



SUNA'S DAUGHTERS



UCAN SÜPÜRGE
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FLYING BROOD WOMEN'S COMMUNICATION
AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATION



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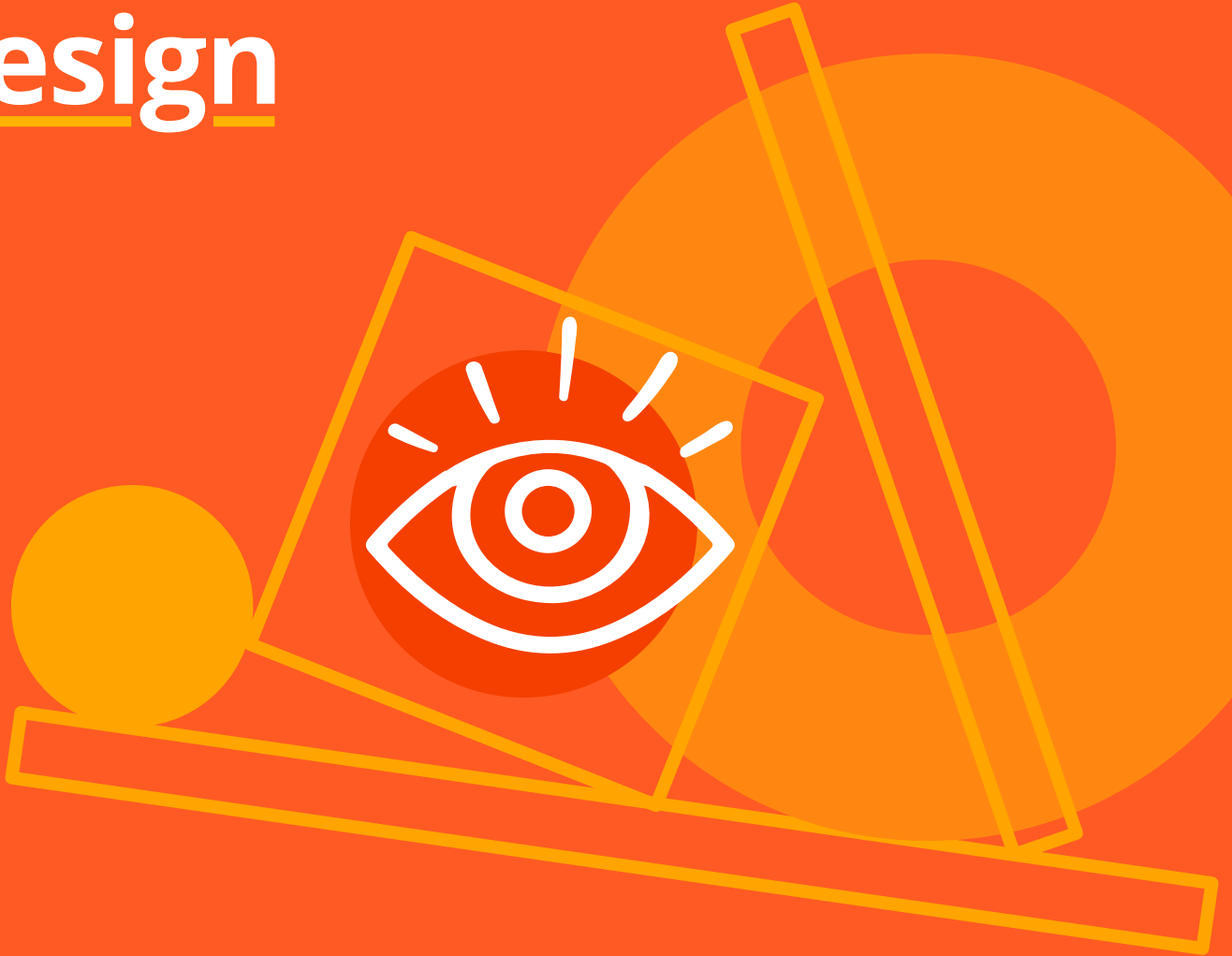


Koruncuk
Oran Kurumu

STGM
Sivil Toplum Geliştirme Merkezi

ŞEHİR
DİJİTALİTİ

Basic Principles and Approaches in Girl-Centered Design





We know, recognize, and care about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as children's rights. We embrace the principle of the best interests of the child and child participation. We pay the utmost attention to child safety. We consider it our responsibility to increase the awareness and knowledge levels of all our members, managers, employees, volunteers, and the employees of our partner organizations and suppliers, regarding children's rights, child participation, and child safety.

