



The Spindle

connecting innovators for development

Annual Report 2018

Introduction

2018 was a very busy and productive year for The Spindle. We were able to build upon the successes of 2018, managed to implement a record number of activities, enlarged our community and expanded our partnerships both within and outside the Netherlands.

In addition we found the time to do a midterm review of our outcomes together with Nele Blommestein of IntoOutcome, as we wanted to find out: what are the results of our work so far and is our theory of change still accurate? We intend to use the outcome of this MTR for learning and communication. We felt it is time that we shift our focus from communicating our activities to communicating our results. The report of the MTR was shared with DSO-MO and after that adapted to contain more information about the way The Spindle achieves its results. The MTR was followed by sessions under the guidance of Nele, to adapt our theory of change. The revised ToC is attached. At the moment it is being redesigned for use on our website.

Assumptions and risks

In this section we discuss how we have managed the assumptions¹ and risks which were identified at the start phase of the project, and explain any risks and assumptions that were not foreseen during the project formulation but that we have identified as likely to have an impact on the achievements of the project objectives.

Assumption I:	social innovations are mostly hybrid combinations of existing solutions rather than "brand new inventions"
Assumption II:	social innovations require open collaboration between actors and organisations that is cross sectoral and cross disciplinary
Assumption III:	connectors have an important role in the innovation system
Assumption IV:	there is a sense of urgency
Assumption V:	there is a sense opportunity

These five assumptions together formed the point of departure for the design of our project's approach.

Assumption I and II:

The innovation brokering (connecting) role of The Spindle is based on these assumptions. One of the conclusions of the MTR is that The Spindle is successful in establishing and fostering working relationships, both within civil society as outside, connecting civil society with academics and with organisations in the public and private sector. We feel encouraged to do more in this field, and to steer on results at the same time.

Assumption III: connectors have an important role in the innovation system.

In 2018 The Spindle has stepped up its support for the connectors within development organisations. In addition to the Community of Practice that we established and that met at regular intervals during the year, we have expanded and strengthened our role as a platform for innovators in development by the many agenda setting and piloting activities that we implemented with a considerably higher participation rate, including representatives of the management of CSOs (see for example the sessions as part of the transformative future scenario trajectory and the #shiftthepower and new business models sessions). For 2019 we aim for a higher participation of Dutch CSOs in the Partos Innovation Festival (143 out of the

¹ One of the conclusions of the MTR consultant was that the assumptions that we formulated at the start of the phase of the project, can be regarded as (assumed) opportunities, more than as assumptions. For 2019 and 2020 we will research the assumptions underlying the newly formulated ToC (see The new Toc in annex)

381). We are constantly monitoring and researching the involvement of Dutch CSOs in our activities and re-adjusting our approach when necessary.

Assumption IV: there is a sense of urgency

We notice a gradually growing awareness among management staff of organisations that change is necessary: in financing and business models, in partnerships, in the way we organize ourselves as civil society. As mentioned in our previous report we started a six months' multi-stakeholder trajectory to explore the future and its implications for development organisations. The report Adapt, Counteract or Transform, that resulted from this trajectory was well received and already contributed to the outcomes of The Spindle (see MTR) and will continue to do so as we constantly use the report and its recommendations to DCOSOs in our strategies and meetings with DCOSOs and other stakeholders.

- Risk I: Under some circumstances organisations feel themselves in competition, rather than in cooperation
- Risk II: There is a growing pressure on the capacity (finances and staff) of the organisations. And present financing mechanisms leave little room for experimentation.
- Risk III: For innovation to have an impact it requires open involvement of the target group, southern partner organisations and other stakeholders.

Lack of capacity and room for experimentation remains a serious threat to the impact that we want to achieve. Positive is that there is more awareness among management. The coming years may be especially challenging as many Dutch development organisations will be busy preparing for the new Dialogue and Dissent Program and finalizing their current program at the same time. For The Spindle it means that we have to focus on topics that are of strategic interest now: new partnerships, #shiftthepower discussions, new organisational models, digitalisation and data.

1. North-South Learning

We continue to believe that in the future The Spindle should preferably operate in an international network of other hubs or platforms that work on (social) innovation for inclusive and sustainable development. In 2018 Partos further invested in the international positioning of The Spindle and in the relationships with other European platforms, international networks as CIVICUS and the Innovation4Change network. We cooperated with CIVICUS and Innovation4Change in bringing representatives of their regional hubs to the Partos Innovation Festival, followed by meeting at the Partos office to identify topics for cooperation. This will be followed up in meetings in Belgrado, during the International Civil Society Week of CIVICUS.

