

WHO Scientific Writing, Mentoring and Coaching Course

International Conference on Family planning 2025
Bogota, Columbia

Dr Rita Kabra, Technical Officer,
Department of Life course, Health and Research,
Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Child, Adolescent and Aging Health



**World Health
Organization**

3-6 November 2025

human
reproduction
programme **hrp.**
research for impact
UNDP · UNFPA · UNICEF · WHO · WORLD BANK

Dr Rita Kabra

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A seasoned medical doctor specializing in reproductive health and public health management, with over 30 years of professional experience. She has spent the last two decades at WHO, Geneva, Switzerland, contributing to clinical practice, research, the development of norms and guidelines, and the implementation of evidence-based approaches in sexual and reproductive health, with a particular focus on family planning.

Currently, she works at the Contraception Fertility Care Unit in the Department of Life course, Health and Research at WHO Geneva. In this role, she leads initiatives to strengthen country capacity in programming, with focus on postpregnancy family planning and facilitating South-South Learning exchanges.

Goal

To develop skills & confidence of course participants to write and publish a high-quality scientific manuscript

Course Aim

Enable participants to submit their manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal within six months of the ICFP

Objectives

At the end of the course, trainees will:

- Have a better understanding on the need to document their work
- Be aware of the parts of a scientific manuscript & the fundamentals of good scientific writing
- Have the skills to craft a scholarly and lucid argument
- Develop their abstract into a scientific manuscript and navigate the process for submission and peer review
- Network with junior scientists, facilitators and experts who have similar interests

Target audience

Junior scientists who have abstracts accepted at ICFP 2025

- Students
- Clinical and public health trainees
- Health care workers
- Employees of implementing partners
- Government employees
- Junior academics/faculty

Course Overview

Abstracts accepted at ICFP 2025

Plenary
seminars
(4)

Meet the
expert at
ICFP

Coaching
after the
conference
(6 months)

Webinars
(2) to share
progress &
lessons

Networking
& peer
support

Develop academic writing skills

Write and submit paper to a peer reviewed journal

Paper accepted
for publication

Agenda

Day 1

3 Nov: 14:30-16:00

Why do I publish?

Keynote & moderator: Rita Kabra

Day 2

4 Nov: 7:00-8:30

The anatomy of a scientific paper

Keynote & moderator: Moazzam Ali

Day 3

5 Nov: 7:00-8:30

What journal editors want

Keynote & moderator: Mahesh Karra

Day 4

6 Nov: 7:00-8:30

Closing and next steps

Keynote & moderator: James Kiarie

Experience @ ICFP 2022

Contraception 144 (2025) 110810



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Contraception

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/contraception



Original Research Article

Building the capacity of young professionals in family planning to publish: Insights from the ICFP2022 WHO scientific writing, mentoring and coaching course^{☆,☆☆}



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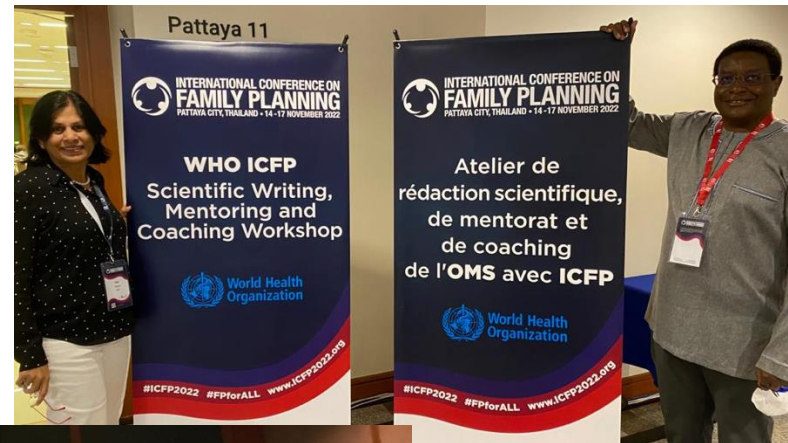
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^c Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, Geneva, Switzerland

^d International Conference on Family Planning, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, USA

^e UNDP-UNFPA-UNICEF-WHO-World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research



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Why do I Publish?



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Day 1: Why do I Publish?

