

# **Improving documentation in the WASH sector for policy, programmes and publication:** a writing course for WASH professionals



## **Hand-outs**

# Aim of the course

On completion of the course, participants will:

- have **skills, know-how and confidence** to share their experiences, ideas and recommendations in a written form that is action-oriented.
- be able to write in a way which appeals to a **wide and differentiated audience**.
- return home with a better understanding of various document **structure(s)** and the writing **process**.
- Return home with action plan to **write and publish** a document by the end of 2012

# Seven Elements of Good Writing



# Agenda – Day 1

08:30-10:30: Module 1 Introduction

*health break*

11:00- 13:00: Module 2 Audience

*lunch*

14:00-15:45: Module 3 Content

*health break*

16:00-17:30: Module 4: Appearance & Style

Evening homework: *Review Documents*

# Agenda – Day 2

08:30-9:00: Homework Report and Recap

9:00-10:30: Module 5 - Structure (part a)

*health break*

11:00-13:00: Module 6 - Structure (part b)

*lunch*

14:00-15:45: Module 7 – Writing Habits & Quality

*health break*

16:00 – 17:30: Module 8 - Synthesis, reflection &  
next steps

# Homework

## Individual

- Review the three documents that you have been working on (which you brought to the workshop).
- Specify who each document is for.
- Reflect on how you would improve the documents with respect to:
  - Content
  - Appearance
  - Style

# Audience Handout A1 - Group Exercise Audience: Matching

## Message

Come to our event!

Become a member or supporter!

Work with us

We want to do this WASH activity, this why and this is how. Give us funding, please.

We have successfully completed this project, this is what was achieved with the money.

This WASH problem is huge, urgent and needs action now! This what is you need to do.

Through our work we found this worked well, and this didn't work well, and this is why.

We have encountered this problem or opportunity, what do other WASH organisations do?

We have developed a new technology or approach. Here is how works

We have complied with our legal or contractual requirements

## Document Type

Paper in a Technical Journal (Waterlines) or Conference (World Water Week)

Press Release

Stand Alone Report

Leaflet/Poster/Advert

Manual

Newsletter, Magazine Article/ Blog Post

Presentation or Speech at a Conference

Tweet / Social Media Update

Organisation Annual Report

Summary or Briefing Paper

## Audience

News Media

Current Funder / Supporters

Prospective Funder / Supporters

Developed Country Public

Local/National Politicians

Public in Project Area

WASH Practitioners

International Politicians/ Decision-makers

task – what messages would you want to get different audiences, and what sort of document would you use to do it?



# Audience Handout A2: Where to get published

- Provide details of where publishing can take place (include formal & informal). Journals
  - Waterlines (<http://practicalaction.org/waterlines>)
  - Journal of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Development (<http://www.iwaponline.com/washdev/>)
  - Water Alternatives (<http://www.water-alternatives.org>)
- Magazines/Blogs/Newsletters
  - WaterAid: Oasis magazine
  - WaterCan: Water Drops newsletter
  - IRC: E-Source WASH news ([http://www.irc.nl/home/information\\_services/e\\_source](http://www.irc.nl/home/information_services/e_source))
  - World Bank (<http://blogs.worldbank.org/water/>)
  - Start your own blog using Blogger ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)), Wordpress ([www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)) or many other tools
- Conferences
  - annual WEDC Conference (various countries) - [www.wedconference.co.uk](http://www.wedconference.co.uk)
  - annual Stockholm World Water Week (Sweden) - [www.worldwaterweek.org](http://www.worldwaterweek.org)
  - annual Water and Health (USA) – [whconference.unc.edu](http://whconference.unc.edu)
  - See <http://washcalendar.wordpress.com/> for details of more events



# Content: Handout B1

(to be cut into cells & handed out)

Records	Reading & Research	Context
Records	Reading & Research	Context
Records	Reading & Research	Context
Records	Reading & Research	Context
Records	Reading & Research	Context
Records	Reading & Research	Context

# Content: Handout B2

- *Finding information and Using it* – available soon from RWSN!

RWSN

# Structure: Handouts C

Structure Structure Structure!!  
Reference Materials

# Handout Structure C1: Overview

- 1. Title**
- 2. Table of Contents**
- 3. Summary/Abstract**
- 4. Introduction**
- 5. The Voice**
- 6. Context**
- 7. Broader message.**
- 8. Lessons Learned & Practical Steps**
- 9. Worked Example/Case Study**
- 10. Conclusion and Call to Action**
- 11. References and Further Information**
- 12. Annexes/Appendices**

What?

