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Table of contents

Foreword

Acknowledgements 6

I A continuous process 7

I.1 Definitions 7

I.2 Principles and objectives 8

International obligations 8

New policy processes 8

New themes 9

II A dynamic process: form and content 10

II.1 Developing an external gender policy 10

Past experience 10

Beijing Platform for Action 11

II.2 Integrating gender equality into the Ministry's organisational structure 12

II.3 Chronological overview of the Ministry's structure and instruments 13

III A binding process 15

III.1 Practical experience 15

III.2 The best integration strategy 15

Clear objectives 16

An effective gender orientation 17

Involvement and accountability 18

Support in partner countries 18

Donor coordination 19

III.3 Integration as a substantive challenge 20

Sustainable poverty reduction 20

Peacebuilding and conflict prevention 20

Good governance 21

Women's rights 21

IV Summary and conclusions 22

Internal integration of gender equality 22

External integration of gender equality 23

Annexe I Request for an advisory report

Annexe II Analytical framework for internal integration of gender equality

Annexe III List of abbreviations

Foreword

All over the world, significant differences still exist in the social, economic and cultural status of men and women. Though they work both in and outside the home and are burdened with many responsibilities, women and girls are frequently at a disadvantage when it comes to health, income, safety, and access to and control of resources. It goes without saying that, in the interests of justice, Dutch foreign and development policy should contribute to improving the status of women.

There is more and more evidence to show that equal participation of women in socio-economic and political development is essential for a country's economic growth.¹ A study by the World Bank has indicated, for example, that closer involvement of women in political decision-making often leads to greater transparency and less corruption.² The pursuit of gender equality is thus not only a matter of justice, but also a condition for sustainable development.

The Minister for Development Cooperation asked the Advisory Council on International Affairs (AIV) for advice on the integration of gender equality into development cooperation. This report gives a number of recommendations, taking into account the changes that have taken place within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since the foreign policy review of 1996. The report can also be used in preparing the Netherlands' contribution to the UN Conference on Financing for Development, which takes place in March 2002. It will also enable the Netherlands to make a gender-oriented contribution to the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, which takes place in August-September 2002, and to other conferences in the future.

Advice was requested on the following questions (see Annexe I):

- Is the Dutch concept of gender mainstreaming appropriate?
- Is the approach that has been chosen to integrate gender policy sufficiently strategic and sustainable?
- Is the mainstream sufficiently accountable for the implementation of gender policy?
- To what extent do the problems identified by the DAC affect Dutch policy?
- Is there sufficient coordination with multilateral partners (especially the World Bank, the UN and the EU) and bilateral partners in this field?
- On the basis of your findings, how do you think that the integration or mainstreaming of gender can best be promoted?

1 World Bank, *Engendering Development Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources and Voice*, New York, October 2000; High Level Policy Statement of the OECD/DAC, *Gender Equality: Moving Towards Sustainable, People-Centred Development*, Paris, 1998.

2 David Dollar et al., *Are Women Really the Fairer Sex? Corruption and Women in Government*, Policy Research Report on Gender and Development No. 4, October 1999.

Acknowledgements

The request for advice focuses on equipping the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to incorporate gender equality into all aspects of foreign policy. This report therefore concentrates primarily on strategy and organisation rather than on the content and implementation of gender policy itself.

Section I identifies and defines the subject on which recommendations will be given. Section II gives a brief historical overview. Section III looks at the lessons that can be learned from the experience of other organisations in integrating gender equality and concludes that the most successful strategy is to combine general development policy and gender policy on an equal basis. The report then gives recommendations on the institutional conditions needed for sustainable integration of gender equality at both the Ministry in The Hague and the embassies, and on cooperation with and in partner countries, and with other donors, highlighting a few contemporary foreign policy issues by way of example. These recommendations have been transformed into a questionnaire that organisations and governments can use or present to others as an indicator of gender equality integration (see Annexe II).

The advisory report was prepared by a sub-committee of the Development Cooperation Committee (COS) and the Human Rights Committee (CMR) of the AIV. The Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming (WGM) consisted of Ms I.E.M. Dankelman (chair), T. Etty, Professor B. de Gaay Fortman, Ms C. Hak, Ms M. Koers-van der Linden, Ms E.M. Schoo and Professor I. Wolffers. Professor K. von Benda-Beckmann-Droogleever Fortuijn and Professor E.J. de Kadt participated as corresponding members. Passages on the integration of gender equality by other donors were taken from a study by Ms C.M. van Waegeningh of Equip Worldwide. Ms B. ten Tusscher, Ms M.J.W. Pechażek (MA) and Ms R. Tesselaar, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs working at the Women and Development Division of the Social and Institutional Development Department (DSI/VR), acted as advisors. The secretary was Ms J.A. Nederlof, who was assisted by M.M.T. Keyte, Ms. W. Neeft and Ms A. Swakhoven (trainees).

The AIV adopted this report on 14 December 2001.

I A continuous process

I.1 Definitions

Gender refers to the social and economic implications of being male or female. It also relates to the balance of power between men and women. The AIV concurs with the definition given by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 1998:

'Gender refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female. In most societies, men and women differ in the activities they undertake, in access and control over resources, and in participation in decision-making. These inequalities are a constraint to development because they limit the ability of women to develop and exercise their full capabilities, for their own benefit and for that of society as a whole. The nature of gender definitions (what it means to be male or female) and patterns of inequality vary among cultures and change over time. A recognition of this variability assists in the analysis of socio-economic contexts and relationships and the possibilities of change.'³

In this report, the AIV uses the term *gender equality* since it reflects the above definition adequately.

Gender equality is achieved by incorporating it into organisation and policy. In the request for advice, this process is referred to as mainstreaming. However, the process entails more than incorporating one issue into a larger whole.

