



Utrecht University

CENTRE FOR  
GLOBAL  
CHALLENGES

Radboud Universiteit



3-8-2021

*DRAFT FINDINGS FOR IOB STAFF MEETING – JULY 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021*  
*Unintended effects in Dutch development  
cooperation*

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## Research question

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“Does the Ministry of Foreign Affairs take potential unintended effects into consideration in its policy, planning and evaluation practices, and if so, how?”

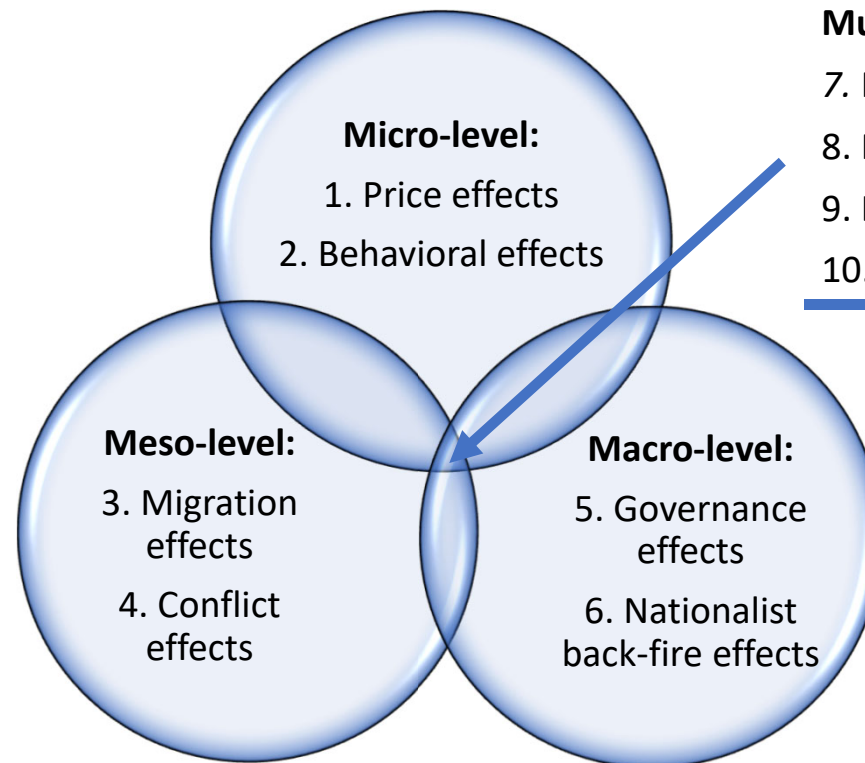
~ contributes to better planning for -  
and evaluation of - unintended  
effects



# Operational typology of unintended effects of international cooperation

An unintended effect became part of this operational typology if it passed the 3\*3\*3\*3 rule:

- It appeared in at least 3 different articles
- It occurred in at least 3 different domains of international cooperation
- It covered at least 3 different geographic areas
- It was written by at least 3 different (groups of) authors.



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## Multiple-level:

- 7. Marginalization effects
  - 8. Poor-process effects
  - 9. Leakage effects
  - 10. Catalytic effects
-

# Operational typology of unintended effects of international cooperation

Effect	Definition
<i>(Micro-level)</i>	
1. Price effect	Price-effects occur when the external intervention distorts local prices, either by strongly pushing or depressing demand and/or by inflicting monopsonies or other certification costs.
2. Behavioural effect	Behavioral effects occur when the psychological reaction of the recipient or affected persons of the external intervention differed from the initial prediction.
<i>(Meso-level)</i>	
3. Migration effect	External interventions can create extra economic and security pull & push factors resulting in population moving towards or from an area of intervention.
4. Conflict effect	An external intervention can engender additional tensions in and between communities because of for instance a perceived unequal treatment of (recipient and non-recipient) groups and communities.

# Operational typology of unintended effects of international cooperation

Effect	Definition
<i>(Macro-level)</i>	
5. Governance effect	External interventions can have a positive or negative impact on the quality of institutions at any level at the recipient country, because of for instance changing accountability relations and relaxed budget constraints.
6. Nationalist back-fire effect	A nationalist backfire effect occurs when a domestic political actor that risks seeing its relative power decline, succeeds to bolster its position or policy by casting intervention as foreign intrusion.

