

# Applied Research Fund 6:

## “The Political Dilemma of Legitimate Stability”

### *Research for Impact Plan of Action*

#### I. Introduction

This document sets out a framework for the activities that WOTRO Science for Global Development of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO-WOTRO) and the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL) will undertake to enhance and maximize the potential for impact of the ARF6 projects funded through the Security & Rule of Law (SRoL) Research Programme. As such, it defines the collaboration between NWO-WOTRO and the KPSRL Secretariat with regard to these projects. This framework can also serve as a point of departure for other running projects granted within previous calls in the Security & Rule of Law Research Programme<sup>1</sup>.

The objective of this plan is to maximize the (potential for) impact of ARF6 research, by facilitating research consortia’s efforts to contribute to changes in behaviour, relationships, actions and activities of relevant stakeholders. This will enable such stakeholders to more effectively contribute to strengthening legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings in an effort to achieve sustainable peace and development.

It should be noted that an impact pathway, as well as plans for knowledge sharing and research uptake are integral parts of the research projects, where the primary responsibility for enhancing the potential for impact lies with the project consortium partners and stakeholders. The framework presented here is intended to chart the path for NWO-WOTRO and KPSRL to increase the potential impact of research by facilitating and coaching consortia, identifying and exploiting opportunities for synergy between the projects, and realizing cross-fertilization by reaching out to other interested parties. The responsibility of NWO-WOTRO regarding the development of the research programme, funding conditions, the assessment procedure as well as project management is separate from and not part of this plan.

#### II. Objective ARF6 call

The Sixth Applied Research Fund (ARF6) was developed jointly by the KPSRL, NWO-WOTRO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)’s Department for Stability & Humanitarian Assistance. For more information about the background of the call please see the call in Annex 1.

The fund is intended for applied research projects that contribute to the knowledge demands within the thematic focus area: “The Political Dilemma of Legitimacy”, that is, empirically-led and scientifically sound interrogations of how political legitimacy is built, shaped, maintained and evolves over time and across communities. The aim of the ARF6 call is to strengthen the evidence-base on

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<sup>1</sup> Acknowledging that these projects were set up under a unique set of parameters and timelines, but nonetheless maintain similar objectives for knowledge uptake.

how SRoL policies and programmes can strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings in an effort to achieve sustainable peace and development.

The ARF6 call has two objectives. One is **to develop evidence-based insights** on how SRoL policies and programmes that focus on human security, rule of law or political governance can become more sensitive to, or stimulate, legitimate stability. The other objective is **to facilitate the uptake** of the knowledge generated so that it can be applied by practitioner organisations including public policy organisations, involved in SRoL policies and programmes.

ARF6 research projects are thus not merely focused on research activities but also on activities aimed at enhancing the potential for achieving impact, with a key focus on achieving outcomes. Consortia are committed to the interrelated aims of research as well as impact through co-creation, end user involvement and knowledge sharing activities throughout the implementation process.

ARF6 applicants could apply for a maximum of €225,000 to spend in a period of six to nine months. The consortia are required to consist of a practitioner organisation and a scientific organisation with a history of collaboration, to ensure co-creation. The design for achieving knowledge products should be done in consultation with potential end users, reflecting their habits and preferences for acquiring and applying new insights.

#### *Branding of output*

When the results from the funded research are published, consortia must acknowledge the three parties by including all three logos as well as the following acknowledgement:

This project was commissioned and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands through WOTRO Science for Global Development of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO-WOTRO). It was developed in collaboration with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL) as part of the Ministry's agenda to invest in knowledge and to contribute to more evidence-based policymaking. Views expressed and information contained in this document are the responsibility of the author(s).

### **III. Research for impact approach**

KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO share a vision on research for impact, each from its own role and perspective. The details of the KPSRL approach and WOTRO approach can be found in the presentations in Annex 2 and Annex 3, respectively.

The activities that KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO plan for the ARF6 projects will focus on improving knowledge uptake through the inner circle (the consortium as well as stakeholders directly involved in the project) and the outer circle of stakeholders (beyond those directly involved), to maximize the outcomes of the ARF6 call. With these efforts, both the KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO endeavour to support research projects in contributing to the main aim of the call: to strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings in an effort to achieve sustainable peace and development.

In the ARF6 call and the application form – which forms the basis of each proposal – specific objectives, requirements and conditions have been formulated based on the joint vision on Research for Impact. Applicants have been requested to work, collaborate and plan in a way that facilitates that projects result in outcomes that are relevant to stakeholders within the SRoL practitioner and

policy community. This was integrated from the inception phase onwards, where consortia were requested to jointly develop an impact pathway for their proposed project, through which the assumptions about achieving outcomes and impact were explicated. Transdisciplinary research consortia are expected to do applied research and consider and connect with their target audience (specifically their designated end user(s), but more broadly as well) through the whole project cycle, prioritize messages that are deemed most relevant to the targeted audience, and to communicate their findings via channels and in a style most appropriate for the target audience(s).

The main components in the ARF6 call to facilitate knowledge uptake are:

*1. Applied research (as defined in ARF6 call)*

Applied research is a form of systematic inquiry involving the practical application of science. According to the OECD, applied research deals with solving practical problems and generally employs empirical methodologies. It accesses and uses (parts of) the research communities' accumulated theories, knowledge, methods, and techniques, for responding to a specific, demand (often state, business or client) driven purpose. ARF research projects aim to provide evidence-based and applicable knowledge on how SRoL policies and programmes can be improved. In the ARF6 call applied research should contribute to how SRoL policies and programmes focusing on human security, rule of law or political governance can become more sensitive to, or stimulate, legitimate stability, based on findings from rigorous research. The starting point being that recommendations for policies and programmes can only be effective when they are based on robust research findings.

*2. Impact pathways*

Consortia are expected to integrate research uptake objectives and expected results as outcomes and outputs in an impact pathway. While knowledge uptake can occur throughout a research project cycle, the path from output to outcome to impact is more linearly defined. ARF6 research consortia are required, as part of the proposal writing, to identify the impact pathway of their particular project.

The impact pathway requires consortia to jointly explicate how they envisage the desired change to be achieved, which research questions are needed to come to the required insights (output) that should lead to outcome. It serves to reveal how different partners perceive the desired impact and how they foresee the pathway to this impact and will plan activities in this regard, such that results can improve SRoL policies and programmes with regard to legitimate stability.

*3. Co-creation*

Co-creation is a form of cooperation in research where different parties (representing both the supply and demand sides of research) are engaged in interaction and joint learning on the problem definition, formulation of possible solutions, design of the research, conducting the research, the assessment of the results, and the translation of these into new practices, policies and products.

In ARF6, cooperation between researchers and expert practitioners will not only help deepen knowledge but also increase the likelihood that research results will be transferred and used, subsequently improving the impact of research and the uptake of knowledge.

#### *4. End users*

This term refers to those individuals and organizations that will be directly impacted by the outcomes of the research projects. That is to say, those that will adapt, adjust and apply new perspectives for action. This group will be found primarily among (international) donors, especially the Dutch MFA, and practitioner organizations involved in the design and implementation of policies and programmes.

In ARF6, consortia are required to identify and actively consult representatives from this group in designing their proposal, keep these end users periodically updated on the project's progress, and seek their input in formulating conclusions and recommendations for uptake. Hereby, the pathway between output and outcome is shortened, helping to maximize the potential of the research projects to effect changes in the behaviours, relationships, assumptions and actions of stakeholders, and increase the evidence base of SRoL programming and policy.

### **IV. Enhancing the potential for outcomes in ARF6**

The previous sections provide information about the joint vision on 'research for impact' and how this has been integrated in the ARF6 call. With this plan, KPSRL and WOTRO aim to enhance the (potential for) impact of the ARF 6 projects, meaning that the parties will offer to support the projects in achieving their outcomes as developed in their proposals (inner circle) as well as going beyond that by achieving change within an outer circle of stakeholders.

#### *Different types of outcomes*

Within the plan, KPSRL and NWO seek to encourage consortia to achieve three types of outcomes: conceptual, instrumental and capacity development. Past experience has shown that, when assessing whether a research call has produced valuable input for policy and programming, evaluations have primarily focus on evidence of 'instrumental outcomes'. The KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO agree that instrumental outcomes should be expressly sought and encouraged among ARF6 projects. However, when looking to support the overall impact of a research call, a broader understanding of outcomes, specifically including conceptual and capacity development outcomes, should also be adopted. Research consortia will be encouraged to inform their designated end-users of the types of outcomes targeted at an early stage and set clear expectations.

#### *1. Fields of expertise*

KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO have complementary and overlapping roles suitable for collaboration efforts. The role of NWO-WOTRO is limited to facilitating the capacities of consortia to achieve outcomes within the inner circle, and the KPSRL plays a key role in enhancing the potential for achieving outcomes in the outer circle.

#### *a) KPSRL*

The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law is a vibrant network of experts working on generating, sharing, interrogating and applying evidence in the field of security & rule of law. The Platform's main objective is to improve the learning capacity and knowledge base of its members, specifically decision makers for security and rule of law policy and programs in fragile and conflict affected settings, in particular but not exclusively those at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The platform sees its role and comparative advantage broadly subdivided into the following three categories:

*Network power:*

- Access to its global network of practitioners, researchers and policy specialists focused on Security & Rule of Law in Fragile and Conflict-Affected (FCAS) Settings.
- Communications and results dissemination (Audience Building)

*Convening power<sup>2</sup>:*

- Organizing and hosting expert meetings, networking opportunities and workshops
  - Closed-door briefings (e.g. Ministry; Practitioner Organizations)
  - Public roundtables/debates
- Introductions between Researchers; Researchers & new ‘End Users’; and peers

*Knowledge brokering power:*

- Summarizing and synthesizing projects for easy dissemination to potential audiences
- Advice on writing for uptake, guided by policy or programming strategies, mid-term updates with coordinators (and, if possible, designated end users) to promote uptake

**Researchers are encouraged to communicate to the KPSRL Secretariat when they seek advice or wish to provide information regarding their project’s potential for uptake or to generate impact.**

For example, KPSRL can identify members from within its network (including but not limited to policy makers within the MFA, where it can leverage its MFA Liaison Officer), which may be potential targets for uptake. KPSRL can subsequently look to facilitate either introductions or set up meetings (see *Roles*) where possible and as appropriate, in addition to providing advice on how the researchers can best communicate their findings to these audiences.

In this way, the KPSRL leverages its role as a neutral broker of the information generated, as it is neither the contractor nor the target audience. This allows the KPSRL Secretariat (and specifically the Knowledge Broker Research and Policy) to provide advice that is focused on maximizing the potential for uptake, without adopting a lobbying approach or hewing conservatively toward simply meeting contractual obligations. As a neutral broker, the KPSRL can give advice and guidance to researchers that prioritizes maximizing the potential of the research findings, pushing boundaries and tapping into broader audiences. It can also help ensure that the researchers frame their messages in constructive ways, and remain anchored in the scientific findings of the research and do not venture into political advocacy. Conversely, it can prevent the target audience from censoring the researchers, or altering the outputs to service their – potentially pre-defined – needs and expectations. In executing its role as a neutral broker, KPSRL facilitates a two-way flow of knowledge and information.

**It is advised that consortia keep KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO up-to-date on their impact and uptake so as to prevent a duplication of efforts.**

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<sup>2</sup> In order to facilitate this, the consortia were required to budget for two trips to The Hague.

b) NWO-WOTRO

NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development programmes, funds and monitors innovative research on global issues, with a focus on sustainable development and poverty reduction. NWO-WOTRO manages research funding instruments that are linked with the knowledge platforms of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. NWO-WOTRO aims to support researchers in increasing the impact of their research projects, on all levels but in particular on the level of societal impact and policy influence.

*Expertise on approaches to Research for Impact:*

- Designing research programmes such that funded research is relevant and facilitates co-creation and research uptake efforts to enhance the potential for outcomes and impact.
- Organizing events for enhancement uptake of knowledge by policy makers and practitioners.
- Trainings on research uptake (in collaboration with Knowledge Platforms) in order to enhance research uptake capacities of consortia.
- Support to projects during the project cycle to keep them meeting their (outcome related) objectives.

*M&E:*

- Provide support to consortia on developing and using impact pathways
- Design and facilitate the evaluation process, including reporting formats that incorporate the needs of KPSRL and MFA

The main applicant will act as project coordinator and point of contact for all correspondence on the project with NWO-WOTRO. Therefore, s/he is responsible for informing the other consortium members about the content of the correspondence. The project will be formally evaluated at the end of the project. For this, applicants must deliver their final report within one month following the end-date. Because of the strict deadline of the projects (without extensions possible), all projects will be asked to update NWO-WOTRO after the first half of their project. For changes in the planning, execution, or budget of the project, NWO-WOTRO must be consulted beforehand and therefore consortia will be requested to contact NWO-WOTRO before these changes are implemented. Because of the short duration of projects, NWO-WOTRO will strive towards quick decisions over request for changes (preferably within two weeks).

2. *Roles KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO in the ARF6 Research for Impact Plan*

a) *KPSRL: Facilitation of research for impact – Focus on “outer circle” stakeholders*

**KPSRL** supports projects in realising structural involvement of target groups and the feedback of research results into society, in particular into SRoL policy and practice. Based on the aforementioned fields of expertise, KPSRL will focus mostly on the outer circle stakeholders. Where pre-defined end-users are within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, KPSRL may make use of its Ministry Liaison Officer to facilitate uptake. Practically, KPSRL will fulfil the following roles:

- a. **Project level:** Maximize the potential for uptake by linking research coordinators with audiences and individuals for whom their research could be relevant
  - i. Linking research consortia to each other, where relevant
  - ii. Linking research consortia to external audiences, where relevant

- 1. Specific policy staff at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 2. Members of the KPSRL network/community
- b. **Call level:** Improve the quality of SRoL policy and programming, including the discussions, debates and exchanges among experts, practitioners, policymakers and researchers, that iteratively contribute to SRoL policy and programming design.
- b) *NWO: Facilitation of research for impact – Focus on “inner circle” stakeholders*

**NWO-WOTRO** organizes the tendering and granting process, manages the financial and reporting administration, monitors progress as well as meeting conditions and requirements. For enhancing outcomes, the following is relevant:

  - a. **Project level:**
    - i. **Supporting projects:** Project feedback and stimulate attention of consortia for the components which may lead to impact (co-creation, end-user involvement, etc.)
    - ii. Input generation for KPSRL and NWO communication
    - iii. Stimulate visibility of KP and MFA as knowledge broker and funder and facilitate contact between consortia and KP
    - iv. Sharing results from projects with KP
    - v. Monitoring & Evaluation
  - b. **Call level:**
    - i. Provide information and coaching related to co-creation, impact pathways and stakeholder involvement.

### 3. Communication

Various line of communication are apparent in ARF6 execution. The principles of these as described below should ensure communication being as efficient and effective, for all parties involved.

#### a) With consortia

General principles for the interaction with the consortia include:

- The consortia are responsible for the knowledge sharing and impact-oriented activities as previously defined in their proposals, including the progress and results detailed in the final report. NWO-WOTRO is responsible for the assessment of the final report.
- Although consortia have earmarked parts of their budgets for activities with KPSRL, the consortia have limited time for research impact activities. Therefore consortia should not be overloaded by additional suggestions of NWO-WOTRO and KPSRL and should be informed timely about expectations. By using the planned moments of interaction and reporting (e.g. award letters, kick-off webinar, mid-term check-in, final meeting and final reviews), resources can be used efficiently.
- Regarding the support of the consortia, NWO-WOTRO focuses on the impact of the research project on the stakeholders mentioned in the proposal (inner circle) while KPSRL focuses on the consortia’ interaction with the wider stakeholders (e.g. linkages with thematic networks, influencing the enabling practice and policy environment and out-scaling and up-scaling of results; outer circle) and building the knowledge sharing capacity of consortia.

