

## **The Inclusive City through the Lens of Quality of Life**

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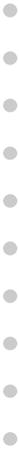
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## This presentation:

- Background information
  - Inclusive City
  - Study
  - Almere
  - Netherlands
- Definition of Inclusion
- Framework Quality of Life
- Having employment is part of the domains they indicate, but **WITH** understanding of what social inclusion means – personal perception is important



## Background/1

# The Inclusive City: a longitudinal experimental case study in the city of Almere

**INCLUSIEVE STAD**

**ALMERE**



## Background/2

### Study: Evaluation of Family Quality of Life after Family-Oriented Support with Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities and Families

- Evaluate presence and nature of long term effects on quality of life
- Evaluate sustainability of established partnerships
- Co-operative design (a.o. Photovoice)



## Background/3

### Inclusive City of Almere

- Average sized, relatively new municipality in 'gained land'
- 195.000 inhabitants, still growing
- Young population, one third below 25 yrs, 9% 65+
- Local authorities and initiatives in the city taking the lead nationally in implementing inclusion



## Background/4

### Inclusion in the Netherlands

Netherlands: slow adapter

- After WW II: functional integration
- Since the 1980's more inclusive housing, still segregated living and employment
- Less emphasis on social interaction; marginalization, exclusion and discrimination
- E.g.: since 1980's sheltered workshops have had to compete with the mainstream market. The demands on employees increased and vulnerable groups started to be excluded from this type of employment, leading to the establishment of new segregated day activity centres.

From 2011, policy reforms stipulated that sheltered employment will only be available for people who can under no circumstances be competitively employed. The Participation Law (*Participatiewet*) also reflects these reforms.

In the field of education, inclusion of children with disabilities in primary education currently forms the core of social policy.



## **Inclusion: 'definitions matter'**

(Martin & Cobigo, 2011)

- In the study (Van Heumen & Schippers) focus on ID/DD: "Cognitive disability is not the absence of self; it is the absence of other people" (Ferguson, 2003, p.16, zie ook Meulenkamp e.a., 2011).
- Definition of social inclusion by Martin and Cobigo (2011): 'complex interactions between personal and environmental factors, including social and cultural factors' (p. 277).  
Also, discrimination, marginalization, and a sense of belonging to a community add to this understanding of inclusion.
- Having employment is part of the domains they indicate, but WITH understanding of what social inclusion means – personal perception is important



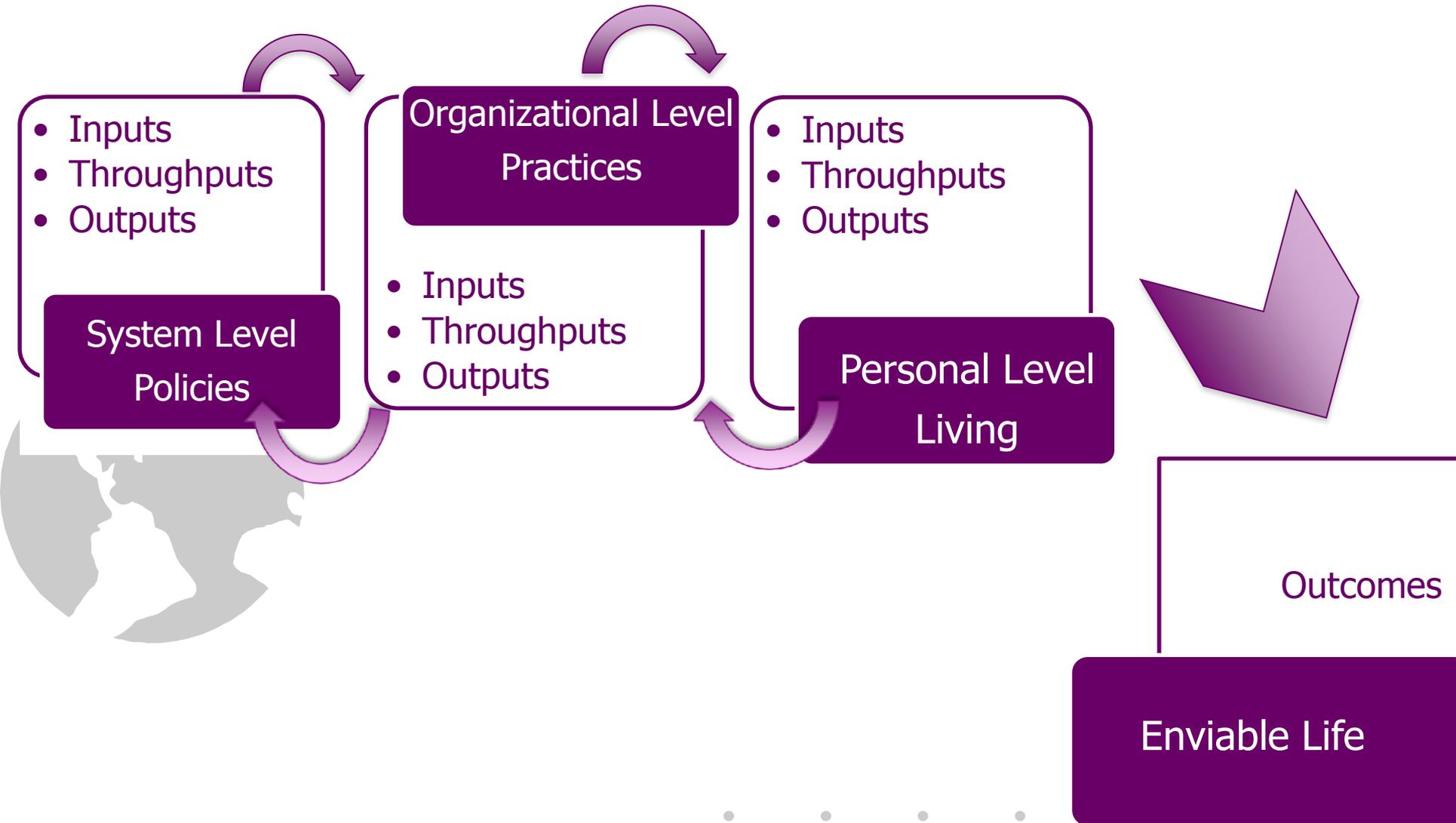
## Family Quality of Life as a Framework

