

Soft Skills Development

Guiding Notes for Project and Curriculum
Design and Evaluation



World Learning

Education | Development | Exchange

Contact hours:	N/A (handbook)
Main author:	Catherine A. Honeyman
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This document represents a work in progress, building off recent research from the USAID YouthPower initiative, as well as other sources. It is likely that revisions will be made in the future as the evidence base evolves. Comments and suggestions can be sent to catherine.honeyman@worldlearning.org.

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How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to encourage continuous improvement in the quality of programs that aim to build soft skills, a “broad set of skills, behaviors, and personal qualities that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, relate well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals” (Gates, 2016, p. 1). This guidance can be used both for curriculum design and for evaluation of curriculum and program quality. The tools in **pages 5-10 should be printed out** for note-taking either individually or in a workshop setting. The remainder of the document offers details that can be referenced in soft copy.

For Project or Curriculum Design

This guide contains a set of checklists and guiding questions to assist in project and curriculum design related to the development of soft skills.

- ① Use the [soft skills checklist](#) to determine which skills are most important for the project’s goals, the [pedagogical inventory](#) to think through the most effective pedagogical approaches to soft skills development in your project or curriculum, and the [assessment guidance](#) to become familiar with the key characteristics of an effective soft skills assessment.
- ② Once you have gone through these background steps, use the [specific skill development plan](#) to think through project and curriculum needs for each specific soft skill to be developed. You may need to print more than one copy of page 8 to accomplish this.
- ③ Finally, use the [overall skills development framework](#) to link all these elements into a coherent approach.

For Project Evaluations and Technical Assistance

The same tools described above can also be used for the purposes of evaluating an existing project or curriculum, or providing technical assistance for their improvement.

- ① Use the [soft skills checklist](#) to evaluate whether all the most important soft skills are being addressed by the curriculum, the [pedagogical inventory](#) to evaluate to what extent the current curricular approach reflects effective pedagogical practices for soft skills development, and the [assessment guidance](#), starting with Step 3, to evaluate the appropriateness, validity, and reliability of the assessment tools being used.
- ② Next, use the [specific skill development plan](#) to think through changes that might need to be made for each specific soft skill that is a focus of the project or curriculum.
- ③ Finally, use the [overall skills development framework](#) to create an overarching plan for improvement.

For Everyone

This guide also provides detailed additional guidance of relevance for both design and evaluation. A list of [references for further reading](#) offers further insight into issues of soft skills prioritization, pedagogy, and assessment. On **definitions**, [Annex I](#) provides a Quick Reference guide to definitions of the seven key soft skills identified as consistently linked to positive outcomes across several types of youth programming, and [Annex II](#) presents a list of dictionary definitions for each of the soft skills terms contained in the guide.

On **pedagogy**, [Annex III](#) provides further description and examples of effective pedagogical practices for soft skills development, while [Annex IV](#) offers an example pedagogical observation rubric. On **assessment**, [Annex V](#) provides an example of a soft skills observation rubric for assessing students’ skills, and [Annex V](#) gives guidance for using a written soft skills assessment that has already been validated internationally, the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale. Finally, [Annex VI](#) lists recent World Learning projects that have a soft skills development component.



Tools for Soft Skills Development

Soft skills checklist

Who are your participants, and which soft skills are important for them to develop? Select any soft skills that are crucial to your program goals, or are of secondary importance. Note that the categories are provided only for organizational purposes and are not rigid. For definitions, see [Annex I](#) and [Annex II](#).

Participants	Select Priority Soft Skills Needs	Crucial	Secondary	N/A	
(describe age, sex, skills, weaknesses, interests, context)	A. Psychosocial and Emotional Skills				
	1. Self-care (rest, nutrition, exercise); Making healthy choices (e.g. SRH)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. Emotional intelligence; Managing emotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3. Positive self-concept, realistic self-esteem, self-efficacy, confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4. Resilience in the face of setbacks; Coping with stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5. Skills for overcoming the effects of traumatic and toxic stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	B. Intra-personal Skills				
	1. Self-control and self-discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. Conscientiousness, dutifulness, responsibility, and reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3. Truthfulness, honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4. Attention to detail and/or Seeing the big picture (specify which)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5. Goal-orientation, goal-setting, making plans, initiative/being proactive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	6. Perseverance, determination, and grit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7. Growth mindset, and recognizing need for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	C. Inter-personal (social) Skills				
	1. Demonstrating context-appropriate behavior, reflecting social norms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. Respecting and expressing appreciation for others; Kindness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3. Empathy and ability to notice the effects of one's actions on others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4. Valuing diversity of perspectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5. Conflict management and resolution; Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	6. Agreeableness, flexibility, collaboration, and teamwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7. Promoting one's rights and the rights of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8. Leadership; providing positive guidance to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Program Goals	D. Communication Skills			
	(describe what the project or program hopes to achieve)	1. Effective listening and seeking to understand others' perspectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Reading and writing: written communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Speaking and presenting: oral communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Online and digital communication: digital (ICT) literacy and etiquette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Awareness of non-verbal communication norms and cues		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Negotiation and non-violent persuasion		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Communicating across ages, genders, cultures, or identities (specify)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Cognitive and Higher-order Thinking Skills					
1. Attention, focus, and concentration		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Critical thinking and evaluation		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Information-seeking and independent learning		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Synthesis, creativity, problem analysis, and problem-solving		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Decision-making		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Self-reflection and learning from experience		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
F. Entrepreneurship and Civic Engagement Skills					
1. Global and local awareness of challenges, needs, and opportunities		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Vision, ability to imagine something new or improved		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Social responsibility and willingness to take constructive action		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Business research and market research		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Financial literacy, budgeting, and financial management		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Marketing, creating coalitions, advocacy, and eliciting support		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
G. Employability Skills (in addition to other soft skills listed above)					
1. Job search skills: self-presentation, networking, CV, interview (specify)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Workplace-appropriate verbal and written communication styles		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Navigating workplace roles and relationships		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Judging appropriate styles of dress, decoration, and grooming		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Punctuality, work planning, and meeting deadlines		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Pedagogical inventory

Below is a list of key elements of quality project design and effective pedagogy for soft skills development. Further information on what each principle looks like in practice, and how it helps, can be found in [Annex III](#), and [Annex IV](#) offers an example rubric that can be used for facilitator observations or self-assessments.

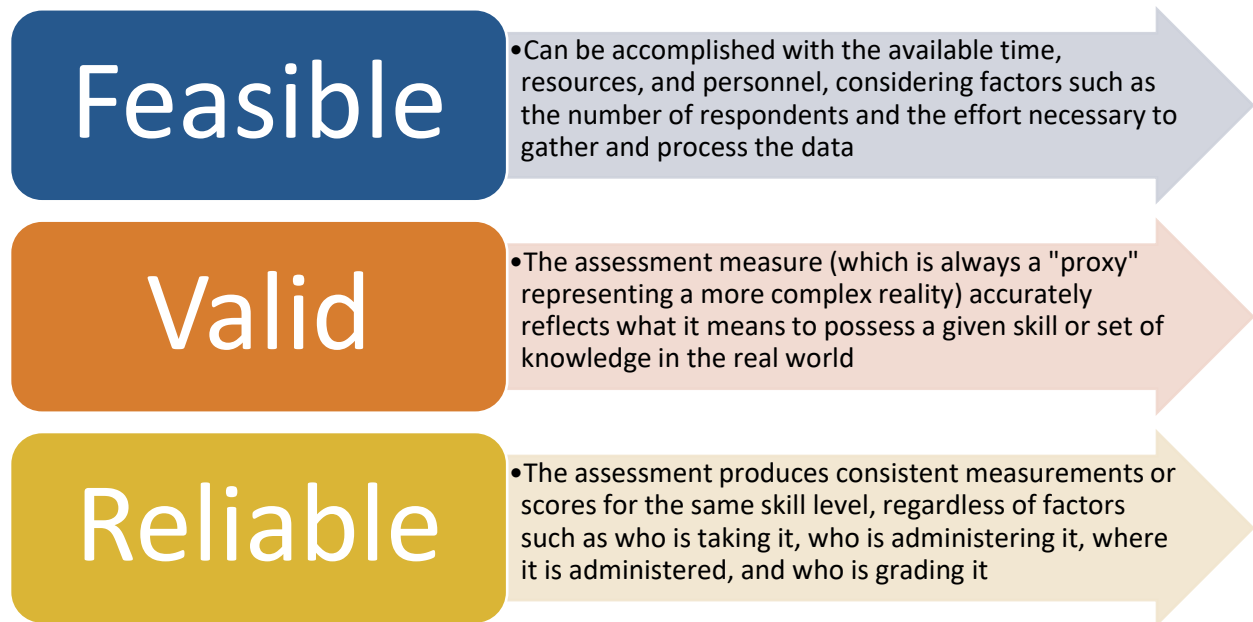
For Planning: Use the space next to each principle to write initial ideas for project or curriculum design.

