



GAP FINAL REPORT

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PROJECT RATIONALE

The rationale behind the project was that a paradigm shift was needed in trade union activities and in the workplace in order to deliver gender equality in employment for women workers. Despite the fact that legislation had existed from 1975 to outlaw wage discrimination on the grounds of sex, national research (ESRI: 2001) pointed to the fact that women working in Ireland were:

- On average paid 15% less than their male counterparts
- Under-represented at higher levels in the workplace
- Occupationally segregated
- Have reduced labour market attachment

The aims of the project were:

- To reduce the gender pay gap
- To develop, test and diffuse gender neutral guidelines for job evaluation and for gender proofing and gender impact assessment
- To develop toolkits for managers and workers in order to increase their awareness raising skills, job evaluation skills, gender impact assessment skills and training needs analysis skills
- To develop the capacity to strengthen equality in policy development and service delivery within trade unions and to develop guidelines for upskilling and training women.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

Interviews were conducted for a project manager in November 2001 and Mags O' Brien was appointed, on secondment from SIPTU, to commence in January 2002. The project development team felt that it was vital to have an experienced official with an IR degree who also had a background in research to oversee the project as this would combine an understanding of the realities on the ground with a theoretical perspective.



STEERING COMMITTEE

The first task undertaken was to appoint a steering committee and all affiliated unions who had members in the Republic of Ireland were approached for nominees. A number of Congress staff were also appointed in order to cover various areas of expertise. Membership of the committee is listed at Appendix 1.

The role of the steering committee was to bring together the expertise and knowledge that already existed within the trade union movement in order to drive the project. The nominees were predominantly experienced union officials who had a grounding in equality issues, many of whom had taken equality cases in the past.

The committee would also play a pivotal role in diffusing the outcomes of the project to ensure the widest possible audience for the materials and knowledge gained.

PROJECT ACTIONS

The official launch of the project took place on International Women's Day (March 8th 2002) and gained extensive publicity around the issue of gender and pay, with coverage on the News at One and the Pat Kenny Show on RTE, and with further coverage in the Irish Times and the Examiner. A simple information leaflet was also produced (Appendix 2)

BRAINSTORMING

Once the committee had been appointed a one day brainstorming session was held on 11th March, 2002, facilitated by Dr Jane Pillinger, who is an expert in the field of gender equality within trade unions. The aims of the day were;

- To identify the key priorities for action
- To generate concrete ideas/themes to move the project forward
- To agree an action plan with clear goals and outcomes

It was decided that the project would be managed and developed through three working groups:

- Job evaluation and gender mainstreaming (gender proofing and gender impact assessment)
- Gender Related Training needs Analysis Skills
- Gender Awareness raising

The third group was to be cross cutting and would promote the outcomes of the first two groups. The group further decided that the first phase of the work would be to examine research nationally and internationally on the issues covered.



While the project had specific objectives, it is generally recognised that the value of situating a such a programme centrally within the headquarters of one of the social partners was that it should inform all aspects of policy development in an organisation and the project team took every opportunity to diffuse knowledge widely and to feed into Social Partnership deliberations.

A project evaluator, Helen Newman, was appointed, who assisted greatly in the committee stage and in developing the training.

TRAINING

The Project Manager attended a certified three day training course in the TUC in London which dealt with training on gender pay audits. While the information gained was of immediate use, so also was the debate with other officials and activists on the difficulties in getting the message across that equality had not been fully tackled. She also undertook the Congress Tutor Training Programme which proved to be of benefit when delivering training later in the project lifetime.

RESEARCH

Extensive research was conducted into the national and international position of women in the world of work. The Steering Committee had decided however, that as much work had already been done on the causes of disparities, and there was general consensus on the majority of these causes, the research should concentrate on what measures were in place to affect change.

A number of papers were prepared on the position of women in the workforce in Ireland and the first of these formed the basis of the informal debate at the Irish Congress of Trade Unions Womens Conference in Belfast in February 2002. The debate was facilitated by the Project Manager and followed a paper presented by Beverly Jones, solicitor with Jones & Cassidy Solicitors. Attendance at the conference was approximately 200. The debate was a lively one which reflected on the lack of progress North and South on closing the last percentile of the pay gap. Again the debate highlighted the issues of childcare, the lack of family friendly policies in the workplace and the predominance of males in senior positions both in the world of work and in the trade union movement.