- Consortia will be responsible for communications with their end users, but where relevant and there is willingness, end users are invited and encouraged to engage in certain uptake activities. The KPSRL may contact end users, when deemed necessary, after approval for this by the project coordinator.

Throughout the research process there will be periodic as well as spontaneous moments in which the research consortia will be in contact with either the NWO-WOTRO or KPSRL. Knowing who is responsible for what, and who is able to offer and facilitate what, can help consortia to direct their message to the right party. KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO will strive towards joint communication where possible and to be clear about the different roles to keep the burden for consortia as low as possible.

*b) Between NWO-WOTRO and KPSRL*

KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO will share updates about and reporting by the projects and meet regularly to make sure that both parties can achieve their full potential in taking up their role and responsibilities, while keeping in mind the principles that relate to the communication with consortia.

NWO-WOTRO and KPSRL will meet monthly to:

- Share updates and information about individual ARF6 projects
- Plan and develop activities and their formats

Furthermore, a digital information sharing platform, between NWO-WOTRO and KPSRL, will be jointly developed.

*c) Tripartite*

In order to exchange information and insights and be informed about expectations, interests and needs of the three main parties in this collaboration (MFA, KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO) all three parties will meet on a regular basis: monthly meetings are planned with one representative of each organization.

## V. Plan of Action – Key Moments

Moment and description	Organization	Action / tool applied
<p><i>Before the start of the project</i></p> <p><i>Award Letters are sent to Grantees, providing clear information about the respective roles of KPSRL and NWO-WOTRO. Expectations from consortia have been clearly formulated.</i></p>	KPSRL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) Provide logos and clear language to include in letter (e.g. need to create a KPSRL profile and upload results to KPSRL database; when to contact KPSRL)</li> <li>e) Provide language for award email and letter</li> <li>f) Provide input into Action Plan</li> <li>g) Give feedback on final reporting template</li> </ul>
	NWO-WOTRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit permission from consortia to share proposals with KPSRL and MFA</li> <li>• Provide input into Action Plan and send to consortia along with the Award Letters</li> </ul>
<p><i>Kick-off webinar (13 December 2018)</i></p> <p><i>Create a shared sense of ownership of the programme, and clarity about roles, expectations and timeline. Better understanding about the key concepts of the call (co-creation, end user, ToC)</i></p>	KPSRL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce of KPSRL and its added value; present what KPSRL can offer; present background and focus of the call to garner enthusiasm and foster a shared understanding among the consortia</li> <li>• Develop a call-level impact pathway jointly with NWO (10 December 2018)</li> </ul>
	NWO-WOTRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with project coordinators and co-applicants to schedule a kick-off webinar; set up and host webinar facility; prepare and communicate agenda; Explain role of NWO; explain the research for impact concepts; explain requirements of the call; incl. interaction with KPSRL and acknowledgement of KPSRL and MFA; ask and prepare coordinators to pitch their projects</li> <li>• Develop call-level impact pathway jointly with KPSRL (10 December 2018)</li> </ul>
<p><i>Early audience building</i></p>	KPSRL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide early summaries of each project for a special issue of the KPSRL newsletter (in coordination with coordinators and based on proposals); Disseminate &amp; promote information about ARF6 projects to build early audience</li> <li>• Send out project summaries within the MFA for additional outer circle stakeholders within the MFA to be able to self-identify and subscribe to updates</li> <li>• Joint meeting with NWO/KPSRL/MFA to identify additional outer circle stakeholders within the MFA (January 2019). Set up meetings where possible</li> <li>• Inform NWO-WOTRO on interesting developments and progress</li> </ul>
	NWO-WOTRO	NA

<i>Mid-term update</i>  <i>Gather information about the status and first insights and messages to practitioners and policy makers, in order to facilitate midterm audience building, support to consortia and evaluate changes</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Together with NWO, check-in with coordinators (and, upon approval by coordinator, designated end users) to discuss projects progress</li> <li>• Iterate offer of support in communicating findings for target audiences</li> <li>• With coordinators, identify opportunities to connect with audiences or peers</li> <li>• Solicit examples of knowledge uptake thus far</li> </ul>
	<i>NWO-WOTRO</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out if projects require assistance on administrative level or one of the key components</li> <li>• Solicit updates on changes to the projects, prompting an evaluation and decision by NWO-WOTRO</li> </ul>
<i>Mid-term audience building</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move on opportunities to organize early results sharing or feedback/consultation sessions; (potentially) host workshops or networking events for ARF6 projects with early results (first of two trips to The Hague); leverage social media (including monthly newsletter) to stir interest in upcoming project outputs; identify key policy themes and processes in all projects – whether MFA is end-user or not – and give potential steer for the production of the uptake outputs.</li> <li>• Inform NWO-WOTRO on interesting developments and progress</li> </ul>
	<i>NWO-WOTRO</i>	NA
<i>Final ARF6 report submitted</i>  <i>Collect information about results, insights and messages to practitioners for further knowledge sharing. Evaluation of the projects (NWO) and collect information for reporting.</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with NWO communications lead on ARF6 projects with potential media resonance; (potentially) contact designated end users to gather insights on uptake processes</li> <li>• Check reports are compliant and carry the appropriate logo's, references, etc. and that branding is as per KPSRL/NWO/MFA pre-agreed format.</li> </ul>
	<i>NWO-WOTRO</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for main insights and update on impact pathway, co-creation, etc.</li> <li>• Remind consortia that all project outputs need to be uploaded to NWO-WOTRO and the KPSRL website database.</li> <li>• Ask feedback on role KP and WOTRO.</li> <li>• Support KPSRL in ensuring correct branding if required.</li> </ul>
<i>Final audience building</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disseminate results of ARF6 projects in a special issue of the monthly newsletter; promote the final Hague-based uptake event (second of two trips to The Hague); set up meetings at the NL MFA for projects where interest was successfully generated; for other projects, synthesize key policy lessons and</li> </ul>

		<p>send to relevant thematic leads in MFA.</p>
	<i>NWO-WOTRO</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication about project results through NWO website and newsletter</li> </ul>
<i>The Hague-based uptake event</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-organize with NWO a one-day event for all ARF6 projects to present their results; design an interactive program geared toward promoting dialogue between ‘supply &amp; demand’ sides; promote and mobilize attendance for the event, particularly among target audiences in the Platform community;</li> </ul>
	<i>NWO-WOTRO</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-organize with KPSRL a one-day event for all ARF6 projects to present their results; collaborate in developing the program; communicate with consortia about their participation</li> </ul>
<i>Post-project: KPSRL Annual Conference</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities for ARF6 projects to participate in KPSRL’s annual conference (theme TBD)</li> </ul>
<i>Post-project update (6mos)</i>	<i>KPSRL</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up with ARF6 coordinators and (potentially) designated end users to gather information about knowledge uptake and research impact following the conclusion of the projects.</li> </ul>

## VI. Plan of Action – Planning Knowledge Uptake ARF6 2018/2019

Planning Knowledge Uptake ARF6 2018/2019	Nov. 2018	Dec.	Jan. 2019	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Mar. 2020
NWO – Award Letters <b>Sent</b> to ARF6 Grantees; explicitly naming the KPSRL as a partner for facilitating knowledge uptake	Wk 46												
KPSRL – Kick off <b>Webinar</b> to introduce ARF6 grantees to each other, the KPSRL, NWO and the MFA		Wk 50 <b>13 Dec.</b>											
CHRISTMAS BREAK		Wks 51- 52	Wks 1-2										
KPSRL – Early Audience Building; Feb <b>Newsletter</b> – Special ARF6 Issue				Wk 6 <b>5 Feb.</b>									
KPSRL – Mid-term Update; scheduled according to apprx. start date					Wk 16		Wk 23						
KPSRL – Mid-term Audience Building; Social media, potential newsletter								Wk 24- 26	Wk 27 - 31				
NWO – <b>Final project submission</b> ; also uploaded to KPSRL website									Wk 27- 31	Wk 32 – 35	Wk 36- 37		
NWO & KPSRL – Hague Uptake <b>Event</b>										Wk 32- 35	Wk 36		
Potential participation in KPSRL Annual Conference											Wk 36- 39		
KPSRL – Final Audience Building; Oct <b>Newsletter</b> – Special ARF6 Issue												Wk 41 <b>Oct 8</b>	
KPSRL – Post-project update													Wk 10 - 13



**WOTRO Science for Global Development**

**Annex 1 – ARF6 Call**

## **Call for full proposals**

### **Security and Rule of Law in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings**

### **Call for Applied Research on the Political Dilemma of Legitimate Stability**



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands



A subsidy scheme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, implemented by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, Division WOTRO Science for Global Development, in collaboration with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

The Security & Rule of Law Applied Research Fund (ARF) is a subsidy scheme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. It is created to underpin the Ministry's Security & Rule of Law policy by developing evidence-based insights and stimulating the use of these insights to solve practical problems for policies and programmes in an effort to achieve sustainable peace and development. The ARF is implemented by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), department WOTRO Science for Global Development. The themes of the ARF calls are developed by the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law.

This sixth ARF call for proposals focusses on how Security & Rule of Law policies and/or programmes can strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and thereby can contribute to sustainable peace and development. To do so, applicants to this call are asked to develop evidence-based insights on how policies and/or programmes focusing on human security, rule of law and/or political governance can become more sensitive to, or stimulate, legitimate stability. Moreover, applicants are asked to facilitate the uptake of these insights in policies and programmes. Proposals must be driven by local or international demands from practitioners (including policy makers) and align with international agendas<sup>1</sup>.

Consortia composed of at least one practitioner organisation and one research organisation, able to demonstrate a prior history of successful collaboration, are invited to submit project proposals.<sup>2</sup> All applications should incorporate research and knowledge sharing activities and actively involve users of the knowledge in these activities. Research projects will have a duration of six to nine months and have to be finished before 1 September 2019.

The deadline for full proposals is Tuesday 7 August, 2 pm CEST. Only consortia which applied to the call for preliminary proposals can submit a full proposal. Applicants of the best preliminary proposals have received an invitation to submit a full proposal.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see section 1.4 for the focus of the call and chapter 2 for the aim and objectives of this call. Section 2.3 provides further information on the specific project conditions.

<sup>2</sup> Further information on the consortium requirements and the requirements for a history of collaboration can be found in section 3.1. Please note that the requirement for a history of collaboration can be negated in specific circumstances, which are also described in this section.

## 1.2 Background

### Dutch knowledge policy for Security & Rule of Law

Security & Rule of Law (SRoL) is one of the priority policy areas of Dutch development cooperation, *aiming at enhancing 'legitimate' stability and sustainable peace in fragile contexts in order to achieve sustainable development.*<sup>3</sup>

Specific thematic priority areas are:

1. Human Security: reduced levels of violence and levels of fear experienced by citizens
2. Rule of Law: strengthened rule of law so that citizens are better able to access their own rights through effective, independent, fair and accountable institutions
3. Political Governance: strengthened national and local level governance structures that are inclusive and accountable to their constituencies, and that are – together with societies at large – able to effectively prevent and resolve conflict in a non-violent and inclusive manner

The way of working in fragile settings needs serious improvement. Despite significant investments from the international community to enhance the effectiveness of their engagement in fragile and conflict-affected settings, e.g. through the 2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States<sup>4</sup>, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set in 2015<sup>5</sup>, the UN's Sustaining Peace Agenda<sup>6</sup> from 2016, and the UN and World Bank's 2017/2018 joint efforts to make sustaining peace a central element of programming for both institutions<sup>7</sup>, results and value for money have been modest.

The current policy frameworks acknowledge that transitioning out of fragility is a long, political process that requires country leadership and ownership. They also acknowledge that significant changes are needed to systems, behaviours and approaches in order to respond more effectively to the challenges posed by conflict and fragility. To make development efforts in Security & Rule of Law more effective, interventions must be conflict-sensitive, adjusted to local priorities and local systems and allow for a flexible, coherent long-term involvement and acceptable risks.

In order to allow for this, policy and programme development and implementation needs to be based on evidence-based knowledge. For this reason, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands invests in further developing the knowledge base on security and rule of law and, more specifically, on how legitimate stability and sustainable peace can be enhanced.

### The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law

To strengthen the knowledge base on Security & Rule of Law in fragile and conflict-affected settings, the Ministry has supported the creation of a Knowledge Platform

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<sup>3</sup> The Dutch MFAs Theory of Change for Security and Rule of Law is currently being updated, but the 2015 can be found here: <https://www.government.nl/documents/regulations/2015/12/10/theory-of-change-for-the-security-and-rule-of-law-policy-priority-in-fragile-situations>.

<sup>4</sup> See [www.newdeal4peace.org](http://www.newdeal4peace.org)

<sup>5</sup> Particularly Goal 16 that aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. See <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

<sup>6</sup> On the basis of UN General Assembly Resolution 70/262 and UN Security Council Resolution 2282.

<sup>7</sup> On the basis of the so-called Pathways for Peace study. See: <https://www.pathwaysforpeace.org/>

Security & Rule of Law. The Platform is a vibrant network of experts working on generating, sharing, interrogating and applying evidence in the field of SRoL. Representatives of social, academic, private, international and governmental organisations aim to jointly explore innovative approaches to emerging challenges in the field of SRoL and conflict-affected contexts. As such, the Platform plays a central role in identifying and articulating knowledge demands, formulating research questions and promoting knowledge exchange.

The Platform decided that in order to strengthen the evidence base of SRoL policies and programmes – and as such to strengthen the effectiveness of international engagement in this field – a combined approach of knowledge development and application thereof is required and therefore designed a competitive Security & Rule of Law Research Programme.

### **Security & Rule of Law Research Programme**

The Security & Rule of Law research programme consists of two funding instruments: (1) the Applied Research Fund and (2) the Strategic Research Fund. Each of these funds seeks to promote a specific type of research, respectively applied research, including action research, aiming at evidence-informed implementation; and strategic research geared at developing new policy insights. Both funds consist of several calls for proposals. The research programme is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and managed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), devision WOTRO Science for Global Development.

#### **The Applied Research Fund**

The Applied Research Fund makes available grants for applied research projects that contribute to the knowledge demands within focus areas issued under the research programme Security & Rule of Law in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings.

##### **What is meant with applied research?**

Applied research is a form of systematic inquiry involving the practical application of science. Applied research deals with solving practical problems and generally employs empirical methodologies (source: OECD). It accesses and uses (parts of) the research communities' accumulated theories, knowledge, methods, and techniques, for responding to a specific, demand (often state-, business-, or client)-driven purpose.

The ultimate goal of the Applied Research Fund (ARF) is to strengthen the evidence base of policy and/or implementation (programming). ARF research projects aim to provide evidence-based and applicable knowledge on how Security & Rule of Law policies and/or programmes can be improved. Projects address questions including: are we doing things right? And, if not, how can our policies and/or programmes be improved? Are our assumptions right? Do we properly understand the problems we address in current policies? And are our policies and toolboxes fit for purpose?

##### **Evidence-based insights for policies and programmes**

The ultimate goal of evidence-based insights for policymaking and programmes is improved public policies and implementation thereof, thereby creating more stable and secure societies. Evidence means that policies and/or programmes are based on reliable empirical data and objective analyses.

## **1.3 Available budget**

A maximum budget of 1,500,000 euros is available for this call. A maximum of ten projects will be funded. Consortia may apply for basic projects (100,000 euros to 150,000 euros) or extended projects (150,000 euros up to 225,000 euros) for projects with a duration of 6 up to 9 months.<sup>8</sup>

The grant should be seen as a contribution to the total costs associated with the proposed activities of the project. Thus, for each research project, it is necessary that one or more consortium organisations or other (third) parties contribute (in kind and/or cash) to the project as well.

## **1.4 Focus of the call**

This call for proposals of the Applied Research Fund seeks to support research projects that can strengthen the evidence-base on how SRoL policies and/or programmes can strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS) in an effort to achieve sustainable peace and development.

