

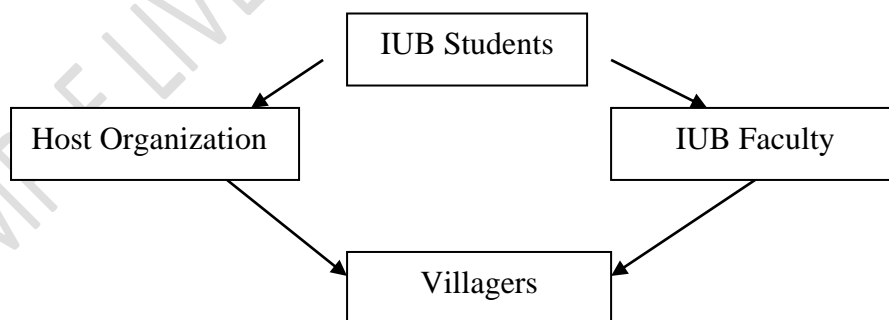
Report Writing

Report writing is an easy job. One can write on every thing you observe and submit it as a report **or** you can be very meticulous about your work yet very concise and focused about your subject matter. The second approach is what we want. Therefore it is wiser to follow some steps and formats to prepare a good report. The course entitled LFE 201: Live in Field Experience of Independent University, Bangladesh, offers a good opportunity for students to (i) go to the fields and observe things in a different (i.e. rural) setting, (ii) to work in a group and share the views, (iii) to be extraordinarily punctual and disciplined, (iv) to be collaborative with the host organization and host community and finally (v) to develop the skill of report writing and oral presentation.

There are some basic guidelines for the preparation of a good report and these guidelines are globally accepted. The acceptance of the content by the examiners or the clients would largely depend upon the way the subject matters are presented. The following paragraphs would highlight upon those issues which are related with LFE work and linked with report writing skill.

1. **What Do We Want to Achieve:** The prime objective of LFE 201 course is to introduce the urban area based students to the rural settings/ environment of the country where majority of people live. This visit allows you to learn the following things-

- You learn to record information collected through Questionnaire Survey and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)
- You learn to transmit and share ideas and concepts. This interaction is carried out with the fellow students and IUB faculty members and supervisors from the host organizations and the villagers.



- You learn to investigate on selected issues chosen under LFE 201 program, analyze facts and figures, and draw some conclusions.
- Final outcome is a report, which can be used as reference material for further investigation. As such authenticity of the information presented in the report is of immense importance.

2. **Beginning of the Report:** The report contains several distinct chapters. Some chapters are prepared individually while others are developed by the group as a whole. The front page of the report should contain a title, name and ID of the students, date of submission and area of work. There should

be an elaborate list of content, which must incorporate the following aspects with corresponding page numbers-

- Title of the issues discussed,
- Title of the maps and figures incorporated
- Captions of the photographs presented
- Acknowledgements- Students are guided by personnel both from IUB campus and the host institution. Their guidance and help can be acknowledged here.

3. **The Introductory Chapter:** The first chapter usually contains certain items in brief and they are-

- Introduction: which highlights upon the origin of the report, i.e. why students are conducting the investigation and what benefit would it bring to them or the community concerned.
- Objectives: This section will highlight upon the specific purposes for which the whole study is conducted or in other words, what specifically the students want to explore about the rural life structure. LFE reports are multi objective type. The principal objectives are stated in the booklet. Individual groups can add a few more to them.
- Limitations of the Study: Students might face some problems in the field regarding information collection or in communicating with rural people. Those limitations can be mentioned here.

4. **Methodology:** All the information and issues presented in LFE report are gathered through two different processes. One is Participatory Rural Appraisal(**PRA**) and the other is pre-designed **Questionnaire Survey**. Therefore it is necessary to explain what is PRA and how this technique is to be applied by individual groups for the collection of information. Several types of PRA groups will have to be formed within the assigned area to investigate different issues. The report must contain how those groups were formed and the structure of those groups, i.e. identification of group members with their **age, profession and education**. By default, the PRA group needs to be heterogeneous in nature. Four types of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) will have to be conducted for this report; they are (i)Village Resource Mapping and Transect (ii) Social Change Process (iii) Income Assessment and Gender Division of Labor and (iv) Rural Production Cycle and Cash Flow Analysis. **A photograph of individual PRA group must be attached with each chapter.** As far as the questionnaire is concerned, the total number of households visited by the concerned group, the identification of the respondents (e.g. household head, house wife, son /daughter of the household head) with their age will have to be mentioned. The selection process of the households needs to be discussed too. Unnecessary discussion on PRA method should be avoided.

5. **Main Body of the Report:** The main findings derived from PRA and Questionnaire Survey are presented in different chapters. Following issues need to be considered during the presentation of individual chapters. These issues are as follows.

A. Front Page: Individual Chapters should have a front page which will contain the title of the chapter along with the name and ID of the student. In fact all the chapters should have a front page and the format of this front page should be the same for all the chapters.

