Sanitation Learning Hub blog writing guidance

27th May 2020

Before putting pen to paper:

- Be sure that a blog is the best way to convey your idea to your target audiences. Would a meeting, press article, series of social media updates, or short video for social media be better?
- Know your audience. Who are you blogging for? Who is the one person you really want to read your blog? SLH have target audiences that are worth bearing in mind:
  - In-country Sanitation and Hygiene practitioners
  - Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist/Consultant (International but with extensive field experience)
  - Southern Policymakers
  - Southern Sanitation and Hygiene academics
  - Northern Sanitation and Hygiene academics

  How would you tailor your messaging and language to best communicate with one (or more) of these different audiences?

- Be clear about what you want readers to do after reading your blog? For example, think differently, act differently, come to an event, sign up for a short course. What is your call to action?

Content

- Recommended word count: we suggest when writing you aim for 750 words, but somewhere between 400-1200 words is fine.
- Use keywords, no jargon, check facts, use clear subheadings throughout, keep it short and succinct.
- Easy to skim, using highlights, good examples, relevant/stand-out stats or images (where relevant) to enable someone to get the thrust of a position in under 60 seconds.
- Interesting, thought-provoking and fresh
- Keep titles under 70 characters (including spaces). We encourage the use of key words in titles and sub-heads, and recommend sub-heads for each new section or idea in the blog.

Images and graphics

- Submit a great image or photo to accompany written blogs.

Things to consider:

  - We follow strict photographic consent guidelines. If your photo includes clearly recognisable people, we will need a statement of consent from them. If you are unable to share this due to GDPR, but your organisation has a clear photographic consent policy, please send this on to us.
- Alternatively choose photos where people aren’t recognisable (e.g. an image that doesn’t show their face) or chose an image without people in it.
- Or you could use an infographic, illustration or alternative graphic.
- The size of the photo or image needs to be 1200px across as a minimum.
- Please include a short description (10 words max) of what the photo is depicting to add context for the viewer.
- Include the name of the photographer (or designer/artist) for the credit. If appropriate link to photographers’ website or Flickr page.
- Please include any Creative Commons details and link to relevant license.

**Editorial support**

Elaine Mercer e.mercer@ids.ac.uk and Alice Webb a.webb@ids.ac.uk from the Sanitation Learning Hub will help with editorial support providing comments, suggestions and edits where appropriate.