

Sustainable Development Goals: Connect for impact

Policy Plan SDG Charter Foundation, phase II (September 1, 2018- August 31, 2021)

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1. Summary

The mission of the SDG Charter Foundation Bureau is to 'connect for impact': to convene diverse actors, catalyse joint actions and create synergy towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It aims for impact that contributes to achieving the SDGs before 2030, through cooperation and partnerships. Its goals are:

1. Implementation Roadmap: identify and implement priority challenges and opportunities on the way to the SDGs for Dutch organizations nationally and internationally
2. Coalitions: convene key players around SDGs to contribute to the Roadmap and its implementation, together with the SDG Coordinator
3. Broad movement: carry, drive and inspire innovations and actions necessary to achieve the SDGs

To achieve these goals, the following results are key:

- 1a. Governance: the Steering Committee will oversee the process and content for the Roadmap
- 1b. Charter Branding: the Charter will be key to the roadmap nationally and share its model internationally
- 2a. 'Symfonie': the Charter will signpost instruments which can help SDG achievement and convene joint repair of potential gaps in the 'symfonie' of instruments
- 2b. Tools coalitions: the Charter will join forces to work on joint issues, such as communication and impact reporting.
- 3a. Events: these events will be the place to be for those working or wanting to work on the SDG. The Charter will piggyback on other events to reach outsiders.
- 3b. Online community: all of the above will be supported by the online community, which is also where partners can showcase their work on the SDGs and find each other.

These goals and results are chosen on the basis of experience during the first phase. They are all interlinked and reinforce each other. All the results taken together can be seen as an enabling environment for the goals. The goals taken together can spark actions and partnerships which contribute directly to the SDGs, which is the impact we strive for.

The role of the Charter Bureau in achieving these goals and results is to be a catalyser: small enough not to become an institution, but big enough to build a strong network and leverage activities. In addition, the SDG landscape is changing rapidly, so the Bureau has to be agile.

Based on experience, this can work with a staff of three in total. This leads to a budget request of about 0,275 million euro per year for 3 years (for two staff). In addition, to maintain strong links, a secondment is requested. Together, this would amount to about 0,45 million euro per year. The Bureau aims to double this amount with (mostly in-kind) contributions from its signatories, amounting to about 0,9 million euro per year. In addition, the Bureau will seek for other funding, if this aligns with the goals and principles of the Charter, as being: neutral, flexible, catalytic, inclusive, transparent and non-competing.

To secure durability,

- the Bureau will stimulate ownership among partners as much as possible,
- build a strong network of organizations which cooperate on the SDGs and can carry them further
- explore options for long term (core) funding, which supports the Charter's goals.

In addition, a mid-term evaluation will be conducted, with a focus on the (changing) needs of signatories, what they have to offer and which role they see for themselves and for the Bureau. Based on this, the Bureau will develop a durability strategy, which will outline the best way to secure increasing impact on the SDGs, after the second project phase. Depending on the changing SDG

landscape, this may entail a different role or type of work for the SDG Charter Foundation.

2. Theory of Change

2.1 Context

International

The Sustainable Development Goals were agreed by the United Nations Member States in 2015, after extended consultations with stakeholders around the world. These goals provide a common language for “the world we want” in 2030. Part of the understanding is that government nor any other sector can achieve these goals by itself, so cooperation is key.

National

In the Netherlands, front-runners from all sectors of society have signed the SDG Charter, thereby expressing that they are committed to contribute in partnership to the SDGs. This initiative started in 2013 and it is still growing. It is unique in the world and puts the Netherlands in the lead when it comes to partnering for achieving the SDGs.

2.2 Issue

Phase one

In 2015, signatories of the SDG Charter indicated that they have the will to cooperate, but that cooperation does not happen by itself. It requires investments in many ways. Sometimes there are strong leaders who can make these investments themselves, but often support is required. The front-runners requested this support, which resulted in 2016 in the set-up of the Sustainable Development Goals Charter Foundation. This marked the beginning of the first phase (September 1, 2016 - September 1, 2018). See box 1 for the institutional set-up.

Box 1: Institutional set-up for the SDG Charter Foundation

Board: Herman Mulder (chair), Anne-Marie Rakhorst (treasurer), Adrian de Groot Ruiz (secretary), Fokko Wientjes (general board member). The Board has the legal responsibility.

Steering Committee: Global Compact NL, IUCN NL, Maatschappelijke Alliantie, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MVO Nederland/De Groene Zaak, Nationale Jeugdgraad, NWO-WOTRO, Partos and VNG International. The Steering Committee steers and carries the Charter.

Bureau: Maresa Oosterman (director), Rosalie de Bruijn (project manager), Lieke Willemsen (interim project manager Jan.-Sept. 2018).

For checks and balances, see under 2.7.

Understand need

During the first phase, the Bureau set out to understand what the signatories need in order to do what they signed up for: contribute jointly to the SDGs. To make sure that any activities or projects would work, a Steering Committee of stakeholders was assembled, consisting of umbrella organizations representing all sectors of society. Together, they have more than 3000 member organizations. They steer the Bureau and they carry it, way beyond the group of signatories.

Vision, mission, impact in phase one

In consultation with the Steering Committee, the signatories and other partners, the Bureau agreed to its vision, mission and impact (see Box 2).

Box 2: Vision mission, impact

- Vision

Our generation is the first to have the means to make the transformation to a world with more prosperity and less inequality, to protect the diversity of nature and the stability of our climate, to peace and security. In such a world, everybody can thrive, from individual to multinational.

The Sustainable Development Goals are our agenda for such a world in 2030. They are a form of civilization, a common language to which we have all committed ourselves. This makes it possible to work together on these goals.

These goals are interlinked and they transcend boundaries between sectors and countries. They pose a set of complex challenges as well as opportunities. They can require deep transformations and joint action at all levels and between sectors.

To create the world we want, it is essential and possible to join the forces of diverse actors, leaving no one behind.

- Mission

“Connect for impact”: The Dutch SDG Charter convenes diverse actors, catalyses joint action and creates synergy towards the SDGs.

