

## **REPORT ON THE 5TH**

## **UGANDA – NETHERLANDS BUSINESS CONVENTION**

**24TH TO 28TH AUGUST 2022** 

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS.

Amsterdam, 9th September 2022

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

- a) The Ugandan Community in the Netherlands (UCN) in partnership with the Uganda Embassy in Brussels jointly organised the 5th Uganda Netherlands Business Convention (UNBC), under the theme: "The Quest for Identity rerooting the Ugandan Diaspora"
- b) The event brought together entrepreneurs, businesses, organisations, investors, traders, educationists, end consumers, citizens from both countries and other parties interested in the development of agriculture and health sectors in Uganda and The Netherlands.
- c) This year's Convention was also attended by the Minister in charge of Kampala Capital City Authority and Metropolitan affairs, nine (9) Members of Parliament, Officials from Ministry of Internal Affair, Post Bank and Housing Finance Bank. The Convention was commended as the best diaspora convention because of its focus on business, networks and field visits to various commercial enterprises in the Netherlands.
- d) Specific UNBC 2022 Aims & Objectives: UNBC is tailored to meet specific learnings, exposure, investment and business goals, It is a networking and business interaction platform for BENELUX Ugandans, one on which they have the opportunity to receive/access key government and business related service provisions but also importantly a platform on which to encourage ambassadorship among Diaspora Ugandans.

## 2. UNBC BACKGROUND:

- a) UNBC is a five-year-old convention that was started with the aim of bringing stakeholders together to attract linkages between Uganda-Netherlands investment. It is a business oriented event which has increasingly succeeded because of the dedication to business and avoidance of politics.
- b) The Convention provides a platform for diaspora mobilisation and has since its first Convention in 2017 focussed on agriculture and health sectors as prime objectives, because of the importance of the two sectors for both Uganda and

- the Netherlands. The UNBC therefore provides an opportunity to network and develop partnerships which lead to commercial transactions in the beginning and once confidence is built, expand into joint ventures with substantial investments in Uganda.
- c) Throughout the year, Uganda Embassy Brussels and the UNBC management keeps tracking partnerships and business networks created. The 2018 Convention provided Ugandans in the BENELUX Diaspora with opportunities in, diaspora banking, real estate, agriculture & health bankable projects, taxation incentives, cultural tourism, and registration for dual citizenship certificates whereby certificates of Nationality were issued to qualifying Ugandan diaspora.
- d) Follow up cases from 2018, 2019 and 2020 include ANTE BV and AGRIPOORT both specialised in dairy processing machinery that are getting well established in Uganda, Royal Van Zanten market leaders in international ornamental horticulture which employs over 1,500 Ugandans who were on the verge of relocating their bases from Uganda but were encouraged to re-affirm their activities due to reassurances from the 2018 Convention and follow up intervention by Uganda Embassy Brussels to resolve tax concerns with URA, Delph a worldwide expert in food and flowers partnered with UNBC and FACOM Uganda to execute two Tailor Made Trainings (TMT) costing about 100,000 euros each.

## 3. UGANDA EMBASSY AND UNBC:

- a) During the 2nd edition of the UNBC in 2018, the Rt. Hon. Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda who was the Guest of Honor, commended the Convention as the best organised of the Uganda Diaspora Conventions that she had ever attended, and particularly commended its serious focus on businesses that benefits Uganda.
- b) Since its inception Uganda Embassy in Brussels has been a dependable partner in providing guidance and a fraction financial contribution despite no budget

provision for this particular activity, the Embassy continues to hold onto the spirit of teamwork, commitment in terms of time and funding, focus on the big picture goals that benefit all Ugandans including, development, business, skills and knowledge transfer, philanthropy, positive promotion of Uganda's image, and most importantly avoiding the UNBC from becoming a political platform which would lead to division and its breakdown.