In this report, the AIV has therefore chosen to use the term 'integration', but would point out that it applies to a mutually binding process in which thematic gender policy and general development cooperation policy are adapted to and influence each another.

In the 2001 budget letter on emancipation policy, the Dutch government defines the integration of gender equality as: 'The (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes to ensure equal impact on women and men is sustainably incorporated in all normal policy.'

However, the AIV prefers the Council of Europe's definition, because it places responsibility with the people that make and determine policy. That definition is as follows: 'The (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 policymaking.'⁴

3 High Level Policy Statement of the OECD/DAC, 'Gender Equality: Moving Towards Sustainable, People-Centred Development', Paris, 1998.

4 Council of Europe, 'Gender Mainstreaming: Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Presentation of Good Practices', Strasbourg, May 1998.

1.2 Principles and objectives

The integration of gender equality is a dynamic process, not a static goal. It is one of the paths that lead to the ultimate goal of a just, democratic and safe society. This process requires constant attention and commitment at all ministries in the Netherlands and its partner countries, to ensure that men and women can influence, contribute to and benefit from development. Though 25 years of gender policy and four World Conferences on Women (in Mexico, Copenhagen, Nairobi and Beijing) have helped to raise awareness, reality still presents a bleak picture. For instance, women and girls still make up 70 per cent of the world's poorest 1.3 billion people, and violence against women has not been eradicated.⁵ Women have fewer economic opportunities, less power and political influence, and less access to resources than men. However, gender equality is not only a matter of justice. According to the World Bank, the participation of women in socio-economic and political development is essential for a country's economic development and welfare.

International obligations

Gender equality is laid down in various international agreements by which the Netherlands is bound by signature and/or ratification.⁶ Their implementation is dealt with in the coalition agreement of 1998, the multiyear policy document on equal opportunities of 2000 and the Government's position paper on gender mainstreaming of 2001. Inter-ministerial agreements have been concluded to promote gender equality by means of emancipation objectives. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is focusing on promoting the reproductive rights of refugees, integrating poverty and gender issues into the macroeconomic support programme and integrating gender equality within the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

New policy processes

The various changes that have taken place within Dutch development policy in recent years are discussed in Section II of this report. They include: the sector-wide approach, the delegation of responsibilities to the embassies, transfer of ownership to developing countries themselves, the emphasis on good governance, poverty reduction, women and development, institutional development and environment (the GAVIM approach), and the implementation of poverty reduction objectives. Nevertheless, the second Kok government has found it difficult to integrate gender equality successfully. In fact, studies into emancipation policy in the Netherlands and abroad indicate that while the tools for integrating gender equality are in place, 'there is no oil to lubricate the engine.'⁷

5 World Bank, 'Engendering Development Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources and Voice', New York, October 2000.

6 Charter of the United Nations, San Francisco, 1945; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), New York, 1966; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), New York, 1966; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), New York, 1979; Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted during the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 1993; International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994; Political Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted by the Fourth UN World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995; World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995; Outcome Document of the 23rd Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (the Beijing + 5 process), New York, June 2000.

New themes

New themes are constantly emerging in the field of foreign affairs and development cooperation. In recent years, peacebuilding, conflict prevention, sustainable poverty reduction and good governance, in particular, have demanded increased attention. Integration of gender equality is essential if progress is to be made with the current global agenda and with new policy processes. This is also discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

7 TECENA, *'Emancipatie in de hoofdstroom'* (Equal Rights in the Mainstream), December 2000; EOS Consult, *'Quick Scan Genderdeskundigheid Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken'* (Gender Expertise Quick Scan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), November 2000.

II A dynamic process: form and content

II.1 Developing an external gender policy

Past experience

In 1975, during International Women's Year, the first UN Conference on Women took place in Mexico. From that moment onwards, more attention was devoted worldwide to the status of women. Dutch development policy aimed to ensure more aid benefited women. There was an awareness that women's emancipation required relations between men and women to change, and that this was not a matter for developing countries alone. Changes would also be needed at the Ministry and the embassies. The first Dutch policy memorandum on women and development appeared five years later.⁸ It set out gender policy, identifying the following goals:

- to increase the influence and participation of women in the preparation and implementation of development policy;
- to promote greater economic independence for women;
- to strengthen women's organisations in developing countries.

To organise integration, the memorandum recommended making the status of women an integral part of overall aid policy. No distinction was made at this point between the internal and external objectives of gender policy. However, a 1984 review of bilateral development cooperation policy put both form and content in a nutshell: 'The policy on women aims to improve their status and is an integral part of development policy as a whole.'⁹

In 1985, the United Nations held the Second World Conference on Women in Nairobi, which resulted in the adoption of the Forward-Looking Strategies (FLS). The term autonomy was also used for the first time. Autonomy would guarantee women the opportunity to shape their own social and personal lives on the basis of their own priorities and conditions. In 1987, the FLS were introduced into Dutch development policy in the form of the Action Programme on Women and Development, which consisted of 53 action points relating to policy and organisation. They ranged from guidelines for improving the participation of women in the various aid sectors, to courses for the Ministry's own employees and the appointment of specialists at embassies. Although gender policy was gaining more substance, more action was needed to make what was still a fragmented policy fully operational. It needed, for instance, to be given a higher priority and incorporated more deeply into general development policy.

In 1990, gender policy gained a higher priority when Women, Poverty and the Environment became the main themes of Dutch development policy.¹⁰ The focus was on increasing the autonomy of women in developing countries in order to strengthen their:

- economic independence;
- political and social participation;

8 DGIS, 'Women in Development', 1980.

9 DGIS, 'Review of Bilateral Development Cooperation Policy', 1984.

10 DGIS, 'World of Difference – A New Framework for Development Cooperation in the 1990s', 1990.

- social and cultural position;
- control over their own bodies.

