s Reform policy by the Ministry of Public Health. Besides that, they note that the government of country Y is of the opinion that the country’s current fertility level is too high and that direct support for access to various contraceptive methods is needed to lower fertility rates (ibid.). Furthermore, they read from other reports that 60% of the population is under the age of 25 and, due to high levels of fertility, large and growing cohorts are entering reproductive age each year with no corresponding increase in reproductive health services (assessment report, 17 November 2005). Also, 25% of the women who either do not want more children or would like to space their births by two or more years, are not using a modern method of family planning (ibid.). Hence, Sonja and Rob conclude that the population of country Z is in need of a project that increases access and supply to contraceptives, that there is support from the government and that, thus, further steps can be taken to realize the project.

However, the Dutch embassy in country Y objects to the conclusions in the assessment report. In a memo to department D at the headquarters, the embassy health expert comments on the assessment report. He writes:

It is surprising to note that the most relevant comments made by [the Ministry of Public Health of country Y], donor partner group, [a family planning NGO], and the RNE [Royal Netherlands Embassy] are not reflected in this Draft report very well. All these key partners stated that they are skeptical of the existence of a large market for Oral Contraceptives at a cost of 4-6 USD per cycle. They do not believe that addressing this high end of the market will have any relevant impact on the FP [family planning] coverage, nor will it substantially

reduce the problems [country Y] faces with regard to Rep. [Reproductive] Health Commodities Supplies (RHCS). In short, addressing this high end of the market is not considered a development priority, nor is it understood why development funds and time should be spent on this.

(Memo from health expert of embassy country Y to department D, 22 December 2005)

Whereas Sonja and Rob conclude in their report that there is a need for the project and that there is sufficient support for the PPP-project, the health expert opposes these conclusions. He points out that many key partners do not believe that there is a market for high-end contraceptives nor that the promotion and selling of these products is a solution for the problem of contraceptives in country Y. Hence, the conclusion of this memo is that these key partners do not support the project. The Dutch embassy tells the assessment team that there had already been problems with a similar project by the United States and a large international NGO in country Y (interview with Sonja, October 2008).

So, we see here how the assessment team and the Dutch embassy contextualize the PPP-project differently. Whereas Sonja and Rob envisage a pre-existing context in which the project fits, the embassy concludes that the project “doesn’t suit the country Y” (ibid.). Because the embassy opposes to the project, Sonja decides against the option of carrying out the project in country Y.

Country Z: the best option for concrete results

The assessment team, this time consisting of Sonja and Eva, pay a last five-day visit to country Z. They conclude that “the information produced by this assessment is sufficient to designate [country Z] as a country for the implementation of a Public Private Partnership Plan” (assessment report, 11 November 2005). Z proves to be the country where support is greatest and opposition is minimal.

First of all, Sonja and Eva conclude from other studies that country Z “has one of the highest rates of population growth”, that “[d]esired fertility rates are more than two children less than the total fertility rate” and that “[t]he demand for contraception is not fully met whilst resources for public health are inadequate” (assessment report, 11 November 2005). So, in country Z, there is a request and need for contraceptives. The PPP-project, they reason, can suit this demand.

The political and institutional situations in country Z are also supportive of the project, they conclude in their report. To begin with, they sum up a number of policies that support the project. For example, they remark that the national poverty reduction strategy addresses population growth. Other policies that they believe will support the PPP-project are the strategic vision, the five-year development plan, the population policy 2001/2025 and sector strategies that set objectives in terms of population, gender and basic social services, including reproductive health (assessment report, 11 November 2005). They point at these policies to indicate that the government supports the project and that the project addresses the issues that the government tries to tackle.

Besides government support, Sonja and Eva point out that the President himself is committed to family planning. In the report, they highlight that he supports the national campaign for family planning. They include a copy of a campaign poster to show this commitment, explaining “[t]he President of [country Z] is featured on posters produced by the National Population Council such as the one below. His statements, printed on these posters, declare that religious leaders have a key role to play in stressing the importance of family planning, and that extensive population growth depletes resources for national development” (assessment report, 11 November 2005). They point out that not only the government through its policies but also the President himself feels that family planning is an important issue. By putting these statements in the report, they implicitly suggest that the President supports the PPP-project.

Sonja and Eva also mobilize and assess support among government officials in country Z. They conclude that, at different levels in the Ministry of Public Health of Z, officials “are keen to organize and manage contraceptive services and products in line with the desires of women who want to exercise control over their fertility” (assessment report, 11 November 2005). In addition to the officials’ willingness to carry out activities to deliver contraceptive services, they indicate that this Ministry has a separate budget for reproductive health commodities for the public sector. With this, Sonja and Eva try to point out that besides the support of ministerial officials, the project can also count on the indirect institutional support of country Z’s Ministry of Public Health. And though they note that this Ministry “lacks manpower, resources and management structure”, they write that the officials they talked to “expressed an interest on effectively structuring and monitoring the market” (assessment report, 11 November 2005). In other words, Sonja and Eva highlight that the officials of the Ministry of Public Health want to create a situation that facilitate the project and help realize its goals. According to the report, the PPP-project also gained support from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and “NGOs including, for example, the women’s union” (assessment report, 11 November 2005).

Another group that is important for Sonja and Eva is the people of country Z. Their decision to buy or not to buy Pharmaco’s contraceptives will determine the success or failure of the project. Sonja and Eva aim for the project to create a demand for Pharmaco’s products through marketing strategies. Yet, they do not know whether people are willing to pay for these contraceptives, as there is limited data on willingness to pay (assessment report, 11 November 2005). Hence, this is something that they have to assess. Despite the lack of “hard” data on people’s willingness to pay, Sonja and Eva believe that the people of country Z will support the project. The report states:

Costs were not stated to be an important reason for not intending to use contraception. By culture the [Z] people does not value free of charge commodities and it is proven that a financial contribution enlarges the personal commitment to continue with a method. Reasons given for not using contraceptives ranged from fear of side effects and health concerns and [from] not knowing a method to [motives inspired by] religion. Out-of-pocket health expenditures in [country Z] are substantial.

(Assessment report, 11 November 2005)

Here we see how Sonja and Eva create a context for the project to fit in. Sonja and Eva draw on a World Bank report that says that people in country Z pay a significant fee directly from their pocket to health services providers and conclude that thus people do not mind paying. Furthermore, they cite an unknown source that indicates that people do not use contraceptives for fear of side effects and religious motives and conclude that it is not due to financial reasons that they do not use contraceptives. Then, their final conclusion is that “by culture the [Z] people do not value commodities that are free of charge” and, so, tie the people of country Z to the project. In this description, we are told that the project is suitable for their culture. In other words, the project fits in the context of country Z. But, this context was not there before the project. Instead, it is the outcome of the work of contextualization. As a result, the project appears to be supported by the people of country Z. To justify a project that encourages people to pay for contraceptives, the report states that, “It has been proven that a financial contribution enlarges the personal commitment to continue with a method,” (assessment report, 11 November 2005). In other words, the report says that, not only do the people want to pay, but it is also better for their development to pay for contraceptives. So, in the assessment report Sonja and Eva have mobilized the people of country Z to support and to justify the project that even though they do not know about the project’s existence.

Based on the visits to countries X, Y, and Z, Sonja and her boss, Mieke, write in a memo to the Minister that “country Z stands an excellent chance as the best option for cooperation with regards to concrete results” (internal memo from head of department D to the Minister, 14 November 2005). Sonja, Rob and Eva have concluded that only country Z provides enough potential support to realize the project. Here Sonja and Eva mobilized the largest amount of support for the project and encountered little objection.

Outside the report: the story of Pharmaco in country Z

Through contextualization meaning is given to a project or program. Contextualization is not only about connecting particular people, events, situations, and phenomena a project to but also about keeping others out. In the case of the PPP-project, the assessment team does not talk about the Pharmaco’s commercial activities in country Z in the assessment report. Sonja and Eva omit Pharmaco’s business practices in country Z in the context that they create for the project. The result of this contextualization is that the assessment report presents the PPP-project as a development project rather than a commercial project.

To understand the work of contextualization, we need to understand why particular stories are left out. That is, these stories can tell us a lot about how meanings are manipulated. Furthermore, they tell us about the interests of different actors in projects. In the case of the PPP-project, Pharmaco’s business activities and its past successes and failures in country Z give us insight into why Pharmaco is interested in undertaking the project in this particular country. Furthermore, it can help us understand why this information is not in the assessment report.

Pharmaco has been present in the country for more than 20 years. Yet, there is no information about its work in country Z in the Ministry’s files. Hence, to get information about Pharmaco and about the pharmaceutical industry in country Z in general, I talked

to many people working in the pharmaceutical industry, including Pharmaco's sales representatives, sales representatives of Pharmaco's competitors, and people who had previously worked for Pharmaco. The pharmaceutical world appeared to be small: they all knew each other. And their accounts of Pharmaco's business were more or less the same: Pharmaco's market share is limited due to two critical events that took place in the 1980s and 1990s. But before I go into details, let me first tell you a bit more about the country Z's pharmaceutical market in general.

Like in many other developing countries, the pharmaceutical industry is a profitable business in country Z. Most medicines are available over the counter, which means that you do not need a prescription from a doctor to buy medicine. This makes it an interesting place for pharmaceutical companies to do business. If a company wants to do business, it needs to work with a local agent. The agent will take care of the whole process from clearing the product when it arrives in the port, to marketing the product, to distributing the products across the country, and to having products approved for market entry by the national Pharmaceutical authority of country Z. Without such an agent, it is almost impossible to get goods into the country and sell them in the private market. Even with an agent, clearing products is a difficult process as customs are controlled by the army. Stories abound of companies, and NGOs, that have had problems with clearing a shipment of pharmaceutical products and products stored by customs who withhold them for unknown reasons. In other words, without a local agent, there is no business in country Z. This applies to all types of commercial activities, not only to the pharmaceutical product trade.

A large number of agents assist the pharmaceutical product business. Most of them are located near the capital's central square. The local agent sells the products not to the pharmacists but to sub-agents. As it takes a lot of time and effort for pharmacists to go to the different local agents to obtain a wide selection of products and negotiate a good price, the pharmacists buy their products from the sub-agents. These sub-agents are small traders that buy a wide variety of pharmaceutical products from the local agents, store them in their tiny shop, and resell these products to pharmacies. It is important for the local agent to maintain a good relationship with the sub-agents in order to negotiate good deals and prevent the sub-agents from selling products that are smuggled into the country or fake products that illegitimately use the (brand) names of big pharmaceutical companies, such as Pharmaco. To a large extent success and failure of pharmaceutical companies' business depends on the local agent's work to enter, create, maintain, and protect the market.

Pharmaco has been promoting and selling its products in country Z for more than 20 years through its local agent, the National Pharmaceutical Company (NPC). The NPC sprang from an organization that was established by the military in the 1970s. The President, who is a former military officer that came to power long ago, used this military organization to stabilize and expand state power. He appointed family members and relatives in crucial positions, including in the future NPC. The organization was placed under the Ministry of Supply and, in that position, it largely controlled the import, distribution and marketing of foreign goods. In the mid-1980s, the organization merged with a commercial organization into a military-commercial complex that generated great personal wealth for those in

control of this new company. The military-commercial company played a crucial role in securing and expanding state power through the control over consumption goods and tribal land that was bought or appropriated. The National Pharmaceutical Company is one of the sub-companies of this military-economic complex that had many of the major foreign pharmaceutical companies under its wing.

Pharmaco used to be one of the best-selling companies, people working in the pharmaceutical industry tell me. Yet, I also learn from them that currently its market share is very small. They point out that the decline of Pharmaco's business in country Z has much to do with past events concerning the local agent, the National Pharmaceutical Company. So, I decide to go pay a visit to Pharmaco's local agent.

I made a call to Kamal, Pharmaco's representative in country Z, to plan a meeting. He suggested I come to his office, which is located near the main square. As I follow the directions I notice that I am in a pharmaceutical quarter. A small number of streets housed pharmaceutical companies or agents and numerous tiny 6 m² stores that look like pharmacies, but which are the sub-agents, as I later learn. According to my information, a green building houses the National Pharmaceutical Company. When I enter the building I start to doubt whether this is the office, as the building looks abandoned and dust settles on the stairs. On the first floor, there are a number of empty rooms that must have been former offices. Yet, on the next floor I find a door with a sheet of paper hanging above it, saying "scientific office [Pharmaco]". I walk in and introduce myself to a man who turns out to be one of the two Pharmaco representatives. A little later, I meet his colleague, Kamal, a young and scrawny looking man. The two young men represent Pharmaco's business in country Z and work from this office in the National Pharmaceutical Company (NPC). From my talk with Kamal and with other people working in the pharmaceutical industry I later come to understand that the empty and abandoned offices are symbolic of the NPC's state of affairs and Pharmaco's current position in the market. To grasp Pharmaco's interest in undertaking the PPP-project in country Z, we need to explore the relationship between Pharmaco and its local agent over time. Two critical events had an effect on the relationship between Pharmaco and its local agent, and, in the end, on Pharmaco's business.

The first critical event that led to the decline of Pharmaco's market was the world oil crisis in the early 1980s. As oil prices rose in the 1970s, Europe, Northern America and Japan went into a recession in the early 1980s. Due to the recession in these countries, foreign aid to country Z and remittances from Z's people working in oil states were reduced. The foreign currency reserves country Z's government dissolved. To prevent inflation, imports were drastically restrained. Consumers were encouraged to buy local products and local production increased. It could very well be the reason why the military-commercial company established a factory for the production of pharmaceuticals in 1982. Yet, this company did not produce hormonal contraceptives, as their production requires high-tech manufacturing equipment and techniques, such as a sterile environment, which the company could not arrange. So, for contraceptives the country was still dependent on foreign products.

Due to inflation, these foreign products, including contraceptives, became more and more expensive. The National Pharmaceutical Company wanted to keep contraceptives on the market and asked the pharmaceutical companies to help them out as prices kept

rising every day. Pharmaco was willing to absorb 50% of the losses while the other 50% had to be paid by the National Pharmaceutical Company. For the National Pharmaceutical Company this meant a great financial setback. Pharmaco's argument was that they worked with expensive hormones and therefore could not absorb more losses. Yet, Pharmaco's main competitor, who also worked with the NPC, absorbed 100% of the losses due to inflation. All pharmaceutical companies faced great losses. Some of them decided to stop doing business through the National Pharmaceutical Company and sought other ways to penetrate the market. Others stayed and waited to see what was going to happen.

Nonetheless, companies could not change agents easily. A foreign company can only shift from one local agent to another when the first agent agrees to the transfer. So, many companies that might have preferred to work with another agent were prevented from doing so because the National Pharmaceutical Company did not allow them to leave the company. Yet, in the early 1990s, an opportunity to change agents arose when the President appointed one of his relatives as the new director of the National Pharmaceutical Company. This new director was willing to negotiate the companies' release. It is said that many companies saw their opportunity to change agents. They paid the director and (part of) the board of directorates in exchange for their "release". The money went straight into the director's pockets and those some of the members in the pharmaceutical corporation's board. All this was done behind closed doors, but most people working the pharmaceutical market in country Z are aware of this. They refer to it as a huge corruption scandal. This scandal is the second critical event that led to the downfall of Pharmaco's market share. Companies saw their opportunity to change agents and new agents entered the market. The initial three agents that controlled the market saw their competition rise. Agents that imported food, furniture and cars, now seized the opportunity to expand their business to the lucrative pharmaceutical market.

A gold trader in the capital took notice of the money-making market in pharmaceuticals. He decided to invest in this business and made a deal with the head of the National Pharmaceutical Company. The gold trader paid a substantial amount of money to take over Pharmaco and two other, small, foreign pharmaceutical companies. At the end of the 1990s, he took Pharmaco from the NPC and worked as its local agent from the building of the NPC near the central square. Having no experience in the pharmaceutical market, his management of Pharmaco products led to a dramatic decline in sales.

In 2002, when the President visited the corporation, he found out that nearly all foreign pharmaceutical companies had been sold to other agents. He closed down the office of the National Pharmaceutical Company so that no more business could be done from that building. Furthermore, he appointed a new director to the NPC with the instruction to reclaim the companies that were sold. The NPC went to court where it received the verdict that they could only take back the companies that were registered as theirs in the Ministry of Industry and Trade. As the gold trader had not registered the three companies he bought from the director of the NPC, he had to return the companies including Pharmaco. Yet, he disagreed claiming that he had paid a significant amount for the companies. He went to the most prominent tribal leader in country Z. Yet, this tribal leader told him that this is a case for the State and that he could not help him. Next, the gold trader lodged an appeal against the verdict. However, the court stayed its verdict and

judged that the companies belonged to the NPC. Pharmaco came back into the hands of the NPC. Nonetheless, the gold trader was upset and angry as he had lost a lot of money. He threatened people who worked or wanted to work for Pharmaco that they should not continue their business. He told them not to open the office and stressed that no one had the right to open the office because it was his. Some say that the failed attack on the life of the NPC's general manager at the end of 2002 was his work. According to these stories, the gold trader had hired hit men that riddled the general manager's car with bullets.

Pharmaco was most unhappy with the dispute between the gold trader and the NPC. To keep its business going in country Z, Pharmaco's regional representative asked another local agent to clear and distribute the products that had been manufactured for the country. The agent accepted this offer. The agent bought the products, collected and stored them in its warehouse in the port, and waited for the paperwork to be finished so the products could be distributed. The NPC heard about the business deal between Pharmaco and the new agent, and prevented the distribution of the products. It asked the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Public Health to investigate this deal claiming that Pharmaco was their business and that the other agent illegally traded Pharmaco's products. The Ministries concluded that the products had not entered the country illegally, as there were signed documents of permission for import. However, by the time the government inspections were finished the products were expired and could not be distributed in the country. The local agent was stuck with a huge financial loss. And Pharmaco had not succeeded in distributing and selling its products.

