

Success Stories Guidelines

What is a Success Story?

A success story is an informative account or a case study of an inspiring action that made a positive change in people's lives. Success stories help member organizations spread the word about their achievements, as well as share experiences that others can learn from.

How to develop a Success Story?

- 1) **Select the topic:** the project, program, or service, the impact of which you would like to feature.
- 2) Collect the needed **information and statistics** to start writing. You are advised to involve staff members who worked on the selected project, program, or service.
- 3) Simultaneously, you should be collecting **relevant photographs** that best feature action in the work field.
- 4) Contact some of the project beneficiaries and ask them to draft **quotations** about their experience and how they benefited from the initiative, project, program, or service. Remember to get their approval for editing, translation, or publishing.
- 5) **Draft your success story** in the light of the instructions below.
- 6) **Share** the success story with your colleagues and ask for their **feedback**.
- 7) Get the needed **approvals** to send your story for publishing.

Elements of an Effective Success Story (1000–1500 words)

- 1) **Headline:** Choose an attractive title to attract the readers' attention and encourage them to read; it should be simple, concise, and informative.
- 2) **Background:** Mention a brief summary of your organization, including the scope of work and the long-term goals.
- 3) **Situation:** Explain the problem or issue your organization aimed to address.
- 4) **Response/Initiative:**
 - Describe the initiative designed to address the challenge.
 - Showcase the strategy and timeline of actions.
 - Mention the inputs (staff, fund, research, partnerships) invested in it, and the outputs (activities, trainings, products, etc.).

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- 5) **Challenges:** Mention the difficulties you faced and how you dealt with them.
- 6) **Result/Impact:** Describe the outcomes/impacts of the initiative. Explain how it improved people's lives or made a sustainable positive change in society. Use statistics to validate your story and highlight the substantial number of beneficiaries.
- 7) **Quotations:** Feature beneficiaries and quote them. Including first-person accounts serve as a real-life example of the positive impact of the initiative.
- 8) **Future Potential:** Mention your future plans for sustaining and/or increasing the positive impacts of the initiative.
- 9) **Photographs:** Provide two to three high quality photographs capturing people in the story context, along with short captions.
- 10) **Additional information:** Supporting materials, contacts, partners, etc.

Writing Tips

- Use clear and concise sentences, and avoid run-on structures.
- Break the elements of your story into separate paragraphs that help the reader better map the content.
- Use punctuation marks to aid the clarity and comprehension of your story.
- Link different ideas using transitional words to keep the reader on the right track.
- Avoid using acronyms and specialized terms, and provide explanations when necessary.
- Proofread the text to find and correct typographical errors and spelling or grammatical mistakes.