For Evaluation: Does your project meet the standards described below? What areas need improvement?

Pedagogical Principles	Space for Planning or Evaluation				
	N/A	Not at all	Some -what	Yes, mostly	Yes, fully
1. Develop a safe, caring, and supportive environment that allows participants to express themselves and take on challenges—including the risk of mistakes—without fear of ridicule.					
2. Build underlying skills of social awareness to help participants identify, evaluate, and—where appropriate—follow the norms and standards of particular social contexts.					
3. Explicitly discuss what each soft skill is , why it is important, and what it looks like in practice. Define new concepts. Point out specific soft skills when they are enacted or observed in action.					
4. Connect it all together into an overarching framework of principle and purpose that helps participants understand the larger picture of why developing these skills is important, and helps them apply principles to make decisions in new situations.					
5. Promote skills development through experiential learning in cycles of concrete action, reflective analysis, relating the experience to abstract concepts, and planning for further action—including both prearranged exercises and demanding but achievable real-life experiences.					
6. Draw on the arts and movement to get participants thinking and acting in new ways. Options include theater and role play, sharing poetry and proverbs, painting murals, photography, digital storytelling, crafting, music, dance, sports, and more.					
7. Provide consistent positive feedback when participants demonstrate core soft skills. Consider employing negative consequences when necessary.					
8. Promote integration across the different learning contexts to which participants are exposed—family, community, education institution, workplace, etc—with clear and consistent standards.					
9. Ensure that staff model in their own daily life the soft skills being promoted. Support staff in recognizing and addressing any personal areas for improvement.					
10. Promote strong mentorship relationships among participants or between those who are more experience and less experienced (such as adults to youth), which are meaningful and caring, and in which participants are seen as valued contributors.					
11. Allow for the development of soft skills over time and in a variety of situations, not just in single lessons. Employ multiple experiential learning cycles of action and reflection.					

Assessment guidance

Measuring soft skills can be challenging, especially as these skills are naturally expressed in action, in complex social environments (Wilson-Ahlstrom, Yohalem, DuBois, & Ji, 2011). Determining an appropriate assessment method depends on many factors, including the purpose of the assessment. In many contexts, it can be important to help participants set goals and assess themselves. Some projects also require collecting assessment data for purposes of monitoring and evaluation. In general, assessments should be:



Different assessment methods present different strengths and weaknesses along these three factors.

Method	Feasibility	Validity	Reliability
Observation: Assess how people behave in everyday situations, or in response to a particular task.	↓ Feasible only for smaller numbers of respondents, since observation requires more time and direct attention from the assessor.	↑↑ With a well-designed rubric defining the behaviors to be observed and their scoring, observation comes closest to measuring the skill itself in practice.	→ Achieving reliability requires a well-designed rubric and significant training of assessors to ensure that they score observed behaviors in similar ways.
Project: Measure the successful completion of a project that requires the use of certain skills.	→ Soft skills assessment can be integrated as part of the achievement of other course objectives, but completing/grading projects takes time.	→ Can be a highly authentic assessment method—but measurement may be unclear if the project requires other skills or resources that some youth do not have.	→ Achieving reliability requires a clear rubric of skills to be assessed and assessor training to ensure consistent scoring across projects reflecting similar skills levels.
Written or oral assessment: Pose questions that test for certain knowledge, attitudes, and skills.	↑ Relatively easy to accomplish with many people when closed (multiple choice) responses are used.	↓↓ Soft skills do not easily translate into words. Self-reported measures are unreliable. Literacy/language skills may also get in the way of accurate measurement.	↑ Reliability is fairly easy to test and improve through piloting.

Use the following steps to create—or help participants create—a rubric or a written assessment. Skip to Step 3 if you want to evaluate an existing tool. You may also refer to [Appendix IV](#), which contains an example soft skill observation rubric, and to [Appendix V](#), which provides detailed guidance for how to use the CPYDS, a written assessment for some soft skills that has already been validated internationally.

Skill Name:

Step 1. Answer the following questions:

How does a person with this skill behave? (contrast to someone without the skill)

How does a person with this skill think and feel? (contrast to someone without the skill)

Does exercising this skill require some knowledge? (contrast to someone without the skill)

Step 2: Create a Rubric or Written Assessment

Create a rubric for observations or projects

- Write the skills to be assessed in the first column of a table and leave three or four blank columns to the right.
- In the far right column, write context-relevant observable behaviors or results that demonstrate excellence in that skill. Fill in the other columns with progressive examples of lower skill levels.
- Determine whether there are any behaviors that you want to count, such as "the number of times a student offers an idea" and provide a space for recording that result.

Create a written assessment

- Having multiple measures of the same construct helps improve the validity of written assessments:
- Write a few questions asking about the respondent's behavior related to the soft skill in the past day or week.
- Write a few related statements of feeling or attitudes that correspond to the soft skill.
- Write a few questions that require relevant knowledge.
- Randomly mix the questions so that related items are not all found together. Use a Likert scale for response options.

Step 3: Pilot and check for validity and reliability

Circle the method(s) in blue that you are using, then check off the criteria that the tool meets.

Observation:

Assessing everyday actions and interactions, focusing on observable behaviors

Project-based:

Measuring the successful completion of a project that requires the use of certain skills

Written or oral assessment:

Linking the skill itself to certain verbal questions. Such questions may be:

Knowledge-based, primarily focused on information

Psychometric assessments of personality or attitude

Scenario-based, asking for a reaction to a hypothetical situation

☐ **Validity:** Do you have a well-defined rubric of observable behaviors that are clearly linked to the skill in question, and are not gender-biased?

☐ **Validity:** Do you have a well-defined rubric? Have you accounted for background skills that may pose a blockage to some students?

☐ **Validity:** Does each question adequately reflect the skill itself?

- Is there any gender, culture, or other bias in the question?
- Can this question **only** be answered by someone who possesses the skill?
- Do individuals whose behavior already exhibits competence in that soft skill answer the question "correctly"? If not, revise.

☐ **Reliability:** Do different assessors reliably evaluate the same behaviors in the same way, using your rubric?

☐ **Reliability:** Do different assessors reliably evaluate the project's skill levels in the same way, using your rubric?

☐ **Reliability:** Does the assessment produce consistent results?

- Do the different items on the assessment that are intended to measure the same thing produce the same results for the same person?
- If the same individual takes the assessment on two subsequent days, are the results identical or nearly identical?

Are revisions necessary? _____



Specific skill development plan

Use the following questions to create a skill-specific design plan, or a plan for curriculum improvement. Use one copy of this page for each core soft skill targeted in the program.

Name and define the soft skill to be developed, and the purpose or importance of developing it.
↓
What kinds of teaching and learning processes, including experiences, are generally needed to develop the skill?
↓
Out of these options, what specific learning experiences do you intend to include in the project? Aim for inclusion of all participants. Keep in mind that some cross-cutting experiences may be necessary.
↓
How can the development of these skills be measured? How can participants measure their progress? Which specific assessment approach will you follow, and how will you ensure validity and reliability?
↓
How will the development of this skill or cluster be linked to the development of other soft skills that are important to the project goals, in an overarching and consistent approach?

Overall skills development framework

Use this page to create an overall soft skills development framework. First describe the overall learning objectives and list the program's core target soft skills below. Then summarize the inter-linked learning experiences that will lead to the development of these skills, as well as how they will be assessed.