Modern day development cooperation takes as a starting point that sustainable development is negatively affected by instability and insecurity. As incorporated in the Sustainable Development Goals, it is clear that there can be no sustainable development without peace and stability, and that there can be no peace and stability without sustainable development.<sup>9</sup> Evidence shows that a lack of inclusiveness on the part of states and within societies can result in violent conflict.<sup>10</sup> In particular, citizens' exclusion from access to political processes, the lack of accountable, effective and transparent justice, and security institutions that do not act in the service of citizens, can create fertile ground for mobilization to violence.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, long-term fragility and/or conflict can foment disruptive relations between a government and its population, and can erode social cohesion and trust between people. Hence, the international community – including the Netherlands – understands legitimacy to be a key component in achieving sustainable peace and development.

### **Legitimacy**

In this call 'legitimacy' refers to a society's collective consent to be governed. At its most symbiotic, legitimacy stems from citizens' consensual recognition of certain actors' and institutions' power to set rules, shape norms, arbitrate and enforce sanctions, as well as to collect and distribute public resources. In exchange, society is assured a degree of predictability and everyday order. As such, it is incumbent upon the authorities to earn this consent, and the prerogative of society to confer it.

*What is meant by 'legitimate stability'?*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (MFA) has incorporated this focus on legitimacy in its SRoL policies and programmes, by making the enhancement of '*legitimate stability*' the main objective of its SRoL efforts in Fragile and Conflict

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<sup>8</sup> Please see section 3.2 for the specific budgetary options for this call.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

<sup>10</sup> UN-WB study Pathways for Peace (<https://www.pathwaysforpeace.org/>)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Affected Settings.<sup>12</sup> The term 'legitimate stability' indicates that stability is not a goal in itself. A suppressive and authoritarian regime may be stable, but is not considered to be in a state of sustainable peace, as grievances related to exclusion (e.g. from access to power, natural resources and/or security and justice) can be at the root of future violent conflict. With 'legitimate stability', the MFA refers to stability that is grounded in inclusive policies and service delivery, accountable governance, inclusive political processes and a social contract between the state and its people, as well as horizontal social cohesion between groups. The Dutch policy goals are aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 16, which focuses on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

For specific research foci of the call see section 2.2.

#### **Geographical focus**

Projects should address specific SRoL policies and programmes that focus on one or more of the following regions: the Horn of Africa, the Sahel region, the Great Lakes region, North Africa, the Middle-East, and Afghanistan<sup>13</sup>.

### **1.5 Validity of de call**

The application procedure consists of two stages: a call for preliminary proposals and a call for full proposals. Only consortia that have applied with an eligible preliminary proposal can send in an application for this call for full proposals. Applicants of the best preliminary proposals have been invited to submit a full proposal.

Applications within *this call for full proposals* can be submitted until **7 August, 2 pm CEST**. Please consult section 4.1 for further information about the procedure and for an overview of the timeline.

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<sup>12</sup> Next to achieving sustainable peace.

<sup>13</sup> Projects should address SRoL policies and programmes which focus on one or more of the following countries within these regions:

Great Lakes region: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda

Horn of Africa: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Kenya

Sahel: Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria

North Africa and Middle East: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Libya, Tunisia.

## 2 Aim

### 2.1 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this call for proposals is to strengthen the evidence-base on how Security & Rule of Law policies and/or programmes can strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings in an effort to achieve sustainable peace and development.

Each research project should contribute to two objectives (A and B):

- A. **Develop evidence-based insights** on how Security & Rule of Law policies and/or programmes focusing on human security, rule of law and/or political governance can become more sensitive to, or stimulate, legitimate stability (see section 2.2 for specific policy and programme research foci);

**AND**

- B. **Facilitate the uptake of the knowledge generated**, so that it can be applied by practitioner organisations<sup>14</sup>, including public policy organisations, involved in SRoL policies and/or programmes. Findings should be communicated in such a way that these organisations can easily use the knowledge to (re-)design, or integrate the knowledge into, the policies and/or programmes described under A.

### 2.2 Research foci

#### Rationale of the research foci

Recent interventions in FCAS have been informed by international policy agendas, such as the 2011 New Deal and the 2015 commitment to SDG 16, that draw explicit attention to the need to foster ‘legitimate politics’, inclusive political settlements, societies and institutions. Consequently, many of the current donor interventions focusing on state building, institution building, rule of law, security sector reform and good governance in FCAS, rely on the assumption that performance legitimacy is a prerequisite for longer-term stability. For example, both the recent UN/World Bank “Pathways for Peace” study and the targets associated with SDG 16 focus on performance legitimacy, by espousing legitimacy as a correlate of how proficiently and inclusively a state carries out discrete functions or delivers specific services. However, this assumption contains a number of critical blind spots, as identified by the Knowledge Platform SRoL:

- First, the automatic link that is often made between efficient and inclusive service delivery on the one hand, and legitimacy on the other, is problematic. Strengthening local governance or service delivery systems may not ‘trickle

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<sup>14</sup> Practitioners include any type of organisation, other than research or higher education organisations, that represent a group of people actively engaged in policy design and/or implementation of those policies (programmes). These type of organisations include: a) private for-profit enterprises and related support organisations, as well as; b) private non-profit organisations, such as non-governmental organisations, cooperatives, unions, civil society organisations etcetera, and; c) public organisations such as governmental departments of line ministries or local governments, extension services.

- up' to validate state legitimacy. Legitimacy is issue-, population-, and context-specific. Though efficient and inclusive service delivery may contribute to the legitimacy of state actors in one arena or among one group of citizens, this is not a universal truth and is likely to vary across contexts, demographics, geographies and social strata.
- Second, local legitimacy is not always rooted in inclusion. It can also be based on exceptionalism. For instance, in majoritarian political systems riven by identity-based divides, partisanship and patronage is often a condition of being seen as 'legitimate' by a core electorate. This scenario, characteristic of fragile and conflict-affected contexts, enables or even encourages 'relational' or identity-based systems for distributing public services, power and resources. The local, popular legitimisation of such systems challenges the promotion of inclusive and 'rule-based' governance.
  - Third, the service delivery-legitimacy-stability paradigm has an overt state bias. In conflict-affected contexts, social fragmentation, acute or violent political contestation and deficient infrastructure severely limit the reach and role of the state, enabling (even demanding) other forms of governance to earn popular legitimacy. Although these informal or semi-formal actors may contribute to efficient and inclusive service delivery, their presence does not (necessarily) foster stability or institutionalised good governance.
  - Fourth, legitimacy inevitably has a top-down dimension. External interventions are therefore never neutral undertakings, but have the potential to influence the entire service delivery-legitimacy-stability chain. In a development intervention, supporting the capacity of one group of authorities can put these actors in direct competition with other local authority figures seeking popular legitimacy, and thereby adversely affect local stability. In other instances, accepting external support may actually undercut the popular legitimacy of local authorities, hindering their ability to engage in efficient and inclusive service delivery or safeguard stability.

These blind spots pose a serious dilemma for SRoL policies and programmes aiming to enhance legitimate stability – and ultimately sustainable peace and development. For instance, is fostering local legitimacy (i.e. popular acquiescence, consent to be governed) sufficient for reducing violence and building social cohesion, trust and peace? Is it imperative for donors to work with the (in)formal justice and security actors who muster the necessary popular allegiance to dissuade violence, but do so via nominally 'illiberal', identity-based or exclusionary tactics? If so, how, and to what end? And what (violent) consequences must be accounted for should an external intervention begin to compete with or unravel the legitimacy of a local authority?

In recognition of the uncertainties on how SRoL policies and programmes should view and account for legitimacy, this call intends to shed more light on how legitimacy works, and ultimately to produce a richer evidence-base on how SRoL policies and programmes can strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and as such contribute to the achievement of sustainable peace and development.

This call targets SRoL policies and programmes in the fields of human security, rule of law and/or political governance – as key elements of SDG 16. More specifically, the call aims to produce practical recommendations to enhance the contribution of

interventions to legitimate stability, with a focus on the following types of interventions<sup>15</sup>:

- **Human security interventions** with an aim to reduce the levels of violence and levels of fear experienced by citizens and/or social groups;
- **Rule of law interventions** with an aim to enhance citizens' ability to exercise their rights through effective, independent, fair and accountable institutions; and
- **Political governance interventions** with an aim to enable states, regional and local authorities, and societies at large to effectively address instability and insecurity, and as such effectively prevent and resolve conflict in a non-violent and inclusive manner.

#### **Specific research foci**

**Research under this call should address one or more of the following interconnected lines of enquiry, all of which feed into the overarching question of how SRoL policies and programmes can strengthen legitimate stability in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and thereby contribute to sustainable peace and development. Consortia are asked to focus specifically on the fields of human security, rule of law and/or political governance, and to produce practical recommendations to enhance the contribution that specific interventions make to legitimate stability:**

- 1) **What evidence do we have of how governing authorities build and maintain legitimacy?** This first line of inquiry aims to identify both performance (output) and process (throughput) sources of legitimacy in FCAS. Given that legitimisation is a highly fluid and deeply contextual process, it also aims to explore the possibilities to isolate specific processes or roles of governing that consistently appear to align with popular expectations of a legitimate authority. Such processes and interventions may include, for example, constitution building, decentralisation, electoral assistance, ensuring access to justice, investments in peacebuilding, or transitional justice. Consortia are requested to study such interventions and interrogate their impact on local legitimacy, in order to deepen our understanding of how legitimacy in FCAS is formed as well as sustained over time.
- 2) **How are the assumptions that underpin current interventions seeking to promote legitimate governance related to local processes of legitimisation?** The second line of inquiry takes into account that legitimisation is a contentious process, in which competing narratives are constantly produced and challenged by state, non-state, and international actors to suit different political ends. Yet, all efforts at legitimisation inherently assert assumptions about what people perceive as fair, rightful and just. They are also driven by normative ideas of what governing authorities *should* do – and the role they *should* play. For Western external actors, for instance, there is a strong notion that legitimacy and inclusivity are inevitably intertwined. However, this may not align with local populations' preferences for or expectations of local authorities. Proposals in this category should focus on identifying the assumptions underlying both national and international efforts to promote legitimate governance (including assumptions about what people

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<sup>15</sup> These interventions are in line with the Dutch MFAs policy thematic priority areas mentioned in section 1.4.

perceive as fair, right and just), with a specific focus on the limitations intervening actors face regarding their own legitimacy vis-a-vis local populations. Consortia are asked to explain how these assumptions affect the effectiveness of efforts to promote legitimate governance, and to present recommendations on how the effectiveness of these efforts can be improved.

- 3) **How do external actors recognise or seek to affect the legitimacy of local actors when they make their decisions of who to support in FCAS?** The third line of inquiry considers how donors and their implementing agents assess the (potential) legitimacy of local partners. Perceptions of legitimacy are not limited to state actors; they are also applied to governance, justice and security actors who operate through mechanisms other than formal, state ones. In most FCAS, such actors play a key role in the provision of stability, specifically at the community level. However, these actors may employ tactics that sit in contrast to western laws, values and frameworks. In selecting local partners, external actors will apply (normative) standards and criteria assessing the legitimacy of their partners, and this will affect the relevance and effectiveness of their policies and programmes. It can also affect the legitimacy of the local partners (positively or negatively). Consortia are therefore asked to clarify the legitimacy standards and criteria applied in the selection of local partners, and explore the implications of those choices.
- 4) **What are the experiences of longer-term legitimisation processes in the context of an external stabilisation intervention?** The fourth and final line of inquiry recognises that the international community intervenes in certain situations (e.g. Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Somalia) with the express intent to provide support and political legitimacy to one side of a conflict. Such interventions are often conducted with the aim of 'stabilisation', reigning in the violence and disruptive chaos of active conflict. However, the longer-term effects of stabilisation interventions on the domestic processes of legitimisation warrant further examination, specifically in those cases where the partner government exercises its internationally-backed power through repressive and exclusive practices – and possibly human rights violations. There is a risk that such interventions (diplomatic, military and/or aid interventions), in the longer term, affect domestic processes of legitimisation in such a way that they have become less inclusive. How can external stabilisation interventions account for this risk? Proposals in this category should therefore focus on identifying the risks that have become apparent from experiences to date. Consortia are asked to present recommendations on how these risks could be better identified and navigated in the future.

## 2.3 Specific project conditions

### Demand-driven project articulation

The project should respond to a knowledge demand of local or international practitioners (including policy makers), which relates to one of the interventions mentioned in 2.2. Moreover, applicants should demonstrate how their project relates to relevant international policy agendas, with a specific focus on the SDG 16 set in 2015, the UN's Sustaining Peace Agenda from 2016, and/or the UN and World Bank's "Pathways for Peace" study 2017/2018.

### Conflict sensitivity

Project proposals must be sensitive to the local context and regional complexities. From the applications it should become clear that applicants take a conflict-sensitive approach, and that they espouse a do-no-harm approach to people (practitioners, researchers, local/regional people, stakeholders etcetera) that are directly or indirectly related to the subject of the project. Conflict-sensitive

research needs to account for the direct and indirect channels by which conflicts affect individuals' behaviour and welfare. Attention should be paid to the political and economic role of women.

### **Applied research approach**

The call is open for applied research projects only. Applied research addresses practical problems and makes use of information that is gained through **empirical methodologies or** that is based on **existing empirical data**. A range of empirical methods and techniques – from randomised controlled trials to differences-indifferences, case studies, surveys – can be used<sup>16</sup>. However, generating new information may not be feasible within the short time-frame of these projects. Therefore, research projects may be geared towards applying current scientific information (for example by using scientific systematic review methodologies).

### **Uptake of insights and contributing to developmental impact**

Projects should employ the approaches and activities described below. This will enable projects to facilitate the uptake of the insights generated for SRoL policies and/or programme, and ultimately to contribute to developmental impact<sup>17</sup>.

#### *Co-creation*

Research projects should evolve in a process of co-creation: both practitioners and researchers in and outside of the consortium – including at least one 'end user' from outside of the consortium – should be actively involved throughout the entire project process, in (advising on) defining and conducting the research as well as in communicating the progress and results, in order to jointly produce a mutually valued outcome.

*Co-creation* is a form of cooperation in research where different parties (stakeholders, target groups) in the knowledge (demand and supply) process are engaged in interaction and joint learning on the problem definition, formulation of possible solutions, design of the research, conducting the research, the assessment of the results, and the translation of these in new practices and products.

The diversity of perspectives and of the type and level of knowledge is seen as an asset that can be addressed in a constructive way of mutual learning and design. The experience of policymakers and other users such as farmers, patients, consumers, activists, technology users and the public, is a valuable source of knowledge that can be enriching to science. Cooperation between researchers and expert practitioners will not only help deepen our knowledge but also increase the likelihood that research results will be transferred, used, and subsequently improve the impact of research.

#### *Pre-defined knowledge sharing (activities)*

To enhance impact, the knowledge generated by projects receiving a grant must be easily accessible for and applicable by practitioners (including policy makers) involved in the policies and/or programmes targeted by the project. Therefore:

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<sup>16</sup> Projects can make use of innovative analysis techniques and data collection techniques (i.e. social media analyses, and data from Google Search, apps, GPS, etcetera).

<sup>17</sup> Although impact is (normally) beyond the sphere of a single research project, formulating developmental impact a project aims at, can help a project to define a scope and focus, and this can help to design engagement strategies and research-into-use activities that contribute to working towards the envisaged impact. Projects should aim at achieving impact on the level of policies and/or programmes.

- the research project should include activities for active knowledge sharing with a broader group of relevant (local, national, international) organisations that are not directly involved in the project (as member of the consortium) in order to enhance the potential for findings to be implemented and to generate impact.
- generated knowledge must be translated into a policy brief, or other (concrete) means for communication (i.e. audio/visual products) addressing how practitioners can use the new insights to transform (new or existing) policies and/or programmes.
- applicants are encouraged to propose innovative knowledge products specifically designed to increase policy and/or programming uptake. The design of these knowledge products should be done in consultation with potential end-users, reflecting their habits and preferences for acquiring and applying new insights.

