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by Jinte Veldman

Promoting Rights Abroad:
Prioritizing SRHR in Dutch Development Cooperation

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Abstract

Since the 1990s, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) have been an important aspect of the Dutch development cooperation policies. This thesis investigates the causal mechanisms that played a role in the decision of the Dutch government to prioritize SRHR in foreign policy. It examines the Dutch context between 1989 and 2007, when SRHR officially became one of four priorities of the development cooperation policies, and tests four hypotheses based on the works by Baehr and Castermans-Holleman (2004) and Busby (2010). This thesis finds that in the Netherlands, economic and security considerations seem to have played only a relatively small role in the prioritization of SRHR in development cooperation. More important was that the Dutch women's rights movement and NGOs in the development sector were able to gain support from the liberal gatekeepers within the political system by framing SRHR as a women's self-determination issue. This thesis ultimately argues that the decision to prioritize SRHR in Dutch development cooperation resulted from a combination of both structural and agent-centered factors.

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Introduction

In the last fifty years, many national governments have aimed to improve the living situation of people abroad by making human rights a priority in their foreign policies (Baehr & Castermans-Holleman, 2004). The universal character of human rights is no longer deemed to be a controversial issue, although a distinction is still occasionally made between political or civic rights and socio-economic rights (Baehr & Castermans-Holleman, 2004). The active promotion of certain human rights, however, is still highly debated in international politics. This thesis focuses on a category of human rights that is still strongly contested in international politics, namely sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). "SRHR remained controversial and contested; sexual rights in particular are poorly understood by many policy actors, they are not easy to operationalise 'downstream' in policies and programmes, and their place and relevance in people's day to day lives have been much less explored" (Standing, Hawkins, Mills, Theobald, & Undie, 2011, p.1).

In her research, Seims identifies seven European countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom) that "have been staunch supporters of international … SRHR development cooperation over many years" (2011, p.129). These countries "stand alone in being willing to embrace the controversial elements of SRHR … as well as more mainstream areas, such as the unmet need for contraception" (Seims, 2011, p.129). While Seims focuses on analyzing how these countries aim to improve SRHR worldwide, she neglects an important underlying question: what led these countries to become such strong supporters of SRHR? The goal of this thesis is to investigate what causal mechanisms have contributed to the decision of certain countries to make SRHR a priority in their

development cooperation[1] policy.

In this thesis, the Netherlands is used as a case study. In the policy note "Our Common Concern" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), 2007), SRHR is stated as one of the four priority themes of Dutch development cooperation. This thesis analyzes the Dutch development cooperation policies between 1989 and 2007 in order to investigate what causal factors and mechanisms contributed to this prioritization. This research has both empirical and theoretical implications. As Brysk and Mehta (2014, p. 97) state, "it is critical to understand the factors that lead a small number of 'global Good Samaritans' to contribute disproportionately to the world's humanitarian collective goods". Empirically, understanding which factors influence the decision of governments to make SRHR promotion a priority will assist SRHR advocates in more efficiently promoting these rights within their own governments' foreign policy. Theoretically, this thesis adds to the literature focusing on human rights promotion by testing whether theories on general human rights promotion are also applicable to the specific field of SRHR promotion and/or if new separate theories ought to be developed to explain this particular phenomenon.

This thesis starts by analyzing the existing literature on human rights promotion and international norms dynamics in order to identify the current gaps. Secondly, it discusses the specific literature on which this thesis aims to build to answer the research question. It focuses on the works by Baehr and Castermans-Holleman (2004) on human rights in foreign policy and Busby (2010) on the role of moral advocacy movements in the foreign policy decision-making process. Thirdly,

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[1] The sources used in this thesis use a wide range of terms with regard to what is here defined as development cooperation. In this thesis, the phrase "development cooperation" will be used, since that is part of the official name of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation in the Netherlands.

[2] The main policy documents used in this thesis are "Een Wereld van Verschil" ("A World of

the methodology and operationalization of key concepts of this thesis are discussed. Lastly, in the results section, the findings of the research are presented and these findings are further discussed in the conclusion and discussion of this thesis.

Literature review

This thesis aims to combine insights from the existing literatures on human rights, foreign policy and international norms in order to answer the research question. First, however, the concept SRHR is discussed.

SRHR

The Program of Action of the International UN Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994 recognized reproductive rights and health as fundamental human rights and identified "states' obligations to make these rights a reality, gender equality, and equity and women's empowerment as essential strategies of development" (Nowicka, 2011, p.119). A year later, in 1995, the "concept of a rights-based approach to sexual and reproductive health, … including the right to health, and adoption of strategies for gender equality and women's human rights, were major accomplishments made in the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW)" (Nowicka, 2011, p.119).

The term '*sexual rights*' was also introduced at the ICPD in 1994, but was deemed "too controversial to be approved for inclusion in the official documents of the conference" (Lottes, 2013, p.372). The term SRHR is however used in official documents by the Dutch government. This thesis uses the World Health Organization's (WHO) working definition of sexual rights. Sexual rights are seen as human rights pertaining to sexuality and "embrace certain human rights that are

already recognized in international and regional human rights documents and other consensus documents and in national laws" (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2010, p.18).

Human rights in foreign policy

While many scholars of international relations and political science have written about the relationship between human rights and foreign policy, little information is available on why states prioritize certain human rights, such as SRHR, in their foreign policy. Since information about specific human rights in foreign policy is lacking, this thesis first examines the literature on general human rights in foreign policy. In their book, Baehr and Castermans-Hollemans touch upon "why governments decide to include the promotion of human rights among their foreign policy objectives" (2004, p.2). The authors state that some scholars have argued that states promote human rights out of self-interest, since it might lead to increased peace worldwide. Others have argued that human rights promotion is a legitimation strategy and that it "has become almost impossible to ignore the notion of human rights in international politics" (Baehr & Castermans-Holleman, 2004, p.3). Nowhere in their book, however, do Baehr and Castermans-Holleman mention the fact that some countries prioritize specific human rights over others in their foreign policy and why that is the case. This thesis aims to address that gap.

The research by Philips (2014) does go deeper into the topic of setting priorities among human rights, although it does not deal with foreign policy specifically. Philips argues that states often have to set priorities among human rights "in the context of the allocation of scarce resources" (2014, p.242). Conflicts between human rights, such as "conflicts between the right to freedom of expression and the

right to freedom of religion" (p.242) might also arise. Instead of investigating the motivations of states to prioritize certain human rights over others, however, Philips' work focuses on the normative question of "whether it is indeed a good idea to set prominent and principled priorities among human rights" (p.239). While he presents some interesting insights into why states might have to prioritize certain human rights over others, Philips does not address the research gap identified earlier in this thesis.