# Operational typology of unintended effects of international cooperation

Effect	Definition
<i>(Multiple-level)</i>	
7. Marginalization effect	Marginalization effects arise when an external intervention does not succeed in reaching (or are actually hurting) those who are already (relatively) marginalized, setting in motion a process of increasing inequality.
8. Poor-process effect	Compared to all the other unintended effect inventories in this research, the poor-process effects are situated at a different-level, as it hints more at the origin of the unintended effect than at the substance of the effect itself. Poor-processes effects refer to effects due to a substandard implementation of international cooperation efforts.
9. Leakage effect	Leakage effects materialize when communities and areas outside of the project/program intervention area negatively affected because of the intervention.
10. Catalytic effect	Catalytic effects are positive spill-over effects from the intervention area, beneficiary or domain to the non-intervention area, non-beneficiaries or non-intervention domains.

# Methodology

- Automated text search with thesaurus consisting of search terms synonym to 'unintended effects' (both English and Dutch)
- Total 738 documents in the dataset
  - 408 English and 330 Dutch documents
- Search terms are found in 339 English documents (83%) and 171 Dutch documents (52%)
- Categorised in five categories:
  0. No search terms found
  1. False positives
  2. Unintended effects mentioned but not reported upon
  3. Unintended effects considered but not found
  4. Unintended effects found and reported upon

# Findings I – document categories

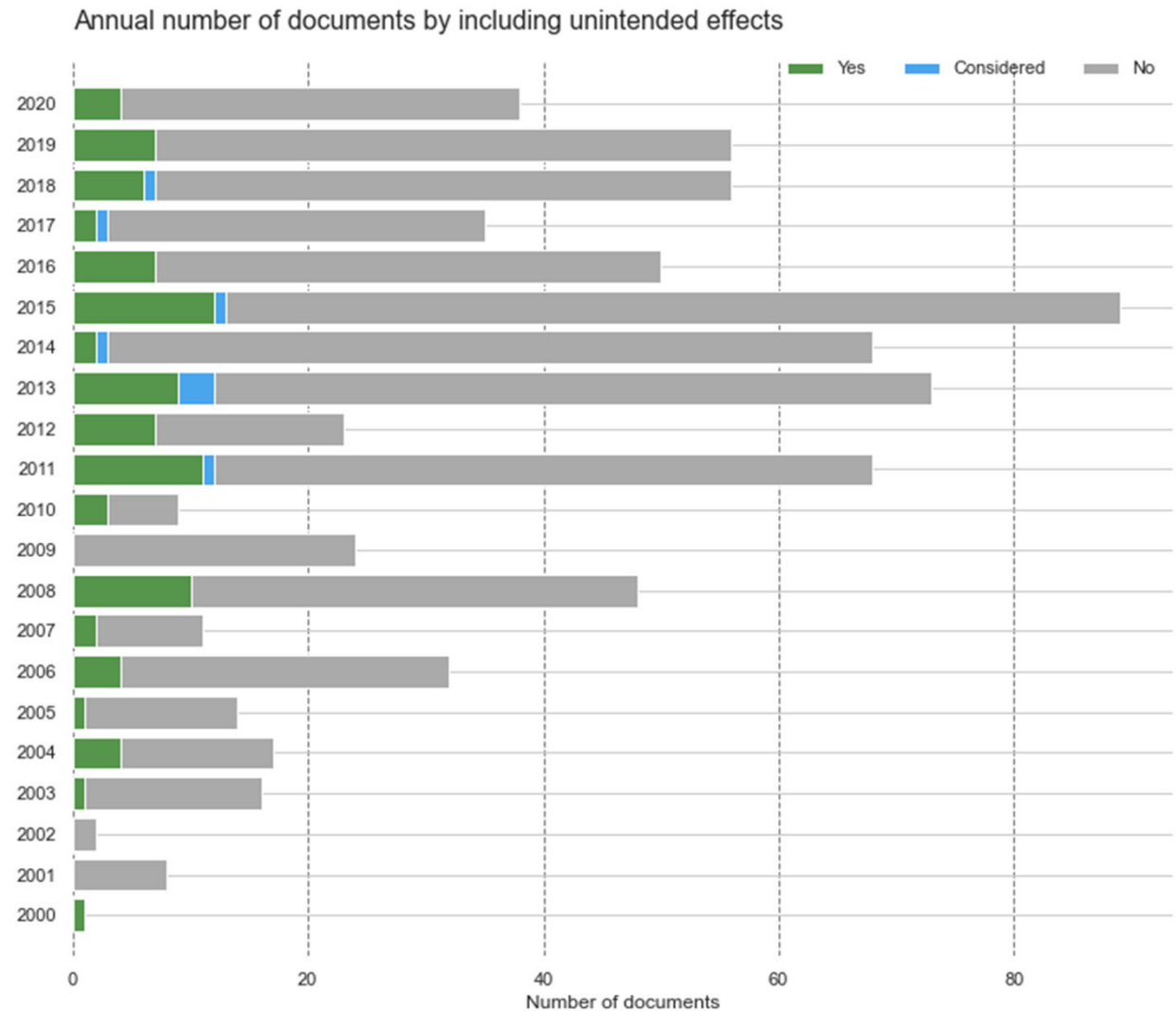
Category	Number of publications	Share
<b>0</b> no search terms	228	33.6%
<b>1</b> false positive	290	42.7%
<b>2</b> UIE mentioned	59	8.7%
<b>3</b> UIE considered	8	1.2%
<b>4</b> UIE reported upon	93	13.7%
<b>Total</b>	678	100%
<b>ToR</b>	60	



