EGGE – EC’s Expert Group on Gender and Employment

Assessment of the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion from a Gender Perspective

Netherlands

2003

EWERC, Manchester School of Management, UMIST

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The case of the Netherlands

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Introduction

This report contains an analysis of the gender mainstreaming in the Dutch National Action Plan for combating poverty and social exclusion 2003. As such it follows closely the assessment grid provided by the European Commission. Throughout this document gender mainstreaming (GM) is defined as "(re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages by the actors normally involved in policy making". In addition, specific measures refers to the fact that, with a view to ensuring equality in practice between men and women, Member States may maintain or introduce specific measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to sex.

Preamble

The structure of the Dutch NAP/inclusion does not follow completely the suggested structure. Table 1 gives an overview of the differences.

Table 1. Conversion of the common outline and the structure of the Dutch NAP on inclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common outline/structure for the 2003 NAPs/inclusion</th>
<th>Structure of the Dutch NAP/ inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Major trends and challenges</td>
<td>1. Trends and challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review of progress during the 2002/3 NAPs/inclusion</td>
<td>Appendix II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Strategic approach , main objectives</td>
<td>2. Policy statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Policy measures</td>
<td>3. Policy measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Institutional arrangements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Good practices</td>
<td>4. Good practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1 – setting targets</td>
<td>Appendices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grid 1: gender mainstreaming and gender issues raised by the member states under the various objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAP outline -</th>
<th>Gender mainstreaming</th>
<th>Specific gender issues / specific measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1- Major trends and challenges – "including indicators broken down by sex + showing gender characteristics" | - Types of stats and indicators disaggregated by sex  
In general there is no strong focus in the text of chapter 1 on stats and indicators. Partly as a result of this, no stats/indicators disaggregated by sex are presented  
- What is missing  
In general, gender is rather absent in the analyses in the Dutch NAP. Despite the fact that, for example, single and older women from ethnic minorities are identified as risks groups (see page 7, section d), there is no integrated analysis of gender issues in relation to social exclusion. Only in Appendix 3, which refers to the risk of financial poverty, some data are provided, f.e. on the gender composition of households with a minimum income (table 3). From these figures it appears that women (single parents included) are highly over-represented among those on long term minimum incomes. In the main analysis, a broad concept of poverty is applied, with poverty being similar to social exclusion. In this analysis, gender is conspicuously absent, despite the fact that on page 7 it is stated that ‘an accumulation of poverty risks occurs more often among women than men’. A translation of this insight into stats and indicators is missing, however. | Please mention specific stats and indicators to identify gender issues  
Given the fact that gender issues are largely absent in the analysis, no specific stats and/or indicators occur to identify gender issues. |
<p>| 2- Review of progress during | - Have some gender gaps been reduced | - Improvement or deterioration of specific gender |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2002/2003</th>
<th>The activity rate of women have increased as a result of which progress has been made on closing the employment gap (see Appendix II, table 1); Proportions of single female headed households below the age of 65 with long term income up to 101% of the minimum has declined (see Appendix III, table 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes in policies</td>
<td>No information included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New initiatives relating to GM</td>
<td>No information included</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Changes in policies</th>
<th>New initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 – Strategic approach, main objectives and key targets</th>
<th>Extract on GM GM is only mentioned in the first chapter on trends and challenges. GM is not included within the policy statements, referring to the strategic approach. Despite the fact that, for example, single and older women from ethnic minorities are identified as risks groups (see page 7, section d), there is no integrated analysis of gender issues in relation to social exclusion. Categories like long term unemployed, homeless, older people and ethnic minorities are not broken down by gender, nor are any gender stats provided on domestic violence or social activation policy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Targets disaggregated by sex</td>
<td>Targets are not disaggregated by sex. For example, targets for domestic violence (included in the NAP 2001) do not recur in the new NAP. In is stated , however, that ‘the cabinet attach much value to policy in the field of tackling domestic violence (p. 9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mention specific measures for disadvantaged sex</th>
<th>Specific targets for women or men with particular disadvantage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.7 mentions the expansion of care capacity for women needing shelter. No target is set, however.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
under the objective 1, increasing social integration, the target set for ethnic minorities is not disaggregated, despite the fact that in the corresponding text it is stated that the employment rate of men among ethnic minorities is 60% and among women 36%.

4 – Policy measures

"indicate how the gender perspective has been taken on board"

4.1.1 facilitating participation in employment
4.1.2 Facilitating access to resources
   a) social protection
   b) housing and basic services
   c) healthcare
   d) education, justice, other services

4.2 Prevent risks of exclusion
   4.2.1. knowledge society, ICT
   4.2.2. prevent life crisis
   4.2.3. preserve family solidarity

4.3. help the most vulnerable
   4.3.1. those at risk of persistent poverty
   4.3.2. children
   4.3.3. areas marked by exclusion

- Mention approach as presented in the NAP
  As stated before, the gender perspective has not been taken on board. Only appendix 3 on financial poverty gives some information about the income situation of women. The overall analysis, focussing on social exclusion is written in general terms, without any gender perspective

- List dedicated measures and financial resources
  No information given
5 – Institutional arrangements relevant bodies, those at risk of exclusion, NGOs

- Involvement of Equality bodies, NGOs, others specific organisations
- Balanced participation of women and men in committees involved in drafting and implementing the NAPs

There is no information in the NAP about the institutional arrangements. It seems very unlikely that Equality bodies NGO’s have been involved in drafting the NAP. At least DCE, which is the department for the co-ordination of emancipation policy has not been consulted.