Anyone involved in an entity or organization the target audience of which is children, i.e., those who work for or with children, or who engage in activities for people who interact with children and whose work affects children's lives (such as teachers, school administrators and staff, healthcare professionals, social workers, justice system workers, etc.) or aimed at parents, guardians, or caregivers, must acquire basic knowledge and, if possible, skills regarding children's human rights. The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) should be used as a guide to recognize, protect, and care for the unique needs, characteristics, circumstances, and expectations of every child and childhood. It is essential to view the [best interests of the child](#), [child participation](#), and [child safety](#) as fundamental principles and to consider them as indispensable elements in every institutional action, statement, or plan.

We design and implement our corporate policies, strategies, and programs using a rights-based approach. All members, managers, employees, and volunteers are informed or trained on the rights-based approach.

Rights-based approach:

- Always puts rights and freedoms at the center,
- Consciously and systematically safeguards rights and freedoms,
- Values not only the outcome, the results, and the benefits, but also the entire process,
- Offers a method for implementing the principle of "leaving no one behind."

We strive to ensure that our work is free from any gender- or age-based or any other form of discriminatory attitudes or language.

Especially in our work with and for children, treating them as equals, avoiding any kind of discrimination –both direct and indirect–, preventing and always taking measures against any physical, mental, or emotional harm should become a standard practice. In addition, maintaining a tolerant and peaceful attitude, behavior, and discourse are key prerequisites for a rights-based approach and inclusiveness.

Our institutional policies and programs aim to protect the rights of girls, support their development, promote their participation, and prevent them from harm.

All children who reach out to us or whom we contact are in for some expected and unexpected experiences. In addition to providing benefits to children, we must ensure that children do not suffer any harm simply because of their involvement in our activities or because they happen to be in the place where we carry out our activities. We must identify the risks and consider the ways to avoid them. By doing so, we can ensure we are not violating children's rights. Moreover, girls with different characteristics, affiliations, needs, and expectations can gain different capabilities through participation in our activities.

We consult with parents/caregivers, professionals who work with children (in fields such as education, health, and law), government agencies, and local authorities about the needs of girls and the ways, means, or solutions that can support them.

Leveraging different fields of expertise, experience, and skills enables us to be a more pragmatic and effective organization, but more importantly, it leads us to meaningful and sustainable solutions or practices that benefit girls. While short- and medium-term goals may focus on access to rights and capacity building, long-term social change, system creation, or system consolidation can only be achieved through mutual dialogue and interaction.

We collect disaggregated, original data that demonstrates the importance of focusing on girls in our work, archive this data in a secure data storage facility, and analyze it when designing our programs and measuring their impact.

Girl-centered design operates from a rights-based perspective, taking into account that needs, conditions, and expectations may change; it does not make strict assumptions or proceed with unfounded predictions. Regularly gathering information, observations, and insights about children's unique circumstances ensures an accurate diagnosis.

We engage in dialogue and collaboration with various stakeholders who have knowledge and experience related to the needs of girls and how to support them, or who provide unique services tailored specifically for girls. We exchange ideas with them and benefit from their expertise.

A girl-centered design approach takes design thinking a step further and positioning the target group, i.e. girls, as both designers and beneficiaries.

This approach requires openness to change, innovation, and continuous rethinking in program design. Engaging with stakeholders that have knowledge and experience regarding the needs of girls and supportive methods or conditions, or that specifically work with girls, paves the way for the development of new ideas. Even in cases where it is not possible to maintain close and regular communication with all stakeholders, drawing on their ideas and experiences improves the creativity and feasibility levels of the program.

When making decisions that affect or concern girls, we make an effort to involve them in the decision-making process and employ methods that ensure their active participation.

