

Case Study Title	Write-shop approach to report writing
Agency	<i>LWF Kenya-Djibouti Program</i>
Case study	
<p>Background</p> <p>The Lutheran World Federation Department for World Service (LWF/DWS) is a certified member of the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP). For over 70 years, LWF has partnered with the UNHCR and various Governments all over the world in assisting refugees and their hosting communities during the disaster response phase as well as in early recovery, rebuilding sustainable livelihoods and strengthening community capacity to advocate for and claim their rights. In her Kenya-Djibouti Programme, LWF is responsible for supporting multi-sector programs comprising of education, child protection, community services and people with special needs, reception of newly arrived refugees and community empowerment of refugees and host communities in and around Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya and in Ali Addeh and HolHol camps in Djibouti. One of the main challenges has been how to achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of humanitarian assistance and commitment to the LWF values, which includes transparency and accountability, information sharing and participation.</p> <p>In 2013, while in the middle of efforts to strengthen monitoring and reporting systems, the LWF Kenya-Djibouti Programme leadership was tipped about the write-shop methodology. They picked the interest and went on to train staff and eventually adopted it as an approach.</p> <p>The write-shop approach provided an opportunity to involve the staff, refugees and members of host communities in the production of quarterly and annual reports and in the process realizing many more benefits.</p> <p>The write-shop Approach</p> <p>Write-shops are 3 or 4 days participatory forums at the sub program level bringing together the frontline staff, refugees and nationals responsible for day-to-day implementation, the supervisors responsible for certain activities and budget lines, the sector heads accountable for the various program sectors and the overall project and sub-program managers. Occasionally, Program staff from the Country office joins the session, bringing together mix of staff at all levels and hierarchies plus representatives of the disaster affected communities. The objective of the write shop session is primarily compiling and reviewing project reports. The refugee counterparts participate in the write-shops to provide input, details and occasionally make clarifications. This is possible since they work directly with their respective unit heads to implement the activities being reported on. At the same time, being members of the affected population, refugee counterparts provide the much-needed reflection and critique of the progress, achievements, challenges and outcomes of the work of LWF with the Disaster-Affected Persons. They add validate and add value to project reports and safeguard against inaccurate reporting. Their mastery of project activities and the fact that they live and work in the refugee community makes them an important resource when proposing modifications or suggesting practical solutions and recommendations. The participation of unit heads and refugee counterparts in report writing builds their capacity and prepares them for greater responsibilities.</p> <p>Testimonials</p> <p>Elias Ciza is Congolese refugee who works with the LWF Youth Development Unit in Kakuma as a Counterpart. He has attended 2 write-shops so far and thinks that they are important in building the capacity and demonstrating confidence in the work done by refugee</p>	

incentive staff who constitute about 75% of the entire LWF staff working in Kakuma. Through the write-shops, I was able to better understand the relationship between project activities and budgets. I used to think that donor money could be used on anything but after attending the write-shops, I realized that every single coin should be used for only what was agreed during the proposal development stage+

Elias also feels more confident with reports now as opposed to previous times when he only provided weekly briefs to his immediate supervisor. He says the write-shops have empowered him and his fellow counterparts. He can now write good monthly reports if given the template and authority to do so+

Nancy Tabot is a national officer in charge of Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) in LWF Kakuma. Nancy has been to all the 5 write-shops in Kakuma except one and considers them as an eye-opener.

There is both learning and doing things during write-shops. You write a draft report and it undergoes an objective review where one gets important feedback and input from colleagues at various levels, including refugee staff. This has certainly made our reporting better+

Emmanuel Kura who is an Accountability Assistant also agrees that the write-shop has changed the way things are done in LWF, especially the information sharing aspect. He has attended one write-shop so far and together with fellow staff we got a chance to fully interact with the various project documents as opposed to just being told to implement certain activities. Now I understand why we carry out those activities and how each activity is linked to a higher objective+

By so doing, Emmanuel believes that the community is now more empowered to know their entitlements and this in turn makes LWF staff more accountable when delivering services in the community.

Kiyonga Nagil, a refugee counterpart from South Sudan working with LWF's Child Protection Sector attended one write-shop in April 2015 to help write the 1st quarter report and sees the write-shops as a demonstration of transparency and accountability which are some of the core values of LWF.

In the write-shop I attended, every project information was shared openly, including activity budgets and we as refugee staff got a chance to know what activities were funded and which ones were not funded and after that, we are able to share factual information with our colleagues back in the community+

In an operation like Kakuma where LWF implements nearly 10 grants at any given time, it would take a significant amount of time for one or 2 people to write quarterly reports with the required substance and quality.

The idea of write-shops has significantly reduced the time taken to prepare quarterly and annual reports as the respective sectors usually organize their own mini write-shops before the main exercise. It is an inclusive and interactive exercise where all ideas, input and contributions from every participant are put together into one document, and this makes the reports more conclusive and accurate. It is also a way of fostering team spirit within the organization.