- Impact

Impact on the people and planet, measured against the SDGs

Goals in phase one

During phase 1, the Charter agreed on three goals, which are necessary to have a growing and lasting impact on the SDGs: 1) SDG Solution Partnerships, (2) an inclusive national SDG movement and (3) a durable governance to support these two goals and ensure synergy in SDG activities. These goals are interlinked: The first goal is about partnerships, which impact the SDGs directly. The partners in these partnerships indicated that their impact is ultimately driven or limited by what their target groups (citizens, consumers, employees or voters) want. This leads to the second goal of initiating an inclusive national SDG movement. Third, a durable governance structure is needed to create synergy in order for the other two goals to be effective, efficient and lasting.

Results in phase one

In consultation with the signatories, it became clear that they needed an enabling environment to achieve these goals. This enabling environment was operationalized in nine results, which are connected to the three goals (see Table 1 for the goals and results during the first phase).

Why phase two

During the first phase, the Bureau started to build and test this enabling environment. This enabling environment seems to be the right foundation. Based on experience during the first phase, it has also become clear where it can be improved and strengthened (see table 1). In general, joint impact on the SDGs is just starting and is not yet 'mature' enough to stop now. A second project phase is necessary to secure lasting joint impact on the SDGs.

2.3 Intervention

The intervention during the second project phase will be focused on strengthening the enabling environment and achieving the improved goals. This will affect in a positive way many non-signatories as well, because all activities and projects are accessible for all who want to contribute to the SDGs. This in turn leads to more impact on the SDGs.

Stakeholder analysis

To ensure that the intervention would work for all stakeholders, a stakeholder analysis was made to identify the most relevant stakeholders. These were invited to form the Steering Committee (see Box 1). Together they represent the most relevant umbrella organizations. The intervention logic was developed in consultation with the Steering Committee, as well as with other signatories and partners. The Bureau will continuously test, learn and adapt (see 2.6) in consultation with its network of stakeholders (for the network see 2.4).

Learning from phase one

The enabling environment will be strengthened based on experience during the first project phase. This leads to adjustments for the second phase (Table 1).

Impact, goals and results: changes from phase one to phase two

The lessons learned in phase 1 and improvements that can be made in phase 2 are the foundation for the plans for the second project phase.

The main changes in comparison to phase 1 are:

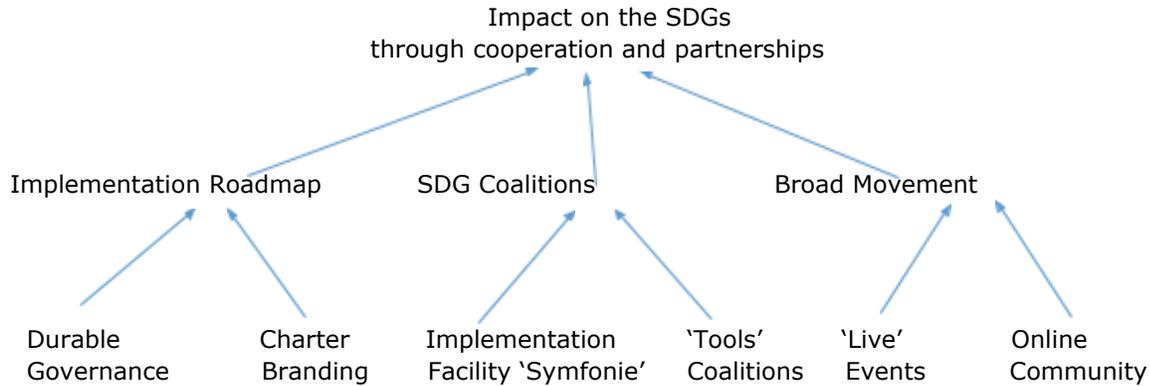
- Solution Partnerships turned out to be too much beyond the span of control of the Charter to be a goal, but are still very important because they have real impact on the real world, which is why they are better placed at the level of impact. The formulation of impact was adjusted accordingly.
- The Implementation Roadmap is the most important new development and will become a goal. It has the potential to become the backbone of the work of the Charter.
- Durable governance is still essential, but can be seen as instrumental rather than a goal and it is very much within the span of control, therefore better placed at result level.
- The Work streams will be upgraded to Coalitions. These are essential to carry implementation. We will split them into SDG Coalitions and Coalitions in support of those (namely Symfonie and 'Tools' coalitions). The SDG Coalitions are not completely within our span or control and are very important, so are better placed at goal level. The others are best placed at result level.
- SDGNederland.NL and SDGGateway.NL are taken together as the SDG Community. They might also be integrated into one platform in practice.

All in all this leads to a more compact chain of goals and results.

An overview of the adjusted goals and results for phase 2 is given below (Picture 1 and Table 1) and is reflected in more detail in the logical framework (Attachment 1).

Impact, goals and results in phase 2

Picture 1: Overview of goals and results in phase 2



These goals are interlinked and reinforce each other: The Implementation Roadmap will identify priority challenges and opportunities for Dutch organizations nationally and internationally, on the way to the SDGs. The Coalitions convene key players around SDGs to contribute to the Roadmap and its implementation. The Broad Movement carries, inspires and drives the innovations and actions necessary for the implementation of the Roadmap. All the results taken together provide the enabling environment for the goals.