Exercise idea: get groups to guess what the article is about based on the title

## Hand-out Structure C2: Example titles

	Title	Publication (Audience)	Reason
1	“Developing a framework for the mitigation of geogenic contamination”		
2	“Community-led total sanitation, Zambia: Stick, carrot or balloon?”		
3	“Public-Private Partnerships in Madagascar: a promising approach to increase sustainability of piped water supply systems in rural towns”		
4	“Water: a most precious commodity and a basic right”		
5	“Walking for water”		
6	Accelerating Self Supply: Summary of progress in introducing a new approach		

## Handout Structure C3: Example titles

	Title	Publication (Audience)	Reason
1	<b>“Developing a framework for the mitigation of geogenic contamination”</b>	RWSN Forum Poster (RWSN members)	Descriptive: generalised approach to a specialised technical issue that affects more than one country
2	<b>“Community-led total sanitation, Zambia: Stick, carrot or balloon?”</b>	Waterlines (WASH professionals)	Title: describes topic (jargon, but well known by audience) and location (Zambia) Subtitle: Intriguing – Carrot and Stick suggests incentives and penalties, but what is the balloon about? Must read it.
3	<b>“Public-Private Partnerships in Madagascar: a promising approach to increase sustainability of piped water supply systems in rural towns”</b>	RWSN Forum Long Paper (RWSN members)	Title: describes topic and location Subtitle: suggests that public-private partnership may be a way forward and is worthy of further investigation.
4	<b>“Water: a most precious commodity and a basic right”</b>	WaterAid article in <i>The New Statesman</i> (socialist-leaning UK public)	Appeal to reader’s sense of moral obligation to help
5	<b>“Walking for water”</b>	Article in WaterAid’s <i>Oasis</i> supporter magazine (existing WaterAid supporters in the UK)	Double meaning: (1) women and children in Africa has to walk long distances to collect water (2) The reader in the UK can do a sponsored walk to raise money for WaterAid to tackle problem (1)
6	<b>Accelerating Self Supply: Summary of progress in introducing a new approach</b>	RWSN Field Note (Audience: WASH practitioners)	Title says the topic. Subtitle tells the reader that this is an overview of work done and summary of other reports.

## Handout Structure C4: Table of Contents

What should it do?	Help the reader navigate around larger documents and find information quickly
How do you write it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Only needed with standalone documents and reports more than 10 pages long.</li><li>• Should include the main headings, subheadings and their page numbers.</li><li>• Microsoft Word can generate a table of contents automatically</li><li>• Needs to be updated if there are changes to the document and before it goes to print.</li></ul>
For examples see:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Document No 6 – Accelerating Self Supply: Summary of introducing a new approach</li><li>• Document No 7– RWSN Publication Process</li></ul>	



What?

Why?

Where?

When?

## Handout Structure C5: Summary/Abstract

### What should it do?

- Helps the reader get a feel for the article quickly and helps them decide whether to read your whole report/article.
- Gets over the main points to the reader if they don't have time to read the whole thing.

### How do you write it?

- TIP: write it at the beginning, so that you are clear in your own mind what you are going to write about, and then go back when you have finished and re-write it so that it summarises the key points that you *actually* wrote.

### Examples:

- Doc 3 - Annis & Razafinjato (2011)
- Doc 8 - Phiri (2011)
- Doc 6 - Accelerating Self Supply (RWSN 2011-2)

Exercise idea: all participants read the abstracts of Doc 3 and Doc 8. and asked for their observations.

## Handout Structure C6: Introduction

### What should it do?

The introduction should capture the reader's interest and put forward either:

- (a) a question that will be answered by the end of the article/report;
  - (b) a problem that the authors attempted to solve;
  - (c) a challenge that the reader should respond to.
- or all three.

It should not just say what the article is about but why it is important.

### How do you write it?

- Be focused on a single, well defined question or problem. Don't try include everything or you will end up writing an Encyclopaedia!
- Keep it short (1-3 paragraphs).
- Avoid long sentences, technical language and acronyms so that readers aren't put off.

## Handout Structure C7a: **Voices (Part 1)**

What should it do?

