

Documenting Locally Led Adaptation Success Stories in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB), Kenya

A Guide for Research Assistants on Writing Adaptation Policy Briefs, Reports, Blogs, and Case Studies

MODULE 1: Introduction to Documenting Adaptation Success Stories

As Research Assistants, your role goes beyond data collection; you are storytellers of resilience. Your mission is to document how communities in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) are adapting to climate change through the creation of policy briefs, reports, blogs, and case studies. This is the heart of what the Locally Led Adaptation Metrics for Africa (LAMA) initiative is all about: turning local knowledge into national and global solutions.

Understanding the Knowledge Products:

Policy Briefs – Targeted at decision-makers with concise, action-oriented recommendations. Examples:

- *County policies on wetland restoration in Siaya*
- *Integrating climate adaptation into Kisumu's urban planning*
- *Community-led flood management in Busia*
- *Drought-resilient maize farming incentives in Homa Bay*

Reports – In-depth, evidence-based documents that analyze adaptation interventions. Examples:

- *Adaptation strategies for sugarcane farmers in Kakamega*
- *Climate risk assessment for Lake Victoria fisheries*
- *Indigenous crop resilience in Migori*

Blogs – Storytelling-based, engaging, and public-facing narratives. Examples:

- *Kisumu youth turning plastic into eco-bricks*
- *Siaya women using solar-powered irrigation*
- *Climate-smart kitchen gardens in Busia*
- *Bungoma farmers using digital climate platforms*

Case Studies – Real-world, replicable examples of success and innovation. Examples:

- *Agroforestry in Vihiga to combat soil erosion*
- *Traditional water storage revival in Kakamega*
- *Crop diversification in Homa Bay*
- *Mangrove restoration in Kisumu*

MODULE 2: Writing Effective Policy Briefs

Introduction: Making Policymakers Listen

A policy brief is a short, focused document that presents research findings and clear recommendations to inform decision-making. Policymakers are busy, and therefore your brief must distill evidence into a digestible, actionable format.

Imagine you have five minutes to convince the Kisumu County Governor to invest in flood mitigation. What will you say?

Why Policy Briefs Matter

1. **Inform Decision-Makers** – Deliver key messages fast.
2. **Bridge Research & Policy** – Connect evidence to solutions.
3. **Encourage Action** – Highlight urgency and relevance.
4. **Engage Stakeholders** – Appeal to government, NGOs, and donors.
5. **Support Advocacy** – Add credibility to campaigns.

Structure of a Policy Brief

- **Title:** Catchy and clear (e.g., *"Protecting Lake Victoria's Wetlands: A Policy Priority"*)

- **Introduction:** Why the issue matters
- **Evidence & Analysis:** Data (e.g., flood frequency in Bunyala)
- **Case Example:** Local initiative (e.g., community-led dike construction)
- **Policy Recommendations:** Clear, actionable, realistic steps

Writing Style Tips

- **Length:** 2–4 pages depending on the audience
- **Clarity:** Use simple language
- **Brevity:** Focus on essentials
- **Visuals:** Use infographics, charts where necessary

MODULE 3: Writing Adaptation Reports

Introduction: From Research to Action

Reports provide the full story: what was done, how, and with what results. They are essential for learning, replication, and scaling.

Example:

Kisii and Nyamira launched a climate-smart agriculture project in 2022. What happened? A report explains the outcomes and lessons.

Types of Reports

- **Technical Reports** – Deep dives for researchers
- **Project Reports** – Monitoring and evaluation
- **Impact Reports** – Showcase successes

Structure

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Objectives
3. Methodology
4. Findings
5. Case Example (e.g., Indigenous seed banks in Migori)
6. Conclusions & Recommendations

Best Practices

- Clear headings and structure
- Visual data presentation
- Consistency and accuracy

MODULE 4: Writing Blogs

Introduction: Storytelling for the Public

Blogs make adaptation visible and personal. They build emotional connections and inspire action.

Example Title:

"How Women in Kisumu Are Turning Water Hyacinth into Biodegradable Bags"

Key Elements of a Great Blog

1. **Headline:** Catchy, benefit-driven
2. **Hook:** Strong first few lines (quote, question, or statement)
3. **Storytelling:** Real people, real change
4. **Structure:** Problem → Solution → Takeaways
5. **Visuals:** Images or videos
6. **Value:** Practical tips or lessons
7. **Call To Action:** Invite reader interaction or action

MODULE 5: Writing Adaptation Case Studies

Introduction: Learn and Replicate

Case studies show what works, where, and why. They can help scale local innovations to national solutions.

Example:

Community-led wetland restoration in Siaya County

Elements of a Strong Case Study

1. **Title:** Reflects issue and outcome
2. **Background:** Who, where, and what
3. **Problem Statement:** Define the challenge
4. **Solution & Implementation:** What was done?
5. **Impact & Results:** Quantitative and qualitative outcomes
6. **Lessons Learned:** Transferable insights
7. **Conclusion & Call To Action:** Encourage replication or partnerships

Interview Techniques for Capturing Local Voices Strong case

studies and blogs rely on authentic voices. Interview well. **Tips**

- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** “What changed?” “How did you feel?”
- **Build Trust:** Warm up with an informal chat
- **Listen Actively:** Ask follow-up questions
- **Capture Emotions:** Real stories, not just facts
- **Record Carefully:** Always ask permission
- **Verify Facts:** Cross-check with multiple sources

Exercises

- Draft a **policy brief** on a real adaptation initiative
- Write a **short blog post** using storytelling techniques
- Develop a **case study** based on fieldwork

Storytelling Techniques & The 5Ws + H of Communication The 5Ws +

H

- **Who?** Are the people involved?
- **What?** Is happening?
- **Where?** Is it happening?
- **When?** Did it occur?
- **Why?** Is it important?
- **How?** Was it done?

Use these questions to shape clear, structured writing.

Principles of Effective Documentation

1. **Simplicity** – Use plain language
X *"Anthropogenic variability affects hydrology..."*

R *"Climate change is causing more droughts and floods in Kisumu."*

2. **Structure** – Use a logical flow

- Introduction
- Causes & Impacts
- Solutions
- Results
- Lessons

3. **Evidence-Based** – Use real data

Example. "Kisumu County saw a 35% drop in rainfall between 2015–2023."

4. **Engaging** – Include visuals, quotes, and local voices

Example 'Before we planted trees, my farm was washing away,' says Achieng, a farmer in Migori."

Conclusion & Key Takeaways

- ❖ Stories shape policy, attract funding, and inspire change
- ❖ Clear, structured, evidence-based, and engaging writing is key
- ❖ Local context and voices are your most powerful tools

Next Steps for Research Assistants

1. Identify an adaptation story in your community
2. Draft a knowledge product (brief, blog, case study)
3. Use this training guide to refine your work
4. Refer to [ARIN PRESS](#) for practical examples of each of these products

Final Note: By documenting locally led adaptation success stories, you are not just chronicling efforts; you are amplifying voices, influencing policy, and driving meaningful change. Let your work be the bridge between local action and global impact.

Good luck!