Girls in the Lead
A global Network for Women Empowerment

CURRICULUM DESIGN

The guide to designing and implementing S4D classes

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Module 3: Developing, Designing, and Implementing Programs

WHAT DOES CURRICULUM DESIGN REALLY MEAN?

A solid curriculum design offers a long-term, goal-oriented guide or structural theme for coaches and other members of your organization. It explains the content and the structure of the training sessions. Training is a continuous process of leadership that improves the skills of the participants.

Why do we believe it is important?

The purpose of **curriculum design** in sport for development is to ensure that students receive holistic learning experiences that contribute towards their personal growth and development. Therefore, a long-term plan leading the way to help align the training is essential. Below are two questions to think about:

⚽ Does your organization have a curriculum which gives orientation / guidance for coaches?

⚽ What specific long-term goal does your organization want to achieve with the training?

Participatory approach

When designing a curriculum, it is essential to follow a **participatory approach** and include the people on the ground. They work with your target group every day and need to be included in the decision making and design. This will create a better relationship between the organization and the community. A participatory approach allows the content to meet the needs of the target group and ensures that implementation is realistic given the local circumstances.

Periodization

When training, you should always remember what you want to achieve from your short-term to long-term goals. Training periodization can help you to make sure you are still on track. Short-term and medium-term cycles focus on a specific, broken down goal:

⚽ Micro Cycle: 1-3 weeks, training sessions for a short-term goal, e.g. changing self-perception

⚽ Mezzo Cycle: 1-3 month, training sessions for a medium-term goal, e.g. in general, increasing self-awareness and self-confidence

⚽ Macro Cycle: 1 year, training sessions for a long-term goal, e.g. helping children become community leaders

TASK 1: PROGRAM ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

How you develop a program affects how it will be implemented and received by your audience. This task helps you organize and structure your curriculum so that your participants and coaches have a smooth experience.

- [ ] The overall goal and the specific goals of your training session are clearly articulated (including the mission and vision).

- [ ] The material, pitch, and other logistics for the training have been identified, acquired or created, and made accessible to the coaches and participants.

- [ ] The content and structure is based on the skill levels of the participants, with room to advance based on program progress.

- [ ] The wishes and expectations of your participants are defined and conveyed to coaches.

- [ ] Coaches have a separate training and are provided the tools and support to create a safe space – a crucial part of a supportive learning experience.

- [ ] The participants and coaches understand how the project goals include and are supported by the community.

- [ ] Guardians are aware of the program activities and expectations. Their consent is documented.

- [ ] Methods of monitoring and evaluating the program have been documented and explained to coaches.

Helpful Hints

Think about what else is important in your organization when planning training sessions, such as safety and gender-specific issues. Brainstorm how your organization can promote equity and involve the community, as well as the specifics for the group of children you work with. Areas to think about are refugee contexts, children affected by poverty, lack of nutrition, children with disabilities, and girls-only programming.

More examples:

- RespAct Manual

- Sport for Violence Prevention

- Boxgirls Manual
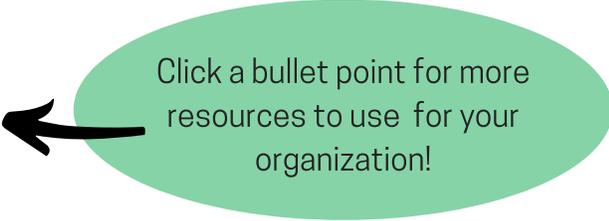
Click a bullet point for more resources to use for your organization!

TASK 2: CREATING A CHECKLIST FOR COACHES

Prepare a checklist for your coaches with information they should consider when implementing a training session with participants. Keep the participatory approach and program orientation (above) in mind.

- ☐ Welcome everyone in the room to the training session and explain the training schedule.

- ☐ Do introductions and take attendance to see which participants are present and which are not.

- ☐ Explain what "sports for development (SfD)" means and why it is important to the program (this can include the organization's mission and vision).

- ☐ Explain how gender and working with all genders is important for SfD programs.

- ☐ Establish **group norms** to build a **safe space** that participants agree to abide by for the duration of the program. Each participant should agree by signing it.

- ☐ Utilize the "example structure of a session" sheet below to illustrate how a real session would be run.

Example Structure of a Session

Warm-Up and Introduction

⚽ The coach introduces the rules for the session and behavior expectations.

⚽ The physical Warm-Up prepares the participants and their muscles for the upcoming exercises in order to prevent injuries.