A short story quote from an interview with a water user affected by the problem or challenge that is the focus of the article humanises the subject.  
It helps ground the subject in reality so that the reader is clear that we are talking about improving the situation for real people who are facing real problems, and that this isn't an abstract academic study.

How do you write it?

- It needs to be true!
- Find an interview a water users affected by the problem – and get their permission to use their words and name (in some cases it is a good idea to change the name so that the person doesn't suffer recrimination for speaking out)
- If you can't get a water user, then get quotes from an expert or local government person who is working in an area affected by the problem described in the article.

## Handout Structure C7b: **Voices (Part 2)**

**What should it do?**

**This is a common trick in magazine articles and speeches to create a sense of coming full circle from the problem to the solution.**

**Previous sections may have become quite theoretical, so referring back to a quote from an interviewee in the area affected helps make the solution tangible again.**

**How do you write it?**

- This may overlap with the Worked Example/Case Study in the previous step, however, if your article doesn't have this then it is a good, short alternative.
- The Experience (Part 1) should focus on the interviewees past or current experience. (Part 2) should focus on their outlook for the future, or if their situation has already been improved, present their opinion of how their daily life has improved as a result of the intervention (e.g. a new handpump close to his or her home)

## Handout Structure C8: **Voices (Example- Doc 9)**

“Then there was Madina, I called her pretty Madina because she has such gorgeous eyes. She’s barely 5 also and she was carrying two three-litre jerry canes to go fetch water. Not knowing how to approach this child labour question, I ask her whether she had siblings. She tells me she has many. I ask why they aren’t fetching the water, she says they were somewhere playing and her mother needed water. We talked and she said the water wasn’t that heavy, and that she was ok, she could bring the six litres at once.” – Uganda blog post (Doc 9)

## Handout Structure C9: Voices (Example – Doc 5)

“In the dry season I go out at 6am, at midday and in the evening to collect water. Each journey takes three hours.”

**Mariama Oumarou Dicko from Mali** (pictured with red bucket)



WaterAid/Layton Thompson



What?

Where?

When?

## Handout Structure C10: **Context**

**What should it do?**

Quickly allow the reader to understand the context in which your Question/Problem/Challenge (Structural Element 4) is set. Typically these include:

- The climatic and geographical factors that affect water availability
- The rural access to improved water sources
- Past and ongoing activities by the government, NGOs and development partners (like UNICEF or WSP)
- Any other relevant political, social or economic factors (for example recent war or civil unrest)

**How do you write it?**

- The context should be factual – not opinion - and in reports and papers should be backed up by references as evidence to back up your statements.
- Use JMP or Government data
- Maps, graphs and photos are very effective at helping



## Handout Structure C11: **Context** – Example 1

Clear, concise description of the District's geography

“The climate in Mwanza District, Malawi is tropical and mainly falls into wet and dry seasons. The wet season starts from November to April and the dry season is from May to October. The average rainfall ranges between 800mm to 1,200mm although it has been erratic and difficult to predict in recent years. The topography of Mwanza District is mountainous and hilly with several areas having slopes of more than 12 degrees and no large areas of flat. The soils are sandy-clay, permeable and well drained. These local conditions have often proved to be barriers in the provision of rural water supply in the district, as they narrow the spectrum of appropriate water technologies that can be implemented effectively.”

Phiri (2011) Doc 8

How the geography is important for rural water supply

## Handout Structure C12: **Context** – Example

Clear, concise  
description of the  
country's rural  
water supply  
coverage

“ Currently, Madagascar has 20 million inhabitants, of which 70 percent live in communes designated by the government as Rural. Water supply coverage rates in these areas are less than 30 percent (WHO, 2010). Having risen little over the past 11 years – a situation exacerbated by the ongoing political crisis that began in January 2009 – the country is not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015. ” - Annis & Razafinjato (2011) (Doc 3)