Table 1: Goals and Results for Phase 2

<i>Goals and results in phase 2</i>	<i>Elaboration and interlinkages</i>
1. Implementation Roadmap	The Implementation Roadmap for the SDGs will identify priority challenges and opportunities, based on input from inside and outside of the SDG 'bubble', and plan for implementation. Therefore, it will be linked to the SDG Coalitions, Symfonie and the Tools Coalitions. It will support the Broad Movement, by involving diverse groups and individuals. It will be the backbone of the SDG Charter, because it provides a concrete and clear structure, where all of our work can come together. We will work together with Ministries and present it to coordinating Minister Kaag, as agreed. The roadmap itself is only the beginning, because we will work with groups such as the Coalitions to implement it.
1a. Governance	The Roadmap will involve many actors and therefore requires a clear and strong governance structure. The Steering Committee will be the core, as it is a group of umbrella organizations covering all sectors.
1b. Charter Branding	Charter branding will focus nationally on the Roadmap, with its signatories as frontrunners on that road. The Charter will make itself more visible internationally, by showing how it can be a model for society to have an active role in achieving the SDGs. We may consider a name change, because the name Charter is confusing to some, and change it for example into SDG-NL, with SDG.NL as community, to make it consistent.
2. Coalitions	The SDG Coalitions will be the place where key players around these SDGs come together and make plans. Some coalitions are already in place but need to be connected to the SDGs. Others will have to be set up, in order of priority (of where the greatest challenges are). They can help identify priority challenges and opportunities for the Roadmap and be ready for implementation. They will inspire and involve others around 'their' SDGs and thereby contribute to building a Broad Movement.

	2a. Symfonie	Symfonie will make a signpost for the various instruments (for funding and expertise) which can support partners in achieving the SDGS, it will link instruments as much as possible to the SDGs and it will identify whether there are still gaps and work on fixing those gaps together, either within existing instruments or by setting up new facilities. Overall, this should lead to a 'symfonie' of instruments, which reinforce each other in just the right way, to create optimal support for contributions to the SDGs. This will support the Coalitions and others to implement the Implementation Roadmap. 'Symfonie' is a Dutch word, loosely based on the acronym for SDG Impact Facility.
	2b. Tools Coalitions	Tools coalitions will work together to improve the tools necessary to enable the Coalitions and others to contribute to the SDGs. We will make sure that the tools available can be found and that we work together on improving the tools and linking them to the SDGs. A communication coalition was already set up and will be continued. A coalition working on (harmonizing) impact reporting may be in the making, together with the SDG Coordinator. A coalition on certification and beyond (for example blockchain) can be considered. Other coalitions may be set up, if there is a need and willingness.
	3. Broad Movement	A Broad Movement is necessary, because citizens can drive or stall the actions and innovations required to achieve the SDGs. As starting points, we will take youth and SMEs. Youth because they are the future and can be reached through fun things. SMEs because as a group they have a huge impact. We already work with VNO and the bigger companies, who can help to pull along the SMEs. To reach a broader audience, we will work on creative ways, such as a bus tour, and work with partners with similar goals, such as NCDO.
	Events	Events as the place to be for everyone working on the SDGs or interested in doing so, the main one being SDG Action Day on the SDG birthday September 25. In addition, we will piggyback on events by others to reach a broader audience, for example at festivals.
	Online Community	The SDG Gateway is the online basis for all our work (such as the Coalitions) and it is the place to be for professionals who want to showcase their work and find partners. We are considering integrating SDGNederland into this, in order to concentrate our budget more, but also to have a clearer brand.

Measurement

In general, it is hard to measure impact and thus the success of an intervention. In the case of the SDGs, various systems are being developed for certain types of organizations, but not yet a uniform impact reporting system for all sectors. This is confusing for partners and it makes it difficult to aggregate impact. The Charter will work with partners to improve ways for SDG-reporting (result 2b), but to make it comparable it has to be part of an international effort. For measuring the goals of the Charter, some useful indicators were found, as well as for the results. The baselines for this second phase will be established during the evaluation of the first phase (which is at the start of the second phase). (See logical framework for indicators.)

Attribution

In terms of attribution, the impact of the Charter on the SDGs leads to a contradiction: the better the Charter works to catalyse (joint) action on the SDGs, the greater the ripple effect will be way beyond its direct partners, the more they impact the SDGs. So more impact leads to less direct attribution. Attribution of the goals is more direct, but by their very nature none of the goals can be achieved by the Charter alone, hence the Charter cannot take full responsibility and attribution can never be one on one to the Charter. The results can be attributed directly to the Bureau and it takes responsibility for this, because it plays a key role in achieving them, although they are still by their nature the result of cooperation.

Thematic priorities

All of these interventions are across the board, on all SDGs, because the Charter is about all SDGs and all SDGs are interconnected. However, in order to understand the situation and trends and to prioritize, reports on SDG progress and opportunities are taken into consideration. So for example, setting up a Coalition for gender is a priority, because the Netherlands is not yet on track on that issue.

National

Within the Netherlands, the main pieces of information are the reports and updates by the National Statistics Bureau (CBS) and the government. The CBS points out that the Netherlands is lagging behind on the issues of gender equality, energy and climate, biodiversity (quality of surface water) and its ecological footprint (in comparison to the EU, in 2018). Therefore, the Charter will ensure that these issues are taken up in the Implementation Roadmap and in the Coalitions.

International

Worldwide, statistical information and global analyses on the SDGs provided by the United Nations are the foundation for understanding international challenges and priorities. Some reports by other organizations (such as the 'Better Business – Better World' report) focus on the opportunities that come with the great transitions. The report 'Onderzoek Economisch Groeipotentieel van wereldwijde maatschappelijke uitdagingen' relates these international opportunities to Dutch solutions. Food security and nutrition (SDG2) is one of the major areas emerging from these reports and one where the Netherlands has much to offer. Water and urbanization are in a similar position. Gender equality issues are often presented as problems rather than opportunities, a frame which the Charter will try to change in order to have a more constructive approach.

Tasks

The Bureau will carry out all the tasks as specified in the logframe, in which they are linked to goals, results and activities. In terms of types of tasks, this can be summarized as follows:

- drive the process and content for the Implementation Roadmap
- function as a service desk for the SDGs (answer questions or direct through)
- make presentations on the SDGs and the Charter (at conferences etc.)
- entice organizations to contribute to the SDGs, increase that level, and show it
- convince people to take the lead in cooperation on the SDGs, such as for the Coalitions
- catalyse organizations to cooperate on the SDGs
- organize inspiring meetings and find the right participants and speakers
- build a network of organizations by working together (on Events, in Coalitions, Steering Cie etc.)
- find ways to find joint solutions to joint problems (such as communication)
- lobby to link existing or new institutions and initiatives to the SDGs (such as those on finance)
- export the Charter concept
- build bridges between society and government, together with national coordinator
- promote the SDGs as an action agenda for all
- manage the online community
- explore and secure ways for in-kind and in-cash contributions and income
- develop a durability strategy

2.4 Added value in network

Unique

The added value of the SDG Charter is that it is the only dedicated SDG organization in the Netherlands as well as the only societal organization which is in a position to convene other organizations which work or want to work on the SDGs, to catalyse joint action and to help create synergy among organizations.