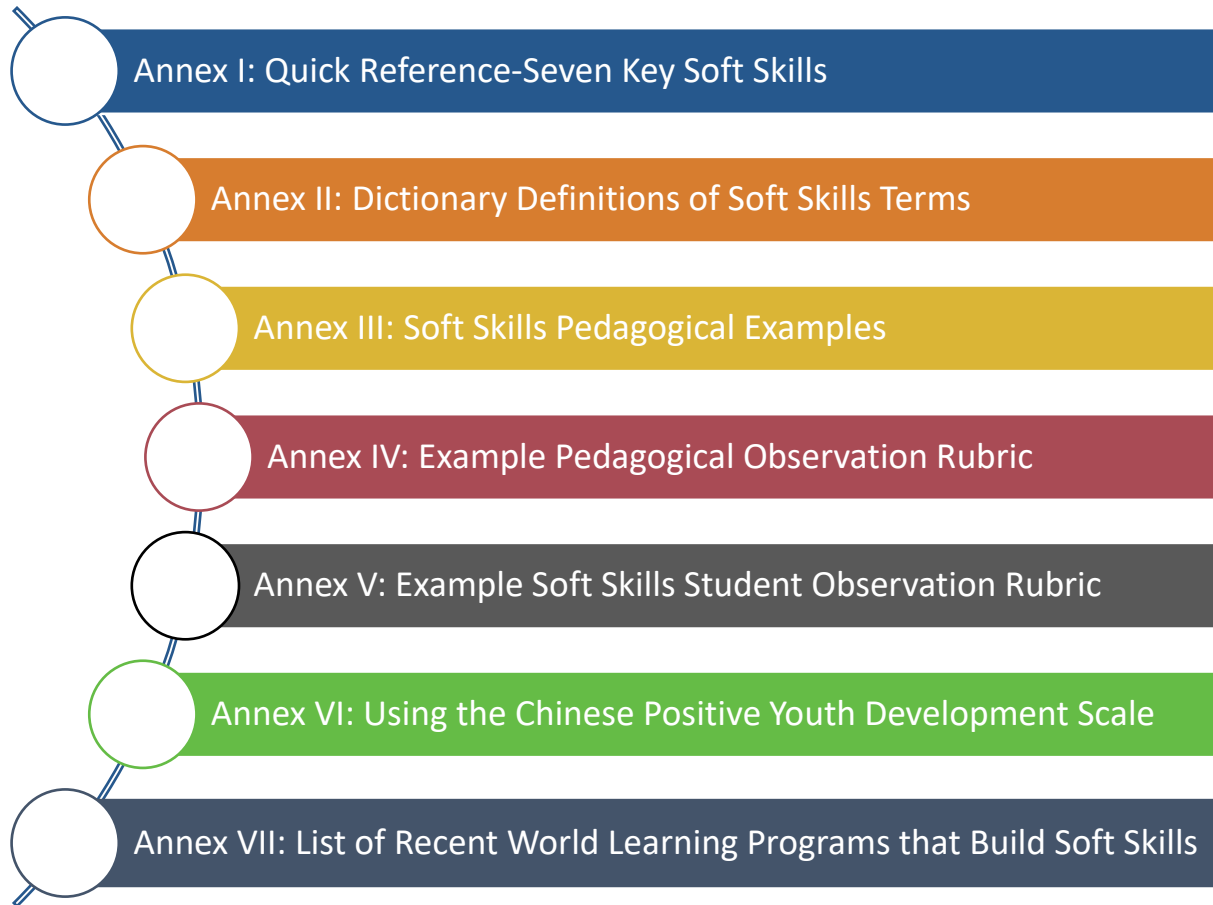
Overall Learning Objectives:

	Learning Experiences:	Assessment Methods:
Psychosocial and emotional health		
Intra-personal skills		
Inter-personal (social) skills		
Communication		
Higher-order thinking skills		
Civic engagement and social enterprise skills		
Employability skills		

References for further reading

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Annexes



Annex I: Quick Reference—Seven Key Soft Skills

For projects working with youth, the USAID YouthPower Action Initiative has identified seven key soft skills or skill areas for cross-sectoral youth development (Soares, Babb, Diener, Gates, & Ignatowski, 2017) (Lippman, Ryberg, Carney, & Moore, 2015). These seven skills are highlighted because of the research support indicating that they lead to positive outcomes in at least two of the following domains: workforce success, sexual and reproductive health, and violence prevention.



Below are definitions of these soft skills.

Definitions of the Key Seven Soft Skills Identified by the USAID YouthPower Action Initiative¹

Higher order thinking skills

- Skills encompassing problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making. These skills may reflect the same underlying skill set, which is the ability to take in information from multiple sources, identify the issue(s), evaluate potential options, and reach an appropriate conclusion

Self-control

- The ability to delay gratification, control impulses, direct and focus attention, manage emotions, and regulate behaviors

Positive self-concept

- A realistic awareness of oneself and one's abilities, strengths, and potential

Social skills

- A cluster of skills necessary to get along well with others, including:
 - Respecting and expressing appreciation for others (requiring cultural sensitivity)
 - Demonstrating context-appropriate behavior according to social norms
 - Using a range of skills or processes aimed at resolving conflict

Communication

- The ability to effectively express and understand knowledge and ideas. Includes one's ability to negotiate and persuade, as well as transmit and interpret knowledge. Types of communication include listening, and skills in verbal, non-verbal, and written communication.

Empathy

- The ability to feel and understand what someone else is feeling.

Goal-orientation

- The motivation and ability to make reasonable plans and take action toward desired goals

¹ These definitions are summarized in Soares et al (2017, p. 13), drawing primarily on definitions developed in Lippman et al (2015).

Annex II: Dictionary Definitions of Soft Skills Terms

Many soft skills are defined in different ways in different contexts and publications, using a range of related terms and varying ways of clustering related skills together. The table below presents dictionary definitions for each of the soft skills terms referenced in the [Soft Skills Checklist](#) earlier in this document, with each individual term organized in alphabetical order. Cross-reference to the original skill area (as organized in the Checklist) appears in the column to the right. These definitions are provided from the Merriam-Webster* and Cambridge† dictionaries for illustrative purposes, or when necessary from Wikipedia‡; in most cases, multiple different definitions exist in the literature for the same term.

Soft Skill	Definitions	Skill Area
Agreeableness	A tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others.‡	Inter-personal (social) skills
Appreciation	Recognizing someone's worth as a person or showing you are grateful for something that person has done.†	Inter-personal (social) skills
Attention to detail	Thorough, accurate, and consistent when accomplishing a task; small details are not overlooked.	Intra-personal skills
Awareness	Knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists* [for example awareness of local or global social or environmental issues and problems]	Civic engagement and social enterprise
Collaboration	Working together or with someone else for a special purpose.†	Inter-personal (social) skills
Communication	The process by which messages or information is sent from one place or person to another, or the message itself†. Includes oral and written communication.	Communication
Conflict management	The process of limiting the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflict.‡	Inter-personal (social) skills
Conflict resolution	The methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict and retribution.‡	Inter-personal (social) skills
Conscientiousness	Feeling a moral responsibility to do your work carefully and to be fair to others‡; The personality trait of being careful, or vigilant. A desire to do a task well, and to take obligations to others seriously.‡	Intra-personal skills
Coping	To deal with problems or difficulties, especially with a degree of success.†	Psychosocial and emotional health
Creativity	The ability to produce original and unusual ideas, or to make something new or imaginative. †	Higher-order thinking skills
Critical thinking	The process of thinking carefully about a subject or idea, without allowing feelings or opinions to affect you‡; the objective analysis of facts to form a judgment.‡	Higher-order thinking skills
Cross-cultural competence	The knowledge, skills, and affect/motivation that enable individuals to adapt effectively in cross-cultural environments. The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures. ‡	Inter-personal (social) skills
Culture	The way of life of a particular people, especially as shown in their ordinary behavior and habits, their attitudes toward each other, and their moral and religious beliefs.†	Inter-personal (social) skills