At the time the assessment team had to select a country to carry out the PPP-project, Pharmaco's business in country Z was in a poor state. For Pharmaco, the PPP-project was a great way to regain its market share. While its main competitor had expanded its business, Pharmaco's business was damaged by the conflicts between different parties that wanted to represent Pharmaco in country Z. No one in the Dutch embassy knew about these conflicts. And the question remains as to whether Sonja did. All the same, this information is not in the assessment report.

New actors enter the PPP

To transport a project from one place to another support needs to be mobilized. This mobilization of support took place during the visits of Sonja and Eva to country Z. Yet support also needs to be kept. At the same time, new actors need to be enrolled in the project to make it real and operational. Let us take a closer look at this process.

Now that country Z has been selected, Sonja and Pharmaco's representative, Eva, need to decide who is going to market and sell Pharmaco's contraceptives in country Z. As a general practice, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs finances other organizations to run its projects: it does not carry out development projects itself. Pharmaco could market and sell its products in the private market in country Z through its local agent, but given the problems with its local agent this is not considered a good option. Sonja and Pharmaco want to market and sell the contraceptives in the social market instead of the private market, which -given the long-running troubles Pharmaco has with its agent- seems

like a good strategy. This way, the project can avoid the problems that Pharmaco has encountered in the private market. The focus on the social market means that the Ministry and Pharmaco have to involve a local partner in the project.

The future partner needs to work at the grassroots level or have clinics where women come to receive a consultation. This makes two types of partners eligible for the job of marketing and selling the contraceptives: the government and NGOs. Yet, Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry prefer to work with an NGO. To be included as partner in the PPP, the NGO needs to support the project, have the credentials to do the job, and be able to demonstrate these qualifications in some way. Based on these criteria, Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry choose the Organization for Reproductive Health in country Z (ORH) as the third partner in the PPP-project. Let us look at how Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry selected an organization that could carry out the project in country Z.

Before the assessment team made their field visits, Pharmaco had asked three international NGOs working on reproductive health issues to present a bid for the PPP-project for each of the countries X, Y, and Z. One of the three international NGOs chooses not to bid for the project, because it does not have a local counterpart organization that can market and sell Pharmaco's products in country Z. The other two international NGOs make a bid for the project in country Z. During the visit to country Z, the assessment team talks with the local counterpart organizations of these two international NGOs and with three other local NGOs. In the assessment report it seems as if all five organizations were in the running for becoming the project's local partner. Yet, given that bidding had taken place before, it appears that the choice was actually between the two organizations that made the bid. Sonja and Eva learn that one of these two organizations has management problems. As these problems could affect the PPP in a negative way, Sonja and Eva prefer to work with the other organization. This other organization is the Local Organization for Reproductive Health. The local ORH is an organization that provides and campaigns for sexual and reproductive health care and rights with support of its affiliate international network organization, the International Organization for Reproductive Health (International ORH) (see also previous chapter). If the local ORH has the credentials to do the job and is able to show this, then Sonja and Eva want this organization to become the third partner in the project.

The assessment team gets a good impression of the local ORH. It seems to support the project and has qualified, trained, and experienced staff. Its director, Abdul, has been educated as a pharmacologist, has previously worked for a Dutch development project in which he was responsible for medical supplies, and has been the local sales representative for Pharmaco's biggest competitor in country Z. Furthermore, he is an amiable person. The assessment team believes the local ORH has the credentials to turn the PPP-project into a success. Yet, Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry want the local ORH to prove that it can market and sell Pharmaco's products. To that end, Pharmaco donates a number of contraceptive products for the local ORH to market and sell. The local ORH sells all contraceptive pills and thereby proves that it can do the job.

In order to take part in the PPP-project the local Organization for Reproductive Health needs to adapt its way of working. The local Organization for Reproductive Health has always worked on a non-profit basis, advising women on reproductive health. It now needs

to start marketing and selling Pharmaco's contraceptives. The contraceptive pills currently offered by the local ORH in its clinics are produced by Pharmaco's biggest competitor in country Z. This pill has a simple hormonal composition and is an older version of the contraceptive pill. It is very cheap and the women who use this pill have few complaints according to Abdul and a nurse who works in one of the local ORH clinics. Abdul says that the local ORH has been content to work with this product for a long time. For the local ORH, which aims to reach the poorer women, this cheap pill is just fine. Now the Dutch Ministry and Pharmaco propose that the local ORH to market and sell two of Pharmaco's contraceptive pills. Compared to the product that the local ORH sells, Pharmaco's pills are newer products with a more advanced hormonal composition. But it is also about 5 times more expensive than the contraceptive pill that they currently advise women to take. Is the local ORH willing to participate in this PPP-project and transform its way of working?

Director Abdul does not see the marketing and selling of Pharmaco's products as a problem. He believes the PPP-project can help the local ORH reach its goal. With the project, the local ORH can now sell both Pharmaco's pills and a cheaper pill from the competitor. He explains that the doctors promote Pharmaco's products to women who are better-off by telling them that now they have a superior product, a product that is the latest generation of contraceptives. On the other hand, Abdul says, the women who are really poor will not have to buy Pharmaco's contraceptives at the organization's clinics. Instead, they will receive the competitor's pills for free. This will not harm them, he points out, because the two products are chemically almost the same. It is only a matter of promoting different brands to different groups, he believes. The money that will be raised through this project, Abdul continues, can be spent on improving the services to people. The money can be used to buy more mobile clinics, with which the organization can provide services to remote areas. Abdul concludes, "[a]t the end of the day, I'm spreading the services. Okay, I'm getting some money, but this money allows me to continue [providing services]". He sees this project as an opportunity for his organization to expand its work to areas that lack any reproductive health services. By using commercial techniques of marketing and selling products for profit, the NGO wants to achieve social goals.

The PPP-project: A source of hope

Those actors whose support the assessment team had tried to mobilize, saw the PPP-project as a means to realize their dreams and aspirations. In a place such as country Z, where the number of donors is limited and development funding is meager, new projects are a scarce source of hope. The visit of the assessment team raised expectations among the different people whom the team informed about a new reproductive health project of the Dutch government in country Z. The team also asked some of them if they were willing to support the project. Whether or not the assessment team told them about the project's financial aspects is not clear, but these people all said that the project came with a budget of five million euro. People fantasized what they could do with this budget. They came to see the project as an opportunity to realize their dreams of development and personal aspirations. Yet, the project could not fulfill everyone's dreams and aspirations. Furthermore, the project damaged existing relations between the Dutch government and

organizations in country Z. What followed was a major struggle over the project. In short, the mobilization of support resulted in a major conflict over the PPP.

Whose dreams of development and aspirations cannot be realized through the project? First of all, there is the Ministry of Public Health in country Z. In September 2005, Sonja and Eva talked to the Deputy Minister and a number of top executives of the Ministry of Public Health to explain the PPP-project to them and assess their willingness to support it. To realize the project, it needed support from the government of country Z and in particular of the local Ministry of Public Health. The government of country Z can permit or forbid the presence of an aid organization in its country. Furthermore, the PPP-project aims to reform the supply of contraceptives in country Z, which, Sonja and Eva expect, will change the government's contraceptive supply. So, support of the Ministry of Public Health is essential.

The Deputy Minister expressed her willingness to support the project in the meetings with Sonja and Eva in September. She also pointed out that she wants her Ministry to carry out the project. However, Sonja and Eva judged that the Ministry was not suited for that job as "the MOHP lacks the manpower and resources and management structure, especially beyond the district level" (assessment report, 11 November 2005). Instead, they wanted the Ministry of Public Health to help realize the project by giving "fast track approvals for registration of products related to the PPP". Furthermore, they wanted both the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Finance to help "eliminate fees, taxes, and charges on contraceptives" and "if required, combined with price control on contraceptive commodities by the [Ministry of Public Health]" (ibid.). In other words, the assessment team wanted the Ministry of Public Health to create the conditions that the teams believed were necessary for the project.

After the assessment team's visit, the Deputy Minister of Public Health asked her advisory committee of health experts for a meeting to discuss the project. They recommended her to be cautious as they judged that the project was overly ambitious and ambiguous. Also consultants, Alex and John (see Chapter 3), warned her not to accept a project that only works with Pharmaco and to clearly tell the Dutch government that other (generic) manufacturers needed to be included in the project. Yet, the Deputy Minister wanted to get a hold of the project and have her Ministry manage it.

To find out how officials of the Ministry of Public Health felt about the project, I had an interview with one of its Directors-General (interview with Director-General Ministry of Public Health country Z, December 2006), a young man who had studied public health issues in the London School of Economics and had worked as a medical representative for one of the big pharmaceutical companies. When we come to talk about the PPP-project in the interview, his tone becomes more hostile and, in his responses, he expresses his frustration and that of the Deputy Minister. My conclusion after the interview is that top officials in the Ministry of Public Health were irritated about their role in the project design and execution.

To begin with the Director-General says that the Ministry is displeased that the Dutch government did not consult the Ministry of Public Health in country Z when designing the project. He explains that, in the stakeholder meeting held in June 2006, the Dutch government presented a full-fledged project for the Ministry of Public Health to accept or

not. Then it also became clear that not only the Ministry but the local ORH would be the local partner to carry out the project in country Z. The Director-General explains how this choice between accepting or not was not an easy one:

It was just like, something has been done, cooked, and... accept it or not. It was very difficult for us, because if you reject it then you are doing harm to your country and if you are not accepting you are showing a bad attitude towards partners and donors that you are not cooperating [...] For the Minister of Public Health and the government, it is not good when you say no when someone gives you something. And at the same time, if you accept it, you have to accept it with the preconditions that are on top of it.

(Interview with Director-General Ministry of Public Health country Z, December 2006)

The Ministry of Public Health is asked to approve and support a 5 million euro project. The Ministry feels the project does not acknowledge their key role in the supply of contraceptives to the public. Yet, as the Deputy Minister wants to get the project and the money that comes with it, she states in the stakeholder meeting that the government of country Z is very much interested in the PPP.

Related to this is the Ministry's discontent with the selection of a local NGO, the local ORH, to carry out the project. The Director-General says, "As I said at the beginning, we do not have anything against [the PPP-project]. But they [the Dutch government] seemed to be very much involved with it without our knowledge, and our presence in the pre-selection. So it comes to one point: ownership, the national ownership, and the selection process" (interview with Director-General Ministry of Public Health country Z, December 2006). He tells me the selection of the NGO was non-transparent and illogical. Instead, he claims, the Ministry is a logical partner for the PPP-project. The first reason, the Director-General says, is that the local ORH has no advantage when it comes to the marketing and selling of contraceptives. Secondly, he feels as representative of the public sector in country Z, that the Ministry of Public Health should be the owner of any project. With this statement he refers to the Dutch embassy's policy of promoting national ownership. That means the embassy believes that the national government of country Z should manage and control the development initiatives in its own country. Therefore, the embassy should try to reduce the number of fragmented projects and build a strong Ministry of Public Health. This project contradicts the embassy's practices and the Director-General stresses this point. A third reason why the Director-General says this project is illogical is because it is not what the name says it is: a public-private partnership. He says that the PPP with Pharmaco and the local ORH is not a public-private partnership but a private-private partnership. This means that the Director-General categorizes the NGO as part of the private sector. To make the project a true public-private partnership in country Z, he says, the Ministry of Public Health should manage the project instead of the NGO. Moreover, he stresses that, since the project intersects with the public sector, the Ministry of Public Health should safeguard the project.

Whose support is needed?

When Sonja and Eva visit country Z in September 2005, they talk with representatives of organizations active in the field of reproductive health issues. They tell them that the Dutch government wants to set up a new health project to increase contraceptive security. People have heard that the project comes with 5 million euro. The local ORH and the Minister of Public Health of country Z are interested. Yet, the Minister of Public Health and the Dutch embassy have asked Sonja for clarification of the project. Hence, in June 2006, Sonja requests consultant Alex to organize a meeting. She hopes that Alex can clear up any doubts about the project and make the next step in its realization. But the meeting becomes a fiasco.

Rather than creating support for the project, the meeting creates a new enemy. The United Nations Family Planning Association (UNFPA), the main player in the field of sexual and reproductive health, population and development strategies, is not invited to the meeting. Initially Alex and the local ORH wanted to discuss the project with a broad range of people and organizations and began to informally invite these organizations, including the UNFPA. Yet, Sonja tells Alex that only the main stakeholders should be invited. These organizations sent high-level representatives of their organizations because they considered the PPP-project with its 5 million euro budget important. Because the meeting takes place in a hotel where one could walk in and out, many people who hear of the meeting join in. The UNFPA, however, was not present. When the director of the UNFPA finds out, he is furious. This marginalizes the role of the UNFPA in country Z and does not make him look good as director of the organization. And so, he calls the Dutch ambassador to tell him, bluntly, how he feels.

The meeting destabilizes the already fragile relationship between the UNFPA and the Dutch embassy. The Dutch government works with the UNFPA on various projects. It is one of its biggest funders, and the UN-organization is dependent on money from donors to carry out activities. One of the UNFPA projects that the Dutch government finances in country Z concerns the procurement of contraceptives. The Dutch government pays the UNFPA to procure the contraceptives in the international market for the government of country Z. The UNFPA has been doing this for country Z since the mid 1980s. Besides the procurement of contraceptives for the government of country Z, the UNFPA also carries out two other projects financed by the Dutch embassy and DfID. Now the embassy wants to end these projects or at least reduce the organization's weight in family health projects and programs in country Z because the health expert believes that the government of country Z should be doing these projects. The fact that the health expert had applied for the UNFPA director's position but did not get it, might also have played a role. Whatever the reasons, the relationship between the UNFPA and the Dutch embassy is tense and the proposed PPP-project will only marginalize the role of the UNFPA more.

So, this meeting damages the already difficult relation between the Dutch embassy and UNFPA. But how problematic is that? None of the other actors involved in the project feel that the UNFPA should be included in the project and, for that reason, they do not mind that the UNFPA was not invited to the meeting. Only the facilitator John thinks that the UNFPA should have been invited, not because of the project, but to join the

discussion on how to tackle the problem of contraceptives. However, for the realization of the PPP-project UNFPA's lack of support does not seem to be a problem.

However, after the meeting a problem arises with one of the actors. This actor is not given the role it wants in the project, but its support is needed to realize the project. In the assessment report, Sonja and Eva had stated under "conditions for success" that "interaction between the PPP and the [Ministry of Public Health in country Z] should be formalized, whereby both effective co-operation and mutual independency will be safeguarded". They need the Ministry's support to realize the project and the Deputy Minister knows that. But does the Deputy Minister want to support to the project without getting something in return? She does not seem to be willing to give her support if her Ministry will not be the main local partner in the project.

The Deputy Minister feels the public-private partnership should involve her Ministry. She wants her Ministry to control this project in country Z. Therefore, the Ministry sets up a directory for partnerships to handle projects like this one. She wants her Ministry to be the local organization that carries out this project instead of the local ORH that Sonja and Eva selected. The Deputy Minister claims that her Ministry is the eligible partner for this project in country Z because, she says, it is the government of country Z. But also, the Deputy Minister uses her position to gain control over the project. She tells Alex and John that if the Dutch Ministry will not give her Ministry of Public Health the project, she will not approve of the project (interview with Alex and John, November 2006). If the Ministry of Public Health does not approve of the project in country Z, it will be impossible to realize the PPP there. So, how are the Dutch Ministry, Pharmaco, and Alex and John going to handle this situation?

Incompatible dreams?

The struggle between the local ORH and the Ministry of Public Health in country Z is not the only problem the project has to deal with. The project has included a number of actors who have their own dreams and aspirations. To increase the reality of the project the actors included need to compromise (Latour 1996: 99). They do not have to give up on their dreams, but they do need to compromise on their expectation that the project can realize their dreams and aspirations. What does that mean in practice?

Alex, the director of a for-profit organization that aims to improve access to contraceptives, was asked by Pharmaco to set up the project in country Z (see previous chapter). His dream is to make contraceptives available and affordable for everyone in developing countries, which, he believes, can be realized by marketing and selling low-priced contraceptives in the private market. He had taken on the job because he hoped the project would bring him closer to his dream. Yet, he is not convinced that the PPP will make contraceptives more accessible in the long-run if the project only promotes Pharmaco contraceptives. Pharmaco's contraceptives are high-priced and although Pharmaco will lower the prices for the project, Alex believes that the company will not continue to do so after the project has finished. He feels it is morally wrong to create a demand for products that will later increase in price. For that reason, he judges that the project is not honest and straightforward. On top of that, he does not want the good

reputation of his organization being used to provide credibility to such a project. Hence, Alex tries to transform the project using different strategies that continuously change.

First, Alex involves John in the project. He is a former researcher at the WHO and now a freelance consultant. John and Alex have worked on another project that helped improve access to contraceptives in developing countries (see previous chapter). Because Alex is hired by Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry, as his organization is selected to carry out the project, he feels he cannot openly criticize the project. But John, as independent consultant can. So Alex asks John to facilitate the meeting in country Z. In that meeting John, and later also Alex, inform the different organizations, including the Ministry of Public Health, the local ORH, and the Dutch embassy, of their reservations about the current PPP-project. They explain to them that Pharmaco's role in the project is problematic. They also explain how they think a PPP could work to improve the supply of contraceptives in country Z. John and Alex want the organizations in country Z to request the Dutch Ministry to include the marketing and selling of generic contraceptives in the project.

The Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Public Health recognizes the potential problems sketched by Alex, but she wants this project to be realized in country Z and she wants the project under the control of her Ministry. She is willing to accept Pharmaco's role as she told Alex and John, "we can use this [project], because it will help us develop capacity in the Ministry. We take control of this and we'll use [Pharmaco]. This is a pilot project and after the pilot is finished, we will have learned how to do it, and then you can bring in the generic manufacturers" (interview with Alex and John, November 2006). So, at the end of the meeting she states that the government of Z is very interested in the PPP, that the project is new and various issues need to be solved, but that solutions can be found. So, she stresses that though the PPP-project needs negotiation, it will be realized in country Z with support from her Ministry.

Weeks after the meeting the Deputy Minister discusses with health experts from different organizations working in country Z, how to deal with the proposed PPP-project. It is decided that, prior to this meeting the technical group, Alex and John would write a document that describes how the PPP in the market of country Z will work. But Alex and John do not know how to continue. They do not want to continue to support this project that, in their view, is not a proper Total Market Approach. For the project to keep their support it needs to include low-priced generic contraceptives.

Alex and John are pondering how to change the project. Their first strategy did not work, so they have to come up with a new strategy. While they are thinking what to do, Pharmaco's representative, Rob, has become impatient and sends Alex and the Dutch Ministry the following e-mail; "we have to conclude that 2 weeks after the meeting there has been radio silence towards [country Z], whereas the meeting with NGOs and donors [the technical group] will be held next Tuesday and we only have a few days left to avoid unnecessary irritation in [country Z]". He urges Alex to finish the document and send it to the local counterparts so that they can approve the project and the promotion and sale of contraceptives can begin. Alex writes to Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry "Ideally, we would expect to have finished a little earlier, but it has been a difficult task to develop a paper that attempts to satisfy the concerns of the variety of different parties" (from e-mail communication).

Alex and John then decide to write the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to explain their problem with the PPP. They hope that the Ministry will see that this project is not benefiting anyone but Pharmaco and that they will then decide to enroll generic manufacturers in the project. In this letter, Alex and John ask the Dutch Ministry to reconsider Pharmaco's role in the project. They propose three options to the Dutch headquarters (interview with Alex and John, November 2006). The first option is a project that includes Pharmaco. In the letter to the headquarters, Alex and John sum up all the advantages and disadvantages of this project and write that they do not believe this is a proper Total Market Approach, but if the Ministry wants to do this, that is fine by them. Then Alex and John will reconsider whether or not they will continue with this project. The second option is a project that works with Pharmaco's contraceptives, but that also includes other products and markets and sells these products in the private market at low costs. The third option is to undertake what they call a proper Total Market Approach. This means that the project forgets about Pharmaco and instead introduces, promotes and sells high quality generics from low cost manufacturers in the private sector, as Alex once had proposed to the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, in which Sonja participated (see Chapter 3). These are the three options John and Alex propose to Sonja, saying that she has to make a decision as the Minister has given her instructions explaining what she must do.

Alex and John also point out that they have problems with the role claimed by the Ministry of Public Health of country Z. They want the role of the Ministry as described in the assessment report, namely to create the necessary conditions for the project's undertaking. Furthermore, they believe that the project cannot go to the Ministry because the Ministry has neither the expertise nor the skills to carry out the project. Besides that, Alex's affiliate organization, the local ORH, has already been selected to carry out the project. This is what the Dutch government has decided earlier on. Alex and John want the Dutch Ministry to solve the matter with the Ministry of Public Health in the project. They ask Sonja what the specific role of the ministry of Public Health in country Z is. They also point out that the input and motivation of the IORH and the local ORH is tempered by the fact that their inclusion in the project does not seem to be guaranteed. Alex feels it is not fair that the project go the Ministry of Public Health of country Z when he, on behalf of the IORH, and the local ORH have put so much time and energy into the PPP-project so far.

However, no one from the ministerial headquarters in The Hague replies to this letter. Pharmaco remains the only provider of contraceptives in the PPP-project. Furthermore, the Ministry of Public Health of country Z continues to claim control over the project. Alex and John feel that they have become enrolled in "a rollercoaster of feelings, with ups and downs at an enormous speed" (interview with Alex and John, November 2006).

A Total Market Approach without the Dutch ministry?

In November 2006, Alex and John visit country Z again to see whether there is still a possibility to realize a PPP that matches their dream for development. They want to try to set up a project that they believe is appropriate for country Z. That is, they want to set up a project that will not simply promote Pharmaco's products. The only thing Alex and John have to do is find support for their idea. That is not so easy, but they believe they might have found some supporters in the local ORH.

Though Alex as representative of the International ORH has played a crucial role in involving the local ORH in the PPP-project, that does not necessarily mean that the organization follows Alex's or International ORH's requests. Alex does not want the local ORH to agree with the project as it is proposed now, that is with promoting only Pharmaco's products. He wants the organization to insist that the Dutch Ministry and Pharmaco include other, generic contraceptive products in the project. Yet, the local ORH is anxious to carry out this project with a supposed budget of 5 million euro. In another attempt to turn the PPP into a project that Alex believes helps the people of country Z, he talks to the board of directors of the local ORH. As I am there at the meeting, I observe how Alex and John explain their interpretation of the PPP-project to the two board members and suggest other ways of cooperating without Pharmaco and without the Dutch Ministry.

In the meeting, two women of the board of directors are present to talk with Alex and John about the PPP-project. John explains that this mission will engage those organizations that have not been previously involved. He continues to explain that they are in country Z to look for an appropriate approach that is supported by the main stakeholders. John tells the board members of the local ORH that there is a problem with Pharmaco's role and that, if they would have managed the project, they would not include Pharmaco. He continues explaining that he and Alex are worried about what will happen when the project finishes in five years time. One of the board members remarks fiercely that Pharmaco cannot just leave after five years. But this is not the problem that Alex and John have in mind. Alex tries to make them see that the project will create a demand and need for Pharmaco's products, but that most likely after the project has finished, Pharmaco will not continue to provide contraceptives to the local ORH at a reduced price. John steps in again to say that they developed the project as part of a bigger plan (see previous chapter). Alex explains to the board how the three biggest pharmaceutical companies for hormonal contraceptives, which includes Pharmaco, are rapidly losing business because of the rise of generic manufactures that offer hormonal contraceptives at a much lower price. Now with this PPP-project, Alex says, Dutch money goes to Pharmaco, which has agreed to give the profit back to the project for at least the five years that the project will take. At the end of the project Pharmaco will dominate the market, Alex forecasts. "Furthermore", he says, "Pharmaco wants to provide their products at the costs of 1.50 euro. While they say that is the lowest price they can provide, we know that is not true", Alex adds. John repeats, "We know it's not true". Now, John points out that Alex can help them make another PPP-project. This other project, he continues, will not involve Dutch money or Pharmaco's products. Yet, the board members think of the possibilities the proposed PPP-project brings to their organization. The PPP-project is an opportunity to work with the Dutch government and receive Pharmaco's products. One of them replies, "As [the local ORH] we do not want to depend totally on [our international counterpart, the International Organization for Reproductive Health]. We want to have other options. We want [the International ORH] to say, 'We helped you to set up and build your organization. Now you can do it yourself'. The board members do not want their organization to be dependent on one donor that provides funds and contraceptives and, for that reason, show little interest in the project that Alex and John propose".

Alex understands their position, but also points out that the project that they are proposing is offering the local ORH new ways of working. He explains that this project is not part of the International ORH, but belongs to another organization (see previous chapter). Furthermore, he stresses that they do value the Dutch Ministry and its work for the PPP. Yet, Alex says, the problem is that the Dutch Ministry tied the PPP-project to Pharmaco. John explains that, unfortunately, country Z cannot produce cheap contraceptives themselves, because the market is too small, they could not reach the quality standards, and there is no capacity and investment to set this up. When John mentions that there is a factory producing generic contraceptives in a neighboring country and that the local ORH could work with them in the project they propose, the women become enthusiastic.

John sees a breakthrough to what they have been trying to achieve all this time, a project to improve contraceptive supply in developing countries that benefits the people. He concludes, "We don't need the Dutch after all". Alex is also relieved that all the energy he put in the PPP-project, finally seems to be leading to something. However, he also notes that it would be a pity not to use the money that the Dutch Ministry wants to spend on a PPP-project. Also Alex and John need money to realize their plans. They decide to continue to convince the Dutch Ministry to realize a PPP-project that does not deal exclusively with Pharmaco's products.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how, with the transportation of the project, the support of new, local actors is mobilized. I explored how the Ministry and Pharmaco selected a country for the PPP-project based on criteria of where support was largest and opposition was minimal. I also pointed out that the project was then contextualized. This case is not particular. I claim that aid practitioners always create contexts for their development interventions, whether projects or programs. The now popular approach among aid organizations is to reform governments of developing countries. This is just another way of creating a context for development projects of aid organizations and local aid initiatives. So, development interventions are not implemented in a context. They create their own context (Latour 1996).

In chapter 3, I explained how through the assembling of a project proposal the project included many different dreams and aspirations. In this chapter we see new actors joining the project because they, too, see it as an opportunity to realize their dreams and aspirations. The realization of the project depends on the willingness of the actors to compromise their dreams and aspirations. Whether or not people want to compromise not only depends on how badly they want to realize their dreams of development. It also depends on how the project reflects on their personal status and that of their organization. Alex considers a PPP-project that only promotes Pharmaco's contraceptives bad for his organization because he believes that Pharmaco is interested in profit and not in development. For the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Public Health, the PPP-project is a big project with 5 million euro attached. Gaining control over this project can raise the status of both the Minister and the Ministry in the eyes of aid organizations. In country

Z, most aid organizations work with NGOs and a large organization set up by the World Bank instead of the government, which they regard as weak and corrupt. If the Ministry could carry out the PPP-project, it would become a more important partner for other aid organizations and it would give the Minister more status. So, whether or not people are willing to compromise depends on the motivations they ascribe to the other actors involved in the project, how they believe this determines the essence of the project, and how they believe others will see their involvement in the project.

This chapter also shows that the trajectory of a new project is never secured. It always needs to mobilize the support of new actors and at the same time secure the support of all actors involved in the project (Latour 1996; Mosse 2005). The realization of the PPP-project did not progress because the people who supported the project could not agree on how the project should continue its trajectory. They used their position to change the project or to get control over the project and were not willing to compromise. Hence, the project created conflicts and struggles between the different actors involved. We have seen that the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs avoided getting involved in these conflicts and struggles. From the next chapter it will become clear that a major reason for this is that in the Ministry officials are absorbed in a conflict over the meaning of the PPP-project.

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- ¹ Though Pharmaco told the new agent it would send a new load, the new agent claimed it did not receive any products nor did Pharmaco pay for the losses.
 - ² One of the products is the contraceptive pill that Pharmaco and the Dutch Ministry want to market and sell in the project. Besides that, Pharmaco also donates a batch of 50.000 injectables with an imminent-expiry date of six months and a few implants for demonstration to the doctors. These latter two types of products will not be sold in the PPP-project.
 - ³ This organization is a for-profit business company that is owned by the International ORH. Alex is the director of this company. Yet, Alex does not give this information; he only tells the board of directors it is another organization.



In the previous chapters, I explored the assembling and transportation of the PPP-project. We saw how translation played a crucial role in the trajectory of partnership as a policy notion to becoming a project. In this chapter, I explore how through negotiation with headquarters the Dutch embassy in country Z tries to purify the PPP-project in order to turn it into what they believe is a *real* development project. I show how the organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays a role in this discussion on the PPP-project.

In this chapter I address the debates in aid organizations. The literature on development aid, depict the aid organization as a machine that produces aid projects, programs and policies. Yet, they fail to understand the practices through which these projects and programs are produced. As Wagenaar points out, we need to pay attention to officials' "practical judgments, the everyday, taken-for-granted routines and practices, the explicit and tacit knowledge that is brought to bear on concrete situations, the moving about in the legal–moral environment of large administrative bureaucracies, the mastering of difficult human–emotional situations, the negotiating of discretionary space, and the interactive give and take with colleagues" (2004: 644). It is these practices that make up the aid organization and shape development aid. Following Wagenaar, I study how ministerial officials make practical judgments about what is right or fitting in the Ministry and in development aid by studying the discussion between headquarters and Dutch embassy. Thus, this chapter explores how ministerial make sense of and give meaning to their own work, the work of others and to the Ministry. I do this by studying the negotiation of the PPP-project between the headquarters and the embassy mostly takes place through e-mail communication. The e-mails presented here are part of the files on the PPP-project in the Dutch embassy in country Z.

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in academic literature

In the discussion between headquarters and the embassy, the organization of the Ministry plays a central role. Literature that pays attention to the internal workings of the Ministry and its effects on development aid is limited and mostly written in Dutch. Most of these studies comment on the recruitment policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Tennekes (2005) points out that this recruitment and career policy influences which visions on development aid reach the arena where policy is made. He explains that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is formally responsible for the Ministry's recruitment policy. The Minister for Development Cooperation has little say in this. For a number of years, the Ministry has mainly recruited young people who are just starting their career. Over the last decade, the Ministry's recruitment policy is to attract "generalists" rather than "specialists". This means that the Ministry selects young people with university a degree and a few years of work experience, some international experience, and language skills. The new employees start at the lowest rank and begin to climb the bureaucratic hierarchy. Tennekes points

out that the focus on recruiting these “career diplomats” means that the Ministry has many generalists with backgrounds in law and history, and relatively few specialists with an education in development sociology or tropical agriculture (2005: 136).

Another important feature of the Ministry is the job rotation in which all ministerial officials take part. This job rotation was introduced halfway through the 1980s to prevent and stop embassies from operating as “small empires”. The job rotation policy means that officials hold their position for three to four years, after which they have to apply for a new position in the Ministry. Studies of Dutch development aid have criticized this policy for different reasons. Hoebink (1996) argues that because top officials are recruited among the high ranking diplomats, the administrative top has little experience with the running of large and complex organizations such as the Ministry, and this leads to steering problems. Janssen points out that, due to the recruitment procedure, the limited training recruits receive on general development, and the job rotation, “the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] employees have little knowledge of the aid themes” (2009: 166).

Scholars also point at the organizational culture of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a reason for its negative effect on development aid results. Drawing on the work of Stoppelenburg and Vermaak (2005), Janssen (2009) describes the Ministry as an organization where conflicts are never in the open, perceptions and reputations are very important, officials strive for consensus, adherence to procedures is more important than results, and risks are avoided.

In the debate on how the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs can improve the organization of development aid, the WRR (the Scientific Council for Government Policy) suggests a “new organization [that] should not be a bureaucratic, administrative organization, but a professional one, in which learning is central” (2010: 225). This new organization would still acknowledge a role for a Minister for Development Cooperation. But it also requires aid practitioners to develop country-specific knowledge and long-term commitment, furthermore, and to be “personnel with creativity and guts” (*ibid.*). The WRR calls for a “professional execution”, a “professional aid”, and a “more professional organization”. Yet, the report remains vague on what exactly this professionalism means in practice.

The writings above all point at the negative effects of the Ministry’s organizational procedures and its organizational culture on development aid. What these studies do not take into account is how officials deal with the controversies that the bureaucracy itself produces in practice (cf. Nuijten 2003). I claim that we need to look at the actual practices of ministerial officials before we condemn the aid organization and call for radical changes. Then, we will see how the Dutch aid organization produces different notions of what is good aid. This different notions about “good aid” are related to practitioners interpretations of what it means to be a good ministerial official and how the Ministry works best. One dominant interpretation in the Ministry of the good official draws on a Weberian notion of bureaucracy. In this interpretation, the good official should advise the Minister, but also carry out the Minister’s will. Most officials accept this position vis-à-vis the Minister, but they struggle with a dilemma when executing a policy that they believe harms the very essence of their work and the goal of their organization, namely development. When this is the case, officials draw on organizational models to handle and solve such dilemmas. It is interesting that those officials who draw on bureaucratic,

machine-like organizational models also point out that as an official, “you have to think out-of-the-box” and “dare to take risks” (see Chapter 3). Then, I try to explain when and how officials draw on particular organizational models and with what effect.

The rise of opposition

Ministerial officials Sonja and Pharmaco’s representatives Rob and Eva have selected country Z to realize the PPP-project. However, the embassy does not support the project that the assessment team proposes in its report. Various aid practitioners in the Dutch embassy in country Z oppose the realization of this PPP-project with Pharmaco. The ambassador, the head of the development section, the health expert, and the economic attaché all believe that this is not a *development* project. In the discussions around the PPP-project, the health expert, Janine, and the Ambassador, Paul, play a central role. They oppose the project because it frustrates their dreams of development and their personal ambitions in life.

Janine is educated in development issues, like most of her middle-aged expert colleagues in the Ministry. She worked for international aid organizations and as a consultant on development issues before she joined the Ministry in the 1990s. Since then, she has worked as a development expert in various Dutch embassies abroad. And now she is working at the Dutch embassy in country Z. Here she works long hours, as there is much to be done. When she is not at work, she takes long walks in the area or reads books. Books written by Nobel Prize winning authors especially draw her attention. These books often describe struggles for equality and justice, which are important to Janine. But she does not only dream of a more equal and just world. Janine also tries to achieve it, for example, by walking in a demonstration against the war in Iraq. Yet, the PPP-project with Pharmaco does not fit in the realization of her dream for development.