*Collaboration with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law*

Strengthening a learning culture within the broader group of stakeholders bringing about national and international knowledge flows is extremely important for enhancing the development impact of the Applied Research Fund. Therefore, the project participants must be prepared to coordinate their knowledge sharing activities with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL). This includes actively participating in KPSRL-organised activities to exchange project results with both other ARF projects and external stakeholders, and to create feedback loops between the research projects and potential users, in particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and its Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid.

Over the course of the project's implementation, it is expected that the consortia respond to periodic check-ins with the Knowledge Platform, and capitalise on opportunities offered to share lessons, experiences and (early) findings both with other ARF awardees as well as broader stakeholders. This is considered essential to building feedback loops and increasing the likelihood that the projects' results will be taken up by the intermediate target audience (end-users).

These activities will be organised by the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law<sup>18</sup>, which is responsible for setting the agenda of ARF calls and for sharing research results for uptake among a broad group of relevant networks and organisations.

*Impact pathway*

Applicants should explicate how the project works towards the realisation of the two objectives of this call and ultimately contributes to enhanced peace and development in the targeted regions. In this *full proposal stage* applicants are asked to sketch an impact pathway (for a schematic example, see section 6.4).

In this pathway:

- it must be envisioned how the project activities (both research activities and knowledge sharing activities) result in outputs and contribute to outcomes and impact, with verifiable indicators for the output and outcome levels;

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<sup>18</sup> Part of the project budget will be allocated to enable consortiums' active participation in activities of the Knowledge Platform, based in The Hague.

- it must be explicated and specified who the foreseen users of the project results are and how users will be targeted.

*Research outputs* relate to the direct and immediate results obtained by a research project or programme;

*Research outcomes* relate to the external use, adoption or influence of a project's outputs that results in behavioural change of partners and stakeholders needed to achieve the intended impact;

*Research impact* is defined as changes in economic, environmental and social conditions a project or programme is aiming at.

Research outputs and outcomes respectively fall under the direct span of control of a research project or programme. Achieving societal change (impact) is, however, beyond the control of a research project as it is a complex process that depends on a variety of actors and factors of which research is only one.

### **Target groups for this Call**

The most immediate target group consists of researchers and practitioners from across the globe with knowledge of (context-sensitive) policies and/or programmes for development and security and with proven experience in performing research in the foci of this call. This target group will formulate and submit project proposals.

The intermediate target group consists of those individuals and organisations that will be directly impacted by the outcomes of the research projects. That is to say, those that will adapt, adjust and apply new perspectives for action. These are considered the '**end users**' of the knowledge, mentioned above. This intermediate target group will be found primarily among (international) donors, especially the Dutch MFA, and practitioner organisations involved in the design and implementation of policies and programmes. Consortia are required to actively consult representatives from this group in designing their proposal, keep these 'end users' periodically updated on the project's progress, and seek their input in formulating conclusions and recommendations for uptake.

Finally, the ultimate target group to reap the benefits of this call consists of people living in fragile and conflict-affected settings, including the most marginalised and vulnerable people in the targeted FCAS and regions mentioned in section 1.4.

# 3 Guidelines for applicants

## 3.1 Who can apply

### Composition of the consortium

A research project must be directed by a consortium and carried out by practitioners and researchers from various backgrounds. Consortia consisting of different relevant member organisations from across the globe may apply for funding under this call. The inclusion of a partner actively working in an implementation country<sup>19</sup> will be considered a strength. This call specifically requires consortium partners to demonstrate a prior history of successful collaboration (although this criterion can be negated in certain specific circumstances, see more information below).

The consortium must consist of at least:

- A practitioner organisation<sup>20</sup> involved in the design and/or implementation of policies and/or programmes in the fields of human security, rule of law and/or political governance within FCAS<sup>21</sup>

### AND

- A research organisation<sup>22</sup> with demonstrable experience working with human security, rule of law and/or political governance within FCAS.

The consortium may be extended with additional organisations. All organisations participating in a consortium must be registered as a legal entity. All non-Dutch organisations that are part of the consortium are requested to deliver proof of this registration.

### Coordination of the consortium and collaboration between consortium members

The consortium appoints one main applicant from its midst. He or she should hold a senior<sup>23</sup> position within his/her organisation. He or she will act as project coordinator and point of contact with NWO-WOTRO and will submit the research proposal. The main applicant's organisation will take responsibility for the project secretariat, the day-to-day management and all financial affairs of the research project. The research organisation in the consortium should also be represented by a senior researcher<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> For implementationcountries, see footnote 13.

<sup>20</sup> For a definition of 'practitioners', see footnote 14

<sup>21</sup> For the targeted FCAS, see section 1.4.

<sup>22</sup> Research organisations include any organisation:

- of which one of its main tasks is to carry out independent research;
- that has no profit motive other than that for the purpose of further research;
- whose researchers enjoy freedom of publication in the international (academic) literature.

For example, universities and higher education institutions, think-tanks, planning offices, centers for international scientific education, but also NGO's and private organisations that meet these criteria are included. Here, research organisations from across the globe are invited to apply.

<sup>23</sup> 'Senior': individuals with at least a demonstrable six years experience relevant to the proposed project proposal.

<sup>24</sup> 'Senior researcher': individuals with at least a demonstrable six years research experience.

The (main and co-)applicants of the consortium member organisations will together:

- 1) steer the process of demand articulation;
- 2) actively involve and consult one or more 'end users' (e.g. a policymaker, programme lead, or similar target audience) during the development and execution of the research (i.e. involving the 'end user' in the design of the proposal, periodically consulting the 'end user' as the project is carried out and actively consulting the 'end user' in the formulation of project conclusions and recommendations);
- 3) translate demands into relevant research questions and approaches;
- 4) develop, formulate and submit the proposal;
- 5) conduct the project activities;
- 6) organise knowledge sharing activities and disseminate and communicate the project results to a broader group of (local) stakeholders beyond the consortium;
- 7) collaborate with the Knowledge Platform on Knowledge sharing activities (i.e. actively participating in KPSRL-organised activities to exchange project results and to create a feedback loop between your project and potential users);
- 8) take responsibility for the adequate and timely reporting to NWO-WOTRO.

Each individual (main or co-)applicant can participate in only one proposal issued in response to this call. This means that an organisation can part of the consortium in multiple proposals in case different individuals (people) are involved.

#### **History of collaboration**

Applicants are asked to demonstrate previous experience of successful collaboration. This condition has been included in this call, because forming collaborations takes time. Next to the fact that pre-existing partnerships maximize time-effectiveness, the collaboration also increases potential impact of the call. Principally, this condition applies to the main applicant, in combination with the co-applicant that is responsible for the largest share of the research and/or fte. Additional co-applicants do not have to adhere to this condition.

Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of such collaboration as part of the eligibility criteria. The quality of the history of the partnership will be part of the selection criteria.

*This condition can be negated if the applying consortium can demonstrate the complimentary qualities of both/all partner organisations towards the joint and efficient completion of the research project, substantiating that no time will be lost to the consortium formation.*

## **3.2 What can be applied for**

Applicants can apply for *basic* projects or *extended* projects. The maximum available budget per *basic project* within this call amounts to 100,000 euros for a project with a duration of six months and 150,000 euros for project with a duration of 9 months. Applicants may also apply for a project of seven or eight months<sup>25</sup>. In

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<sup>25</sup> Basic project: Maximum budget for 7 months is 117,000 euros, maximum budget for 8 months is 133,000 euros. Extended project: Maximum budget for 7 months is 175,000 euros, maximum budget for 8 months is 200,000 euros.

case of an *extended project*, this budget can be raised with 50 per cent (amounting to a maximum of 150.000 euros for a project with a duration of six months, and a maximum of 225.000 euros for a project of nine months) in case applicants can clearly demonstrate in the proposal that they undertake any of the following in this extended project:

- The project compares (similar) interventions within two or more countries;
- The project addresses two or more of the lines of inquiry of this call (see: 2.2 'specific research foci').

The applicants can budget only for costs directly attributed to the project. In this full proposal stage, the value for money of the proposed project will be judged. This will be based on the proposed objectives and the proposed budget (including activities to be financed). In case a project does not deliver enough value for money, the project may not be funded, notwithstanding its high quality.

Please note that due to the running time of the SRoL programme ***there is NO room for projects to be granted a budget- neutral extension that would result in an end date of the project after 1 September 2019***. This means: Projects with a duration of nine months should start within one month of receiving a positive decision (start date: 1 December 2018) and can not be extended. All projects need to be finished at 1 September 2019. Applicants should be realistic with regard to their project planning. In this planning, applicants should take into account Holidays and periods that may limit access to field research, such as seasonal rains, harvest periods, migration periods, or Ramadan, as well as the potential risks associated with the project and its context. Within the selection procedure, projects will be judged on the feasibility to conduct the project in the time frame proposed.

### **Reimbursable costs**

#### **I. Personnel costs of project staff<sup>26</sup>**

##### Reimbursable costs:

Subsidy can be requested for the time that staff members work on the project. To determine the reimbursable salary costs, a distinction is made between personnel from Dutch Universities and personnel from all other organisations.

##### *I. Personnel from Dutch Universities;*

The maximum tariffs for the different categories researchers (to be) employed by universities in the Netherlands are based upon the NWO-VSNU contract.

##### *II. Personnel from all other organisations than Dutch universities*

For determining the amount of reimbursable personnel costs for staff members from other organisations, the legally determined salary scales of the individual's employer are guiding. Salaries include costs for insurances, taxes, travel from and to work, medical costs, organisational overhead et cetera.

#### **II. Research costs**

##### Reimbursable costs:

- Travel (excluding travel from and to work) and accommodation costs for consortium/project staff members;

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<sup>26</sup> Project staff refers to individuals who actually conduct the project activities, including supervision of (this staff during) the project.

- Consumables, costs of materials or for obtaining or use of information/data, etcetera.

**III. Knowledge sharing costs (*minimum 20% of the total subsidy budget requested*)**

Reimbursable costs:

Knowledge sharing costs should preferably be directed towards enabling stakeholders beyond the project staff to participate in the project's knowledge sharing activities.

- Activities during the project's running time, including activities for communication purposes, for sharing project plans and (intermediate) project findings with relevant national and international stakeholders beyond the organisation(-s) employing the applicants/project staff;
- Organising consultation moments with relevant stakeholders beyond the consortium (including an end-of-project consultation with relevant stakeholders beyond the consortium).
- Costs for the dissemination of results (policy briefs, open access publications, conference fees, books, and other (visual/audio) forms of knowledge dissemination and activities to encourage research uptake).
- Budget for participation in activities of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law: two visits to the Hague by main or co-applicant.

Projects with a budget of more than 100,000 euro, with a main applicant organisation other than a Dutch research organisation, should also include a maximum of 2,500 euro for an audit report.

**Co-funding**

The grant should be seen as a contribution to the total costs associated with the proposed activities of the research project. Therefore, one or more of the consortium member organisations, or other ('third') parties, are expected to contribute cash<sup>27</sup> and/or in kind<sup>28</sup> to the grant in order to cover the total costs of the project. This contribution must be made explicit and valorised in the budget overview in the application form and a letter of support of the organisation should be provided when submitting the application. The amount of the in kind contribution of personnel costs should be guided by the organisation's norms and legal regulations of the country concerned.

### 3.3 Preparing and submitting an full application

**Preparing the application**

Applications, including the annexes, should be written in English.

The application form can be downloaded from the electronic application system ISAAC or from NWO's website (on the grant page of this programme). Before

<sup>27</sup> Should the proposal be awarded a grant, please note that in-cash contributions of more than 5,000 euros are to be channelled via NWO for reasons of transparency.

<sup>28</sup> 'In kind' contributions include costs that are carried by the participating consortium member organisations (for example personnel costs, overhead, goods etcetera). *Third parties* (not being a member of the consortium) can contribute 'cash' by providing cash money to the project or 'in kind' by providing goods or services to the consortium.

completing the application form, please read the information and guidelines provided in section 6 of this call.

An application can only be submitted to NWO-WOTRO via the online application system ISAAC. Applications that are not submitted via ISAAC will not be taken into consideration.

The main applicant should submit his/her application via his/her own ISAAC account.

Please note: All consortium member organisations need to be registered in ISAAC. In case a consortium member organisation is not listed in ISAAC it is vital to take five working days into account to ensure correct registration (a request for registration of the applicant's organisation in the ISAAC system should be sent to [relatiebeheer@nwo.nl](mailto:relatiebeheer@nwo.nl)).

### **Submitting an application**

Please arrange the annexes in a single PDF before starting your submission. When the application form has been completed, save the form (including annex) as a single PDF and upload it in ISAAC. When you submit your application to ISAAC you will also need to enter additional details online.

It is advised to start submitting your application at least one day before the deadline of this call for proposals. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

For technical questions please contact the ISAAC helpdesk, see section 5.2.

## **3.4 Conditions on granting**

### **Accountability**

With regard to accountability of the projects, the General Provisions of the NWO Regulation on Granting<sup>29</sup> and the conditions as specified in the NWO-WOTRO Regulations<sup>30</sup> apply to all applications. When the results from the financed research are published or presented, it should be acknowledged that the project is part of the research agenda of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of law, and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands through NWO-WOTRO.

### **Intellectual property rights and Consortium Agreement**

NWO encourages and facilitates the transfer of research results to industrial and other partner and will provide steering and will endorse contractual arrangements to be drawn up by the consortium. With regard to ownership of results, such as on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Confidentiality of Results and Knowledge transfer to Developing Countries, the conditions and requirements as specified in the WOTRO Regulations apply: [www.nwo.nl/en/documents/wotro/wotro-regulations](http://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/wotro/wotro-regulations).

Project partners are required to conclude a Consortium Agreement. A consortium agreement has to be signed by all project partners and approved of by NWO-WOTRO before the first payment can be made. The Consortium Agreement must

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<sup>29</sup> NWO Regulation on Granting: [www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/legal/nwo-regulation-on-granting-2015](http://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/legal/nwo-regulation-on-granting-2015)

<sup>30</sup> NWO-WOTRO Regulations: <http://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/wotro/wotro-regulations>

include a description on how LMICs will be able to benefit from the (patented) results under market conditions that safeguard local affordability including but not restricted to sublicenses for humanitarian purposes. A format for the Consortium Agreement is available on the NWO-WOTRO website: [www.nwo.nl/en/about-nwo/organisation/nwo-domains/wotro/forms](http://www.nwo.nl/en/about-nwo/organisation/nwo-domains/wotro/forms). A draft (not necessarily signed) Consortium Agreement should already be added as an annex to the application form.

### **Open Access and use of results**

All scientific publications resulting from research that is funded by grants derived from this call for proposals are to be immediately (at the time of publication) freely accessible worldwide (Open Access). There are several ways for researchers to publish Open Access. A detailed explanation regarding Open Access can be found on [www.nwo.nl/openscience-en](http://www.nwo.nl/openscience-en).

In addition, submitting a proposal implies that the applicants' employing organisations agree with the use of the results for free by the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

### **Data management**

Responsible data management is part of good research. NWO wants research data that emerge from publicly funded research to become freely and sustainably available, as much as possible, for reuse by other researchers. Furthermore NWO wants to raise awareness among researchers about the importance of responsible data management. Proposals should therefore satisfy the data management protocol of NWO. This protocol consists of two steps:

#### *1. Data management section*

The data management section is part of the research proposal. Researchers should answer four questions about data management within their intended research project. Therefore, before the research starts the researcher will be asked to think about how the data collected must be ordered and categorised so that it can be made freely available. Measures will often need to be taken during the production and analysis of the data to make their later storage and dissemination possible. Researchers can state which research data they consider to be relevant for storage and reuse.