WOMEN IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The project manager attended a conference in Brussels on women in the trade union movement in Europe and the findings, coupled with the debate from the ICTU Women's Conference, informed the work of the sub committees. It was decided that primary research was needed in order to ascertain the position of women within the ICTU affiliate unions in Ireland and in particular to ascertain:

- The numbers and gender breakdown of staff/national officers within trade unions
- The numbers and gender breakdown of activists at local level within unions

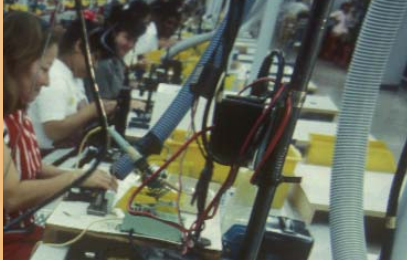
A preliminary report on the findings was published (Appendix 3) and formed part of the proceedings at a fringe meeting held at the ICTU Biennial Conference in Tralee in 2003. The meeting was extremely successful with a large attendance and a lively discussion, which was alluded to on the floor of conference.

The essential findings were that:

- While women now made up 50% of union membership in the North of Ireland and 44% in the Republic they were still grossly underrepresented at decision making levels in all unions, with only 26% of elected officers being female.
- Men still made up the majority of national elected officers in unions, even when the unions were predominantly female.
- Although women made up 60% of union staff, they were concentrated in specific areas, with 98% of administrative staff of those who returned surveys being female, but only 25% of women officials, and where there were higher grade officials only 14% of these were women.

Representation at local level showed more female involvement; however they tended to be committee members rather than officers while the position of Branch President/Chair was still predominantly held by men.

A further set of questions were included on negotiations on family friendly/work life balance policies locally. While those findings need further analysis, they point to the fact that activists on the ground tended to view these as issues for national negotiation.



NEWSLETTERS

Three newsletters were produced during the project, aimed at officials and activists. These focused on facts and figures illustrating the pay gap and on specific issues such as Equality Audits. Their aim was to familiarise people on the ground with the issues in a 'bite-sized' format. The newsletters were circularised individually to branches rather than to head office of the unions, to ensure as full a coverage as possible. Electronic copies were also circulated via e-mail where possible.

TAKE 4

A series of four lunchtime briefings were held, with lunch provided. These were aimed at officials and activists from all unions, and were conducted in the new Connolly Centre in Liberty Hall. The aim of these was to cover a different equality topic each week and were aimed at those who had limited time to attend seminars etc. They covered:

- Taking an Equality Case
- Proofing existing agreements and understanding the 'jargon'
- Job evaluations - understanding and preventing hidden bias
- How to conduct a pay audit

LINKS TO NATIONAL POLICY

The project manager was co-opted onto the Department of Justice Equality & Law Reform PPF Consultative Group on Male/Female Wage Differentials. The project Manager also gave input into the Indecon questionnaire which was used to form the basis of the Sectoral Report and initiated contacts with unions for the researchers. Members of the steering committee were also nominees on committees such as the National Equal Opportunities Committee and The Equality Authority, Pensions Board and other national committees. This ensured a wide cross fertilisation of ideas both into and from the project.

GAP TOOLKIT

Negotiating for Equality – Gender & Pay Toolkit

One of the major outcomes of the GAP Project was a toolkit for use by officials and activists. It was designed as a 'no-nonsense' guide for practitioners. While the toolkit is a complete publication, the individual sections can stand-alone and are cross-referenced. The section on training women in the workforce was written by the committee following input from focus groups of women returners, both from Gateway, the FAS initiated project and a group of women from the CPSU who work in the Department of Social Welfare in Sligo.



Rationale for Publication

It has become increasingly clear that closure of the pay gap will only come about by both legislative and attitudinal changes.

The toolkit seeks to explain the reasons for the gender pay gap and to put forward an agenda for action for its reduction and eventual elimination. The contents of the toolkit are, as follows:

Gender Pay Gap - Current Findings

This section gives details of the current pay gap and explanations of the main reasons for its existence.

The Law and Equality

This section sets out the background to equality legislation and other related legislation and provides a brief guide to taking a case.

Equality Audit

This details the steps that need to be taken and the information required to conduct an equality audit in the workplace.