Ambassador Paul also opposed to the PPP-project put forward by headquarters. Paul is a man at the end of his career, who has worked for the Ministry in many developing countries considered hardship countries in terms of work and expatriate living. As a student of law and a former member of an elite fraternity during his studies, Paul does not stand out from the ministerial crowd. But unlike many other ambassadors, he is seen by development experts in the Ministry as a “development man” rather than a diplomat. When development issues are discussed in staff meetings, he shares his thoughts and feelings with the others. He often expresses his thoughts with heavy irony and traces of sarcasm. That is how he handles the intricacies of working in the Ministry on development.

Both the health expert, Janine, and the Ambassador, Paul, oppose the PPP-project with Pharmaco, but for different reasons and in different ways. Janine believes aid needs to be purely altruistic and philanthropic to realize development. Making profit from aid is self-interest and, thus, unacceptable for Janine. She thinks the PPP-project infringes on these qualifications of aid. That is why she writes on the project document, “What is Pharmaco planning to give as a gift?” and “What do they [Pharmaco] sacrifice?”. Janine wonders why the Ministry wants to do this project. She believes that Minister Van Ardenne’s motives for wanting this project are that it helps to maintain her network and advances her career. Janine feels Van Ardenne is like other world leaders nowadays; lacking vision on big issues

of inequality and justice. Instead, she says, they determine their stance in conflicts such as in Iraq and Gaza on their personal interests. Current world leaders act from personal interests in power, wealth and status, instead of what is best for others, Janine thinks. She says, "It is a sign of our times". The PPP-project is a result of that, she thinks, as "it has nothing to do with development or the people in country Z". Her conclusion is that "[the Minister] gives money to an NGO to sell products" as she writes on the assessment report. She also comments on the report that the project is "swindling the populace". The project does not fit Janine's aspiration in life to create a world of equality. Hence, she tries to prevent the PPP-project from being realized.

On the other hand, Paul believes this particular PPP-project as proposed by headquarters, should not be executed. First of all, he criticizes the project for a lack of clarity. The assessment report does not provide a description of why this project is important for country Z, nor how the project will convince women to use Pharmaco's contraceptives, he argues. Secondly, Paul criticizes Pharmaco's role. He believes that Pharmaco should be willing to give something to or do something for the people in country Z. Yet, he concludes that this project is only offering its products to make a profit for Pharmaco. He does not see how this project changes the situation of women in country Z, an issue that, in his opinion, the project should address. Furthermore, he concludes that the women in this project have no choice but to purchase Pharmaco's products. This is ethically incorrect, he feels. So, Paul writes on the assessment report, "I still don't understand exactly what Pharmaco planning to do for country Z (I still get the idea that they want to earn a free subsidy)". A third concern of Paul's is that the project addresses the wrong target group. Aid should target the poor, Paul believes, and this project does not target those people. In the following statement Paul defines the target group for a development project (underlining in original):

The choice for [local family planning organization] as the NGO [that will carry out the project] is too meagerly reasoned. They can be effective, but that is possibly limited to the already converted ones = women/families who already have a birth-control wish. Isn't it at least just as interesting to work with an organization that tries (CSSW) to convince people (with due observance of the conservative Islam) to finally start using contraceptives...? An insufficiently profound story!... For example, [there is] no analysis of not having nor wanting to have fam.planning commodities.

Paul concludes that a project that focuses on women who already practice birth control to convince them to use other, more expensive products has nothing to do with development. In his opinion, this project is not solving any development problem. He interprets the project as merely a free ride for Pharmaco; the company can increase its sales through a Ministry project without making clear what it is offering to women in country Z.

Paul does not accept the PPP in this form. The project conflicts with his dream for development. Yet, he sees opportunities to transform this project into a development-oriented project. In his opinion, one of the fundamental problems of country Z is its

growing population. Paul feels that, in the context of the conservative Islamic society of country Z, this project should try to convince people to use contraceptives. Such a project in country Z would be a real *development* project, in Paul's opinion. Though Paul opposes the current project proposed by the assessment team, he is willing to support the project if the headquarters changes the project into a development project.

Defining what has to be negotiated

In November, Sonja sends the embassy the assessment report (see Chapter 4) as a mere update of the progress in the project's realization. She foresees no problems to moving forward with the project. As Sonja receives no response from the Dutch embassy, she plans the next steps to realize the project in country Z. Yet, ministerial officials in the embassy, even though they have diverging dreams of development, all believe that this PPP-project is not a *development* project. A discussion around the PPP-project arises and two groups are formed. On the one hand, there is the embassy staff that opposes this PPP-project. While, on the other hand, there is staff in the headquarters that wants to the PPP-project. They start with defining what can be negotiated in the discussion. To make it possible to proceed with any negotiation it is important for the actors to determine what can be or has to be negotiated and how this negotiation should take place, according to the official doctrine of how to handle policies and projects in the organization (Latour 1996: 112).

As the Minister will visit country Z in a couple of months, Sonja plans two actions to advance the project. To realize the project, elements have to be added to the project as every element that is added increases the reality of the project (Latour 1996: 85). Speeches by the Minister, policy documents, a company visit to Pharmaco, the selection of country Z, they all add to the project becoming real. Sonja and her boss, Mieke, see the Minister's visit to country Z as an opportunity to stabilize the project and make it's realization more inevitable. They want to plan a few official meetings between the Dutch Minister Van Ardenne and ministers in country Z to talk about reproductive health commodity security and a possible PPP. Furthermore, they also want Minister Van Ardenne to sign a declaration of intent for the PPP in country Z. An official meeting and a declaration of intent would establish the project. Should both ministers sign an agreement, it would be more difficult to go back on it. The project would become more stable and thus more real.

Sonja's boss, Mieke, wants to propose these two actions to the Minister, so she makes a draft memorandum. Before sending the memorandum to the Minister, Mieke sends the draft to Ambassador Paul. Now that Mieke has become involved in the project, she also connects her fate to the project. The success or failure of the project, its realization or non-realization, will affect the fate of her personal ambitions (cf. Latour 1996: 137). Mieke is now also determined to realize this project. Yet, Ambassador Paul, who receives the memo, is surprised about the plans for the Minister. He e-mails Janine, saying, "We will need to receive information from [department D] at once on what exactly they intend to do. This is too ridiculous for words!!!!" (translated passage from an e-mail, 15 November 2005). Paul first wants department D to clarify the project's main idea and to answer his questions before he will give the embassy's support. He does not want any further stabilization of the project before it is clear what will be stabilized. Hence, Janine tells Mieke on the phone

that signing an agreement in December 2005 or even February 2006 would be premature and asks her to delete the proposal to sign an agreement in the memorandum.

Though Mieke believes that the Minister's visit to country Z would be ideal timing to sign an agreement, she drops this idea. She tells Sonja that, instead, "We will need to inform [the minister] between now and two weeks, maybe to adjust her expectations and provide her with a realistic, but sufficiently ambitious timeline (based on agreements between them and us) *when we do want to have the PPP ready for signing*" (e-mail communication, italics by author). Whether or not the project should go ahead is not a question for Mieke. The only thing that she is willing to negotiate is the time in which the project will be realized. Yet, Mieke also writes to Sonja to "consult as actively as possible with the embassy". This consultation is needed to gain support from the embassy. Without the embassy's support it will be much more difficult to realize the project.

The enactment of Pronk and Herfkens' scripts

The aid practitioners in the Dutch embassy have different dreams of development. Yet, in the discussion over the PPP-project they all draw on the script that Minister Pronk and Herfkens have offered (Chapter 2). They use the technical notions, indicate the facts, and call attention to the agreements made, in order to purify aid from interests that, according to them, conflict with development.

When Janine reads that Mieke and Sonja want to have the Minister sign an agreement, she writes Mieke to tell her that, according to the embassy – she uses "we"-, this project is not a *development* project. To point this out, she draws on previous policy statements and an international agreement. She writes the following e-mail to Mieke:

Mieke,

Much thanks for the cc of this message. Because we understand the urgency, herewith, a first comment as a start. As you know we welcome more cooperation in Reproductive Health, and we would like to see more PPPs in country Z. However the recent draft of the PPP-proposal raises as yet important questions. The PPP-proposal –in its current form- basically seems to be subsidized aid support, and thus tied aid. The contribution of Pharmaco concerns mainly investing in its own marketing activities, while the contribution of the Ministry [of Foreign Affairs] concerns the financing of an NGO, but related to the selling of Pharmaco's products (Besides, the contribution of the Ministry seems to be intended for capacity building of the NGO, but the NGO concerned does not need that. It already is a very professional NGO). We wonder how the PPP-proposal corresponds with Dutch development policy and the Dutch support for the Paris Declaration.

As pointed out from the beginning, and herewith repeated, the Dutch embassy willingly stands by Pharmaco in its trade promoting activities. That requires no PPP. We still believe that this would be a good step forwards. If we have interpreted the document incorrectly, then we would like to hear that.

2. If a PPP in this field is considered, then the question arises if the September mission couldn't have looked at the alternatives. For example: why work with only one NGO? There is a second NGO that could provide an excellent complement to the scope of the chosen NGO. The choice made is meagerly motivated in this document. Besides that, in the text it doesn't clearly state how the PPP fits in with the policy, strategies, and the chosen NGO's way of working. Also the role of the government is not clearly shown, regarding how the proposal fits in with the National Reproductive Health Strategy and the activities in the field of social marketing supported by various donors. We understand that the next step would be to conduct further research. At the same time, we are hesitant since we try hard to cut back on all those isolated activities. The question now is how to proceed. May we propose to taking the pressure off, and informing [the Minister] that careful consideration and preparation will need more time, and (b) to soon make further agreements on subsequent steps. With kind regards

In her e-mail, Janine points out the embassy supports PPPs for the development of country Z, but not this PPP with Pharmaco. Janine states, the project is subsidized trade support, or in a technical notion "tied aid" (Chapter 2). Tied aid stands for financial aid that is given under the condition that the recipient spends the money in the donor country on goods and services. The person who uses the term "tied aid" also expresses disapproval of this type of aid. The technical notion "tied aid" is part of the scripts of Pronk and Herfkens. Pronk said that "tied aid" is amoral, as this type of aid is not a gift for development but serves as a means of exchange to keep the Dutch economy going. His policy texts of the 1970s and early 1990s state that tied aid is hampering development. Also his successor, Herfkens, uses the term in her policy documents in the late 1990s. She states that tied aid is an impediment for development, as it does not give developing countries ownership of their own development process. Her policy texts explain that, without feeling responsible for development, countries cannot develop. Thus, when a project is defined as tied aid, one is saying that the project is not helping or may even be destructive for development. Janine asks Sonja how the PPP relates to Dutch policy of untying aid.

Janine also reminds Sonja that the Dutch government has signed the Paris Declaration, a treaty that prescribes how donors and recipient countries will increase the effectiveness of aid and improve its results. The treaty includes the statement that "DAC Donors will continue to make progress on untying" (OECD 2005: 5-6). This statement is signed by the Dutch government, and as such the government has promised to give aid without imposing Dutch products and services on people in developing countries. Janine feels that if the Netherlands does not keep its promise and is not responsible, it would be difficult to ask developing countries to do so. She wants Dutch policy to be coherent. She feels she cannot tell country Z's underperforming Ministry of Public Health to reform and become the owner of development processes while, at the same time, the Dutch Ministry breaches international agreements and provides "tied aid", which goes against the idea of ownership. So, here we see how Janine tries to create consistency and unity in development aid policy through political acts of composition (Latour 2000, cited in

Mosse 2004: 647). This type of practice is a way that “front line workers” or “street level bureaucrats” (Lipsky 1980; Moody-Maynard and Musheno 2003), such as embassy personnel, handle the inconsistencies of governmental policies in their daily work.

Because the embassy does not see this project as a development project, Janine states that the PPP with Pharmaco should not be financed with Official Development Assistance (ODA), which is money allocated to development aid. For projects that support trade such as this PPP, there is a different budget line in the Ministry, Janine points out. She explains that the embassy is very willing to support this project as a trade-promoting activity. That would mean that not Janine but the embassy’s economic attaché, responsible for economic and trade related issues, would devote his time to this project. Then the project would not only be separated from aid in financial terms, using a different budget line, but also in terms of utilizing different personnel. So, Janine tries to keep the PPP-project away from the money and man-hours allocated for development aid. She purifies aid by keeping development money and man-hours from being used on activities unrelated to development, such as supporting an NGO that does not need financial support and a project that is not a development project, according to her interpretation.

Ideology or expertise?

Janine draws on the scripts of Pronk and Herfkens to point out that this particular PPP-project is not a development project. Under Ministers Pronk and Herfkens, the information that Janine provides was considered to be expert knowledge. Now, officials close to the Minister at headquarters in The Hague read the same information of the embassy as resistance to PPPs. They do not see the information that Janine includes in her e-mail as expert knowledge, but rather as ideology. An official close to the Minister points out that many aid practitioners in the Ministry are passionate and zealous and that they hang on to the view generally accepted in the 1960s and 1970s that working with private companies was “dirty” (interview, November 2005). She explains that when the Minister wants PPPs, for some people in the Ministry this is heretical. She also says, “if we are talking about ‘tokootjes’ [little kingdoms or shops] I do not say that we have them [literally], but ideologically they are there”. In other words, this official claims that many aid practitioners in the Ministry ideologically oppose PPPs. Seeing the information given by Janine as ideological views, rather than expert knowledge, means that headquarters does not take the embassy’s worries seriously. It invalidates the embassy’s arguments in the discussion over the PPP-project.

The Dutch embassy’s Ambassador, Paul, starts to mingle in the discussion to clarify that the embassy is not ideologically opposed to PPPs. This is very unusual. Ambassadors are concerned with the general management of the embassy, maintaining relations with high level officials in the country where they are positioned, and representing the Netherlands abroad or, as an official described the work of ambassadors, “they just walk around with the Dutch flag”. In general, ambassadors do not become involved in discussions over specific projects or policies. However, when the reputation of the embassy is at stake, they do need to take action. Hence, Paul sends the following e-mail to the headquarters:

I allow myself to become involved in this matter. I can assure you that we here in [the capital of country Z] have no skepticism at all regarding the instrument of PPP. On the contrary, it is an innovative formula that offers numerous opportunities. Especially in a partnership-starved country as [country Z], we are pre-eminently pleased with a PPP. An earlier PPP that is in the pipeline [...] is an outstanding example of how it can work.

Our problem with the Pharmaco-plan is simply that, on essential parts the project proposal, it is very vaguely formulated. What we need are answers to questions such as; what exactly is Pharmaco going to "offer" here (more than marketing of its own product-because that is not a PPP). More information about the support package to be financed by DGIS [the Director-General of International Cooperation] meant for the partner organization would also be desirable. A clear overview of means and expected results, as well as a time frame, are both lacking.

At the end, the document mentions a series of "steps to take" of which it is not clear if these should be taken prior to decision making, or if one sees this as part of the project implementation. I trust that the experts will come a long way and that we, if foregoing questions can be answered quickly, can be much further along in early December. But these answers have to come from Pharmaco or from The Hague, because we cannot gaze into a crystal ball.

For us the bottom line remains that, eventually, the result needs to correspond with [country Z's] own [reproductive health] policy and that the principles of harmonization are respected. That means that the PPP flawlessly fits in with what is done on this theme here in the country (and thus doesn't become a stand-alone initiative)

With a bit of good will, that should be feasible.

The ambassador stresses again that the embassy is not opposed to cooperation with the private sector in general. He emphasizes that the embassy needs more information about this specific project to be able to support it. This includes that the headquarters and Pharmaco explain what Pharmaco will offer, what the Ministry will do to support the NGO that will carry out the project in country Z, what the expected results will be, what the timeframe for the project will be, and what are the steps to follow. If these questions are answered, the embassy will see if the new project proposal is in line with activities undertaken in the field of health in country Z.

The ambassador's message to the headquarters differs from Janine's message. Janine started from the premise of Dutch aid policy and statements to argue that the PPP-project with Pharmaco does not fit in. Hence, she closes any option for negotiation on the PPP-project. The ambassador, on the other hand, leaves room for negotiation. He requests that the headquarters clarify the project proposal before the embassy can see if it fits in with the development policies on health in country Z.

Janine opposes the PPP

Over the next week, Janine speaks with Sonja on the phone to ask her what the next steps are. Sonja tells Janine that she is waiting for a reaction from the Head of Development, Tom. After that Janine writes an e-mail to Tom, in which she says that she, her local assistant, and the economic attaché do not see how this project can be turned into a PPP. As a way forward, she writes, "Maybe it would be better to engage in a fundamental discussion, and get the PPP-thing sorted out. But, to be frank, I don't know whether it would be worth the time and energy" (28 November 2005). Such fundamental discussions rarely take place because they take time and energy and, above all, they hardly ever finish. There will never be a definition that everyone agrees with (Gould 2007). Hence, the meaning of notions, such as development and partnership, are negotiated through concrete projects and programs.

Janine does not believe PPPs are good for development because they are isolated projects that do not lead to structural change. Furthermore, they apply commercial marketing techniques to the poor. To give the Minister what she wants, but at the same time avoid the realization of this particular PPP-project, Janine suggests that department D have the Minister sign a general partnership agreement with Pharmaco. Janine writes that, with this agreement, "[Pharmaco] is welcomed to prepare specific proposals for a few countries, [while] these proposals will then be jointly assessed by the respective embassies and [department D] using the normal development cooperation criteria and the specific PPP criteria" (28 November 2005). The general agreement that Janine suggests meets the wish of the Minister and Sonja and Mieke to sign a partnership. Meanwhile, it gives the embassy, and thus Janine, the final decision on the projects proposed. Janine is determined in how little she is willing to compromise on her dream for development. She writes that if headquarters does not agree on this solution, then she will withdraw from the discussion and the embassy "will stick to CdP's [Chef du Poste, or Ambassador] feedback and wait and see". She adds "And if need be, let's face the music (even if it means firing me)". Janine under no condition wants to support the project even if that means she will lose her job.