Grid two : Assessment of gender mainstreaming

taking into account the gender perspective in the identification of challenges, the design, implementation and assessment of policies and measures, the selection of indicators and targets and the involvement of stakeholders;"

GM = gender mainstreaming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main NAP fields of assessment</th>
<th>Main questions to be raised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Progress made since last NAP  | - Importance given to gender issues  
                               |   - To what extend have they been dealt with and how, compared to the commitment taken by MS in their NAP 2001?  
                               |   *Gender issues have a very low profile, and there is hardly any commitment to GM. It is stated (on page 8) that ‘where relevant, discussion will be held with the departments involved during the ongoing NAP process, to determine how to take account of the male- female issues differences in implementing targets and policy measures’. Yet there is no analysis how gender is connected with the actual shape and structure of social exclusion. As a result, one should also be rather sceptical about the (outcomes of) ‘discussion to be held with the departments’ on these matters.*  
| Identification of challenges  | - Importance given to GM and Gender issues in the key identified challenges  
                               |   - Comment in the light of the other challenges mentioned  
                               |   *See above. Targets/challenges are not differentiated by gender*  
| Statistics and indicators    | - Assess the means for / use of gender analysis |
Assess the extent to which statistics and indicators cover the gender issues

In general, a gender analysis is not applied. Only appendix three, covering the risk of financial poverty, provides data disaggregated by gender.

- Compare with the set of commonly agreed indicators (see Indicators sub-group report)
- Compare with the treatment of gender issues in the identification of challenges

See above. The report is largely silent on gender issues, despite that fact that it is mentioned that an accumulation of poverty risk occurs more often among women than among men and that groups needing extra attention, are, for example, single and older women from ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, categories like long term unemployed, homeless, older people and ethnic minorities are not broken down by gender, nor are any gender stats provided on f.e. domestic violence or social activation policy.

- What has been dealt with adequately?
- What is missing?

See above. No analysis/data is provided on the way how gender is connected with the actual shape and structure of social exclusion.

### Strategic approach and targets

- Assess the importance / attention given to GM – assess the resources (financial, human, organisational,…) allocated to it – see also part on “mobilising all stakeholders”
- Assess the importance given to gender in the choice of quantitative (qualitative?) targets
- Are the targets consistent with the identified challenges?

In general the importance given the GM / gender is minimal.
| Design of policies and measures | - Assess importance/attention given to / ability demonstrated for GM  
- Assess the balance between gender mainstreaming and specific measures:  
  - In what circumstances/ in response to which common objective are specific measures chosen?  
  - Is gender considered/ mainstreamed in measures for vulnerable groups (disability, homelessness,…)  
  - In what circumstances / in response to which common objectives is gender mainstreamed  
  
  *Given the low profile with regard to gender issues, the focus is on neither GM nor specific measures.* |
| Monitoring and assessment of policies | - Assess the means for/ use of / reference to gender impact assessment  
  
  *No reference is made towards gender impact assessment* |
| "mobilisation of relevant stakeholders" | - to what extent have stakeholders for gender issues have been involved (and how relevant are the stakeholders that have been involved for gender issues?  
  
  *See above. Involvement of stakeholders is very limited – for example the Department for the co-ordination of emancipation policy(DCE) is not consulted* |
| Overall assessment | - Has gender been mainstreamed consistently across the NAP  
- To what extend has it been mainstreamed and how?  
  
  *Gender mainstreaming plays a very limited role - quod non*  
- Summarise the strengths and the weaknesses of the approach  
- Compared it with previous NAP  
- Assess the overall balance between GM and specific measures  
  
  *See above. Given the low profile with regard to gender issues, the focus is on neither GM nor specific measures.* |
Grid three : gender proofing in good practice presented by Member States

Q - 1 : Is there any gender dimension mentioned : Yes/No ; if Yes please explain
Q – 2 : Has an assessment of the implications for men and women of the good practice been made ? Is an assessment planned ? Yes/No ; if yes please explain
Q- 3 : Does the good practice risk increasing discrimination against men or women ? Yes/no / Don't know ; if Yes: please explain
Q - 4 : Is the good practice likely to reduce gender gaps / sex discrimination ? Yes/no/Don't know ; if Yes, please explain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good practices mentioned</th>
<th>Q 1 Gender dimension</th>
<th>Q 3 – positive impact on gender equality</th>
<th>Q 4 : negative impact on gender equality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Experiments in social activation</td>
<td>No gender dimension mentioned, no gender proofing planned</td>
<td>Of all experiments in 2001, 21% focused especially on one-parent families and 18% on women. In total, it appears that the share of women within the experiments is close to 70% percent. This is higher than the percentage of women among all beneficiaries (58%). There is no information available whether the effects of the experiments differ for men and women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) administrative collaboration between nurseries and primary education</td>
<td>No gender dimension mentioned, no gender proofing planned</td>
<td>The goal of the administrative collaboration between nursery facilities and primary education is to achieve an unbroken development line for children aged between 0 and 12. This may be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated debt assistance in Arnhem and Dordrecht</td>
<td>No gender dimension mentioned, no gender proofing planned</td>
<td>A significant number of households – though exact number are not available - have to contend with debts. It not clear if women are confronted with debts more often than men and/or whether they have higher debts. It is conceivable that one-parent households, among which the share of women is high, the risk of ending up with debts is relatively high. More detailed figures are not known, however.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>