

## ROUTINGS TO RESETTLEMENT



Just before EQUAL began, 11 of the young offender institutions in the Netherlands were involved in Work-Wise. While this was an innovative reintegration programme that began in 2000, there was still room for improvement. For example, the agencies associated with the scheme tended to operate independently with little communication between each other. There was also a need for a more effective system of case management and for training programmes that were better tailored to particular target groups of young offenders. Work-Wise Nederland saw EQUAL as an answer to its prayers, especially from the point of view of developing a model of inter-agency cooperation and successful applications for EQUAL funding in both rounds resulted in the [IMPACT](#) and then the [MATCH](#) Development Partnerships (DPs).

*“Aftercare is the final piece of a trajectory in which the custodial institutions for juveniles, the youth probation services, and the local authorities too, have to organise and to facilitate care and guidance in cooperation with each other,”* said Mr. Piet Hein Donner, the Minister of Justice, at a conference about Youth Criminality and Aftercare in September 2005. He added that, *“this trajectory has to start inside the custodial institution. Reintegration into society will be made possible by opening the door of the institution in a gradual way. That can be done by offering schemes such as Work-Wise and this successful programme proves how partners who are geared to one another can cooperate very productively”*. Such partnership working was at the centre of the work of both DPs which have brought together custodial institutions, agencies associated with the Dutch Justice Department, probation services, NGOs, employers representatives and colleges.

### A THREE-WAY ROUTING INTO ADULT AND WORKING LIFE

The main success of the DPs has been the development of a model of case management based on a partnership approach, but more intensive and appropriate resettlement measures have also been created for a range of young offenders in the Netherlands.

Originally, Work-Wise operated in 11 of the custodial institutions for juveniles but through the EQUAL activities all 13 institutions in the Netherlands are now involved in the MATCH DP. This might be explained by both the quality of the programme and the fact that Work-Wise was initiated by some of the institutions themselves. The objective of Work-Wise Nederland is to provide young people with a seamless into-employment programme, creating a nationwide network for preparing release and providing aftercare, through which further developments can be made to the programme.

The programme is focussed on boys and girls aged 15 to 24, who have been placed in a custodial institution following a criminal sentence imposed by a court or placed under a supervision order and removed from their parents' care by special order of a juvenile court. Most of these young people have a long history of convictions or relationships with the youth justice system. They often have severe psychiatric or developmental problems and can either present a danger to society because of their anti-social behaviour, or a danger to themselves because they repeatedly run away from home and sleep rough. The Work-Wise programme originated from the best practice within juvenile institutions in dealing with such young people. Through close cooperation between these institutions, a well-defined framework for the resettlement scheme was established. This framework is outlined in the Work-Wise Manual and it has proved to be workable for everyone concerned, including the external agencies that are involved.

The Work-Wise programme offers young offenders an individual route that should lead them to an independent, adult life in wider society. Thus, the activities within Work-Wise are mainly

focused on training and work experience but the programme also offers support with finding housing, re-establishing relationships, developing social skills and managing leisure time.

Work-Wise is a comprehensive programme with three routings that are followed simultaneously:

- **Work and Education** prepares young offenders to function effectively in a paid job by providing training and work experience placements and assistance in making an application for a job or work placement;
- **Living Independently and Coping with Leisure Time** assists juveniles and young offenders in creating a rhythm and a structure for their daily life, which will help them exercise their responsibilities and reduce their chances of re-offending;
- **Creating a social network** provides intensive coaching in socially acceptable behaviour, relationships and social skills.

When a young offender is placed in an institution, the programme usually starts in a closed setting but because all the institutions in the Netherlands operate Work-Wise programme, the routings can be continued if, and when, the young person is transferred to an open institution.

The programme has been a great help to Joris, a young boy with a history of offending. The first routing motivated him to go back to school where he gained two qualifications in catering. After his training, he was offered a steady job in the same company where he had undertaken a work experience placement. Now, Joris is following the Living Independently and Coping with Leisure routing. *“In my time off I like to play football; also regularly I have to work late, which happens very often in the catering business,”* explains Joris who adds that *“I really*



*would like to live by myself and have no more rules like in the institution; I'll*

*Hands-on experience of catering in the kitchen of a care home*

*be able to make my own rules!”* However, he finds having to deal with money matters and filling in all kinds of forms a real headache but he can always call on help from his case manager and he is really looking forward to his independence.

In many other instances, these individual, holistic routings have led to a paid job but Work Wise has always been conscious of the need for continual improvement and quality assurance. During the initial IMPACT DP, the programme was adapted for short-stay detainees who spend between three to six months in an institution. In addition, training in self-esteem was developed for young women prisoners, cognitive skills training was extended for would-be employees and a coaching system was created for ethnic minority offenders. All of these new approaches are now part of the mainstream programme.