Both CIVICUS and Africans Rising participated in the publication and distribution of *Joining Forces, Sharing Power*, a report with inspiring examples of civil society activism in a context of shrinking civic space. We had 33 visiting guest from different foreign countries at the Partos Innovation Festival, including colleagues from European platforms, and civil society organisations in the Global South.

We initiated talks with European platforms to discuss cooperation on innovation, followed by regular talks per skype to exchange new developments. Sadly enough, Bond had to close down its innovation program because of a shift of focus towards safeguarding. And at the Berlin Civil Society Centre there has been a change of staff and strategy, which had made contacts difficult, but at the moment there is a new and growing interest in cooperation, and in April Partos/The Spindle will visit Berlin to talk about a possible joint strategy to bring existing initiatives together.

2. Gender

Gender sensitivity is one of the criteria that is applied during the selection of best idea and best innovation. The winner of the Best Innovation Award 2018 had a gender specific approach. We provided a platform to organisations working on gender

balance and women's rights (GAGA, CMI, Women Leading from The South). In all our activities we look for a gender balance in the persons present on stage and in the images we use.

Project progress, achievements, deviations and adjustments

See table below

3. Financial Report 2018

See annex

Explanation of main deviations:

There are no major deviations in the financial expenditures.

B1 Enabling Environment – Outcome Results	Milestones 2018	Progress, deviations and adjustments
<p>Partos contributes to an enabling environment in which organisations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in joint learning and innovation 2. Have funding agreements with donors with adequate provisions for innovation 3. Have adopted measures aimed at establishing a conducive environment for innovation. 	<p>An innovation cycle 3.0., resulting in 10 ideas selected for further development in a series of 5 workshops (labs) and 10 best innovations with two winners selected at The Partos Innovation Festival (250-400 participants); awards for the winners of best idea and best innovation (a grant and consultancy hours). Improved focus on innovation in the four priority areas; better articulation of challenges and need for innovation on basis of active involvement of 50+ DCSOs in our activities and a loosely knit network of 10-20 actively involved Southern based change makers. New partnerships with important players in the field of innovation and financing to enlarge our capacity, network and funding possibilities. Exploring the Future of Dutch Development Cooperation together with Partos, its members, other stakeholders, results presented; Building a community of innovators within DCSOs for peer learning and as Ambassadors for The Spindle</p>	<p>This year we had in addition to The Spindle Awards for Best Idea and Best Innovation a NOW-US award (Nothing About Us Without Us, in cooperation with VOICE) and a Best Humanitarian Award (in cooperation with DCHI). The award money for the winners of Awards for Best Idea and Best Innovation was enlarged to match with that of the new awards (NOW-US and Best Humanitarian), partly on the basis of contributions by organisations represented in the Jury (a.o. Triodos Foundation, Haella Foundation) complemented by money from The Spindle's budget for innovations in one of the four thematic areas.</p> <p>The NOW-US week (part of the NOW-US Award, brought ten teams from Southern countries to the Netherlands for a week of exchange and inspiration about inclusive civil society. They also participated in the Partos Innovation Festival.</p> <p>This year's Partos Innovation Festival was sold out with almost 400 participants, who rated the festival with an 8 on average. The Festival's focus was on A Future We Want and the changes we need to realize this Future. The audience included more international visitors than ever, of which a majority were civil society activists coming from the Global South.</p> <p>A Future We Want is the topic that was researched during a transformative scenario trajectory that was conducted with Perspectivity, with involvement of Partos members and other stakeholders, and resulted in the publication Act, Counteract or Transform. The results of this trajectory importantly informed the Festival and the other programming of Partos and The</p>