International norms

Although they do not necessarily focus on human rights, some constructivist scholars investigate why states adopt particular policies by looking specifically at the role of international norms. Some of the primary research on the dynamics of international norm promotion has been conducted by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998). They identify three stages of norm promotion: 'norm emergence', 'norm cascade' and 'norm internalization'. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, p.896) argue that "norms do not emerge out of thin air; they are actively built by agents having strong notions about appropriate or desirable behavior in their community". These 'norm entrepreneurs' can be individuals, states, or societal actors and they function by "mobilizing support for particular standards of appropriateness and persuading states to adopt new norms" (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, as cited in Ingebritsen, 2002, p.12). The logic introduced by Ingebritsen (2002, p.20) who argues that the Scandinavian countries have acted as important norm entrepreneurs in areas such as sustainable development, can be used to understand why countries such as the Netherlands are acting as norm entrepreneurs with regard to SRHR, as they are trying to persuade other states of the importance of SRHR in a human rights framework. This thesis investigates how the Netherlands became a pioneer in this area and what role moral movements played as

domestic norm entrepreneurs. The logic regarding moral movements is further explained when discussing Busby (2010) in the theoretical framework section of this thesis.

Another important contribution to the field is the work by Marijke Breuning (1995; 2013), who investigates the relationship between norm diffusion and foreign policy on development assistance in several Northern European states. Breuning (2013) focuses on why in some cases international norms are not adopted by certain states. She builds from the commonly held assumption that "[t]he adoption of international norms by a state depends on the active support of decision makers in key gatekeeping positions" (p.307). Gatekeepers are those political actors that – alone or collectively – have the power to decide whether certain policy is implemented or not. However, Breuning concludes that "a sympathetic gatekeeper *alone* is not sufficient" (2013, p.322) to see states adopt new norms. Instead, "decision makers in gatekeeping positions increase their odds of success when they are able to: (i) craft their message in such a way as to gain broad public support and (ii) navigate the peculiarities of the political institutions within which they function" (p.322).

While Breuning provides many valuable insights into the role of gatekeepers in the foreign policy decision-making process, her research focuses specifically on the adoption of international norms, whereas this thesis investigates how the Netherlands became a pioneer in promoting SRHR abroad. Additionally, applying Breuning's argument to the case discussed in this thesis would require extensive research into the coalition building and framing behavior of gatekeepers and the effects it has on popular opinion in the respective countries. Unfortunately, conducting that research goes beyond the more limited scope of this thesis, which will therefore focus instead on the arguments presented by Busby (2007, 2010), who also investigates the role of

gatekeepers, but whose theoretical argumentation is more directly applicable to this particular study. Nevertheless, applying Breuning's argumentation in order to improve our understanding of the role of norm pioneers would be an interesting scholarly project in the future.

Theoretical Framework

The next section discusses the theories from which the hypotheses for this thesis have been derived. Firstly, this thesis builds on earlier literature on the role of human rights in foreign policy (Baehr & Castermans-Holleman, 2004). Additionally, this research project looks into the social movement literature (Busby, 2010) in order to investigate the role of advocacy groups in the creation of foreign policy.

Prioritizing human rights in foreign policy: structural factors.

In their book on the relationship between human rights and foreign policy, Baehr and Castermans-Holleman (2004, p.46) argue that "[a] policy of human rights means a choice among priorities", because prioritizing human rights in foreign policy can at times be incompatible with other foreign policy goals, such as economic gains or state security. In those cases, governments have to choose which policy goal they will prioritize. Baehr and Castermans-Holleman identify three policy goals that might directly conflict with human rights policies: peace and security, economic relations, and development cooperation. Regarding peace and security, they argue that "[t]here exists a general feeling among policy makers that the essence of human rights policy is always potentially conflictive and may lead to a deterioration of relations among states, as no government likes to be criticized for alleged human rights violations" (p.47). Therefore, they argue, governments are more likely to prioritize human rights

in their foreign policy if their promotion is unlikely to damage endanger foreign relations with other states. In the case of the Netherlands, this argument will be translated in the following hypothesis:

H1: The Dutch government was able to prioritize SRHR in its foreign policy because doing so was unlikely to damage the security cooperation with other states.

With regard to economic relations, Baehr and Castermans-Holleman argue that "[h]uman rights considerations may come into conflict with international trade" (2004, p.51), as criticizing a trade partner's human rights policies can negatively affect the economic relations with that state. This deterioration is likely to have negative economic consequences for the country aiming to promote human rights, which is why Baehr and Castermans-Holleman argue that governments are more likely to prioritize human rights if their promotion is unlikely to damage economic relations with trade partners. Similarly, this thesis tests the following hypothesis:

H2: The Dutch government was able to prioritize SRHR in its foreign policy because doing so was unlikely to damage economic relations with trade partners.

Moral movements and foreign policy: domestic factors.

While Baehr and Castermans-Holleman argue that states are less likely to promote human rights if doing so can have negative economic consequences, Busby (2010) argues that the "material interests of states and of individual politicians are insufficient explanatory variables for making sense of foreign policy choices" (Deo, 2011, p.328). According to Busby (2010), the idea that states will always act in accord with their (economic) self-interests "cannot explain behavior in all circumstances" (p.33). There are numerous instances where states have seemingly acted against their direct economic interests. Busby (2010) therefore claims that

"more complex explanations are needed and are more persuasive" (p.34). Whereas many of the arguments of Baehr and Castermans-Holleman (2004) are based on states' self-interest, Busby (2010, p.255) emphasizes "the importance of morality and other motivations that [are] not strictly instrumentally rational or self-interested and how those concerns could lead to costly acts of altruism when policy gatekeepers [believe] those values to be important".

