**Report Template Components**

This report template offers one example of what a report could include. Despite the range of formats each report recipient may require, most reports contain variations of the same topics. The following reporting structure may be a useful guide, but should be adapted to suit the specific situation.

1. **Title and cover of the report:** This is the first page of your report, it helps draw the attention of the reader and should have a clear title, date, and appropriate picture. It is a good idea to give details about the type of report (i.e., annual/semi-annual/quarterly), the period it covers, and the number or name of the program.
2. **Content list:** A table of contents with page numbers is helpful, especially if the report is large.
3. **Abstract or executive summary:** This summary aims to capture the essence of the report and should be written last, once the whole report is finished, to help the author summarize or highlight an overview of the content. Keep it short and do not introduce new content or anything not referred to or supported in the main report.
4. **Background or introduction:** The introduction sets the tone of the report by summarizing the background and problem the program is trying to solve or contribute to. Writing a problem statement clarifies to the reader the motivation for the program and reminds them why they donated. The goal of the program, its objectives and the program timeline can be stated here, followed by a short description of the report flow. If you are working with partners, identify them here. The length of the introduction should be relative to the length of the report itself.
5. **Main body of the report:** The main body will include activity updates, progress or results, any deviation from the objectives, goal or plan, challenges encountered and their solutions, lessons learned, plans for the next reporting period and any financial reporting that is required.

* **Methodology:** Details of how the assessment was conducted and who the key participants were is explained here, along with the methods used and a justification of their selection. Strengths and limitations for the process can briefly be described here. This allows others to replicate the needs assessment at a later date, so information can be compared and contrasted.
* **Update on activities:** An update provides a status report on the program activities implemented, or in progress, during this reporting period. It describes how the implementation is advancing using related indicators to show progress against the timeline and work plan. This helps support statements of success or deviation from what was planned. Divergence from the plan should be explained.
* **Progress results:** This is intended to summarize the extent to which implementation of activities, or the deviation from activities, has contributed to the achievement of desired outcomes. Including supporting material, such as special reports, workshop reports, and others, it reinforces the progress and impact. Human interest stories can be used here, in challenges, or lessons learned to illustrate how the program is affecting lives.
* **Results or key findings:** These findings report the information or data collected as a result of the methodologies used in the needs analysis. Arrange findings in a logical sequence with a summary of the analysis and interpretation. Describe the needs or gaps identified and the impact it is having on the community and the influence it could have on the program, or vice versa.
* **Deviation from the objectives and key findings or goals:** Reporting this metric affirms activities that are on track, explains any changes to the program plan, and justifies or recommends changes.
* **Challenges and solutions identified:** Make sure you account for obstacles and problems that may occur both within the program team, and the program’s activity implementation. Analyzing the problems helps project staff and management to understand the constraints under which the activities are being carried out and offers solutions.
* **Lessons learned:** Capturing lessons learned is an ongoing effort throughout the lifespan of the project. Lessons learned come from informal conversations where program designers and implementers openly discuss what worked, and what didn’t, or isn’t working. Lessons learned describes just-in-time program adjustments, suggestions for how to do something differently the next time, or that you should indeed do it the same! Engaging funders and donors to understand the lessons learned throughout the process strengthens trust and encourages future funding and support.
* **Plans and recommendations for the next reporting period:** This look ahead describes the implications from the data and suggests next steps. Sharing the next reporting period plan is useful for donors and others to see that lessons learned and activities postponed in the last period are being acted upon. Recommendations should be focused and reflective.
* **Financial report:** Each update report can include a detailed financial report (usually as a spreadsheet), as well as a short narrative to summarize how resources were used, or will be used, and the financial impact of problems mentioned above. Emphasize significant deviations from the approved budget, and clearly justify any requests for approval for changes to the budget.

1. **Conclusion:** Summarize thekey issues, results of the work, and emphasize how program activities are contributing toward the program goal, and the higher global impact. Conclusions should be clear, precise, and short. Effective pictures can and should be used to enhance the report because they appeal to the emotional connection between humans and the impact the program is having. No more than three to five pictures, with clear images of people, or actions, from a unique perspective that tells a story.

References:

1. Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc. (CARE). (2009). Key Resources for Project Managers; Report Writing Guide 6. [Key Resources for Project Managers -- Report Writing (weebly.com)](https://viafellowship.weebly.com/uploads/4/8/0/7/48076463/6_report_writing.pdf)
2. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). (2009). Managing Marine Protected Areas: A TOOLKIT for the Western Indian Ocean. [Managing Marine Protected Areas - A TOOLKIT for the Western Indian Ocean | IUCN](https://www.iucn.org/content/managing-marine-protected-areas-a-toolkit-western-indian-ocean-0#:~:text=Managing%20Marine%20Protected%20Areas%20-%20A%20TOOLKIT%20for,of%20managers%2C%20wardens%2C%20rangers%2C%20community%20members%20and%20others.)

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# Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management Toolbox (2020) *WASH Needs Assessment*.

1. [*WASH Needs Assessment | SSWM - Find tools for sustainable sanitation and water management!*](https://sswm.info/humanitarian-crises/rural-settings/planning-process-tools/preparedness-immediate-response/wash-needs-assessment)Upadhyay, M. (unknown). *How NGOs can write Project Reports*. <https://www.fundsforngos.org/featured-articles/ngos-write-project-reports/>