

Developing writing skills

Key objective

To enable workshop participants to gain confidence and skills in writing practical information, discussion questions and participatory bible studies

TOOLS required

PILLARS workbook, Base line survey documents, any guide as examples of layout, approach and language level

Personnel required

Trainer or consultant to lead partner staff through a series of three workshops, the final workshop being where participants write a new guide on a subject of their choosing.

Anticipated outcomes

- Partner staff demonstrate increased confidence and experience in writing or documenting information in ways that are short and to the point and which meet the needs of a given target audience.
- Staff using effective illustrations to gain interest and highlight key points for a non-literate audience
- Increased ability to empathise and understand the needs of the target audience demonstrated in the content and language of the written materials produced.
- Staff gain experience in using open questions and discussion as a means of reinforcing learning and enabling people to take ownership of their own decisions.

Suggested approaches

- Run a series of three workshops as part of the PILLARS process
- Use a base-line survey to enable staff to understand the needs and priorities of sample target beneficiaries
- Carry out effective field-testing to ensure new writing is relevant and appropriate to the needs of the target audience.

Case studies

- PILLARS process workshops give participants considerable confidence and skills in writing and translation
- Participants have shown skills in writing new guides in a number of workshops – Mooré, Wolaitigna, Burmese and Yoruba.
- Writing workshops usually reveal several people who have real flair in writing and enable these skills to be recognised and encouraged by partner organisations.