Busby (2010) focuses specifically on the influence of moral movements on foreign policy and the role that "moral advocacy groups" play by possibly persuading gatekeepers of the importance of their cause. He states that since the end of the Cold War, "states increasingly came under pressure to adopt policies championed by transnational advocacy groups" (Busby, 2010, p.3). Busby (2010, p.11) summarizes his argument as follows: "whether states accept commitments made by advocacy movements depends primarily on how three factors conjoin: (1) the balance of material incentives facing states, (2) the cultural resonance of the messages, and (3) the number and preferences of policy gatekeepers". This does not mean, however, that structural factors are of no importance according to Busby (2010). Instead, he gives a nuanced argument about the relation between structural and agent-related factors, stating that "the international context can be permissive or obstruct the acceptance of a movement's aims" (2010, p.44).

First of all, Busby argues that the number of veto players has an influence on the likelihood that policies are implemented. Veto players are "individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo. It follows that a change in the status quo requires a unanimous decision of all veto players" (Tsebelis, 2002, p.19). Busby (2007, p.254) argues that "[w]here there are many veto players, policy stasis becomes more likely (Tsebelis 2002:25). This

establishes a higher bar for frame success as more views make it harder to please everyone". Busby (2010) compares different countries and argues that in countries with fewer gatekeepers, moral campaigns are more often successful. However, because this thesis focuses on a single case study, no variation in the number of gatekeepers can be measured. It is therefore impossible to conduct any research into whether variation in this variable would affect the policy outcome in the case of the Netherlands. Instead, this thesis focuses on the preferences of the gatekeepers involved in the Dutch development cooperation policy between 1989 and 2007. Evidence shows that a clear variation can be measured across this variable over time. Nonetheless, future research on this topic involving multiple case studies is urged to also investigate the influence of the number of gatekeepers on the prioritization of certain human rights in foreign policy.

Busby (2010) argues that if gatekeepers are convinced that an issue is morally important, they are more likely to create policy supporting this issue, even if doing so might have negative economic consequences. Applying it to the case of the Netherlands, the next hypothesis therefore is:

H3: The Dutch government prioritized SRHR in its foreign policy because social movements advocating SRHR were able to convince gatekeepers within the political system of the importance of SRHR.

Keck and Sikkink (1998, p. 201), who claim that transnational advocacy groups "try to frame issues in ways that make them fit into particular institutional venues and … seek leverage over more powerful actors to influence their targets", seem to agree with this hypothesis. They also argue that these mechanisms are strongest with regard to "[i]ssues involving core values … [because those] arouse strong feelings and stimulate network formation among activists, who see their task as

meaningful" (p.201). This mechanism is therefore hypothesized to be present in a controversial issue such as SRHR.

Furthermore, with regard to the preferences of gatekeepers, Busby (2010) finds that "some countries are more susceptible to moral coercion than others as a result of their self-image as virtuous states" (Deo, 2011, p.329). Decision-makers sometimes support certain policies because they are "consistent with the conception of their country's role on the international stage – such as being a good international citizen, a leader, a trustworthy ally" (Busby, 2010, p.141). This argument ties into earlier work on national role conceptions (NRCs), which Holsti defines as "policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions, suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system" (Holsti, 1970, as cited in Brummer & Thies, 2015). The final hypothesis that can be derived from the work by Busby (2010) is:

H4: The Dutch policymakers prioritized SRHR because they perceived their country as a virtuous state.

The next section of this thesis discusses how the hypotheses and the relevant concepts are operationalized.

Operationalization

Case selection

This case study examines the Dutch development cooperation policies between 1989 and 2007. The Netherlands serves as a strong example of a country that prioritizes SRHR in its foreign policy. It is a particularly interesting case because "[e]ver since the early 1990s, the Netherlands' international policy has been steadfast

in its commitment to supporting and advancing … SRHR" (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2014, p.52).

Conducting an exploratory single case study has several methodological implications; first of all, it allows researchers to investigate a particular "contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2009, p.14). What makes the Netherlands stand out from the other Northern European states that also prioritize SRHR is that in spite of being a small country, the Netherlands is a relatively large donor of development aid focused on SRHR (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). Research by Hsu, Berman and Mills (2013), for example, shows that in 2009 the Netherlands spent 166.7 million US$ on official development aid (ODA) for reproductive health, while Belgium, also a small country where SRHR is a priority in the development cooperation policy, only spent 25.3 million US$. The Netherlands thus invested significantly more funds in the promotion of SRHR in development cooperation than similar countries where SRHR was also a priority. Additionally, compared to states that are also named as SRHR champions by Seims (2011) such as the UK and Sweden, the Netherlands also stands out because it puts more emphasis on the controversial aspects of SRHR, such as the right to safe abortion and lgbt issues (Meredith & Back, 2012). This case study investigates what causal mechanisms influenced these particular policies.

However, conducting single case research also comes with limitations: the generalizability of the conclusions is limited, since if evidence is found supporting the hypothesized causal mechanisms, the evidence originated only from one particular case. However, the Netherlands is an instance of a small, Northern European state with "a colonial heritage, open economies, and substantial trade links with the Third

World" (Breuning, 1995, p.238) and is similar to other Northern European states "in terms of both their international positions and their domestic political structure" including "similarities in the institutional framework regarding foreign policy making" (Breuning, 1998, p.309). Although the opportunities for generalization based on this exploratory single case study are limited, findings from the Dutch case can therefore also have implications for the other states mentioned by Seims (2011), such as Denmark and Sweden.

Time frame

This thesis will investigate the developments with regard to development cooperation policy in the Netherlands between 1989, when Minister Jan Pronk established several "new topics in the field of development cooperation" (NCDO, 2013, p.12) and 2007, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) published the policy document "Our Common Concern", in which SRHR was officially named as one of four priorities in Dutch development cooperation policy. Of special interest are the moments surrounding the publication of policy documents describing the new multi-annual strategies for development cooperation.

Research method

This thesis uses process tracing to investigate the causal mechanisms that have led to the prioritization of SRHR in Dutch foreign policy. Bennett and Checkel (2014, p.7) describe process tracing as "the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purposes of either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case". This research method is especially suitable for the purpose of this thesis because it

functions as the "study of hypothesized processes within individual cases" and "is a key technique for capturing causal mechanisms in action" (Bennett & Checkel, 2014, p.9) As argued by Busby (2010, p.166) "process tracing ... offers a way to understand how a policy evolved from conception to execution" and it allows the researcher to understand to both the material and moral motivations of governments to implement a certain policy. Process tracing is a particularly suitable method in this case because little is known about the causal mechanisms behind the prioritization of specific human rights in foreign policy. This is an exploratory study that aims at identifying causal mechanisms that can be then further tested in other national contexts.