- c) To mobilise the diaspora effectively, the Mission needs adequate funding for these kind of activities. In addition, the UNBC can be strengthened further if the Government of Uganda makes a sizeable financial contribution to support its activities. There is a need for more collaboration from the invited participants in honouring invitations on time. Going into the future a respectable partnership and business network platform is expected.
- d) There are 3,858 legally registered and economically active Ugandans in the Netherlands. When we consider also the now nationalised Dutch but formerly of Ugandan decent, the number increases to approximately 4,500, including the not yet registered Ugandans would bring the number to 5000. Of the legally registered Ugandans 2,687 are of first generation and the rest second generation.
- e) Delegates in this year's edition participated in field visits to various companies, including Koudijs, Philips, Verbeek, Hospitainer, Ante BV Holland, Insect Engineers BV, Bles Dairies, Bejo Zaden B.V and Delft Imaging. These companies are already collaborating with Uganda at different levels. The aim is to enhance this collaboration and create linkages and networks that foster trade and investment for national development.

## 4. ATTENDANCE:

The Guest of Honor was the Rt. Hon Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon Thomas Tayebwa, represented by Hon. Mwine Mpaka, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Trade, Tourism and Industry.

#### a) Executive

Minister for Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs, Hon. Hajjati Minsa Kabanda, Ambassador Mirjam Blaak Head of Mission Uganda Embassy Brussels, 2 diplomats from Uganda Embassy Berlin, 5 Diplomats from Uganda Embassy Brussels, 4 KCCA Councillors, Public Service Commission, Ministry of Internal Affairs (Passport Control Office) and the Dutch Foreign Affairs representation.

#### b) Legislature

Delegation led by Hon. Mwine Mpaka, Hon. Sarah Najjuma, Hon. Walyomu Moses Muwanika, Hon. Mwesigwa Robert Rukaari, Hon. Ikojo John Bosco, Hon. Kibalya Henry Maurice, Hon. Lokwang Philips Ilukol, Hon. Akamba Paul, Hon. Makhoha Margaret, Mr Caleb Mugisha, and Mr. Jakony Brian.

#### c) Private Sector

The Private Sector was composed of Koudijs Philips, Verbeek, Hospitainer, Ante BV Holland, Insect Engineers BV, Bles Dairies, Bejo Zaden B.V, Delft Imaging, Housing Finance Bank, Post Bank Uganda, Asasira Traders, GATC General Supplies, Swift World, Animal and Crop Farmers, Eiton Capital, Modern Agrospecies, and Da Hares farm,

#### d) Diaspora

A population of about 300 Ugandan Diaspora from both the Netherlands and Belgium took part in one or more of the 4 day convention activities.

## **5. UNBC ACTIVITIES:**

The main activities undertaken were the plenary on the 26th August; field visits to six (6) agricultural establishments and three (3) health equipment facilities. Field visits are the most unique aspect of the UNBC, these trips provide exposure to participants through a real experience that could be tapped into as means to transfer knowledge and capital necessary to up scale on agriculture and health sectors in Uganda.

#### A. Field Visits

## i) Agricultural Enterprises:

Agriculture remains the primary focus of the UNBC because it is the backbone of Uganda's economy and a major part of the Netherlands economy. Farms visited were selected based on the interests of delegates traveling from Uganda. Agricultural establishments visited included:

Koudijs Animal Nuitrition B.V: With over 100 years of international experience, participants led by HE Ambassador Mirjam Blaak with Hon. Minsa Kabanda the lead delegate were informed that Koudijs specialises in the production of complete ranges of compound feeds, premixes and many other animal feed concentrates. Johan the presenter made us aware that the company learnt quite early that animal business can be complex if not well managed, a notion that pushed them to continuously work towards sustainable ways of production necessary for animal food improvements. Koudijs has set out to invest 43 million Euros in Uganda by setting up three factories in the next three years, they are currently trying to find land to setup business in Uganda.

Ante BV Holland: imports and exports dairy processing machinery. The has over 25 years of experience in dairy production, e.g. cheese/ yoghurt, with many years of experience designing and building dairy factories. At the Showroom delegates were given lessons on daily products and how they are produced both on small and large scare. Delegate witnessed first hand how daily products can be produced in a small factory setting yet yield lots of revenue to sustain a factor.