# Findings I – document categories

Number of publications that:

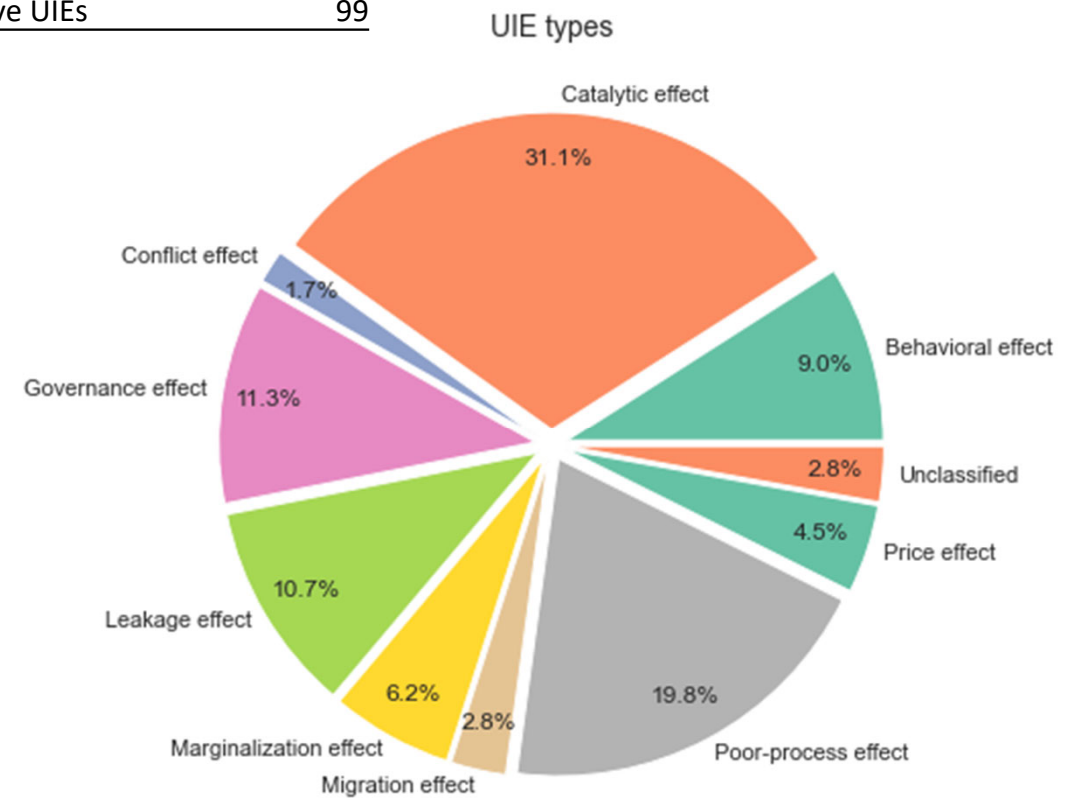
- report on unintended effects (category 4, green),
- considered unintended effects (category 3, blue)
- do not report on unintended effects (category 0, 1 and 2, grey)