Decision-making	The cognitive process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several possibilities.‡	Higher-order thinking skills
Determination	The ability to continue trying to do something, even if it is difficult.†	Intra-personal skills
Digital literacy	The set of competencies required for full participation in a knowledge society. It includes knowledge, skills, and behaviors involving the effective use of digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, laptops and desktop PCs for purposes of communication, expression, collaboration and advocacy.‡	Communication skills
Dutifulness	Filled with or motivated by a sense of duty, proceeding from or expressive of a sense of duty, a dutiful effort*; Obedient or (of an action) done because it is necessary or expected.†	Intra-personal skills
Emotional intelligence	The ability to understand the way people feel and react and to use this skill to make good judgments and to avoid or solve problems‡; includes awareness of one's own emotions.	Psychosocial and emotional health
Emotional regulation	The ability to respond to the ongoing demands of experience with the range of emotions in a manner that is socially tolerable and sufficiently flexible to permit spontaneous reactions as well as the ability to delay spontaneous reactions as needed.‡	Intra-personal skills
Empathy	The ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation.†	Inter-personal (social) skills
Etiquette	The set of rules or customs that control accepted behavior in particular social groups or social situations.†	Communication skills
Evaluation	to judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something.†	Higher-order thinking skills
Financial literacy	Managing financial resources effectively.‡	Civic engagement
Goal-orientation	An individual disposition toward developing or validating one's ability in achievement settings.‡	Intra-personal skills
Grit	Bravery and strength of character.†	Intra-personal skills
Growth mindset	Those with a "growth mindset" believe that they can acquire any given ability provided they invest effort or study.‡	Intra-personal skills
Honesty	Fairness and straightforwardness of conduct, adherence to the facts, sincerity.*	Intra-personal skills
Information-seeking	The process or activity of attempting to obtain information in both human and technological contexts.‡	Higher-order thinking skills
Initiative	The ability to judge what needs to be done and take action, especially without suggestion from other people.†	Intra-personal skills
Integrity	The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.†	Intra-personal skills
Kindness	Being generous, helpful, and caring about other people.†	Inter-personal (social) skills

Leadership	The quality or ability that makes a person a leader [of other people], or the position of being a leader.† Note: Many different “types” of leadership have been defined; projects focusing on this skill should clarify definition.]	Inter-personal (social) skills
Listening	To hear something with thoughtful attention.* [Note: Many different “types” of listening have been defined; projects focusing on this skill may need to learn more.]	Communication
Motivation	Willingness to do something.†	Civic engagement and social enterprise skills
Negotiation	The process of discussing something with someone in order to reach an agreement.†	Communication
Networking	The exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; specifically: the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.*	Civic engagement and social enterprise skills; Employability skills
Non-verbal communication	Communication through sending and receiving wordless clues. It includes the use of visual cues such as body language (kinesics), distance (proxemics) and physical environments/appearance, of voice (paralanguage) and of touch (haptics). It can also include chronemics (the use of time) and oculesics (eye contact and the actions of looking while talking and listening, frequency of glances, patterns of fixation, pupil dilation, and blink rate).‡	Communication
Norms	A principle of right action binding upon the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper and acceptable behavior*; An accepted standard or a way of being or doing things†; Informal understandings that govern the behavior of members of a society.‡	Inter-personal (social) skills; Employability skills
Perseverance	Continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition, the action or condition or an instance of persevering, steadfastness.*	Intra-personal skills
Persuasion	The ability to persuade, to move by argument, entreaty, or expostulation to a belief, position, course of action.*	Communication
Problem-solving	The process or act of finding a solution to a problem.*	Higher-order thinking skills
Punctuality	Arriving, doing something, or happening at the expected or correct time; not late.†	Employability skills
Reliability	The quality or state of being reliable*; deserving trust; dependable.†	Intra-personal skills
Research	A detailed study of a subject in order to discover information or achieve a new understanding of it.†	Higher-order thinking skills; Civic engagement
Resilience	An ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.*	Psychosocial and emotional health
Respect	An act of giving particular attention, consideration, high or special regard, esteem*; admiration for someone.†	Inter-personal (social) skills

Scheduling	The job or activity of planning the times at which particular tasks will be done or events will happen.†	Employability skills
Self-awareness	An awareness of one's own personality or individuality*; Good knowledge and judgment about yourself.†	Psychosocial and emotional health
Self-care	The act of caring for yourself when you are ill or to stop yourself from becoming ill.†	Psychosocial and emotional health
Self-concept	The mental image one has of oneself.*	Psychosocial
Self-control	Control over your emotions and actions; self-restraint.†	Intra-personal skills
Self-discipline	Correction or regulation of oneself for the sake of improvement* The ability to make yourself do things when you should, even if you do not want to do them.†	Intra-personal skills
Self-efficacy	A person's belief that they can be successful when carrying out a particular task.†	Psychosocial and emotional health
Self-esteem	A confidence and satisfaction in oneself.* [Note that healthy self-esteem is based on a realistic appraisal]	Psychosocial and emotional health
Self presentation	Analyzing and describing one's skills, knowledge, and experience [no dictionary definition available]	Employability skills
Self-reflection	The activity of thinking about your own feelings and behavior, and the reasons that may lie behind them.†	Higher-order thinking skills
Social responsibility	[The attitude or obligation to] act for the benefit of society at large.‡	Civic engagement, social enterprise
Social skills	Any skill facilitating interaction and communication with others. Social rules and relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal / nonverbal ways.‡	Inter-personal (social) skills
Stress	Worry caused by a difficult situation.†	Psychosocial
Synthesis	the act of combining different ideas or things to make a whole that is new and different from the items considered separately.†	Higher-order thinking skills
Teamwork	The combined actions of a group of people working together effectively to achieve a goal.†	Inter-personal (social) skills
Tolerance	Willingness to accept behavior and beliefs that are different from your own, even if you disagree with or disapprove of them.†	Inter-personal (social) skills
Toxic stress	Toxic Stress can occur when [negative] experiences are long in duration and intensity.... Prolonged stress leads to adverse effects such as permanent emotional or developmental damage.‡	Psychosocial and emotional health
Trauma	A disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from severe mental or emotional stress or physical injury.†	Psychosocial and emotional health
Trustworthiness	Worthy of confidence, dependable*; deserving of trust; able to be depended on.†	Intra-personal skills
Truthfulness	Telling or disposed to tell the truth*; honest and not containing or telling any lies.†	Intra-personal skills
Vision	The ability to imagine how a country, society, industry, etc. will develop in the future and plan in a suitable way.†	Civic engagement, social enterprise
Work planning	Breaking down work objectives into tasks and scheduling them to achieve a result on time [no dictionary definition]	Employability skills

Annex III: Soft Skills Pedagogical Examples

Following are the 10 core pedagogical recommendations offered in the [Pedagogical Inventory](#), together with further description of what each looks like in practice and why it is recommended. All quoted text is from Soares, Babb, Diener, Gates, & Ignatowski (2017).

1. Develop a safe, caring, and supportive environment that allows participants to express themselves and take on challenges—including the risk of mistakes.

What it looks like:

- Positive and supportive relationships between staff and participants and among participants
- Ground rules for group processes, developed together with participants
- Consistent routines, activities, and procedures
- Class meetings, sharing circles
- Low participant to staff ratio

How it helps:

- "A safe, caring, and supportive environment allows youth to feel comfortable expressing themselves, even on difficult topics, knowing that they will be accepted and not bullied or ridiculed" (p. 5). This is particularly important for troubled, vulnerable, and at-risk youth or other participants who face unpredictability and trauma in other aspects of their lives.

2. Build underlying skills of social awareness to help participants identify, evaluate, and—where appropriate—follow the norms and standards of particular social contexts.

What it looks like:

- Teach participants to analyze a social context for patterns of behavior. Ask: How are most people behaving in this situation? What is considered an acceptable way of acting and talking in this context? Why?
- Encourage participants to compare their analysis of social norms in a particular context to their own knowledge and beliefs about positive behavior, to judge whether it is appropriate to follow what others are doing. If it is, then help them analyze how they can shape their behavior to match.