In 1991, the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) organised a one-day seminar on implementation of this new approach, which was also attended by representatives from developing countries. Most of the participants were of the opinion that promoting women's autonomy could play an important role at national level, provided the specific cultural, political, social and religious context of each country was taken into account. In the 1990s, policy developed around specific themes: violence against women, women and Islam, and the effects of macroeconomic development on the status of women. The theme of Women and Development was also integrated into most country and regional policy plans.

Beijing Platform for Action

The Fourth UN World Conference on Women took place in Beijing in 1995. In preparation the former National Advisory Council for Development Cooperation (NAR) issued an advisory report in which it observed that the differences between men and women were still very significant in many areas of life and that the status of women had even worsened in many developing countries.¹¹ The report contained recommendations on ways of organising the integration of gender equality. It warned against the excessive production of policy, arguing that more attention should be devoted to putting it into action, consolidating agreements made at international conferences and evaluating implementation. Governments needed to be made accountable for their policies on women, in the first place to their own parliaments. Though these recommendations date from 1995 they are still relevant today and continue to require our constant attention.

The Dutch government also committed itself to the conference's conclusions, the Beijing Platform for Action (PfA), and went on to identify six themes on which its foreign policy would focus. These themes, which are described in Chapter III.2, were not new, but their importance was underscored through regular funding, deployment of expertise and the development of *proefpolders* (testing stations) to transform them into practical activities.

Throughout this period, structural poverty reduction remained the main objective of Dutch development policy. The Minister for Development Cooperation, Eveline Herfkens, did not deviate from this approach, although she did introduce the following changes to implementation:

- delegation of responsibilities to embassies;
- concentration of bilateral support on the '17 + 3' countries ('19 + 3' from November 2001)¹² and on 19 countries in which the Netherlands supports programmes on good governance, human rights and peacebuilding; the environment (13 countries) and the private sector (20 countries);

11 NAR, *'Van Woorden naar Daden, Gender en Ontwikkeling, De Vierde Wereldvrouwenconferentie 1995 in Beijing'* (From Words to Deeds, Gender and Development, The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing), Advisory Report, 1995.

12 Bangladesh, Benin (from 2001), Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Macedonia, Mali, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda (from 2001), Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia + Egypt, South Africa and Indonesia.

- ownership by the recipient government;
- support for whole sectors instead of project-based assistance.

Within the sector-wide approach, the GAVIM approach was introduced to ensure that good governance, poverty reduction, women and development, institutional development and the environment would be taken into account in all policy. A project was also launched to mainstream poverty.¹³

II.2 Integrating gender equality into the Ministry's internal organisational structure

A study into the availability of gender expertise at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, conducted by EOS Consult in November 2000, has made a valuable contribution to the integration of gender equality into the Ministry's internal organisational structure. EOS Consult defines gender expertise as the ability to explain the differences brought about by cultural and historical perceptions in men's and women's positions of power.¹⁴ EOS Consult observed, for instance, that 'managers and policy officers at the Ministry still did not adequately share responsibility for gender equality.' The study recommended that the Ministry appoint a gender coordinator for internal and external emancipation at a senior level in the professional hierarchy, that the Secretary-General become the holder of the gender policy portfolio and that the Ministry provide training for all its employees.

A month later, the Temporary Expert Committee on Emancipation in the New Advisory System (TECENA) issued a report on the effectiveness of integrating emancipation into Dutch government ministries. TECENA identified the following benchmarks:

- **ownership of the problem:** final responsibility for integrating emancipation should preferably be located as high as possible in the professional hierarchy;
- **structure and organisation:** how the process is incorporated into the organisation as a whole;
- **gender expertise:** the availability of gender expertise at the ministry in question;
- **integration expertise and mechanisms:** availability of and familiarity with integration processes and their application;
- **information:** availability and accessibility of gender-specific data;
- **capacity and budget:** availability of time, people and money.

Earlier, in 1999, the DAC observed that not one Member State was adequately equipped to integrate gender equality successfully. In holding its own policy up to the DAC criteria, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs found that it had not yet done enough internally to encourage a positive attitude, strengthen leadership, or establish where responsibility lay or who would be held accountable. For more effective external implementation policy needed to be translated more adequately into activities in partner countries.¹⁵

¹³ This project aims to incorporate the main objective of poverty reduction in working procedures, organisation and personnel management at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

¹⁴ EOS Consult, '*Quick Scan Genderdeskundigheid Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken*', November 2000.

¹⁵ Response of DSI/VR to the DAC's evaluation, submitted to the Minister for Development Cooperation, November 1999.

A 2001 policy document on gender mainstreaming contains recommendations for the integration of gender equality into the internal organisational structure of all Dutch ministries.¹⁶ The conditions dovetail with the benchmarks identified in the TECENA report:

- involvement and commitment of the political leadership and senior civil servants;
- a clear policy;
- establishment of responsibilities;
- availability of gender expertise, resources and instruments.

Awareness of the value and necessity of integrating gender equality increased significantly between 1975 and 2001. As the world changed, gender policy changed with it, and itself influenced the changes that were taking place, since it strengthened the position of women. In the Netherlands, it was a process which centred initially on external policy implementation and later on internal organisation.