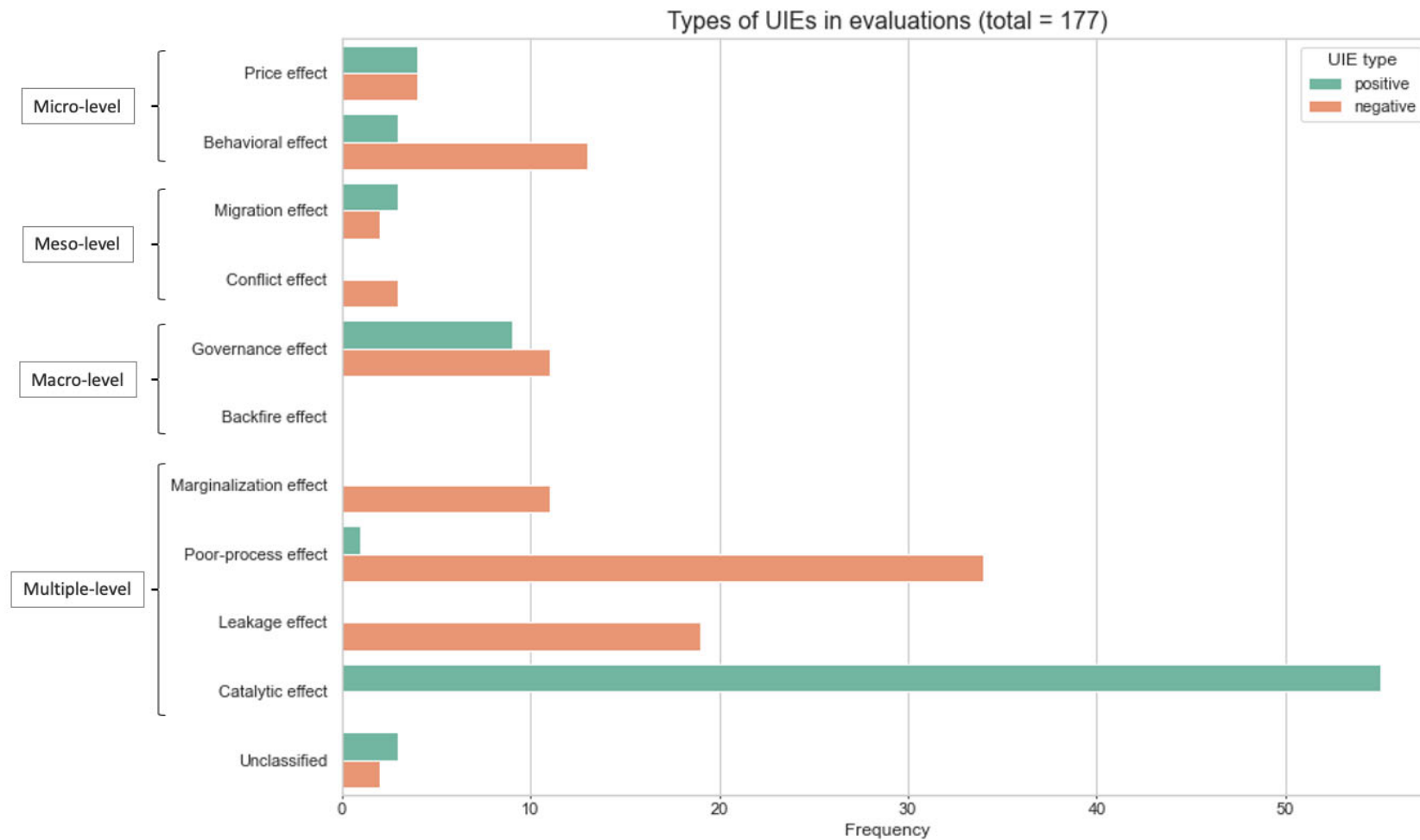
# Findings II – Types of unintended effects