Insect Engineers: Insect Engineers provides commercial insect farming all over the world with machines, climate systems, and engineering solutions. Insect engineers aim at starting a chain reaction of people and companies that will contribute towards sustainable food production. The commercial farming of the Black Soldier Fly (BSF)

is one of the most effective steps toward this circular and sustainable food production. The BSF larvae are the best source of animal protein and are a source of high-quality food for pigs, chickens, fish and pets. The Company aims to make BSF cultivation as commercially attractive as possible worldwide. Insect engineers own and manage an insect school equipped for knowledge transfer and modernising techniques in cultivating insects as a source of protein

Bejo Zaden B.V: An internationally oriented family business is a leading company in the breeding, producing and selling of vegetable seeds with operations in more than 30 countries. Bejo has 2,000 employees dedicated towards developing the best vegetable varieties for the present and the future.

Bles Dairies: With its operations base in the Netherlands, Bles Dairies has international wings spread across the globe. The company was founded in the 1980s with a core focus point to genetically improve and trade in quality livestock. Over the past 30 years, Bles Dairies has grown into a company focusing on creating value in every part of the Dairy Value Chain, right from the breeds, through to the feeds and finally to the factory gate.

## ii) Health Equipment Facilities Visits:

Medical care is a key aspect of life, UNBC continues to believe that providing of better medical facilities saves the nation funds used to travel abroad for treatment. UNBC intended to give Parliament's delegates a tour of affordable Medical equipments that Uganda can procure.

The companies selected were those with intentions of doing business with Uganda to the extent of setting up production plants in Uganda. Health equipment facilitates visited included:

**DELFT Imaging Systems:** Delft Imaging Systems provides affordable, innovative diagnostic imaging techniques and solutions worldwide with expertise to vulnerable and developing communities. The core activity of Delft imaging systems is tuberculosis (TB) screening. Nearly 10 million people are affected with the disease every year, but with proper diagnose, it can be cured within a period of six months. Developed approaches in fighting TB including, CAD4 Software: Delft's innovative CAD4TB software is designed to help non-experts detect and diagnose TB more accurately and costeffectively. Digital X-rays combined with machine learning and remote expertise makes CAD4TB a valuable asset in the fight against TB. One Stop TB Clinic: As all-in-one mobile solutions, Delft's One Stop TB clinic reaches remote, and frequently under serviced areas with ease. The clinic is equipped with Delft's CAD4TB technology, x-rays and more, and is designed to diagnose and treat TB in a selfsustaining unit. X-RAY Systems: Delft supplies two X-ray modalities for existing (mobile) clinics: the Easy-DR and the Easy-Portable. Both systems are compatible with the Delft CAD4TB software and suitable for large X-ray screening programs. Uganda, through the Ministry of Health has so far purchased 30 (five) portable TB screening machines from Delft Imaging Systems. During the field trip to Delft Imaging Centre (DIC), the directors told delegates that a plan was in place to supply 45 high-quality imaging equipment to Uganda.

Hospitainer: Hospitainer delivers a wide range of mobile medical units for emergencies in areas with limited access to medical facilities. Their mobile modular turn-key field hospitals are rapidly deployable and can be tailor-made to fit any medical specifications. Hospitainer ideology started when founder Rolof Mulder was installing a medical ICT solution alongside a hospital in western Africa. This hospital was an expensive, high-tech medical infrastructure located in a rural, remote area. Three months after

installation, the hospital was functioning poorly, was understaffed and on the verge of closing. The idea for a different approach to conventional health infrastructure was born: Making 50-100 Hospitainer hospitals for the price of one traditional hospital. Since the prototype, Hospitainer has been active in 4 continents, and the medical solutions have facilitated thousands of surgeries in post-disaster areas, conflict areas and developing countries. Over the years, Hospitainer has expanded its product portfolio to a wide range of medical solutions with Hospitainers characteristics; Robust, Low-cost, Mobile, and In standard shipping containers. Hon Philip Lokwong, who led the delegation plus other participants were amazed with this simplified hospital solution and how relevant it could be in up scaling health facilities in Ugandan's remote and disaster hit areas.

Philips: has been in healthcare since 1921 and aims at improving the health and wellbeing of 2.5 billion people per year by 2030. The delegation was hosted at the largest Philips facility in the world in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. It relies heavily on digitalisation and creation of a partnership with the client along the entire lifetime of the products. Philips shared a proposal to supply medical equipment-radiology, ICU and cardiology under Managed Equipment Service to Uganda (as was piloted in Kenya), where equipment is maintained by Philips (at least 98% uptime) and full ownership reverts to the Government of Uganda at the end of the contract period. Training and capacity building will also be carried out across all hospitals for medical personnel. This modern equipment has increased the retention rate of staff by 80% in Kenya. It was proposed that Philips gets in touch with the Uganda Heart Institute, which has recently secured funding for a heart facility.