## Handout Structure C13: **Context** – Example

extent of the  
problem  
globally

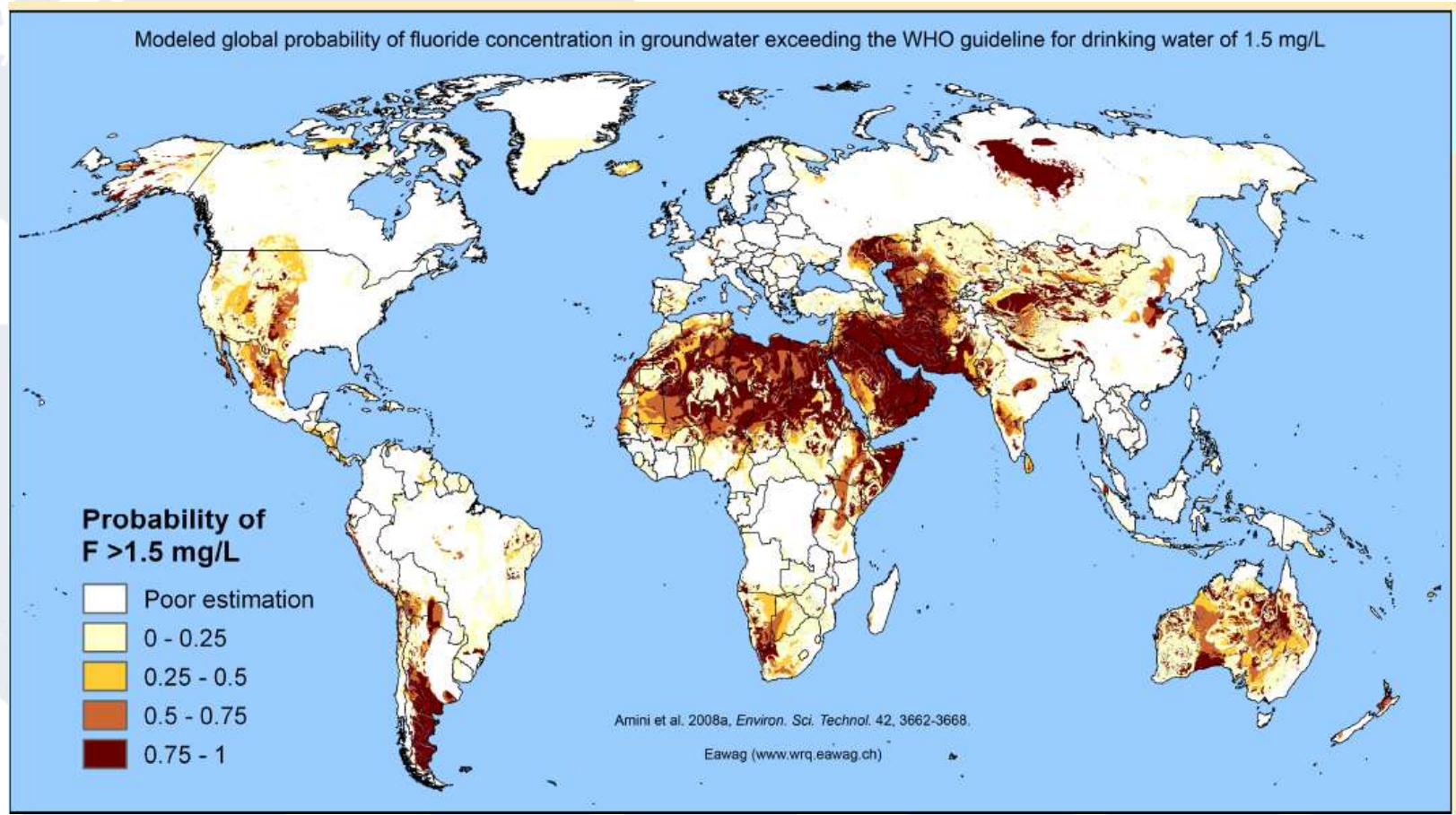
“Geogenic contamination, especially arsenic and fluoride, is widespread, affecting up to 10% of wells globally. Geogenic contaminants in groundwater derive from aquifer rocks or due to chemical conditions in the aquifer that allow high dissolved concentrations. They occur naturally, though they may also be associated locally with mining activities or with emissions to the atmosphere from industrial processes.