- Individual QoL has been studied 30 yrs
- More recent: Family QoL
  - interactions between social network
  - emotional, physical and material wellbeing
  - support from and within the community



-> creating sustainable partnerships in order to enhance the quality of life of families and individual familymembers (with a disability)

# Integrating Framework for Quality of Life



## System level in Almere: policies

- Implementing Social Support Act: implementing policies in the life domains Employment Education and Welfare by establishing local partnerships
- Employment related policies: association of local business owners welfare partners and local government drafted a manifest 'Talenten benutten' (using talents).
- Local partners: active role in securing appropriate employment  
Corporate social responsibility: hiring people with a 'work related disability'
- Co-makerships: students in secondary education collaborate with local entrepreneurs in small projects (also in our Inclusive Study project!)



## Organizational level in Almere: policies put into practice

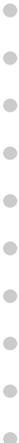
### Inclusion in employment:

- Creative Motor, a cooperative of self-employed support workers aims at developing a new social infrastructure and empowering capacities of workers
- Provides trajectories – training of people with disabilities in mainstream work situations (internships and paid employment)
- Tante Truus, well-known pub – supported employment. Does not make profit, cannot pay regular wages to personnel

### Inclusion in education:

- Academy for Independency (Academie voor Zelfstandigheid), providing learning opportunities to people with disabilities, alternative for mainstream higher education
- Segregated initiative: White Elephant (Witte Olifant), an arts academy





## **Personal level in Almere: impact on Quality of Life**

Inclusive practice:

- Co-designers in neighbourhood
- Co-workers in business
- Co-makers in education
- Co-researchers in study
- Co-policymakers in local government



# Outcomes: Integrated Practice towards an Enviable Life

*Alex Naber (from his photovoice)*

G-force Panel: 'I'm attending the meetings wearing this suit'

Impact on Quality of Life

- Empowerment
- 'Sammies'





## Outcomes: Integrated Practice towards an Enviably Life

Important elements :

- implementation of proactive policies
- interconnect policies and practices in different life domains at the system, organizational and personal levels
- use of inclusive methods to empower and promote positive self-representation of people with disabilities
- attention for the perspectives of multiple stakeholders to promote mutual understanding, reciprocal friendships, equality and respect.





## Acknowledgements

- Alex, his friends and their families as well as the larger community in the city of Almere for sharing their experiences with us.
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- And of course our projectleader Inclusive City, Edwin de Vos and his team





## **Publications:**

- Schippers, A. & van Heumen, L. (2014). The Inclusive City through the lens of Quality of Life. In R. I. Brown & R. Faragher (Eds.). Challenges for Quality of Life: Applications in Education and other Social Contexts.
- Schippers, A. & van Heumen, L. (forthcoming). The inclusive city through the lens of quality of life. International Public Health Journal, 6 (4), 00-00.

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