#### **B.** UNBC Conference

#### i) <u>Plenary Session:</u>

Panel discussions were held on

- Politics & Human Rights;
- Diaspora; and
- Business & Investment.

## ii) Consular Services

The Embassy set up a consular desk at the convention to provide consular services to Ugandans. Consular services were supplied by Sheilah Rukundo from the Ministry of Internal Affairs Passport Office, Titus Seruga from the Uganda Embassy in Brussels, and Claire Odhiambo from the Uganda Embassy in Berlin. Issues handled by Consular desk.

1.	Passport renewal		25 Applications
2.	National ID registration		20 Applications
3.	Passport Collections		10 Passports
4.	Inquires	60	
5.	Queries	43	

## iii) Introductory Remarks by Ambassador Mirjam Blaak

The Head of Mission started by welcoming guest to UNBC 2022. A convention she termed as unique for its particular focus on agriculture and health.

Ambassador Mirjam Blaak highlighted the UNBC 2022 theme "The Quest for identity. Re-rooting the Ugandan Diaspora", emphasising the need to provide services to Ugandans in the Diaspora and facilitating them to contribute to national development through knowledge, skills, experience, networks and financial transfer. "We encourage the diaspora to invest in agro-industrialisation, manufacturing, services (IT, hospitality, banking and insurance) and tourism, among others."

## Why is it important to facilitate identity for Ugandans in Diaspora?

Uganda can court her diaspora for opportunities ranging from disaster relief to business development to peace-building by cultivating shared patriotic sentiments, offering diaspora privileged access to business opportunities, and strengthening domestic institutions.

The time is now!!! Countries like India and the Philippines benefit greatly from their diaspora communities; the Mission in Brussels is not sitting still. We have just concluded arrangements with NIRA to process National IDs at the Chancery in Brussels.

The Ambassador informed the audience that in the coming months, staff at the Mission will be trained to operate NIRA equipment in Brussels. She further noted that the mission has a target to register at least 2000 Ugandans in one year, giving 1000 Ugandans the opportunity to invest back home. (*Full remark attached in annex*)

# iv) Remarks by Hon. Mwine Mpaka representing the chief Guest Deputy Speaker of Parliament Rt.Hon Thomas Tayebwa.

Hon Minister for Kampala, Your Excellency the Ambassador, Diplomats, and delegates, we have had two exciting days filled with lessons that can only be found in the Netherlands. Such well-organised conventions give us great joy to see that Ugandans in the diaspora are working with us to promote Uganda away from home and help transfer knowledge for the development of our country Uganda. We have visited high-quality agricultural setups that inspire us to productive agriculture.

We have seen state-of-the-art equipment produced in the Netherlands for the sole purpose of saving lives. As a result, we now have a clear picture of what we need to save lives in Uganda, and we will transfer this knowledge back home.

We therefore pledge the following:

- 1. To expedite the National Identity cards registration process (I am reliably informed that this exercise will take place here in the Netherlands next month.)
- 2. To ease the process of obtaining dual citizenship politically (we are politicians, so we do things politically)

- 3. To advocate for incentives to Ugandans in the diaspora who wish to invest in our country in Uganda (we have been giving these incentives to foreigners, I don't see why we can not give the same to Ugandans in the diaspora who are considering investing back home)
- 4. To lobby for the increment in our mission budget for the sole purpose of diplomacy like this.
- 5. To officially recognise the role of UNBC with one primary purpose, we, as the 11th parliament, recognise that a man without the knowledge of where he has been known, not where he is or where he is going. We have been informed about Uganda House. You had a recreation centre with traditional food, games and culture. We pledge our full support. Luckily enough, you are partnering with the mission. There could be a possibility of putting a budget within th mission to finance your budget.
- 6. To advocate for a consular in the Netherlands, we know that all the East African countries, surprisingly even our neighbour South Sudan have missions in the Netherlands. So we will lobby for at least a consular general because we are reliably informed you are more than 3000 Ugandans. So Honorable Members, when we return, we will present a report and, if possible, adopt resolutions.

