

KOMELEYA BERÎ HER TIŞTÎ ZAROK
ÖNCE ÇOCUKLAR DERNEĞİ

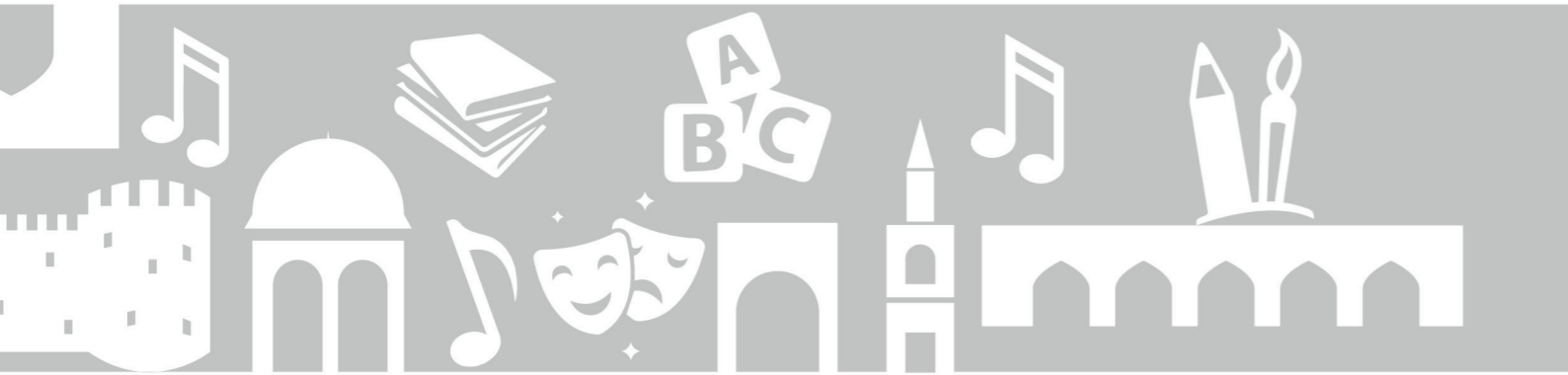


CHILDREN FIRST ASSOCIATION

2024 - 2026 Action Plan



DİYARBAKIR



KOMELEYA BERÎ HER TIŞTÎ ZAROK
ÖNCE ÇOCUKLAR DERNEĞİ



CHILDREN FIRST ASSOCIATION

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Contents

Our Story / 4

Introduction / 6

Project we are implementing/ 9

Children First Association 2024-2026 Action Plan / 20

2024-2026 Prioritized Work Themes / 34

Education / 35

Health / 37

Child Labour / 39

Child Protection / 41

Access To Culture And Arts / 42

Disability / 43

Child Participation / 44

Crosscutting Issues / 45

2024 - 2026 Action Plan Matrix2024 - 2026 Action Plan Matrix / 46

Referances / 48



Our Story

Children First Association, with reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, carries out activities for the psycho-social development, cultural-artistic development, linguistic, mental and physical development of children. In addition to organising technical/scientific workshops and seminars focused on preparing children for the developing age of technology and science, it was founded in 2017 to combat child labour, to carry out activities for the benefit of migrant and refugee children, and to monitor and evaluate violations of children's rights.

In addition to these, it aims to develop policies for children to reach better care conditions, to support the development of policies and to collaborate with or support people and organisations that have activities on these issues, to develop content and projects on various themes and topics, especially in the field of culture and arts, to make productions with the participation and leadership of children, and to make these productions available to as many children as possible through visual media platforms.

As an association, in line with these aims and objectives, we have created this action plan covering the period between 2024 and 2026 in order to reach and implement the needs we have identified to a wide audience.

Children First Association 2024-2026 Action Plan

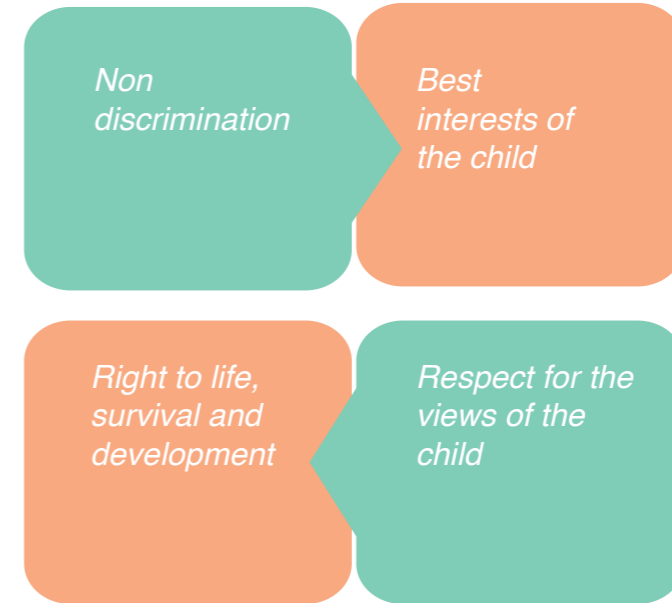


INTRODUCTION

There are 2 billion 850 million children in the world. In Turkey, there are 22 million 600 thousand. What is the meaning of “child”? Defining a “child” is both very easy and very difficult. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by Turkey and 193 other countries, recognizes individuals under 18 as children. Despite this descriptive approach, children are often treated as “incomplete citizens” and “non-adult individuals,” focusing on education and discipline while neglecting their lives, rights, and languages.

Children, like adults, are diverse and face discrimination based on age, gender, ethnicity, birthplace, citizenship, disability, mother tongue, and parental social status. However, unlike adults, children lack the right to object to discrimination and are positioned as passive subjects. Our association, part of the “child studies” field, strives to raise awareness against the discrimination children face, reminding them of their rights and creating suitable conditions for their exercise.

The aforementioned United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child underlines that children have four inalienable rights:



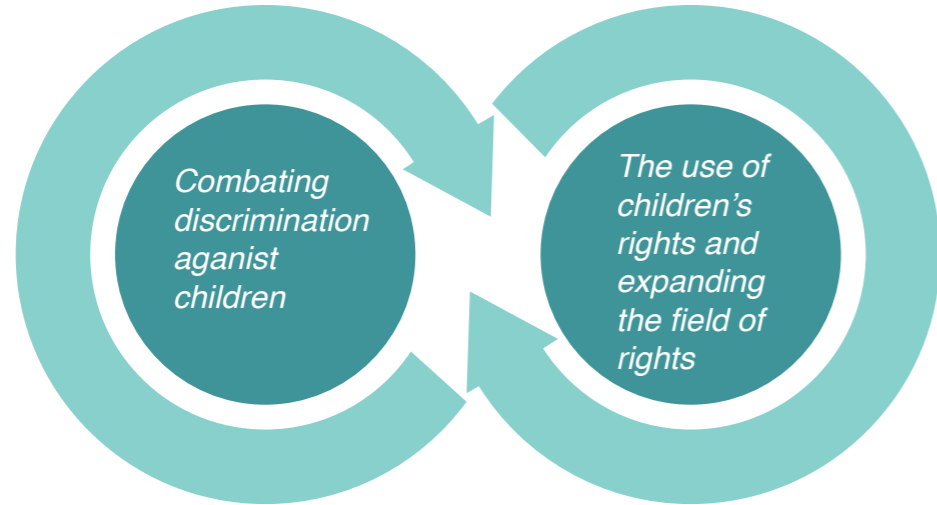
In our country, especially in Mesopotamia, it is evident that children are deprived of these basic rights. Our association, situated in Mesopotamia, including Diyarbakır, positions itself in the struggle for children’s rights, aiming to be both an advocate and an advocacy organization. It considers the fight against the violation of children’s rights and the promotion of their rights as interconnected fields.