Counterpart

In doing so, especially for the national part, it cooperates closely with its counterpart at the government; the National Coordinator for SDG Implementation (in short in this document: SDG Coordinator). Being in touch with signatories and partners, understanding what they need and finding ways to provide that, are done in close cooperation with him, ensuring complementarity.

Principles

The Charter has built up its position and gained the trust required to hold this position over the first project phase (1/9/2016 - 1/9/2018). Its partners have indicated that the following principles are essential for this position. The SDG Charter has to be:

- neutral
- flexible
- catalytic
- inclusive
- transparent
- non-competing

Organization

These principles define the role of the Charter Bureau. It has to balance between being small enough to be catalytic and flexible, while being big enough to be a reliable partner, to build the network and play its leveraging role effectively. It does not take ownership, but stimulates ownership among partners as much as possible, making the results and goals as independent from the Bureau as possible. Bases on experience, three staff seems to be the right middle road between small and big enough. Interns add to the dynamics. To be inclusive, the Steering Committee was set up, but the Bureau will seek more diversity through its activities (e.g. gender balance, involving people from diverse backgrounds, interdisciplinary approach). Being inclusive, neutral, transparent and non-competing is essential for trust, but also means that the Bureau can hardly develop anything exclusive to 'sell'. Hence it is appropriate that it has the legal entity of a foundation, not a social enterprise (see 2.6).

Network

The Charter Bureau is a convener, but not from the outside. It is part of the networks. In all of its activities it seeks cooperation, because this will help to build a movement and a durable governance structure. Fortunately, there are many very good partner organizations in the Netherlands. Examples are given below, but it is not an exhaustive overview and the network is growing every day.

Where possible, the Bureau co-creates. Events were co-created and often co-funded with students (EFR), DSGC (Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition, 8 multinationals), the SDG House (KIT), World Connectors, Amsterdam Municipality, NCDO and Steering Committee members. It involved various organizations to host sessions (e.g. Africa Rise, Wo=Men). It organizes SDG sessions at other events, such as Springtij, National Sustainability Congress and One Young World (discussions ongoing) and gives presentations at many more events (such those by Avans Hogescholen, Rheden). It cooperates with other campaigns (such as Adopt an SDG, by Building Change).

Its websites too are co-creations, with OneWorld (SDGNederland.NL) and C-Change (SDGGateway.NL). This however may change, to use means more efficiently. For the latter, 10 other platforms (such as Nudge, MAEX, MVO-NL and Hero's and Friends) were consulted and involved.

Where the Bureau encounters shared problems or opportunities, it will work together on joint solutions and on jointly seizing opportunities. For Symfonie, together with Board and Steering Committee members, it consults and cooperates with the DSGC, NIBC, InvestNL, NL International Business, RVO etc. It explores a Dutch Implementation Roadmap with CEO DSM, CEO Unilever, the DSGC, NWO, SER, CBS and many others. It cooperates with networks such as 'Leren voor morgen' and Holland Circular Hotspot to link their Coalitions to the SDGs. It showcases partnerships, such as those initiated by Philips (Community Life Centres) and AkzoNobel (Human Cities Coalition).

The communication coalition is another example of working together on shared issues. It joins the forces of the Steering Committee and Ministries in a coalition. In addition, the Bureau aligns with or participates in other relevant communication initiatives, such as DIF (makes paid SDG publications and a website, partners among others journalists), YES (consumer product-based campaign, partners among others Unilever, Dutch, Rabo, still under the radar) and Young Impact Celebration (festival to involve schoolchildren in sustainability, cooperation being explored).

Its Board, Steering Committee members and staff play prominent roles in relevant other networks and initiatives, such as '17DoelenDieJeDeelt', SDG-Investing, World Connectors, 'Nederland Kantelt' and the Transitions on Circular Economy.

Finally, the SDG Charter seeks international like-minded organizations, to inspire them to work with the SDG Charter model and link to the global SDG movement. Cooperation with the Belgium Charter and exchanges with the Mexican and Danish governments on a potential Charter are examples. The Bureau works with international networks such as the UN SDG Action Campaign and the UN Training Centre.

Change

As the SDG landscape changes, roles of organizations in the network, including the Charter, may change. This could entail that a catalyser such as the Charter is no longer necessary, or that another organization is better fit to take up (part of) this role, or that the Charter should continue to play this role but adapted to the new landscape.

2.5 Contributions

In-kind

The significant in-kind contributions to the Charter's activities are an indicator of the commitment and willingness of organizations to work with the Charter. During the first project phase, the in-kind contributions were about double the amount of time-investment required according to the budget. During the second phase, the ambition for the level of these contributions will be to double the investment by Foreign Affairs (see under 'budget' and in logical framework).

In-cash

There was no level planned for in-cash contributions during the first project phase, and some in-cash income was generated, but this was dwarfed by the in-kind contributions. The Charter has consulted signatories and business model consultants on how to raise the in-cash level. They advised that this often carries the risk of undermining the principles of the Charter (see 2.4) and thereby the goals of the Charter. For example, acquisition would often lead to competition with the partners in approaching the same clients or donors. Advertising could undermine neutrality. High fees would make the Charter

exclusive. Nevertheless, during the first project phase, experience was gained with ways to generate in-cash income without undermining the Charter, and this will be explored further during the second phase along the following lines: product-based, specific and generic (see below).

