

ILRI Uganda Scientific Research Paper-Writing Workshop



Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe

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www.livestockfish.cgiar.org




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1. Summary

This workshop was conducted for the Livelihoods, Gender and Impact Program and specifically for ILRI staff and contractors working in the “Smallholder pig value chain project (MorePORK)”. This project ends in March 2017 and the workshop coincided with the current need to produce a range of written outputs: journal papers, policy and research briefs and leaflets. The Writing Workshop was to facilitate their writing. There were seventeen participants.

The participants brought project materials to the workshop, for example figures and tables and any other illustrative material that had been generated from data analysis. Participants benefited from intensive, interactive hands-on training. A post-workshop evaluation showed that most participants rated the course content and methodology as either “good” or “excellent”. The planning sessions at the start of the workshop were considered to have been particularly beneficial. Participants made several recommendations on how to improve the course, including fun breaks to help maintain energy levels. The trainers have a formal commitment to provide ongoing support until at least 28th February 2017 to facilitate the final completion of outputs. In practice, we will continue to offer support beyond that date to participants who continue to engage until the task is done.

2. Workshop preparation, organization, trainers

The lead trainers, Dr Chris Beadle (Scientific Research, Writing and Workshop Facilitator) and Dr Peter Willadsen (Consultant Scientist-Animal Health, Australia) were responsible for preparing the pre-workshop information for participants, most of the workshop materials and presentations, and the workshop schedule. ILRI through Emily Ouma and Sheila Ayoo was responsible for the workshop announcement, participant selection, budget, and organising the workshop venue, accommodation and other logistics.

3. Workshop participants

Workshop participants were*:

<i>Participant</i>	<i>M/F</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Key contribution (developed at workshop)</i>
Ben Lukuyu	M	Journal paper	The high cost of commercial feeds, opportunistic feeding, and poor combination of existing feed resources have led to poor pig diets and performance on smallholder farms in Uganda
Emily Ouma	F	Journal paper	Smallholder pig farmers are less likely to take up ASF biosecurity interventions if not coupled with an income (financial) incentive to counter the cost
Michel Dione	M	Journal paper	Participatory training increases farmers’ knowledge on biosecurity and improves their practices in the control of ASF
Brian Kawuma	M	Journal paper	If the various actors are to equably benefit from the PVC they should be encouraged to actively participate in forums where they can interact, share knowledge and collectively harness opportunities and generate solutions to sectoral changes
Peter Lule	M	Journal paper	Smallholder pig producers risk losing dominance in supply of pork in the next decade if technological changes provide benefits only to commercial and modern producers

Grace Asiimwe	M	Research brief	Information on identified constraints to productivity, profitability and consumption of pigs in Uganda can be used to improve livelihoods of PVC actors
Rosemirta Birungi	F	Journal paper	Socio-psychological factors that constrain the movement of women are a major determinant of the ways women and men participate in the PVC
Vincent Yiga	M	Journal paper	Pigs housed on treated deep litter (IMO) have lower feed intake and thinner back-fat thickness than those housed on a solid concrete floor
James Muhangi	M	Journal paper	IMO technology has a higher gross margin than concrete floor technology in smallholder piggery systems
Mary Jo Kakinda	F	Research brief	Capacity building interventions in the PVC improved the abilities of different actors to address marketing and production constraints, particularly control of ASF
Robinah Twine	F		
Eve Luvumu	F	Feeding schedule	Effective local pig feed planning, combinations and conservation promote the availability of affordable balanced diets all the year round for the smallholder pig farmer, leading to increased production and sustainability
Richard Erechu	M	Policy brief	Pig movement control policy should be included in the Animal Disease Control Act
David Kiryabwire	M	Leaflet	To bring on board butchers and traders to identify and use simple biosecurity and hygiene methods that target stopping risky pig/pork handling and trading behaviour associated with the spread of ASF
Lawrence Mayega	M	Leaflet	To develop a community biosecurity household fact sheet to prevent entry of diseases at community and farm levels
Asindu Marsy	M	Journal paper	Sweet potato silage technology is an untapped business opportunity that can reduce wastage and the feed scarcity gap for sweet potato and PVC actors, respectively
Margaret Kabahenda	F	Journal paper	Dietary intake of protein and fat was much lower than recommended levels and differed between household members while consumption of animal-sourced foods was associated with improved dietary adequacy