#### *2. Data management plan*

After a proposal has been awarded funding the researcher should elaborate the data management *section* into a data management *plan*. The data management plan is a concrete elaboration of the data management section. In the plan the researcher describes whether use will be made of existing data or a new data collection and how the data collection will be made FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable. The plan should be submitted to NWO via ISAAC within a maximum of 1 months after the proposal has been awarded funding. The approval of the data management plan is one of the conditions that must be met before the project can start and before funding is disbursed. The plan can be adjusted during the term of the project. All changes are subject to approval by NWO-WOTRO.

Further information about the data management protocol of NWO can be found at [www.nwo.nl/datamanagement](http://www.nwo.nl/datamanagement).

# 4 Assessment procedure

## 4.1 Procedure

### Planning

The assessment and selection procedure consists of two stages: assessment of preliminary proposals and assessment and selection of full proposals. *The current call for proposals regards the full proposal stage.* The Societal Panel has invited a selection of the consortia which sent in an application in the preliminary proposal phase. Only those consortia which have sent in an eligible application for the preliminary proposal phase can send in a full proposal at this stage.

The full proposals will be assessed, ranked and selected for funding according to the following time scheme:

7 May 2018	<i>Publication call for preliminary proposals Application form available via the NWO website</i>
<b>5 June 2018</b>	<b>Deadline for submitting preliminary proposals</b>
1 week	<i>Eligibility check NWO-WOTRO</i>
June 2018	<i>Assessment of preliminary proposals by societal panel members</i>
Last week of June	<i>Advice to applicants on submitting a full proposal (expected 26 June)</i>
<b>7 August 2018, 2 pm CEST</b>	<b>Deadline for submitting full proposals</b>
1 week	<i>Eligibility check NWO-WOTRO</i>
August 2018	<i>Review by experts</i>
September 2018	<i>Rebuttal applicants</i>
Beginning October 2018	<i>Meeting IAC: Advice on funding</i>
End October 2018	<i>Meeting Programme Committee: decision on funding full proposals Notification of applicants</i>
November 2018	<i>Approval of budgets for awarded projects Start research projects within one (9 month project) to two (project less than 9 months) months</i>
December 2018	<i>Start of projects</i>

### Assessment

All project proposals received via ISAAC are screened by the NWO-WOTRO secretariat for compliance with formal eligibility criteria as described in section 6.3.

Full proposals will be pre-assessed by expert advisors on the basis of the selection criteria. After this assessment, the applicants will be offered the opportunity to respond to the comments made. In a meeting, the IAC will discuss all full proposals, pre-assessments and rebuttals and will rank the proposals for quality. The IAC will present an advice on funding to the Programme Committee (PC). The PC will decide on funding of the full proposals, based on the advice of the IAC. Only applications that evaluate at least as 'good' for each criterion are eligible for funding. The PC may deviate from the IAC ranking of 'good' proposals to balance the geographical spread of the focus regions and spread between the research foci of the proposals. The PC must clearly motivate its deviation.

All main applicants will be informed by email about the outcome of the selection procedure (end of October). An awarded project should start within two months

after the granting date. All awarded projects with a running time of *nine months* should start within one month after the granting date (before 1 December 2018).

The NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest<sup>31</sup> applies to all persons, including NWO staff, involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process.

#### **Appeals procedure**

If an applicant objects to a decision taken by the PC, it can lodge a complaint with the General Board of NWO through the NWO Appeals Committee. Any written appeal against a decision taken by the PC must be lodged within six weeks after the day on which the notice of this decision was sent.

## **4.2 Criteria**

For the full proposals the following three selection criteria apply, each of which carries equal weight in the ranking process and should meet the minimum quality standard. Only proposals which score at least '*good*' for all three main criteria can be considered for funding.

#### **Research quality**

- Potential to provide new evidence-based insights (objective A);
- Adequacy and feasibility of the research methodology/approach and activities, in relation to research questions and objectives;
- Demonstrable quality of relevant expertise of the main- and co-applicants.

#### **Relevance for policies and/or programmes**

- Extent to which the proposal aligns with the call's aim and foci;
- Robustness of the knowledge sharing activities and probability to generate impact on SRoL policies and programmes (including a realistic impact pathway) (objective B);
- Extent to which the proposal has been demonstrably developed and will be executed in co-creation (including integration of scientific knowledge and practitioners' knowledge and the involvement of end-users);
- Extent to which the project answers to the demand of a policy maker or other type of practitioner;
- Appropriateness of the contextualisation, and sensitivity of the project for conflict dynamics.

#### **Feasibility, quality of collaboration and value for money**

- Strength of partnership, based on the history of collaboration<sup>32</sup>, experience of partners with the issue at stake, inclusion of a partner working in an implementation country<sup>33</sup>, and embeddedness of all the partners in the consortium;
- Value for money: adequacy of the budget and optimal use of resources to achieve the intended results;
- Feasibility of the projects activities in the given timeframe and budget.

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/legal/nwo-code-of-conduct-on-conflicts-of-interest>

<sup>32</sup> This condition can be negated if the applying consortium can demonstrate the complimentary qualities of both/all partner organisations towards the joint and efficient completion of the research project, substantiating that no time will be lost to the consortium formation.

<sup>33</sup> This is not a condition, but a strength.

### **4.3 Project final evaluation**

The project will be evaluated at the end of the project's running time. For this, applicants must deliver within one month after the end-date:

- a policy brief (max. 3 pages) or other means of communication that includes policy recommendations and enables (specified) practitioners (including policy makers) to use the project's results in policies and/or programmes. In addition, delivering other knowledge sharing output is encouraged, such as audio/visual products or other mean(s) of communication;
- a project report, based on a format provided by NWO-WOTRO, which includes an explanation about the analysis on which the policy brief has been based, as well as information on how the project progressed (best practices and encountered challenges), information on the output of the project (what new insight in policies and/or programmes has been obtained), and a reflection on the impact pathway that was foreseen (including which external user(s) has been addressed in what way and with what outcome);
- a financial report (based on a format provided by NWO-WOTRO) that shows how the grant was spent;
- an official (organisational) audit report showing that the grant and co-funding has been spent on the project as reported<sup>34</sup>.

The final report, policy brief and/or (audio and/or visual) communication output will be shared with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law and the MFA.

NWO-WOTRO reserves the right to execute an on-site (final) review of projects.

The project ends with the issuing of the grant settlement decision. This decision is taken after approval of the final document(s) by NWO-WOTRO<sup>35</sup>.

### **4.4 Governance of the Research Fund and call for proposals**

The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law is responsible for setting the Security & Rule of Law Knowledge research agenda and for the overall knowledge management of the results of that agenda. The Steering Group of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law is represented in the Programme Committee of the research programme. NWO-WOTRO will share the knowledge generated by research projects granted by the calls with the Platform and the Netherlands MFA, to encourage broad application of this knowledge and to safeguard alignment of consecutive calls of the research programme Security & Rule of Law with evolving knowledge needs as formulated by the Platform.

The Programme Committee (PC) is the decision making body of the Research Fund Security & Rule of Law and is responsible for:

- Approving of calls, having consulted Knowledge Platform for the focus of the call;
- Appointing members of the advisory bodies;
- Allocating funding to projects, based on the advice of the IAC;

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<sup>34</sup> Only applicable for projects of more than 100,000 euro of with main applicant organisations other than a Dutch research organisation.

<sup>35</sup> Please note that the conditions in Article 24 under paragraph 4.4 of the NWO 'General Provisions on Granting' apply to this grant settlement decision.

- Approval of the final project evaluation reports, based on the advice of the IAC.

The individual members of the Programme Committee are responsible for timely informing and aligning with the bodies they are representing.

The PC, operating under a mandate from the NWO-WOTRO Board, consists of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (1), NWO-WOTRO (1), the Steering Group of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (1, observer status), and a representative of the international scientific community (1) who can be replaced depending on the specific call theme. The PC is chaired by an independent, technical chair.

The International Advisory Committee is responsible for

- Assessment and ranking of research proposals;
- Advising the Programme Committee on funding of research projects;
- Assessing the quality of the final project evaluation reports;
- Advising the PC on the approval of the final project evaluation reports.

The IAC is composed of (international) researchers and (academic) practitioner experts in the field of SRoL in FCAS. The IAC has been installed by the Programme Committee. The PC may ask the IAC to advise the PC on other matters as well.

The composition of the PC and IAC has been published on the NWO-WOTRO Security & Rule of Law Research Fund website.

NWO-WOTRO is responsible for the day-to-day management of the call, including organising the assessment procedures, for all (financial and other) administration with regard to awarded projects, and for fulfilling the reporting conditions as put by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. NWO-WOTRO provides the secretariat of the PC and IAC.

# **5 Contact details and other information**

## **5.1 Questions regarding the content of this call**

For questions about the Research Fund Security & Rule of Law and especially about this call for proposals please contact:

NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development  
E-mail: [SRoL-ARF6@nwo.nl](mailto:SRoL-ARF6@nwo.nl)

Day-to-day coordination:  
Floris Dekkers and Marije Severs, Policy Officers  
[SRoL-ARF6@nwo.nl](mailto:SRoL-ARF6@nwo.nl)  
+31 70 3494606/94351

General information, forms and administration:  
Naomi Strubbe-Baksteen, Staff Officer  
[SRoL-ARF6@nwo.nl](mailto:SRoL-ARF6@nwo.nl)

Postal address:  
P.O. Box 93120  
2509 AC The Hague  
The Netherlands

Visiting address:  
Laan van Nieuw Oost Indië 300  
2593 CE The Hague  
The Netherlands

## **5.2 Technical questions about ISAAC**

For technical questions about the use of ISAAC please contact the ISAAC helpdesk. Please read the manual first before consulting the helpdesk. The ISAAC helpdesk can be contacted from Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 17:00 hours CET on +31 (0)20 346 71 79. However, you can also submit your question by e-mail to [isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl](mailto:isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl). You will then receive an answer within two working days.

## **5.3 Further information**

For more information on the Security & Rule of Law research programme visit [www.nwo.nl/securityandlaw](http://www.nwo.nl/securityandlaw). For background information on the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law see: [www.kpsrl.org](http://www.kpsrl.org).

# 6 Instructions for applicants

## 6.1 General instructions for applicants

The application form must be completed in English. For some items, a maximum number of words is stated. Do not exceed this number and please fill in the word count (*please note*: words in footnotes, figure captions and tables should also be included in the word count). Your application may be disqualified if the maximum number of words stated is exceeded.

Applications should be submitted electronically by the main applicant using the online application system ISAAC. The ISAAC system can be accessed on the NWO website ([www.nwo.nl](http://www.nwo.nl)). Using ISAAC requires registration, at least five working days before submitting the application. Please see section 3.3 for more important information.

Additional information on the registration of your application:

- Download the application form from the electronic application system ISAAC or from NWO's website (on the grant page for this programme - [www.nwo.nl/srol](http://www.nwo.nl/srol)).  
*We advise you to carefully read the information and guidelines as provided in this chapter before filling in the application form;*
- Complete the application form and save the application form as a pdf file. In order to be able to process the details of the application properly, this pdf file should not be protected in any way (no passwords, etcetera) nor should it be a scanned document;
- The receipt of your application will be confirmed by e-mail.

## 6.2 Specific instructions for the applicants

These instructions relate to the *application form of the full proposals*. The numbers refer to the questions on the application form. Take care not to exceed the individual word count for each section and note the total in the respective boxes. Please note that these instructions differ from those for the preliminary proposals, which were included in the call for preliminary proposals.

### Registration

#### 1. Title

Provide a title for your research project. The project title must state the fragile country/region targeted by the policy and/or programme (or intervention) your project is directed at (for eligible FCAS see section 1.4, footnote 13).

#### 2. Project focus

Please indicate the following project details:

a) *Intervention*

Indicate which of the three types of interventions, as specified in 2.2, will be addressed in the project proposal. In the relevant box, provide a brief explanation of the proposal's specific intervention.

b) *Research focus*

Check the box of one or more research foci, as specified under 'specific research foci' in 2.2, that the proposal addresses.

c) *End-user(s)*

In the designated box, provide an overview of the end-user(s) that will be involved in the project (specific project condition in section 2.3). You are required to submit a support letter from the end-user(s).

d) *Type & duration*

Check the box for the duration (and corresponding maximum amount of funding) that you wish to apply for. On the form, 'basic projects' refer to projects that either analyse an intervention in one country, or address one line of enquiry (as per questions 2a and b). 'Extended projects' compare interventions within two or more countries, and/or address two or more lines of inquiry in this call. If the latter applies, also fill in the answers under question 7.

e) *Countries* where the organisations employing the main applicant and co-applicant(s) are based.

### 3. Composition of the consortium

a) *consortium*

Provide the details of the main-applicant (coordinator) and co-applicant(s) and their employing consortium member organisations. At least two different partners as specified under Section 3.1 should be indicated, but additional partners can be added to the consortium.

For *Type of organisation* indicate if the participating consortium member organisation classifies as: A = research organisation or B = practitioners organisation. In addition, classify if the organisation is: 1 = public; 2 = private for profit; or 3 = private non-profit. For each organisation the specification is expressed as a combination of a character (A or B) and a digit (1 or 2 or 3).

b) *Project staff*

Provide a list of the project staff members, i.e. the individuals that will actually carry out the project (this includes the lead staff member from the main- and co-applicant consortium organisation). Both staff members funded by the grant and staff funded by co-funding should be included. Provide the name (if possible) of each staff member and the name and type of his/her employing organisation. Furthermore, indicate time involvement of each staff member by specifying total number of hours and the number of months the staff member will be involved in the project. Indicate the staff member's role in the project (e.g. researcher, supervisor, local coordinator, advisor, etcetera) and his/her added value to the project.

## Project proposal

### 4. Summary of the project proposal

Provide a summary of your project proposal, written for the interested layman. The summary should describe briefly, in no more than 200 words, the practitioners' knowledge demands, the main objective(s) of the project, the approaches/methodology, practitioner involvement approach and the envisaged application in practice. This summary will be published on your project description on the NWO website, if your proposal is granted.

*This section should not exceed 200 words. Please specify the number of words used (please note: words in footnotes, figure captions and tables should also be included in the word count).*

### 5. Impact pathway

Please complete an impact pathway diagram for the project (max. 1 page). In the impact pathway specify how the project works to the realisation of the two

objectives of this call (see Section 2.1) and ultimately contributes to enhanced security for the most vulnerable people in the targeted FCAS (see section 1.2). For more information and a definition of the impact pathway please see section 3.2. An schematic example of an impact pathway is provided in section 6.4.

Please note that appropriate outputs and outcomes (and indicators thereof) depend on the specific objectives of the project and the level or scale of intervention of the project, and that users of project output and outcomes should be specified (name, country etcetera).

#### *Indicators*

In order to be able to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the project, verifiable indicators should be presented for the *output and outcome* levels. We encourage you to make your indicators as SMART as possible: Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic and Time-related. The following table *may* serve as a general example and source of inspiration.

