

Project proposal for  
London Design Biennale  
DESIGN IN AGE OF CRISIS

# THE DESIGN THINKING FACTORY

## The design question

- Identity
- Globalization
- Culture
- Locality
- Branding

A methodology designed for youth to empower girls in the Mashreq region to partake in their community by finding (digital) solutions in times of (economic) crisis.

This project is a collaboration between:

**NL** هولندا





## **NExAR is a bridge building initiative between the Netherlands and the Arab world.**

Design is a discipline that is known for being creative and open-minded. Our experience in the field has proved that design is able to build bridges between countries, cultures and societies. It can be a first a step to stimulate people and organisations to work across cultures and disciplines and to learn from each other's perspectives and experiences.

NExAR shares with other countries what the Dutch creative industry is all about. We aim to show how the Dutch creative industry got to where it is today and how that relates to the Dutch values and context. By doing so, we hope to start a discussion about the development of creative industries in other cultures. We hope to not only stimulate a cultural exchange, but also to empower people within their creative industry, both students and professionals, to be part of shaping the future of their industry and country.

We do this all by organising lectures, workshops and exhibitions, usually in collaboration with local designers and embassies to make sure we actually contribute to the local industry.

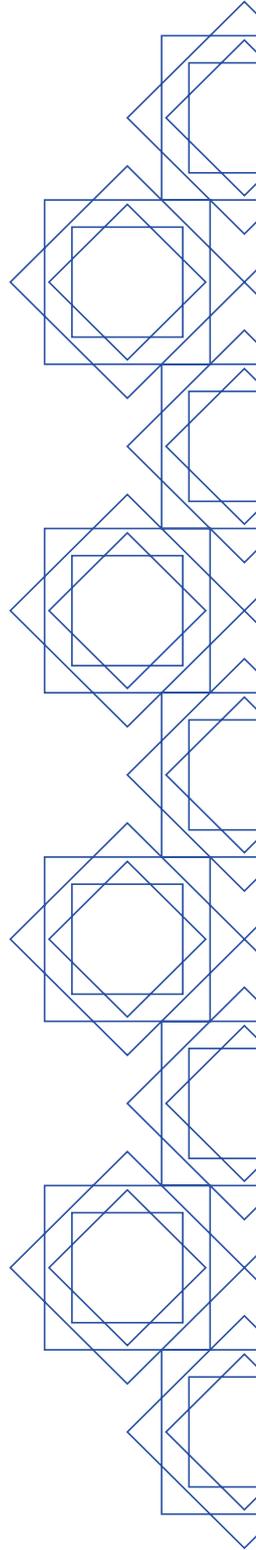
**NExAR** shares knowledge and experience about design

**NExAR** shares perspectives on the position and added value of design for the cultures we live in

**NExAR** creates a network of like-minded designers

**NExAR** initiates multi-disciplinary and cross-cultural projects

**NExAR** builds bridges to learn form each other



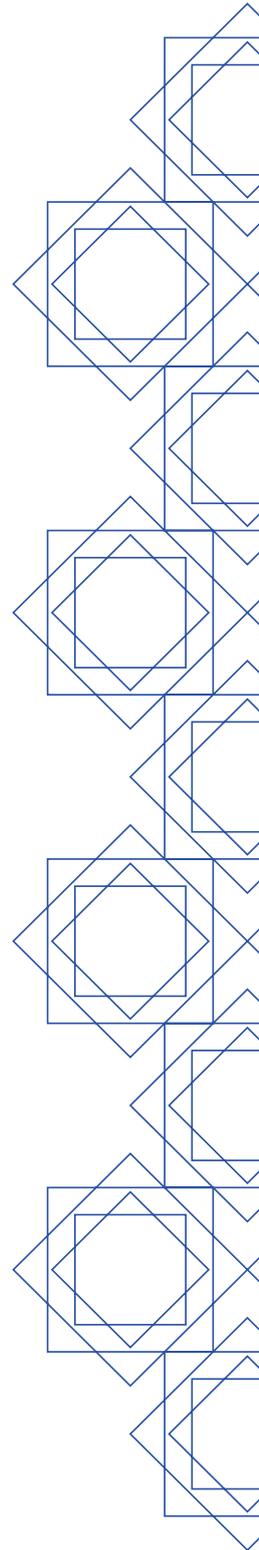
## The aim & context

**The aim of this methodology & toolkit is to empower girls in the Mashreq region by giving them hands-on tools to partake in their community finding (digital) solutions in times of (economic) crisis.**

As described in the publication 'Women's economic participation in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon' by Worldbank female labor participation in the Mashreq region is exceptionally low. The participation rates for women in these three countries lie between 25 and 35 percentage points below the international average given their per capita GDP.