*ASF = African swine fever; PVC = Pig value chain; IMO = Indigenous microorganisms technology

4. Workshop content

To realize the full benefit of the workshop, participants were asked not bring draft manuscripts/briefs etc that were at an advanced stage of preparation. Instead, participants were requested to bring:

- A topic for their type of output
- Materials e.g. data, results, a project report or tables/figures to convert into the type of output
- Key references for journal papers

Participants were expected to develop their outputs at the workshop from these basic materials and data. The workshop offered a structured approach in the first instance to writing a journal paper, but emphasised the relevance to other types of output. It began with a series of seven minute / three slide presentations of the material each participant was to turn into their output, a method we use to begin the process of focusing down on to key elements of the proposed type of output. Approximately 30% of the time was spent on instruction, with the remaining time dedicated to writing and peer review. Each participant selected one other participant to act as peer reviewers during the workshop: the ‘trusted reviewer’ or ‘writing buddy’. Trainers were available to review drafts and provide advice during all stages of writing.

The workshop covered the following topics. Training presentations were given by the lead trainers, Drs Chris Beadle and Peter Willadsen.

- Principles and the Original Contribution
- Concept Planning: overview of the output’s narrative
- Outlines: logic of the output (building structure and content)
- Target Journal, Impact Factor (journal papers only) and Plagiarism
- Figures, Tables and Captions
- Introduction and Conclusion
- Discussion
- Abstract and Title
- Authorship and Acknowledgement
- All presentation material from the workshop was distributed daily.
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5. Participant feedback/evaluation

Fifteen of the 17 participants completed a post-workshop feedback form.

Feedback/evaluation scores for components of the workshop

Overall, participants considered the content and methodology of the materials as either “good” or “excellent”; overall level of satisfaction was scored similarly. There were some reservations about the quality of the room, perhaps because of problems with the internet and microphones. Fourteen participants would recommend the course to others; one did not answer this question.

Feedback table

Item	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Course content		1	5	9
Course methodology		1	6	8
Quality of the trainer				15
Quality of the rooms		6	6	3
Quality of materials		1	9	5
Overall level of satisfaction ¹			9	5

¹ No response from one of the 15 people who responded to all other questions.

Participants were also given an opportunity to contribute more general comments in three areas i.e. **1.** Do you consider the training session helped you to improve your scientific writing skills? Why? **2.** Was

there a session that was particularly important or relevant to you? **3.** Please let us know your comments for improving upcoming training sessions and **4.** What other comments would you like to make?

These responses are listed in full in Appendix 1. There was no widely common feedback to the first three questions. The first included a strong appreciation of the idea of structure and planning prior to the commencement of actual writing. Perhaps because of the range of outputs being prepared at this course, the preferred sessions varied widely amongst participants. There were also a variety of responses to the third question which we deal with in Section 7.

6. Workshop follow-up

Participants are expected to complete an advanced draft of their outputs and send to one of the trainers (Appendix 2). The trainers are committed to follow up after six weeks and three months if contributions are not received earlier, and will continue to provide assistance to the point of publication to anyone actively seeking support and advice. A nominal date for completing the advanced draft is 28th February 2017.

7. Trainers' observations

The interactions with this group were an enjoyable and encouraging experience. There appeared to be a genuine enthusiasm for the writing process and a commitment to produce the outputs. Hopefully this will continue to fruition!

The suggestions by participants will, of course, be taken into consideration should there be a future workshop. There was some call for greater content and more time. We feel this would be counterproductive. While the desire to have an "almost complete" manuscript by the end of a course is understandable, the course is sufficiently demanding that by the end of the week participants are tired and writing with declining efficiency. In fact, our desire and willingness to sustain the involvement with participants is our alternative to a formal "second week" i.e. a longer course. However, the suggestion "Please incorporate some fun breaks/energisers to keep energy levels up" is noted. In a previous course run by Chris in Vietnam, each day started with some cultural entertainment e.g. singing, reading poetry. Thursday evening's entertainment was much appreciated by both of us.