In accordance with the process tracing method, this thesis focuses on within-case evidence, and uses both primary and secondary sources to investigate the hypotheses. The main sources used in this thesis are policy documents describing the Dutch development cooperation policy. These policy documents are created by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and are publicly available through the website of the Dutch Government or through the Dutch National Archives. Additionally, several reports on the Dutch development cooperation created by government committees, the National Advisory Council for Development Cooperation and private organizations are used. Furthermore, this thesis uses several scholarly articles on the Dutch development cooperation as sources.

Hypotheses, variables and data sources

In this thesis, the main unit of analysis considered is the government of the Netherlands. For all the hypotheses evaluated in this thesis, the dependent variable is the foreign policy outcome – more specifically, whether SRHR is prioritized in the

Dutch development cooperation policy or not. Whether SRHR is a priority can be found in the policy documents in which the Dutch development cooperation policy is presented[2]. In the policy document "Our Common Concern" from 2007, for example, SRHR is clearly stated as one of the four priorities of Dutch development cooperation. The Dutch development cooperation policy is discussed in the first part of the results section of this thesis.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 are closely related; the same logic applies to both security relations and economic relations. For both hypotheses, this thesis looks at objective and perception criteria: the objective nature of the security and economic relations between the Netherlands ('the donor') and the partner countries (the 'receivers'), and the more subjective perception of the Dutch policy makers regarding these relations. This thesis looks at bilateral and multilateral agreements and the history of cooperation between the states giving and receiving development aid in order to analyze the economic and security relations between states both before and after SRHR was implemented as a priority and investigate whether anything has changed. Additionally for H2, this thesis looks at Dutch trade statistics from the Central Bureau of Statistics to analyze the nature of economic relations between the Netherlands and other states. The perceptions of these relations, on the other hand, are analyzed using policy statements, personal interviews with policy makers and scholarly articles in order to see whether policy makers perceived the action of prioritizing SRHR as dangerous to their bilateral relations with other states.

H3 is measured by looking at two factors; the existing preferences of the gatekeepers involved in the creation of Dutch development cooperation policy and the

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[2] The main policy documents used in this thesis are "Een Wereld van Verschil" ("A World of Difference", Pronk, 1990), "Een Wereld in Geschil" ("A World in Dispute", Pronk, 1993), "Aan Elkaar Verplicht" ("Indebted to Each Other", Van Ardenne, 2003) and "Een Zaak van Iedereen" ("Our Common Concern", Koenders, 2007).

Dutch SRHR movement's relative political strength and influence. These indicators will be measured by analyzing scholarly literature and government reports about the women's rights movement in the Netherlands and the four main NGOs focusing on development cooperation in the Netherlands in order to investigate the strategies they used to promote SRHR as a priority in Dutch development cooperation.

The independent variable for H4 is the national role conception of the Dutch government and more specifically, whether the government conceives the state as 'virtuous'. The NRC is measured by looking at policy statements given by those responsible for the Dutch development cooperation policy to investigate what NRCs are being expressed and whether the virtuous state is mentioned or implied as an NRC. Additionally, scholarly literature on the NRCs of the Netherlands, such as works by Breuning (1995), is analyzed to determine the extent to which these NRCs are also applicable in the case of the development cooperation policy in the timeframe used in this thesis.

Data and results

The following section will describe the Dutch development cooperation policy between 1989 and 2007, and the evidence found relating to the hypothesis described above.

SRHR in the Dutch development policy

Development policy in the Netherlands between 1989 and 2007 can be divided into three periods, based on the three Ministers for Development Cooperation: Jan Pronk (1989-1998, PvdA), Eveline Herfkens (1998-2002, PvdA) and Agnes van Ardenne (2003-2007, CDA).

Pronk (1989-1998).

During Minister Pronk's term of office, Dutch development policies mainly focused on the environment, urban poverty, research and women's rights. Sexual and reproductive health and rights, including HIV/AIDS, became a priority in Dutch development cooperation policy in 1994 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). In 1994,the ICPD in Cairo brought about a change in the Dutch thinking about population policies: beforehand, the focus had been mainly on demographics and "family planning, while during the ICPD, the term sexual and reproductive health and rights was defined. From then on, the focus of the Dutch policy was on needs of those receiving help, and on the individual freedom to choose" (Directorate-General for International Cooperation, 2003, p.19).

Herfkens (1998-2002).

Under Minister Eveline Herfkens (1992-2002) some priorities in the Dutch development policy changed, while others were further developed (Development Policy Review Network (DPRN), 2008). Gender remained an important topic, and the interconnectedness between the different issues such as the environment, poverty and gender was emphasized. Additionally, Herfkens strongly limited the number of partner countries to 19+4 structural bilateral partners that received Dutch aid and created conditions that a country had to fulfill in order to receive aid, with good governance as the most important one. Good governance in this case primarily constituted of strong macro-economic policies, in accordance with policies identified by institutions such as the World Bank (DPRN, 2008).

Van Ardenne (2003-2007).

In her policy document "Indebted to Each Other", Minister Van Ardenne declared that an even stronger emphasis would be put on SRHR in Dutch development cooperation from then on (MFA, 2003). In 2017, SRHR remains one of the four priority areas in Dutch development policy, together with security and legal order, water, and food security.

Material and security incentives facing states

The next part of this thesis investigates whether the Dutch government faced any economic and security considerations when deciding whether to prioritize SRHR in its development cooperation policy or not, and analyzes to what extent these considerations have played a role during the prioritization of SRHR in Dutch development policy.

Security relations.

The first question to answer is whether security considerations played any role in the decision of the Dutch government to prioritize SRHR in Dutch policy. As Baehr and Castermans-Holleman (2004, p.2) argue, "[r]aising human rights issues [in a state's foreign policy] may lead to intensive discussions and even tensions with other countries". Similarly, Busby (2010, p.43) states that "countries consumed by external threats might believe that they cannot afford to be charitable or generous".

According to the logic presented by Baehr and Castermans-Holleman, there are three options that could explain the Dutch policy outcome. First, SRHR was not a threat to security relations with other states, or at least the Dutch government did not perceive it that way, and therefore made it a priority in the development cooperation

policy. Second, the Dutch government believed that making SRHR a priority could be problematic for the relationship with some countries and therefore only worked on SRHR in countries that were not seen as a threat. Or third, security considerations did not play a role, either because promoting SRHR was not perceived as a threat to the security relations with other states, or because the Dutch government did not find this threat important enough to limit the promotion of human rights in its foreign policy. In order to investigate this issue, it is important to look at the partner countries of the state and the considerations of the government to choose these specific countries. Did security relations play a role in selecting the partner countries?