II.3 Chronological overview of the Ministry's structure and instruments

In the last two decades, many instruments have been developed for integrating gender equality into external policy implementation. In chronological order, they are as follows:

- 1980 and subsequent years: inclusion of gender issues in sector and country papers (Women and Development; Women and Architecture; Women, Water and Sanitation; Women and Health; Women and Energy, Forestry and Environment; Women and Education).
- 1990 Specification of the percentage of expenditure intended to benefit women directly.
- 1992 Introduction of the development screening test for project evaluation, including criteria for poverty reduction, women's autonomy and the environment.
- 1996 Expansion of project evaluation memorandums to include DAC gender indicators focusing on basic needs, human development and income.
Introduction of the Gender Assessment Study (GAS) to evaluate target groups and donor organisations. However, in developing policy and instruments less attention was devoted to monitoring and evaluation.
- 1997 Publication of the Women in Development Working Paper, Parts I and II: Gender and Environment: A Delicate Balance between Profit and Loss and Rights of Women to the Natural Resources of Land and Water.
- 2001 Publication of the policy document on gender mainstreaming by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment on organising the integration of gender equality into Dutch ministries.
- 2001 Publication of a reference guide by the DAC Working Party on Gender, entitled Gender Equality in Sector-wide Approaches in Health, Education and Agriculture.
- 2001 Publication of a memorandum on gender issues and poverty reduction, the main objective of Dutch development policy.
- 2001 Publication of a Key Sheet on gender mainstreaming by DGIS and the Department for International Development (DFID).

The main benchmarks in integrating gender equality into the Ministry's organisational structure were:

- 1977 Appointment of coordinators for international women's affairs and establishment of an emancipation unit in the Policy Planning Section and Advisory Council Secretariat.

¹⁶ Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 'Policy Document on Gender Mainstreaming', June 2001. See also Chapter III.3 of this report.

- 1985 Appointment of sector experts at the embassies.
- 1991 Establishment of a gender unit (DST/VR) within DGIS and introduction of the Women's Fund.
- 1996 Transfer of the Women and Development Division (DSI/VR) to the Social and Institutional Development Division (DSI).

The main tasks of the Women and Development Division are:

- To assist the embassies and the Ministry in organising and implementing gender policy in both development cooperation and general foreign policy, by advising on the integration of gender equality into everyday policymaking, developing instruments, and providing information on best practices and international viewpoints.
- To put the external implementation of gender policy into operation by managing the Women's Fund (NLG 45 million in 2001) and by launching concrete projects centring on themes selected from the Beijing Platform for Action: women's rights; women, peacebuilding and good governance; and women and macroeconomics/poverty reduction.
- To advise on the integration of gender equality into foreign policy by contributing to memorandums on conflict prevention and human rights, by maintaining close contact with the Human Rights Ambassador and by monitoring the Ministry's general emancipation objectives.

III A binding process

III.1 Practical experience

In recent years, many international and Dutch institutions have started to integrate gender equality into their policies and organisational structures. A study of the integration processes in a few organisations, commissioned by the AIV, indicates that different strategies have been used to achieve this goal.¹⁷ They include:

- incorporating of gender equality into strategic areas of general policy;
- fully integrating gender policy into general policy, and launching programmes to improve the status of women;
- combining general policy and gender policy on an equal basis.

The indicator for the sustainable integration of gender equality is the extent to which an organisation takes account of men and women's different needs, interests and skills, both internally and in its external policies.

The study also indicated the following:

- Of the three strategies, integrating gender equality into certain policy areas has the least effect on general policy. This is the case in organisations where a separate department seeks to inform and motivate other staff members on gender issues, but where those staff members are not accountable for the results.
- Where the full integration strategy is used, there is a risk that gender equality penetrates so far into general policy that it is in effect 'integrated away'. In this case, the development of gender policy does not take place in a separate division, but becomes just one of the tasks of an existing division, or even all divisions, within the organisation. As a result, nobody is explicitly responsible, and it is tempting to assume that 'someone else' will add a 'dash of gender' to policy. In addition, there is no central point where new knowledge and experience are aggregated, used and passed on to others.
- The strategy of combining gender policy and general policy produces the most motivated and best informed staff and partners in developing countries, because they feel responsible for the results. To this end, thought must be given to the implementation of gender policy in developing countries and to the process of integrating gender equality into staff members' perceptions, sense of involvement and actions. There must be opportunities for building up and renewing expertise. Staff and partner organisations are held accountable for their gender-oriented behaviour and results.

III.2 The best integration strategy

The study concludes that combining gender policy and general policy produces the most sustainable and effective form of integration. This form of integration requires more than just gender-oriented perceptions and actions: it requires a sense of responsibility and commitment from all those involved. In fact, it is a mutually binding process in which individual members of staff and partners (recipient countries or organisations)

¹⁷ C.M. van Waegeningh, *'Gender mainstreaming in (internationale) organisaties: enkele praktijkvoorbeelden'* (Gender Mainstreaming in (International) Organisations: Some Practical Examples), Equip Worldwide, June 2001.

can call each other to account for their actions with regard to gender issues. This is an important condition that is frequently neglected.¹⁸ Finally, this form of integration is also a continuous process that requires time, expertise and shared objectives.¹⁹

Based on the above, the AIV recommends combining general policy and gender policy as the best strategy for integrating gender equality. Responsibility and accountability are key concepts in a process that must be mutually binding. Extra attention should be devoted to:

- *clear objectives;*
- *an effective gender orientation;*
- *involvement and accountability;*
- *support in developing countries;*
- *donor coordination.*

A. Internal organisational structure

Clear objectives

The clearer the objectives and the more strategically instruments can be deployed, the better management can exercise control, and the easier it is to formulate clear criteria to govern accountability. Because gender equality is the responsibility of the whole Ministry, the objectives of integrating it must be made very clear to all those involved.

The following objectives apply to the various areas of foreign policy.

1. Interdepartmental objectives for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:
 - to integrate gender and poverty criteria into the macroeconomic support programme;
 - to guarantee the reproductive rights of refugees;
 - to increase capacity for the integration of gender equality within the OSCE.²⁰
2. Focal points of Women and Development policy:
 - to increase the role of women in sustainable poverty reduction;
 - to improve reproductive health;
 - to improve the implementation of women's rights;
 - to combat violence against women;
 - to increase the role of women in conflict prevention and reconstruction;
 - to increase the participation of women in political decision-making and good governance.²¹
3. Objectives aimed at the internal organisation. Policy documents have failed to formulate these clearly and unambiguously. However, the AIV concurs with TECENA's criteria:

18 DAC Informal Network on Poverty Reduction, 'Synthesis Report DAC Scoping Study of Poverty Reduction: Donor Policy and Practice. Making Aid Work for the Poor', 1999.