Examples of research outputs, outcomes, indicators and users:

<b>Narrative description</b>		
<b>Research outputs</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible users</b>
- New, applicable knowledge and insights gained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publications, datasets, content-related and/or communication (audio/visual) tools;</li> <li>- Policy briefs, advices;</li> <li>- Workshops and trainings developed;</li> <li>- Proposal for new approach / intervention;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	(international) donors, policy makers, practitioner organisations, researchers, public
- Knowledge, insights gained, shared with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publications (e.g. policy briefs) on gained knowledge in practitioner's communication instruments, advocacy materials, etc.;</li> <li>- Events and meetings: convened policy discussion events, key note speeches, community outreach meetings, facilitation local dialogue processes;</li> <li>- Workshops or trainings held and attended by stakeholders;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	(international) donors, practitioner organisations, public
<b>Research outcomes</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible users</b>
- Uptake of new applicable knowledge and insights by targeted practitioners in policy and (pilot-) projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- White papers, proceedings of Parliaments, broad policy debates;</li> <li>- More financial support for applying new approach in pilot projects;</li> <li>- Change in prescript responses of institutions;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	Local, national, international policy makers at governments, donor organisations or NGO's.
- Uptake of new applicable insights by broader group of stakeholders, including authorities and other sectors (private companies, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roll out of pilot projects using new insight or knowledge;</li> <li>- Publication of new rules, laws and regulations by authorities at various levels;</li> <li>- New or adapted approaches recognised as best practice and implemented by broader group of practitioners;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	Policy implementing organisations (legal authorities, NGO's, private companies, associations etc.)
- Uptake of new insights/knowledge by researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publication etc. of studies, using the new insights;</li> <li>- More financial support for research projects into (use of) new insights or knowledge;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	Researchers
<b>Impact</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>End Users</b>
- More stable environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drop in statistics for crime-related events;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	Most vulnerable and marginalised people in <region>
- Safety experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic growth region, less poverty, more wealth and well-being;</li> <li>- Etcetera.</li> </ul>	Most vulnerable and marginalised people in <region>

## **6. Project description**

This narrative outline of the research project should include the following aspects:

a) *Background and rationale (context)*

Provide a brief analysis and contextualisation of the problem or opportunity addressed. Pay attention to the conflict dynamics (local and regional problems, socioeconomic and political conditions and capabilities) and show how the research project is rooted in the demand of specified local, national or international practitioner organisations and/or policy makers.

b) *Research objectives, questions and methods*

- Specify the research objectives in terms of its contribution to the main aim and the objectives A and B of this call (see Section 2.1) and to the specific research foci;
- Specify the research questions and methods to be used. Be as specific as about your methodology, for instance regarding the number of respondents and how they will be selected;
- Indicate the research activities to be carried out as part of the project. Include an overview of how the different activities are planned and organised over time;
- Explain how the methods and approach chosen are conflict-sensitive and allow for an objective analysis of scientific/empirical information so easily applicable evidence-based insights for policies and/or programmes of the specific research focus can be developed;
- If applicable, specify how the project pays attention to the political and economic role of women;
- Include a narrative on the envisioned project results and a rationale of how the projects' outputs and outcomes will reach what user (the intermediate and ultimate target groups).

c) *Knowledge sharing (activities)*

Indicate the expected output for practitioners (including policy makers), the approach and activities to share knowledge about the projects' plan, progress and experiences as well as the results beyond the consortium (in broader stakeholder networks). Describe how these activities will contribute to making the knowledge accessible to and applicable for practitioners involved in policies and/or programmes. The knowledge sharing activities must be coherent with the research activities.

The total project description (a+b+c) should not exceed a maximum of 1,750 words. *Please specify the number of words used (please note: words in footnotes, figure captions and tables should also be included in the word count).*

d) *Timetable*

Provide an (schematic) overview of when the project activities will take place.

e) *Reference list*

Provide a list with the (literature) sources referred to in the project description (*6e is excluded from the word count*).

## **7. Ethical challenges**

Consider the ethical challenges that the project may encounter and describe how you will deal with these challenges.

*This section should not exceed 150 words. Please specify the number of words used.*

## **8. Risk assessment**

Identify potential risks for the successful execution of your project and describe how your project could deal with these risks.

*This section should not exceed 200 words. Please specify the number of words used.*

## **9. Data management**

Please answer the questions in the form. For more information, please see section 3.4 of the call.

*This section should not exceed 300 words. Please specify the number of words used.*

## **Consortium**

### **10. Consortium expertise**

#### a) *Consortium members*

Describe the role and added value of each of the consortium member organisations in terms of experience (including research and practice experience), skills, knowhow and expertise.

#### b) *Approach for the process of co-creation*

Explain how co-creation will be achieved: how will the specific expertise and knowledge of the partners (both practitioner and research organisations) complement each other? Also explain how especially the practitioner organisation will be actively involved throughout the entire research process, in defining and conducting the research as well as in communicating the progress and results.

#### c) *History of collaboration*

In a narrative, please explicate the consortium's history of collaboration and highlight the complimentary qualities of both/all partner organisations towards the joint and efficient completion of the project (Include proof in annex 2). In case the consortium cannot meet this condition, the applicants should demonstrate the complimentary qualities of both/all partner organisations towards the joint and efficient completion of the research project, substantiating that no time will be lost to the consortium formation.

#### d) *References*

Provide a list of a maximum of five key communications of each consortium member organisation. It is possible to refer to reports (e.g. of successfully implemented programmes), convened policy discussion events, key note speeches, community outreach meetings, facilitation local dialogue processes, facilitating grass root surveys, revenues/profits, policy or company briefs, websites, scientific publications, (chapters in) books etc. Please provide the following details in full: authors, year, title (if relevant), and make sure referees can track the communication and/or publication (for example by providing the name of the journal or series in which the publication appeared, web-links, report contact details, et cetera).

## **Extended project**

*Only fill in this section if you are applying for an extended project (see definition under 2d).*

### **11. Rationale for extended project**

#### a) *Interventions and lines of inquiry*

Check the box/boxes that applies/apply.

b) *Substantiation for extra funding*

The reason that extended projects are able to apply for more funding, is that they *have the potential to deliver more extensive policy recommendations through a synergy of multiple case studies*. Creating synergy is crucial towards that purpose. In this section, provide a brief explanation of the added value of comparing interventions in separate countries and/or to address two or more lines of inquiry for this particular project, as well as an indication of how this synthesis will be achieved.

### Funds required

*Please note that you should complete both the budget in the full proposal form and in the Excel spreadsheet (both worksheets).*

#### 12. Budget estimates

The maximum subsidy requested from this call may not exceed the amount that fits your project (see question 2d). The applicants can budget only for costs that directly attribute to the project.

***For the a specification of the three budget lines and the minimum conditions that apply to the reimbursable costs, please see section 3.2.***

To complete the tables, please use the completed Excel form and make sure that the numbers correspond.

The total budget of the research project includes: a) the budget requested from this Applied Research Fund, and b) co-funding contribution of the consortium member organisation(s) and/or other ('third') parties.

Co-funding: The grant should be seen as a contribution to the total costs associated with the proposed activities of the research project. Therefore, the consortium member organisations employing the applicants, or other ('third') parties, have to contribute cash<sup>36</sup> and/or in kind<sup>37</sup> to the grant in order to cover the total costs of the project. This cash and/or in kind contribution must be made explicit in the budget specification and budget overview in the application form and should furthermore be valorised via a letter of support of the organisation providing the co-funding contribution which should be uploaded when submitting the application. The amount of the in kind contribution of personnel costs should be guided by the organisation's norms and legal regulations of the country concerned.

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<sup>36</sup> In case your project is awarded a grant, please note that in-cash contributions of more than 5,000 euros are to be channelled via NWO for reasons of transparency. After a project has been approved, an invoice will be sent to partners who have pledged a financial contribution. NWO will allocate the funds to the project.

<sup>37</sup> 'In kind' contributions include costs that are carried by the participating consortium member organisations (for example personnel costs, overhead, goods etcetera). Third parties (not being a member of the consortium) can contribute 'cash' by providing cash money to the project or 'in kind' by providing goods or services to the consortium.

### **Signatures**

The application must be signed by all applicants employed by the participating consortium member organisations. Electronic or scanned signatures will be accepted. The application must also be submitted through ISAAC by the main applicant (see section 3.3 of the call).

### **Annexes**

Please attach the 8 annexes as indicated in the application form.

## **6.3 Eligibility criteria**

All received project proposals will first be assessed on the basis of formal eligibility criteria and, if eligible, subsequently on basis of selection criteria that are in line with the aim and objectives of this call.

### **Formal eligibility criteria**

Formal criteria for the **full application** include (but may not be limited to) the following:

- The research project will be executed by a consortium consisting of at least one practitioner organisation (which is involved in the design and/or implementation of policies and/or programmes for SRoL reform programmes in FCAS and whose knowledge demand is addressed by the consortium) and one research organisation (with demonstrable experience working with human security, rule of law and/or political governance within FCAS);
- Application has been submitted by the main applicant who holds a senior<sup>38</sup> position at one of the consortium member organisations;
- The research organisation in the consortium is represented by a senior researcher with at least a demonstrable six years research experience;
- Application provides all information requested in the preliminary application form, and the project proposal includes research activities, an impact pathway and knowledge sharing activities;
- Format, length of text, language (English) are in line with the conditions for the application provided in section 6;
- Application has been received timely via electronic application system ISAAC;
- Application form has been completed and correctly signed;
- Specific conditions (e.g. target FCAS as depicted in Section 1.4, footnote 13) have been applied;
- Budget conditions have been applied (see Section 6.2.10) and the Excel budget has been added as an annex in ISAAC (Annex 8);
- Annexes are completed:
  - Annex 1. Curriculum vitae of the lead staff member of each consortium member organisation involved in the project proposal, and of all other staff members either a curriculum vitae or a job profile (a brief description of the characteristics and skills of the vacancy) (Max. 1 page each in English).
  - Annex 2. Proof of the consortium's history of collaboration (1 document), i.e. documentation, such as a project sheet or link to a project web-page, that demonstrates past collaboration between the main applicant and primary co-applicant.

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<sup>38</sup> For a definition of 'senior', see footnotes 23 and 24.

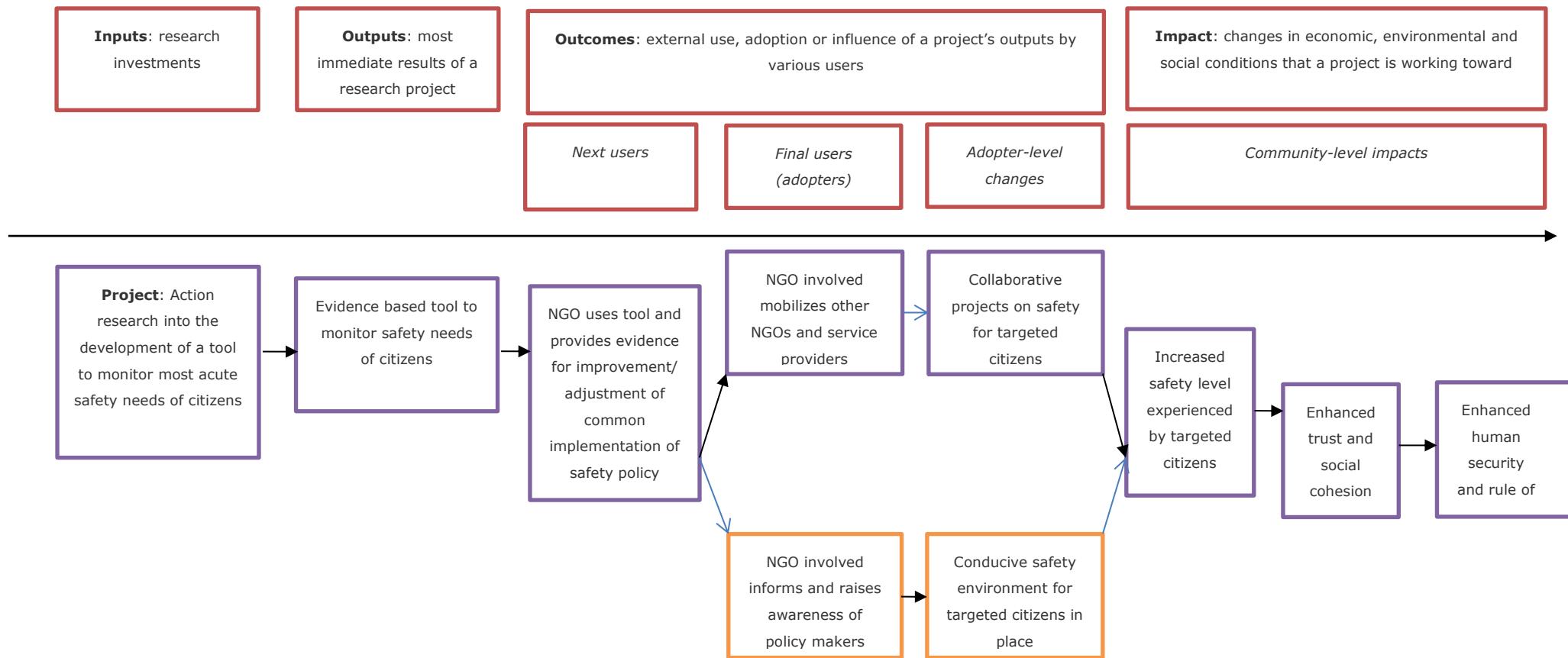
- Annex 3. Support letter of consortium partners (including main applicant organisation), these letters should include the support for co-funding (max. 2 pages each in English – see for more information section 6.2 call);
- Annex 4. Support letter(s) of the end-user(s).
- Annex 5. Draft Consortium Agreement (this does not need to be signed yet)

The WOTRO Regulations provide the conditions and requirements for the Consortium Agreement. A template for the Consortium Agreement can be found here:

<https://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/wotro/wotro---format-consortium-agreement>

- Annex 6. A proof of registration (preferable in English) for all non-Dutch organisations that are part of the consortium;
- Annex 7. An overview of the legally determined salary scales or day rates of all consortium member organisations other than Dutch Universities (in English).

## 6.4 Schematic example of Research Impact Pathways



Freely after T. Walker et. al. (2008), *Strategic Guidance for Ex Post Impact Assessment of Agricultural Research*, Science Council of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

Published by:  
Netherlands Organisation  
for Scientific Research (NWO)

Visiting address:  
Laan van Nieuw Oost-Indië 300  
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## ***Annex 2 - KPSRL - Theory of Change***

### **I. Introduction**

As part of its contractual agreement with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Stability and Humanitarian Aid, the Clingendael Institute, on behalf of the Consortium Partners of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (Clingendael, Saferworld, and the International Development Law Organization), submit this Theory of Change document, prepared by the Secretariat of the Knowledge Platform.

#### ***Structure of the Document***

Section II outlines the general purpose of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL), a brief description of the initial KPSRL (2012-2016), and how the next iteration will build from and expand upon these original foundations. Section III provides the Secretariat's perception of the current state of play in the field of international Security & Rule of Law (SRoL) interventions in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS). It outlines its understanding of how the field is currently evolving, and how the Platform constituency (i.e. SRoL policymakers, researchers and implementing actors) will need to adapt. This helps draw the landscape before moving, in Section IV, to analyze the specific issues within this context that the KPSRL seeks to address.

In Section V the Secretariat puts forward its Theory of Change, that is, its understanding of how its activities, efforts, and investments will work to address the issues outlined in the preceding sections. Moving forward from here, Section VI is dedicated to describing the Secretariat's Intervention Logic, namely, the instruments at the Secretariat's disposal, the approaches the Secretariat will adopt to foster the change it wishes to see, and the foreseeable risks involved.

Section VII provides the Results Framework as described in the original proposal, and subsequently adopted as part of the contract with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### **II. General purpose of the Knowledge Platform**

In May 2015, the Department of Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid, released a Theory of Change for its Stabilization work in FCAS. The document espouses the ambition for Dutch policy to bolster the conditions for poverty reduction and development, while promoting humanitarian principles and the responsibility to protect. The document also recognizes that no single, comprehensive Theory of Change holds all the answers for how external actors can help countries move from fragility toward stability. To quote directly from that document:

“Up to now, far too little light has been shed on certain factors, such as the role and legitimacy of informal institutions, the causes of radicalization and the influence of transnational drivers of conflict. These are context-specific factors, which lead us to ask whether it is possible to formulate more general principles. Perhaps what matters is asking the right questions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is keen to generate more knowledge on these questions, and to disseminate [that knowledge] among implementing organizations and knowledge institutions. The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law is making a major contribution through its network meetings and research”

The Secretariat of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law takes seriously its role as an important partner in generating, assembling and channeling state-of-the-art research and empirical lessons to strengthen the impact of policy and programs in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

### ***Evolution of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law***

As of January 2017, the Secretariat of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law operates as a distinct entity from its predecessor (2012-2016). It has been strengthened with additional human and financial resources and thematic expertise. It also now operates under a new set of consortium partners and governance structure. Perhaps more importantly, it has turned its attention to a new set of objectives.