How it helps:

- Social success often requires awareness of the appropriate standards in a given context. Since these standards may change from one setting to another, it is not sufficient to teach participants soft skills as if they are rules—they need to learn that they have a repertoire of possible behaviors at their disposal to choose from.
- Disadvantaged participants often lack the cultural knowledge to succeed in more advantaged contexts, so may need explicit help to learn this social awareness.

3. Explicitly discuss what each soft skill is, why it is important, and what it looks like in practice.

What it looks like:

- Teach the word, explain the concept, and provide definitions when helpful.
- Point out specific soft skills when they are enacted or observed in action.
- Use narratives, including fiction and non-fiction stories, theater, and films, to demonstrate applications of particular soft skills or character attributes. Narratives capture attention and imagination, and stay with people.

How it helps:

- Our vocabulary shapes how we see the world and how we act within it. Knowing the concept and word attached to a certain quality, skill, or behavior helps us notice it in action and consciously or unconsciously compare it to our own actions. Identifying the skill in action helps us envision what we are trying to develop.
- Narratives and quotes can also inspire.

4. Connect together the different soft skills development objectives into an overarching framework of principle and purpose

What it looks like:

- Rather than just moving one by one through disconnected skill development activities, show the big picture from the beginning: the goal, each skill and the principles behind them, how they are connected to each other and how they help support achievement of the goal.
- Use graphics to map out the educational experience and its goals. Identify together someone who has achieved the goal and analyze how they got there.
- Better yet: involve young people in defining their purpose and how to get there.

How it helps:

- Inviting students to explore the whole vision that connects together what they are learning and its purpose gives them deeper understanding and greater intrinsic motivation. Learning also improves when the connections between ideas are clear.
- Giving students a framework showing the importance of key skills and principles for action helps them make independent decisions in new contexts.
- Soft skills are interconnected and "developing skills separately may prove ineffective" (p. 26).

5. Promote skills through experiential learning.

What it looks like:

- Cycles of concrete action, reflective analysis, relating the experience to abstract concepts, and planning for further action.
- For example, to build the skill of perseverance, participants must be given a task that is slightly beyond their abilities, and be encouraged to continue striving until they succeed.
- Experiences can be prearranged / contrived exercises, or they can be demanding but achievable real-life challenges
- Reflection is an essential part of this process, "in which youth describe what they understand, evaluate their performance or choice, connect their experience to what they already know, and envision opportunities for the future" (p. 4)

How it helps:

- Lecturing may convey information and conceptual understanding, but it does not build skill. Skill requires practice.
- "Practice is especially important to soft skills fluency--the ease with which youth apply their soft skills--since it means not only learning many new skills, but it may also mean unlearning habits of thought and behavior... Practicing skills helps youth learn how to use these skills easily and appropriately, especially in stressful and difficult situations" (p. 20).

6. Draw on the arts and movement to get participants thinking and acting in new ways, and inspire motivation for change.

What it looks like:

Teach lessons through artistic activities, or let participants use the arts to reflect on what they are learning and their future goals.

Examples include:

- Theater and role play
- Sharing poetry and proverbs or quotes
- Painting, drawing, vision boards, murals
- Photography--documenting life or goals
- Digital storytelling, comics, video
- Music, lyrics with key messages
- Movement--dance, sports, outdoor activities, physical challenges, etc.

How it helps:

- All forms of the arts can inspire--provoke profound thinking, offer a vision of a different reality, build motivation to change
- Through arts such as theater, and dance, participants can try on new roles and practice new social skills
- Proverbs, quotations, poetry, and lyrics are powerful due to their imagery, elevated language, and calls to apply principles
- Visuals can inspire and communicate
- Movement, sports, and active teamwork build friendships and refresh the mind



7. Provide consistent positive feedback when participants demonstrate core soft skills.

What it looks like:

- Design a system that recognizes and rewards instances when youth demonstrate new soft skills--through authentic and specific praise, and through other symbolic forms of recognition.
- When necessary, consider a system for employing negative consequences such as revoking privileges for failure to demonstrate the soft skill in question.
- Ensure that consequences are consistent and closely connected to the incident.

How it helps:

- Not everyone has a strong sense of intrinsic motivation to improve. Even while intrinsic motivation should be developed, consistent external rewards (and sometimes punishments) serve an important purpose in shaping behavior.
- The use of authentic reward and punishment can mirror conditions in the real world and help prepare participants for reality, such as the consequence of losing a job for tardiness or incomplete work.

8. Promote integration across the different learning contexts to which youth are exposed, with clear and consistent standards across them.

What it looks like:

- Use a "whole school" or "whole program" approach where soft skills goals and behavior standards are reinforced in every aspect of the setting--not just in planned lessons and activities. For example, if the goal is to teach emotional regulation and self-control, participants may be asked to practice this at home, in social settings, etc.
- Reach out to parents, share soft skills objectives with them, and give them tools to reinforce these objectives at home.
- Connect participants to community activities and service in ways that reinforce their soft skills development.

How it helps:

- "During adolescence and young adulthood, youth are part of several networks and peers, the school, the community, and the workplace increasingly influence skill development. Skill development is enhanced when those areas are connected and staff, peers, and family provide clear, consistent, and compatible standards and messages. Skills learned in one environment can be reinforced in another and over time" (p. 5).



9. Ensure that staff model in their own daily life the soft skills being promoted.

What it looks like:

- "Program staff demonstrate high proficiency in the soft skills they want youth [or other types of participants] to develop" (p. 4).
- Staff are supported in recognizing and addressing any personal areas for improvement, including providing additional staff training when necessary.

How it helps:

- Youth see staff modeling these soft skills and they are attracted to emulate their example.
- It is important to avoid hypocrisy between program goals and lessons, on the one hand, and staff behavior on the other. Many participants, especially youth, are very sensitive to hypocrisy and can easily lose motivation to learn when they sense it from adults or leaders.

10. Promote strong mentorship relationship among participants, or between those who are more experience and less experienced.

What it looks like:

- "Meaningful, caring, and two-way [relationships], with respect for youth's [or other participants'] contributions and shared power, where youth are seen as valued partners and contributors" (p. 27).
- Staff who "can connect well with youth, are sensitive to their reality, and interact with them in a positive and respectful manner... [and] who are flexible, patient, good listeners, and can empathize with youth's needs and fears."
- Mentorship can involve specific discrete interactions, or ongoing relationships.

How it helps:

- Mentoring provides participants with social connections to learn about new contexts and life pathways, and with a supportive relationship to encourage their learning.
- "Successful interventions at any age emulate the mentoring and attachment that successful families give their children" (p. 28, citing Heckmand & Kautz, 2013).
- "Experiential learning is most effective within strong, supportive relationships that allow youth [or other participants] to feel secure so they can safely try out new activities, roles, and behaviors" (p. 27).

11. Allow for the development of soft skills over time and in a variety of situations.

What it looks like:

- Employ multiple experiential learning cycles of action and reflection with respect to a particular soft skill.
- Teach in a spiral, returning to each soft skill several times to allow for deepening understanding and ability.
- Use the principle of integration across contexts (#4 above) to extend the time and experiences available for working on a particular soft skill.

How it helps:

- Many soft skills require years to develop, ideally from early childhood. A single lecture or workshop cannot duplicate this natural skill development process. Projects and curricula should maximize the time they have available to give participants a long trajectory for experimenting, learning, and improving over time.



Annex IV: Example Pedagogical Observation Form

You may wish to evaluate a program's current pedagogical practices using direct observation of instructors or facilitators. Following is an example of an observation rubric that could be used for this purpose. **This tool can be adapted or extended to include the specific pedagogical practices** that have been identified as important for developing certain soft skills—for example, the pedagogical approach and learning activities for building good written communication skills will clearly differ from the pedagogical approach needed for developing self-control and self-discipline.

Before using such a tool, observers would need to come to a common understanding on each of the pedagogical indicators, and on what each of the demonstration levels would look like in practice. Note that such a tool can also be used for facilitator self-evaluation, or for a collaborative lesson-study approach to group self-evaluation.