Girls having a say in decisions that concern or affect them is fundamental to participatory decision-making. Those who experience things firsthand are the ones who have the best insights into those experiences. Therefore, the people who are competent to make decisions regarding girls are the girls themselves. The conditions to facilitate the exercise of their right to participate must be secured so that children can be involved in decision-making processes. In other words, for effective and meaningful participation, girls must be sufficiently informed about the issue and have the means and platforms to express their opinions. It is the responsibility of adults to establish appropriate participation mechanisms, taking into account the capabilities of children. For more information about child participation: [UNICEF Handbook on Child Participation](#)

We understand the [developmental needs](#) of girls, we recognize the uniqueness of these needs, and we always take them into account.

The unique needs of girls constitute one of the cornerstones of girl-centered design. To truly safeguard the rights and interests of girls, the methods, language, and tools used, as well as the spaces and content designed, should be consistent with their needs. Children have both common developmental needs and individual, unique, experience-based needs. Participatory data collection methods such as focus group interviews can be used to explore and understand such unique needs.

We prioritize empowering girls.

Empowering girls in terms of their capabilities is one of the foundations of girl-centered design. This contributes to their well-being through capabilities such as being aware of their rights, knowing how to exercise them, being able to make their own decisions, and recognizing their needs. Girls are empowered when they are active participants with concrete roles and responsibilities, rather than just passive beneficiaries/recipients of a project. For more information on girls' capabilities: [Capability Cards](#)

We design spaces where girls can safely thrive, socialize, express themselves, and develop, taking into account their differences (such as disability, language, and culture) and focusing on their needs and opinions with an inclusive approach.

Spaces that do not accommodate the unique needs of girls can lead to their exclusion from public life and the deepening of social inequalities. Recognizing diversity, preventing marginalization, and creating safe spaces for everyone are fundamental requirements for children's equal participation in social life. Learning about needs directly from children ensures that solutions are based on real-life experiences. This enables the creation of inclusive, equitable, and sustainable spaces.

We create spaces where girls can feel physically, environmentally, and emotionally safe throughout the day, spending time in healthy conditions and environments where the risks are minimized.

A sense of security shapes girls' relationship with space, making it possible for them to embrace public spaces, act freely, and express themselves. Physical security measures such as lighting, security cameras and personnel, and traffic regulations, combined with wellness-promoting elements such as clean air, natural light, and ergonomic seating, create a comprehensive safety environment. Transparent oversight processes and periodic evaluation reports also build trust with the parents and caregivers. Safe spaces provide a fair environment in terms of access, continuity, and equality; they enable girls' active and continuous participation in social life.

We develop child-friendly, sustainable, and transparent methods to enable girls to actively participate in the [design, implementation, and evaluation of spaces](#), establishing empowering participation mechanisms that take their views into account.

Participation ensures that girls are recognized as individuals, that their experiences are taken into account, that they are involved as subjects in spatial design and implementation processes, and that they have a say in decisions that affect their lives. Access to information as well as the tools to express their ideas not only enables more inclusive and functional space designs, but also empowers children. Through participatory mechanisms, girls become active components rather than passive subjects of the social structure.

We work to ensure that all children can access and experience spaces independently and safely, taking into account their physical, sensory, mental, and neurological diversity.

Accessibility is a prerequisite for children's participation in society as individuals with equal rights. Ensuring that access to the space is safe, straightforward, and barrier-free; and arranging the interior in a way that is sensitive to the needs of all children boosts their sense of belonging and serves as a safeguard against exclusion. This empowers girls as individuals who can make their own decisions, act independently, and actively participate in social life.

We design environmentally friendly spaces that girls can use safely in the long term, with planned maintenance processes and efficient use of resources.

Sustainability requires a sense of responsibility that considers not only the present but also the future needs of girls. Regular maintenance plans, allocating adequate budgets, choosing environmentally friendly/non-toxic materials, and supporting spaces with procurement processes enhance children's safety, health, and well-being. Long-lasting, durable, and flexible structures prevent resource waste while enabling the establishment of systems responsive to the changing needs of girls.

