



# VALUE BASED SYSTEMIC CHANGE



## WHAT IT IS (DEFINITION)

The context of Woord en Daad has become more complex, with increasingly urgent and interconnected global crises related to planetary boundaries, resource scarcity, climate change, migration, and demographic challenges. It is essential to analyse and understand these interrelations in order to work in an impactful way. Through a systemic approach, we aim to **influence the underlying causes of poverty and socioeconomic inequality and to bring people and organisations together** across public, private, religious and social domains to achieve lasting change. We do this from our Christian identity in a **value driven way**, with the aim of contributing to **sustainable, just and inclusive change**.



## GOAL

Address deep rooted issues through value driven and adaptive approaches, seeking to create sustainable and transformative impacts in the countries and communities we serve.



## WHAT DID WE DO

To properly explore this theme and embed it in our work, we engaged in an extensive organisation wide **learning trajectory**, involving our partners as much as possible. Learning questions were formulated, tools were developed; studies were conducted, papers were written, and specific methodologies were explored and developed.

In addition, there was a lot of **dialogue** with partner organisations at implementation level, including discussions about power relations and how these can be shared more equitably.

Finally, there was a separate learning track focused on **measuring systemic change**.

One key tool developed is the **System Canvas**. The System Canvas is used for system analysis, defining ambitions, and identifying potential interventions and collaboration partners.



## RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Within Woord en Daad, an organisation wide systemic change approach has been initiated. This shows a clear **shift from stand**

**alone projects towards strategic partnerships** in which the **conditions for systemic change** are present. More information on these conditions, such as orchestrating and collaborative leadership, understanding and application of adaptive management, and continuous context mapping and analysis, can be found in the publication Partnerships aimed at Systemic Change.

**A new mindset is emerging**, in which Woord en Daad increasingly sees its role as connector and facilitator rather than implementer, taking a modest role in practice, while remaining ambitious in vision. We have started working at a **larger scale**, often together with governments. At the same time, **small local initiatives** can be just as systemic as large scale interventions.

**Tools** such as the System Canvas, Causal Loop Diagramming, and the System Ladder for Outcome Mapping for Systemic Change help to develop shared insights and change strategies, provided that teams and partners have sufficient skills. Outcome Mapping has proven to be a valuable method for measuring impact, as long as it is aligned with context and partnership. The Systemic Dimension Matrix helps to interpret the full set of available data on systemic change in a coherent way.

Projects are increasingly **embedded in networks, consortia and local policy frameworks**. This strengthens co creation and local ownership.

At the same time, **challenges** remain. Collaboration with governments is valuable but vulnerable due to political instability. Not all partners are familiar with systemic thinking, and it remains difficult in broad sectors to define clear system boundaries and to achieve truly system wide impact.



## WHAT WE TAKE WITH US GOING FORWARD

To further anchor the systemic approach within Woord en Daad, it is important to **continue developing the tools and methodologies** that have been created, make them more accessible, use them as a starting point for new policy themes and contexts, and **integrate them into standard ways of working**, so that the approach remains a fixed part of the entire policy cycle.

**Key points of attention** for the next policy period include identifying leverage points, making better use of local resources and actors through the so called catalyst role, keeping partners engaged after funding ends, and finding ways to scale impact to a broader level.

Further steps are also possible in the area of **monitoring and evaluation**. Especially in thematic programmes where multiple projects come together, tools such as Causal Loop Diagramming and the Systemic Dimension Matrix are valuable. These methodologies, including Outcome Mapping, can be more strongly embedded in impact measurement. Learning from one another and peer reflection stimulates growth and makes Value Based Systemic Change concrete and workable in practice.

Through an **Academy learning pathway and various initiatives focused on institutionalisation**, such as documenting core principles, periodic thermometer checks, and standard documents with practical examples, we aim to create structural space for knowledge sharing and mutual support, so that staff and partners continue to be equipped to further shape the systemic approach.