Soft Skills Pedagogical Principles	No Demonstration	Beginning Demonstration	Competent Demonstration	Exemplary Demonstration
1. Developing a safe, caring, and supportive environment				
Facilitator demonstrates a positive and supportive relationship with learners				
Facilitator and youth together establish and apply ground rules for group processes				
Facilitator uses clear and consistent routines, activities, and procedures				
Facilitator creates space for personal communication, such as class meetings				
There is a low facilitator to learner ratio in the learning setting				
2. Building underlying skills of social awareness				
Facilitator occasionally asks participants to analyze a social context or situation for patterns of behavior				
Facilitator asks participants to compare the behavior they see around them to their own beliefs and values				
3. Explicitly naming and explaining each soft skill				
Facilitator uses and explains the vocabulary of core targeted soft skills				
Facilitator identifies specific soft skills when they are observed among participants or in narratives				
4. Promoting soft skills through experiential learning				
Facilitator applies cycles of concrete action, reflective analysis, linking concrete to abstract, and future planning				
Facilitator provides experiences that are demanding but achievable real-life challenges				
Facilitator provides an opportunity for learners to reflect on their understanding, self-assess, make connections to prior knowledge, and envision future opportunities				

Soft Skills Pedagogical Principles	No Demonstration	Beginning Demonstration	Competent Demonstration	Exemplary Demonstration
5. Draw on the arts and movement to get participants thinking and acting in new ways				
Facilitator uses the arts/movement to reinforce soft skills. Options include: theater, role play, poetry, proverbs, murals, photography, storytelling, music, sports.				
6. Provide consistent positive feedback for demonstrating core soft skills				
Facilitator recognizes and rewards instances when participants demonstrate the core soft skills that are targeted by the program				
Facilitator applies appropriate negative consequences when necessary				
Facilitator applies consequences consistently and in close connection to the demonstrated skill (or failure to apply the skill)				
7. Connect it all together into an overarching framework				
Facilitator explains and shows participants the “big picture”—how different soft skills are connected to one another and the purpose of developing them				
Facilitator helps participants identify someone who has reached a goal important to the program, and analyze how certain soft skills helped them achieve that goal				
8. Promote integration across different learning contexts				
Facilitator participates in a “whole school” or “whole program” approach to reinforce certain soft skills goals or behavior standards				
Facilitator has established a relationship with parents, including sharing the program’s soft skills goals and tools for supporting these objectives at home				
Facilitator connects participants to community activities and settings in which they can practice core targeted soft skills				
9. Ensure that staff model the core soft skills in their own daily life				
Facilitator demonstrates [X] soft skill in his/her interactions with participants, with other staff, and with community members				
Facilitator demonstrates [Y] soft skill in his/her interactions with participants, with other staff, and with community members				
Facilitator recognizes areas of weakness and makes efforts to improve them				
10. Promote strong mentorship relationships				
Facilitator has established meaningful, caring, and two-way relationships with participants, with respect for participants’ contributions and priorities				
Facilitator demonstrates qualities such as: flexibility, patience, openness to listening, and empathy with participants’ needs and fears				
11. Allow for the development of soft skills over time				
Facilitator offers multiple cycles of action and reflection to allow for developing a particular soft skill over time				

Annex V: Example Soft Skills Student Observation Rubric

The following example of a soft skills observation rubric comes from the Tennessee (USA) [Work-Based Learning Toolbox](#).

Student Skills Assessment Rubric

Student Name: _____

Employer Name: _____

Employability Skills	Level 1 Novice	Level 2 Approaching Proficiency	Level 3 Demonstrates Proficiency	Level 4 Approaching Expertise/Leadership	Student Skill Level (1-4)
Workplace & Career Navigation	Responds to familiar people and situations, and seldom asks questions about workplace practices or career pathways.	Follows safety procedures and occasionally asks questions about other workplace practices, and education and career pathways.	Routinely asks about workplace practices and safety issues in addition to following safety procedures, and seeks information about education and career requirements and opportunities.	Goes beyond following and seeking information about workplace practices and career pathways for self, and seeks to clarify and share information with peers.	
Creativity & Innovation	Approaches tasks in familiar or ways, tends to get stuck repeating familiar ways even when they are not productive.	Occasionally will offer an idea about different way to do something, and will try a different approach when things do not turn out as expected.	Regularly looks for ways to be more efficient or productive in assigned tasks, and ways to improve products or services.	Inspires and encourages others to look for ways to be more efficient or productive in assigned tasks and ways to improve products and services.	
Critical Thinking	Accepts information given without questioning sources, relies on past experience in problem-solving situations.	Sometimes questions sources or reasoning behind a claim when encouraged and shown how, and uses reasoning and evidence in problem-solving situations.	Consistently seeks to evaluate the quality of sources and review reasoning behind claims, and uses evidence and reason in both familiar and novel problem-solving situations.	Able to explain, and demonstrate to others how to evaluate the quality of sources and reason from evidence in both familiar and novel problem-solving situations.	
Speaking & Listening	Speaks in familiar vernacular irrespective of audience or purpose, assumes understanding when listening.	Learning to adjust speech based on audience, setting, and the purpose of communication. Sometimes checks understanding by asking questions when listening.	Routinely adjusts speech based on both audience and purpose in both personal interactions and formal presentations, and checks understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing.	Helps others attend to differences in audience, purpose, and setting, including cultural differences, to create opportunities to improve effectiveness of communication.	
Collaboration	Comfortable working with friends or like-minded individuals from similar backgrounds. Has difficult time negotiating conflicts.	Works well as a team member when roles and goals are clearly defined. Sometimes able to negotiate conflict to achieve an intended result.	Works well with others and recognizes and builds on different strengths of team members. Can usually manage conflict to achieve an intended result.	Models behaviors, including sensitivity to cultural, generational, and personality differences, that promote collaboration and working productively as a team.	

Student Skills Assessment Rubric

Employability Skills	Level 1 Novice	Level 2 Approaching Proficiency	Level 3 Demonstrates Proficiency	Level 4 Approaching Expertise/Leadership	Student Skill Level (1-4)
Information Literacy	Able to access information from familiar sources. Has difficulty organizing or evaluating information accessed.	Shows interest in learning how to access information from unfamiliar sources, and sometimes uses provided criteria to evaluate and organize information.	Usually able to locate, understand, organize, and evaluate information from familiar and unfamiliar sources using criteria most relevant to the task and setting.	Is frequently called on to explain to, or assist others in locating, understanding, organizing, or evaluating the quality and relevance of information from multiple sources.	
Technology Literacy	Uses familiar technologies in familiar ways. Little interest in learning new uses of familiar or new technologies.	Sometimes willing and able to learn new uses of familiar and new technologies, and shows interest in learning how to determine what is most appropriate.	Routinely uses, and learns new uses of, familiar and new technologies. Usually able to determine the most appropriate technology for a particular use without being told.	Teaches others how to use technologies and explains to others the criteria for judging the appropriateness of particular technologies for particular purposes.	
Initiative & Self-Direction	Completes assigned tasks with normal supervision if familiar, but requires constant supervision to complete unfamiliar tasks.	Will sometimes ask questions as needed to complete assigned tasks, and begins to self-monitor progress without constant supervision.	Routinely exhibits initiative and self-direction in completing assigned tasks, asking questions as needed, and keeps supervisor informed of progress.	Uses knowledge of self-motivation and self-regulation skills to motivate others and lead by example in completing assigned tasks.	
Professionalism & Ethics	Dresses and acts "professional" based on experience. May not take responsibility for mistakes or misconduct.	Makes visible efforts to imitate professional etiquette, standards, and ethics from professionals in the workplace. Takes responsibility for mistakes or misconduct.	Demonstrates professionalism in dress and behavior consistent with standards and workplace norms. Shows concern for professional ethics in addition to taking personal responsibility for mistakes and misconduct.	Is able to articulate and model the situational nature of some aspects of professionalism such as dress and etiquette, and the fundamental importance of standards and ethics.	
Adaptability & Flexibility	Comfortable switching among familiar behaviors or roles but uncomfortable with unfamiliar change in the environment.	Makes an effort to adapt to unfamiliar change in the environment and/or tries to be more flexible with encouragement and when the need is pointed out.	Usually adapts to changes in the environment without needing to be told, and is flexible in taking on different roles and responsibilities as required.	Notifies changes in the environment that require adaptation or flexibility and helps others explore ways to adapt or be flexible to better achieve an intended outcome.	
Productivity & Accountability	Completes assigned tasks when the task is familiar and there are no unexpected obstacles. Has difficulty accepting constructive criticism.	Shows a beginning awareness of the importance of managing time, and persisting in the face of obstacles, to complete tasks. Accepts constructive criticism.	Routinely uses time-management skills to overcome obstacles and complete assigned tasks on time and to agreed-upon standards, requesting feedback on performance.	Helps co-workers manage time and overcome obstacles, and helps create shared sense of accountability among coworkers to supervisors and customers for delivering work on time and to agreed-upon standards.	

