



Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes

What's it all about?

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) YouthPower Action Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes report is an international evaluation of social and emotional skills and how they predict positive outcomes for 12- to 29-year-olds. The study is used to identify specific social and emotional skills that could be developed to promote positive outcomes for youth across three areas: violence prevention, workforce success, and sexual and reproductive health. Regions studied for this project include Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East/North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, North America, and Oceania.

This summary is part of our curated digital platform on social and emotional skills (SES) assessment and contains key details on one of the external SES assessment tools and applied studies we reviewed. The platform is part of The Conference Board of Canada's multi-year research project for the Future Skills Centre on SES. [For more information, check out our landing page here.](#)

How does it work?

The social and emotional skills measured through the program are based on:

- findings from peer-reviewed research in criminology, public health, psychology, and violence prevention interventions;
- consultation with education and skills stakeholders in the academic and applied research sectors;
- cross-cultural considerations;
- evidence for the malleability of various social and emotional skills.

These were used to determine an appropriate set of social and emotional skills that are most relevant to youth outcomes and are malleable between the ages of 12 and 29.

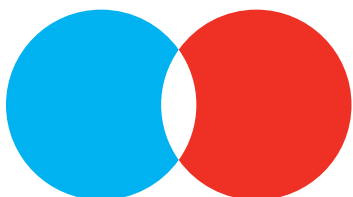
Intended users

Youth workers and employment agencies

The findings of this report can be used by youth workers, government employment agencies, and local skills-training organizations to help develop strategies and programs aimed at creating positive outcomes for youth across the three areas identified above.

USAID

This research can help guide and inform USAID and similar organizations that research labour market success and social and health behaviours in youth. It also helps inform investments for future studies and organizations supporting youth development.





Social and emotional skills measured

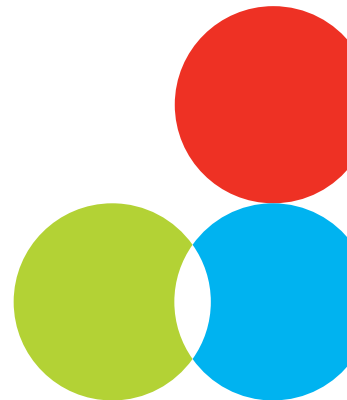
This test measures the following skills, as defined by the framework authors:

- **Self-control:** one's ability to control impulses, delay gratification, direct and focus attention, and regulate and modulate emotions and behaviours.
- **Positive self-concept:** a realistic awareness of oneself and one's abilities that reflects an understanding of one's strengths and potential.
- **Social skills:** one's ability to interact positively and pro-socially with others and respond to emotions or conflict in socially appropriate, non-aggressive ways.
- **Communication:** one's ability to effectively express and understand knowledge and ideas verbally, non-verbally, and in writing.
- **Higher-order thinking skills:** one's ability to identify an issue and take in information from multiple sources to evaluate options in order to reach a reasonable conclusion.



Read the study:

Sarah Gates and others, *Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes* (Washington, D.C.: USAID's YouthPower: Implementation, YouthPower Action, 2016), accessed May 21, 2020, www.youthpower.org/resources/key-soft-skills-cross-sectoral-youth-outcomes.



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