In the first iteration of the Knowledge Platform, the Secretariat's efforts were concentrated on the generation of evidence and exchange of ideas. While the new Secretariat will also invest in these activities, more of its attention and its increased staff capacity will shift to the work of encouraging knowledge uptake, investing in feedback loops between evidence generated and its practical application in policy and programming.

### **III. Recent dynamics within the field of Security & Rule of Law**

The Secretariat has noted an apparent sea-change in the field of Security and Rule of Law over the past few years. While some longitudinal data patterns clearly show a steady decline since the 1940s in the number of lives lost to war, other measures indicate growing instability and deeply protracted conflicts escalating once again. These discordant trends have provoked both deeper thinking, as well as rising trepidation regarding the impact of SRoL policies and interventions in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

Alongside these disquieting notions there is growing recognition of the inadequacy of traditional approaches. The field of Security and Rule of Law has long been a stronghold of technical experts, focusing on the creation of state systems, institutions and procedures for defense and domestic security. Yet, it has become increasingly apparent that local societal factors such as structural inequality, unevenly distributed resources and opportunities, systemic discrimination and political exclusion all play a role in how social ruptures violently emerge, and in how they are dealt with by designated security forces. Old tenants and assumptions, such as electoral-democracy's causal relationship with peace, or that economic development 'raises all boats', are starting to wear thin. Demands for better understanding of local (political) contexts, power dynamics and conflict-sensitivity are duly becoming the norm, though they require further uptake in practice.

These emergent realizations underscore the importance of investing a strong knowledge base to inform SRoL policy and praxis. This momentum has been manifested in stronger calls for aid effectiveness, and its more dispiriting counterpart, waning public support for international development assistance. The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, for example, and in particular SDG16, have been at the vanguard of international calls for better demonstrations of results at outcome and impact level.

All of this has led to an evolution in SRoL thinking, which is starting to make its mark on policies and programs. Innovating programs now seek to tackle the power-dynamics that underlie insecurity, taking up the discourse of empowerment, accountability and legitimacy. The scope of SRoL partnership has expanded to include new agents of change beyond state-sanctioned actors and institutions. And, perhaps most importantly for the Knowledge Platform, new program logics such as adaptive, iterative and problem-driven approaches, are starting to outmode the log-frames and project management mentalities of previous years.

What the Secretariat takes away from these observations is that Security & Rule of Law policies and programs have become, and will continue to be, much more knowledge-driven. Their success or failure will be increasingly associated with the ability of programmers and policy makers to track progress, analyze outcomes, adapt to lessons, anticipate and respond to blockages or backsliding, to maneuver politically and in a context-sensitive manner - essentially - their ability to learn.

### **IV. Knowledge Platform 2.0: Objectives & Problem Analysis**

The primary objective of the Knowledge Platform is to improve the quality and impact of Security & Rule of Law policy and programs. This is contingent upon the ability of those who shape SRoL policy

and programs to continually generate and incorporate new evidence into their work and decisions; essentially, it requires a robust learning capacity among these actors. Strengthening that learning capacity is, thus, a key outcome that the Knowledge Platform seeks to achieve.

The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law can therefore be described as a learning community: an informal and flexibly connected group of professionals, linked by a shared thematic interest (i.e. SRoL assistance in fragile and conflict-affected states), who voluntarily contribute to and seek to benefit from the generation, exchange and application of knowledge.

**What do we mean by ‘Knowledge’?** - In its simplest form, knowledge is *a familiarity with the facts of a matter*. As the Secretariat, in line with our objective to improve the quality of SRoL policy and programming, we value knowledge insofar as it enables a person to better anticipate the implications of events or decisions, to consider a range of options and make weighed choices based on reliable evidence.<sup>1</sup>

In this way, we distinguish ‘knowledge’ from ‘research’. Research, or *the collection and analysis of data*, constitutes the process (and product) of gathering the evidence that can help inform decisions. Knowledge, on the other hand, signifies the intangible acumen and confidence that is derived from that evidence.

This learning community is comprised of individuals and organizations that are (1) active in the field of Security & Rule of Law assistance in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and (2) are interested in improving SRoL policy and programs by reinforcing the collective knowledge base of the SRoL community and investing in the capacity to learn.

However, learning within a voluntary network of flexibly connected participants often suffers from a **collective action problem**. While each participant may enthusiastically support the stated objectives of the Knowledge Platform, none are in a position to dedicate the time and resources necessary for maintaining it. Here, the role of the Secretariat of the Knowledge Platform comes to the fore.

The Secretariat can be seen as the full-time custodian of what is the shared responsibility of all Platform participants: to encourage and enable learning within the Platform community. While each participant is expected to contribute to learning and work in pursuit of improved SRoL policies and programs, individual levels of participation will wax and wane according to demands on time, attention and resources. Additional learning obstacles were identified in the initial proposal, and can be generally grouped into four categories:

**Echo Chambers** - Participants struggle to access information from new and/or diverse sources

- There is limited exchange between implementers, and between professional sectors (research, practitioners and policymakers) about real challenges faced in policy decisions and in programs, particularly at the working level of implementation.
- Implementers and policymakers find it difficult to access and apply new information unless it is tailored specifically to their policy or programming needs, operating assumptions and daily working realities.
- Many researchers, policy makers, and some program implementers work at a distance from, and have trouble accessing, insecure and volatile conflict and post-conflict settings where SRoL programming and policy is applied.

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<sup>1</sup> A literature review for the Scoping Study discusses three types of “knowledge”: *Tacit* (embedded in people’s minds); *Explicit* (akin to information, data, or familiarity with the facts); and *Implicit* (similar to culturally-bound expectations and perspectives). Our understanding of knowledge pertains mostly to *Tacit* and, to a lesser extent, *Implicit* knowledge, which will be instructive for building a learning strategy.

**Untapped Evidence** - Investments in generating research do not necessarily guarantee its uptake

- The language and complex messages of academic research is not often tailored to the SRoL policy and practitioner audiences, making it difficult for their findings to permeate policy and programming discussions.
- SRoL policy is a relatively new field, thus strategies and policy documents are often fairly general, and therefore cannot often be directly applied to policymakers specific questions.
- There is limited capacity among policymakers and program implementers to demand and verify program results at relevant levels in this relatively new field of SRoL policy.
- Academic researchers are working along different funding and work cycles, making it difficult to time their research outputs for uptake in strategic policy moments or processes.

**Unaligned Processes or Priorities** - Actors struggle to synchronize their efforts effectively

- Donors often place insufficient emphasis on reporting and improving outcome-level results, which fails to provide practitioners with compelling incentives to learn.
- Applied research is seen to have only limited relevance for academic career opportunities, lowering the incentives for many academic researcher to actively engage.
- There are a limited number of thematic SRoL and Results Based Management experts at the MFA. Frequent staff rotation and heavy workload impede developing such capacity.
- Learning is often perceived as an add-on component of programs, associated with M&E at mid-term and project closure; it is seen as an HQ function that is often bothersome and not essential to implementation.

**Competition between potential allies** - More trust and honesty is needed between partners

- Strong competition over resources with very low margins put pressure on overheads and leaves little room for investing in learning or innovating when success is not guaranteed.
- There is a fear of backlash when reporting the results of projects that were not completely successful, or could be seen as a failure; thus important lessons are often not recorded

It is the role of the Secretariat to remain a constant and vigilant guardian of the cause by addressing these obstacles, creating and defending the space for learning, and continually motivating participants to animate that space with their ideas, data, lessons, analysis, energy, queries and dilemmas. As it is the Platform community that enlivens the space for learning, it is essential that the Secretariat work diligently to strengthen and inspire that community.

This specifically implies attracting new (and potentially provocative) voices, and helping create compelling incentives for Platform participants to engage in the entire learning cycle (generation, dissemination, debate and application), rather than focusing exclusively on producing and exchanging evidence. Diversifying the membership as well as the sponsorship of the Knowledge Platform could also enhance the sustainability of the Secretariat. It is also incumbent upon the Secretariat to proactively connect Platform participants to ensure the cross-pollination of ideas, to encourage constructive debate and to strategically channel research findings and practical lessons to interested audiences at key moments.

Problem Analysis	Response
<b>Collective Action Problem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bearing costs of network coordination and maintenance</li><li>• Continuous, full-time attention for the shared ambition of the Platform: enhance learning capacity of the network</li></ul>
<b>Echo Chambers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diversifying the network community, both in terms of geographic representation and a variety of viewpoints</li><li>• Proactively connecting participants to one another to prompt the exchange of ideas, or to engage in respectful, informed debate</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying participants' operating assumptions and encouraging their rigorous and continual interrogation</li> </ul>
<b>Untapped Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and promoting new evidence or research, and proactively tailoring it to expressed knowledge needs</li> <li>Identifying where existing evidence may prove relevant to policy or programming questions, and channeling it to knowledge needs within the network.</li> <li>Helping to create the right incentives for the collection and dissemination of lessons from practice</li> <li>Working with (academic) researchers to frame their findings for relevance to policymaker, practitioners</li> </ul>
<b>Unaligned Processes, Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraging incentives - namely the NWO Call for Proposals and Knowledge Management Fund - to encourage (academic) researchers to engage in applied SRoL research</li> <li>Channeling the outputs of these same instruments into policymaking processes and strategic events</li> <li>Strengthening relationships between the Secretariat and Thematic Leads within the MFA, to more efficiently and effectively tailor how information reaches their teams</li> <li>Working with implementing organizations to identify the steps necessary to strengthen their institutional learning</li> <li>Working with donors to design more compelling incentives for implementers to document learning</li> </ul>
<b>Competition Among Allies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing the resources for the community to invest in innovating, experimenting (within ethical bounds) and learning, without compromising on budget margins</li> <li>Coordinating the learning agenda of the Addressing Root Causes program, currently the largest MFA SRoL program</li> <li>Creating candid 'safe' spaces to allow implementers to discuss lessons and failures without fear of negative financial or reputational repercussions</li> </ul>

## V. Theory of change

In order to fulfill its stated role in enhancing the learning capacity of the network, the Secretariat of the KPSRL 2.0 has explicitly extended its focus to understanding of how learning, or 'knowledge uptake', happens within the network. The following assumptions constitute the starting point of the Secretariat's understanding of learning within the Knowledge Platform community:

- The Secretariat assumes that knowledge uptake (signaled by a change in practice or assumptions) occurs when new insights are: connected with existing knowledge within organizations; align with existing learning priorities; and are embedded in the organizational culture. Only then are the conditions right for change.
- The role of the Platform community, and the Secretariat as the designated custodian of the Knowledge Platform's objectives, is to facilitate this process of connecting, aligning and embedding, by provoking a demand for knowledge and ensuring that the knowledge offered fits existing knowledge needs, in terms of subject, timing and the way in which it is communicated.
- The Secretariat assumes that learning processes are chaotic, and that knowledge is not automatically transferred through gentle osmosis from policy to programs, or from head offices to field level program staff. To ensure that it can play its necessary guiding role, the Secretariat commits to regularly assessing the learning processes of the network, while both following and contributing to innovation in this field.

In light of these assumptions, the Secretariat will pursue a strategy of "Knowledge Brokering". This will require the Secretariat to have a substantive grasp of both the supply and the demand side of

knowledge. This includes being able to assess the implications of new insights for the capacities and learning or organizational cultures within the Platform community. It also means having the skill to strategically frame and channel information to where it has a high potential for uptake, and helping create incentives for practical insights and rigorous evidence to be documented and shared.

- The Secretariat assumes that knowledge questions and the relevant novel insights or innovative solutions are likely to arise in different places and within different groups. That is why demand and supply often do not seamlessly complement each other. This is why the Secretariat's role in enabling sharp-minded (though not necessarily like-minded) people to find one another is so central to its mission.
- In order to embed knowledge in organizational systems and cultures, the Secretariat must provide attractive learning experiences that garner the interest and participation diverse members of the Platform community. During the Scoping Study, it was learned that there is strong interest in discussing themes or topics that are less likely to be dealt with by organizations themselves, due to political sensitivity or narrowly orthodox programmatic focus. Secondly, interviews with Platform participants underscored that knowledge generated and shared must have a clear practical use.
- The Secretariat finds it useful to leverage current policy and programming processes as concrete and practical opportunities to identify applied knowledge questions and invest in harvesting new insights. For example, working to help coordinate the ARC learning agendas, and participating in the development of DSH's SRoL Theory of Change.

In short, knowledge brokerage is an extremely practical and applied activity, which takes existing processes as a starting point. Over the course of the next four years, the Secretariat is bound to deepen and expand its understanding of how learning happens within the Platform. This will enable the Secretariat to regularly review these starting presumptions, and reinforce or adjust them as necessary.

If the Secretariat is successful in its endeavor to achieve the following intermediate outcomes:

- 1) The Platform network is strengthened, more sustainable and more focused on learning
- 2) Knowledge generated within the network is increasingly relevant to policy and programming
- 3) Knowledge is brokered in a more pro-active way, tailored to programming and policy needs

...then it is expected that these will lead to the enhanced the learning capacity of the Platform community.

## VI. Intervention Logic

To increase Learning and Knowledge Uptake within the network, the Secretariat is committed to three main categories of activities: Networking, Knowledge Brokering and Research. For this, the Secretariat has invested both human and financial resources to each of these activity areas.

### 1) Network Strengthening

- **A well-equipped Secretariat:** The Secretariat itself is the primary propelling agent and coordinator of networking within the Platform community. The KPSRL 2.0 budget reflects and increase the substantive knowledge of SRoL policy and practice, dedicating 2.5 FTE (cumulative) to a Head of Secretariat, Policy & Programming Advisor and Research Coordinator, each with a substantive background in security and rule of law. Furthermore, 0.9 FTE has been dedicated to a communications & logistics officer, whose primary responsibility is to develop and implement a communication strategy to stimulate learning processes in the network and help reach out to new groups. Finally, 0.1 FTE is dedicated to financial support, provided by Clingendael Financial Department, bringing the sum total to 3.5 FTE.

- ***The Annual Conference:*** The annual conference is the Secretariat's signature event. By virtue of its ability to attract individuals from across the Platform's professional spectrum, it offers an unparalleled opportunity for cross-sector exposure and connection. Moreover, it is framed as a key moment for determining the Platform's Annual Research Agenda which feeds directly into the design of the NWO/WOTRO research calls. The Annual Conference convenes the outputs of recent research funded through the Secretariat's instruments (NWO/WOTRO-funded research or Knowledge Management Fund Projects) as well as 'headlining' keynote speakers. The Secretariat's aim is to strike a balance between offering the Platform community an opportunity to showcase their own work, while challenging them to raise the bar by introducing cutting-edge thinkers, world-renowned researchers, and creative minds from the wider SRoL field.
- ***Innovative thematic meetings:*** The Secretariat aims to organize 4 thematic meetings a year set around the annual Thematic Headlines (one per Quarter). These meetings, which may also be organized in the Southern hemisphere, will seek to link international knowledge production and learning to knowledge questions and challenges that percolate up through the Platform community. Meetings will be ideally planned around important policy moments and forums, and may take place in locations such Addis Ababa, Brussels, Geneva, London, Nairobi, New York. The Ministry will be encouraged to participate through relevant Embassies.
- ***A concrete and pro-active communication strategy:*** The Secretariat will use the inception phase to develop an integrated communication strategy that is linked to stimulating the network's learning processes. Herein lies an important role for the website and the use of social media. Deeper thought will be given to how the research findings and Platform activities' outcomes can be shared more broadly and in a more accessible way.