Lecture

Rita Kabra (WHO)

Panel

Claire Rothschild (Population Services International)

Charlotte Greenbaum (Junior Scientist, PhD student)

Manjula Danansuriya (WHO)

Learning outcomes

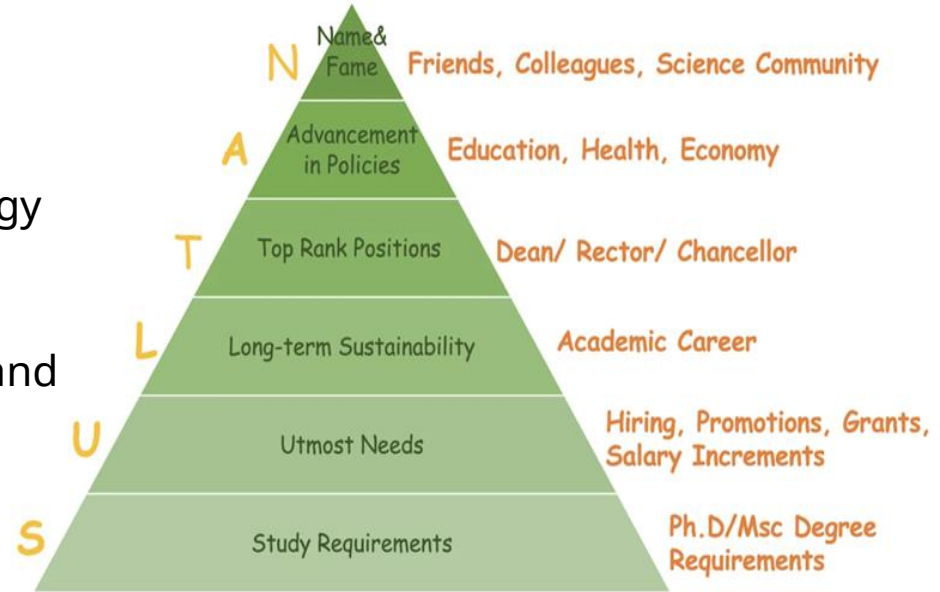
- Understand the purpose and structure of the course
- Know the reasons why we publish
- Tips for successful academic writing
- Understand authorship etiquette and rules

Interactive questions

1. What motivates you the most to publish?
2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident do you feel about writing a scientific manuscript?
3. Have you published at least one paper in a peer reviewed journal?

Why do I need to publish?

- Build knowledge and contribute to global evidence base
- Inform and Influence policy and practice
- Shape future research, develop technology
- Advance your career
- Build collaboration with peers, mentors and new research networks
- Ensure accountability and establishes reputation



Scientist may distribute information in many ways

- Informally communicating with colleagues
- Presentations at conferences
- Writing books, stories
- YouTube, WhatsApp and other social medias

Publishing in a scientific journal is Gold standard

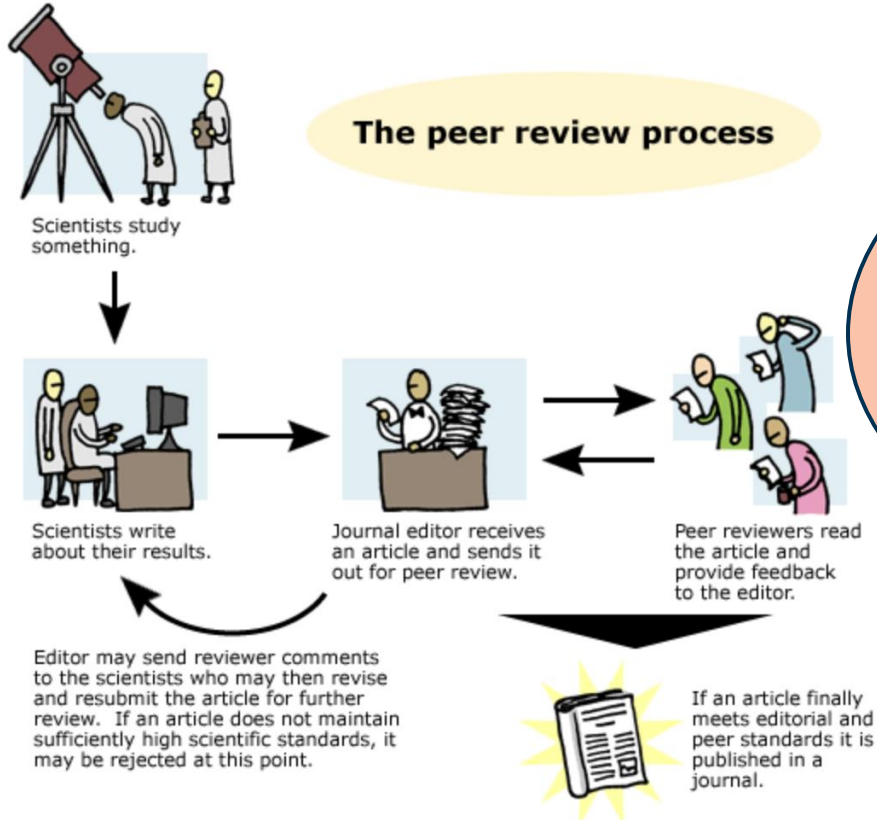
What is Scientific writing?