Our association is based on the idea that there are two main axes in the field of children:

In this respect, it sees itself not only as an advocate but also as an advocacy organization. It defines the struggle against the violation of children's rights and the struggle for the use and dissemination of children's rights as two inseparable, intertwined fields.

Within the framework discussed above, the general goal of our association is to work on the psycho-social development of children, to educate and support their development in the field of culture and arts, to work on their linguistic, mental and physical development; to organize technical/scientific workshops and trainings focused on preparing children for the developing age of technology and science, as well as to combat child labor, to carry out activities for the benefit of migrant and refugee children, and to cooperate with or support individuals and organizations that have activities in these areas.

The main projects and activities carried out by the Association to date can give an idea about its structure.



Fairy Tales are Siblings 2018



Within the scope of the 'Fairy Tales are Brothers' project organized by the Children First Association with the support of the Goethe-Institut, fairy tales from the Arab, Kurdish and Armenian communities were compiled and translated into English and Turkish in addition to the 3 languages used by these communities. The dubbed and digitized fairy tales were presented to children and all adults who do not give up their childhood dreams at the Multivoiced Fairy Tale Library. Within the scope of the project, which aims to support cultural diversity and preserve cultural heritage and pass it on to future generations, children who speak different languages came together in multilingual storytelling events organized at Amed Şehir Tiyatrosu (an independent theatre), Rengarenk Umutlar Association (RUMUD) and Hayata Destek Derneği (Support To Life Association/ Humanitarian Aid Organization).

Children's Musical Pîrê û Rovî 2019



A 10-day fairy tale workshop was held in Diyarbakır with the participation of 15 children and 2 facilitators, in which 10 different fairy tales were told through animation. At the end of the workshop, the fairy tale Pîrê û Rovî, which tells the story of an old grandmother and a fox and was selected in cooperation with the children, was staged with the participation of Amed Şehir Tiyatrosu actors and Ma Music Center musicians after intensive rehearsals.

The musical was prepared simultaneously in two dialects of Kurdish, Kurmanji and Kirmanji, and was presented for the first time in both Kurmanji and Kirmanji on June 9, 2019 at the Sur Children's Festival. The musical had a total of 22 performances, 19 in Kurmanji and 3 in Kirmanji, in the centers and villages of Diyarbakır and Batman.

12

Sur Children's Festival 2019



Under the leadership of Children First Association, Lotus, ÇocukÇA, Ecology Association, DSM, MedDER, Laleş Art House, Amidart Culture and Art Group, Anadolu Culture, ZimZim, ICC, Middle East Cinema Association, Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce, Ma Music Center, Amed City Theatre, Zarok TV, Diyarbakır Sur Municipality and Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, the 5-day Sur Children's Festival included productions and exhibitions on topics such as art, literature, nature and science. Sur Children's Festival hosted approximately 5 thousand children, 15 thousand adults and dozens of non-governmental organisations in its 5-day programme.

13

Micro-Folie Digital Museum 2019-2020



The Micro- Folie digital museum project offered the opportunity to see 250 masterpieces in 12 important museums and institutions in France on a giant screen and examine them on tablets. The project met with children in Diyarbakır with the support of the French Embassy. With this virtual museum, children had the opportunity to get to know different geographies, cultures and products, while at the same time gaining experience in the process of “digitalization”, which is a natural consequence of the age we live in. Thanks to the digital museums, approximately 2000 children had the opportunity to come into close contact with technology, digitalization and new media tools, which are the main outputs of the modern world.

14

Mobile Music School 2021



With the “Travelling Music School” project, 14 children and young people in the surrounding villages of Diyarbakır were brought together with the traditional musical instruments of the region while working on the restoration of traditional musical instruments to society by drawing attention to their cultural value. With this project, children focused on musical instrument production and instrument training. With the “Mobile Music School” opened to people with limited opportunities for music education, a significant contribution was made to the continuity of the cultural products of the region.

15

Journey to the World of Animation/ 2022



In this project, which we realized in cooperation with Culture Civic and the European Union, workshops were organized for 15 children between the ages of 7-15 who are socio-culturally and economically disadvantaged for 1 year. Workshops based on the philosophy of freedom of expression, Human Rights and Children's Rights were carried out on topics such as "Character Creation and Drawing and Meeting in the Children's World", "Camera and Photo Shoots", "Script Writing", "2D and 3D Animation". In the year-end event, an exhibition of project outputs was organized for 100 people with the participation of institutions working in the field of children.

Kurdish Voices from The World 2022

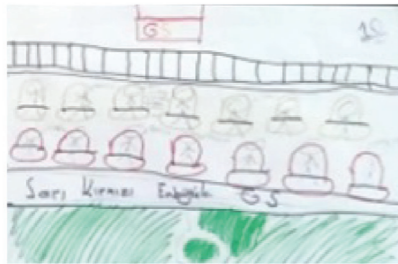


Tom Sawyer, Pollyanna, Robin Hood, The Count of Monte Cristo, Gulliver's Travels, Pinocchio, Oliver Twist, Little Violinist, Little Black Fish, Around the World in 80 Days, 10 World Children's Classics, which were brought to Kurdish Literature by Aram Publications with the contributions of the Embassy of Switzerland, were visualised, voiced and made ready for publication. The works, which were performed in Kurmanji dialect of Kurdish, were made accessible to a wider audience through the digital media accounts of the Children First Association and Zarok TV.

More Right to Tomorrow 2022-2023

In the project that we started through the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, workshops, trips and exhibitions focusing on Gender Equality and Children's Rights were organised with a total of 120 socio-cultural and economically disadvantaged children (between the ages of 6-17), which we identified with local NGOs and institutions, under titles such as Cartoon, Philosophy, Theatre, Photography, Animation. A theatre play emphasizing gender equality was prepared under the leadership of children. The play was staged with the name of "Equal Roles" by Amed City Theatre trainers.

In addition, a field research was carried out in Diyarbakir province on the monitoring of children's cultural rights and violations of their mother tongue rights. The data of the field research was made available to the public under the titles "Monitoring and Reporting on Mother Tongue Rights" and "Monitoring and Reporting on Children's Access to Cultural Rights".