Product-based

One way of generating income is product-based. This can generate relatively small in-cash contributions, which do not undermine the Charter's principles and goals, and can sometimes support its goals. For example, if co-created events are also co-funded, it creates equal partners. Reasonable entree fees for events make participants more committed. If 'Symfonie' will be realised, the Bureau may charge it for its services. The Charter will continue to seek such opportunities. However, in general, these product-based opportunities will probably not be at the level required for core-funding of the Bureau.

Specific

Core-funding is hard to obtain by private partners (both companies and foundations), because they do not like to pay for overhead and prefer more specific contributions. They indicate that the SDGs are too broad for them, since they usually operate in a niche. In addition, they believe that convening organizations and individuals for the SDGs is largely a public task. They would rather contribute to specific (sub-)SDGs or projects, dovetailing with their core-business. This would not contribute to core-funding for the Charter Bureau, but it would contribute to the goals of the Charter. Therefore, the Charter will continue to seek their in-cash or in-kind (like expertise) SDG specific support, for example within the impact facility 'Symfonie' or for the Implementation Roadmap.

Generic

In addition, the Charter will continue to explore ways to find generic (core) funding, which does not undermine and if possible supports its principles (see 2.4) and goals. An example is subsidy from the European Commission (EC), preferably together with Charter-type organizations in other countries, which could contribute to forming an international societal SDG movement.

2.6 Evaluation and durability

Since the SDG landscape is dynamic, the Charter Bureau constantly seeks feedback and adapts to the circumstances. (In fashionable terms: it is 'agile'.) Being relatively small helps it to remain flexible.

Evaluations

Dedicated moments for feedback are the Steering Committee meetings (four times per year). In addition, two evaluations will be conducted. The first one, right at the start of this second project phase (around September 2018). This evaluation will look back at the first project phase (Sept. 2016- Sept. 2018). This will help to fine tune plans for the second project phase (Sept. 2018- Sept. 2021). The second evaluation will be mid-term the second phase (so around March 2020). It will focus on whether the Charter has worked for the signatories so far, and what they need and have to offer in the long run to achieve the SDGs. This should include the role they see for themselves and for the Charter Bureau. The Charter has a much broader reach than the signatories, so any feedback received from beyond the signatories will also be taken into account.

Long term funding

The Bureau will further explore options for long term (core) funding, which support the Charter's goals, as elaborated above (see 2.5). The most promising option seems to be EU funding.

Durability

On the basis of these two (evaluations and long term funding), the Bureau will develop a durability strategy, which will outline the best way to secure increasing impact on the SDGs, after the second project phase. Depending on the changing SDG landscape, this may entail a different role or type of work for the SDG Charter Foundation. For example, its place in the network may have changed (see 2.4) and the funding situation for the Charter or its results might have evolved (see 2.5). The durability strategy will take into account how to secure the achieved goals and results of the Charter. To ensure a smooth transition to a potential different role of the Foundation after the second phase, a course adjustment may be proposed for the last year of the project phase (Sept. 2020 – Sept. 2021).

2.7 Assumptions, risks, mitigation

Cooperation

The main assumption for this intervention is that more effective cooperation (avoiding fragmentation) will lead to more impact on the SDGs. This is what the signatories indicate, but proof will have to be built up. This will take time, because building up cooperation takes time and creating impact with it takes even more time. In addition, impact is always hard to measure and attribute, on top of the fact that there is no uniform measuring system for the SDGs (let alone for partnerships working on the SDGs). A related assumption is that signatories and other partners are willing to make the investments necessary for cooperation on the SDGs. This risk is relevant for all of the Charter's results, but is mainly for 'Symfonie', the SDG Coalitions and the Implementation Roadmap, because they require large (in-cash and/or in-kind) contributions from partners.

The risk associated with these assumptions is that in the end, these interventions will not generate enough investments from partners and will not result in enough impact on the SDGs.

The Charter will mitigate this risk by constantly testing with its partners whether the intervention of the Charter supports them in their efforts to have impact on the SDGs (see 2.4). It will also work with relevant parties on improving ways to measure impact on the SDGs (see 2.3).

Durability

Another assumption is that the interventions during the second project phase as well as their long-term impacts will be durable, even after this phase ends. This risk is relevant for all the Charter's results, but mainly for the websites, because they require in-cash contributions from the Bureau to function, and they are generic so cannot be taken over by others easily.

The risk is that interventions are not durable and this would mean a loss of investments by the Charter and its partners. It could also backfire on new attempts to facilitate the achievement of the SDGs.

The Charter will mitigate this risk by making the results (together forming the enabling environment for the three goals) as strong and self-sufficient as possible, stimulating ownership among partners as much as possible. It will reconsider its role in this enabling environment with a view to the longer term at the midterm evaluation, and plan accordingly during the third year (see 2.7).

Capacity

An assumption on the organization itself is that the Charter Bureau has enough capacity to execute its mission ('connect for impact') in an effective way.

Because of the nature of this mission, the risk is that the Bureau will overstretch (there is no natural limit to connecting). This would entail exhaustion of staff and disappointed partners. At the same time, the Charter wants to be inclusive, so drawing a line (and not helping everyone) entails the risk of undermining its principles. This risk is relevant for all the Charter's results, but mainly for the Implementation Roadmap and the SDG Coalitions, because they are very labour intensive and depend very much on the goodwill of others. Because of this risk, staffing has been prioritized. This means budget cuts elsewhere, leading to no budget for the coalitions and greatly reduced budgets for the website and community. This means that the core staff will have to do all the work for these coalitions and online environments, and the risk is that this will either drain the additional staff (of 1) or lead to suboptimal results for these goals and results.

The Bureau will mitigate this risk by constantly checking which activities will have the greatest impact and focus on those (so the main criterion is the leverage that can be achieved), while ensuring that the general enabling environment works for everyone (without further input from the Bureau for individual organizations). For example, the Bureau will actively seek cooperation with strong organizations which can become leaders for SDG Coalitions or which can contribute to 'Symfonie', but it will not support small organizations in finding partners and instead direct them to events and the Gateway. Still, to be inclusive, the Charter does often have to play the role of SDG helpdesk, which is very time consuming.