		<p>Spindle, and it was well received by Partos members and the larger community.</p> <p>In 2018 79 of the Partos members actively participated in one but mostly more activities of The Spindle, some non-member Dutch CSOs and many other stakeholders. Together with CIVICUS Partos facilitated the participation of representatives of the Southern hubs united in the InnovationforChange network. An active Community of Practice was formed with 20 members and five meetings in 2018.</p>
<p>In the thematic cluster 'Inclusion of the extreme poor' (or "Leave no one behind") The Spindle will contribute to innovation in five thematic sub-areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identifying the extreme poor; → Addressing self-esteem; → Inclusive business and value chain development; → Addressing the digital divide; → Youth participation & employment; 	<p>4 meetings of the platform, 2 new working groups established, 2 joint activities (one conference, one-two publications, joint lobby initiatives) facilitated. Joint lobby initiatives towards new government and parliament, embassies and private sector companies. Further strengthening of the cooperation with Voice, the grants program for inclusion; and with the Leave No One Behind Chapter of CIVICUS.</p>	<p>The LNOB platform meets regularly (6 times in 2019) and is actively involved in, and sometimes the initiator of, different innovation initiatives of The Spindle. The inclusion officer of CIVICUS is an active member of the LNOB platform.</p> <p>Topics that LNOB platform initiated and focussed on were: disaggregated data and the business case of inclusion.</p> <p>In 2018 there was little activity within the pilot with the Exclusion Radar with Karuna Nepal. The funding that was applied for did not become available and there were no further attempts (yet) from the participating organisations. No follow up either on the idea for an Inclusion Index as it requires a global approach for it to be meaningful.</p> <p>The Inclusive Business Guide is an initiative by Endeava for which it sought the cooperation with Partos/The Spindle. The Spindle supports financially and formed a core group involving the LNOB-platform to co-read and provide feedback on contents and usability of the Guide. For the distribution of the Guide in the Netherlands The Spindle has in addition established contacts with NABC.</p>

<p>Outcomes</p> <p>In the thematic cluster 'Civic power' The Spindle will contribute to innovation in the three thematic sub-areas mentioned below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The development of capacities for lobbying and advocacy; → New approaches to lobbying & advocacy; → New strategies and tools for monitoring and combating threats to civic space. 	<p>4 meetings with 15+ participants; monthly mailings; 2 working groups facilitated, one website with up to date resources;</p> <p>Lessons shared among organisations as part of the Strategic Partnerships in four learning and linking events</p> <p>Learning from pilots initiated by for example Oxfam: what is it that private sector can do in practice?</p> <p>First lessons learnt about new strategies and mechanisms for DCSOs and their partners to remain effective and safe with their lobby and advocacy activities in a context of shrinking civic space</p> <p>Two preparatory meetings by an event group; one event organized; one publication;</p>	<p>The Civic Space Platform met three times in 2018: on the issue of civic space in the Strategic Partnerships, on the anti-civil society policies of Russia and the example it sets for neighbouring countries and for some countries in Africa; and on Pakistan and the government's hostile attitude towards offices of International NGOs in the country. Participation in the platform has declined over time. In an evaluation the Steering Group decided to focus attention on two thematic conferences a year, and continue the clearinghouse function of the platform with regular newsletters and the possibility of action alerts.</p> <p>In 2018 The Spindle organized three Partos meet ups on topics of the Strategic Partnerships (civic space, effective partnerships, and how working with a ToC strengthens local ownership), each with 40+ participants, mostly representing organisations in the SPs.</p> <p>Together with the Ministry we organized an explorative session on communication for Dialogue & Dissent. How to tell our story of social change to a wider audience? It was followed up by a meeting that the MFA organized and by the so called Proeftuinen that Partos organizes in 2019.</p>
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In the thematic cluster '**Innovative ways of cooperation between organizations**' (or New Ways of Working Together) The Spindle will contribute to innovation in the two thematic sub-areas mentioned below:

- Organisational & financing models for North-South cooperation, alliances and international networks.
- Cooperation with new, informal citizens' networks and movements.

Final event to share lessons learned as part of this learning trajectory, with the broader community 10-20 DCSOs learning and sharing lessons in series of workshops on new ways of organising, working and financing

An inspirational publication to stimulate change in the way civil society cooperates in a context of NGOs increasingly seeking to establish or join international networks and partnerships, many NGOs and CBOs being confronted with a shrinking space for civil society, the emergence of new, informal civil society movements and digital activism. The publication will contain inputs from a series of events and relevant stakeholders
Further Exploration of the use of block chain in development cooperation. Ideas shared; ideas further developed as part of the (Summer)labs;

New ways of working together was the topic of 2018.

In 2018 we did a pilot on **new business models** for civil society organisations with the use of the sustainable business model canvas that was moderately successful. It did show that there is a need for directors to meet and exchange about challenging questions they are facing. Especially the Value Proposition Canvas proved useful to facilitate these discussions. The discussion partly relates to the **#shiftpower** discussions that we continued in 2018, with a session in cooperation with CIVICUS, Wilde Ganzen and the Global Fund for Community Foundations. Issues of power were also addressed in the publication **Joining Forces and Sharing Power** that was produced by The Broker on an assignment by The Broker, and with participation by CIVICUS and Africans Rising. The publication was brought to the attention of a larger audience at the Partos Innovation Festival where it was handed to key note speaker Tulika Srivastava of the Women's Fund Asia and as part of workshop on this topic with Mama Cash and Tulika.