19 The policy document on emancipation speaks of a 'new social contract' on page 7. House of Representatives of the States General, Parliamentary Paper No. 27061, No. 3, November 2000.

20 Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 'Policy Document on Gender Mainstreaming', June 2001.

21 From the Beijing Platform for Action. See also Chapter II of this report.

- gender equality must be expressed in all policy products and other organisational elements;
- the integration of gender equality must be visible and verifiable.²²

According to EOS Consult, the Ministry has not consistently met the conditions of transparency and efficiency in recent years. For instance, the requirements for the preparation of an annual plan, which every division and embassy must draft, differ from year to year. In addition, cooperation between the divisions and embassies involved in integrating gender policy was inadequate.

*The AIV recommends devoting specific attention to gender equality in the new annual plans and annual reports. The AIV also recommends explicitly addressing the issue of gender equality in discussions at the embassies on the integration of poverty reduction. The memorandum on the relationship between poverty and gender equality of June 2001 can be used for this purpose as a background document.*²³

An effective gender orientation

It is important that the Ministry's political leadership and senior civil servants feel responsible for the process of integrating gender equality, because integration processes require constant support and management. The AIV therefore supports the Government's viewpoint that ownership of the integration process should be placed as high as possible in the Ministry's hierarchy.²⁴

*The AIV recommends appointing a gender coordinator at the highest possible level within the political and civil service hierarchy. This official should be responsible for the coordination and effectiveness of efforts to promote gender equality within Dutch foreign policy.*²⁵

Thematic expertise remains essential for the continuity of the integration process. While knowledge should continue to be concentrated within centres of expertise, such as DSI/VR at the Ministry and the theme experts at the embassies, an effective gender orientation must be inculcated throughout the organisation. A consequence of the Ministry's policy of hiring generalists is that they must be capable of promoting gender equality, whatever their policy area.

The AIV recommends that information on gender equality should be distributed more adequately and that a sense of responsibility for the matter should be encouraged throughout the Ministry. An affinity with and knowledge of the subject should therefore carry more weight in the recruitment and assignment of civil servants. Staff must be

²² TECENA, 'Emancipatie in de hoofdstroom', December 2000.

²³ This memorandum was published by the Ministry in 2001 and forms part of an 11-part series on the interaction between poverty and other themes.

²⁴ Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 'Policy Document on Gender Mainstreaming', June 2001.

²⁵ An internal coordinator for gender-related issues within the Ministry, such as childcare, flexible working hours and throughput of women to more senior positions, was appointed in the autumn of 2001 for a period of one year.

capable of promoting gender equality in their policy areas. The AIV therefore recommends that regular in-service training sessions should be organised, that gender issues should be incorporated into management training courses and into courses leading to assignments abroad, and that gender orientation should be included as a criterion in staff evaluations.

The theme experts at the embassies in the '19 + 3' countries provide support in integrating gender equality. To enable external implementation of gender policy in larger countries and regions, gender expertise needs should be catalogued, and, where necessary, local experts recruited to make up for any shortfalls. In countries where the Netherlands mainly has to cope with other urgent problems, such as trafficking in women, violations of women's rights and armed conflict, gender policy theme experts have seldom been appointed.

The AIV recommends ascertaining whether larger countries or regions on the country list require more gender expertise. It also recommends appointing gender coordinators at embassies in relevant theme countries. Wherever possible, these gender coordinators should be local experts.

Involvement and accountability

In its study, EOS Consult concludes that, with the exception of the gender experts in the relevant divisions and at the embassies, staff members are not occupied with gender issues on a daily basis and that, in practice, the link to policy making is seldom made. EOS Consult bases this conclusion on the absence of gender issues from policy memorandums, speeches, answers to parliamentary questions and reports. As long as neither management nor staff have any sense of involvement with the subject, they will not be inclined to regard it as an essential part of their work.

The AIV recommends promoting the integration of gender equality in the Ministry's internal organisational structure by involving management and staff more closely in policy. This may be encouraged by increasing their understanding of the subject. Staff will have to establish where and how gender equality fits into their policy areas. They will be responsible for integrating gender equality into these policy areas, and will have to give an account of the action undertaken, for example, in their annual reports.

On the basis of Van Waegeningh's 2001 study, the AIV has drafted an analytical framework for the internal integration of gender equality. It is presented in Annexe II, which also includes a questionnaire that can be used by the Ministry, other donor organisations and governments and organisations in partner countries.

The analytical framework in Annexe II can be used as a qualitative yardstick to measure level of gender orientation.

B. External policy

Support in partner countries

To implement external gender policy, communication with partner countries is as important as exchanging information in the Netherlands. After all, the autonomy and wishes of partner countries are central to current development policy, since it is based on the view that each country is the owner of its own development. Dialogue will therefore be needed on the implementation of gender equality in each country. This is not always a simple matter, as it can be difficult to determine who is in control: the central government or the target groups. In addition, a conflict of interests can sometimes arise,

given that donors are no longer free to impose their ideas on partner countries, while Dutch policy increasingly accords importance to issues such as poverty reduction and gender equality.

This is what emerges, for example, from a study funded by the Netherlands in 2001 into the experience of donors in integrating gender equality into the education and healthcare sectors in Bangladesh, Uganda, Ghana and Tanzania. According to the study, the above-mentioned conflict of interests can lead to false modesty on the part of donors, because they fear that any discussion of gender equality might be interpreted as a priority imposed by the West. One of the recommendations put forward in this study repeats the call made by representatives of organisations in partner countries to address the unequal power relations between men and women at political level. Gender equality is not just a Western obsession, but a basis on which to fulfil the wishes of the partner country, and a problem that women face every day.²⁶

The AIV recommends drawing the attention of partner countries and other donors to the recommendations contained in the DAC Reference Guide on Gender Equality in Sector-wide Approaches and generating support for them within the DAC. The AIV also recommends seeking permanent structures for consultations with governments and target groups in partner countries on the pursuit of gender equality, preferably in coordination with other donors.