Spending

An assumption is that the Bureau will spend its means transparently and fairly.

The risk is that this will not happen internally or externally. Based on experience during the first phase, this risk is most relevant when working in co-creation with third parties. This can blur the lines between assignments (open to all) and cooperation (with partners) and thereby make spending less transparent and fair.

The Bureau will mitigate this risk by drawing up an integrity policy during the first phase. It will focus on the risks in working in co-creation with third parties. The Bureau sees fewer risks in other areas related to integrity, such as fraud and corruption, because it is a small organization with a lot of oversight (Board, Steering Committee) and with checks and balances already in place: The Steering Committee steers the course of the Charter. The Board has to approve all (content and financial) reports to Foreign Affairs. It also has to approve payments above 10.000 euro beforehand. All payments have to be approved by two Bureau staff members beforehand. The financial reports are backed by receipts, as collected by an external administration office (Tunen) and are available upon request. An audit report will be made.

3. Budget elaboration

De budget during phase one was largely suitable for the work of the Bureau. Therefore, this will be the basis for phase two, with some important adjustments, based on experience during the first phase. This is elaborated below.

The Bureau had some under-expenditures during the first year, for two reasons:

- First, because of larger than expected in-kind contributions as well as some in-cash contributions, which were not budgeted, but which were very welcome.
- Second, because the Bureau did not have the capacity during this set-up phase for certain activities which would have led to expenditures (such as developing communications materials).

This was corrected during the second year, by bringing in more capacity and carrying out all the activities.

It became clear during the first year that capacity was too limited (see e.g. 2.7). In addition, it turned out that for important results, the budget was very lean in comparison to similar activities. This was the case in particular for the websites and for the SDG Work streams. The budget for the websites will nevertheless be reduced, due to budget constraints and priority for core staffing. The Work streams will be upgraded to Coalitions, but for budget they will have to turn to organizations working on 'their' SDGs (Ministries etc.). For other activities, the budget could be slightly reduced. A brief overview of these changes is given below (Table 2), followed by an elaboration on the most important issues.

Table 2 - Relation between budget and goals & results, as well as comparison to phase 1

<i>Budget lines</i>	<i>Goals and results (phase 2)</i>	<i>Comparison to phase 1 (on annual basis)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Salaries and contributions	Core	Large increase	For large additional capacity
Facilities and travel costs	Core	Slight decrease	For more staff, but decrease because of in-kind contributions
Communications	Goal 3	Increase	For higher ambitions
Events and facilities	Goal 3 - Result 3.a	Slight decrease	Because of contributions by partners
Partnership support	Goal 2	Similar	
Administration	Core	Similar	
Websites	Goal 3 - Result 3.b	Large decrease	In spite of already very tight budgets, in comparison to similar websites, due to budget constraints
No budget line	Goal 2 - Result 2.a Goal 2 - Result 2.b	n.a.	Core funding is used to set up 'Symfonie'. The actual fund/facility would be funded by others (negotiations ongoing). Coalitions for other joint issues (such as communication) are paid from core funding as well.
	Goal 1 Goal 1 - Result 1.a	n.a.	Core funding is used to facilitate the Steering Committee and to facilitate the Implementation Roadmap process. The actual analysis would have to be funded by others (negotiations have started).
	Goal 1 - Result 1.b	n.a.	Work on the Charter is the basis and therefor interwoven with other budget lines (e.g. communication for branding, core for services, etc.).

Main reduction

For the website and online community, the budget was very tight, but it worked thanks to co-creation and cooperation. This is explained below. Interns played an important role for the websites.

- SDG Gateway: The Bureau wanted to build this on one of the existing platforms, but none of those wanted to do this for 50.000 Euro. (They requested at least 100.000-200.000 Euro) In addition, community management was not included the budget. Similar platforms have multiple FTEs for community management. The Gateway could finally be built by co-creating it with C-Change. It allowed for hosting fees and for community management (8 hours a week). This is still very modest, so expectations for the growth of the community had to be accordingly. To optimize

results, community management was focused on pulling in large partners (such as VNG) and on linking to live events.

- SDG Nederland: the budget in phase 1 allowed for a journalist for 16 hours a week. It worked because this journalist is part of OneWorld and content is shared.

Due to budget constraints, these budgets will be greatly reduced. To use means more efficiently, the community and website may be merged. Management of the community and website will be taken up by core staff, which will be expanded (by 1).

Based on experience during the first phase, other budget lines can be kept at a similar level, in spite of more staff, or even be trimmed, mainly due to in-kind and in-cash contributions by partners (for example for events). However, these trimmings are small in comparison to the big changes above and below.

Main increase

It became clear during the first phase, that three rather than two staff works much better, because it provides more stability and leverage, and hence this is proposed for the second phase:

1. **Bureau staff:** The Bureau proposes to hire one more permanent staff for phase 2. A Bureau of two staff can perform its basic functions, but a Bureau of three is able to go beyond that and invest more in activities which create a lot of leverage (for example finding strong SDG Coalition leads or making the impact facility "Symfonie" work) and strategic impact (for example linking financial instruments more closely to the SDGs). This is based on experience during the second year of phase 1. The Bureau could do even more with still more staff, but the Steering Committee made clear that a catalytic organization should remain small and the budget does not allow for more. It will increase its capacity with interns, but due to budget constraints there can only be a few.
2. **Project period:** It was felt during the first phase that two years is too short to have meaningful cycles of planning and evaluating, and thus for learning and improving. At the same time, four years seems a lot in a changing SDG landscape. Therefore, a second phase of three years is proposed.

This leads to a budget request of about 0,275 million per year, for 3 years. The budget in the excel attachment gives a detailed overview.

In addition to the budget request, a secondment is requested to maintain strong links between Foreign Affairs and the SDG Charter. Together, this would amount to about 0,45 million euro per year. (Conversion rate 1FTE = 1750 hours/year x 100 euro/hour = 175.000 euro.)

