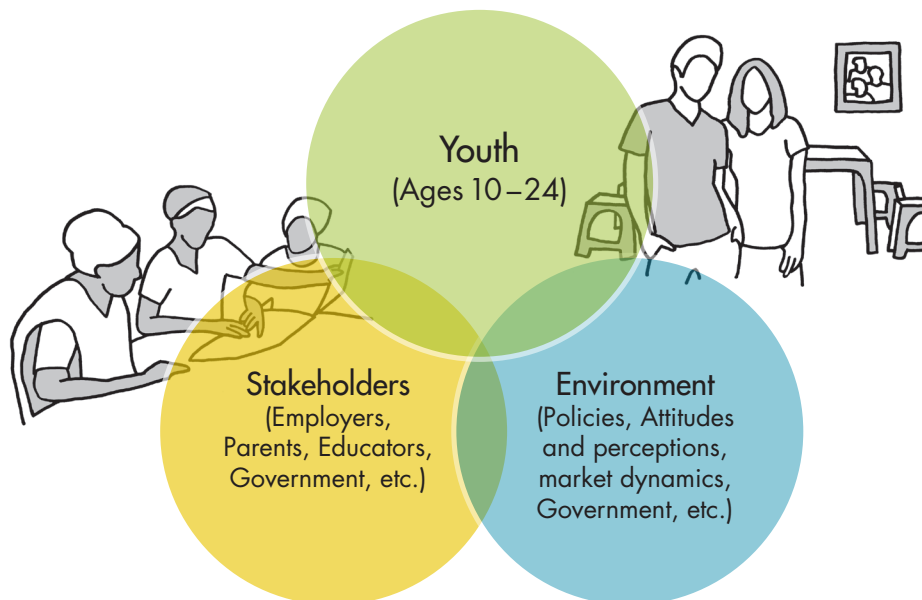


SKYLS Facilitation Guide



Introduction to SKYLS

Skills and Knowledge for Youth Leaders (SKYLS) is a participatory assessment that supports young people to identify issues they feel are important to their future development. The game-based, interactive card tool uses imagery and facilitated discussions to reveal underlying causes of these issues, and the skills and actors that can be mobilized to address them. The information gleaned from SKYLS can be used to address limitations to youth's current environment, inform program design and proposal development, or unveil additional opportunities to engage youth already participating in existing programs. Mercy Corps has found that traditional focus groups and quantitative surveys with youth rarely provide high quality information due to their formal, rigid nature. SKYLS overcomes this barrier by tapping into young peoples' desire to interact with one another and use experience as a basis for deeper discussion. SKYLS should be combined with other data collection methods such as labor market assessments, stakeholder and community mapping, and Key Informant Interviews to provide additional information to guide program design and implementation.



Content of SKYLS

SKYLS has three main components, the card deck, facilitation guide and the information canvas.

The card deck has a number of different components, each represented by images, including: thematic cards, cause cards, skills cards, and actor cards.

The facilitation guide offers guidance to assist in preparing for and facilitating a SKYL assessment. The guide supports facilitators to prepare for, run and document the assessment process while providing guidance on how to adapt the assessment tool to different contexts.

The information canvas offers a user-friendly layout to highlight the data that should be capture during the facilitation process. This documentation form outlines important information that should be collected while also encouraging the capture of more nuanced information that may come out while youth engage in the assessment. This additional information should be captured in the comments section to ensure a holistic understanding of youth issues, aspirations, and needs.

Who Should Use SKYLS

Each SKYLS session should engage homogeneous groups of no more than ten 10–24 year olds. As needs differ between 10 and 24 year olds and between genders in each context, it is critical that the groups be single sex and represent and target an age range of no more than 5 years. These arrangements will allow for the most detailed and actionable results.

The Facilitation Process (120+ minutes total)

At a minimum, two staff members (Mercy Corps staff, local partners, youth leaders, etc.) are needed for the process, one to act as a data capturer/note taker and the other to facilitate the process and the conversation amongst the youth. The steps of the process are highlighted on side two.

1. Introduction to MC: Who we are, what we are doing – 5 min

Why are we engaging with the youth and what do we hope to gain from working with them today? Also explain the activity we are going to conduct is to better understand what youth face in their day to day life and how we can better work together in the future. If SKYLS is being conducted for a specific program, details of that program should be conveyed to the group.

2. Themes: Hold up one card at a time – 25 min

- What does this card represent?
- Think about how this card plays a role in your life today—how do you feel about it?
- Is this something that you think you would like to make better in your community?
- Is there anything else in your life that is really important that hasn't been mentioned that we would like to add?

3. As a group: 1 hour (allow for more time if needed)

- Let's pick three cards that we would like to explore a bit more—as a group come to a consensus on 3 themes that you would like to see become better in your community
- As a group sort through these three stacks of cards, skills, barriers and actors and through discussion sort them into 3 piles ones that can help you as youth in making this theme better, ones that can prevent you from making it better and ones that aren't relevant. *Note to facilitators:* allow the youth to engage with each other during this process, only stepping in if guidance or additional information is needed. During this time facilitators may be able to extract more information about youth in the specific context based on their behavior. Observations should also be noted during this process.
- Are there any other things that have been left out? Other barriers? Other skills? Other actors?

4. Wrap up: 15 min

- Now I want you to look at the piles that we have created and as a group let's talk through how we can create an action plan based on the skills and actors that you identified as being able to help you.

- Are there people you could talk to or skills you could work on to help you improve an aspect of your life?
 - Are there any next steps that you as youth can take to help address some of these issues?
- b. Does anyone have any closing remarks?
- How did this activity make you feel?
 - Did you learn anything new from it?
 - Do you think that it can help you think through different aspects of your life?



Remember that your role as a facilitator is to develop a deep understanding of the issues affecting youth in your location to inform project design and implementation. As you become more familiar with issues affecting youth, or the demographic, geographic or technical focus of your project, feel free to contextualize how SKYLS is facilitated as needed to make it more relevant or applicable to the youth you are working with. For example, if you are working on a proposal for an economic development project feel free to ensure that the jobs/economic activity thematic card is one that is further explored by the group. Also remember that this should be a fun, youth-led activity.

What We Need to Capture

- Interpretation of themes of each of the themes and the role it plays in youths' life
- The 3 selected themes—why they were seen as the biggest issues that need to be addressed
- The causes of each of the 3 themes' issues
- The skills and actors that could support them and prevent them from resolving the issue
- Any wild cards that are created
- Solutions to the issue or next steps if they are covered



Additional Support

If you have any questions or need additional support in the implementation of this tool or the data analysis feel free to contact: Rose Hemmer-Vitti, rhemmervitti@mercycorps.org or the Youth, Gender, and Girls (Y2G) TSU.