Janine knows that in the Ministry it is not only what is said that is important, but also who says it and how it is said. Janine sees Mieke Janssen as a "career diplomat" who does not know nor even cares about technical terminology and expert knowledge on development. Furthermore, Mieke outranks Janine. So, Janine writes to her colleagues in the embassy, "If we go for the above suggestion, may I then suggest that not me, but a 'real' diplomat calls [Mieke Jansen] and discuss it with her? I think it is better if somebody who is speaking the same language calls". She wants Tom, as Head of Development, to contact the headquarters to propose signing a general partnership agreement with Pharmaco. Tom is Head of Development of the embassy, and thus higher in the ministerial hierarchy than Janine. But Tom is also seen by many as a "career diplomat", rather than a development expert, because he studied law, was a member of a fraternity, dresses like a diplomat, worked on issues that did not concern development, and, above all, thinks like one. Tom knows Mieke from "het klasje", the intensive training course for diplomats. However, Tom does not see himself as a "career diplomat" but does consider Mieke to be one.

Tom's e-mail to Mieke is a repetition of the questions raised by Janine and the ambassador. To offer a way out of the discussion he ends his message with the suggestion made by Janine to let the Minister sign a general agreement with Pharmaco. Yet, Sonja ignores this proposal. Mieke already e-mailed the secretary of the Minister saying that country Z is "potentially the number 1 candidate for the PPP" (e-mail, 15 November 2005). Tom's suggestion of an overall agreement would mean that the selection of countries, the writing of project proposals, and the assessment of the feasibility of the project would all have to be repeated and possibly lead to a different outcome. The Dutch embassy of country Z could, in that scenario, then reject the project. So, to sign an overall agreement instead of continuing with this project decreases the chances that the PPP-project will become a reality in country Z. That will be difficult to explain to the Minister without losing face. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the Minister will accept such a general agreement. Hence, instead of proposing to sign a general agreement, Sonja's boss, Mieke, sends a memorandum to the Minister to explain why country Z is chosen to realize the PPP-project with Pharmaco (memorandum 431/05, 23 December 2005). Hence, Sonja writes to the embassy that "department D does not assume that this project is tied aid". She also states that the public sector will never be able to provide for the total needs of commodities.

Hierarchy

In June 2005, Minister Van Ardenne and a few officials visited Pharmaco. It is now January 2006, and there is still no project. The Minister has no idea why it is taking so long to set up and start the project. In a staff meeting, she asks her assistants to find out about the project and stresses that she wants to launch this project during her visit to country Z. What follows is an e-mail communication between officials at different levels and positions in the Ministry. Tim, the personal assistant of the Minister sends an e-mail to Inge, who is the desk officer for country Z at headquarters. In that position, Inge is responsible for coordinating the Minister's visit to country Z. Inge tells Tim that the PPP-project is not scheduled for the Minister's visit. Yet, Tim insists on scheduling this project, Inge forwards this message to department D at headquarters and to the Dutch embassy and stresses, "there is no escape possible" and "if the Minister wants this, then it has to happen" (the passages below are taken from the e-mail exchange in the file on the PPP-project, 17/18 January 2006):

Tim (political assistant in headquarters):

Inge, the intended Pharmaco activities in country Z were discussed this morning in the staff meeting with [the Minister]. Question by [the Minister]: "What is the state of affairs?" With a request to see if it is possible to pay attention to this during this visit and possibly to kick it off.

Inge (country representative in headquarters):

I'll send your question to [Sonja] at [department D]. Basically, we hadn't had anything planned for Pharmaco in the [the Minister's] trip in February, because we want to try to see if she can kick off the PPP with the [Dutch water company]. I'll keep you informed.

Tim:

Inge, explicit interest of [the Minister] for Pharmaco. [The Minister] visited the company last year in 2004; so see how this can be fit in.

Inge to department D and embassy:

no escaping possible

Inge to Tom (Head of Development):

I just talked to Sonja and she believes now is not the right moment for [the Minister] to do something with this PPP, precisely because of your comment on the assessment report. Tim however says that if the Minister wants this, than it has to happen and we have a month left to get the PPP on the rails.

Janine (Health Expert) to Tom;

It is more important that Paul writes to [Karel, the boss of Mieke]

Paul (Ambassador) to Janine and Tom:

This nonsense should be really OVER now! There is NOTHING on the table that can be made into a decent PPP. If they force this gibberish through, then [the Minister] will be in very big trouble! What should we now tell Inge? ANYWAY; well, everything is fine with me! If [the Minister] wishes to finance a competition-distorting, supply-driven, tied aid project for country Z's more privileged, then she should do so by all means. Then things will run their course, but then "zal de wal het schip keren" and we will be proved right ex-post.

In this e-mail exchange, we see how officials in the Ministry communicate. Embassies do not directly communicate with ministers. Communication from the embassy to a minister goes via officials in the headquarters. That means that officials in departments at headquarters decide which information is sent to the Minister. At headquarters, usually the official with the highest rank informs the Minister.

Janine knows that in the struggle over the PPP bureaucratic ranks play an important role. Therefore, she stresses that the Ambassador, Paul, should e-mail Mieke's boss, Karel, as they have the same rank in ministerial hierarchy. When Paul contacts the head of department D, Karel, to discuss the PPP-project, he says that he is particularly disconcerted about the way this project is handled within the Ministry. He points out that the embassy has always taken a positive attitude towards the project and that if the project is somehow promising and feasible the embassy would like to support it. Yet, Paul writes, the doubts and questions the embassy raised have been pushed aside as marginal comments and, instead, a memorandum of department D to the Minister sketches a very bright picture of the project's chances of success in country Z. Paul says he is perturbed that department D suggests that something wonderful is going to happen, in order to please the Minister, while that remains to be seen. Furthermore, he is worried that the Minister might read in the memo that she can sign an agreement in February when she visits country Z, while "nothing could be further from the truth". Paul is unsettled that department D points a finger at the embassy for the lack of progress on the realization of the PPP. The embassy cannot feel responsible, Paul writes, because its remarks and questions have not been addressed and the embassy cannot change the fact that the Minister cannot immediately

sign a great PPP. He is worried that later, after “firmly working on a detailed business plan with all partners” the project will turn out to be a whole lot of “hot air”. To prevent this from happening, Paul suggests, “bringing the tone back down to a realistic level”. In addition he suggests that headquarters ruminates on the real key questions. If this leads to a comprehensible project design that fits the embassy’s standards, then the embassy is willing to help set up this PPP in country Z. If this fails, so Paul writes, then that is a pity, but he feels that is better than going around in circles.

From these e-mail communications we see that the discussion between the various officials at different sites and levels in the Ministry has turned into a struggle between officials in the ministerial headquarters and officials at the Dutch embassy in country Z. The officials at headquarters feel the pressure from the Minister to realize this PPP-project. Yet, the officials in the embassy consider how the PPP-project could help country Z to develop. They worry about the consistency of the different Dutch aid policies that they have to translate into actions and communicate to the government of country Z. Furthermore, they are concerned that the Minister will receive heavy critique from, among others, Parliament, other donors, and journalists, for setting up a project that violates the Paris Declaration, the international agreement that the Netherlands has helped to bring about.

A breakthrough?

The embassy has repeatedly asked for more clarity about important aspects of the PPP-project. The assessment report only states, “by means of a PPP, a product can be launched into a sustainable market segment” and “the PPP should contribute to rapidly developing a sustainable market for private-market contraceptives in [country Z] that also contributes to improving the general environment of delivering Reproductive Health in [country Z] as well as increasing general acceptance and use of contraception” (assessment report). After Paul sent the e-mail to Karel, the embassy finally received an answer to its questions from Sonja and Pharmaco’s representative, Eva. They explain the essence of the project as follows in an e-mail:

When we, through the PPP, attract those who could afford to pay for [reproductive health commodities] to those commodities made available in the private segment, the service delivery capacity and public funds of the [Ministry of Public Health of country Z] can be diverted to those clients that can’t afford [reproductive health commodities].

Sonja explains that by marketing Pharmaco’s contraceptives, the project will encourage better-off women, who now take cheap contraceptives from the public sector (government hospitals and health clinics run by NGOs), to buy Pharmaco’s contraceptives in the private market (pharmacies). In this way, she claims, the public sector will have more money available to reach the really poor. She also explains that when donors help to develop the private market, developing countries’ dependence on donors will decrease. Janine thinks that this is “a container full of assumptions”. Furthermore, she feels the marketing and

selling of contraceptives to women is unethical. As in the past in the Netherlands, she feels contraceptive products should be free or nearly for free to (poorer) women.

Ambassador Paul, however, finds Pharmaco's plausible. Answering the embassy's questions, Pharmaco explains why women would buy a contraceptive in the private market that can also be obtained for free in public hospitals and health clinics. Pharmaco's representative, Eva, writes, "the commodity[ies] that will be sold in the PPP will have demonstrable advantage(s) over those commodities that are distributed for free". Furthermore, she clarifies why women will use its products, namely because "marketing will shape consumers perceptions. People do not drink Coca Cola because they need to drink it, they just desire to drink it". Paul writes that this is "quite convincing". And he concludes, "Pharmaco is pretty clear on how they see it. We can do something with this!".

The embassy and headquarters agree that Pharmaco and the consultant, Alex, (see Chapter 3), can design a conceptual business plan for the PPP. Sonja and Janine agree that this PPP needs to meet all requirements regarding cooperation with the private sector (e-mail February 2006). Paul formulates the requirements as follows in an e-mail to officials in the headquarters:

The intended [Pharmaco] PPP will only be fundable by DGIS if: (a) the training and promotional activities apply to all products available in the country Z market (not only [Pharmaco]), (b) the assumption that targeting the commercial upper (urban) segment will liberate attention and funds which can be redirected to the poor is considered realistic, (c) the assumption that over-all acceptance and availability of contraceptives will increase as a result of the PPP is considered likely, (d) the PPP must fit in country Z's national health strategy. Facultative core conditions (at [the Minister's] discretion): (a) the PPP should have sufficient added value to be preferred over other interventions in the RH sector that could be realized with the same DGIS funds.

Paul wants to be sure that if a PPP-project with Pharmaco is carried out in country Z, it will be a development project. He lists the requirements on which the project shall be assessed as being development-oriented or not. These requirements are, to a large extent, based on the assumptions made in the assessment report.

Who has unrealistic expectations?

While officials appear to have reached an agreement on how to proceed with the PPP-project, Minister Van Ardenne wants to know from department D why no PPP-agreement can be signed during her visit to country Z. Officials Mieke and Sonja draft a memorandum, in which they write that there is yet no business plan because there is a "difference of insight between the embassy and department D". They state that "the embassy is rather more reserved than department D about the innovative cooperation with Pharmaco". Furthermore, Mieke and Sonja want to tell the Minister that "some of the embassy's requirements in this PPP are practically unachievable in department D's view". By calling

the project “innovative” and the embassy “reserved” and “unrealistic”, Mieke and Sonja put the blame for the lack of progress on the side of the embassy. They implicitly say that the embassy is opposed to progress, and thus to development.

The Ministry is divided about the project, but Mieke and Sonja write that “before being able to continue with working out the concrete details of the PPP there needs to be uniformity between the embassy and department D”. They also state, “The cards of the different parties, particularly of Pharmaco, department D, NGOs and the embassy, are now on the table, but still do not form a harmonious set”. They tell the Minister that they had thought about sitting down with all parties including Pharmaco and Alex, but before that, the different perceptions between department D and the embassy in country Z needed to be solved. They add “the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to speak with one voice” towards others. Within the Ministry, there can be divisions between departments and groups that have different views. Yet, to the outside world the Ministry needs to represent itself as a whole, that is, one organization with a singular view. Because Mieke and Sonja have represented the embassy as “reserved” and “unrealistic” with regards to this PPP-project that the Minister wants, they implicitly say that the embassy needs to accept and support the PPP with Pharmaco.

The embassy receives the draft memorandum before it is sent to the Minister. Paul is very unhappy with the text. He writes Mieke to set things straight (e-mail 15 February 2006). In the communication, the tension rises. Paul writes to Mieke that her “concept-memo concerning PPP Pharmaco is not a proper response. It is not only too long and woolly, but concludes that the embassy is actually accountable for the lack of progress. That is an incorrect presentation of matters”. He also points out, “The embassy (contrary to [department D]) has merely tried to comprehend the project with analytical questions, the core questions that need to be answered in order to assess the proposal adequately later on. I just have to get this off my chest that, as yet, there is little that shows a clear vision of the side of [department D]. Until now, the input in the discussion is mainly coming from the embassy and from Pharmaco, while [department D] is the central actor (at least it ought to be)”. Ambassador Paul also stresses, “the embassy is not reserved when it comes to innovative approaches and cooperation with the private sector” and that “the embassy hasn’t got problems with the [the Minister’s] policy at all”. He also spells out that the embassy does not stipulate, as the concept-memo puts it, all sorts of conditions. Instead, he says, “[w]hat we have done is just to list all the principles that Pharmaco, with regards to the PPP, itself has formulated”. He says that “the next step is for Pharmaco to convince us ([department D] and the embassy), in the forthcoming business plan -or in the run-up to that- that these principles are realistic”. Paul concludes with the proposal to help Mieke compose an alternative text for the memorandum to the Minister.

Mieke does not need this fight with the embassy. She needs the embassy to realize the PPP-project. She needs to defuse the hostility between the embassy and the headquarters. To set things straight, she first stresses that the embassy and the department are allies instead of opponents. And secondly, she points out which requirements mentioned by Paul in his earlier e-mail are, in her opinion, not realistic. Mieke writes the following e-mail to Paul with carbon copies to a number of colleagues at headquarters:

Paul,

Thank you for your comment. It is not my intention, of course, to blame anyone; I am looking for a way forward. And there is a request from [the Minister] for clarity. I do not feel that the efforts of Sonja are done justice by imputing her of a lack of vision. It is a tricky matter that we can only jointly resolve. Thereby I would want to ward off a feeling of "us-them": we are of the same club! Regrettably, the unclear aspects continuously remain. Or maybe it could and now is the time to come down to brass tacks.

The requirements as they are stated in the memo [the draft memo the Minister], were stated in Paul's contribution. And are not coming from Pharmaco. In my experience, there are a few that are factually not realistic, namely:

- by focusing on strengthening the commercial segment, a shift will take place by which more public means and attention are released for poor people (public market segment)
- the PPP leads to an increase in total acceptance and availability of contraceptives

I want an elucidation from you on this. I would say that this is most certainly the aspiration, but it is too much for the intended intervention to achieve such results.

I would gladly receive your input for a memo that, in your view, sketches out a balanced image of the situation without placing blame; the entire project needs to have a constructive impression. I do not need a divide-and-rule situation between us and the embassy on the occasion of a visit of [the Minister].

I look forward to your input; then something can be sent to [the Minister] at the latest tomorrow morning.

Kind regards,

Mieke

Mieke states two requirements that Paul mentioned in his e-mail of the week before (stated above, 8 February) that she believes are unrealistic. In the chain of translations realistic goals have become assumptions and claims, then requirements, and finally unrealistic goals. Paul's articulated requirements are coming from the assessment report and from Sonja's previous e-mail, in which she explains the essence of the project. He has turned the assumptions and claims, of these two texts, about how the project would achieve development into requirements for ministerial support of the PPP. Sonja, who had defined these assumptions and claims, used an idea for the PPP-project that aspired to attain these goals by promoting and marketing generic contraceptives in the private market. Sonja translated that idea into a PPP-project, but kept its original aims. Now Sonja's boss, Mieke, points out that she believes the requirements are unrealistic. Hence, Paul writes back to Mieke that the requirements he phrased are based on the information that Pharmaco sent to staff at the embassy.

Eventually, Paul and Mieke agree on the text for the memorandum to Minister Van Ardenne. The Minister is told that “the successful conclusion of the intended PPP with Pharmaco necessitates careful consideration and preparation” (memorandum to the Minister, 17 February 2006). There is no word about the different interpretations of the project between headquarters and the embassy. Instead, the memorandum states, “[t]he raw concept-PPP contained a number of premises (about circumstances and preconditions in country Z) that gave rise to further analysis and exchanges of ideas between parties. That discussion has not yet fully completed. It is the idea that parties come together in March to dot the i’s and cross the t’s” (ibid.). It also sketches out the idea that, in time, there will be a PPP-project, saying, “Pharmaco has started with the fine-tuning of the proposals, which will lead to a business plan. Aim, strategy, division of tasks, time frame, and means need to be carefully elaborated in the business plan. There is confidence that this will lead to a well-balanced proposal”. In short, the memorandum satisfies the minister by telling her that her staff is working hard on the PPP-project and it will be realized sooner or later.

A new PPP-project?