<b>(Micro-level)</b>	
1. Price effect	8
2. Behavioral effect	16
<b>(Meso-level)</b>	
3. Migration effect	5
4. Conflict effect	3
<b>(Macro-level)</b>	
5. Governance effect	20
6. Nationalist backfire effect	0
<b>(Multiple-level)</b>	
7. Marginalization effect	11
8. Poor-process effect	35
9. Leakage effect	19
10. Catalytic effect	55
<b>(Other)</b>	
0. Unclassified	5
<b>Total of unintended effects</b>	<b>177</b>

Positive UIEs	78
Negative UIEs	99



# Findings II – Types of unintended effects



# Findings II – Types of unintended effects

Category	Evaluation	Quote
<i>(Micro-level effects)</i>		
1. Price effect	Riding the wave of sustainable commodity sourcing - Review of the Sustainable Trade Initiative IDH 2008-2013 (2014)	<i>“While this may not be the purpose of the public funding, it is likely to be a side-effect. There can be benefits for farmers (if better prices are offered due to eliminating middlemen, there is greater assurance of market access, or access to credit or inputs is facilitated), but it would also constrain the competitive environment for the farmers, reducing their bargaining power and making them more dependent on one particular outlet. By supporting a single trader’s efforts – even when this company has won an open call for proposals – the public funding intervenes in the market structure and may restrict competition.” (p. 88)</i> (negative)
2. Behavioural effect	The risk of vanishing effects – Impact evaluation of drinking water supply and sanitation programmes in rural Benin (2011)	<i>“An interesting but worrying negative unintended effect of the installation of improved water points is that households discontinue point-of-use water treatment to improve water quality.” (p. 111)</i> (negative)

# Findings II – Types of unintended effects

Category	Evaluation	Quote
<i>(Meso-level effects)</i>		
3. Migration effect	Work in Progress – Evaluation of the ORET Programme: Investing in Public Infrastructure in Developing Countries (2006)	<i>“The country benefits indirectly from the remittances of the engineers who have moved abroad and who are expected to return with more experience.” (p. 241)</i> (positive)
4. Conflict effect	Aiding the Peace: a Multi-donor evaluation of Support to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities in South Sudan 2005-2010 (2011)	<i>“Elsewhere (a World Vision project), attempts were made to integrate peacebuilding, disaster preparedness and service delivery, but unnecessary tensions were introduced by the failure to incorporate a ‘do no harm’ approach. One example was the rebuilding of a damaged water dike in one village that negatively affected villages downstream. Another was the placing of a health clinic intended for mutual use in only one of two villages in conflict with each other.” (p. 117)</i> (negative)

# Findings II – Types of unintended effects

Category	Evaluation	Quote
<i>(Macro-level effects)</i>		
5. Governance effect	Evaluation of the Dutch Food Security Programme in Ethiopia – including an impact study of the Integrated Seed Sector Development Project (ISSD II) (2017)	<i>“Lastly, for the Sustainable Development of the Gambella and Rift Valle Landscapes project, the following important positive unplanned effects were reported: the federal government used the experience of the project to scale-up land use planning in other regions. Moreover, the federal government is using the project experience as basis for developing the national land-use policy.” (p. 96)</i> (positive)
6. Nationalist back-fire effect	Not found.	
<i>(Multiple-level effects)</i>		
7. Marginalization effect	Mid-term evaluation of the Netherlands Food Security Programme in the Palestinian Territories (2016)	<i>“It is a fundamental question that requires reflection about the cost and benefit of different products and production methods, that needs to take into account the fact that because of the required capital investments HVC production is rarely accessible to small farmers and that further strengthening the better off farmers increases their power to compete over natural resources with their poorer colleagues.” (p. 17)</i> (negative)