Annex VI: Using the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale

Recent USAID YouthPower research has investigated the available tools for measuring soft skills development in youth around the world. Galloway et al (2017) examined measurement tools that were publicly available, had been used internationally, had strong evidence of validity and reliability, and measured youth development outcomes with cross-sectoral interest.

Many such tools are available, including those that have very sophisticated processes for cross-cultural adaptation. However, considering the breadth of soft skills outcomes prioritized in various programming and the need for an open-source tool, one easily adaptable assessment with a strong research base is the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale (CPYDS), which includes 90 self-reported items measuring 15 subscales (Shek, Siu, & Lee, 2007), primarily concerned with positive youth outcomes and preventing depression, delinquency, and violence.

Recommended uses for the full CPYDS:

Given the inevitable draw-backs of a written soft skills assessment (see this [Assessment Guidance](#) tool), the full CPYDS is most appropriate for instances when the large-scale measurement of soft skills is required for key performance reporting or as part of core monitoring and evaluation processes. The CPYDS can be administered to the same individual at two points in time, and to comparison groups, in order to measure change that may be linked to an intervention. Some important notes to bear in mind:

1

The **cause** of any changes observed can only be determined by using an experimental or quasi-experimental design, in which the “treatment” group that received the intervention is compared to a “control” group with similar characteristics, other than the fact that they have not received the intervention.

2

The questions presented below, which are grouped by subscale for ease of understanding, **should be randomly reorganized** for the purposes of an actual assessment. Additionally, all of the separate measures for each subscale should be used, even though they are similar to one another. These two techniques together help to reduce the bias inherent in self-reported measures.

3

Language abilities can interfere with the results of a long assessment like this one. For younger youth and youth with low literacy abilities, it may be necessary to **use an enumerator who can read the questions orally** to an individual youth and record answers on his/her behalf.

4

For contexts **where translation is necessary**, it is important to follow these practices:

- Give the translator a full briefing on the purpose of the assessment and the meaning of the different subscales.
- After the translator produces a draft, hire a second independent translator to “backtranslate” the draft back into English. Compare this version to the original English to detect any items whose meaning has been altered during translation. Ask the two translators then to work together to find alternatives that better reflect the original meaning.
- Conduct a pilot with a group of young people who are similar to the population that will eventually attempt the assessment. Observe how they interact with the tool (whether they understand the instructions, how long it takes them, whether they are responding randomly or legitimately) and afterwards ask for general and item-by-item feedback to understand how the assessment may need to be adapted. Also see [this guidance](#) on cross-cultural adaptation.

Possibility of using individual CPYDS subscales:

For programs only wishing to measure a subset of the CPYDS items, or those seeking a shorter assessment, it may be possible to select and use only particular CPYDS subscales. Note: it is **not advisable** to select only certain items (statements)—instead, use all items within a particular subscale, because including multiple measures of the same construct helps to reduce the bias inherent in self-reported measures.

Tests of validity and reliability have been conducted for each of the subscales included on the CPYDS and according to the information presented in assessment validations (Shek, Siu, & Lee, 2007), all of the subscales have acceptable validity and reliability—although **three of them are weaker**: the Self-Efficacy, Behavioral Competence, and Beliefs in the Future subscales, with the Self-Efficacy subscale being notably weakest. Analysis and interpretation of these subscales should be done with caution. Figure 1 below provides the definition of each subscale construct, as well as information about its internal reliability.

Figure 1: Definitions of the CPYDS Subscales and Reliability Statistics. Source: Shek, Siu, & Lee, 2007, p. 386.

TABLE 1: Definition of the Constructs and Reliability Statistics (Mean Inter-item Correlation Coefficients and Coefficient Alphas) of the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale (CPYDS) and its Subscales

Subscale and Number of Items	Definition of the Construct	Mean Inter-item Correlation	α
Bonding (BO): 6 items	Development of positive relationship with healthy adults and positive peers.	.40	.80
Resilience (RE): 6 items	Capacity for adapting to change and stressful events in healthy and adaptive ways.	.44	.82
Social Competence (SC): 7 items	Interpersonal skills such as communication and conflict resolution skills.	.44	.84
Emotional Competence (EC): 6 items	Skills to recognize feelings in oneself and others and emotional self-management strategies.	.41	.81
Cognitive Competence (CC): 6 items	Cognitive skills such as problem solving and goal setting.	.51	.86
Behavioral Competence (BC): 6 items	Behavioral skills such as taking action skills and provision of reinforcement for the effective behavior choices and action pattern.	.25	.63
Moral Competence (MC): 6 items	Ability to differentiate right and wrong and respect for rules and standards as well as social justice.	.39	.79
Self-Determination (SD): 5 items	Sense of autonomy, independent thinking, or self-advocacy.	.40	.76
Self-Efficacy (SE): 7 items	Skills for coping and mastery.	.19	.63
Spirituality (SP): 7 items	Sense of purpose and meaning in life, hope, or beliefs in a higher power.	.50	.86
Beliefs in the Future (BF): 7 items	Ability to develop future potential goals, choices, or options.	.29	.73
Clear and Positive Identity (CPI): 7 items	Development of healthy identity formation and achievement.	.37	.80
Prosocial Involvement (PI): 5 items	Activities and events to make positive contribution to groups.	.50	.83
Prosocial Norms (PN): 5 items	Development of clear and explicit standards for prosocial engagement.	.41	.78
Recognition for Positive Behavior (PB): 4 items	Systems for rewarding, recognizing or reinforcing positive behavior.	.44	.75
Total scale (CPYDS)	Positive adolescent development defined in terms of healthy, holistic, and valuable developmental attributes, assets, and potentials.	.43	.91

To the extent possible, validity and reliability will be improved when more than one subscale is selected, and items are mixed together and randomly sorted.

Adaptation

Some basic item adaptations may be necessary, such as for statements with the phrase, “in this school” if that context does not apply to your program. Furthermore, in applying the assessment in new cultural contexts, [terms and constructs may be understood or valorized differently](#), resulting in additional need for adaptation. Adaptations should be undertaken with caution to minimize the impact on the existing research base behind this assessment’s validity and reliability. For recommendations on translation issues, see note 4 on the previous page.

English Translation of the Items in the Chinese Positive Youth Development Scale Subscale