While Mieke and Paul were absorbed in the struggle over the PPP-project, Janine drew up her own plan to influence the trajectory of the PPP. She mobilized another official of department D, Dirk, to write a paper providing a completely different plan for the PPP with Pharmaco. Janine and Dirk want the project to provide Pharmaco’s contraceptive implants, small rods placed in the upper arm that give off hormones. They point out that rural and poor women often prefer long-term methods, which are more practical and comparatively cheaper. Furthermore, they explain that oral pills are a more costly method of contraceptives. For that reason, it is better to promote implants instead of keeping the country relying heavily on an oral pill. They also write that the Ministry of Public Health of country Z is very keen to start a pilot with Pharmaco’s implants. Janine and Dirk send the proposal to Sonja who forwards it to Pharmaco and the consultant, Alex.

Alex is surprised by this completely new proposal, which uses the standard social marketing strategies instead of the Total Market Approach that Alex wants to further develop. Furthermore, Janine and Dirk have proposed to work with other organizations instead of the local counterpart that Alex directs. Hence, Alex tells Sonja that he will withdraw if the Ministry and Pharmaco choose to work with this plan. If this proposal is accepted, the PPP-project loses the support of one of its key partners.

Sonja sees the reactions of Alex and Pharmaco and quickly replies to both Pharmaco and Alex saying, “please [...] visit [country Z] together and visit all stakeholders together in order to make progress in developing a PPP/business plan or a proposal that both [Alex’s organization] and Pharmaco consider realistic and are comfortable within the context of [country Z]”. She tells that this proposal will be the basis on which to determine if the Ministry will finance the project. Again she stresses that it is not Janine, but rather “[i]t is the Ministry in The Hague that will basically decide on financial support based on a proposal prepared jointly by you” Sonja writes, “This is an opportunity for all of us to work together in an innovative way.” She points out that there is support from her but, more

importantly, also from the Minister, writing, “[t]he Minister herself would have wanted this partnership to emerge yesterday”.

Next, Pharmaco and Alex sit down together and assemble a proposal that promotes Pharmaco’s products in the private market. Janine, who sees that Pharmaco and Alex are continuing to work on a Total Market Approach, writes an official memorandum to Mieke, in which she asks Mieke to reject the proposal. In this extensive memorandum she raises numerous arguments to decline the project proposal. But before she can send the memorandum, the Ambassador intervenes. He takes the lead in this discussion and writes to department D, saying, “the proposal is very brief” and does not offer more than the initial idea. It is therefore, he believes, that the proposal is “insufficient” to take a decision on financing. In Paul’s opinion, the proposal should at least answer the fundamental question, “Does this proposal really serve poverty reduction?”. If the answer is “no”, Paul affirms, funding for the PPP is not justified. He again invites Pharmaco to come to country Z to meet all local parties involved in the PPP and develop “a viable proposal” so that this question can be answered with a “yes”.

A scapegoat is found

It is now April. Minister Van Ardenne has heard nothing but silence about the PPP-project. She wonders what is going on with the project and asks her personal assistant to find out when to expect the project to be up and running. Head of department D, Karel, answers that the preparations for the project will be completed in October. Furthermore, he stresses that his department is on top of the project, but that all parties affirm that it just cannot go any faster. He explains that this is, foremost, caused by the authorities of country Z, stating that because of “the limited capacity in the government of [country Z] things move very slow and the theme (commodity security) is not well-known to everyone”. Karel holds the government of country Z responsible for the lack of progress in the realization of the PPP-project instead of informing the Minister about the discussion taking place amongst ministerial officials.

While Karel tells the Minister that country Z has been delaying the realization of the project, Janine worries that the government of country Z and the local NGO will not refuse an offer of 5 million euro even though this offer, she says, is “not good for them”. She believes that the government of country Z and the NGO will be blinded by the money and disregard what Sonja considers a fact, namely that the project does not help women. Mieke does not seem concerned about this. She writes to the embassy, “The fact that there is much interest on the part of [country Z] supposes that there is at least some active inquisitiveness from that side. And the presence of the Minister and Vice-Minister [of country Z] in part of the exercise appears to point to the same [conclusion]”. The embassy is less sure of that.

Embassy staff members know that the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Public Health asked several experts for advice on the PPP. Some of these advisors raised their concerns about the project. According to one of them, “the proposal seems to be very ambitious and ambiguous”. Someone else points out that “it simplifies a sophisticated issue like the sustainability of contraceptives, which may be possible in the ideal world, but maximizing

the clients who will buy their own contraceptives by creating a new layer is betting against all odds". It is also said that the UNFPA, as current key partner of the government on contraceptive supply, is completely ignored in the project design. The embassy feels that there is a possibility that the Deputy Minister of Public Health of country Z will not approve the project if she listens to these counsels. Paul and Janine are genuinely concerned that if the Ministry of Public Health rejects the project it will be punished for that by the headquarters and receive less Dutch aid. This, they feel, would be completely unfair, since they believe rejecting the current PPP-project would be an intelligent thing to do. In the following e-mail conversation, Paul and Janine express these feelings:

Paul: ...it doesn't look good at all (for [Pharmaco] and [the minister]) since it is very likely that the [country Z] will torpedo the whole thing in the meeting at the end of this month....I hope an eventual [possible?] rejection by [country Z] will not lead to "revenge" actions by The Hague!!!

Janine: ...the Ministry [of country Z] is concerned about the implications of speaking their mind. I expect the Ministry to come up with a draft reply they would like to discuss with you before making it formal. And instead of revenge, [country Z] will deserve a medal when they proceed with this issue wisely and responsibly. In that way, they do much better than we do, and I think they should get the 5 million [Euro] for good reason.

Paul: I fully agree with you. We should have a good talk with the Ministry before they deliver their reply. I am also worried about the consequences, should Pharmaco be torpedoed. We should be prepared to come with a constructive and acceptable alternative in case Pharmaco does not do so itself. Does [the Deputy Minister of Public Health] realize that the "Pharmaco money" [for this project] and the regular money [from the Dutch government for public health] are from very different sources and not interchangeable?

(18 June 2006)

The embassy's fear that the government of Z would be punished for rejecting the PPP turns out to be for naught. The Deputy Minister of Public Health is still interested in managing the project. Yet, Alex, the consultant, also starts to speak up for the people in country Z. He sends an e-mail to department D, stating that many key issues, among other things the role of Pharmaco, are still not resolved. Ambassador Paul takes this opportunity to stress again that their concerns still have not been addressed. The PPP-project is still not supported by the embassy, and Alex's mail shows that his support is not guaranteed. Now Sonja is losing faith that the project will ever be realized in country Z. Hence, she proposes to "seriously consider with [the international ORH] and Pharmaco to develop the pilot 'PPP Market Development Approaches Reproductive Health Commodities' somewhere else, as there is 'still no noticeable progress,' in country Z" (e-mail August 2006). Will this be the end of the PPP-project in country Z?

Pressure from above

In various e-mails, the Dutch embassy points out that the PPP-project is “tied aid” and that it conflicts with the Paris Declaration. Mieke acknowledges that there are difficulties and problems with such public-private partnership issues, but she contends that it is not for officials to make the final decision about the PPP-project. She writes, “of course there are snags on these public-private cooperation initiatives, but the choice for this is the Minister’s”. And she goes on to state that “the PPP with Pharmaco is an important topic for [the Minister]”. Mieke tells her colleagues in the embassy that they, as officials, have to comply with the wishes of the Minister, even if this is difficult and problematic. Their only job is “to make a valuable contribution to minimizing the risks in the execution for which we are not blind of course”, she writes (May 2006). According to various people in the embassy, Mieke is a “career diplomat”. They believe she only complies with the Minister because she hopes this will help her secure a good position in her next job rotation. However, the embassy staff members believe their role is to advise the Minister and guard her from any future (political) problems. They do not want to obey the Minister at any cost.

At this point, the Deputy Director-General also gets involved in the discussion between department D and the embassy. He had a talk with Pharmaco’s representatives at an official dinner. The representatives told him that Pharmaco wants the PPP to be realized. Pharmaco asserts that their interest in the PPP is not driven by profit, at least not for the period of the PPP. The Deputy Director-General writes to Ambassador Paul and the Head of Development, Tom, saying that he wants to see the project go ahead. He writes:

Paul and Tom,

At the yearly [...] dinner, I had a chat with the representative of [Pharmaco] who was a little blue because of the [country Z] story, which is not getting off the ground. Let’s get one thing straight right away. I would very much like to see it “fly”; Why? Because, in my opinion, the population problem in your region is the central reason why so little headway is made in the field of mother and child care.

Where is the bottleneck? Who should be convinced? What do the people of country Z themselves think of it? Are the risks assessed and are they controllable? Is there the danger of a monopoly position? These are all questions, that’s right. But if we really want, we can also come up with answers.

Thanks for your reaction.

Pim

(6 September 2006)

In this e-mail, the Deputy Director-General lets the Ambassador know that he feels the embassy should be more cooperative in finding the answers. But does the embassy really want this? “No”, Janine cries out. “Not at the expense of everything,” Paul stresses yet again. It is not the embassy that needs to find the answers, but Pharmaco and IORH, the Ambassador believes. He suggests to the Deputy Director-General that Pharmaco, or Alex from IORH, come to country Z and listen to the viewpoints of the various parties in country Z. This would provide the opportunity to explain Pharmaco’s position more fully, and to

explain the idea behind the project. Furthermore, Paul stresses, Pharmaco will have to think about how to present and distribute the contraceptives in a product-neutral way to avoid the accusation of tied aid.

Paul implicitly points out that it is not the embassy that needs to be convinced. Rather, he indicates, it is the people of country Z involved in the project that have mixed feelings. These people do not (yet) understand how a project that aims to sell contraceptives in the commercial sector matches their idea of providing people with a free supply of contraceptives. Furthermore, they see the PPP as a helping hand in the supply of contraceptives, but “they find it rather ‘frightening’ and, as yet, way too abstract to sign anything”. This problem can be solved, Paul thinks, if Pharmaco and Alex come to country Z to explain the project’s main idea. But he also adds that the time is not right to visit country Z now, because the elections are coming up and it will be Ramadan soon. Paul puts the meeting between Pharmaco, the consultants, the government of country Z, and the NGO on hold, and thereby forestalls the chance to solve this issue.

The Deputy Director-General feels that the problems the embassy raises have to be solved by the Ministry and not by country Z. He writes, “If we can’t solve this, what can we solve then?”. He disputes that the project would conflict with the free supply of contraceptives. The free supply of contraceptives in country Z is an ideal; it is not the current situation in country Z. Therefore, this is only a hypothetical problem. One of the most important and recurring problems for the embassy is the issue of tied aid. In his e-mail, the Deputy Director-General stresses that he feels this is not a problem. He writes, “Tied aid? It may be a shock but I do not have much difficulty with that in this case. PPP’s are, by definition, tied aid”. He closes his e-mail with a suggestion to go over all the basic questions again before anyone travels to country Z.

Ambassador Paul changes his tone into one of support. He agrees with the Deputy Director-General that all PPPs are tied aid. He adds that it is not a problem that Pharmaco makes some money from this project in the long run. But, and this remains essential for the embassy, with this specific PPP-project there is a large risk of distorting competition. Paul ends his e-mail in an optimistic tone. He brings all the parties together and sketches out a promising future for the project. He writes, “Concluding: in principle, it must be solvable, but all parties have to put their back into it”. So Paul stresses that all parties are responsible for the success or failure of the project and, thus, all have to put in a lot of effort and energy to get the project off the ground. If all questions and answers are brought together again, as the Deputy Director-General suggests, it will show the progress made in getting the project off the ground. Of this, Paul says, his colleague may be assured.

A last word on the assassination of the PPP

In December 2006, I left country Z. Yet, the negotiations around the PPP-project continued until sometime in 2007. For more than two years, attempts had been made to realize the project. Pharmaco lost hope that there would ever be a PPP. But besides that, Pharmaco was bought by a foreign pharmaceutical company and the company was being merged. The future of both staff and projects had become unstable. It was Pharmaco that finally

decided to withdraw its support from the project. Without the main partner, the PPP ceased to exist.

In September 2008, I interviewed Agnes van Ardenne, the former Minister for Development Cooperation. She was working in Rome as the Dutch representative to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and visiting the Netherlands for the annual meeting of Dutch ambassadors, organized by the Ministry. We met in her house in Vlaardingen, the city where she started her political career. I wanted to know how she looked back on the PPP with Pharmaco. Van Ardenne could not remember much of this particular partnership. Though she said that this project was “very arduous” and that it just “couldn’t get through” like most other PPPs. While discussing that the PPP-project had not been realized, Van Ardenne talks about the functioning of Ministry as organization. She explains that the Ministry did not function as it should:

Every-time all those e-mails went around, and around, and around. And then someone sent something, and then suddenly it was quiet again for a while. Then someone looked up and then, of course, I asked about it once in a while. [...] I had a list of “where are these [projects]”. Whereas, this is absolutely no longer my job, of course. If I say, “sort this out and take care that there is an adequate partnership” then, of course, it just has to be possible to work that out administratively [...] That’s what officials are there for.

(Interview with former minister Van Ardenne, 30 September 2008)

Van Ardenne tells me that the ministerial officials had to carry out her requests as Minister. Only, they did not. The reason that ministerial officials did not set up partnerships, the Minister elucidates, is because the officials just did not want to do it. According to Van Ardenne, the problem is that, in the Ministry, no one dares to make a decision. It is due to the organizational culture that so few partnerships have been realized, she believes.

Conclusion

Currently, the aid organization is under attack. The one-sided portrayals of aid practitioners do little to change the widespread conception of the aid bureaucracy as a cunning yet defective machine. There are two stereotypes of the aid practitioner that stand out in academic works and dominate the public debate. There is the image of the aid practitioner as the selfish, career-minded official, who travels around the world at the cost of the western taxpayer and hangs out at the swimming pool in developing countries to “help the poor”. The other stereotype is that of the ignorant, rule-crafting aid practitioner who thinks that ambiguity can be solved through guidelines. Both stereotypes of the aid practitioner do little justice to them. They obscure the devotion of aid practitioners to development aid.

This chapter has shown the commitment of officials in the Dutch embassy, “street level bureaucrats”, to borrow the term of Lipsky (1980), to country Z and the vigor with which they defend the interests of the poor in country Z. This commitment is also shown

in the zeal with which the embassy staff argues that aid should be pure otherwise it is not *development* aid. They want the headquarters to transform and purify the PPP-project so it becomes a real development project. Only they differ in how the project should be purified. Officials at the headquarters involved in the PPP do not want to know about a purification of the project as they are afraid that it would then lose support from the Minister and/or Pharmaco. This chapter shows how the Dutch embassy tries to purify the project that officials in the ministerial headquarters in The Hague want to realize in country Z. In this battle both officials in the headquarters and in the embassy draw on and comply with official agreements, rules and regulations, and bureaucratic procedures to structure their and other people's actions, to justify and legitimize their actions and to make other actions unlawful and thus not possible.

In this fight over the PPP-project officials point out to each other what it means to be a good official. We can distinguish two interpretations of the good official. One is that the official should inform, advise, and contradict the Minister not only when he or she asks for it, but also when the official believes necessary. Another interpretation of the good official is that he or she should comply with the Minister's wish because he or she is politically responsible and needs to give account in Parliament. In practice, the two interpretations of what it means to be a good official do not necessarily conflict. Only when interpretations of the Minister's dream for development differ, then the interpretation of what it means to be a good official becomes important.

In the aid bureaucracy, such differences of opinion are hardly ever settled. Discussions on development projects and programs can go on persistently until one of the actors loses interest or patience to continue their realization. This is what happened with the PPP-project. The endless discussions within the Ministry about the PPP-project finally made Pharmaco withdraw from the project. Like Latour's conclusion that no one killed Aramis (a project that aimed to set up a personal transportation system), but rather it was a collective assassination (1996: 10), the PPP-project befell a similar fate. Then, it is not the policy that is unclear, nor the implementation that fails. Rather, it is the trajectory of translations that has led to the non-realization of the PPP-project. So, instead of focusing on getting the policies right or trying to develop incentives to improve implementation without reinterpretation, we should pay more attention to the chain of translation, thus the trajectory, of projects and programs.

¹ Dutch saying meaning; if someone does not take into account an imminent problem, then the problem has to rise to its full proportion, and then still solved.



CHAPTER 6 | THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This thesis started with the observation that in academic and public debates the difference between policy statements and policy outcomes can be explained by the gap between policy statements and the practices that follow these policy statements. Yet, I contended that instead there being of a gap, there is a chain of translations. Then, I claimed that if we want to understand the trajectory of policies we also need to pay attention to practices whereby some translations are denied. In other words, translation often goes together with purification. Furthermore, I pointed out the importance of dreams of development in policy processes in development aid. In the chapters that followed I explored the trajectory of partnership since it was launched in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs through the creation of a public-private partnership (PPP) and its transportation to country Z all the final abandonment of this PPP-project.

As this thesis is not an evaluation of development aid, I do not draw judgments about the aid practitioners, the development policy, or ministry nor the events that took place in this closing chapter. Instead, I want to return to the debates as set out in the opening chapter and draw conclusions on the intricacies of policy, policy processes and the meaning of Dutch development aid, based on the ethnography presented in this research.

Dreams of development

In the opening chapter I have said that policy, planning, and intervention studies focus too much on instrumentality and hardly pay attention to the dreams that policy expresses. Studies of development aid point at its “good intentions” (Quarles van Ufford and Roth 2003), “high moral objectives” (Curtis 2004), and “the will to improve” (Li 2007) but hardly explore the dreams that inspire these intentions, objectives and the will to improve. If this will to improve is a driving element in development aid as Li points out, how come these studies mainly neglect to take dreams of development seriously and study how these dreams shape aid? If we want to come to a better understanding of policy processes in development aid we need to start paying attention to dreams of development. For that reason, this thesis explored the dreams of development in Dutch aid over the period 1989 until 2005.