Throughout the 20th century, the Netherlands has given development assistance to almost 120 developing countries (Hout, 2003, p.512). In their paper analyzing Dutch bilateral aid policies between 1977 and 1993, Hilhorst and Sideri explain that during the Cold War, the Dutch government chose certain partner countries, such as Angola, Cuba, Jamaica and North Yemen because of security considerations. "The choice of Angola and North Yemen, that had turned 'socialist' can be seen as an attempt to avoid their isolation from the West, since they might otherwise only have had contacts with the East Bloc" (1995, p.3). However, after the end of the Cold War, the East Bloc disintegrated and the need for a strategic selection of partnerships based on security considerations decreased. "[M]oney formerly spent on defense could now be used for other, more peaceful instruments of foreign policy, allowing new initiatives in development cooperation" (NCDO, 2013, p.12).

In the period between 1989 and 2003, the countries that received development aid from the Netherlands were selected based on varying requirements, yet security relations were not mentioned as a selection criterion. The main priority for Jan Pronk, Minister between 1989 and 1998, was to reduce structural poverty. Therefore, he

focused the Dutch development cooperation on the poorest countries ("A World of Difference", 1990). A large shift in selection criteria for partner countries took place when Eveline Herfkens succeeded Jan Pronk as the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation in 1998 (Hout, 2003). Not only did Minister Herfkens strongly reduce the number of partner countries receiving foreign aid to "nineteen structural and three temporary partner countries" (Minister for Development Cooperation, 1999, as cited in Hout, 2003, p.512), but from 1998 on, a minimum quality of governance became a criterion for receiving development cooperation (Hout, 2003). What is interesting is that in the policy notes published by the different administrations between 1989 and 2003, the Dutch government never seemed to be afraid to be critical about the governments of their partner countries. In "A World of Difference" (MFA, 1990), for example, it is stated that many developing countries with which the Netherlands cooperate have authoritarian tendencies. In fact, the debate on aid conditionality shows that many policymakers also considered engaging in development cooperation with governments that they found highly problematic.

However, De Haan (2011) argues that after 2001, security considerations seem to have actually stimulated the Dutch development cooperation, instead of limiting it, as the logic presented by Baer and Castermans-Holleman would suggest. According to De Haan (2011, p. 208) "since the late 1990s, and since 9/11 in particular, the global security agenda has simultaneously led to an increased interest in development […] and a redefinition of the objectives of at least part of that assistance". Regarding the Netherlands, De Haan gives the example of the '3D' approach implemented by Minister Van Ardenne, which focused on the combination of defense, diplomacy and development. "The emphasis on fragile states was also part of this global security agenda: while on the one hand the poorest people … are increasingly concentrated in

fragile states, these same conditions for lack of a functioning state are considered potential sources of global terrorism" (De Haan, 2011, p.208). In other words, one of the goals of the Dutch development aid was to improve the political, social and economic situation in these fragile states in order to decrease terrorist threats that could also harm the Netherlands.

It is also important to look at the Dutch behavior in the international sphere. Apart from providing bilateral funding for initiatives promoting SRHR and implementing its own SRHR programs, the Dutch government also aimed to contribute to the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights worldwide by speaking out in favor of these rights at international institutions, such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Because of these actions, the Netherlands is considered a very outspoken supporter of SRHR worldwide. While this reputation could potentially have negative consequences for the Netherlands, since many powerful states have different opinions regarding SRHR, this has not stopped the Netherlands from publicly declaring a strong support for SRHR, even with regard to controversial issues such as abortion and lgbt rights. The Dutch activism for SRHR on large global platforms suggests that the country does not fear being seen as a large supporter of SRHR.

In conclusion, the evidence indicates that security considerations played little to no role in the decision by the Dutch government to prioritize SRHR in the development cooperation between 1989 and 2001. Some evidence suggests that unlike what is suggested in the hypothesis, security considerations might have actually stimulated development cooperation after 2001. By then, the Netherlands had already demonstrated its support for SRHR worldwide and its continuing support could also be at least partially the result of path-dependency.

Economic relations/incentives.

The second hypothesis of this thesis states that the Netherlands was able to prioritize SRHR because doing so was not a threat to the economic relations with other countries. This hypothesis is supported by Hilhorst and Sideri (1995); in the working paper "Dutch Bilateral Aid Policies in the Period 1977-1993" they state that "if one compares the list of target countries [for Dutch development cooperation] with the list of countries where most overseas investments by Dutch enterprises have taken place it appears that there is only a very partial overlap among them" (p.3). In other words, because no strong trade relations existed between the Netherlands and its development cooperation partner countries, the Dutch government did not have to fear a potential deterioration in trade relations when prioritizing SRHR in the development policy.

An additional factor that might influence a government's decision to adopt a new policy, according to Busby (2010) is the status of the national economy at that moment. Busby argues that "donor giving is contingent upon available resources and other economic factors" and that therefore "countries with poor economic conditions would likely be less generous than countries doing well" (p.159).
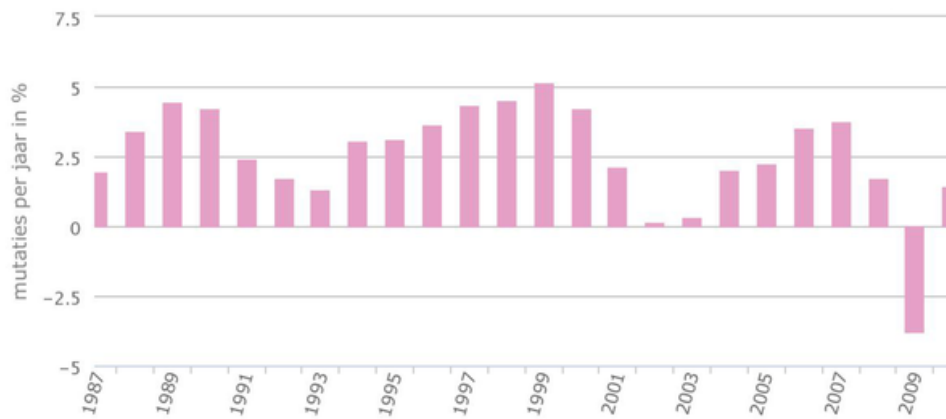
Figure 1. Netherlands GDP annual growth rate. Source: central Planning Bureau (CPB), n.d.