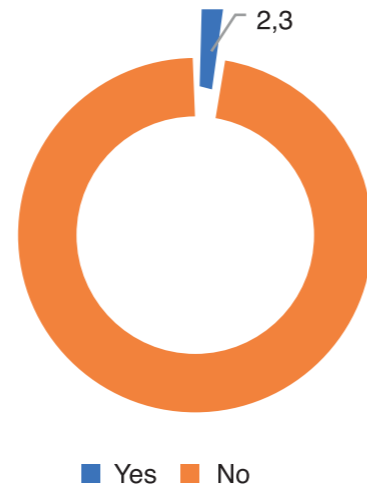
Earthquake Emergency Aid Support 2023

On 6 February 2023, an earthquake centered in Kahramanmaraş caused devastating effects in many cities of the country. As a result of the feasibility studies carried out after the natural disaster, our association took action to send aid to many cities, especially Diyarbakir, which was affected by the earthquake, and to meet urgent needs. In this context, with the Emergency Aid Support Fund called by the Support Foundation for Civil Society, aid parcels were prepared for the priority needs of children and women and delivered to the region. Packages containing priority needs such as formula, diapers, baby bottles, milk, seasonal clothes were delivered to Adiyaman province in cooperation with STDV.

Monitoring and Reporting Study on Child Rights Violations in Adiyaman 2023

The themes of “education, health, shelter, nutrition and play”, which constitute the main topics of our association’s fields of work in cooperation with Sivil Düşün (SD) and the European Union, directly serve the guarantee and assurance of rights. With this study, the association aimed to systematically identify the violations that occurred in Adiyaman province after the earthquake and to provide road maps that will help the relevant NGOs and public institutions to eliminate the violations. Thanks to the outputs of the study, attention was drawn to the social devastation caused by the earthquake disaster, which has become more and more obscured by the election agenda. In the study conducted through the field research centre, attention was drawn to the violations of education, health, shelter, nutrition, etc. suffered by children in Adiyaman. The report prepared after the research study was shared with the public through digital platforms and digital media. The report reached more people by sharing the videographies created on social media channels.

DID YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE?



Support to Rights Programme 2023-2024



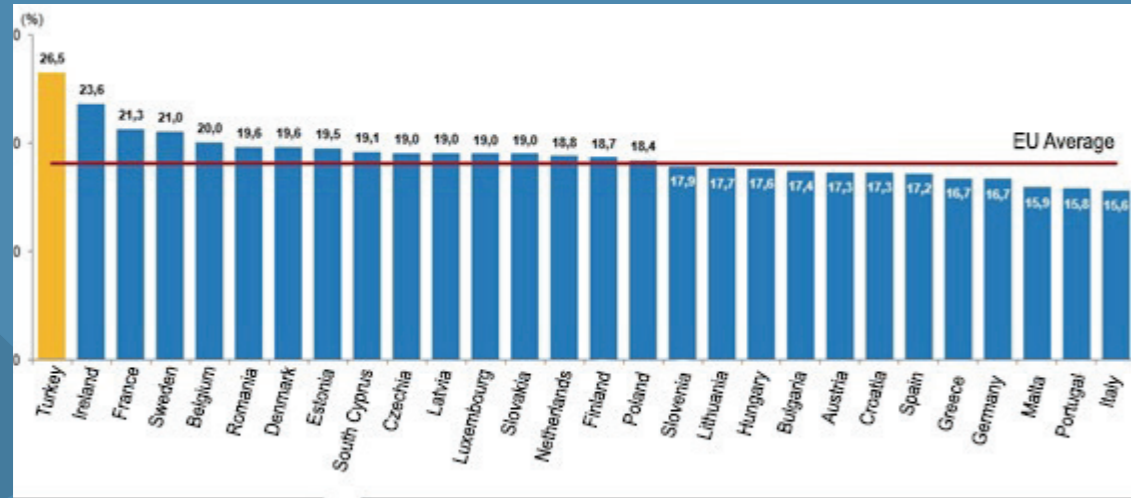
With the Institutional Capacity Building support received from the Hafıza Merkezi, our association building, where we had been working in a small space with limited facilities, has turned into a larger, well-equipped, gardened place where children can come and go all the time. In this way, our association has become a life centre for children. The sustainability capacity of the association’s work was increased. Within the scope of the project, 1 project coordinator was also employed.

With the solution of our space, team and equipment problems, the way has been paved for us to become a more institutional non-governmental organisation that can stand on its own feet in line with its goals. With the institutional grant contribution, our opportunities to reach more children in their mother tongue in a social, cultural and rights-based manner have increased. The ongoing institutional capacity building support within the scope of the Support to Rights Programme will end at the end of 2024.

Our Action Plan for 2024 - 2026

Turkey's child population rate is 26.5 percent, higher than all EU Member States. According to the results of the Address Based Population Registration System, as of the end of 2022, the population of Turkey was 85 million 279 thousand 553, of which 22 million 578 thousand 378 were children. Of the child population, 51.3 percent are boys and 48.7 percent are girls.

European Union Member States and Turkey Child Population Ratio, 2022:



Source: European Union Statistical Office (Eurostat), 2022 – TURKSTAT, Address-Based Population Registration System, 2022

Although the child population rate in Turkey is high compared to other EU countries, it is known that studies on children in Turkey are limited, the scope of the use of children's rights in legislation and practice is narrow and violations of rights are intense.

The child population rate in the Eastern and Southeastern regions is higher than in all other provinces.

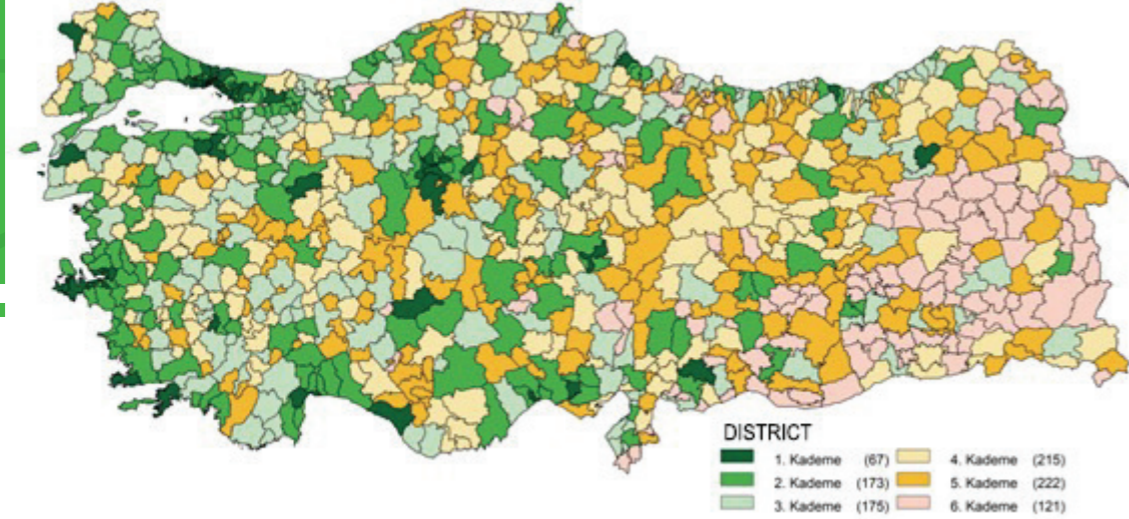
The top 10 provinces with the highest child population rates in Turkey are located in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions. While the child population rate in Diyarbakır is 37.6 percent, this rate rises to 44.9 percent in Şanlıurfa.



Source: TurkStat, Address Based Population Registration System, 2022.