Job Evaluation

This provides a methodology to be used in conducting a job evaluation that is free of gender bias.

Gender Proofing/Gender Impact Assessment

This explains the rationale behind and the necessity for gender proofing agreements and the process of conducting a gender impact assessment.

Recruitment & Selection

This section gives a guide to employers for complying with equality legislation when conducting interviews.

Gender Pay Questionnaire

Gives a sample gender pay questionnaire, which can be tailored to suit the needs of individual organisations.

Promote Yourself

This sets out a three-day training session for women who wish to be promoted in their organisation. It aims to equip participants with skills and knowledge to set career goals for themselves.

Equality Briefing for Employers

This is a one-day session designed for middle management. It gives them the chance to benchmark how they maximize the potential of the workforce and understand their responsibilities under Equality legislation.



Resources

This section gives summaries of cases taken to the ODEI- The Equality Tribunal dealing with gender grounds, and useful contact addresses for further information.

Bibliography

Is a guide to relevant research and the publications used in this publication.

OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES

Conferences

The GAP Project manager participated as an Irish representative on a transnational project 'Advancing Women in the Workplace'. The aim of this project was to bring together good practice across partner companies with regard to increasing opportunities open to women to progress in the workplace, thus reducing vertical segregation. The outcome of the project was a handbook of good practice and a conference on the issue.

Equal Pay Seminar July 2002 TUC London

The conference, which took place in London in January 2003, was attended by a number of representatives of the Gap steering committee and Rosheen Callender (SIPTU) presented a paper on the Irish experience.

Conference Lisbon 2002

'Ensuring Rights on Equal Pay'. Participants from Luxembourg, Portugal, and Ireland.

Presentations were also made at conferences of IMPACT and SIPTU

Presentation to EC Social Dialogue Meeting on Gender Equality

Congress Equality Officer made a presentation to the above meeting on Tuesday September 14 2004 in Brussels. The meeting was attended by representatives of trade unions and employers from around Europe and the particular focus on that day was Equal pay. The meeting consisted of a Plenary meeting to present selected case studies (of which the GAP resource was one) & a question and answers session, during which both sides of the table were very complimentary about the initiative and many requested copies of the resource.

ICTU WOMEN'S SEMINAR MARCH 2003

The theme of the seminar was recruiting and promoting women in the trade union movement. Jette Lyke, a Danish Trade Unionist spoke on the issue of training and mentoring women. The Danish Trade Union movement had set up training, which was aimed at three areas:

- New Recruits
- Women activists
- Women at senior level in the trade union movement

Over 250 attended the seminars, from unions North and South.



CLASSES/SEMINARS

- A half day module was designed for delivery on HETAC- certified courses run by SIPTY in Galway, Cork and Dublin and for integration into the Congress-run HETAC course for trade union officials.
- Tailor-made modules for equality training courses run by TUI, IBOA and ESBOA were designed
- A paper was given at a half day seminar on equality north and south run by the NI Equality Commission.

TALENT BANK

In order to increase the participation and profile of women in the trade union movement, a 'Talent Bank for the New Millennium' was set up. This was an effort to ensure that, when choosing expert members for nomination to committees internally or externally. This was launched at the fringe event held at the Biennial Conference in 2003. The application form also included a question on mentoring. It was hoped that women who were senior within the movement would put themselves forward as mentors for those who were less experienced. A number of meetings within Congress debated this subject and the consensus was that, while the talent bank form was aimed at women, efforts should also be made to have men mentor activists. Links were maintained with other groups involved in the measure and a Lunch was held in December 2003, bringing together women who had completed the talent bank forms. The lunch was addressed by women from 'Mentorlink' a project that was fostering links with women in engineering and science.

FINAL CONFERENCE - BRIDGE THE GAP

A closing conference was held in Jurys Ballsbridge on the 8th March 2004 with the theme of "National and International Trends & Remedies"

It targeted both participants who influence policy and those that take part in negotiations in the workplace.

The conference was opened by Sally Anne Kinahan, Director of Advocacy and General Services Congress. Conference speakers and content are listed at Appendix 3.

The conference received extensive coverage on RTE, Newstalk 104 and The Times, Examiner and Independent.



EUROPEAN LEGISLATION

The project also co-ordinated a CD Rom which updated European Judgements on Equality legislation, in order to ensure that this acted as an accompaniment to the Negotiating for Equality Toolkit.