The Bureau aims to double this amount with (mostly in-kind) contributions from its signatories, amounting to about 0,9 million euro per year (same conversion rate). Details can be found at the bottom of the overview in the excel attachment.

In addition, the Bureau will seek for additional funding, if this aligns with the goals and principles of the Charter, for example EU funding. This will be used for the same goals and results, while raising the level of ambition.

Attachment: Logical Framework

	Description	Indicators		
	This is an elaboration of Table 2 and should be read in conjunction with it.	Assumptions and risks are generic and are listed in the Theory of Change. Baselines will be generated by the evaluation at the beginning of phase 2		
Impact	JOINT IMPACT ON THE SDGs	End of project phase (31-8-21)		
	Impact on the SDGs, through cooperation and partnerships	Impact on the SDGs (targets/indicators) measured by CBS (national) and UN (global).		
		Number of Dutch organizations reporting on their impact on the SDGs.		
		Improvements in systems for impact reporting. Number of partnerships		
Outcomes/ Goals	COOPERATION ON THE SDGs	2019 (until 1-9)	2020 (until 1-9)	2021 (until 1-9)
1	SDG Implementation Roadmap	Phase 1: Inclusive consultation, in and out of bubble. Pre-selection of best opportunities by Steering Cie. Find financial means for the number crunching: Phase 2: Number crunching to select the best opportunities out of the results of the consultation. Phase 3: Roadmap ready. Link to (financial) instruments.	Phase 3: Joint implementation of 2 priorities from the Roadmap. (Many more priorities may be implemented, but without direct involvement of the Charter, therefore not listed here) Keep improving roadmap and involving broad audience.	Phase 3: Joint implementation of 2 more priorities from the Roadmap. (Many more priorities may be implemented, but without direct involvement of the Charter, therefore not listed here) Keep improving roadmap and involving broad audience.
2	SDG Coalitions	1 new one around a priority SDG 1 existing one linked to the SDGs 1 joint meeting of the leaders of SDG coalitions. Leaders have to be diverse.	1 new one around a priority SDG 1 existing one linked to the SDGs 1 joint meeting of the leaders of SDG coalitions. Leaders have to be diverse.	1 new one around a priority SDG 1 existing one linked to the SDGs 1 joint meeting of the leaders of SDG coalitions. Leaders have to be diverse.
3	SDG movement	1500 (youth) participants reached at conferences or festivals 100 new initiatives on the online community: SDG Gateway (action) 2000 unique online visitors each month	1500 (youth) participants reached at conferences or festivals 100 new initiatives (action) 2000 unique online visitors each month	1500 (youth) participants reached at conferences or festivals 100 new initiatives (action) 2000 unique online visitors each month

		1.5 million views at articles via mainstream media (online and offline)	1.5 million views at articles via mainstream media (online and offline)	1.5 million views at articles via mainstream media (online and offline)
		5% of NL youth (<25) reached through partners via social media (= 250.000 individuals)	7.5% of NL youth reached (cumulative)	10% of youth reached (cumulative) = 500.000 individuals.
Outputs/ Results	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE GOALS	2019 (until 1-9)	2020 (until 1-9)	2021 (until 1-9)
Mainly in support of goal 1: SDG Implementation Roadmap				
1a	Governance			
	Steering Committee Meetings	4 meetings	4 meetings	4 meetings
	Input of Steering Committee to Implementation Roadmap and its implementation	Input into the ToR of the Roadmap (process)		
		Input into the Roadmap itself (priorities)	Support implementation of the Roadmap	Support implementation of the Roadmap
		Consult members on priorities for the Roadmap	Involve members in implementation of the Roadmap	Involve members in implementation of the Roadmap
		Pre-selection of best opportunities (out of all the results of the inclusive consultation)		
	Evaluation of Steering Committee	Evaluation and recommendations	Implementation of recommendations	
1b	Branding SDG Charter nationally and internationally			
	Signatories show how they contribute to the SDGs. By signing, they have only committed to contributing to the SDGs (undefined). Anything additional will have to be agreed with them:	All signatories show how they contribute to the SDGs in the Gateway	All signatories update their contributions in the Gateway	All signatories update their contributions in the Gateway
	Agreement on what it means to be a Charter signatory, in consultation with signatories (e.g. more requirements).	Agreement.	Implementation of agreement.	Input to durability strategy on role of signatories.
	Stimulate contribution to work of the Bureau (in-cash or in-kind)	Overview of contributions by signatories.	Overview of contributions by signatories.	Overview of contributions by signatories.
	SDG Charter known in the Netherlands among relevant groups	300 Charter signatories (cumulative)	400 Charter signatories (cumulative)	500 Charter signatories (cumulative)
	SDG Charter concept known abroad, to promote international cooperation and learning.	2 presentations for an international audience	2 presentations for an international audience	2 presentations for an international audience
	Durability strategy for the SDG Charter, or rather its goals and results, taking into account the changing SDG landscape	Input for durability strategy from Steering Cie and signatories and partners	Durability strategy ready	Preparation for post-phase 2