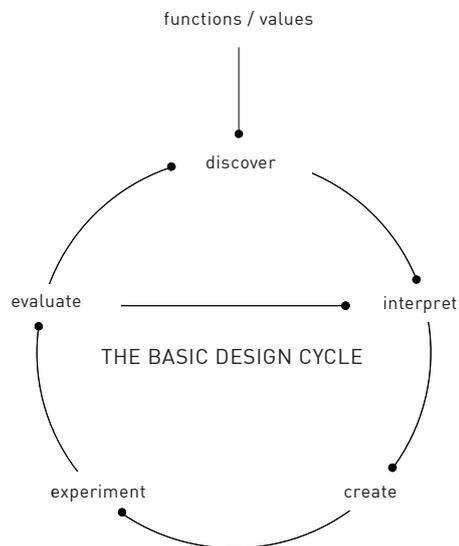
In current times, when the world is fighting a pandemic, it becomes even more clear that making use of digital media in society is highly important. On the other hand, we see digital exclusion of women and girls in the Mashreq region. Now is the time to find opportunities and raise more awareness on including woman and girls in digital society.

We believe that working with our 'design-thinking factory' we will bring awareness and will find new opportunities working together with the target group and local organizations.

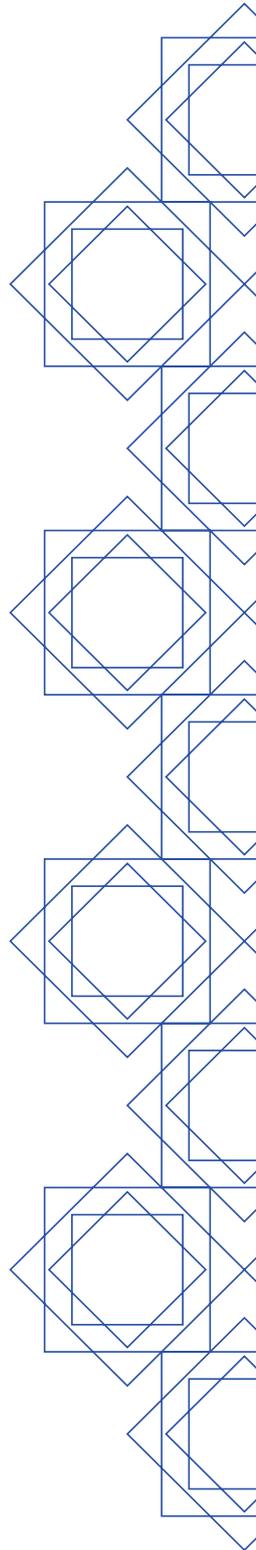


## The Design-Thinking Factory

The workshops will be set up according our Design-Thinking Factory, following our basic design cycle. Participants (youth between 15-24) will be encouraged in a creative way to work towards new (digital) opportunities for girls in the Mashreq region.



The design-challenge is defined as follows:  
**Dream of a time where everything is possible. Which (digital) possibilities do you see for or as the girls of the Mashreq region?**



# The Design Thinking Factory

The trigger

1

Discover



2

Interpret

The design question

- Identity
- Globalization
- Culture
- Locality
- Branding

4

The implementation

The Solution

Create

3

5

Evaluate

Ambition - Ripple Effect

Experiment



# The Design-Thinking Factory

## Discover

Insights and inspiration are gathered. This exploration uses both qualitative & quantitative research methods and can involve both directly engaging with end users and analysis of wider social and economic trends. By the end of this phase you will have another perspective about the situation, you will see the sky from another point of view; large and full of opportunities...

Tool: Touchpoints & Impact

## Interpret

The mass of ideas and findings are analyzed and structured into a reduced set of opportunity statements. These are aligned with the needs and objectives to identify which to take forward. By the end of this phase you will be able to recognize the relevant details, the actors and the connections that play important roles in the situation you are studying.

Tool: Moodboard / people & connections map

## Create

The initial design brief is taken through an iterative process. Developing and testing, refines the product or service concepts until they are ready for implementation. You develop the individual service components in detail and ensure these link together to form a holistic experience.

Tool: 6 thinking hats

## Experiment

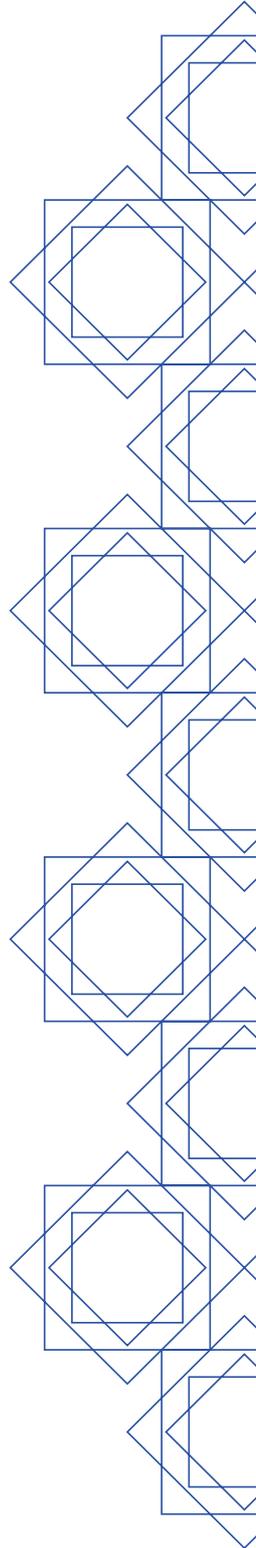
The concept will be presented to each other. It is time to jump and take risks trying it out; no matter how developed it is, there is always time to adjust details and jump again. It is important to ensure systems are in place to capture user feedback, especially for services. During this phase they get the change to adjust their concept to a final 'end-result'.