“Geogenic contaminants affect the health of 100s of millions of people worldwide. Arsenic causes skin lesions, pulmonary disorders, internal cancers, heart attacks, and many other conditions. Fluoride causes dental mottling and at high concentrations, crippling skeletal deformation”. – Eawag 2011  
(Doc 1)

Why the  
problem is  
important

Strong visual  
quickly  
conveys extent  
of the problem

# Handout Structure C14: **Context** – Example



Eawag (2011), Doc 1

## Handout Structure C15: **Context** – Example

**Table 1 Self Supply Piloting Focal Country Statistics**

<b>Geographic context</b>						
<b>Country</b>	<b>Total Population (JMP)</b>	<b>Rural Population (JMP)</b>	<b>Land Area sq/km</b>	<b>Rural pop density per sq/km</b>	<b>Unimproved Rural (JMP)</b>	<b>Unimproved Rural (JMP)</b>
Ethiopia	80,713,000	66,992,000	1,000,000	67	74%	49,574,000
Mali	12,706,000	8,640,000	1,222,190	7	56%	4,838,000
Uganda	31,657,000	27,542,000	197,100	140	36%	9,915,000
Zambia	12,620,000	7,800,000	743,398	10	54%	4,212,000
<b>Economic indicators</b>						
<b>Country</b>	<b>HDI ranking (UNDP 2010)</b>	<b>Pop &lt;\$1.25/day (UNDP 2010)</b>	<b>Life expectancy (UNDP 2010)</b>	<b>Labour force in Agriculture (CIA 2009)</b>	<b>Economic Growth (AEO 2009)</b>	
Ethiopia	157	39%	55.1	80%	11.6%	
Mali	160	51%	49.2	85%	3.6%	
Uganda	143	51%	54.1	82%	7%	
Zambia	150	64%	47.3	85%	5.5%	

**Information sources:** See reference list. Note - J (WHO/UNICEF 2010) - Joint Monitoring Programme Data of 2008

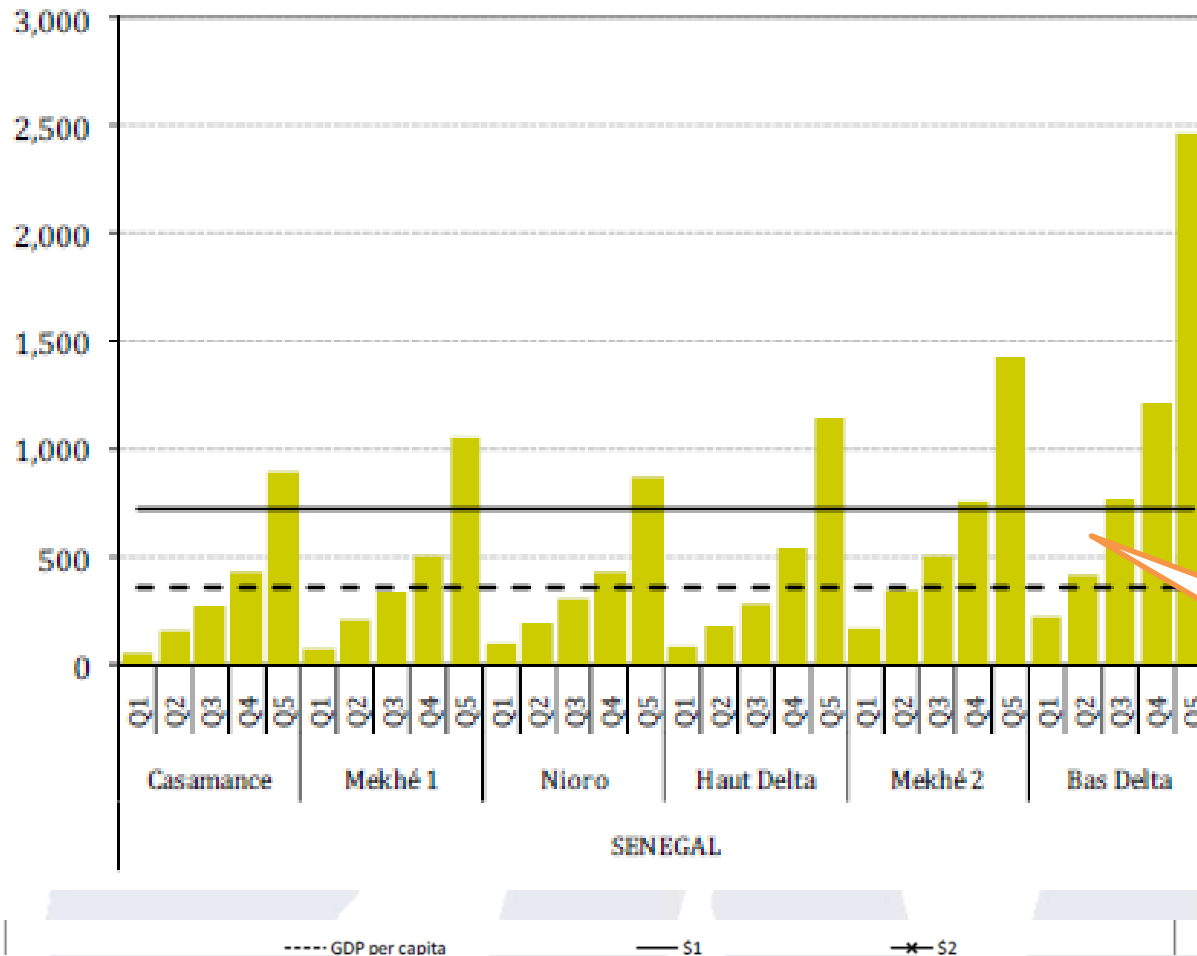
Statistics presented like this can seem daunting at first but spending time looking reveals interesting similarities and differences between countries