⚽ The exercises should coincide with the upcoming content of the training. An icebreaker game can help participants to feel more comfortable and connect with each other.

Main Activities

⚽ This conveys the goal of your training session. It includes a sequence of exercises or games, which built up on each other and transmit the set goal.

⚽ At the end of the main activities, a large-scale game should be played, which the former implemented exercises and games lead up to. After each game, a short, open discussion shall take place to recap what has been learned and which social skill has been addressed in the games and exercises.

Conclusion and Cool-Down

⚽ Conclusion includes a reflection session on what social and physical skills were learned during the training. It is probably the most important part of the training in regards to reaching the social outcomes. It also tests what the children understand from the day's activities.

⚽ Cool-Down includes stretching and relaxation exercises order to help the body recover from the former distress.

More examples:

- Preparation for Training
- Template Attendance Sheet

Want more? Click a bullet point for more resources to use for your organization!

What is the role of the coach?

The coach is the key player when providing a positive and supportive learning environment. They need to possess certain characteristics and qualifications. The organization has to make sure that the coach meets the necessary requirements:

Preparing the Coaches

- Be early, prepared ,and organized

- Bring an attendance sheet, a phone for emergencies, a First Aid kid, etc.

- Bring necessary professional, technical, and methodical competencies

- Bring social competency to enforce a positive and supportive learning environment

- Be able to give individual and specific advice to the children

- Solve problems and conflicts in a constructive manner

- Represents the organization's mission and values
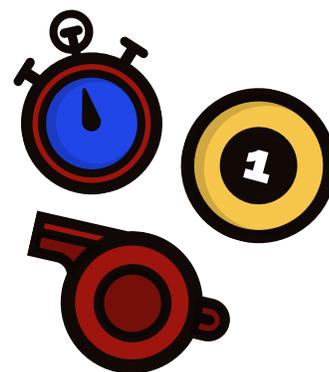
Helpful Hints

Think about other important skills that a coach needs when working in your organization. Do you have a list with specific requirements for the coaches? Do you have a checklist or tips to support the coaches on the pitch?

More examples:

- Characteristics of a coach

- Characteristics of a coach in violence prevention

- S4D Toolkit

For more examples to use in your organization, click a bullet point!

TASK 3: CHECKLIST TO DESIGN A COACH GUIDELINE

Coaches need support just as much as the participants! Not only do they coach the participants, but they too need to have training sessions that are gender sensitive. They will have questions. How can a coach foster gender equality? What competences does he or she need to cultivate?

- ☐ The coach can encourage all participants to achieve their personal and team goals.

- ☐ The coach offers a safe space for participants to embrace their creativity while participating in sports and physical exercise activities.

- ☐ The coach understands their position as one of power and influence as a role model for the program participants.

- ☐ The coach can take responsibility for their actions when they may exhibit behavior that perpetuates gender roles and stereotypes and take steps to do better.

- ☐ The coach can teach the participants how to empower themselves and those around them.

- ☐ The coach can speak up when they notice gender and sex discrimination during the program.

- ☐ The coach can build healthy and nurturing rapport with the participants.

- ☐ The coach can educate the participants on the barriers to gender equity and work with them brainstorm possible solutions.

- ☐ The coach can influence the parents and community to continue to let participants, regardless of gender or sex, to play sports.

- ☐ The coach can be creative and think off innovative ways to teach and engage participants of all genders in sports.

- ☐ The coach is knowledgable of community resources to help participants, if necessary.

- ☐ The coach is aware of their own support networks within the organization for the program to be successful.

- Know and raise some gender dimensions related to sport and recognize and integrate gender aspects put forward by the participants;

- Adapt the training or workshop format and schedule to optimize the meaningful participation of women and men;

- Ensure both women and men express their true opinion, and listen to and respect each other's experiences and views;

- Create an atmosphere in which women and men feel respected, safe, and encouraged to share their views, and to interact with women and men with diverging views

Example coach guideline from Girls & Football SA

More examples:

- Girls in Football Afrika

- Boxgirls Manual

- Coaches Competences - Gender Sensitive Training

Click a bullet point for more resources to use for your organization!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Curriculum design: the systematic organization of a program, class, or course that aides in the development of specific concepts for its audience

Participatory approach: an inclusive strategy in decision-making and design to collaborate with the people on the ground who work with your target group every day so the content to meets their needs and its implementation is realistic given the local circumstances

Group norms: spoken and written agreements that a group creates to govern their behavior in a space

Safe space: places for marginalized individuals to feel secure and affirmed in their identities and be free of harm, stereotypes, and judgment