The high rate of child population brings along important tasks and problems in many areas such as education, health, employment, culture and arts, human rights and social life. It is not possible to say that there is a public infrastructure in Diyarbakır and the region that can fulfil these tasks and combat these problems. In this respect, the importance of non-governmental organisations working on children in the region increases even more.

The Relationship Between Child Rights Violations and Socio-economic Development is Parallel



Source: General Directorate of Development Agencies' Research of Socio-Economic Development Ranking By Districts, 2022

The 2017 "Socio-Economic Development Ranking Survey of Provinces" and the 2022 "Socio-Economic Development Ranking Survey of Districts", which are the most recent surveys of the General Directorate of Development Agencies, show that Diyarbakır and the provinces in the region remain at the 5th and 6th level of socio-economic development. Of the 17 districts in Diyarbakır, 13 are at the 5th and 6th level of development. This shows that the majority of Diyarbakır's population is highly disadvantaged in terms of socio-economic development. This situation creates a basis for violations of children's rights, especially their right to education and child labour.

	Overall Ranking	Ranking Within the Province	Score	Level
<u>Kayapınar</u>	150	1	0,857	2
<u>Yenişehir</u>	227	2	0,466	2
<u>Sur</u>	296	3	0,124	3
<u>Bağlar</u>	337	4	0,017	3
<u>Ergani</u>	690	5	-0,572	5
<u>Bismil</u>	796	6	-0,727	5
<u>Silvan</u>	852	7	-0,824	5
<u>Çermik</u>	879	8	-0,887	6
<u>Lice</u>	917	9	-1,022	6
<u>Çüngüş</u>	930	10	-1,092	6
<u>Kulp</u>	935	11	-1,102	6
<u>Dicle</u>	941	12	-1,122	6
<u>Kocaköy</u>	945	13	-1,131	6
<u>Eğil</u>	951	14	-1,166	6
<u>Çınar</u>	962	15	-1,256	6
<u>Hani</u>	965	16	-1,267	6
<u>Hazro</u>	970	17	-1,285	6

Source: General Directorate of Development Agencies' Research of Socio-Economic Development Ranking By Districts, 2022

State of Education

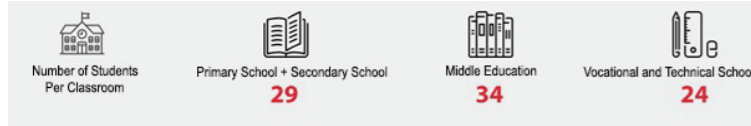
As of 2023, there are 15,554 classrooms in 2,285 schools in Diyarbakır. In these schools, 24,726 teachers and 478,483 students continue formal education.

Number of Schools, Classrooms, Teachers and Students in Diyarbakır Province



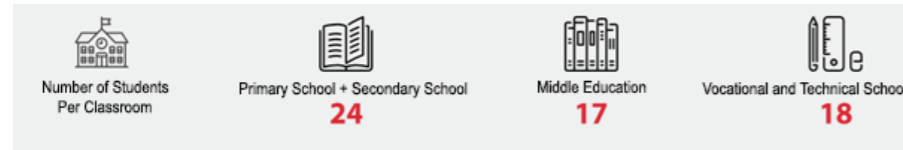
Source: <http://diyarbakir.meb.gov.tr>

According to the same source, the number of students per classroom is 31 in primary and secondary schools, 38 in general secondary education and 24 in vocational and technical schools. In order to understand the meaning of the number of students per classroom in Diyarbakır, it would be useful to look at the same data for Ankara. In Ankara, the number of students per classroom is 24 in primary and secondary schools, 17 in general secondary education and 18 in vocational and technical schools.



Kaynak: <http://diyarbakir.meb.gov.tr>

Number of Students per Classroom in Ankara Province

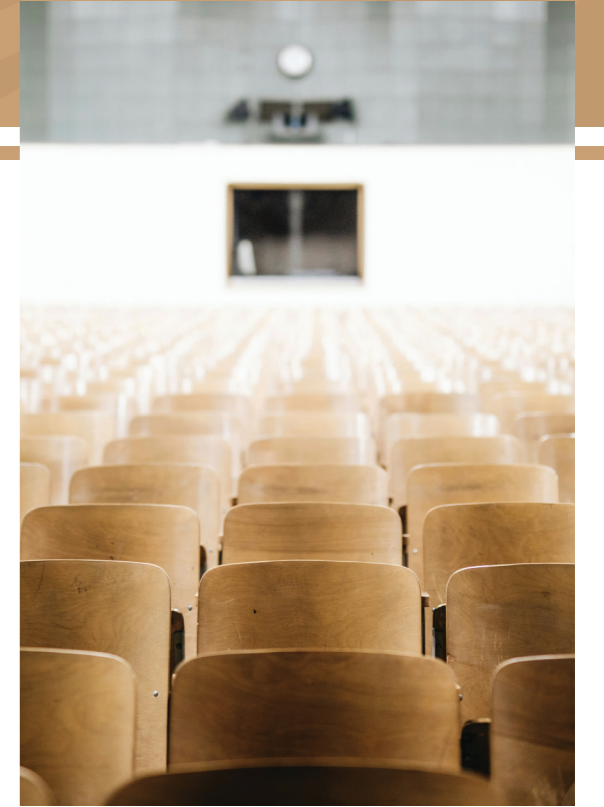


Source: <https://ankara.meb.gov.tr>

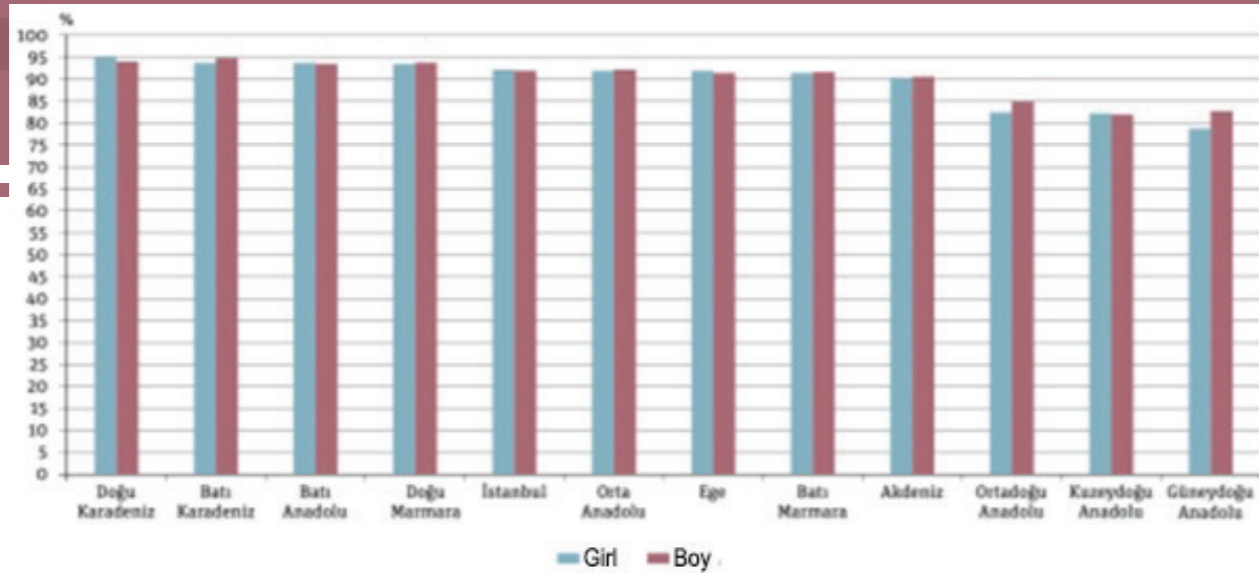
These numbers show that children in Diyarbakır continue their education in overcrowded classrooms. Another point to be taken into consideration is that these numbers include private schools. If we take only public schools as a basis, it is inevitable that we will encounter a more pessimistic picture.