Also in 2018 we continued the work **on internationally networked NGOs**, with interviews with directors of INNGOs on the why, how and what of the cooperation they had chosen for. The publication, that will include analyses of the cases presented is meant to serve as a practical guide, and will be finished in 2019.

In the thematic cluster '**Innovative monitoring and evaluation**'(or "Use of Data") The Spindle will contribute to innovation in the three thematic sub-areas mentioned below:

- Improved use of monitoring, evaluation and research findings, IATI data and citizens' generated data;
- Impact measurement of development projects; Monitoring cost-efficiency.

A coordinated series of inspiring, learning and linking events on issues of IATI and use of data for decision making and showing results
Sharing experiences of steering for and measuring of impact results between Dutch charity organisations as part of the Impact Challenge and Impact Event with CBF and the Goede Doelen Nederland (GDN)
Learning Trajectory on Efficiency completed, final events organisations (60-80 participants), publication presented and distributed
"Explore the potential for projects of IoT in development,
milestone: ideas shared and a trajectory started to develop some prototypes

In 2018 we had a successful **IATI meeting** with 70. participants , including colleagues from other European NGO platform.. The open teas that we organised on inspiring examples of data driven decision making, also in cooperation with Data4Development, raised less interest than expected. For 2019 we decided to stop with the Open Teas.

As part of the **learning trajectory on efficiency** a training was organized with two senior experts on methods to measure efficiency; four organisations participated in pilots to test the methodology and the concept of a theory of efficiency. The conference to present the lessons learned was postponed and will take place in May 2019.

In 2018 the first **Impact Event** took place, as part of a joint initiative of Dutch charities coordinated by GDN, CBF and Partos. The Impact Challenge Award was formulated and the work on the online website Impactwijzer was started.

In cooperation with GGPAC, The Knowledge Platform Security & Law and outcome harvesting consultant Wolfgang Richert we organized a meeting about best practice to assure **quality of outcome harvesting** with 60 participants.

Also in 2018 The Spindle worked on a Partos trajectory on the strategic and operational **digitalisation and data management** by Dutch development organisations.

A session organized by The Spindle to disseminate learnings within a pilot with **narrative assessment**, a new M&E method for lobby and advocacy projects by Hivos and WUR, that was supported in The Spindle Summer Labs, raised an unexpected high interest: of 50+ participants from Dutch development organisations.

Annex Financial report 2018

	BUDGET 2018	ACTUAL 2018
A General Costs		
Staff costs	17.500	20.085
<i>Own contribution Partos € 85,000 to be divided into:</i>		
Financial management	10.000	10.000
Office costs	50.000	50.000
M&E	12.500	15.972
Own contribution external costs	12.500	14.505
Subtotal €	102.500	110.562
B Outcomes		
1. Enabling Environment (Cross Cutting)		
Online facilities & community building	5.000	3.116
Inspiration council	5.000	7.592
Challenge	65.000	51.313
Communications	10.000	4.041
Monitoring of trends research & publication	12.000	27.5000
Innovation Festival	40.000	40.000
Other costs (price money)	-	11.525
	137.000	145.087
Total External costs	137.000	145.087
Staff costs	125.000	130.553
Subtotal €	262.000	275.641
2. Innovations on Inclusion of the Extreme Poor		
Total External costs	30.000	20.455
Staff costs	40.000	40.170
Subtotal €	70.000	60.625
3. Innovations on Civic Power		
Total External costs	30.000	15.669
Staff costs	40.000	40.170
Subtotal €	70.000	55.840
4. Innovative ways of cooperation between organisations		
Total External costs	60.000	49.999
Staff costs	25.000	25.106
Subtotal €	85.000	75.105
5. Innovative monitoring and evaluation		
Total External costs	60.000	70.398
Staff costs	32.500	30.128
Subtotal €	92.500	100.526

subtotal extern	317.000	301.608
subtotal staff	280.000	286.213
subtotal own contribution	85.000	90.477
Totals	682.000	678.298

Partos own contribution		90.477
Allocation BuZa		587.821

Received BuZa	balance 01/01/18	258.285
	received 05/07/18	550.000
	total	808.285
	allocation	587.821
	interest result	0
	balance 12/31/18	220.464

Specifications of all external costs upon request