RWSN 2011-2  
Doc 6



## Handout Structure C16: **Context** – Example

Figure XXX Incomes per Household Quintile (\$ PPP, per capita) (Source World Bank, 2011)



Poverty remains a largely rural problem, and the majority of the world's poor will live in rural areas for decades to come.

Graphs can be highly illustrative

RWSN 2012-1  
 (In press)

## Handout Structure C17: **Broader Message**

### What should it do?

It should present an analysis of the underlying problems and causes and then lead from this analysis to an idea for a solution.

It might challenge current thinking and make the cases for a philosophical shift in how to approach the problem so that progress can be made.

### How do you write it?

- Do plenty of reading around the subject to see what other theories and ideas have been put forward on this topic by academics and practitioners.
- When applying ideas developed others, reference them clearly.
- If you are putting forward an idea that is your own, make it clear that it is yours (or your organisation's)
- Write in simple paragraphs that help the reader follow the logic of your argument.
- Refer back to your case study.



## Handout Structure C18: **Broader Message** - Example

### **"The use of coercion**

It has also been argued that participation is sometimes coerced and that traditional leaders may force communities and households into constructing toilets by imposing fines on those that don't (Sijbesma, 2008). However, this is simply not the case in Zambia. As His Royal Highness Chief Mapanza reports:

*When you use force, people will resist. That kind of resistance can go on for generations. Perhaps this is what has happened in our country. Perhaps CLTS has broken that chain of resistance, because it is amazing how people are responding to the programme and are now busy constructing toilets in their villages (UNICEF, 2008)."*

Harvey (2011)  
Doc 2

Subheading introduces the broader theme (within the use of CLTS)

Another researcher's opinion (with reference)

Author's counter argument – relating to the context of the paper and illustrated with a quote (and reference)

## Handout Structure C19: **Broader Message** - Example

1. Political Will: Clearly....
2. Size and Geographic Location:  
Importantly...
3. Latent Demand for Modern Services: The  
peri-urban characteristics...
4. Donor Support: An international donor...

Each paragraph starts with the key message, followed by an explanatory paragraph

- *Annis & Razafinjato (2011)*  
*Doc 3*

## Handout Structure C20: **Lessons Learned/Steps for Progress**

<p><b>What should it do?</b></p>	<p>If the article is reporting on a project or experience – what has been learned? What lessons could be transferrable to other contexts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What pragmatic steps can the reader, or others, take to move towards the new way of thinking described in the Broader Message (Structure Item 7) that tackles the problem, question or challenge (Structure Item 4)</li><li>• If done well, this is the section that the reader will remember and come back to.</li></ul>
<p><b>How do you write it?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Short, clear paragraphs or bullet points.</li><li>• Focus on unusual or counter-intuitive lessons learned as these will be more memorable to the reader.</li><li>• While the experience should be transferable to other contexts, it shouldn't be too general, like "Community involvement is important". These are well known – be more specific.</li></ul>

## Handout Structure C21: **Lessons & Steps** - Example

### 1. Encourage private sector participation in rural water supply:

The formal private...

### 2. Increase Demand:

While the first recommendation focused on ...

### 3. Target large rural towns

An annual growth rate of...