Schooling rate and continuity in education are low

In the report published by the Ministry of National Education under the title “National Education Statistics, Formal Education, 2012/22”, schooling rates across Turkey and by provinces were announced. According to these data, the schooling rate in Diyarbakır is 44.7 for 3-5 years old, 58.7 for 4-5 years old, 94.00 for 5 years old, 97.86 for primary school age, 96.42 for secondary school age, 98.4 for primary school age and 81.46 for secondary school age. While most of these data are close to Turkey’s average, the most striking value is the secondary school enrolment rate. While the secondary school enrolment rate is 89.68 in Turkey in general, this rate drops to 81.46 in Diyarbakır. This rate is 93.38 in Çanakkale province. This data shows that children who drop out of school at the transition to high school constitute a significant population in Diyarbakır when analysed on the basis of regions, it is seen that Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions have lower rates of schooling compared to Turkey as a whole.



Net Schooling Rates in Secondary Education by Gender and Regions



Source: National Education Statistics, Formal Education, 2012/22 Graphic: <http://www.egitimreformugirisimi.org/>

The number of child labourers is not known

Considering that the Ministry of National Education does not include children who are enrolled in these statistics but who do not/can not attend school for various reasons, it can be stated that the secondary school enrolment rate for Diyarbakır and the region is at much lower levels. When considered in the context of Diyarbakır's socio-economic development ranking and other sociological observations/research, it is only one of the known facts that this population, who do not attend school at secondary school age, have to work for low wages and mostly precariously. On the other hand, recently, after graduating from 8th grade, a significant majority of students continue their education in open education high schools. These students are forced to join working life after enrolling in open education. However, a significant number of students are enrolled in Vocational Education Centres or vocational and technical high schools. When all these data are brought together, it is seen that there is a significant child population in Diyarbakır, especially in the secondary education age, who are directly or indirectly distanced from education and forced to enter the working life as cheap labour.

The right to education in the mother tongue cannot be exercised

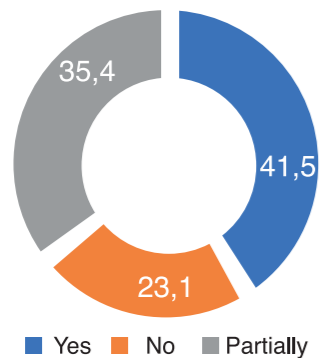
When analysing the educational process in Diyarbakır and the region, the most important issue to be addressed is the issue of education in the mother tongue. The academic and social skills of children who do not receive education in their mother tongue have been the subject of countless studies, and it has been revealed that not receiving education in their mother tongue is a serious disadvantage for children. In Turkey, it is currently not possible for children to receive uninterrupted and systematic education in their mother tongue. This situation remains a major disadvantage for children in Diyarbakır and, of course, throughout the country, not only for their daily lives, psychological and social conditions, but also for their future.

Currently, Kurdish (Kurmanji and Zazaki) is an elective subject in schools within the National Education system, but even this elective subject system is not operated as it should be.

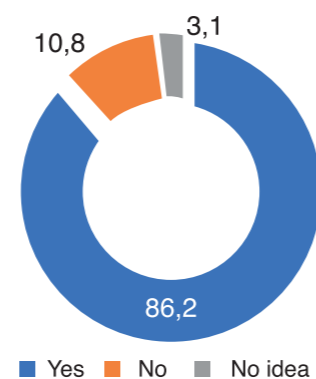
Despite the fact that the elective course system and teacher appointments were not carried out properly, it is seen from the response of the then Minister of National Education Mahmut Özer to a parliamentary question that 20,265 students chose Kurmanji and Zazaki courses in the 2021-2022 academic year.

In the "Monitoring and Reporting Study on the Right to Mother Tongue" conducted by our association within the scope of the "More Justified for Tomorrow" project, it was found that 76.9% of the interviewees spoke Kurdish partially or completely with their parents. In the same study, 86.2 percent answered "Yes" to the question "Do you want to learn and/or speak your mother tongue better?". In this study, the rate of those who know their mother tongue to a greater or lesser extent in terms of speaking and understanding reached 90 percent, while the rate of those who know their mother tongue in terms of reading and writing remained at 15-20 percent.

DO YOU SPEAK YOUR MOTHER LANGUAGE WITH YOUR PARENTS? (%)

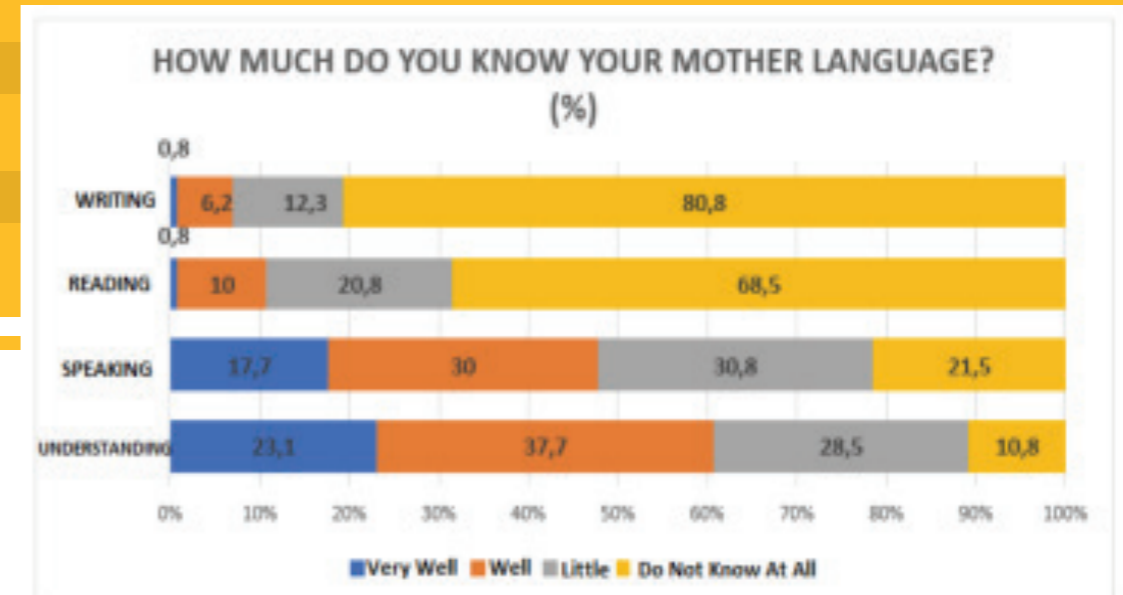


DO YOU WANT TO LEARN/SPEAK YOUR MOTHER LANGUAGE BETTER? (%)



30

To what extent do you know your native language?

