



Youth Assembly 2017 Facilitation Guideline



ICSW Youth Assembly

Our Planet. Our Struggles. Our Future

OBJECTIVE

Connect, learn and celebrate the experiences of young civil society actors present at ICSW2017, and strengthen their advocacy and networking skills as the next generation of civil society activists creating positive change around the world.

STRUCTURE

Two rounds of six simultaneous conversations facilitated by youth representatives, each for **one hour and a half** on different topics with the aim to

1. *Share what is this generation of young activists creating to achieve social justice in their communities?*
2. *Collect recommendations for civil society organisers and intergovernmental representatives at ICSW2017 to strengthen young activists and initiatives in 2018 and beyond around Our Planet, Our Struggles, Our Future?*

One **closing plenary** to discuss the final recommendations of YA2017 and set a short term advocacy plan

DELEGATES

Youth Assembly delegates come from diverse civil society organizations (NGOs, Community Based Organizations, academia) and social enterprises, mostly from the Global South. Each conversation will have between 10 to 15 people 30 or under. Some observers (above 30) will be attending. English is not the first language for most of delegates.

SUMMARY

Facilitation Goals

- Create an open, safe and inclusive environment
- Keep discussion focused
- Provide opportunities for all voices to be heard.
Respect your audience knowledge
- Leave participants feeling challenged
- Encourage follow-up or action

Questions to Consider

- What are my personal beliefs, values and stereotypes on the issue?
- Can I assume an objective role in the discussion?
- How do I show respect for the opinions of others?
- How do I tactfully keep the conversation respectful and constructive to avoid conflict?
- How do I keep discussion flowing smoothly?
- How do I encourage the participation of everyone, and avoid domination by a few?

Set the Tone

You are responsible for **establishing norms of conduct** and discuss the expectations in how participants engage with each other.

Consider distractions to the group (e.g. how will cell phones be handled?). If possible, it is best to **let the participants co-create these norms**, leading to a greater likelihood of commitment.

Be Present

It is important that you have **constant awareness of the needs of the group**. Is the conversation getting heated? Would it be helpful to take a break? Does your energy level as a facilitator positively guide the group? It is useful to check in with the group to see what they need, and how it can best be accommodated. **#TakeThePulse**

Delegate

You are responsible for guiding the group towards their goal(s). Consider **delegating a time-keeper or note-taker**, so you can focus on facilitating the discussion.

Stay on Track

As facilitator and conversation starter, you are responsible for ensuring the conversation stays on track. If participants begin to veer, acknowledge the point being addressed and check in with the group. If the idea is important, consider **'parking' the idea to be discussed later**.

Active Listen

Successful facilitators listen more than they speak. It is best to avoid addressing all questions or giving input on each discussion. Allow the group to answer each others questions and provide a space for insight and opinions. **The knowledge is already in the space, your job is to guide co-learning.**

Create Space

As the facilitator, you need to **ensure all participants have the space to share their thoughts in a safe environment.** Some participants are natural leaders and take more than their share of space while others hardly speak. Be aware of these dynamics and how different forms of privilege can restrict space (e.g. gender, age, language, technical terminology).

Focus on Ideas

Heated discussions should **not lead to personal attacks.** If this occurs, the facilitator should steer the group to **focus on the idea, rather than the person.**

Safe Space

Encourage group members to **discuss open and freely** in a way that is accessible to everyone in the group. And try to **encourage quiet participants, without putting them on the spot** when you **notice silences**. A good way to do this is by encouraging 2-3 minute discussions in groups of 2 or with your neighbor.

We'll be working in **English** which will not be everyone's first (or even second) language. Be conscious of how this might affect the discussion. If people don't understand, tell them not to get frustrated! Instead, simply **get participants to ask for a clarification**.

Ask Open Ended Questions

Your role as facilitator is to **encourage discussion between participants**. Be aware of the types of questions you are presenting: do they deepen the discussion? Do they engage a wider participation?

Summarize & Consult

An effective note taker will not document the discussion verbatim. To ensure your note taker is **not misrepresenting the participants thoughts**, paraphrase participants ideas, asking the individual if the summaries are accurate. Sharing briefly with the group the main ideas noted down by the note taker could be a quick way to ensure nobody's contribution was misunderstood and there is clarity in the group.

Know When to Intervene

In some cases conflict can arise between participant. Be sure to assess when ideas are being challenged leading to **healthy conflict**, and when individuals are being challenged leading to hurtful and unproductive conflict.

Redirect

Be ready to refer back to the code of conduct/ norms that was created at the beginning of the round table. **Ask participants if their arguments/positions reflect the values that were agreed upon**, such as respecting all voices and ideas.