B. An Introduction and Conclusion of the Chapter: All individual chapters should have an introduction, a paragraph on objectives, discussion on major findings and a conclusion. The objectives of individual chapters should mention why that particular chapter is being prepared. The conclusion of each chapter should mention the major findings and the observation or opinion of the student.

C. Heading and Sub-Headings: Each chapter will incorporate several topics under which a series of sub-topics may appear. These topics and sub-topics should be written or typed with varying font sizes. The main topics would appear as headings and the sub-topics as sub-heading. The headings and sub-headings should be numbered according to their appearance in the chapter. An example is given below.

3.0 The Study Area–Rupoddi Village(Heading, Font Size 16)

3.1 Introduction(Sub Heading, Font Size14)

3.1.1 Significance of Village Mapping (Sub Heading, Font Size12)

D. Discussion of Tables: Information collected through Questionnaire Survey are presented in tabular form. Each Table should have a Number, Title and a Source. One example is given below.

It is often found that students simply describe the numbers or percentage plotted in the Table. This is not right. Rather they should explain WHY or HOW the numbers plotted in each table have emerged. Each table is discussed under a heading or sub-heading, therefore the title of the table should match with the title of the text. An example is given below.

5.3.3. Toilet Facility (topic heading)

The sanitation facility of Rupoddi village is in a better situation compared to other rural areas of the country.....(Table 5.5).

Table 5.5. Toilet Facility

Type	No	%
Septic Tank		
Pit Latrine		
Hanging Latrine		
Others		

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Major Findings:

E. Graphs, Charts and Photographs: Much of the information collected has to be presented in graphical form. **It needs to be noted that same data should not be presented in both Tabular and Graphical form.** Rather any information related with the data presented in a table or any extension of the data incorporated in the table may be presented in graphical form. An example is given below.

3.5. House Type

Type	Roof		Wall		Floor	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Tin	12*					
Bamboo	7					
Wood	-					
Concrete	5					
Earth						

Source: Field Survey, 2005

As found in the table 3.5, 12 respondents use tin as their roofing material and they mostly come from higher and middle income group (Fig 5.3).



Figure 5.3: Distribution of Respondents Using Tin as Roofing Material

Sometimes flow charts and photographs are inserted in aid of the discussion. All such items must contain a number and a title / caption. The titles/captions of these flow charts/ photographs must appear in the content page with their page number. Reference of the Table, charts and photographs should be made in the discussion. An example is given below.

6.1.6. Places Visited By the Villagers for Their Treatment

Villagers go to various places for the treatment of the diseases. Visits to these places depend on the nature of the disease and the distance of the concerned center (Table 6.1).

F. Appendices: Some Tables, charts and photographs, which are not directly related with a chapter but relevant to it may be presented at the end of the report under the heading of Appendices. In such cases references will have to be made properly.

G. Cross References: Tables presented in one chapter can be used or be referred to in another chapter. Under such circumstances, students only need to refer to those tables and chapters and need not to include the same table again.

H. Maps: A copy of the village resource map, transect map, map of social change and other relevant maps should be attached with the report. (On A4 size paper). **All maps should have a margin on all sides, legends should be properly presented and directions must be shown correctly.**

I. Referring to Time and Age: In some cases respondents fail to reveal the age or time of occurrence of an incidence and this may happen due to their ignorance. Under such circumstances the investigator needs to help the respondent to figure out the "Time". Here the students can try to figure out the actual time or age with reference to some major incidences which occurred during the time concerned.

J. Avoid Unnecessary Discussion: Repeated discussion of same topic or unnecessary discussion should be avoided. Marks will be deducted for unnecessary discussion.

K. Individual Chapter size, Font size, Line Spacing and Page Margins:

Individual chapters may vary in content and size. Students have a misconception that the grade given to an individual chapter is influenced by the volume of the chapter. This is not correct. IUB faculty members who examine the reports emphasize on the text (**grammar , content, presentation technique, analysis and organization of chapter**).

The official font size is 12, Line space is 1.5,page number at the center bottom and Page margin is 1" on all sides.

THEY MUST PROVIDE A HARD COPY AS WELL AS SOFT COPY

The softcopy to be mailed to

lfe@iub.edu.bd

6.Bibliography: Many reports and books are consulted with during the preparation of the report .Apart from these documents, different web sites are also browsed. All these sources need to be cited at the end of the report. The systematic way of preparing the list of references is shown below.

6. **Case Story:** Students who are enrolled LFE, will prepare 2 case stories on people they meet during their PRA and Questionnaire Survey. The focus of the case story would be the role of Government or Non Government organizations serving in the rural settings in influencing the social and economic life of rural people. Students will highlight on the basic characteristics of the case and then focus on the activities of an institution, which has contributed in mobilizing the economy or developing the social status of the respondent. At the end, students will add a paragraph on their overall observation about the case and the lessons they learn from each case story.
7. **A photograph of the respondent of each case story along with the interviewer will have to be attached with the report. Case stories will be submitted separately.**

8. Summary and Conclusion: This is a common chapter. All the members of the **group must sit together** to prepare this chapter, which will reflect the major findings of each chapter. One issue presented in one chapter may also contribute in shaping another issue of some other chapter. The conclusion will highlight upon those issues.