A structured way of communicating research findings- conveying what was done, why, where, when and how was it done, what were the findings and why it matters

Publishing a scientific paper,
is an iterative process- **not** a linear process

Peer review

Time consuming & competitive process



- Highly regarded journal accepts less than 8% of the article it receives.
- The NEW England Journal of Medicine, publishes only 6% of its submission

Tips for clear & effective writing

- Use active voice: say *"we analyzed the data"* instead of *"The data were analyzed"*.
- Eliminate unnecessary adjectives: replace *"a very large effect"* with *"a large effect"*.
- Minimize the verb *"to be"* where possible: *"Evidence suggests...."* rather than *"there is evidence to suggest..."*.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short and direct.
- Remove redundant words.
- * Use of responsible AI

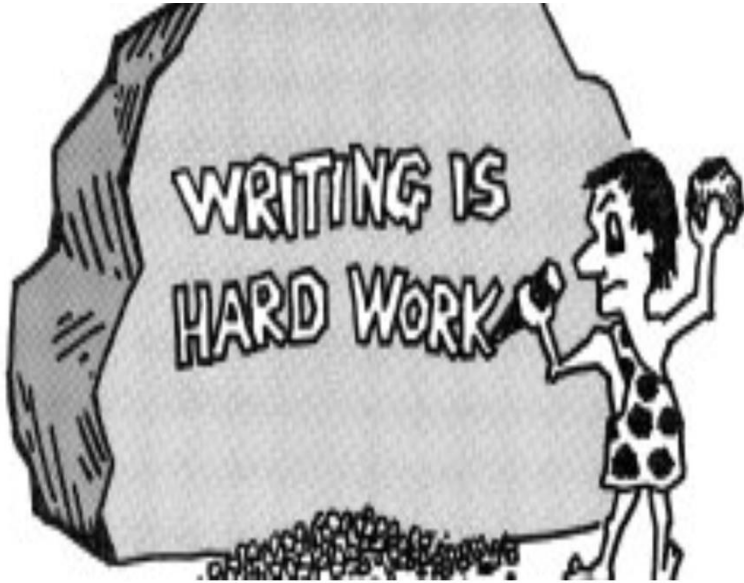
Who should be an author on your paper?

- **First author:** The person who made the major contribution to the research and writing the paper
- **Last (senior) author:** Usually the supervisor or principal investigator who provided overall guidance, mentorship & oversight of the work
- **Other co-authors:** Individuals who made substantial intellectual contributions
- International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) guidelines

ICMJE criteria for authorship

- Substantial contributions to the conception, design, data or analysis
- Drafting or critical revision of the manuscript
- Final approval of the version to be published
- Accountability for the integrity of any part of the work

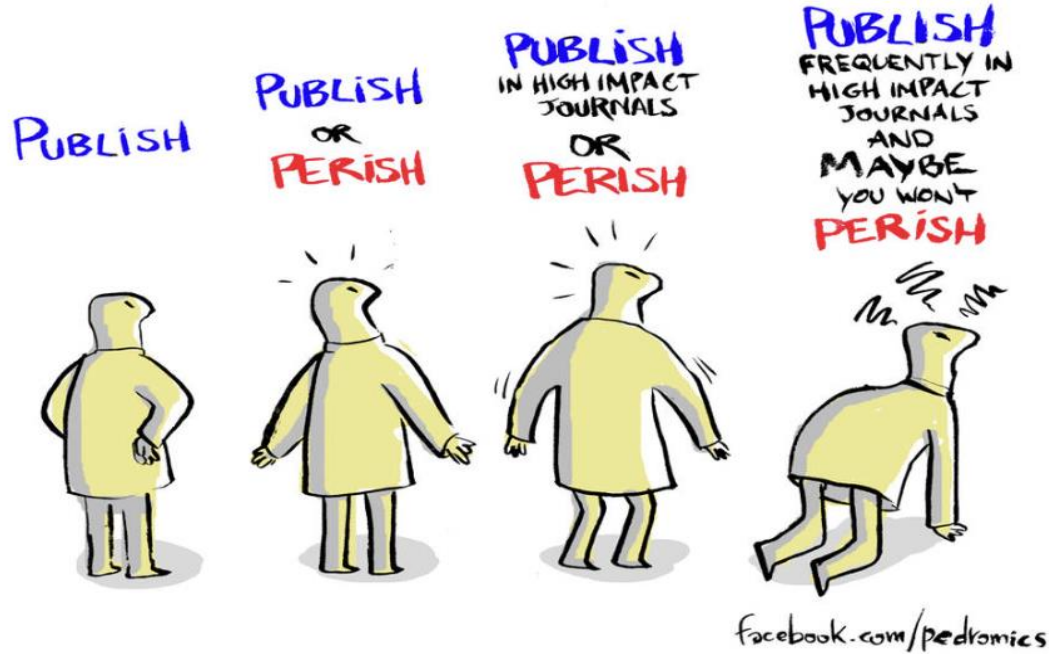
Why would I put myself through this!



The scientific community can only fulfil its role as fact checker, visionary, whistle blower, and advocates if it has trusted information about the work of its community.

Publishing is critical for progress of science

THE EVOLUTION OF ACADEMIA



Thank you