MATCH, the current DP, is concentrating on the development of an effective aftercare scheme and this will pay special attention to the needs of young people with learning difficulties, with psychiatric problems, sex offenders and repeat offenders. One element in the scheme will be the creation of a peer support network. In addition, MATCH will design an integral screening and diagnosis instrument to measure and monitor motivation, an e-coaching system, a tool to measure quality in the total programme and a centre to prevent school drop-out based on distance and e-learning.

Some resources have already been developed in the course of this work, for example a publication is available on “Motivational Interviewing within Juvenile Custodial Institutions” and a CD-Rom has been created that demonstrates the DP’s case management approach in action. In cooperation with transnational partners, a guide on “Towards more Effective Transnational study visits” has been produced which can also be downloaded from the project [web site](#) and a Merit

glossary covering the use of terms in different countries is also available. All of these resources may be obtained from MATCH (see contact details in the final section).

## **PARTNERSHIP – A PREREQUISITE FOR CASE MANAGEMENT**

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Whilst the IMPACT DP had been very carefully designed to bring together all the agencies and interests that could contribute to a new form of case management, there were a number of problems and bottlenecks that could be identified and these included:

- Competition between the agencies involved;
- Lack of unity about the desired approach;
- Insufficient communication;
- No familiarity with each other's (im)-possibilities in terms of contributing resources or expertise;
- Lack or loss of relevant information on the young person and previous assistance received.

The DP believed that if case management was to be effective, it was necessary to shape the collaboration between all of the partner organisations concerned. However, in the words of Robert Suvaal who chaired the group, *"the start that was made was absolutely terrible. Everyone was defending their own organisation and wasn't prepared to listen to anyone else."* So how did they get over this impasse, Robert again explained *"I finally got so fed up that I insisted that we begin all over again and this time look at what we were doing from the point of view of the individual young person."* Fortunately this new focus seemed to work as all of the organisations had a real concern for the best interests of the young offenders and within five months they had developed a new model of Dual Case Management.

After the initial contretemps, there was a greater degree of transparency in all aspects of the work. This was very important because the objectives of the case management were to:

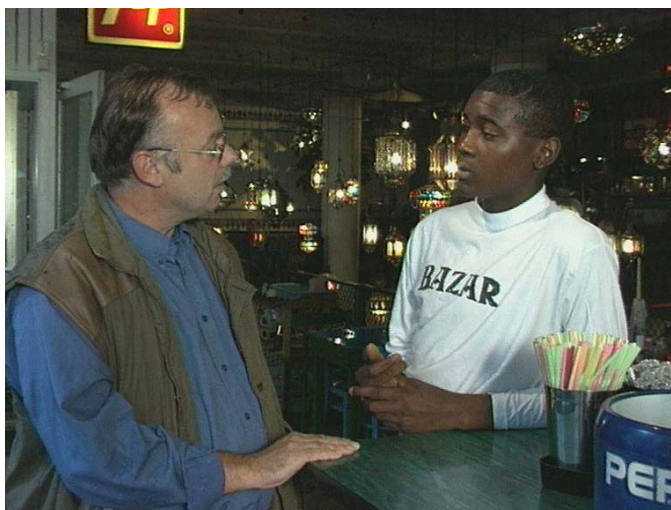
- Develop an efficient and effective package of services, by fine-tuning the various services that up until then had not been synchronised;
- Make maximum use of services and their direct and indirect coaching in order to enhance young offenders' chances of social integration.

Also, if the case management was to be effective the policies of the various organisations had to be synchronised and this required a dialogue that was open and frank if everyone was to understand the potential and the limitations of each of the other partners.

Case management is seen by the DP as, *"fulfilling the roles of particularly coach, supervisor, mediator and process monitor."* However, the DP came up with a model of dual case management that is provided during the Work-Wise routing by a

"twosome" of officials. This duo comprises the individual employment counsellor (IEC) from the penal institution and the (youth) probation officer of a youth care service. Thus, nowhere was the need for clear and honest communication more important than in the dual execution of the case management function.

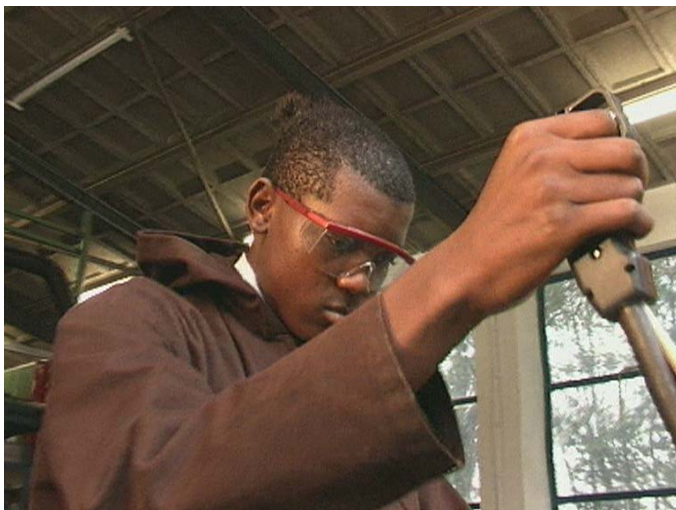
The IEC acts as case manager during the routing within the institution and can be seen as the 'routing manager'. Together, the twosome and the young person draft the routing plan and then the IEC consults internal or external expertise and controls the progress of the routing. While the



*An Individual Employment Counsellor drops in on an aftercare visit*

two officials maintain close communication the most important moments when they meet together are:

- Application for the Work-Wise routing
- Drafting the individual routing plan
- Start of the Work-Wise programme
- Interim evaluations
- Aftercare
- Evaluation
- Closure.