	Manage website SDGCharter.NL and help new signatories on their way. This site contains basic information on the Charter and for its signatories. It is the worldwide window for our Charter approach.	Website updated with reports etc. 100 new signatories helped.	Website updated with reports etc. 100 new signatories helped.	Website updated with reports etc. 100 new signatories helped.
Mainly in support of goal 2: SDG Coalitions				
2a	Symfonie SDG Impact Facility 'Symfonie': jointly improve access to expertise and funding for SDGs, to fix gaps in the 'pipeline' for social and commercial innovation, also as a nursery for other investors, such as InvestNL. This will support the Coalitions and others to implement the Implementation Roadmap.	First 'signposting' of various instruments at SDG Action Day and discussion of gaps. Signpost (online) for the various instruments (for funding and expertise) which can support partners in achieving the SDGS (Grand) Challenge model further explored, for use in NL (with partners) or for use by the EC (with help from Dutch partners), both linking NL to a worldwide network	Instruments linked to the priorities of the Implementation Roadmap Existing and new instruments as much as possible linked to the SDGs Identified whether there are still gaps in the 'symfonie' of instruments. Strategy for fixing those gaps together, either within existing instruments or by setting up new facilities (if needed).	Instruments used for implementation of the Roadmap Coalition working on fixing gaps together.
2b	'Tools' coalitions Tools coalitions will work together to improve the tools necessary to enable the Coalitions and others to contribute to the SDGs. We will make sure that the tools available can be found (online and via events) and that we work together on improving the tools and linking them to the SDGs. More coalitions may be set up, if there is a need and willingness. These can be taken up as priorities in the Implementation Roadmap.	Communication coalition (communication experts from Steering Cie members and Ministries) carried out its own agenda (which includes developing materials, setting priorities, learning from each other, meeting other communication experts from companies and consultants).	Coalition on(harmonizing) impact reporting may be set up (with National Coordinator), if there is a need and willingness Coalition on certification and beyond (for example block chain) may be set up, if there is a need and willingness	Coalitions carried out their own agenda's
Mainly in support of goal 3: SDG Movement				
3a	SDG Events: join forces for a visible movement SDG Action Day in SDG House, with national outreach, focused on professionals,	1 conference with 500	1 conference with 500 participants	1 conference with 500 participants

	co-organized with others, to broaden the group of frontrunners. Includes workshops around SDGs and tools.	Participants (= max capacity of SDG House)		
	Light involvement in other events, such as conferences and festivals, to make SDGs or SDG Charter visible	2	2	2
	SDG roadshow focused on a broader audience, co-organized with others, to build a movement. Participants can contribute to the Implementation Roadmap.	Plan developed, making use of results of pilot (in phase 1). (Funding) partners involved. Exploration of how to link an online roadmap for this tour to the online Implementation Roadmap.	If funding found, road trip started and visited Global Goals municipalities (and companies, schools, etc.), made visible through online roadmap. The roadshow can end by summer 2020, by handing over to the SDG Clipper (initiative by others), which will make a tour past 17 world cities (if this materializes).	
3b	SDG Online Community: showcase & find each other, find news and information			
	SDG Gateway: community where everyone (main target group: professionals) can show what they/their organizations are doing, find each other and join the action, find funding, expertise, tools, etc. In English, to allow for international connections with similar platforms (which are developed by partner C-Change). Due to budget constraints, there can be only minimal community management, which means minimal dynamics, but the Roadmap and the Coalitions may create some.	1000 profiles (individuals and organizations)	1.250 profiles (cumulative)	1.500 profiles (cumulative)
		Online support for the Implementation Roadmap (its level of sophistication depends on other funding). If possible linked to the Roadmap of the SDG Roadshow.	Updates	Updates
		Online support for the SDG Coalitions and the 'Tools' Coalitions.	Updates	Updates
	SDG Nederland: online information, news, events on the SDGs to involve a broad Dutch audience, therefore in Dutch. Partner OneWorld. Due to budget constraints, merging this into the Gateway is considered.	Consideration to merge into Gateway, unless other ways (of funding) are found). Strategy for future of SDGNederland.	Implementation of strategy	Implementation of strategy
Activities				
1	Lead process on roadmap: organize meetings/consultations for roadmap inside and outside of bubble	Focus on phase 1 and 2 (consultation and selection)	Focus on phase 3 (implementation)	Focus on phase 3 (implementation)

	developing ToR, find funding, involve right partners, assign work to others (e.g. for number crunching), have a product ready in December, ensure and organize follow-up, ensure buy-in			
	Prepare Steering Cie, especially for its input in the Roadmap	4	4	4
	Carry out evaluation of Steering Cie	x		
	Organize and prepare board meetings, update on plans and financial situation	4	4	4
	Update Board and Steering Committee regularly of news and events	x	x	x
	Be in touch with signatories individually and collectively, show them the way, develop strategy together, send newsletter	x	x	x
	Be a service desk for everybody, answer questions, connect organizations, sharing this task with National Coordinator	x	x	x
	Maintain sdgcharter.nl	x	x	x
	Prepare and make presentations in NL and for international audience on the SDG Charter			
	Communicate through social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and write/be visible in articles	x	x	x
	Maintain or build links to SDG initiatives by others, such as 'Adopt an SDG' for politicians	x	x	x
	Further build the SDG network, by cooperation with like-minded organisations (like the DSGC and Worldconnectors) and SDG networks (such SDG Academy).	x	x	x
	Further cooperation with Belgium SDG Charter and similar initiatives, such as in Mexico	x	x	x
	Prepare durability strategy, including exploration of institution cooperation, other income. Get approved by Steering Committee and potential partners.		x	x
2	Build SDG Coalitions (or link existing ones to SDGs) together with SDG Coordinator, find leads, facilitate process. Try to involve popular people (artists etc.)	x	x	x
	Lead and organize the cooperation on 'Symfonie', involve key players. Do research for signposting and on gaps, including contact with relevant organizations (BZ, RVO, FMO, VNO, etc.)	x	x	x
	Lead and organize the 'tools' coalitions, find rights subjects,			

	partners and approach. Do research for signposting, including contact with the relevant organizations (PWC, EY, etc.)			
3	Be one of the leading/visible faces of the SDG movement	x	x	x
	Lead organization of SDG Actions Days with partners	x	x	x
	Prepare and present SDGs at conferences and festivals (such as Springtij, OneYoungWorld, Sustainability Congress, Charter signing ceremonies, etc.)	x	x	x
	Develop plan for VIP bus (roadshow), find (funding) partners	x	x	
	Explore option of SDG train wagons ("SDG Coupe")	x		
	Community management (online)	x	x	x
	Link Gateway to other platforms and involve groups (such as VNG)	x	x	x
	Make strategy for and evaluate SDGNederland and SDGGateway	x	x	x
Internal	Maintain financial administration	x	x	x
	Support staff and interns with trainings, job evaluations etc.	x	x	x
	Organize and process surveys and evaluations; report and plan annually	x	x	x
	Develop durability strategy		x	x
	Make integrity policy	x		