# Findings II – Types of unintended effects

Category	Evaluation	Quote
8. Poor-process effect	Humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, 2001-2005 (2006)	<i>“Hierarchical relationships between the international project national staff and the civil servants, and competition between international funded projects, have been unintended consequences.”</i> (p. 67) (negative)
9. Leakage effect	Drinking water supply and sanitation programme supported by the Netherlands in Fayoum Governorate, Arab Republic of Egypt, 1990-2009 (2010)	<i>“An unintended effect of the extension of the water network is that improved water availability has in some locations contributed to the overflowing of on-site sanitation tanks and possible health dangers.”</i> (p. 17) (negative)
10. Catalytic effect	Mid-term review of PSD apps programme (2018)	<i>“Finally, we found a surprisingly large effect of PSD Apps on wider economic diplomacy, especially in countries with a relatively small budget.”</i> (p. 3) (positive)
<i>(Other)</i>		
0. Unclassified	Better Ways of Trading – Evaluation of Technical Assistance for Trade Policy and Regulations (2018)	<i>“An essential result achieved by TFF (which is not concretely defined in the intervention logic, but which indirectly added to the extent and sustainability of results) has been in the area of creating awareness of the importance of the role of trade facilitation in trade and development.”</i> (p. 144) (positive)

# Findings III – Additional findings on methods

- In some evaluations additional interesting findings were found
  - A number of evaluations mentioned that unintended effects were not included because the monitoring, indicators or method of reporting does not allow for analysing unintended effects.
    - *“In particular with regard to the indicator on “job creation” it is recommended to broaden the view to “income generation” and to ensure that not only the direct but also indirect impacts and co-benefits are taken into account.”*  
*(Strategic Evaluative Review of the Energising Development Partnership Programme – short version, 2018, p. 21)*
    - *“Also, the surveys are not designed with the attempt to measure whether the process actually leads to increased effectiveness and whether there are unintended effects of the processes of change set in motion.”*  
*(Framework Terms of Reference for the First Phase Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration, 2017, p. 3)*



# Findings III – Additional findings on methods (2)

- There were also a couple of evaluations that mentioned that unintended effects were intentionally excluded from the evaluation:
  - *“Other problems which arose during implementation, including the lack of availability of medicines for treatment of STIs, may also have had an effect on overall impact but are not suitable for inclusion in the study for methodological reasons.”*  
*(Country evaluations of the support by the Netherlands to sexual and reproductive health and rights programmes in Mali and Nicaragua – Nicaragua study, 2010, p. 24)*
  - *“The negative spill-over effects of the private standards programmes did not receive much attention. Examples of possible negative spill-over effects include more rainforest being destroyed for (less remunerative) crops instead of palm oil and a shift in child labour from cocoa plantations to even more miserable jobs. These effects also fall outside the scope of this evaluation, as they do not affect trade.”*  
*(Better Ways of Trading – Evaluation of Technical Assistance for Trade Policy and Regulations, 2017, p. 96)*

# Potential Limitations

- UIE Typology is not Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive (MECE)
  - Meant to trigger in-depth consideration by evaluators
- UIE Typology not applied to *all* development cooperation, only Dutch
  - Typology based on literature review that was *not* limited to Dutch development cooperation
- UIE Typology does not address other barriers to investigating UIEs
  - E.g. monitoring, indicators or method of reporting does not allow for analysing unintended effects
    - “In particular with regard to the indicator on “job creation” it is recommended to broaden the view to “income generation” and to ensure that not only the direct but also indirect impacts and co-benefits are taken into account.”*
    - (Strategic Evaluative Review of the Energising Development Partnership Programme – short version, 2018, p. 21)*
  - E.g. There were also a couple of evaluations that mentioned that unintended effects were intentionally excluded from the evaluation
    - “The negative spill-over effects of the private standards programmes did not receive much attention. Examples of possible negative spill-over effects include more rainforest being destroyed for (less remunerative) crops instead of palm oil and a shift in child labour from cocoa plantations to even more miserable jobs. These effects also fall outside the scope of this evaluation, as they do not affect trade.”*
    - (Better Ways of Trading – Evaluation of Technical Assistance for Trade Policy and Regulations, 2017, p. 96)*