Dear Stakeholder,

We have created a list of indicators/checklists under seven main headings that we think may be useful for you when conducting work on the axis of girl-centered design, that you can choose and use or adapt according to your organization's goals and your specific work. While these are not fixed or standard indicators for implementing girl-centered design, they have nonetheless been compiled to serve as inspiration for you, your work and your organization.

As we assume that you adopt a rights-based approach in your work using these indicators, we omitted those indicators directly related to rights-based action. For details of the rights-based approach, please visit [GCD's Organizational Policies](#) page.

Girl-Centered Design Indicators/Checklist for Organizations Working Directly with Girls

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that adopt and implement a girl-centered design approach establish indicators to monitor and measure the impact of their programs and activities. Such indicators are used to monitor and analyze the extent to which the interventions respond to girls' unique needs, and support them in the long term. Below are some illustrative indicators, categorized according to various themes, that NGOs working directly with girls can use for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

1. Accessibility and Participation Indicators

These indicators can be used to measure the extent to which girls have access to and engage with the programs you implement in all your areas of activity.

- **Registration and Attendance:** Number and/or proportion of girls enrolled in and regularly attending your programs.
- **Inclusiveness:** Proportion of girls from the most vulnerable backgrounds (e.g. girls with disabilities, refugee girls, seasonal agricultural worker girls, girls from minority groups, girls not enrolled in school) participating in programs as a percentage of all girls the programs reach.
- **Dropout and Absenteeism Rate:** Proportion of girls who do not attend the programs regularly or drop out and the reasons for this (inconvenient hours, difficult access by public transport/no public transport, domestic care burden, insecurity, negative attitudes of the family, co-educational program, need to work, dissatisfaction with program content, seasonal migration or change of city, etc.).

- **Support from Parents and Caregivers:** The level of support from parents or caregivers for girls' active participation in the program.
- **Decision-Making Processes:** The number and effectiveness of mechanisms through which girls can provide input/feedback, and the proportion of processes where girls are actively involved in decision-making relative to all decision-making processes.

2. Physical and Emotional Well-Being Indicators

These indicators measure how your programs contribute to girls' safety as well as physical and emotional health and well-being.

- **Safe Spaces:** The availability and accessibility of safe spaces that address girls' individual needs for learning, empowerment and community-building; the proportion of girls who rate these spaces as "very safe" or "safe"; and the increase in the number of children expressing themselves about their problems.
- **Access to Healthcare:** The proportion of girls accessing menstrual hygiene and self-care products through your services and programs (safe spaces, workshops, meetings, etc.).
- **Preventing Violence:** Increase in the number of reported incidents of gender-based violence and violence against children reported through the safe spaces and competent staff; the proportion of girls who are aware of and trust mechanisms to report safety concerns or violence they have experienced; the existence and effectiveness of mechanisms to prevent peer bullying in the program context.
- **Nutrition and Hygiene Awareness:** The proportion of girls who reported being knowledgeable about personal hygiene, nutrition and self-care practices.

3. Indicators for Access to Education and Life Skills

These indicators measure the extent to which the program (workshops, meetings, events, long-term programs, etc.) fosters the basic knowledge, skills and learning outcomes necessary for girls to have a say in their lives and to make their own decisions.

- **School Enrollment and Attendance:** The proportion of girls attending and/or completing primary, secondary or tertiary education as a result of institutional interventions.
- **Capabilities:** Number of children who know about the knowledge, skills, rights and services that girls have and can access, and who report being able to benefit from these services.

- **Literacy and Numeracy:** Improvement in literacy and math skills among attending girls.
- **STEM-Centered Skills:** The increase in the number of girls participating in workshops and activities on science, technology and mathematics and in the interest in these fields.
- **Digital and Technological Literacy:** Proportion of girls with increased access to and knowledge of digital tools, coding and online safety.
- **Vocational and Life Skills Training:** Number of girls completing vocational training and life skills development programs.

4. Economic Empowerment and Financial Independence Indicators

These indicators assess the girls' ability to achieve financial independence and economic security.