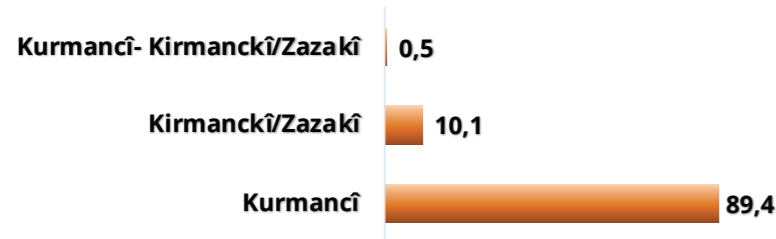


Source: Children First Association, Mother Language Right Monitoring and Reporting Study, 2023

The results of a survey conducted by the Centre for Socio-Political Field Research in 2022 with 2638 people in 19 cities show that Kurdish is still spoken in households, albeit to a limited extent, that literacy rates remain low as it has not become the language of education, and that almost all of the people demand education in the mother tongue:

31

WHAT IS YOUR MOTHER TONGUE(%)

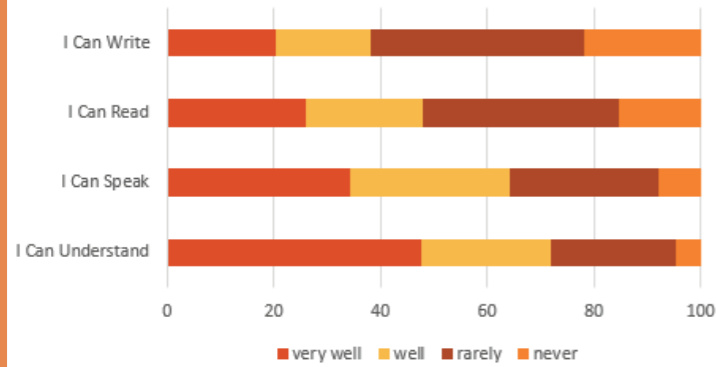


WHICH LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)(%)



When expressing the dialects they belong to, 89.4% of the participants defined their dialects as Kurmanji, 10.1% as Kurmanji and Zazakî, and 0.5% as both Kurmanji and Zazakî.

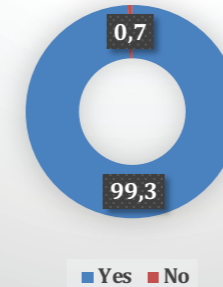
To What Extend Do You Speak Your Mother Tongue?



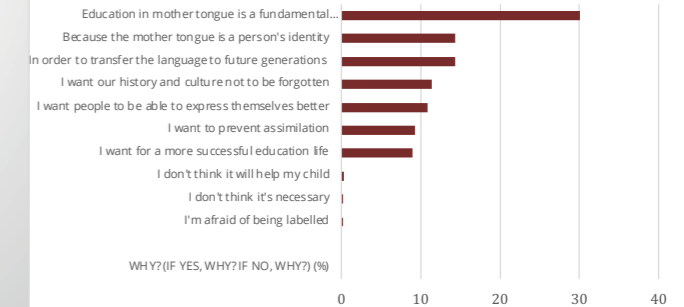
- 47.6% of the research group stated that they could understand their mother tongue at a very good level,
- 24,2 stated that they could understand at a good level;
- 34.3% stated that they could speak their mother tongue very well,
- 30 percent say they can speak at a good level,
- 26.1 % stated that they could read their mother tongue at a very good level,
- 21.7% say they can read at a good level,
- 20,5 of them say that they can write their mother tongue at a very good level,
- 17.7% stated that they could write at a good level.

Source: Socio-Political Field Research Center's Research Report on Kurdish Native Language and Usage Levels.

DO YOU WANT CHILDREN TO RECEIVE IN THEIR MOTHER TONGUE? (%)



WHY? (IF YES, WHY? IF NO, WHY?)



Source: Socio-Political Field Research Center's Research Report on Kurdish Native Language and Usage Levels.

In the study, the majority of the families reported that although they requested elective courses, elective course classes were not opened either because the number of requests was limited, because there were no teachers, or for no reason at all. In the same study, families who did not request elective courses stated that they did not request elective courses because they did not know that there was such an elective course or because they knew that it would be rejected even if requested. The fact that the Ministry of National Education makes symbolic appointments of Kurdish teachers every year, announcing that only 50 teachers will be appointed for the 2022-2023 period, yet the total number of Kurdish teachers across the country is only 132, confirms the inadequacies.

Access to the right to health is extremely limited.

Considering the situation of the region in terms of socio-economic development, it is of course not surprising to reach a conclusion based on socio-economic development in health, just as in education. The most basic information on child health in the region is partially provided by the study titled “Research Report on Monitoring Growth in School Age Children (6-10 Age Group) in Turkey (TOÇBİ) Project” conducted jointly by Hacettepe University and the Ministry of National Education. The NUTS (The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) regions and body weight, height and body mass index data by gender are included in the TOÇBİ report. These data provide both the level of healthy development and growth in the region and the factors that enable us to speculate about variables such as nutrition, environment and socio-economic development level that affect these three data.

According to the TOÇBİ Research Report, 3.5 percent of children in Eastern Anatolia and 5.4 percent of children in Southeastern Anatolia are stunted due to chronic hunger. In the western regions, this rate is as low as one percent, while the average in Turkey is 2 percent. According to the research conducted according to gender, the rate of stunting due to hunger was found to be 6 percent for boys and 5.5 percent for girls living in the region.

In the report, the Southeastern Anatolia region ranks first in the research conducted according to the percentage of underweight. Accordingly, 4.2 percent of children in the Southeastern Anatolia region are underweight, while the average in Turkey is 2 percent. The rate of underweight among boys in the region is 4.3 percent, while it is 4.1 percent among girls.

In terms of infant mortality rate, the provinces of Central Eastern Anatolia (Van, Bingöl, Hakkari, Muş, Bitlis, Elazığ, Tunceli, Malatya) and Southeastern Anatolia (Siirt, Diyarbakır, Şırnak, Batman, Kilis, Gaziantep, Mardin, Adıyaman, Şanlıurfa) are the regions with the highest infant mortality rate and below the Turkey average (TÜİK; 2022). Similarly, the under-five mortality rate is higher than the Turkey average of 11.2 per thousand (11.4 per thousand, TÜİK, 2020). In order to have a realistic picture of Diyarbakır and the Mesopotamia region, the above-mentioned data are very important but absolutely insufficient. Among the representative data collected by TurkStat, there is very little data that has been disaggregated by province and published. On the other hand, certain issues such as addiction, schooling and child labour are systematically left off the agenda.

Among the topics for which there is no data or insufficient data, the following topics are particularly noteworthy:

There is no region-specific data on child protection.

There is no comparative data on children's utilisation rates of culture and arts activities.

There is no data on the proportion of children with disabilities and types of disabilities.

There is no representative data on the number and gender of child labourers.