Figure 1 shows that, with the exception of 2002 and 2003, the Netherlands experienced unusually strong economic growth during the period discussed in this thesis (Central Planning Bureau (CPB), n.d.). One can therefore conclude that the Dutch government was not constrained by a lagging economy when creating its development cooperation policies. Moreover, the Dutch government did not change its policy even when economic growth was limited, for example in 2003. Instead, the prioritization of SRHR in development was continued in the policy note published that year.

The findings showing that the Dutch government did not experience any economic threats when creating development cooperation policies in the timeframe of this thesis correspond with the perceptions of the gatekeepers regarding this topic. For example, Jan Pronk was very critical of development cooperation for economic reasons. "We have made a lot of mistakes in Africa. After the decolonization, between 1945 and 1975 approximately, we basically continued to sustain the economic relations to benefit ourselves" (as cited in Jurriëns, 2009). In a different interview, Pronk also stated that "[e]conomic and social sustainability are far more

important than financial sustainability. Cost recovery within a year or two or three years does not make sense. You have to invest in health, in order to make people live longer and contribute to society over time – over a lifetime" (Gade, 2011).

The NCDO report by Spitz, Muskens and Van Ewijk (2013) also offers evidence supporting the conclusion that economic considerations did not play a significant role in the decision to prioritize SRHR in the Dutch development cooperation in the 1990s. They state that while "[s]elf-interest was from the beginning an essential part of Dutch aid policies", under Minister Pronk, "Dutch development aid became more ideologically and morally motivated" (p.11). The policy note on human rights in foreign policy published in 2001 states that "[e]conomic interests cannot lead to ignoring human rights violations" (House of Representatives, 2001, p.11). In the case of human rights violations in partner countries, it could therefore be decided to cancel the trade relations with that specific state, even if the trade relations were economically beneficial to the Netherlands.

However, this did not mean that the Dutch government was no longer motivated by the benefits that development cooperation could have for the Netherlands. Instead, in accordance with the idea of 'enlightened self-interest', the Dutch government believed that the economic development of developing countries, which was the goal of the Dutch development cooperation policy, "would create social harmony and stability: it would promote peace, curtail migration and promote free international trade" (NCDO, 2013, p.11). However, the correlation between these factors has not been scientifically proven so far. Throughout the period discussed in this thesis, Dutch development cooperation policy has increasingly focused on trade and economic relations ("Indepted to Each Other", MFA, 2003; "Our Common Concern", MFA, 2007). However, the focus on SRHR has not decreased. SRHR has

remained a strong priority. This would suggest that economic relations did not play a significant role in the decision to prioritize SRHR.

In conclusion, the evidence presented in this section suggests that while economic considerations have historically played a role in the decision-making process regarding the Dutch development cooperation policy, this factor did not play a very strong role in the period discussed in this thesis. No evidence has been found suggesting that economic considerations were an important factor in the prioritization of SRHR in the development cooperation policy.

Cultural resonance of the messages

The next section will discuss the interaction between the gatekeepers in the Dutch government and the actors promoting the prioritization of SRHR in foreign policy in the Netherlands. In his book, Busby (2010) discusses the factors that might stimulate governments to take certain actions even if doing so goes against the state's self-interest. He argues that "the role of policy gatekeepers is critical" (p.59). The logic of the third hypothesis argues that the prioritization of SRHR in the Dutch policy is partially dependent on the preferences of the gatekeepers involved. It is important that those promoting the policy change (in this case, the supporters of SRHR in development cooperation) are able to present their issue in a way that is convincing to the gatekeepers. According to Busby (2010), this is most likely to happen if the gatekeepers perceive a 'cultural match' with the issue.

Preferences of gatekeepers

In order to investigate this hypothesis, it is important to analyze which actors played a role in the decision to make SRHR a priority in the Dutch development

cooperation policy and what their opinion on SRHR was. This section will identify the main gatekeepers influencing the Dutch development cooperation policy.

The main organ in charge of the Dutch development cooperation policy is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), to which the Minister for Trade and Development Cooperation belongs. With regard to SRHR policy and its implementation, the health and AIDS division of the social development department (DSO/GA) "has an important advisory role regarding the implementation of SRHR policy through multilateral, bilateral and private channels" (MFA, 2013, p.34). Within the MFA, the main actor is the Minister for Trade and Development Cooperation. As stated by the Development Policy Review Network (DPRN, 2008, p.8) and demonstrated in earlier sections of this thesis, "[e]ach minister has impacted their term of office by putting specific policy priorities onto the agenda. A number of these priorities return in consecutive Ministries, but the focus and style of working differ". In other words, while the Ministers might not be the only gatekeepers in the decision to prioritize certain aspects in the Dutch development policy, they are an important force to consider.

In their working paper, Hilhorst and Sideri (1995) list several additional actors that are able to influence the Dutch development policy. Apart from the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, an important actor in the creation of development cooperation policy is the Dutch Parliament. The policy documents created by the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation are sent to Parliament for discussion. According to Hilhorst and Sideri, "[t]he Dutch Parliament [...] has always been a strong supporter of development co-operation" (1995, p.12).

Table 1. *Cabinets of the Netherlands between 1989 and 2006.*

Year	Name of the Cabinet	Participating Parties
1989-1994	Lubbers III	PvdA (Labor) and CDA (Christian Democrats)
1994-1998	Kok I	PvdA, VVD (Liberals), D66 (Liberal Democrats)
1998-2002	Kok II	PvdA, VVD and D66
2002-2003	Balkenende I	CDA, VVD and LPF (center right)
2003-2006	Balkenende II	CDA, VVD, D66

While no data is available on the position of these political parties regarding the prioritization of SRHR in development policy, it is possible to investigate their views on SRHR in the Netherlands. Outshoorn (2001) describes the position of Dutch political parties during the debate about abortion legislation between 1960 and 1990. She argues that the Social Democrats and Liberals accepted the legalization of abortion relatively early, because they believed that "abortion was a matter best left to the woman and her doctor" (2001, p.228) and thus emphasized the woman's right to self-determination. Catholic and Protestant political parties, however, opposed more liberal abortion laws for moral reasons (Outshoorn, 2001). What is interesting is that between 1994 and 2002, the timeframe during which SRHR became a priority, for the first time in the Netherlands the Dutch cabinet did not contain any religious parties (Pennings & Keman, 2008). Instead, it consisted of the Labor party and two liberal parties, to whom women's rights and self-determination were important issues. Van Cranenburgh, (1994, p.381) states: "[o]verall, a general consensus seemed to exist among the Dutch government on the urgency of promoting SRHR".