## 2) Knowledge Brokering

- ***Ministry of Foreign Affairs Liaison:*** Within the Secretariat a specific expert will focus on identifying existing knowledge and strengthening learning processes. This person will work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs one day a week to remain in touch with their questions and support the Ministry in their programming, monitoring, evaluation and learning cycle.
- ***Program-related learning:*** It is important to directly connect part of the Platform's learning agenda to existing and planned programs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (especially to the Addressing Root Causes program). The Secretariat will play a facilitating role in encouraging and supporting the coordination of practitioners and researchers within the ARC learning community to establish a common learning agenda, and exchange and incorporate lessons from their programs.
- ***Linking meetings to uptake processes:*** The Secretariat has proven to be most effective as a knowledge broker in a brainstorm/workshop setting. The Secretariat will build on this strength by deploying new methods and involving new participants. The Secretariat commits to developing - in collaboration with the Minsitry of Foreign Affairs, among other partners - a more clear strategic line in linking meeting results to (inter)national policy processes and moments.
- ***An accessible knowledge database:*** The Secretariat has invested in the redesign of the existing Knowledge Platform database to enhance its user friendliness, accessibility and online visibility. These developments were guided by need to incentivize participants to upload their knowledge (reports, research outputs, blogs, etc.) and the need to make it easy and rewarding for users to search the database. The new website was introduced at the 2017 Annual Conference and will be launched in the fall of 2017.
- ***A stimulating website:*** Renewing the website is proving essential in stimulating and facilitating knowledge exchange and interaction. This requires a stronger emphasis on novel

ways to convey complex and elaborate matters in a pleasant and efficient way. The Secretariat has therefore committed to exploring interactive tools, dashboards, as well as artistic, audio and graphic means for sharing knowledge. This includes forays into posting animations, data-dashboards, podcasts and political cartoons as knowledge outputs on the new website.

### 3) Research

- **Managing NWO/WOTRO research calls:** It is the responsibility of the Secretariat to lead in the development of the substantive side of the NWO/WOTRO research calls. This requires guiding the process in a fully consultative manner, to ensure these calls are relevant to the fundamental knowledge questions and thematic interests as voiced by the Platform community. In this respect, the Secretariat will also play an important role in securing the use and feedback of knowledge acquired through earlier research calls to the network.
- **Short-term research consultancies and study trips:** The Platform's Knowledge Management Fund will be used for initiatives that have a high potential to generate innovative knowledge (i.e. creative research methods and questions) and to be politically relevant. To this end, the Secretariat has developed a standard procedure and format for short activities (6mos) with a ceiling of EUR 15,000 and a format for executing joint activities and study trips to generate communal experiences, stimulate network cohesion and the participation of partners from fragile settings. The Knowledge Platform will cover the direct costs of such activities, whereas the contribution of Platform participants will consist of (partially) financing the participants' time.

#### ***The Knowledge Management Fund***

The Knowledge Management Fund (KMF) stimulates the active involvement of participants with the Platform. The KMF will be managed according to these leading principles:

1. In Q1 of each year, the Secretariat outlines a strategic vision for the KMF, articulated in "Thematic Headlines". These will be based on and formulated through a thorough consultation with the Platform community to ensure the activities and expenses of the Platform align with the knowledge questions and thematic interest of the Platform.
2. Proposed activities will be judged on the basis of their quality and their adherence to publicly stated Criteria. Although frequent activities are desirable for the visibility of the Platform, the strategic logic and quality of the activity will not be compromised.
3. The Secretariat will ensure that the activities and work streams are individually of added value, and also contribute to the overall dynamic and coherence of the Platform. The Secretariat will consciously focus on the linking of and learning from activities.

#### ***Role of the Secretariat vis-à-vis the Platform community***

As stated above, the Secretariat is the designated, full-time custodian of the collective ambition of the Platform: to enhance the learning capacity of the network, and thereby improve the quality and impact of SRoL policies and programs. This means that the Secretariat works in service of the Platform community, to help coordinate and facilitate its inclinations and expressed intentions.

As was revealed in both the Scoping Study and the Needs Assessment Survey (conducted in the Inception phase) Platform participants greatly value the role the Secretariat plays in facilitating connections among its community members. The Secretariat does this primarily by providing learning spaces (offline events, and online knowledge databases) and convening instruments

(Thematic Headlines, Online Consultations, Annual Research Agenda & Conference, the Knowledge Management Fund).

Yet it is the *Platform community* that collectively animates the learning spaces and instruments that the Secretariat creates, manages and maintains. This is how the Secretariat understands the role and the value of the Platform community. The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law, as a structure, allows the Platform community to collectively channel their questions and challenges, and also to access and draw upon the insights of others, and/or build collective momentum behind emerging solutions and innovations.

In order to enable and encourage the Platform community to play this role, it is important that the Secretariat guards the trust and the integrity of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law, as a structure, and ensures that Platform participants feel they have equal (that is, non-preferential) access to the learning spaces and instruments that the Secretariat creates, manages and maintains. The Secretariat must be vigilant in its defense of the Knowledge Platform structure as a reputable, ‘safe’, candid and accessible space for learning. This is essential to ensure the Platform community feels encouraged and enabled to animate the shared learning space.

Hence, the Secretariat perceives its role in identifying the trending issues and shared knowledge questions that emerge from the Platform, and then strategically guiding collective attention for these issues. The Secretariat does this most directly by announcing the Annual Thematic Headlines (in the Spring), and the Annual Research Agenda (in the Fall), both of which are derived from open, conscientious and comprehensive consultation of the Platform community.

Consultations are facilitated through open online forums and personal meetings between participants and Secretariat staff. Secretariat staff, with its recently reinforced technical and thematic capacity, are also able to reach out to leading, global experts in specific SRoL fields to solicit their opinions, perspectives and insights. To ensure consultations remain open to all Platform participants, and to avoid over reliance on the ‘usual suspects’, the Secretariat works to maintain an ‘open door policy’ for its (potential) participants. In practice this means remaining available for meetings and phone calls, providing high-quality feedback on ideas and proposal submitted to the Secretariat, devoting time to responding directly and swiftly to participants’ inquiries, as well as maintaining a recognizable ‘public face’ and a strong professional reputation.

### **Potential Risks and Pitfalls**

The Secretariat is keenly aware that the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law must remain demand driven, and avoid the risks of either over centralizing its role vis-à-vis the Platform community, or creating an exclusive ‘inner circle’ among its participants. Either of these developments would undermine the role of the Platform community, cause participants to lose interest or disengage completely, and thereby compromise the flexibility, wealth of insights, creativity, ingenuity and diversity that animates the Knowledge Platform.

The Secretariat is also aware of the risk implied in being perceived as an extension of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), or disproportionately partial to its requests and agendas. The Dutch MFA is, undoubtedly, a strategic partner of the Secretariat and valuable member of the community. The active involvement of the MFA in the Platform contributes greatly to its credibility. The Secretariat must therefore navigate carefully its relationship with the MFA, actively working to reduce concerns of monopolization or instrumentalization. This is true of the MFA but also any one particularly community member or professional group. The degree to which it the Secretariat is able to both equitably and strategically respond to its diverse community will be an important aspect of assessing the Secretariat’s performance.



NWO

**Research for Impact**

**@WOTRO Science for Global Development**

## Starting point

- Societal relevance of research does not need to compromise quality of research
- But: societal relevance (often) does not come automatically
- Rather: societal relevance of research can be prepared, made more likely, shaped, planned, ...

## **Focus and core values of NWO-WOTRO**

### ***Focus***

- inclusive development-oriented research
- inter- and transdisciplinary research
- partnerships: public-private, North-South

### ***Core values***

- a concern for equity, social justice and sustainability
- the drive to mobilise the best science for development



## Aspects of research relevance

- Distinction between fundamental and applied research is unfruitful for impact
- Addressing societal challenges requires multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary research
- Other types of knowledge than scholarly knowledge are often valuable too
- Research for impact needs an integrated approach



## **NWO-WOTRO-funded research**

**is directed at producing societally relevant research**

*and*

**is evaluated as scientifically very good (*CWTS report 2017*)**

- Publications from WOTRO projects are cited 43% more often than comparable publications
- WOTRO articles are published in journals with 30% higher impact factor than average
- 16% of the WOTRO articles belong to top 10% of publications in their scholarly domain



## Integrated approach towards research impact

- Co-creation by transdisciplinary teams
- Theory of Change and Impact Pathway
- Knowledge sharing and Research Uptake

➤ *Starts from proposal development onwards*

## Theory of Change



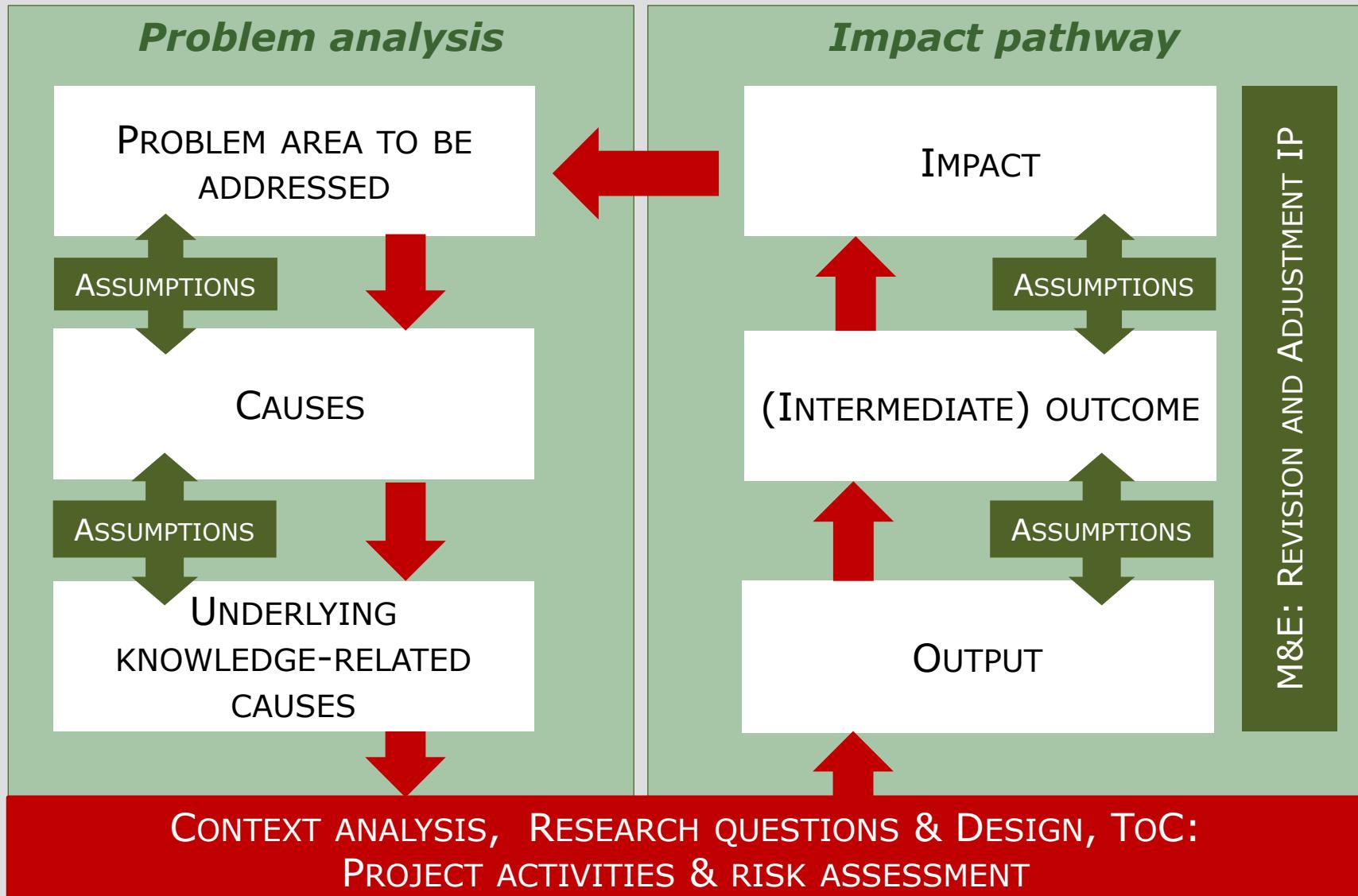
A photograph showing two farmers using water buffalo to plow a rice paddy. The water buffalo are pulling a wooden plow through the wet soil. The fields are lush and green, and the sky is overcast.

'A Theory of Change articulates the **assumptions** about the process through which change will occur, and specifies the ways in which all of the required (**intermediate outcomes** related to achieving a desired **long-term change (= Impact)** will be brought about and documented as they occur.'

(Anderson, 2006, p.1)

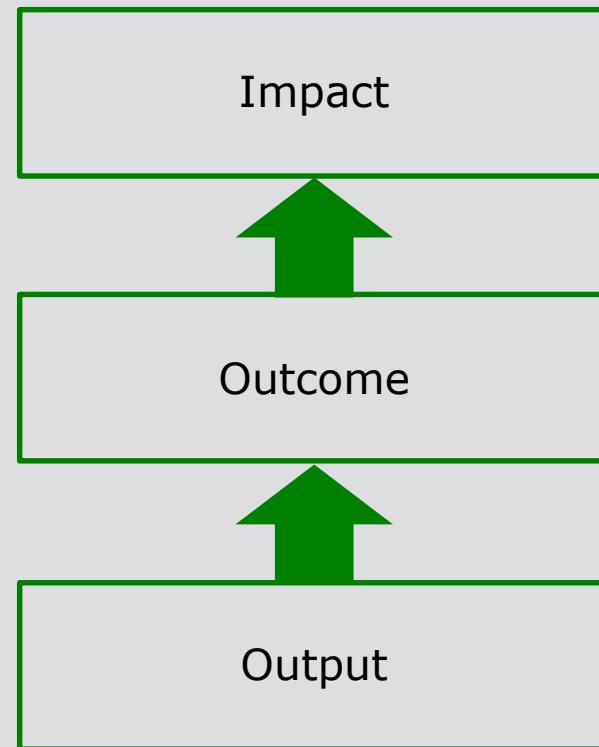
- *Research asks for continuous reflection and adaption of assumptions*

# Theory of Change





## Impact Pathway: From Output to Outcome and Impact



## Defining Output, Outcome & Impact

- **Research output** relates to the direct and immediate insights obtained by a research project or programme.
- **Intermediate research outcome** relates to positive steps towards outcomes.
- **Research outcome** relates to the changes in behaviour, relationships, actions and activities of stakeholders in the business and policy environment, resulting from exchange of knowledge and the uptake of research output.
- **Research impact** is defined as the ‘big picture’ changes in economic, environmental or social conditions that a research project or programme aims to realise.

## Outcomes of Research: possible dimensions

- ***Conceptual changes***

Change in the understanding, in the way of thinking or raised awareness on the issue

- ***Instrumental changes***

Concrete change to policy, interventions, practices or pathways for implementation

- ***Capacity development***

Building the capacity of stakeholders to use research findings/evidence



## Knowledge co-creation

A form of cooperation in research where different parties (researchers and stakeholders) in the knowledge process (demand and supply) interact and engage in joint learning to define problems, formulate possible solutions, design the research, conduct the research, assess the results and to translate these into new practices and products.

## Research Uptake

Research uptake includes all activities - integrated throughout the entire research project - that facilitate and contribute to the use of research results by policy makers, practitioners and other development actors.

Four main strands of RU:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Capacity development
- Communication
- Monitoring & Evaluation

Research Uptake is directed at:

- The 'inner circle' – the consortium and its stakeholders
- The 'outer circle' – wider networks (eg through knowledge platforms)

Expect to see

Like to see

Love to see