### 4. Emphasize Service Delivery:

Large rural centers require...

- *Annis & Razafinjato (2011)*

- Doc 3

Each paragraph starts with a recommendation of what to do, followed by an explanatory paragraph of how and why to do it

## Handout Structure C22: **Lessons & Steps** - Example

“The rehabilitation will be long and complex,” admits Fidaa Haddad, manager of IUCN’s West Asia Water and Dry Land Program. “it requires significant financial resources, close co-ordination and support of the public and local farmers. We need some quick wins that show people why this basin needs to be saved – demonstrating how they can use it as a sustainable resource.”

- *Flower in the Desert (Geographical, March 2012)*
- Doc 10

Steps that need to be taken to achieve the objective of saving the wetland, in Jordan

## Handout Structure C23: **Worked Example/Case Study**

<b>What should it do?</b>	<b>It should illustrate how the Steps for Progress (Structure Item 8) can be applied and give examples and evidence of where the approach has worked, or is promising.</b>
How do you write it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you are writing a technical document, for example, on how to design a gravity water supply scheme. Give a worked example of how to do it. A hypothetical example can be used, rather than a real example, but label it clearly.</li><li>• Use diagrams and pictures</li><li>• Provide links and references to project reports and case studies where the approach (e.g. Self Supply or CLTS) has been used successfully. Use quotes that are relevant to the context of your article.</li></ul>

## Handout Structure C24: **Conclusion & Call to Action**

<b>What should it do?</b>	<b>Having read this, you want the reader to think that there is something they can do immediately (send a donation, send an email or letter to a politician) or lodge a single idea in their head that they will remember when doing a piece of work or networking with colleagues.</b>
How do you write it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Short, punchy, inspiring, challenging, optimistic.</li><li>▪ Don't try and repeat everything; pick three points (preferably only one if it is a magazine article, a speech or leaflet).</li></ul>



## Handout Structure C25: **References & Further Information**

<b>What should it do?</b>	<b>References to do things:</b> They provide evidence to back up your statements They give the reader a path to finding out more about the subject and help them with their research.
<b>How do you write it?</b>	See RWSN Publication Process Document

**RWU**

## Handout Structure C26: **Annexes/Appendices**

<b>What should it do?</b>	<b>Provide additional technical detail, information sources, papers or reports that are critical to understanding the paper, or templates/forms that the reader can use.</b>
How do you write it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflect on how much detail is actually needed in the main document. If information or data does not significantly improve the flow and arguments, but you still want to include it, consider annexes.</li></ul>



# Appearance Handout D1

## **Publications with different appearance & style**

- RWSN Field Note (Doc 6)
- Waterlines Article (Doc 2)
- Blog Post (Doc 9 & 13)
- Supporter Magazine Article (Doc 5, 14, 15 & 16)
- Interest Group Magazine Article (Doc 4, 10, 11 & 12)
- Speech (Doc 19)
- Guidelines (Doc 7, 20 & 21)
- Discussion Paper (Doc 18)
- Poster (Doc 1 & 17)
- Conference Paper (Doc 3 & 8)
- Policy Brief

# Appearance: Handout D2

## Key appearance issues

- Text formatting
- Paragraph length
- Subheadings
- Bullet points
- Tables & boxes
- Layout, font, white space
- Data & graphs
- Length

# Appearance: Handout D3

## **Advice for Illustrations, Graphs and Pictures**

- Use the visual appearance of the document to make it more effective at communicating
- *"A picture is worth a 1,000 words"*. Use pictures, photos illustrations to communicate.
- Carefully consider the message you want from a graph
- Remember not everyone will print in colour
- Consider headers and footers in case a page is photocopied
- Label the picture correctly.

# Style: Handout E1

## Different Styles

- Formal
- impersonal
- personal
- humour
- language
- acronyms

## Acronyms

- Try to avoid them!
- Write out in full the first time it is used in a document, with the acronym in brackets: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
- Common ones (like WASH) are more readily understandable than new ones.