The above-mentioned problems are also recognised in the new annual plan cycle, in which the embassies are advised to act pragmatically. In other words, if a partner country is not yet focusing attention on GAVIM priorities (which include gender policy), the embassy will have to develop enabling policies. The embassies will make policy to measure, as it were, and this will require strong argumentation. It will take considerable tact to involve target groups in the dialogue without giving central governments the impression that they are being pushed to the margins, and *vice versa*. The Dutch embassy in New Delhi, for example, has initiated a multiyear plan on gender equality, in consultation with all local stakeholders, that is tailored to the situation in India.²⁷

Donor coordination

Donor coordination is also essential for optimal integration of gender equality into external implementation of policy. Merely ensuring policy objectives are transparent can prevent incompatibility between the priorities of donors and between the priorities of donors and partner countries further down the line. Coordination already takes place between the Utstein countries, at embassy level in partner countries and in the DAC Working Party on Gender.²⁸ The Key Sheet, issued by DGIS and DFID in the summer of 2001, bears witness to the existence of a common policy on integrating gender equality. It deals with

26 DAC, 'Gender Equality in Sector-wide Approaches in Health, Education and Agriculture', 2001.

27 A first draft of the plan, 'Power and Diversity. Gender and Development Policy, Objectives and Planning 2001-2005', appeared in March 2001.

28 In 1999, the four female European Ministers for Development Cooperation (of Norway, Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands) meeting in the Norwegian town of Utstein, decided to coordinate their policies more closely.

a number of common objectives and instruments, such as plans to use gender analysis, initiatives promoting gender equality and capacity-building in developing countries in all cases, from macropolitics to activities in the framework of sector policy.

The AIV recommends that donors should work more closely together to coordinate policy on promoting gender equality and the relevant funding and procedures both among themselves and with partner countries. Donors can thus put their diversity to more purposeful use and strengthen their positions in multilateral organisations.

III.3 Integration as a substantive challenge

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment's policy document on gender mainstreaming incorporates a number of recommendations on integrating gender equality. It emphasises the importance of dovetailing with day-to-day practice. Ministries should take advantage of important political and administrative opportunities, such as budgets, policy documents on relevant issues and answers to parliamentary questions. This requires a flexible approach to current events and a sound grasp of strategy.

It is possible to identify a number of themes in the area of foreign affairs and development cooperation that lend themselves to the integration of gender equality. A few current issues are given below by way of example.

Sustainable poverty reduction

The 2002 Explanatory Memorandum expressed the intention to devote even more attention than before to the relationship between macroeconomic development, national budgetary planning, poverty and gender equality. More than 70 per cent of the world's poorest people are women, and they are often hit disproportionately hard by economic crises. The involvement of women and organisations representing them in macroeconomic analyses and decision-making is therefore of great importance. A useful instrument is gender budgeting, which measures the effects of the national budget on the development of men and women in that country. The results can be used to advocate the changes needed for a more equitable distribution of resources.

National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which are currently being drafted by more than 40 developing countries, are another useful instrument in integrating gender equality. An internal study of the World Bank's gender department recently showed that the status of women receives little or no attention in most PRSPs. At the same time, however, the World Bank has shown that the involvement of women in economic development is essential for achieving sustainable economic growth (see also Chapter I.2 of this report). This casts doubt on the effectiveness of the PRSPs.

The AIV recommends encouraging the use of gender budgeting during the preparation of national budgets. The AIV also recommends that the Netherlands should continue to draw attention in international forums and in its dialogues with partner countries to the status of women in PRSPs and their role in drafting them.

Peacebuilding and conflict prevention

The 2002 Explanatory Memorandum expressed the intention to fund the involvement of women in peacebuilding. This is in line with UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which emphasises that women need more protection than men during conflicts and should be involved in conflict resolution. The Government subscribed to the gist of this resolution.

The AIV recommends involving political experts and development and gender experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence in the coherent implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325.

Good governance

In a 1999 report, the World Bank noted that the increased involvement of women in politics and government leads to greater transparency and accountability. The more women in a country's parliament, the lower the level of corruption and the smaller the risk that development money will be used for illicit purposes.²⁹ This is very important in guaranteeing the quality of development cooperation. It may well be asked whether this positive effect is directly attributable to women, or whether it is due to more progressive, less corrupt governments that promote the participation of women in national government. This question is not relevant to this advisory report, however. The positive effects are the main issue.

The AIV recommends lending explicit support to gender-oriented initiatives in the field of good governance.

Women's rights

Dutch human rights policy has long devoted considerable attention to improving women's rights. The Netherlands was one of the initiators of a UN resolution on the prevention of female genital mutilation. The AIV however concluded in a recent advisory report that much remains to be done to combat violence against women.³⁰ The Human Rights Ambassador devotes much of her attention to promoting equal rights for and protection of women. Migration and human trafficking are new themes here, the latter because many of the victims are women and girls.³¹

The AIV recommends treating gender equality as a fundamental component of human rights policy, in particular with a view to combating human trafficking.

29 David Dollar et al., 'Are Women Really the Fairer Sex? Corruption and Women in Government', Policy Research Report on Gender and Development No. 4, October 1999.

30 AIV, 'Violence Against Women: Legal Developments', Advisory Report No. 18, February 2001.

31 Advisory Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy, '*Mensenhandel*' (Human Trafficking), Advisory Report No. 14, 1992.