With these words I wish you wonderful delebations and declare this convention officially opened for debate.

For God and My Country.

## **6. CONCLUSION:**

- a) UNBC 2022 was successfully organised with very limited funding, our immediate task is to lobby for funding of this convention. Most especially, with no consulate in the Netherlands, Government should seriously consider funding the activities of the Ugandan Community in the Netherlands because they are well organised, innovative, resourceful and willing if supported to look out for more opportunities that will benefit Uganda.
- b) Visiting delegates and members of Parliament can leverage the values and knowledge generated by their participation in the UNBC. Effortlessly, the members of parliament and legislators present came to understand the challenges of the Ugandans living in the BENELUX. Also worthy while, if the lessons from the field visits are implemented and the unearthed opportunities quickly tapped into, Uganda will go a long way in improving the welfare of many people, increasing their household incomes and reducing on the level of poverty.
- c) The Embassy of Uganda in Brussels thanks the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda for the support being given to the activities of both the Embassy and the UNBC. We look forward to a stronger partnership in the development of Uganda.

#### **ANNEX I**

## Fully Introductory Remarks by Ambassador Mirjam Blaak

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the annual Uganda Netherlands Business Convention (UNBC) 2022 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, last held physically in 2019 and digitally in 2020 due to disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Uganda Netherlands Business Convention has come a long way since 2017 and has overcome the various challenges faced over the years to promote trade and investment between Uganda and The Netherlands, particularly in agriculture and health. As a result, the UNBC is unique and the best Uganda Diaspora Convention among all Uganda Diaspora Conventions is held with a host of tangible benefits for Uganda and Ugandans. What makes it so unique is the two days of field visits.

Delegates in this year's edition have participated in field visits to various companies, including Koudijs, Philips, Verbeek, Hospitainer, Ante BV Holland, Insect Engineers BV, Bles Dairies, Bejo Zaden B.V and Delft Imaging. These companies are already collaborating with Uganda at different levels. The aim is to enhance this collaboration and create linkages and networks that will foster trade and investment for national development. We endeavour to reach out to many other companies to interest them in investing in and trading with Uganda and continue promoting tourism in our accreditation areas.

We welcome representatives from Koudijs, PharmaAccess, Ignite Now Eco-cooking stoves, Post Bank and Housing Finance Bank, and thank you for supporting the Uganda Netherlands Business Convention.

Right from the onset, the Uganda Embassy in Brussels found it vital and effective to work with the Uganda Community in the Netherlands (UCN). The team at UCN is committed, hardworking and reliable, and we are proud to be part of this Convention and its unique and productive setup. We also collaborate with UCN in various other matters, including monthly consular sessions, outreach and community mobilization, commercial diplomacy and sports diplomacy to ensure effective service delivery to the diaspora.

This year's edition is under the theme "The Quest for identity. Re-rooting the Ugandan Diaspora". The emphasis is on the provision of services to Ugandans in the

Diaspora and facilitating them to contribute to national development through knowledge, skills, experience, networks and financial transfer. We encourage the diaspora to invest in agro-industrialisation, manufacturing, services (IT, hospitality, banking and insurance) and tourism, among others. This will foster job creation, especially for the unemployed youth, and overall stimulation of the national economy. The Diaspora can also contribute to seeking opportunities for market access for Ugandan value-added products.

We welcome investment into Uganda. A firm foundation for development through investments in infrastructure, including roads, electricity, ICT and human capital, has been set. Through the National Development Plan (NDP III), the Government is focused on transforming Uganda from a peasant economy to a modern and prosperous country and as Ugandans we each have a role to play to achieve this for us and future generations.

The Embassy is championing the quest for the identity of Ugandans in the Netherlands, Belgium and other European Communities. We have assisted in renewing 600 passports in one year. The volume of passport applications tremendously increased as Ugandans across Europe rushed to renew passports occasioned by the phasing out of the old passport.

I am pleased to announce that Uganda Embassy in Brussels has developed a passport management system to address communication challenges that have led to delays in the production of passports. The new system provides timely updates to applicants and allows applicants to track the status of their applications. We hope to share this innovation with other Embassies to benefit other Ugandan communities in the diaspora.