# Writing Habits Handout F1: Production Schedules, Deadlines and Timing

**Description:** many documents are time-sensitive.

- Some deadlines are imposed by a project structure, for example reporting progress to the funder and other stakeholders.
- Some documents need to be ready for a particular event, either because it is directly related to that event, or because the people you want to read your publication are likely to be there.
- Some deadlines are external, when there is the audience is likely to be more likely to read your document – for example as part of a wider publicity campaign for World Water or Day, or the week before a World Water Forum.
- **Tip 1:** Consider the deadlines (and milestones) to enable team work and increase productivity.
- **Tip 2:** Consider timing to increase the impact of your document.
- **Tip 3:** Plan writing and document production to meet deadlines.
- **Tip 4:** Timetable for producing your documents on time. (make an estimate and double it!).
- **Tip 5:** Importance of recording how long activities take.



# Writing Habits Handout F2: Organisation

## Filing

- Bring everything together into a folder (both a physical folder and a software folder in Windows Explorer)
- Organise references so that you can find them quickly and easily
- Carefully organise pictures, graphs and other background materials
- Give your documents useful file names, e.g. after each major revision, save the file under a different name, for example  
"myarticle\_Sean\_29May2012.doc" then you can go back to earlier drafts if you change your mind about deleting something, or a file is lost
- Make back-ups! Regularly!

## Writing Process

- Use MS Word, or other programs
- Learn to touch type!
- Start with sub-headings: everyone has a different way of writing, but we both find it best to establishing the structure and headings first and then fill in the gaps as ideas come to me. Some people start at the beginning and write to the end, but it is unusual and likely to end in frustration.

## Writing Habits Handout F3: Production Schedules, Deadlines and Timing

- **Exercise:** In groups of five look at a range of different document types and break it down into what activities would be needed and how long they think they would take. For example: a leaflet –
  - prepare text,
  - proof read text,
  - find images/photos (and get permission or buy rights)
  - get layout done,
  - review proofs
  - send to printers
  - distribute

# Quality Handout G1: Quality Summary Checklist

## Editing

- Has the document been reviewed by people who are knowledgeable about the subject and context?
- Have references been done properly?
- Is the document the correct length?
- Is one language used consistency throughout the document?
- Is the grammar correct?
- Have you checked the spelling? Use Word's spellchecker, but don't rely on it.
- Is the document layout in the format requested?

**Proofreading** is very important!

- Proof reading your own work can be hard because you often read what you think is written on the page rather than what actually is. Get someone else to proof read it, or read it out loud (or both).

## Quality Handout G2: **RWSN Publication Process**

- See separate document (No. 7)
- Note that it includes guidelines and weblinks for references

**RWSN**

## Quality Handout G3: **Proof Reading**

Proof reading is an integral part of the writing process so that published documents are the best they can be.

- **Tip 1: Seek help!** When writing, team work can make a huge difference.
- **Tip 2: Print it out!** Mistakes are often easier to spot on paper than they are on the screen.
- **Tip 3: Read it out loud** – do your sentences make sense? Do you run out of breath before then end?
- **Tip 4:** Get someone else to read it, and don't take offence when they make corrections – remember you don't have to agree with them.
- **Tip 5:** Watch out for spelling and grammar!  
*If there is major grammar, or glaring spelling mistakes, or stray punctuation, then days of research and writing effort can be undermined in the eye of the reader in less than a second.*
- *If there are major grammar, or glaring spelling mistakes, or stray punctuation, then days of research and writing effort can be undermined in the eyes of the reader in less than a second.*

# Quality Handout G4: What to look for when Proof Reading

- What to look out for:
  - Spelling mistakes, particularly words with more than one meaning that Microsoft Word spell-checker won't pick up.
  - Long sentences with lots of clauses. Always try and keep sentences as short as possible. Use a full stop
  - Check grammar and punctuation
  - miXEd formatting or letter siZe
  - mismatched table or figure numbers
  - Consistency #1: British English or US English? Doesn't matter which, but use the same spellings throughout, e.g. Programme vs. Program; Colour vs. Color.
  - Consistency #2: if you use specialist terms or acronyms, make sure they are consistent. Recent example: e-learning; E-learning; e-Learning; E-Learning.

# Handout for Next Steps

Name	
<b>Audience:</b> who are you writing for?	
<b>Content:</b> what are you going to say, and do you have evidence to back up your argument?	
Outline the <b>structure</b>	
How will you use the <b>appearance</b> so that someone will read and understand it?	
Make notes on the <b>style</b> you may use	
What do you need to do to improve your <b>Writing Habits?</b>	
How will you ensure the <b>quality</b> of your <b>work?</b>	