

Table 10.1. Baseline and Progress Across GOAL’s Five Intervention Strategies, Plus Policy Interest/Support

ASPECT OF PROGRAMME OR POLICY		LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT
Partnerships and networks	<i>Start of GOAL</i>	6 There has been a focus on regional collaboration for some time. The preconditions for addressing low basic skill levels were mapped out in a number of regions in the Literacy for Life pilot programme (2012 and 2015). Partly because of the outcomes of the previous pilot programme, strengthening networks is incorporated as one of the five action lines in the national Count on Skills programme (2016-2018) and the aim is to establish active networks in all 35 employment regions in the Netherlands. The goal of the action line during the action programme is to ensure that at least 45,000 participants start literacy training, in which materials and volunteers from the programme will be used.
	<i>End of GOAL</i>	7 The Dutch GOAL pilot didn’t explicitly focus on the development of partnerships and networks. However, the information from this evaluation study does make an indirect contribution to this aspect of the programme, because further improvement and dispersion of the guidance process (screening for low literacy and referral to appropriate training facilities) means more organisations will work together to tackle low literacy. Once the regional networks have been established, a second and important challenge follows: embedding. It emerged from the interviews with pilot organisations and partners that there is room for improvement on this.
Counsellor competences	<i>Start</i>	4 Nearly all adult guidance practitioners in the Netherlands have experience in education and/or reintegration practices. However, there are no formal criteria for guidance practitioners and thus a great divergence in quality between various service points. No research is available from the Netherlands on the effectiveness of guidance practitioners. One reason for this is that effectiveness is strongly dependent on the quality of the individual practitioner, but there is currently no policy focus on the quality of the practitioners.
	<i>End</i>	5 No specific targets have been formulated in the Dutch GOAL pilot with respect to counsellor competences, because the intervention consists of a brief screening and referral. Those administering the Literacy Screener have received instruction from the Reading and Writing Foundation on how to recognise low literacy, how to discuss this issue with clients and how to use the Literacy Screener (<i>Taalmeter</i>). The client satisfaction survey shows a (very) positive image of the performance of the counsellor. It should be noted here that 43 per cent of the clients received assistance in completing the client satisfaction surveys, which may have influenced the answers due to social pressure.
Outreach	<i>Start</i>	3 In the area of reach of service users with low literacy, gains can be made in the Netherlands. That is why this aspect formed the core of the Dutch GOAL intervention. This involves expanding identification sites and screening of people who potentially have low basic skills in an accessible setting.

	<i>End</i>	<p>5</p> <p>An important first step in the Dutch approach to low literacy is finding more persons with low literacy. The pilot organisations have succeeded in this and their successful implementation of the Literacy Screener gives leads regarding how to disperse the implementation on a larger scale in the Netherlands. The identification of those with low literacy is in itself not sufficient; we can only speak of outreach if those with low literacy are also helped in a suitable manner and are 'not left to fend for themselves.' In three out of the four pilot organisations, the number of identified people with low literacy who then enrol for a language course is still (too) low. Especially low literate people whose mother tongue is Dutch hardly take part in language lessons.</p>
Tools	<i>Start</i>	<p>7</p> <p>At the heart of the GOAL project in the Netherlands is a Literacy Screener, the <i>Taalmeter</i>. The Literacy Screener is an online tool with which organisations can identify quickly and easily those people who may have difficulty reading. In 2013 this instrument was developed by the Reading and Writing Foundation because there was a need for a validated instrument that helps identify low literacy. This means that the development of the Literacy Screener constitutes an investment in the approach to the recognition, reduction and prevention of low literacy.</p>
	<i>End</i>	<p>8</p> <p>In the four pilot organisations, conducting the Literacy Screener could be implemented successfully in their regular work processes. The tool can be conducted quickly and easily and provides the organisations with a structured method for identifying low literacy. The organisations use this information to tailor their services to the client's needs. The pilot organisation's successes give leads for implementing the Literacy Screener on a larger scale in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The Reading and Writing Foundation regularly encountered resistance against working with the Literacy Screener when it was recruiting organisations for GOAL as well as outside the context of the pilot. For this reason, the Reading and Writing Foundation is in the process of developing variants of the Literacy Screener that are shorter and more applicable in organisations that have less elaborate work processes.</p>
Overall service quality (holistic judgement)	<i>Start</i>	<p>5</p> <p>Successes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences from the previous Literacy for Life pilot programme (2012 and 2015) • Several national action programmes provide a basis for dealing with low literacy at the local level, with the national action programme Count on Skills (<i>Tel mee met Taal</i>) parallel to GOAL. • Involvement of the Reading and Writing Foundation, which operates both on a national and local level. <p>Room for improvement: people with low literacy generally do not register themselves for language lessons. Finding low literate people and then assisting them in a manner that is suitable for them is a complicated task. The national government seeks to develop a culture in which more social organisations recognise their role in finding and schooling people with low literacy.</p>

	<i>End</i>	<p>6</p> <p>In order to find more people with low literacy, the Dutch GOAL pilot had the objective of finding new locations that can deploy the Literacy Screener: organisations where people come for a completely different reason and where the work activities are not primarily associated with low literacy. Within the GOAL pilot, four organisations (sites) were involved: a social service, an agency specialised in services related to labour participation and two prisons. All four organisations have successfully implemented the Literacy Screener into their regular work processes and are convinced of the added value of the instrument. The pilot organisation's successes give leads for implementing the Literacy Screener on a larger scale in the Netherlands.</p> <p>Next to this success, the evaluation study has also revealed a major bottleneck: in general, the flow into language courses of clients with an unsatisfactory score on the Literacy Screener is still low. Finding more people with low literacy is only useful if this is succeeded by a good follow-up. This should be focused on more specifically in the Dutch approach to low literacy.</p>
Policy interest and/or support	<i>Start</i>	<p>7</p> <p>In general, the Netherlands has a strong policy focus on improving literacy and low basic skills. For example, this shows from the national action programme Count on Skills (2016-2018), in which three ministries together have invested 18 million euros to improve the Dutch approach to low literacy.</p> <p>In spite of the policy focus, too few people with low basic skills are reached. Extra focus and effort is needed to better address this problem.</p>
	<i>End</i>	<p>7</p> <p>The national government makes experiments possible to develop proven, effective methods to address low literacy. GOAL is an example of this kind of experiment. As mentioned, important lessons can be learned from the pilot for the further improvement and roll-out of the guidance process. In this regard, GOAL does not so much influence the extent to which the government is involved, but it does give an outline of the involvement. The lessons that can be drawn from this study should be the focus of future policy on improving literacy and low basic skills.</p>