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concluded arrangements with NIRA to process National IDs at the Chancery in Brussels.

In the coming months, staff will be trained to operate NIRA equipment at the Mission in Brussels, which is, by the way, beautifully renovated, and of course, we welcome you in Brussels to come and see for yourselves. Our target is to register at least 2000 Ugandans in one year, giving 1000 Ugandans the opportunity to invest back home.

You are welcome to network and interact with the Officials present and benefit from the consular desk and tourism desk provided at this event.

## **Attributes of the Uganda Netherlands Business Convention (UNBC)**

## 1. Agricultural Cooperation:

The Netherlands is the second largest exporter (in trade volume) of agricultural produce in the world, only after the United States, with an export value of €90.3bn in 2018. Dutch agricultural produce accounts for 18,2% (one-fifth) of the total commodity exports. This is because the Netherlands, albeit being a tiny country compared to Uganda, has developed the capacity to continuously re-invent its agriculture sector through innovation. The Netherlands' strong economy depends mainly on foreign trade, of which agriculture is a major component. The country's trade balance from the export and import value of agricultural goods in 2018 stood at €28.8bn

Innovation in the Netherlands has been in advanced farming methods to ensure the highest quality in production and breeding, leading to healthy animals with the capacity to produce the maximum quality output. Due to innovation, the Netherlands is one of the world's leading countries exporting products acceptable globally because the products meet global phytosanitary standards.

It is therefore not surprising that the Netherlands has managed to strengthen their position as one of the world's leading exporting countries.

The above facts prove that Uganda has the potential to become one of the largest agricultural exporters in Africa and the world at large by partnering with the Netherlands in skills, knowledge and technology transfer.

## 2. Increase in Uganda's Exports:

Uganda has a lot to benefit from the Netherlands in skills, knowledge and technology transfer so as to meet global phytosanitary standards. Prior to 2014 Uganda averaged 50 consignments intercepted per annum, which figure has now tripled, and now Uganda is at risk of an embargo by the EU on Uganda's agricultural produce. The biggest cause of the interceptions is the false coddling moth which is mostly found on capsicum.

The Netherlands is able and willing to assist Uganda in overcoming the obstacles that affect Uganda's compliance with the phytosanitary standards. Uganda is expected, however, to put in place a reliable mechanism for verification of exports to ensure that contaminated goods are not exported. The Netherlands Government was willing to provide the machinery for detecting the false coddling month. However, this was not possible because Uganda had not set up a reliable system for verification of the exports.

Uganda Embassy Brussels has regularly notified the Government regarding intercepted agricultural commodities from Uganda. Due to interceptions, the exporters lose the consignment, the airfreight charges, which are often higher than the cost of the produce, the funds used to destroy the produce, and confidence in the continued import of Uganda's produce by other countries. A copy of the matrix, which contains over 750 notifications of intercepted produce which have been communicated to the Government, is herewith attached.

## 3. Skills and Knowledge Transfer:

Avenues for skills and knowledge transfer through training offered by the companies visited, Insect Engineers trained delegates on how to manufacture proteins for animal feeds, Ante BV gave participants skills on which machinery should be procured to add value to daily products ETC

## 4. Increased Trade and Investment Opportunities:

Trade and investment opportunities can be tapped more efficiently in particular in Agriculture, Health, and Tourism. In addition, follow-up of trade missions to Uganda is difficult for a non-resident mission.

More Business/Investment delegations to Uganda can be mobilised, and follow up undertaken more effectively.

## 5. Increased Development Cooperation with the Netherlands:

Missions based in the Netherlands are given priority including by invitation to important events especially organized outside Government which are the majority, and as a result Uganda is missing out on opportunities while other countries are staking territory which will be difficult to break through if the opening of a Mission is delayed further.

## 6. SDG Partnership Facility:

The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (rvo.nl) has subsidies and programmes for assisting entrepreneurs from partnership countries to the Netherlands including Uganda. Subsidies are provided for public/private partnerships whose projects contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Uganda therefore has to make use of the funding available to implement the SDGs in particular agriculture and health which are a major part of the National Development Plan III (NDPIII) and are major sectors in the Netherlands.