In this thesis, a dream of development is defined as an image of an ideal alternative order of the world in which life is good. Thus, it has a utopian character in the sense that it is an imaginary ideal order that is singular, coherent, whole, complete, and pure. The language that we find in policy texts is symbolic and expresses these dreams for development. Metaphors such as ownership and partnership need to express a sense of singularity and wholeness. In other words, they express the dream of a world that is a

perfect place for everyone, with nothing more to wish for. It is important to distinguish between this image of the ideal world that is whole and complete and the way in which these dreams are expressed and communicated through symbolic language, such as the metaphors ownership and partnership, statements, plans, and projects.

To explain policy trajectories we need to look at the dreams of development that policies express and the way in which these dreams are communicated through policy texts. This implies the reconstruction of imaginary dreams expressed by policies in order to understand how statements and ideas that appear to be fragmented and partial to the reader very likely hang together in the imaginary of the speaker. I take this methodological approach as described in the second chapter to be a useful way of making sense of the dreams expressed by policy. This methodology involves tracing how events and encounters in the speaker's life shaped their dreams and were translated into symbolic language in policy texts. This implies the reconstruction of the speakers' life histories through interviews with them and the people close to them. We have to understand the situations in which they felt loneliness, happiness, and anxiety to see how these emotional moments are linked with symbolic notions such as freedom, war, and equality. It will help us understand how they make sense of development, and how they express this meaning in policy metaphors such as ownership and partnership.

In development aid people often avoid defining the exact meaning of metaphors because it is almost impossible to come to a definition that everyone agrees on (Gould 2007). Then, simply accepting such metaphors is a way to avoid endless discussions and total paralysis (Riles 2000, 145). I claim that instead of trying to define metaphors such as ownership or partnership we need to discuss the dreams of development that gave way to these metaphors. This implies clarifying how one makes sense of the world and human life in order to explain what someone may consider to be a good life. This also includes the dreams of people in developing countries. As De Vries pointed out, rather than rejecting the notion of development, we need to "engage with development" and take people's dreams for development seriously (2007, 26). Likewise, I claim that instead of talking about the good intentions and high moral objectives of aid practitioners with a cynical undertone, we should also pay attention to their dreams of development and the events and encounters that have shaped them. This way we (re)politicize development aid and offer an alternative to the current cynicism surrounding development aid.

From a technical-scientific to a personal-political way of communicating dreams

The dreams of development that are explored in this thesis start as personal dreams that are shaped by events and encounters in a person's life (chapter 2). Pronk expressed his dream for development in the metaphor of ownership, while Van Ardenne expressed her dream in the metaphor of partnership. Whereas Pronk conceives of the world in terms of power relations, Van Ardenne conceives the world in terms of connectedness and inclusion. To make these dreams real they have to become collective dreams (cf. Latour 1996). Then, the question arises; how do the ministers Pronk, Herfkens, and Van Ardenne share their personal dreams of development with others?

The sharing of dreams of development with others is a political act. It involves convincing others that this personal dream is a collective dream that is good for everyone. It includes the calling into question of other dreams. And, thereby, it leaves little room for difference and diversity. But how are dreams shared with others? How are dreams communicated in policy texts? And how does that relate to the way in which the dream gives meaning to the world and the person that shares this dream with others? In the policy texts I distinguished two styles of communicating dreams; a technical-scientific way and a political-personal way. This thesis shows that styles of communication are related to the extent of purification. The technical-scientific style of communication goes along with a high degree of purification, while the political-personal style comes with little or no purification.

The dream of development that was expressed in the metaphor ownership was shared with others in a technical-scientific way. The policy texts of Pronk and Herfkens resembled scientific texts in how they use information and statements from other documents as facts in their story, how they construct their story by building one statement onto another, and how they expand and explain their story in various policy texts through time. Their technical-scientific style of communicating is replaced by Van Ardenne with a political-personal style of communicating. Van Ardenne's policy texts are highly personal texts. She includes herself as the speaker and draws on her Christian identity. She also selects issues that she finds interesting and important. On various occasions she calls into question the dream of ownership of her predecessors thereby explicitly communicating that her dream of development is a political choice.

Van Ardenne's personal-political way of communication can be explained by her background. Contrary to Pronk and Herfkens, Van Ardenne did not have an academic education. Yet, this only partly explains why Van Ardenne did not communicate her dream in a technical-scientific way. She had academically educated ministerial officials who could help her with that. Her dream of partnership is about developing intimate relations with others through being personal and demonstrative in communicating with others. This dream of partnership could not be realized through a technical-scientific style of communication that is cold, distant, and detached. Hence, the dream of partnership of Van Ardenne relies on a personal-political style of communication to create close ties with her audience and to enroll them in development aid.

The question arises that if this personal-political style of communication only applies to the case of Dutch development aid over the period of 1989 until 2005. Or, is it a general trend in development aid? After all, partnership policy isn't solely a policy notion in Dutch development aid but also of other national and international aid organizations. I will not answer this question here. But I believe I have developed a method to explore this further in other studies.

Translation and implementation

In the first chapter of this thesis I pointed out that the standard thinking about development aid still comprehends policy processes as the implementation of policy ideas into action. I have argued that instead of talking about implementation, we should

talk about translation. In the introduction I have defined translation as the process of proposing and bringing into being of a set of relations between people, organizations, things, interests, and goals (cf. Callon and Law 1989; Latour 1996; Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006). The theoretical notion of translation encourages us to explore which organizations form a relation, what this relation is about, and how this relation is shaped when we study public-private partnerships. This can help develop our understanding of how public-private partnerships reorder our society.

Then, this thesis describes how a project's design, that was developed in order to increase the access to and availability of contraceptives in developing countries, is transformed into a design that brings a Dutch pharmaceutical company into Dutch development aid. The original project design that aimed to promote and sell contraceptives of generic manufacturers in the private market is translated into a design that promotes brand-name contraceptives of Pharmaco. This new project design fits Minister Van Ardenne's dream of development to form partnerships with private Dutch companies. Though both projects aim to make use of marketing strategies, these projects differ in the (type of) products they want to promote and sell and the type of companies that they enroll. As a result, the projects are completely different. This is how ideas travel, through practices of translation that create new relations.

To understand the policy process as a matter of translation practices instead of practices of policy formulation and policy implementation also has implications for our understanding of context. Implementation goes together with the idea that a project or program is placed within a certain context. Thus, literature on implementation assumes that context is already there before the project is. Yet, as we have seen the people and organizations in country Z become part of the project. Then, the question is what is context? As Callon and Law already noted, the division between what is content, thus the project, and what is context "is a division that is negotiated and renegotiated by the actors themselves" (1989: 57). I have shown aid practitioners contextualize and re-contextualize the PPP-project to make the project fit or not fit in the developing country concerned. If one says that a project does not fit, the person says nothing more than that he or she has no trust in the project and does not want to support the project. Hence, the work of contextualization can advance or obstruct the realization of a project.

As we have seen in chapter four and five, the PPP-project with Pharmaco caused much consternation in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs. Several embassies did not want a project that promoted Pharmaco's contraceptives in the private market to be realized in "their" country. Headquarters demanded that this project proposal be supported by the embassy. They pointed out to the Dutch embassy in country Z that this project is the minister's wish. She makes the political decisions, they said, and ministerial officials just have to carry them out. Then, this thesis shows that the model of policy and implementation is not only a theoretical misconception of actual policy practices. Also, managers and high-level officials use this model to reject particular interpretations by other officials in the organization and try to turn merely into cogs in a government machine. The scholars that suggest the installation of incentives to improve implementation of policy aim for the same effect. They overlook that dreams of development are an important drive in aid practitioners' work. Hence, to install incentives basically implies not allowing

aid practitioners in other sites and levels to give meaning to their work. Such incentives take away aid practitioners' motivation to do their work and as a result they often have perverse effects.

Despite attempts to compel others in the organization to accept particular translations, this book shows that these others do not become docile bodies. Instead, we see how aid practitioners in the embassy take part in the negotiation of the PPP-project. It is too simple to understand the negotiation in the ministry in terms of dominance by headquarters and resistance of embassies. As the negotiation presented in chapter 5 shows, aid practitioners develop different manners of discussing, calling into question, and objecting the PPP-project. We have seen that it is not only where these officials are located within the organization, but also the level or rank of the official that influences the way in which they negotiate projects. Furthermore, the different dreams of development and personal aspirations of aid practitioners also shape how they negotiate projects in the ministry. Thus, if we want to understand how policy statements, projects and programs are discussed within aid organizations, we need to take into account both the location and level of aid practitioners and their dreams of development.

Some notes on knowledge practices

This thesis touches upon the political-economic struggles between the big pharmaceutical companies and generic producers and Pharmaco's business in country Z. It struck me that embassy officials did not speak about the global debate on generics, of generic manufacturers versus the brand-name contraceptives of big pharmaceutical companies, nor did they bring up the problems of Pharmaco with its local agent in their discussion about the PPP-project with the ministerial headquarters. The difference between how I came to understand the PPP-project and how aid practitioners understood the PPP-project has partly to do with the difference in knowledge practices of anthropologists in academia and aid practitioners in aid organizations. Anthropologists are engaged with development through the practice of criticism whereas aid practitioners are engaged in development through action (cf. Green 2009). As such, they gather, select, and present knowledge in different ways.

Knowledge is situated. For that reason we have to look at the situations in which knowledge is gathered (Mosse 2005). Aid practitioners in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs stay for three to four years in one country before they move on to the next. In these countries they work and mingle with government officials and colleagues in DFID, the UNDP, the World Bank, and to a lesser extent USAID, DANIDA. Contacts with locals were limited to work relations. And because they were work related, few officials had contacts with business people. Information about the pharmaceutical market or Pharmaco's business in country Z did not come to them if they did not actively seek this information. For example, the economic attaché of the Dutch embassy knew that Pharmaco had been doing business for 20 years in country Z. However, he had not heard about Pharmaco's problems with its local agent and the local agent's history regarding pharmaceuticals. The corruption scandal that I discuss in chapter four was not something many people working in the pharmaceutical industry brought up. I found out through one of my

contacts because I wanted to know about Pharmaco's business in country Z. Officials did not acquire information on the pharmaceutical industry because with their busy agendas they did not have time to learn more about the industry and, more importantly, they believed it was not important for their work.

The gathering of knowledge is also shaped by aid practitioners' dreams for development. Many officials also believed it was not their work to be informed about political-economic issues at national and global level. Not only this particular project showed that, but also in many staff meetings it became clear that aid practitioners' dreams of development were linked to how much they knew about political-economic issues. For example, someone stated in a discussion on how to do development not to be interested in the power plays in the government because it did not concern the poor children they wanted to help. It followed that she wasn't interested in the political-economic interests of government officials and ministries in country Z, the power plays between them, and their strategies towards aid organizations. She reasoned that she needed to help the poor rather than try to intervene in and change such power balances. Also the case of the PPP-project shows that particular dreams of development go together with particular knowledge practices. The embassy's health expert did not know of Pharmaco's business conflict in country Z. She believed she did not need to know because, she judged, the PPP-project with Pharmaco was not ethical. She felt it was morally wrong to persuade people with marketing strategies to buy contraceptives in the private market while they could get much cheaper contraceptives in government hospitals and NGO clinics. Because the whole idea of the PPP was in itself was wrong, it was not important to know what the political-economic interests of the people involved in the project were. So, we see that the information that is gathered, selected, and presented is purified and that purification goes in hand with particular dreams of development.

The type of information that is accepted by others as valid also shapes the presentation of knowledge. It struck me that officials in the Dutch embassy did not suggest the promotion of generics in the PPP-project. The health expert once asked the ambassador to suggest the idea of promoting generics instead of Pharmaco's contraceptives. Yet, in his email to the headquarters he said that the main problem is that the project is "tied aid" and "market distortion". I learned that he translated information that talks about political-economical issues into technical information. Technical information is more difficult to refute than political information. If one raises political issues in the ministry, colleagues who do not agree with these issues can easily point out that it is the minister who makes political decisions. Technical information is inscribed in policy documents, papers and books about development aid. To invalidate technical information implies challenging a whole body of knowledge. Thus, translation of political information into technical information is a way of validating one's dream of development and calling into question the dreams of development and translations of others.

The Purification of Aid

In translation practices we see how people, things, interests, and goals are tied together. In this thesis we have followed translation practices around the PPP-project, such as the

assembling of the PPP-project with Pharmaco by an official in the ministerial headquarters in The Hague, the enrollment of a large international NGO in the field of reproductive health by Pharmaco, and the mobilization of support of the Ministry of Public Health of country Z for the project. These translations make up the trajectory of the PPP-project. In addition, I have shown that we can only understand the trajectory of the PPP-project if we also look at purification practices. If translation is the mobilizing of support, then purification is the deciding of whose support should be and whose support cannot be mobilized. The purification practices described in this thesis are not limited to this particular PPP-project. I claim that the purification of aid is a widespread phenomenon in Dutch development aid and policy processes in general.

The purification of aid is based on the belief that aid cannot be combined with self-interest. It is thought that if aid is given with self-interest it will not truly help the other and, hence, it is not real aid. Therefore, the reasoning follows that in order for aid to foster development, it should be purged of all elements of self-interest. In other words, aid should be pure. Thus, the purification of aid is the removal of all elements of self-interest from aid. The purification of aid is based on the distinction between altruism and self-interest that are treated as two binary categories in which all people, organizations, and techniques can be categorized based on their character. In Chapter 3 and 5 we have seen how aid practitioners made sense of other organizations, techniques, in terms of altruistic or self-interested and categorized them accordingly. If an organization had social goals and was profit-oriented, as was the case with Pharmaco, it was split in two clear parts that could then be categorized as altruistic or self-interested. If the character of an element was categorized as self-interest it should be removed from aid to keep aid pure.

In Chapter 2 I explained that Ministers Pronk and Herfkens put private companies such as Pharmaco in the category of self-interest and concluded that they cannot be mixed with aid. I showed the measures taken by these ministers for the purification of aid, including the creation of a separate budget for supporting Dutch companies that want to do business in developing countries, the shift from aid in the form of projects to supporting budgets of developing countries, and the drastic cut back in spending on technical assistance by Dutch consultants to developing countries. So, the thesis explains that in the dream of development of Pronk and Herfkens aid cannot contain elements of self-interest, which implies that Dutch companies who are oriented towards profit-making cannot be enrolled in development aid. Then, we have seen how with the replacement of minister Herfkens by Minister Van Ardenne, this belief changed. Van Ardenne believed that the mixing of altruism with self-interest is not problematic. Rather, she believed that good aid should enroll Dutch private companies and other groups of people that were purified from aid by Ministers Pronk and Herfkens. For that reason, Minister Van Ardenne requested her ministerial officials to set up public-private partnerships.

The trajectory of the PPP-project shows how difficult it was for ministerial officials to set up partnerships with Dutch private companies. They had been shaped by the ideas ministers Pronk and Herfkens who had headed the Ministry for more than a decade. These officials questioned if and how Dutch private, profit-making companies could be combined with aid. We can see differences between officials as to what extent and in which way they are willing to except the inclusion of profit-orientation and commercial

techniques. From the purification practices of ministerial officials described in this thesis it shows that Pronk's dream of development is still very influential in Dutch development aid.

The translation and purification processes are not only inspired by dreams of development. In chapter 5, I have shown how translation and purification practices are also shaped by career aspirations, concerns for reputation, and interpretations of what it means to be a good ministerial official. In the debate on the PPP-project we can distinguish two interpretations of the good official. There is the interpretation that the official should inform, advise, and contradict the Minister not only when he or she asks for it, but also when the official believes necessary. Another interpretation of the good official is that he or she should comply with the Minister's wish because he or she is politically responsible and needs to account to in Parliament. The two interpretations of what it means to be a good official do not necessarily conflict. We saw in chapter five that when interpretations of the Minister's dream for development differ, then the meaning of the good official becomes important.

In chapter 2, I elucidate that purification is inspired both by religious beliefs and by (neo-)Marxist theories of the expropriation of capital that say that the rich are profiting from the poor and keep them poor for example through paying them little for their labor and products. Since neo-Marxist theories are widespread I believe that practices of purification also appear in, for example, the British DfID or among international consultants. This could explain the reactions Mosse received on his book *Cultivating Development* (see Mosse 2006). In this book he wrote that consultants maintain enduring relations with aid agencies to secure future consultancy jobs and that U.K. institutions, universities and consultants expect to profit from the flow of aid into projects (see Mosse 2011: 53-54). These consultants are upset that Mosse represents them as self-interested. They wrote to him, he quotes, "we could have earned more doing something else. We chose not to because we believed in what we were doing" (in Mosse 2011: 54). In this writing the consultants express that because Mosse represents them as self-interested; they think he does not trust they are really committed to development. Implicitly, it expresses the belief that aid cannot have elements of self-interest in it.

With this ethnography I strive to provide a contribution to the debates on development aid. I call for more research that focuses on how practitioners try to realize development through aid and that clarifies the difficulties and dilemmas they face in doing so. Furthermore, I hope that this thesis increases our understanding of policy and policy processes. It breaks with the secrecy of the state and offers a method of making policy choices, practices, and effects visible. As I see it, explicating the dreams of development, the chain of translations, and purification practices can offer us a way out from excessive optimism in policy promises and the depressing cynicism about its effects. It can feed the public discussion on the practicalities and the meaning of particular policies.