IMPACT

Congress believes that the GAP project has had a significant impact in a number of areas. It has produced a high level of awareness among union officials and activists of the continuing challenge of the gender pay gap. It has succeeded in having this issue addressed in the on-going training provision of trade union officials and has produced important training material to support this. The GAP toolkit provides an extraordinary useful tool for trade unions in terms of both information and also providing a strategic framework for action.

The GAP Project led to several internal developments to tackle the under-representation of women at a high level within the trade union movement.

CLAUSE AND EQUALITY AUDIT PROCESS FOR TRADE UNIONS

Concerned to ensure that the momentum to actively promoting equalities issues within the trade union movement is maintained and accelerated, the Executive Council of Congress submitted a motion to its Biennial Delegate Conference (BDC) in 2003, seeking to develop an Equality Clause and Equality Audit process for trade unions

The motion, which was adopted, proposed that all unions affiliated to Congress have a clear commitment to promote equality between women and men and to eliminate all forms of harassment, prejudice and unfair discrimination, both within its own structures and through all its activities, including its own employment practices.

To give real effect to this commitment, it will be a requirement that all affiliates sign up to the following Model Equality Clause:

The objects of the union shall include:

- (a) The promotion of equality within the union's employment practices by:
 - (i) ensuring that its recruitment and selection process is open and transparent and that any position in the organisation is open to candidates regardless of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, political opinion, age, disability, race or ethnic origin or membership of the traveller community;



- (ii) monitoring its work force to identify if under-representation from any of the categories listed at a(i) above exists across the range of posts available and putting in place lawful positive action programmes to address any such under-representation;
 - (iii) providing a range of work-life balance policies to attract and retain those with caring responsibilities or those with a disability that prevents them from working full-time.
- (b) The promotion of equality in relation to access to and membership of all its internal structures through:
- (i) monitoring the make-up of its lay representatives to identify if under-representation from any of the categories listed at a(i) above exists and putting in place policies and practices to address any such under-representation.
- (c) The promotion of equality for its members through collective bargaining, publicity material and campaigning, representation, union organisation and structures, education and training, organising and recruitment, the provision of all other services and benefits and all other activities.

Affiliates will report back to Congress every two years on the progress they are making to advance equality.

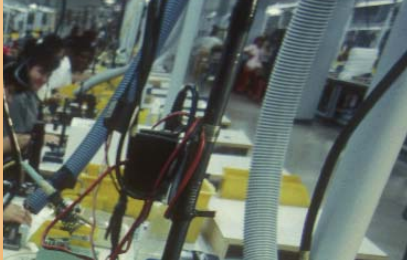
REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

The BDC also agreed to the establishment of a Working Group to examine options and draft a proposal to increase the representation of women on the governing structures of Congress.

A Working Group was established by the Executive Council at its October 2003 meeting. The members of the group were Des Geraghty, Chairperson (SIPTU), Catherine Byrne, INTO; Dan Murphy, PSEU; Patricia McKeown, UNISON; John Tierney, AMICUS, and the Congress assistant general secretary, Sally Anne Kinahan.

Submissions were invited from Affiliates, the Northern Ireland Committee and the Women's Committees which were considered by the Working Group in developing the proposal. The Group's work was also informed by research undertaken of provisions for the representation of women in other confederations and other similar organisations.

The Working Group focussed on different approaches to increasing women's representation and came to the view that outside of Reserved Seats, the only way to increase representation is to elect women on to the General Panel, and to get more women elected, more women must be nominated by trade unions.



It was recognised that a rule change would be necessary to require Trade Unions to nominate more women who stand a serious chance of being elected. To achieve this, Unions which nominate more than one candidate for election (and who have some chance of electing more than one candidate) should nominate women as second candidate but with regard given to the proportion of women in each of the affiliated Unions.