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
1. Bonding							
When I need help, I trust my parents will help me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I need help, I trust my friend will help me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I need help, I trust my teachers will help me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I love my teachers and classmates.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many healthy friends in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My parents care about me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Resilience							
When I face difficulty, I will not give up easily.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I face adversity, I remain optimistic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe those who have determination can get things done eventually.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe those who can bear hardship have superior personal qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My belief is that, even if tomorrow becomes worse, I will still be able to live in a good manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe problems in life can be solved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Social competence							
I can actively talk to a stranger.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how to communicate with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I understand the rules and expectations in interacting with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can interact with others in a harmonious manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I enjoy joining social activities. I know how to differentiate good and bad friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how to listen to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Emotional competence							
I am a pleasant person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I am unhappy, I can appropriately show my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I am angry, I can rationally describe my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I have conflict with others, I can manage my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can see the world from the perspectives of other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will let other people know my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Cognitive competence							
I believe there is a solution for any problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how to see things from different angles.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will try new ways to solve my problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how to find the causes of and solutions to a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how to develop plans to achieve my objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can differentiate the good and bad aspects of things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree	
6. Behavioral competence								
I know how to say no to unfair requests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I know how to make a careful decision when I am persuaded.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I can face criticisms with an open mind.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I can express views that are different from others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
When I do something wrong, I will apologize to the person concerned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I use more time to escape from problems instead of solving problems. [reverse scoring]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Moral competence								
I enjoy sharing my things with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I have high moral expectation about my behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
It is easy for me to forgive those who have offended me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I will not do anything unfair to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I will fulfill my promise.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I have the habit of self-evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Self-determination								
I am able to make wise choices.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I am confident about my decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I will not change easily after making a decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I can complete a task in a focused manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I have the freedom to do things that I wish to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Self-efficacy								
I have little control of things that happen in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I do not have any solutions for some of the problems I am facing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I cannot do much to change things in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
When I face life difficulties, I feel helpless.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I feel my life is determined by others and fate.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I believe things happening in my life are mostly determined by me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I can finish almost everything that I am determined to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Spirituality								
I am usually very bored about life (rather than enjoying life very much).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
To me, life is very dull (rather than being very exciting).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I would choose not to exist at all, rather than choosing to have my present life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Regarding my life goals, there is no progress (in comparison to what I want to achieve).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
My life is empty versus full of excitement.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I feel confused (versus certain) regarding my relationship to this world.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
Regarding suicide, I have thought of it as a solution to life (versus not thought of it).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Beliefs in the future							
I have confidence to solve my future problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have confidence to be admitted to university.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have confidence that I will be a useful person when I grow up.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not expect to get what I want. [reverse scoring]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can see that my future is unpleasant. [reverse scoring]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is not possible for me to have satisfaction in future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is very probable that I will not get things that I want in future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Clear and positive identity							
I can do things as well as others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Compared with my classmates, I am satisfied with my performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am satisfied with my body and appearance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that I am welcomed by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a person with self-confidence.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a person who is devoted to my parents and family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know my strengths and weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Prosocial involvement							
In this school, students are encouraged to have voluntary service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know the channels for engaging in voluntary work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In this school, classmates are encouraged to have mutual help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My classmates are encouraged to have mutual sharing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will try my best to contribute to my school or the society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Prosocial norms							
I care about unfortunate people in society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If there are opportunities, I will volunteer for a social cause.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I agree that everybody should be constrained by laws.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is my pleasure to obey school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Recognition for positive behavior							
When I complete my tasks, teachers will praise me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I help others, my classmates will recognize my behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers are concerned about whether I complete my tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reward and punishment standards are clear in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Annex VII: List of Recent World Learning Programs that Build Soft Skills

The following is a list of soft skills curricula collected and reviewed as part of preparing these guiding notes. These curricula were prepared prior to developing the guiding notes and may not necessarily reflect all the standards suggested in this guide.

Curriculum Name	Country/ Project	Pub. Year	Contact	Topics/Content/Modules	Psychosocial	Intra-personal	Inter-personal	Communication	Higher-order thought	Civic engagement	Employability
Adult Mentorship Training Program	Iraq / IYLEP	2017	Rizwaan Akhtar	Self-growth and growth of youth skills, mentorship skill building, experiential learning with youth							
Civic Engagement and Employment for Students	Algeria / YEP, PEACE, PLUS I and II	2016	Andrew Farrand	Leadership, overcoming obstacles, volunteering and employment, action planning, dealing with obstacles in volunteering							
Civic Engagement for Language Learners	Egypt / Civic Engagement for Language Learners	2016	Lois Scott-Conley	Design, carry out, and report on a community project							
Digital Young Leaders Exchange Program	US & Iraq / DYLEP	2017	Jenn Chen	Leadership and inspiration, global issues and ideation, civic engagement and integration, digital citizenship and innovation, action plans and implementation,							
End of Program Workshop (Re-Entry Workshops)	Global UGRAD	2008	Amy Fisher Bruey	Reverse culture shock, leadership, professional skills, inclusion, action planning							
English Language Program Myanmar	Myanmar	2016	German Gomez	English language program with employability and job search components							
English Works! English for Employment	Pakistan / Pakistan Works!	2017	Radmila Popovic	Teaches English for the workplace as well as employability and workplace culture skills							
Essentials in Classroom Psychosocial Support for Teachers	Lebanon / DRASATI 2	2016	Rajani Shrestha and Lois Scott-Conley	Psychosocial support concepts and framework, classroom communication and management, teacher well-being, creativity and artistic expression							

Curriculum Name	Country/ Project	Pub. Year	Contact	Topics/Content/Modules	Psychosocial	Intra-personal	Inter-personal	Communication	Higher-order thought	Civic engagement	Employability
Experiment in International Living	Global / The Experiment	2017	Jessika Macias	Connect and engage with another culture and society, awareness of global issues, build relationships, develop teamwork, communication, leadership, and other skills							
Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into the Exploration of Culture in an EFL Setting	American English E-Teacher	2017	Kara McBride	Critical thinking, depth of reflection, inter-cultural competence, active listening, lesson planning, assessment of learning, cascading new knowledge							
Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program	Iraq / IYLEP	2017	Rizwaan Akhtar	Leadership and inspiration, global issues and ideation, civic engagement and integration, cross-cultural understanding, action plans and implementation							
Job Access Training	Algeria / YEP, PEACE, PLUS I and II	2016	Andrew Farrand	Job search, CV writing, cover letters, job interview preparation and attendance							
Job Readiness Skills for the Civil Society Sector	Myanmar / iPACE Institute for Political and Civic Engagement	2017	Gretchen Kunze	Civil society and its role in democracy, project cycle management, CV writing, monitoring & evaluation process, cover letters, interview skills, proposal process, budgeting, researching jobs, reporting, networking, mentorship, advocacy, communication, presentations, facilitation and meeting management							
Jóvenes en Acción	Mexico / Jóvenes en Acción	2017	Lisa George	Leadership and inspiration, global issues and ideation, civic engagement and integration, cross-cultural understanding, action plans and implementation							
Leaders for Democracy Fellows	Global / Leaders for Democracy Fellows	2017	Holly McCandless and Fouzia Bencheikh	Democracy studies, conflict resolution, and political mobilization and communication							
Life Skills Based Education	Pakistan / Pathways to Success	2017	Gillian McClelland	Leadership, confidence, communication, listening, internet & social media, decision-making, peer pressure, gender, mental health, violence, health and hygiene, nutrition, financial management, employability skills							

Curriculum Name	Country/ Project	Pub. Year	Contact	Topics/Content/Modules	Psychosocial	Intra-personal	Inter-personal	Communication	Higher-order thought	Civic engagement	Employability
Maharat Mentorship Program	Iraq & Algeria / Maharat Mentorship Program	2017	Rizwaan Akhtar	Exploring career pathways, improving workforce readiness, accessing networks							
Nigeria English Language Training	Nigeria / Community Youth Club	2014	Lois Scott-Conley	Active listening, respect every voice, seek first to understand, taking a position and exploring positions, setting criteria and evaluation options, reaching an agreement, setting group norms, group roles, assessing group skills, synergy, leadership, meeting agenda and facilitation, conflict transformation, project design & implementation, public speaking							
Online Professional and Academic Learning (OPAL)	Global UGRAD	2015	Amy Fisher Bruey	Self-assessment, leadership, intercultural competency, research and academic writing, goal setting, gender roles, social entrepreneurship, action planning							
Online Project Management / Small Grants Management Training Course	Global / Alumni Ties	2014 (updated annually)	Jessica Mead	Project design, implementation and project management, project monitoring and evaluation, and writing a proposal for project funding							
Pakistan Job Access Training	Pakistan / Skills for Youth	2017	Catherine Honeyman	Job market analysis, networking, creating an online profile, creating a CV, formal emails, interviews							
Teaching Assistant's Certificate and English Access Microscholarship	Guatemala and Dominican Republic	2016	German Gomez	Teaches hard skills and soft skills needed to find work as an English-language teaching assistant.							
WiSci Girls' STEAM Camp	Multiple / WiSci Girls' STEAM Camp	2017	Cari Graves	Leadership and inspiration, STEAM, CVE issues, cross-cultural understanding, engagement and integration, action planning and implementation, grant application							
Youth Ambassadors with South America	South America / Youth Ambassadors	2017	Cari Graves	Leadership and inspiration, global issues and ideation, civic engagement and integration, cross-cultural understanding, action plans and implementation							