IV Summary and conclusions

Equality between men and women and in their social and economic status, including rights, duties and responsibilities, has yet to be achieved on a worldwide basis. Donors and developing countries have nevertheless committed themselves to pursuing this goal by signing and ratifying numerous international agreements. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that economic growth and development are difficult to attain in the absence of gender equality.

Awareness of the value and necessity of integrating gender equality increased significantly between 1975 and 2001. As the world changed, gender policy changed with it, and itself influenced the changes that were taking place, since it strengthened the position of women. In the Netherlands, it was a flexible process which initially centred on external policy implementation and later, of necessity, on internal organisation.

Now that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is introducing new policy themes and launching new processes for policy implementation, the opportunity has arisen for sustainable integration of gender equality. However, progress is impossible, without changes to the Ministry's organisational structure. In this advisory report, the AIV puts forward recommendations for the effective integration of gender equality into both the implementation of external foreign policy and the Ministry's internal organisational structure.

The AIV has adopted the Council of Europe's definition and advises the Minister to do likewise: 'Gender mainstreaming is the (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.'

According to the AIV, the best strategy is to combine general policy and gender policy. That is a mutually binding process which calls for:

- *transparency in the process and objectives of integrating gender equality;*
- *personal involvement; granting responsibility and demanding accountability;*
- *thematic expertise and coordination, both in a gender unit and ministry-wide;*
- *capacity building and support in partner countries, as well as good donor coordination.*

Internal integration of gender equality

On the basis of its findings, the AIV issues the following recommendations for integrating gender equality into the Ministry's organisational structure.

The Ministry's political leadership and senior civil servants are responsible for the process of integrating gender equality. It is a process that requires constant support and management. The AIV therefore recommends appointing a gender coordinator at the highest possible level within the political and civil service hierarchy. This official should be responsible for coordinating and monitoring gender equality in the implementation of Dutch foreign policy.

Management and staff should be more closely involved in gender policy. This may be encouraged by increasing expertise. Staff and management will also have to establish where and how gender equality fits into their policy areas. They will subsequently be responsible and accountable for integrating gender equality into these policy areas.

An affinity with and knowledge of gender equality should carry more weight in the recruitment and assignment of civil servants. The AIV therefore recommends that regular in-service training sessions should be organised, that gender issues should be incorporated into management training courses and into courses leading to assignments abroad, and that gender orientation should be included as a criterion in staff evaluation.

The AIV recommends appointing gender coordinators at embassies in relevant theme countries, and not just at the embassies in the '19 + 3' countries. Wherever possible, these gender coordinators should be local experts.

Finally, for effective integration into the Ministry's organisational structure, the AIV recommends devoting attention to gender equality in the new annual plan cycle. The AIV also recommends explicitly addressing the issue of gender equality in discussions at the missions on the integration of poverty reduction. The memorandum on the relationship between poverty and gender equality of June 2001 can be used for this purpose as a background document.

The analytical framework in Annexe II of this report can be used as a qualitative yardstick to measure level of gender orientation.

External integration of gender equality

With regard to the external integration of gender equality into the implementation of foreign policy, the AIV has reached the following conclusions.

The AIV calls on donors to work towards closer coordination of policies on promoting gender equality, and the relevant funding and procedures, both among themselves and with their partner countries. Donors can thus put their diversity to more purposeful use and strengthen their positions in multilateral organisations. Coordination already takes place at embassy level in partner countries and in the DAC Working Party on Gender.

A conflict of interests can sometimes arise during consultations with partner countries. While donors are no longer free to impose their ideas on partner countries, Dutch policy has adopted certain priorities, such as poverty reduction and gender equality. A DAC study funded by the Netherlands shows that other donors have also identified this problem. The AIV recommends drawing the attention of partner countries and other donors to this study.

The AIV has identified new themes in Dutch foreign policy that lend themselves to the integration of a gender-oriented perspective.

With regard to sustainable poverty reduction, the AIV recommends encouraging the use of gender budgeting in drafting national budgets since it can be used to measure their effects on the development of men and women. The AIV also recommends that the Netherlands should consistently draw attention to the status of women in PRSPs and to their role in drafting them at international conferences and in its dialogues with partner countries.

With regard to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, the AIV recommends involving gender and other experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence in the coherent implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325. This resolution emphasises that women need more protection than men during conflicts

and should be involved in conflict resolution.

Finally, the AIV recommends giving explicit support to gender-oriented initiatives in the field of good governance and treating gender equality as a fundamental component of human rights policy, in particular with a view to combating illegal trafficking in women.

Annexes

2 March 2002

To the Chair of the Advisory Council on International Affairs
Professor R.F.M. Lubbers
P.O.Box 20061
2500 EB The Hague

Dear Ruud,

Following a commitment I entered into in talks with the Permanent Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Government Expenditure on 15 June 1999, I hereby request the Advisory Council to report on the integration of gender policy in development policy. A few points are clarified below.

By Dutch gender policy I mean integrating the specific needs, interests and potential of women in recipient countries into mainstream Dutch development policy so as to:

- a) promote equality between men and women (in both a qualitative and quantitative sense) in recipient countries and to increase women's autonomy;
- b) increase the efficiency and sustainability of development activities;
- c) enable women to influence social and economic transition so as to bring nearer the ultimate goal of a just, democratic, safe and peaceful global society.

To this end, the Netherlands supports activities that contribute to:

- a) the empowerment of women. Direct support to the women's movement and support for the development of gender policy in recipient countries are central here;
- b) integration of gender policy into the mainstream of Dutch development cooperation.