Be Tactful

If the situation escalates, it may be important for you to intervene. However, think carefully about how you will step in. Be aware not to 'call out' participants in front of the group, **consider approaching the individual during the break**. In addition, think through the wording you will use. Consider the use of "I" statements ("I hear you getting frustrated", "I feel the conversation has taken a turn") instead of "you" statements ("you are being rude") to avoid putting participants on their defensive.

Check-in on Expectations

Every session that you will be facilitating is guided by goals, expectations, or desired outcomes. As the session or workshop is coming to a close, **check-in with group members** to ensure the outcome has reflected the purpose. If not, orient the group back to the goal(s).

Provide Space for Follow-up

Whether through a feedback survey or by personally checking in with participants, it is ideal that you **provide avenues** for participants to follow-up after the session or workshop. You may prefer to do this anonymously, so participants feel able to speak freely. **Offer space to give you feedback during the breaks or during the week.**

Continue the Conversation

During the meeting, a participant will likely have been taking meeting minutes. These should be compiled and sent to CIVICUS Youth Action Team before closing plenary. When you send the minutes, you may choose to include **'calls to action' or '#YA2017 recommendations'**.

Consider how you will continue the conversation. Perhaps getting participants to send thought provoking reflections, or insight into how they plan to implement certain strategies or objectives during ICSW and afterwards.

10 Tips for Confrontation

1. Address the situation privately

Avoid 'calling out' a person in front of other participants. Addressing the situation privately may avoid the participant getting defensive.

2. Respond, don't react

Pause whenever you feel yourself about to react. Take a deep breath, step back and give yourself the opportunity to respond.

3. Stay calm

If you respond to a situation with anger and/or aggression, that is likely the response you will receive. Calmly addressing the situation is much more likely to produce a positive outcome.

4. Understand intentions

With difficult behavior, there are often specific intentions and motivations. Try to understand the motivation and identify the trigger, to help you isolate the root of the situation.

5. Share intentions

Explain the reason for the conversation to the participant, so they can better understand and emphasize with your situation.

10 Tips for Confrontation

6. Address the situation as soon as possible

Leaving the situation to fester can often cause other participants to feel frustrated, exacerbating the situation. Address the situation as soon as you are able.

7. Point out the impacts

Participants may not be aware of the effect of their behavior. Kindly highlight the negative implications and effects on others.

8. Present criticisms as suggestions or questions

It is important that the participant can take responsibility for their behavior. Using open-ended questions can help give the participant agency over the outcome.

9. Balance with compliments

Ensure you are highlighting the positive contribution that is the person is making to the group.

10. Listen!

Everyone wants to feel heard. No progress can take place until the other person feels acknowledged. While you are listening, focus on what the person is saying, rather than waiting for your turn to respond.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The key as a facilitator is to create the environment for challenging and thoughtful discussions.
- If any situation arises and facilitators feel unable to deal with it, there will be other facilitators on hand to help. Please come and find one of us!
- English is not the first language of all participants, speak slowly and get participants to ask for clarifications or ask for translations support.

CHECK LIST

	YES	NO
The seating arrangements were helpful to open discussion		
I began the session with an open and friendly greeting		
I outlined how the session might proceed, without setting my personal agenda		
We explained the purpose of the discussion/meeting/workshop		
We explained how we would give feedback/follow-up on this discussion/meeting/workshop.		
I facilitated the generation of a range of options and ideas.		
I used a wide range of open questions.		
I tried to use closed questions only when it seemed appropriate.		
I listened actively to what was being said.		
I talked far less than the participants.		

CHECK LIST

I avoided giving too much advice or saying 'If I were you...'		
I disclosed some of my personal experiences as a means of building rapport.		
I was not uncomfortable with silences or pauses.		
I took notes on key points.		
I summarized key points.		
I tried to make positive eye contact – not staring and not looking away when the other person looked at me.		
I tried to assure that my non-verbal / visual communication was positive.		
I matched the other person's body language to build rapport.		
If any difficult situations arose, I responded to them calmly		
I gave positive feedback.		

CHECK LIST

I tried not to be judgmental.		
I tried to address negativity directly and overcame potential problems.		
I avoided stereotyping.		
In our discussions, I focused on future opportunities.		
I checked that the participants could access the location		
Together we identified potential barriers or obstacles to subsequent achievements and developed strategies to overcome these barriers.		
We agreed on dates and ways for reviewing progress.		

YA2017 OUTCOME

- The **outcome** of #YA2017 is a set of 3 recommendations around ICSW themes, Our Planet, Our Struggles, Our Future, to be shared over the course of the week with other ICSW delegates who did not participate in the Youth Assembly.
- **Format:** 140 to 280 characters per recommendation. The 3 recommendations are Clear, Concrete and Easy to remember
- By the end of ICSW 2017 the majority of delegates can list the 3 #YA2017 recommendations!