Another main actor in the creation of Dutch development policy was the Nationale Adviesraad voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (National Advisory Council

for Development Cooperation, NAR), which was made up of experts in the field of development cooperation (Hilhorst & Sideri, 1995). Advice given by the NAR in 1994 in advance of the ICPD demonstrates that the Council supported women's right to safe abortions – one of the most controversial aspects of SRHR. The Council pleads that "governments of all countries ought to be alerted about their responsibilities regarding the health of women. Illegal abortion is per definition unsafe abortion, and ought to be given a central place on the agenda as a public health issue" (NAR, 1994, p.25).

In conclusion, several individuals and institutions can be identified as gatekeepers regarding the Dutch development cooperation: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Development Cooperation, the Dutch Cabinet and Parliament and the NAR. All of these gatekeepers, however, seem to have been relatively open to the concept of SRHR, or at least to human rights based development cooperation policy. The next section will argue that this presented a framing opportunity for those promoting SRHR in development policy.

Actors promoting SRHR in the Netherlands

The third hypothesis of this thesis states that the Dutch government prioritized SRHR in its foreign policy because social movements advocating SRHR could convince gatekeepers within the political system of the importance of SRHR. Busby (2010, p.34) argues that "states may accept reasonably costly international commitments when advocates have framed their messages to fit with the values of the polities they are targeting". The next part of this essay will demonstrate that women's rights activists in the Netherlands framed SRHR as a self-determination issue and were thereby able to obtain support from the liberal parties.

Many scholars have highlighted the influence of domestic and international advocacy or interest groups on development cooperation policy (Lancaster, 2008; Busby, 2010). In the case of the Netherlands, Van Cranenburgh (1994, p.381) states that "main supporters of a policy focusing more on SRHR instead of the narrow concept of family planning were women's rights groups, who believed that focusing on limiting population growth as a sole goal promoted measures that forced women to have fewer children and took away their right to choose". However, as stated by Outshoorn (2012, p. 147), "[a]ssessing the impact of social movements – and women's movements – is a contentious issue, the major reason being the difficulty of the task". Since conducting the extensive research that is necessary to fully answer what role the women's movement in the Netherlands has played in the prioritization of SRHR in development policy, this thesis will use the findings by Outshoorn (2012) regarding the role of the Dutch women's movement in Dutch abortion policy, an important aspect of SRHR, and discuss how these findings could be similar to SRHR in development policy.

Outshoorn (2012, p.148) finds that in the Netherlands "feminist groups made a crucial difference in abortion debates: when there was no feminist movement, only limited reform was enacted". Women's rights movements from countries such as the Netherlands also played a major role in the promotion of the concept SRHR at the ICPD: "[t]he planning and work by feminists, women's health promoters, and human rights advocates before the ICPD facilitated the content of its Programme of Action" (Lottes, 2013, p.371). Both in the abortion debate in the Netherlands in the 1970s and 1980s and in the debate surrounding the ICPD, proponents of these rights framed them in terms of women's empowerment and their freedom to choose. "An important conclusion of our research was that women's movements did not employ the

vocabulary of citizenship when demanding abortion rights … but argued in terms of autonomy and self-determination" (Outshoorn, 2012, p.148; Lottes, 2013,p.271). Because these issues were framed as self-determination issues, the women's rights movement was able to obtain the support of the Dutch liberal parties (Outshoorn, 2001, p.222). The Christian Democrats were reluctant to reform, yet according to Outshoorn (2001) they accepted modest reforms hoping that doing so could prevent more radical reforms in the abortion policy from taking place.

Hilhorst and Sideri (1995) identify NGOs as another important actor in the SRHR debate in the Netherlands. The NGOs most relevant for this thesis are those that took part in the co-financing program, which means that part the Dutch development budget was spent through these organizations (NCDO, 2013, p.10). The NGOs (or MFOs) taking part in the co-financing program were Novib (later Oxfam Novib), Cebemo (later Cordaid), ICCO, and later Hivos. These organizations all strived to promote women's rights. For ICCO the focus was on empowerment, and all their policies had to promote human rights, gender equality and the environment (House of Representatives, 1995). For Novib, three themes were important: "the environment, human rights, and women and development" (House of Representatives, 1995, p.4). Hilhorst and Sideri (1995, p.13) argued in 1995 that these "NGOs are not only engaged in implementing policy, but they also form an important pressure group for shaping policy". They regularly have contact with the Minister for Development Cooperation and can express their views on the development cooperation budget to the standing committee on development cooperation.

With regard to the opinion of the general public, the proponents of SRHR did not have to fear any strong opposition. An NCDO report from 2013 (p.27) shows that the public debate around Dutch development cooperation focuses more on the

financial aspects and effectiveness of aid ("Where does my money go" and "Is this kind of development cooperation useful") than on the content of the development cooperation policy itself. Connecting this finding to the logic presented by Busby (2010) would suggest that, since little interests exists for the content of development policy within the Netherlands, it seems that organizations striving for the prioritization of SRHR would not have to struggle to convince the public of the importance of these policies.

Busby explains that "messengers are most likely to be effective when they face a favorable material environment, but also, crucially, where they possess shared attributes with decision-makers and frame their arguments to fit the values of their target country" (2010, p.14). In conclusion, it can be stated that this mechanism seems to have functioned in the Netherlands, where the women's rights movement framed SRHR as a self-determination issue, thereby fitting the liberal values of several Dutch political parties that were in power at that moment (and that the Ministers for Development Cooperation belonged to). Additionally, SRHR was framed as a human rights issue, thereby fitting the already existing support for human rights that was present in the Dutch society and political sphere (Baehr, Castermans-Holleman & Grunfeld, 2002). Moreover, because four NGOs worked as partners of the Dutch government in the implementation of the development cooperation policy, they were also able to influence the decision-making process and promote the prioritization of SRHR. In other words, evidence seems to support the idea that SRHR was at least partially prioritized due to the work of social movements and their beneficial position in the Dutch political system.