The integration of gender policy in the mainstream of Dutch development cooperation is achieved:

- a) through bilateral cooperation, (via financial and plan-based macro support), through the sectoral approach, and through policies aimed at supporting the development of national gender policy, national institutions in this field and efforts to improve the expertise and capacity of the national women's movement;
- b) through multilateral cooperation (UN, World Bank, regional institutions), focusing on putting into effect the findings of international conferences (Beijing 1995, Cairo 1994, Copenhagen 1994, the 1993 ILO convention, Vienna 1993 and CEDAW 1982). It has emerged that this could not be achieved without using a special fund (the Women's Fund) and deploying gender expertise at embassies and in multilateral organisations (OSCE, DG 8, EU, etc.), as the IOB confirmed in its 1998 assessment of Women and Development policy and its implementation between 1985 and 1996.

As I indicated in my response to the IOB's findings in the Lower House, additional efforts are still needed to integrate gender policy in the mainstream of development policy.

The draft report 'Review of progress in the implementation of the DAC high level policy statement "Gender equality: moving towards sustainable, people-centred development"' of

November 1999 refers to problems affecting donor gender mainstreaming, notably staff shortages, attitudes held by and lack of management commitment, budgetary problems and a lack of both systematic monitoring and assessment procedures and the proper indicators necessary to demonstrate accountability and measure progress.

The following specific questions emerge:

- is the Dutch concept of gender mainstreaming appropriate?
- is the approach that has been chosen to integrate gender policy sufficiently strategic and sustainable?
- is the mainstream sufficiently accountable for the implementation of gender policy?
- to what extent do the problems identified by the DAC affect Dutch policy?
- is there sufficient coordination with multilateral partners (especially the World Bank, the UN and the EU) and bilateral partners in this field?
- on the basis of your findings, how do you think that the integration or mainstreaming of gender can best be promoted?

I look forward to your report on ways of improving the integration of gender policy in development policy.

Yours sincerely,

Eveline Herfkens
Minister for Development Cooperation

Enclosed: Response to the evaluation of Women and Development policy as presented to the Lower House

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNAL INTEGRATION OF GENDER EQUALITY

ORGANISATIONAL ELEMENTS	I. PERCEPTION	II. INVOLVEMENT	III. ACTION
A. POLICY/STRATEGY	<u>I.A.</u> Has there been a thought process on gender equality? Has any thought been given to an integration policy? And to the integration of gender equality into general policy?	<u>II.A.</u> Do staff and management feel responsible for the policy's gender orientation? Is there sufficient support?	<u>III.A.</u> Is general policy actually implemented, monitored and corrected on the basis of a gender orientation? Have enough instruments been developed for this?
B. WORKING PROCEDURES	<u>I.B.</u> Have working procedures been considered from the viewpoint of gender? Are these procedures clear, logical and gender-oriented?	<u>II.B.</u> Are procedures carried out by the book or – where guidelines are lacking – in the right spirit? Is anybody accountable for this?	<u>III.B.</u> Has this led to the adjustment of procedures? Is there any room for change?
C. STRUCTURE	<u>I.C.</u> Has any thought been given to how gender equality will be incorporated into the organisational structure? Are there opportunities and time for reflection on gender equality? Are there channels for mobilising and disseminating the relevant knowledge?	<u>II.C.</u> Is gender expertise located at the highest possible level in the organisation, so that the management also remains gender-oriented?	<u>III.C.</u> How has this been implemented? Is there a separate gender unit, or are there gender experts in each department? Is there an internal consultative body?
D. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE	<u>I.D.</u> Has any thought been given to how to make the organisational culture gender-oriented? Is it customary to do courses and training programmes on the subject and to update knowledge?	<u>II.D.</u> Is the organisation's internal culture gender-oriented? Does the organisation project such a culture externally? Do all members of staff feel free to bring up the issue? Are people willing to change?	<u>III.D.</u> How is information concerning gender policy managed, both internally and externally? If necessary, is anything being done to bring about a change in mentality?
E. PERSONNEL	<u>I.E.</u> Has any thought been given to a staff policy that promotes gender equality? Has a gender orientation been incorporated into job profiles?	<u>II.E.</u> How are the staff and management motivated to give expression to gender issues in their work? Are they held accountable for this? Is gender-oriented behaviour encouraged and rewarded?	<u>III.E.</u> How many women work in the organisation, in junior and senior positions? Has a gender coordinator been appointed to monitor internal and external policy on gender equality?
F. MANAGEMENT STYLE	<u>I.F.</u> Do managers consider how they can integrate gender equality into their leadership style of management?	<u>II.F.</u> Does management have an effective gender orientation? Is the management style intuitive, empathetic and open to discussion?	<u>III.F.</u> Do managers take the effects of their actions on men and women into account?
G. INPUT	<u>I.G.</u> Has any thought been given to the inputs (money, instruments and expertise) needed to integrate gender equality?	<u>II.G.</u> Are people willing and motivated to deliver this kind of input?	<u>III.G.</u> Is this input delivered? How?
H. OUTPUT	<u>I.H.</u> Have the objectives and the expected outcomes been properly considered in advance? Have any criteria been identified?	<u>II.H.</u> Does the organisation have a reputation for being gender-oriented?	<u>III.H.</u> Is policy evaluated and, where necessary, adjusted? Has gender equality been achieved in the organisation and in the outcomes of its activities?

List of abbreviations

AIV	Advisory Council on International Affairs
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CMR	Human Rights Committee (of the AIV)
COS	Development Cooperation Committee (of the AIV)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (of the UK)
DGIS	Directorate-General for International Cooperation
DSI	Social and Institutional Development Department
DSI/VR	Women and Development Division, Social and Institutional Development Department
EU	European Union
FLS	Forward-Looking Strategies
GAS	Gender Assessment Study
GAVIM	Good Governance, Poverty Reduction, Women and Development, Institutional Development and Environment
GMV	Good Governance, Human Rights and Peacebuilding
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NAR	National Advisory Council for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfA	Beijing Platform for Action
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
TECENA	Temporary Expert Committee on Emancipation in the New Advisory System
UN	United Nations
WMG	Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming (of the AIV)

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