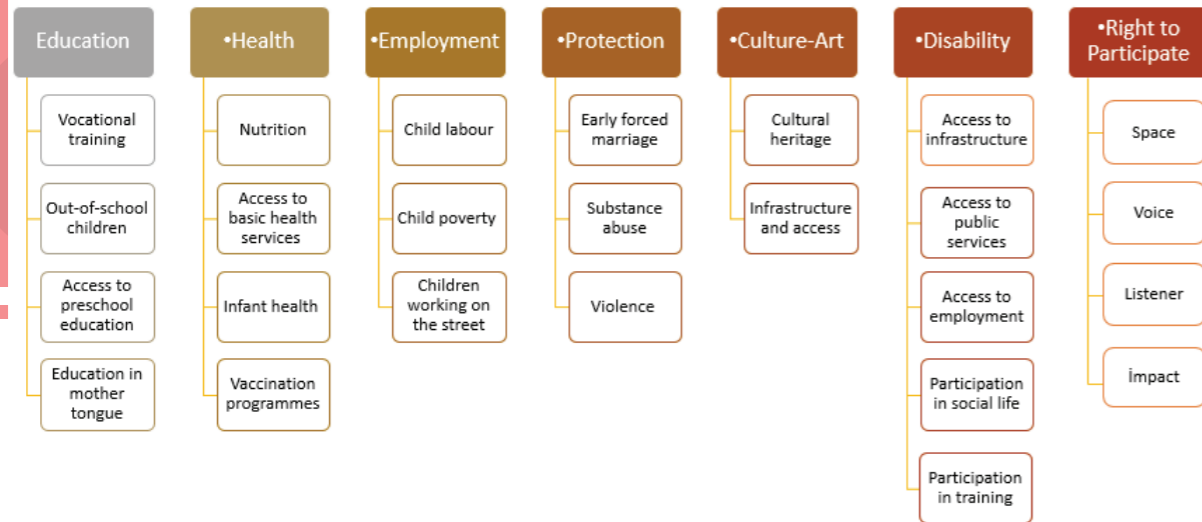
There is no data on childhood addiction.

There is no data on children who dropped out of education, reasons for dropping out, etc.

The absence of data in these areas also creates gaps in the picture to be acted upon, thus crippling civil society organisations, especially in terms of designing outcome-based interventions. The following Action plan, based on extensive internal discussions, builds on this picture and the gaps that we have tried to present:

2024-2026 Prioritized Work Themes

Each of the themes that make up the 2024-2026 programme will be examined through the lenses of migration/refugee status, ethnicity and gender.



In addition to these titles, the following activities will be carried out under the title of strengthening institutional capacity in the 2024-2026 period:

- ✓ Establishment of the circular system
- ✓ Establishment of archiving system
- ✓ Establishment of Reporting System
- ✓ Making job descriptions
- ✓ Creation of the organigram
- ✓ Social media redesign
- ✓ Website redesign
- ✓ Design review
- ✓ Organisational capacity and identity
- ✓ Designing volunteering activities
- ✓ Planning in-house trainings
- ✓ Preparation of minimum - maximum wage table

Programme Topics

Education

Education should be seen as one of the starting points for human rights during childhood, where one is introduced to the systems and communities that surround one's life. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, education should be content in line with the aims of maximizing the child's current abilities, improving respect for human rights, maximizing sensitivity to the child's identity and values, socializing the child and improving the child's development. development. Interaction with others and the development of the child's respect for the environment; All children should have democratic, public and equal access to native languages.

Children's education is a dominant theme throughout pre-school education up to the age of 18. However, without excluding other issues and taking into account the interconnectedness of the processes, our association will focus on the following themes in the 2024-2026 period.

- ▷ Vocational Training
- ▷ Vocational Training Centers
- ▷ Vocational High Schools
- ▷ Children not going to school
- ▷ Transition process to open high school
- ▷ Access to pre-school education
- ▷ Access to education in native language

In this context, one of our priorities is to reveal the widespread exploitation that children experience during their internship/apprenticeship periods under the name of vocational education and vocational high schools, as they are seen as workers, not students, and to carry out studies on this issue.

On the other hand, there are important observations that the transition of especially poor children to open high schools can also be seen as a transition to unregistered employment and working on the streets, but this issue has not been studied in detail in our region. Access to pre-school education, one of the most important factors in early child development, varies according to socio-economic development level. The number of pre-school education institutions owned by public institutions and municipalities in the region is almost non-existent. Carrying out advocacy work so that children can exercise their right to access pre-school education is an important task in ensuring the general well-being of the child.

The issue of mother tongue is evaluated by our association within the scope of the child's right to protect his own culture and identity and the child's equal access to education. Forcing a child to be educated in a language that is not his or her native language creates a complex of pedagogical problems that make the educational process unequal. In an education system that is not conducted in the mother tongue, the child forgets his mother tongue and becomes alienated from it. Our association is in a position to take native languages into consideration in all its activities and to allow.

According to Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, every child has the fundamental right to life. In addition, according to Article 24, every child should have access to the highest attainable standard of health and the necessary treatment and rehabilitation services. States are responsible for the rehabilitation and reintegration of neglected, abandoned, abused or tortured children.

Child health covers a wide range of stages starting from prenatal period to breastfeeding, access to supplementary foods, effective and quality implementation of vaccination programmes, preventive health programmes and free access to all kinds of treatment. However, it cannot be claimed that children in our region can fully exercise their right to health. In the 2024-'26 period, our Association will particularly focus on the following rights:

- ▷ Nutrition (poor and malnutrition, obesity)
- ▷ Vaccination programmes
- ▷ Baby health
- ▷ Access to basic health services

In the section on children in the region in figures, it was mentioned that the situation in these four basic parameters is pessimistic compared to other provinces and regions of Turkey. However, there are no studies on child nutrition and no studies on the distribution of immunisation programmes by provinces and wealthy-poor regions within provinces. Therefore, it will be essential to collect data that will form the basis for further studies.

Child Labour

Regarding vaccination programmes, campaigns will be organised to counteract and prevent vaccine refusal, which has become widespread with the COVID 19 outbreak, in child vaccination.

The right to food, which refers to everyone's sustainable access to adequate, safe and healthy food, is one of the most fundamental human rights protected by international law. Failure to ensure this right becomes a problem that requires urgent solutions in the case of children, who need adequate and safe nutrition to grow, develop, prevent disease, participate actively in education and maintain physical vitality.

Nutrition has become an important problem for children, who are more vulnerable than adults as a result of reduced access to food, especially with the economic crisis. The continuity and quality of nutrition programmes for school-age children are among the issues that need to be advocated. At the same time, it is also observed that efforts should be made to ensure that infants are not given food other than breast milk for the first six months of life, especially in rural areas.

In the last decade, the rates of physician control for each trimester of pregnancy and hospital births have increased in the region. However, stillbirth rate is still very high and above the average of Turkey. Qualitative and quantitative studies to be carried out to determine the obstacles in the access of pregnant women and newborns to basic health services will also be important in terms of children's access to the right to health.

Children First Association shares the universal goal of ending child labour.