It is ideal if a course such as ours can be held at a site separated from the usual work environment. That this was possible on this occasion we consider had positive benefits on the progress that was made during the week, even though the cost of staying at the hotel was reasonably high.

Appendix 1

Participant feedback

Do you consider the training session helped you to improve your scientific writing skills? Why?

Yes, I can now confidently write a paper and be able to advise others.

Yes. I now know what to include in the different sections of an article for a journal paper, and the do's and don'ts for such papers.

Very much so because now I am going to write systematically. I can also make corrections to other existing documents.

I have never had any training on writing a scientific paper.

Yes. Although I have written and published several papers, I found this course very useful because it has enabled me to be more thoughtful before writing.

Yes. I now know about logical writing for all components of a paper.

This was my first time to attend a writeshop. I have found it very useful, especially the development of the Concept Plan.

Yes. I received new knowledge on presentation of results and discussion which I had not experienced before.

Yes, this enabled me to only include relevant material in each section of the paper.

Yes. Gives a good perspective to writing in general but highlights a lot that we take for granted when writing.

I have never received a training like this before and it has empowered me to write better in the future.

Yes, very helpful. Had a lot of new tips to learn and actually apply.

Yes, it was my first time to attend a scientific writing workshop, and first time preparing a journal manuscript from my work as lead author.

The training has helped improve my writing skills especially in the planning process, and how to present the various components of a scientific manuscript.

Yes. It helped me know that planning before writing and having a Concept Plan is important.

Was there a session that was particularly important and relevant to you?

All sessions were very important. I learnt new things

All sessions were relevant and important and it has been an eye opener

All of them were equally important because they were complementing each other. The one specifically on journals was an eye opener

The importance and process of planning writing before you begin actual writing and including data and facts

The Concept Planning (this was my first experience)

Yes, Abstract writing because it is now much easier to write than before training

The Introduction and Conclusions section

Discussion of Results

All sessions were equally important though the Key Contribution was the most exciting

Writing an Abstract

All were important and relevant though making your Title relevant to the readers out there was very touching

Innovativeness of putting together a Discussion

Key contribution and Introduction

Concept Planning and Outline. The Concept Plan was key, especially teasing out the Key Contribution of the paper

Discussion of Results and Abstract

Please let us know your comments for improving upcoming training sessions.

Subdividing participants into groups supervised by a “wiseman” who reads every particular part of the manuscript and gives comments rather than “writing buddy”

A provision for some of the participants to cast out their work on the projector (presenting) plenary critiquing could help the participants grasp the points better

Need to get the equipment such as microphones and net checked before to ensure that working properly

Use examples that are more tailored to the trainee profiles

Increase on number of days so that all participants hand in their work for review

Next time participants could be arranged into groups with particular topics assigned to them to work on so that interactions are increased

Embedding writing/statement of Results in the training sessions

Please incorporate some fun breaks/energisers to keep energy levels up

Establish platform where we can continue to share improvements

Allow more time – at least 40 hours total dedicated to workshop; include a brief session on Results and Discussion

Provide reading/reference materials ahead of the training; provide brief explanation about the course up front i.e. what are the expectations

Have a session on “Results” presentation and how to write a perfect title

Have more one-on-one sessions

What other comments would you like to make?

The writeshop was a success

I am happy with the training. It has been a very worthwhile use of my time

Thank you very much for providing valuable knowledge. And thank you very much ILRI for sponsoring the writeshop

The training was excellent, not only for scientists but for other participants as well

The work you did is highly appreciated

Timely response to writers seeking guidance is important

It has been a great and memorable interface, especially the motivation to write

Very good team and very encouraging – great teachers

Very excellent technical support on the sections of the paper by the facilitators every day. It helped to know what to do the following day

Really appreciated the time dedicated to actual writing and the interactions with the facilitators to provide feedback; the follow-up time allocation is important to help writers finalise on pieces of work

Appendix 2.

Participant emails and follow-up trainer

Participant	Email address	Follow-up trainer
Ben Lukuyu	b.lukuyu@cgiar.org	Chris
Emily Ouma	e.a.ouma@cgiar.org	Peter
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