*Creating opportunities includes providing effective training and work placements*

concerned Robert Suvaal believes that *“in the process of creating the new model there was an enormous amount of knowledge and expertise that was shared and this, in turn, has generated a high level of mutual trust. As for the model itself, it prevents any duplication of effort and ensures that the existing skills and expertise are put to the best possible use.”*

Gerard Stoop, one of the youth probation officers feels that *“my job has changed a lot, as it is now normal for me to work together with the young person’s IEC. The way young people return to society has also changed a lot because they are more motivated and they can make their own decisions. Depending on what is needed, the IEC and I regularly change roles.”* The benefits to the young offenders of having this continued support are obvious. Also, if they establish a natural affinity with one or other of the officials, then the arrangement is flexible enough for

that individual to act as their main support or contact person. As far as the partner organisations are

## CONTINUAL INNOVATION

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Work-Wise has always been keen to improve and up-grade its programme and that is evident in the current MATCH Development Partnership. The agencies that have been chosen as partners are those that can help the DP to attain its objectives and to disseminate and mainstream the outputs. The DP has brought on board:

- The custodial institutions that jointly developed the Work-Wise programme;
- The Penitentiary Institution in Veenhuizen;
- The National Agency of Correctional Institutions;
- The Ministry of Justice, Secretariat of Prevention, Youth and Sanctions;
- The Salvation Army Probation Service;
- The MO group - an umbrella organisation for guardianship, youth probation and juvenile rehabilitation;
- Right Management Consultants - an employment agency;
- StimulanSZ - an organisation representing local communities in the Netherlands;
- Albeda College Rotterdam – a school for lower and secondary vocational education;
- Cedris - a branch organisation for social employment and integration;
- De Sprong - a school for special secondary vocational education.

To help ensure that all of these bodies share a common understanding of the objectives and activities of its work, the DP uses what it calls a Project Planning Description for all of its sub-

projects, whether national or transnational. This planning is established at the beginning of the project and carefully charts, by way of background, the reasons for the project, the goals of the project, any relevant documents or studies and the coherence between the project and wider trends and developments. In terms of implementation, the document outlines expected impact, success factors, stages in development, monitoring arrangements, resources, project organisation, decision making and responsibility and a communication plan.

Every three months, the Board of the DP reviews the progress made and makes any necessary changes or alteration to the plans. In the first IMPACT DP there were some difficulties, as more time than expected was needed to develop the products. While the DP started in October 2002, it was January 2005 before the prototypes had been established and tested and this left only four months for them to be finalised before the end of the DP. Account has been taken of this lesson in the planning for MATCH products and if any other EQUAL DP would like a copy of the project planning tool, please write to [info@work-wise.nl](mailto:info@work-wise.nl).

Within the IMPACT project, a quality system had been developed for the Work-Wise programme. Also a start had been made on the development of an instrument to measure effectiveness by assembling a questionnaire, based on the importance of activating the so-called Five Protective Mechanisms, which are:

- Avoiding risk situations;
- Preventing negative circles of interaction in staff relationships with young people;
- Creating opportunities, especially a job;
- Increasing the self-confidence of the young people;
- Keeping basic family and other relationships intact.

In MATCH, this work will continue in cooperation with various university faculties such as Social Sciences, Criminology and Behavioural Sciences. All of this is aimed at providing more credible and impartial evidence in support of the innovations that will be pioneered by the DP and, therefore, at improving the chances of these new practices being disseminated and mainstream.

Irma van der Veen, the manager of Work-Wise is sure that, *“if you are serious about innovation and its resulting changes you have to take time to inform people about your goals. EQUAL gave us the chance to work both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ and to really involve workers in custodial institutions, the probation service and outside agencies.”* As to the future, Irma believes, *“now the Work-Wise project leaders in the various institutions can be relied upon to maintain the momentum and to promote a culture of innovation in the resettlement of young offenders.”*

## Contact

Irma van der Veen  
Manager - Work-Wise Nederland

P.O. Box 94  
7200 AB Zutphen  
The Netherlands

Tel: +31 575 577080  
Fax : +31 0575 542638  
E-mail: [info@work-wise.nl](mailto:info@work-wise.nl)

Web site: [www.work-wise.nl](http://www.work-wise.nl)  
[Link to EQUAL database description](#)