



REPORT FORMAT FOR LOCAL COUNCILORS

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Report Formats for Local Councillors

Introduction

Report writing is a skill that is developed through practice. As a leader, you are expected to keep council and your electorate informed about your activities particularly those that hinge on fulfilling your mandate as a councillor.

As you may be aware all reports to council should be in writing to enable you and your colleagues and technocrats to account for the activities that you undertake for the benefit of your electorate/citizens throughout the year.

Reporting is also important because when being assessed it is one of the items, that can be referred to, to measure your performance in council. It is therefore important that all your official transactions are put in writing and delivered to the relevant committee, council or clerk.

A short and precise report is usually reader friendly and easy to comprehend. One of the skills that WDN-Uganda Chapter provides to its beneficiaries is report writing skills.

As you monitor government services, participate in council and in implementing government and other stakeholder programs; as you collect views from your electorate on various issues including those that they would like to see in the district development plan, or participate in monitoring government services the short report format can be a guide for you.

2. Key items to include in your report

2.1. Introduction

Your introduction is the gateway to your report. It should be short and precise and entice the reader to keep reading. A good introduction must include the following items:

- The title of the activity;
- The date and place at which the activity is conducted;
- Background and objectives of the activity; i.e. what necessitated the project? why are you conducting the activity and what did you set out to achieve?
- Persons who were involved in the activity either as supervisors, implementers or beneficiaries. It is good practice to segregate data of beneficiaries according to sex differences so that you know if both women and men benefited from the activity and who benefited more than the other. Segregated data enables you to target your audience better either through advance communication or specific instructions to the mobilizer/organizer of the event to ensure that both men and women benefit on an equal footing.
- The method that you used to gather information to inform your activity.

Example of an introduction for a monitoring visit undertaken by technocrats, executive committee of council and the area councillor to find out how a project on constructing bore holes has been implemented in Azia sub-county.

I. Introduction

Azia sub-county is located in Ozu county, Alia district. It is one of the areas with the least access to water. In 2011, the district council allocated 20 million shillings for the construction of three boreholes in the parishes of Oyo, Egba and Onyu in Azia sub-county. According to the plan, the boreholes were supposed to be constructed within a period of six months upon receipt of the money by the contractor. The contractor for the project is Awasa Water Engineers.

The objectives of the monitoring visit are:

- To find out if the boreholes in the parishes of Oyo, Egba and Onyu have been drilled
- To find out if the boreholes were drilled according to the specifications that were provided to the contracts committee by Awasa Water Engineers
- To find out if the people in the three parishes now have water and the effects that is having on their social and economic life.

In order to assess the project the water engineer, two members of the district executive and the area councillor for Azia undertook a monitoring visit to the three parishes in the sub-county on June 14, 2011. The contractor was represented by their chief engineer. Of the four people who conducted the monitoring visit one was female while the three were male. A list of the names of those who participated in the exercise is attached as annex A to the report.

Once the introduction is completed one should then move on to the main body of the report. The main body of the report is usually headed according to the theme of the activity. Different issues introduced in the body should have sub-headings to ease reading and maintain a flow of the report. For instance if we use the example of the monitoring visit to assess the bore holes project in Azia sub-county above the heading for the main body can be:

2. Key findings from the monitoring visit.

You can then use the objectives to develop sub-headings for each issue you address in the body. Always number your headings and sub heading.

Sub-heading for objective one. The subheadings must be numbered as seen below.

2.1. Presence of boreholes in the three designated parishes for the project in Azia sub-county

The text under this could read as follows:

Two boreholes have been drilled in the parishes of Egba and Oyo and met the timeframe within which they were supposed to be drilled. The monitoring team found them being used by the locals in the areas.

The borehole in Onyu had not been completed and was overdue by two weeks. The Awasa engineer attributed the delay to late delivery of two spare parts that are necessary for the borehole to be functional. He informed the district monitoring team that the bore hole would be functional in two weeks time from the date of the visit.

2.2. Adherence of the boreholes to specifications on the contract documents

Prior to the monitoring visit it is important for the monitoring team to have a meeting to understand the specifications of the boreholes as per the contract document and ask the water engineer to explain terms that they may not understand. This will ease the work of the team in the field and make them knowledgeable on what to look out for.

The text under this section could read as follows:

According to the contract document, the specifications of the boreholes were supposed to be:

- a) Standard build
- b) A drainage was to be built to let water run and a small protective circular finishing was to be constructed around the borehole with a diameter of...wide
- c)

It is important to know this information and use it to report on your findings.

The boreholes in the three parishes were constructed according to the specifications.

The drainage for the borehole in Egba parish was poorly built and the cement was peeling off. This could be attributed to the poor mixture of materials which may imply that supervision was not well done.

After addressing section 2.2. you should then move on to the last objective.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations usually follow the findings and analysis. You should number your recommendations and ensure that each of the objectives is addressed where required. Follow the sequence of the objectives in making recommendations so that the report flows.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion is composed of your opinions on the findings. For instance you could conclude by saying that: the contractor on the whole fulfilled the major aspects of the contract despite shortfall in Egba.

If you used any sources of data that is not yours you need to acknowledge it in a separate page titled references.