At the end of the 19th century, the problem of child labour exploitation and child labour, which increased with industrialisation and urbanisation, has still not been eliminated despite the increasing prevention efforts since the second half of the 20th century. In this process, although legal regulations have been made on the subject, restrictions have been imposed on the working age and these restrictions have been secured with the threat of punishment, according to the data published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2021, 10 percent of the child population around the world is still working as child labourers. Nearly half of these children are employed in the worst forms of child labour that endanger their health, safety and moral development. Seventy percent of working children are in agriculture, 20 percent in services and 10 percent in industry.

Child labour keeps children of all ages out of school, separates them from their families, limits their time for play, recreation and rest. Child labour deprives children of their childhood, its potential and value. In particular, the worst forms of child labour harm children's social, physical and psychological development.

Turkey has made great progress in reducing child labour since the early 1990s. However, there are still an estimated 900,000 children in work, of whom around 44 percent are engaged in seasonal agricultural work. According to available statistics, 50 per cent of these children are out of school. As the war in Syria enters its 13th year, an increasing number of refugee children in Turkey are also turning to child labour.

Child protection

Child labour infiltrates children's lives in many different forms; children can work unregistered in under the stairs jobs in industry, as unpaid family workers, seasonal agricultural workers, apprentices/workers or children living/working on the streets. The fact that they are unregistered has further increased their ignorance. At the same time, this problem also shows that existing workplaces need to be inspected more effectively in terms of labour rights and law.

- Monitoring working conditions for the prevention of child labour
 - Monitoring the business world in terms of child labour within the scope of the obligation to respect human rights
 - Conducting research and preparing reports on children working in industry, services and agriculture in the region
 - Developing effective and sustainable policies to prevent child poverty,
 - Opening new skills training, training and employment support centres for young people to reduce youth unemployment,
 - Regular campaigns/advocacy work to keep the issue of children living/working on the streets, which is one of the most serious violations of rights against children, at the top of the provincial and regional agenda, and to establish networks with relevant organisations;
- It is among the priority work areas of our association in the 2024-2026 period.

Child protection is the provision of a protective environment for all children and the prevention of all kinds of neglect and abuse against children. The prerequisite for providing a protective environment for children is the complete provision of all services to support the healthy development of the child. Although our association cannot directly carry out child protection activities due to its function and capacity, it also sees it as a duty to supervise whether the institutions responsible for carrying out these activities fulfil their duties.

At the same time, to determine the current situation of the province and the region in the field of child protection,

Reminding the relevant institutions of their responsibilities and following up their fulfilment,
Providing trainings to institutions and volunteers,

Particularly in Regional, national and international public opinion;

- ▷ Early forced marriage
- ▷ Substance abuse
- ▷ Violence

The aim is to carry out advocacy work in order to draw particular attention to their subject.

Access to culture and arts

Disability

Art activities for children and activities that use art as a tool overlap with the approach needed to create a culture of children's rights, as they include objectives such as developing children's potential, giving them space for free expression, contributing to their physical and psychological development, strengthening their well-being, supporting their self-confidence, safely being together with those who are different from themselves and reaching children with limited access to art.

Children are also important actors in carrying the cultural heritage from the past to the future. For this reason, introducing children to cultural heritage such as language, fairy tales, games, places, etc. is of special importance for the transmission of this heritage.

Children's access to culture and arts covers a much wider area. The reflection of efforts in many areas such as libraries, exhibition halls, cinema and theatre plays in a way that takes into account the children's lens, the reduction of access barriers by using new technologies, and the support of people and institutions working in this field will be one of the main areas of work of our association in this period as it has been in the past.

For children, disability means being pushed out before they even start life. Children with intellectual disabilities, hearing impairment, visual impairment, orthopaedic disability, speech and language impairment, mental and emotional illness, chronic illness, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, etc. experience great difficulties in accessing public services, access to employment, participation in social life and participation in education.

This is an area that is almost ignored by other NGOs except disabled people's organisations. However, unfortunately, neither in our province nor in our region, we witness that the placement of stairs at the main entrance of the school for the visually impaired is questioned.

In this period, our association aims to identify the obstacles created by society and the public to people with different difficulties, to carry out activities to raise general awareness in society in this field and to carry out effective advocacy activities on the participation of people with disabilities in social life and education.

Child participation

Although children are the people who will be affected by the decisions taken about them in the long term, they are among the groups that have the least say in these decisions. However, it would be unreasonable to expect someone who does not actively participate in life today to actively participate in life in the future. Adults have a lot of work to do to ensure children's participation, because children live in a world constructed by adults. For this reason, it is very important to establish mechanisms to ensure children's participation.

Child participation can be defined as the free expression of children's views, taking these views seriously and ensuring that all children play an active role in decision-making processes that concern them.

Our association adopts the Lundy Child Participation Model and acts within the following framework in its activities not only for children but also with children:

Space

- Are children's views actively sought?
- Is there a safe space where children can express their opinions freely?
- Have steps been taken to ensure that all children participate?

Voice

- Have children been given enough information to form an opinion?
- Do children know that they do not have to be part of this process?
- Were children given a variety of options to express themselves?

Listener

- Is there a defined process for transferring children's views to others?
- Do children know to whom/to whom their views will be conveyed?
- Do the person(s) to whom the views will be conveyed have influence/authority in decision-making?

Impact

- Are children's views taken into account by those with impact/authority?
- Is there a procedure to ensure that children's views are taken seriously?
- Have children been given feedback on the reasons for decisions taken?

This approach is not only an approach that our association uses when planning its activities and projects, but also consists of questions that we will follow in all decision-making and activity realisation processes related to children.

Crosscutting Issues

Migrants

Gender

Ethnicity

These three areas constitute the main focus of all our work, historically / socially / culturally. It is well known that there is a difference between the access to health by children of migrant families and children of settled families. It is also clear that early forced marriages are a violation of rights experienced by girls rather than boys. The obstacle to access to education in the mother tongue is a problem experienced by Kurdish children. Examples that can be multiplied show that we need to look at all the above-mentioned topics through all three lenses.

2024 - 2026 Action Plan Matrix

	Research	Defence study	Model development	Capacity building	Preparing training modules	Campaign	Monitoring-evaluation and impact analysis
1. Education							
1.1. Vocational education	x		x	x	x		x
1.2. Out-of-school children	x					x	x
1.3. Access to pre-primary education	x	x				x	
1.4. Education in mother tongue	x	x	x		x	x	x
2. Health							
2.1. Nutrition		x				x	
2.2. Access to basic health services					x		x
2.3. Baby health	x			x		x	
2.4. Vaccination programmes	x			x		x	
3. Employment							
3.1. Child labour	x	x				x	x
3.2. Child poverty	x	x				x	x
3.3. Children working on the street	x	x		x	x	x	x

4. Child Protection							
4.1. Early forced marriage	x	x			x	x	x
4.2. Substance abuse	x				x	x	x
4.2. Violence	x	x	x		x	x	x
5. Culture and Arts							
5.1. Cultural heritage	x						x
5.2. Access to infrastructure	x				x		x
6. Disability							
6.1. Access to infrastructure	x						x
6.2. Access to public services	x						x
6.3. Child labour	x						x
6.4. Participation in social life	x						x
6.5. Participation in Education	x						x
7. Participation rights	x	x	x		x	x	x

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“This work programme has been prepared by Children First Association.

Children First Association is solely responsible for all contents of this programme.”