- **Financial Literacy:** Proportion of girls with increased knowledge about savings, budgeting and financial decision-making.
- **Preparing for Employment:** Number of girls with vocational skills and knowledge about the work life.
- **Knowledge of and Skills in Economic Resources:** Proportion of girls who learn how to open a bank account and have knowledge about reliable income-generating activities.
- **Economic Self-Efficacy Awareness:** Number of girls who gain financial independence in adulthood and are equipped with secure means of earning income through institutional initiatives; number of girls who get acquainted with female role models from various professions through the programs.

5. Social Emotional Learning Indicators

These indicators help to assess the extent to which programs help girls participate in decision-making about themselves and their lives, improve their ability to express themselves (their thoughts and feelings), and enhance their capacity to put their ideas and suggestions into practice when needed.

- **Peer Mentoring and Support Networks:** Number of girls participating in mentoring programs as mentors or mentees.
- **Taking Initiative:** Number of girls who take initiative to fulfill their needs and rights in their school, in the organization where they attend programs, in their neighborhood, and in the city where they live; number of girls who develop a project or initiate a project/campaign to solve a problem in their community.

- **Civic Participation and Activism:** Number of girls participating in advocacy campaigns, community decision-making mechanisms/processes (school councils, municipal children/youth councils, local government youth councils, neighborhood organizations, etc.) or policy discussions.
- **Self-Efficacy and Confidence:** Improvement in girls' self-esteem and self-worth as reported by girls in relation to their ability to achieve their personal and professional goals.
 - * Proportion of girls reporting increased confidence in expressing their opinions in public or making decisions on their own behalf.

6. Gender and Social Norm Transformation Indicators

These indicators assess the progress made in terms of societal and individual perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality.

- **Reducing Child Marriage:** Reducing the proportion of girls married before the age of 18 in the target communities.
- **Increase in Age at First Pregnancy, Live Birth:** Decrease in the number of girls who got pregnant and gave birth before the age of 18 and increase in the age of childbearing.
- **Changes in Gender Norms:** Measured changes in community perceptions and attitudes towards girls' education, participation and independence. Rights-based transformation of society's perception of children and girls. For more information, see Suna'nın Kızları Child Perception Framework Note.
- **Parental Support for Girls' Rights:** Increased parental support for girls' education, access to social life, financial independence and opportunities for participation.
- **Legal and Political Impact:** Observing the existence of girl-centered legal regulations, practices and policies that are directly reflected as a positive change in the lives of girls as a result of institutional advocacy efforts, their impact in practice, as well as compliance with international norms, and monitoring the obligations arising from national and international regulations.
- **Men's Support:** An increase in the number of boys and men who actively support and are part of (participating in) initiatives to achieve gender equality.

7. Program Effectiveness and Sustainability Indicators

These indicators measure the sustainability and scalability of organization-led girl-centered design initiatives.

- **The Long-Term Impact of Programs/Interventions on Girls:** Percentage of program graduates pursuing higher education, employment or initiative in their local community.
* Proportion of girls who continue their education, join the workforce or take initiative in their local community after completing the program (based on long-term monitoring).
- **Dissemination and Scaling:** Number of girl-centered initiatives successfully scaled to new localities or thematic areas or adopted by other organizations.
- **Cooperation:** Number of active partnerships with government agencies, schools, private sector organizations, local governments and other NGOs to implement girl-centered programs.
- **Resource Allocation:** Sustainability of girl-centered funding sources and the ratio of budget allocated directly to girl-centered programs over total budget. Number of programs/content developed based on suggestions received directly from children.
- **Communication:** Number of news/content in local or national media that reflect girls' stories in a rights-based and empowering language.
- **Organizational Competence:** Increase in the number of staff and volunteers trained in child rights, child protection, child safety, girl-centered design and gender equality.
- **Policy Impact:** Number of policies, strategies or practices changed or improved with a focus on girls' human rights at the local or national level, and the number of institutions/organizations allocating resources.

Conclusion

For NGOs that have adopted and implemented a **girl-centered design approach**, these indicators provide a **framework** for measuring the levels of **program accessibility, safety, education, economic empowerment, leadership, social change and sustainability**. By adapting these criteria to their own work, NGOs can ensure that their interventions are **effective, scalable and transformative for all girls in their target group**.



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