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ADDENDUM | SUMMARY

This thesis explores the shift from ownership to partnership policy in Dutch development aid. It is an ethnography based on participant observation during several periods between 2001 and 2006 in the Ministry's headquarters in The Hague and the Dutch embassy in developing country Z. The aim of this research is neither to criticize nor to defend development aid. It does not address the issue of whether partnership policy is effective or if the implementation of this policy is efficient. Instead, this thesis explores policy practices to answer the question of how practitioners try to realize development through aid. It is argued that the current writings conceive development aid as a rational, instrumental policy process and ignores the practices of aid practitioners and, therefore, do not help us understand policy processes. Hence, this thesis develops a theoretical framework that pays attention to aid practitioners' work and tries to understand how they make sense of development aid.

This thesis points out that policy studies should pay attention to dreams of development, which are imaginary orders of an ideal world in which life is good. It shows that ownership and partnership policies express different dreams of development. Then, it shows how aid practitioners try to realize dreams of development through aid and, consequently, how development aid is shaped by different dreams of development. The theoretical framework developed in this thesis conceives policy processes as involving translation and purification practices. Translation is the mobilization and tying together of people, organizations, things, and interests. Purification is the keeping apart of people, organizations, and things because it is believed that they have fundamentally different interests. Hence, this thesis follows the trajectory of partnership from being a policy notion to becoming a public-private partnership project (PPP-project) with the Dutch pharmaceutical company in country Z. In this trajectory the focus is on the different dreams of development that are expressed in and aspired through partnership and the translation and purification processes that make possible or hamper the travelling of partnership.

This study of partnership policy combines both the approach of "studying through", by following the policy of partnership through time and space, and of "studying up", by exploring the aid practices of ministerial officials as a professional elite. The studying of an elite has implications for the methodology of the study. To carry out the research, I had to sign a statement of confidentiality that says no state secrets can be made public. Therefore, this thesis does not reveal any material that is marked as classified in the ministry, but it does write about practices in the aid bureaucracy that are considered by many aid practitioners as public secrets, that is what is generally known about the practices of the state but cannot be articulated in official documents. This thesis contends that writing about the practices of the aid bureaucracy that are part of the state can make a valuable contribution to the debate on development aid. It can explain what keeps the aid bureaucracy together despite the fact that it is not a homogeneous, coherent entity and explicate what makes up development if it isn't a well-defined, singular goal.

The passages quoted in this thesis are both from official and unofficial documents and they also include e-mails between officials in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The documents and e-mails on the PPP-project were filed in the official archives of the PPP-project in the Dutch Embassy in country Z. These e-mail exchanges are used to show how projects like the PPP are discussed and how practices of translation and purification are negotiated, resisted, and justified in the Ministry. For reasons of confidentiality, all people have been given fictional names except for the Dutch ministers for Development Cooperation. Furthermore, to protect the embassy staff, this thesis talks about the country where the PPP-project should be realized as country Z. Likewise, the Dutch pharmaceutical company is referred to as Pharmaco.

The organization of the book is as follows:

Chapter 1 describes the academic debate on partnership in development aid. It points out the limitations of the dominant analyses for our understanding of policy processes in development aid and provides a theoretical framework that can address these issues.

Chapter 2 shows that studies of development aid should pay more attention to the dreams, ideals, values, fears, and beliefs that the aid policies express. Subsequently, this chapter explores the dreams of development of the three Dutch Ministers for Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk, Eveline Herfkens, and Agnes van Ardenne, over the period of 1989 until 2005. These dreams of development can be understood from the descriptions of the key events and important encounters in each minister's life. The dreams of development can be traced in their policies; they are expressed in the symbolic language of ownership and partnership. Pronk used the concept of ownership to express a dream that takes into account power relations, while Van Ardenne's concept of partnership expresses a dream that aims to unite people. Then, whereas Pronk and Herfkens communicate their dream of development in a technical-scientific way, Van Ardenne uses a personal and political way of communicating her dream of development. Because officials who have been trained in academia and worked for many years under Pronk and Herfkens, they have believe that partnership is a buzzword.

Chapter 3 explores the assembling of a public-private partnership project (PPP-project) with the Dutch pharmaceutical company Pharmaco. It explains how in this project various actors with different dreams of development and aspirations in life are tied together in the PPP-project. The chapter describes how a project proposal designed to realize the dream of making contraceptives available and affordable worldwide is translated and transformed by a ministerial official to fit Minister Van Ardenne's dream of development. It is explained why the person who designed that initial project, feels that his project has been "hijacked" by the Dutch ministry and why he, nonetheless, joins the project when Pharmaco invites him.

Chapter 4 analyzes the transportation of the PPP-project from the headquarters in The Hague to country Z. It explores how an assessment team of representatives of the ministerial headquarters in The Hague and of Pharmaco select a country for the realization of the PPP-project. Then, it explains that the choice for country Z is based on where support for the project is thought to be highest and opposition minimal. It is shown that the selection process goes together with the contextualization of the PPP-project. Thus,

this chapter shows that a project is not implemented in a context. Rather, a context is created around a project. Then, transportation implies the transformation of both the project and the context of a project.

Chapter 5 shows how ministerial officials in the headquarters in The Hague and in the Dutch embassy in country Z discuss the PPP-project. The officials negotiate whether or not this PPP is a development project and how it can be transformed into one. Thus, they debate the sense or nonsense of the translations made by a ministerial official in the headquarters and argue if and how the PPP-project should be purified from Pharmaco's interest in profit. We see in this that besides dreams of development, career aspirations, concerns for reputation, and ideas of what it means to be a good ministerial official also play a role in the negotiation on translation and purification of the PPP-project.

Chapter 6 presents the main findings of this research and their theoretical implications. It concludes that the dividing policy processes into policy making and policy implementation is a theoretical misunderstanding as this thesis shows that policy processes consists of translation and purification practices. Yet, this model of policy making versus implementation is also a used as an argument by officials to legitimize particular translations and decline other interpretations. Furthermore, this thesis claims that only when we take dreams of development seriously, we can find a way out of the current cynicism in development aid.



Dit proefschrift onderzoekt de beleidsverandering van ownership naar partnerschap in de Nederlandse ontwikkelingshulp. Het is een etnografie grotendeels gebaseerd op participatieve observatie gedurende verschillende periodes tussen 2001 en 2006 in het Nederlandse Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. Het onderzoek houdt geen pleidooi voor of tegen (Nederlandse) ontwikkelingshulp. Het is geen evaluatie van het partnerschap beleid. Dat wil zeggen, het richt zich niet op de vragen of partnerschap beleid effectief is en of the implementatie ervan efficiënt gebeurt. In plaats daarvan beoogt dit proefschrift de vraag te beantwoorden hoe ontwikkelingswerkers ontwikkeling proberen te bewerkstellingen door middel van hulp. Het probeert te begrijpen hoe zij betekenis geven aan ontwikkelingshulp, met welke dilemma's zij te maken hebben, hoe zij deze praktisch oplossen, en hoe zij daarmee ontwikkelingshulp vorm geven.

Het proefschrift laat zien dat de huidige literatuur ontwikkelingshulp als een rationeel, instrumenteel proces beschrijft en de praktijken van ontwikkelingswerkers negeert. Het beargumeneert dat deze literatuur niet bijdraagt aan ons inzicht in beleidsprocessen in ontwikkelingshulp. Dit proefschrift volgt een interpretatieve benadering voor het bestuderen van beleidsprocessen en kijkt aandachtig naar de praktijken van ontwikkelingswerkers. Vervolgens wordt gesteld dat studies naar beleid, planning, en organisatie meer aandacht zouden moeten besteden aan dromen van ontwikkeling, en translatie- en purificatieprocessen.

Dit proefschrift laat zien dat dromen van ontwikkeling een centrale rol spelen in ontwikkelingshulp. Deze dromen van ontwikkeling zijn imaginaire ordeningen van een ideale wereld waarin het leven goed is. Deze dromen worden uitgedrukt in symbolische taal, zoals de beleidstermen ownership en partnerschap. Hoewel er vele verschillende dromen van ontwikkeling zijn, beschrijft dit proefschrift hoe deze samenkomen in ontwikkelingsprojecten en vervolgens deze project vorm geven. Hoe dromen van ontwikkeling samen komen in ontwikkelingsprojecten wordt beschreven als een proces van translatie. Translatie is het mobiliseren en aan elkaar verbinden van mensen, organisaties, dingen, en belangen. Tegelijkertijd zien we in het realiseren van ontwikkelingsprojecten ook purificatie pogingen. Purificatie beschrijft de hoe ontwikkelingswerkers mensen, organisaties, en producten, niet willen verbinden aan ontwikkelingshulp, omdat deze conflicterende belangen worden toegeschreven. De etnografie beschrijft het traject van partnerschap als beleidsnotie tot aan partnerschap als een project tussen het publieke Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken en het private Nederlandse bedrijf Pharmaco in land Z. In dit traject zien we verschillende dromen van ontwikkeling bij elkaar komen en de translatie en purificatieprocessen die het verplaatsen en ontwikkelen van partnerschap tot project mogelijk maken en belemmeren.

Deze studie van partnerschap beleid combineert een benadering van "studying through" door het volgens van het beleid door tijd en ruimte, en "studying up", door het bestuderen van de beleidspraktijken van ambtenaren van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse

Zaken als een professionele elite. Het bestuderen van een elite heeft implicaties voor de methode van onderzoek, met name voor het verkrijgen van toegang tot informatie en het verwerken en weergeven hiervan in dit proefschrift. De enige manier om beleidsprocessen in praktijk te kunnen bestuderen is door middel van participatieve observatie. Dit kan echter alleen wanneer er een geheimhoudingsverklaring, waarin staat dat staatsgeheimen niet naar buiten mogen worden gebracht, wordt getekend. Echter, de interpretatie van deze verklaring verschilt. Waarbij de ene ambtenaar stelt dat deze verklaring betekent dat alleen de informatie op documenten waarop de term vertrouwelijk staat betreft, stelt de andere ambtenaar dat deze verklaring betekent dat niets dat gehoord, gezien, of gelezen wordt openbaar mag worden. Tegelijkertijd is er in de academische wereld, en met name onder sociaal-wetenschappers, een debat over welke informatie wel of niet bekend moet worden gemaakt. In dit proefschrift heb ik ervoor gekozen om de praktijken openbaar te maken zonder de personen en hun locatie bekend te maken. Daarmee poog ik hun identiteit te beschermen, maar tegelijkertijd meer inzicht te geven in beleidsprocessen in de praktijk. Hiermee beoog ik ook een deel van het cynisme weg te nemen, dat voortkomt uit ideeën van beleid als rationeel proces en de overheid als enkel een instrumentele organisatie.

De organisatie van het boek is als volgt:

Hoofdstuk 1 beschrijft de academische debatten rondom partnerschap als beleidsconcept en projectmodel in ontwikkelingshulp. Het benoemt de beperkingen van de dominante analyses voor ons begrip van beleidsprocessen in ontwikkelingshulp en ontwikkelt een theoretisch raamwerk dat aan deze tekortkomingen tegemoet komt. Daarnaast bespreekt het gevolgde methodologie van dit onderzoek.

Hoofdstuk 2 beargumenteert dat studies over ontwikkelingshulp meer aandacht zouden moeten besteden aan dromen, idealen, angsten, en waarden, die beleid uitdrukken. Vervolgens onderzoekt dit hoofdstuk de dromen van ontwikkeling van de drie ministers voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking Pronk, Herfkens, en Van Ardenne door middel van beschrijvingen van belangrijke gebeurtenissen en ontwikkelingen in hun leven. We zien hoe Minister Pronk zijn droom van ontwikkeling verwoorde in het beleidsconcept ownership waarbij machtsverhoudingen een belangrijke rol spelen, terwijl Minister Van Ardenne haar droom verwoorde in partnerschap waarbij de verbinding van mensen centraal staat. Waarbij Pronk en Herfkens hun beleid op een technisch-wetenschappelijke manier communiceren, dat wil zeggen alsof er een waarheid is, comminiceert Van Ardenne haar droom als een persoonlijke en partij-politieke visie die slechts naast andere visies bestaat. Deze verschillende manieren van communiceren heeft gevolgen voor hoe ambtenaren ownership en partnerschap interpreteren en hoe zij later het publiek-privaat partnerschap met Pharmaco proberen te purificeren.

Hoofdstuk 3 onderzoekt het samenstellen van een publiek-privaat partnerschap project (PPP-project) met het Nederlandse farmaceutische bedrijf Pharmaco en de werking van translatieprocessen zien in de praktijk. In dit project komen verschillende actoren met hun dromen van ontwikkeling en persoonlijke aspiraties samen. Het hoofdstuk beschrijft hoe een projectvoorstel dat is ontwikkeld om anti-conceptiva wereldwijd beschikbaar en betaalbaar te maken, is gebruikt om de droom van minister Van Ardenne te verwezenlijken. We zien dat de persoon die het initiele project heeft bedacht, vindt dat het nieuwe project

immoreel is, omdat het samenwerkt met een van de grote farmaceutische bedrijven die de prijzen van anti-conceptive hoog houden en daarmee juist niet bijdragen aan ontwikkeling. Toch sluit hij zich aan bij het project wanneer Pharmaco hem uitnodigt, omdat hij gelooft dat dit project hem kan helpen zijn droom te verwezelijken. Het hoofdstuk laat daarmee zien hoe dromen die niet met elkaar te verenigen lijken, toch samen kunnen komen in een project en dit kunnen vormgeven.

Hoofdstuk 4 analyseert hoe het project kan verplaatsen van het PPP-project van het hoofdkantoor van het ministerie naar land Z. Het laat zien dat het mobiliseren van steun in het land waar de ontwikkelingsorganisatie het project wil realiseren, cruciaal is voor het project. Tegelijkertijd zien we dat het project ook een context moet krijgen die het project legitimeert. Daarmee is context niet iets dat bestaat voordat er een project is. In plaats daarvan wordt een project gecontextualiseerd. Gedurende de realisatie van een project produceren verschillende groepen, afhankelijk van of ze het project steunen of niet, een context waarin het project wel of niet past. Daarnaast laat dit hoofdstuk zien dat tijdens het verplaatsen van het project nieuwe actoren met ieder hun eigen dromen bij het project worden betrokken.

Hoofdstuk 5 laat zien hoe ambtenaren in de ambassade in land Z ontwikkelingshulp proberen te purificeren en anderen, in het departement, de translaties legitimeren. Het hoofdstuk in op de debat rondom het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken als ontwikkelingsorganisatie. In dit debat worden verschillende factoren aangewezen die, volgens de academici, ertoe leiden dat het Ministerie niet in staat is goede hulp te verlenen en ontwikkeling te realiseren. Echter, deze analyses vergeten dat het Ministerie zelf niet eenduidig is. In een organisatie waar de Minister politiek verantwoordelijk is en verantwoording af moet leggen aan het parlement maar die tegelijkertijd steunt op expertise om haar doel te bereiken moeten de ambtenaren eventuele dilemma's oplossen in de praktijk. Dit hoofdstuk beschrijft aan de hand de discussie tussen ambtenaren van het departement in Den Haag en de ambassade in land Z over het PPP-project, van hoe ambtenaren met dit dilemma omgaan.

Hoofdstuk 6 presenteert de voornaamste bevindingen van dit onderzoek en de theoretische implicaties hiervan. In dit hoofdstuk concludeer ik dat verbeelding van het beleidsproces als opgedeeld in de twee fases van beleidsvorming en implementatie niet alleen een theoretische misvatting is. Het is ook een argument dat door actoren op bepaalde posities wordt gebruikt om bepaalde vertalingen of purificaties van anderen af te keuren. Om die reden stel ik dat in plaats van beleid te analyseren met dit model, het belangrijker is om te kijken hoe, wanneer, en door wie deze modellen worden gebruikt en met welke effecten. In dit hoofdstuk beargumenteer ik dat we de dromen van ontwikkeling serieus moeten nemen en bespreekbaar maken. Juist deze dromen vormen de basis van de enorme energie, tijd, en geld die in ontwikkelingshulp wordt gestopt. Door deze dromen zichtbaar te maken kunnen we ook de manieren waarop deze gerealiseerd kunnen worden, bespreken.



ADDENDUM | CURRICULUM VITAE

Jilles Nathalie van Gastel was born on the 8th of February 1976 in Etten-Leur, the Netherlands. She received her VWO diploma in 1995 at the Norbertus Lyceum in Roosendaal. Thereafter she began her studies in Rural Development at the Wageningen University and specialized in social anthropology with a focus on issues of policy and organization. As part of her studies she undertook internships at Plan International in Hanoi, Vietnam and The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) in Maastricht, The Netherlands. She graduated in 2002 having written her master thesis on the policy process regarding “good governance” policy in the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs under the guidance of Dr. Monique Nuijten and Dr. Otto Hospes and for which she carried out research in the ministry for six months.

After finishing her studies, she worked in the Dutch ministry for Foreign Affairs first as junior policy officer in the project team for Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation and then as junior researcher for the Policy and Operation Evaluation Department (also known as Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie or IOB). In 2004 she received a scholarship from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) for her research proposal “From Donorship to Ownership: Towards a New Architecture of Aid?”. Thereupon, she started her PhD thesis under the guidance of Dr. Monique Nuijten. For this research she worked in a Royal Netherlands Embassy abroad for ten months during 2006. During the following years, she presented much of her fieldwork in several international conferences. She has taught research methods and techniques in Wageningen University and at the University of Austral in Chile in the international Joint Master of Science on Regional Development Planning and Management –SPRING program- of the University of Dortmund and the University of Austral.