Tool: The 5 Why's

## Evaluate (& celebrate)

It is time to set out the product or service into the world. Remember that a newborn idea needs reflection and work to evolve. This is also the moment to evaluate & share the process to fellow participants, sharing new knowledge, insights and tools.

Tool: Ripple effect



# PROJECT OVERVIEW/PROCESS

## 1. Design & recruitment

### a. Development & design toolkit

- by NE-AR Team

The designed toolkit and program will be personalized for this specific design challenge. This means the tools will be implemented and designed specifically for this design question

### b. Recruiting network of local organizations, schools & NGO's

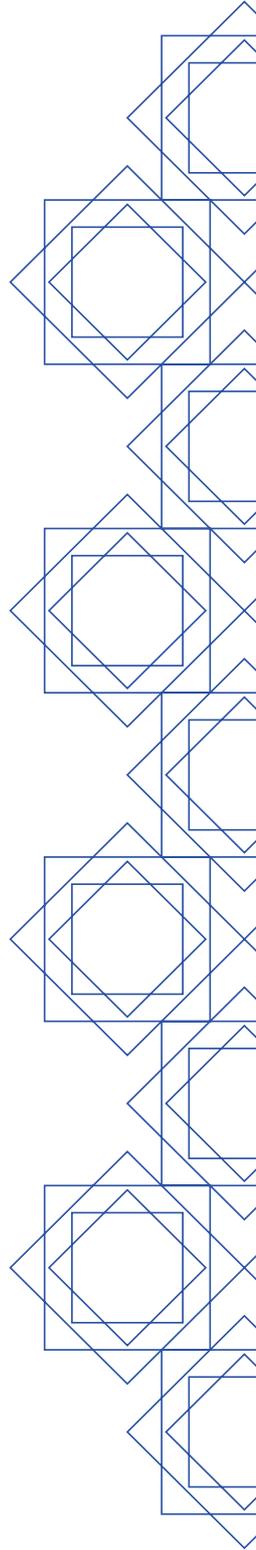
- by Dutch Ministry of foreign affairs / embassy's & the NE-AR team

It is important to recruit the right organizations, schools & NGO's to connect to the target group and are able to follow the train-the-trainer workshop. These organizations have even more knowledge on the target group and know local culture.

## 2. Train-the-trainer workshop

- max. 15 participants per session
- by NE-AR Team in collaboration with Dutch Ministry of foreign affairs
- time investment – 8 hours per session

During International Youth Day on the 12th of August we will provide a train-the-trainer workshop on our methodology. The future trainers will be given a crash-course into our Design-Thinking Factory. They will be provided with an extensive presentation on design-thinking, the toolkit (including a trainer-manual) and our team to guide them through the tools. These future trainers are employees of several local organizations, schools and NGO's who already have access working with the target group; youth between 15-24 years old. This program is online, yet the tools will be physical. Participants have enough time in advance to download the toolkit and print this on basic paper size A4. After this first kick-off the new trainers will recruit 10-15 participants for their own workshops.



### 3. Workshops with the target group

- **by the trainers in collaboration with the NE-AR team**
- **time investment – minimal 6 hours (depending on the preference of the trainer)**

The new trainers each recruited 10-15 participants for their workshop. In advance the trainer will have provided the toolkit (printed or digital) and has followed the train-the-trainer workshop to be well prepared for giving this workshop. It is up to the trainer to decide on the time span of the process, with the minimum investment of 6 hours. Some might want to go more into depth on certain steps of the process. The participants will be guided through the Design-Thinking Factory. Due to the current COVID19-pandemic we designed the program that is could be possible to either give the workshop digital or physical. This decision can be made by the trainer taking the local restrictions and regulations into consideration. At the end of these workshops all insight will be gathered. These will be sent to the NE-AR team for further analysis.

### 4. Sharing knowledge and opportunities

- **By the participants, trainers, NE-AR team and Dutch Ministry of foreign affairs**

After analyzing all the gathered insights the NE-AR team will design a publication with several conclusion(s) and opportunities given by the target group. This publication can be presented to several (local) institutions to develop and implement the ideas.

The participants, the trainers and the NE-AR team will give extensive presentations on the insights and experiences of the workshops during **the International SDG day on the 25th of September** as well as on **the Youth Conference in The Hague on the 2nd of November**.