National Role Conceptions (NRCs)

The final hypothesis of this thesis suggests that the prioritization of SRHR in Dutch development cooperation policy could also – at least partially - be the result of the fact that the Dutch government considered the Netherlands as a virtuous state and therefore believed that it had some sort of "obligation" to contribute to the spreading of these rights.

Much has been written about the different NRCs that were present among the Dutch policymakers during the timespan that this thesis examines. Of interest for this hypothesis is the work by Marijke Breuning (1995). In her study on the development policy of the Netherlands and Belgium, she investigates the national role conceptions of these countries. According to Breuning (1995, p.236) "[d]ecision makers' perceptions of their state's role in the international environment form an important cue to the motivations and objectives that determine the policies they pursue". Breuning identifies four different national role conceptions and states that "[e]ach of these role conceptions presents a different perception of the benefits the donor state derives from foreign assistance, or, put differently, what motivations guide foreign assistance policy" (1995, p.238). Breuning (1995) finds that in the timeframe between 1975 and 1990, the NRC best fitting the Netherlands is the "activist role". This "humane internationalism" is characterized by a "perception by its proponents that achieving greater international equity serves the long-term self-interest of the donor" (Pratt, 1989; Stokke, 1984, 1989, as cited in Breuning, 1995, p. 238). These findings correspond with findings earlier in this thesis, where it was argued that self-interest played a relatively large role in the creation of Dutch development cooperation policy before 1990.

After 1990, however, several sources demonstrated a shift in the motivation of the Dutch government to partake in development cooperation. Spitz, Muskens and Van Ewijk, (NCDO, 2013, p.11) argue that during the Pronk years (1989-1998) "Dutch development aid became more ideologically and morally motivated". Policy documents dating from those years mention the colonial past of the Netherlands and seem to highlight the idea that Western (European) states have a responsibility towards the "Third World", especially after using their resources for the western states' own benefit for centuries in the past (A World of Difference, MFA, 1990). This "sense of obligation toward the Third World" corresponds with what Breuning (1995) calls the "good neighbor role conception" (p. 239). In the years that Pronk was Minister for Development, the focus on "long-term needs" as described by Breuning (1995) without the self-interest usually seen in the activist NRC seems to correspond with the idea of the Netherlands as a "virtuous state" as described by Busby (2010). Therefore, the available evidence for the years 1989-1998 supports the fifth hypothesis of this thesis.

However, in the policy document "Indebted to Each Other" (MFA, 2003), Minister Van Ardenne stated that "[d]evelopment cooperation is no longer just a moral duty, but increasingly becomes of mutual interest. That is why we owe it to each other to continue with development cooperation, but also to search for ways to improve. It is therefore necessary to redefine the role of Dutch development cooperation" (2003, p.5). This quote demonstrates a shift away from the reasoning shown by Minister Pronk, who argued that western countries had a moral obligation to help the poor, especially considering their colonial history, to a more self-interested mentality, which has taken an increasingly important place in Dutch development cooperation policy even after 2007. This change in the NRC of the Minister for

Development Cooperation suggests that the correlation between an NRC of a "virtuous state" and the prioritization of SRHR in development cooperation policy is not as strong as expected by the hypothesis. Another explanation of this phenomenon, however, could be that due to path dependency and the fact that SRHR had already become such an important aspect of Dutch development cooperation since the ICPD in 1994, Van Ardenne did not perceive that decreasing the importance of SRHR was an option. Investigating further this assumption, however, would preferably require first-hand evidence provided by former Minister Van Ardenne, for example through the conduction of personal interviews. Unfortunately, this goes beyond the scope of this thesis, but could be the subject of another research project in the future.

Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis has sought to identify the causal mechanisms that generated the implementation of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as a priority in Dutch development cooperation policy. Doing so is crucial in order to understand why countries such as the Netherlands became " global Good Samaritans" (Brysk and Mehta 2014, p. 97) for SRHR. Understanding these causal mechanisms will also help those lobbying for SRHR in other contexts to further their work. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by analyzing which factors influenced the decision of the Dutch government to prioritize SRHR in development cooperation and by investigating how this decision-making process developed.

Altogether, this thesis finds that in the case of the Netherlands, economic and security considerations seem to have played only a relatively small role in the process towards the prioritization of SRHR in development cooperation. More important seems to have been the role of what Busby (2010) identifies as "moral movements":

in this case, the Dutch women's rights movement with support from NGOs in the development sector. The Dutch context proved to be conducive for these actors because many Dutch policymakers were supportive of human rights based policies and the NGOs and women's rights movement were closely connected to the political sphere. Furthermore, by framing SRHR as a women's self-determination issue, the proponents of SRHR were able to gain additional support from the liberal political parties that played a role as gatekeepers within the political system. Additionally, this study finds that Dutch policymakers perceived the Netherlands as a virtuous state and therefore were motivated to promote human rights in their development cooperation. In that context, they saw SRHR as an important aspect of human rights due to the lobbying by the women's movement. Several statements by Dutch policymakers in the 1990s and early 2000s portraying a sense of obligation to provide development cooperation support this conclusion.

It must be noted, however, that as is the case with almost all political science research, a multitude of factors has likely influenced the policy outcome studied in this thesis. This limitation does not render the findings of this thesis invalid, though; instead, this thesis ought to be seen as a first exploratory case study that identifies some factors that have played an important role in the decision of the Dutch government to prioritize SRHR and warrants further testing. While this thesis presents some interesting findings regarding the prioritization of certain human rights in a country's foreign policy, more research is needed in the future in order to investigate to what extent these findings are also valid in similar countries. Future studies are urged to repeat the study into SRHR in other countries named by Seims (2011). While unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis, future researchers in this field are advised to also conduct interviews with the actors involved in the processes they

investigate thereby providing even stronger evidence for the hypotheses used in this thesis. This strategy has been performed, among others, by Busby (2010) and gives an even better insight into the motivation of these actors for their actions, especially since policy statements may not always represent the true opinions of policymakers.

Altogether, a major implication of this study is that linking human rights in foreign policy to structural factors such as potential economic and security threats only, as Baehr and Castermans-Holleman (2004) do, does not capture the full complexity of the process that precedes the prioritization of certain human rights. Instead, the argument by Busby (2010), that most policy decisions are the result of a combination of both structural and agent-centered factors, seems to provide a more suitable explanation in this case.

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