The Working Group developed a rule change which sets out to:

- change the current arrangement of “reserved” seats for women on the Executive Council and Northern Ireland Committee;
- increase the total number of positions on the Executive Council (apart from Officers) to 31, comprised of a general panel of 30 and one reserved seat for a Trade Council representative;
- conduct a single election for the 30 seats on the General Panel, but the election must result in the selection of at least 8 women members – the normal application of the electoral system will be adjusted to produce this result, if necessary;
- increase the total number of seats on the Northern Ireland Committee to 18, comprised of a general panel of 17 and one reserved seat for a Trade Council representative. The election for the 17 seats will be by a single election but the election must result in the selection of at least 4 women members – the normal application of the electoral system should be adjusted to produce this result, if necessary;
- increase the Officers of Congress from President, Vice-President and Treasurer (3) to President, two Vice-Presidents and Treasurer (4). At least one of the Vice-Presidents must be a woman. The two Vice-Presidents will carry out the functions specified in the Rules for the Office of Vice-President. In the event of a vacancy arising in the Office of President, the Executive Council shall fill the vacancy by the appointment of one of the then Vice-Presidents as President. As provided for under the current Rules and Constitution of Congress, each of the Offices will be filled by election at each BDC. In the case of the election of Vice-Presidents, this would be a single PR election with two seats to be filled and which must result in the election of at least one woman.
- increase the number of places for ordinary members of the General Purposes Committee to five posts, at least one of which must be a woman, elected by the Executive Council;
- introduce a rule to ensure that where trade unions nominate more than one candidate for election to the Executive Council/NICICTU, then, provided the women membership of the union is substantial, they should be required to ensure that one or more of those candidates are women.

A special delegate conference was called in September 2004 to which the proposal was presented as a constitutional amendment. There was significant debate around the motion which widespread support among constituents. The motion was adopted with an overwhelming majority and is now organisational policy. It will be implemented fully at BDC 2005.



Leadership Training

Congress also identified the need to deal with the unsatisfactory representation of women in senior officer posts. A course in Leadership Development was undertaken by a senior woman officer from Congress. The course was developed and run by the Leadership Initiative, an informal partnership of the social partners dealing specifically with gender diversity issues. The purpose of participation was to provide personal development to the officer but also to look at replicating similar training and development opportunities for women within the trade union sector.

Appendix 1

The GAP Committee

Secretary, Mags O' Brien - GAP Project Manager

Brendan Archibold	MANDATE	Joan Carmichael	ICTU
Rosheen Callender	SIPTU	Annette Dolan	TUI
Fiona Dunne	ESBOA	Marion Geoghegan	IBOA
Noirin Greene	MSF	Clare Keane	GPMU
Paddy Keating	IMPACT	Esther Lynch	ICTU
Tom McKeivitt	PSEU	Rhona McSweeney	ICTU (Women's Committee)
Fiona Marshall	ATGWU	Deirbhile NicCraith	INTO
Valerie Sweeney	NUJ	Carol Shaffer	CWU
Clare Treacy	INO	Frank Vaughan	ICTU
Eamon Devoy	TEEU		



Appendix 2

GAP PROJECT - January 2002 to March 2004 - Project Manager: Mags O' Brien
ICTU, 31-32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, Phone: 01 8897707, e.mail: mags.obrien@ictu.ie

The objectives of the project are;

- To reduce the gender pay gap
- To develop, test and diffuse gender neutral guidelines for job evaluation and for gender proofing and gender impact assessment
- To develop toolkits for managers and for workers in order to increase their awareness raising skills, job evaluation skills, gender impact assessment skills and training needs analysis skills.
- Further, to develop the capacity to strengthen equality in policy development and service delivery within trade unions
- to develop guidelines for upskilling and training women.
- The actions will be overseen by a steering committee, made up of persons with expertise in equality issues.
- Three working groups will be formed which will address;
- Awareness & Capacity Building
- Job Evaluation
- Gender Impact Assessment and Training needs analysis
- The working groups will organise consultative forums and will also deliver in company pilot actions

Appendix 3

Bridge the Gap Conference

Speaker

Jack O' Connor General President SIPTU
Niall Crowley Chief Executive Equality Authority
Helen Russell Research Officer ESRI
Mags O' Brien Project Manager GAP

Theme

Unions and Equal Pay
Capacitating the Workplace for Gender Equality
The facts behind the gap
Launch of Toolkit for Negotiators on Gender & Pay

ROUND TABLE chaired by Aine Lawlor RTE

Theme: Gender & Pay in Ireland & Europe

Clare Treacy INO – Congress Executive
Nadine Lars Back ETUC, (former advisor to Swedish Minister for Equality)
Josephine Feehily Revenue Commissioner

David Begg General Secretary Congress Closing Address

