Grants to Institutions

Guidelines for Preparing Final Technical Reports

Programs and Partnerships Branch
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What is the Final Technical Report?

Upon completion of a project, recipients of IDRC project grants are required to submit a Final Technical Report as a condition for receiving final payment from IDRC. This report provides the details of the activities supported by the project, focusing on the substantive achievements and lessons learned from the experience. In addition to other research outputs generated by the project and submitted to the Centre, the report is a primary source of information and analysis for IDRC. It serves an important accountability function in reporting on what was achieved with IDRC support. And, in keeping with IDRC’s commitment to sharing knowledge, all Final Technical Reports, along with other project research outputs, will be available through IDRC’s open access Digital Library (unless otherwise specified), thus making a valuable contribution to the research literature disseminated by the Centre.

Throughout its history, IDRC has believed that to bring about positive change in the developing world, knowledge needs to be widely shared. The IDRC Digital Library makes available and
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preserves in digital format output that is created by IDRC-funded researchers or IDRC staff, and/or is otherwise relevant to IDRC’s program activities. The IDRC Digital Library follows an open access model of communication and provides long-term access to Centre-funded research outputs for researchers all over the world. It fulfills IDRC’s commitment to public accountability and contributes to the global movement to remove barriers – economic, social, and geographic – to the sharing of knowledge.

**The Final Technical Report will be placed, along with other project research outputs, in the IDRC Digital Library, except as otherwise specified.**

**Considerations for Final Technical Reports**

The requirements for all reports, including the Final Technical Report, are agreed to during project development and reflected in the *Grant Agreement*¹ signed between IDRC and grant recipients. The final technical report must contain sufficient information detailing the work accomplished — embodying project research findings, project results and outcomes, any direct or indirect gendered aspects of the project, policy recommendations and an acceptable dissemination plan where dissemination did not take place within the scope of the project —to allow Centre staff to determine its technical success.

The Final Technical Report must include a complete bibliography of all research outputs generated by the project. The report will be accompanied by all research-related outputs, and research outputs created as a result of IDRC-funded research, including all publications and reports produced in relation to the project. The recipient must submit these reports to the Centre in any form now existing or hereafter invented. Additionally, as per the Open Access policy agreed to in the grant agreement,

- IDRC’s Digital Operations staff will maintain yearly contact for up to three years after the completion date of the project to capture **subsequent research outputs** that have resulted from IDRC funding.
- The recipient will submit all reports to be published or disseminated on a non-open access basis elsewhere (for example, published books or articles), keeping in mind that:
  - there is an increasing choice of book and periodical publishers who permit open access sharing. For a directory of publishers see [www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php)

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¹ Please see the relevant sections on Dissemination of results, Disclaimers and duty to acknowledge and on Intellectual Property in the *Grant agreement* you signed with the Centre
many publishers allow open access availability of early or substantially different versions of books and periodicals.
open access is almost always possible with some (agreed) delay, if not immediately.

Before drafting the final technical report, the recipient shall review the following agreed upon requirements:

- Agreement on any intellectual property issues involved in “jointly owned” knowledge where several recipients and partners are involved.
- Agreement on any disclaimers or explanatory information that should accompany reports housed in the IDRC Digital Library
- Grant agreement or amendment documenting the reporting requirements or arrangements.

Before final payment, project completion and closure, all agreed reports must be submitted to the IDRC program officer responsible for the project.

The Final Technical Report provides valuable information on project achievements and outputs and enable further analysis and learning. A project cannot be closed without the necessary reports.

Using these guidelines

Structured guidelines are provided below. The recipient is to report on activities, outputs, and outcomes under each of the project’s specific objectives (research, capacity, or policy/practice), with summary of any overall outcomes and learning at the end. The recipient must also provide candid observations, wherever possible, about the overall experience with the project. However, sensitive or confidential issues should be addressed through a direct exchange with the program officer and documented and filed separately.

The following guidelines are for the content of the Final Technical Report, focusing on a substantive discussion of project activities, lessons learned, outputs, and outcomes. Actual substantive outputs of a project should be submitted separately and not be embedded within the report. This also applies to research results that are published, where the copyright holder cannot provide permission for open access dissemination of the published source in the IDRC Digital Library.
It is suggested that recipients familiarise themselves with the required content for final technical reports from the outset of the project, so that they can remain aware of the key elements of these reports and are better able to maintain the information which these reports require. It is also suggested that recipients document comments received on interim technical reports (if applicable) to include necessary adjustments in the final technical report.

**Preparing a Final Technical Report**

a. **Format**

Depending on the size and complexity of a project, the final technical report may vary in length. However, a final technical report should be no longer than 20 pages, excluding annexes. Project research outputs, including Final Technical Reports should be submitted in digital format via [IDRC Connect](https://www.idrc.ca/en) to facilitate diffusion. Please, refer to the email that you received for explanation about IDRC Connect and information on how to submit documents. See Annex B for a list of digital file formats that the IDRC Digital Library supports and that can be preserved over the long term. While submission of lengthy outputs in paper format such as published books is also acceptable, project leaders are encouraged to submit all project outputs electronically to facilitate dissemination.

Projects differ in relative focus on research, capacity building, and policy/practice influence, and there are different ways to organize this material. A suggested format is provided below, but alternatives may be used as appropriate to the project.

**Basic Project Information includes:**

**Cover Page**
Final report submitted to IDRC must include a title cover page. The important information that must appear on the cover page is listed below.

*Project Title*

*IDRC Project Number-Component Number*
When submitting a joint interim report, no component number is necessary.

*Subtitle (if applicable)*

*By: Full Name(s) of Author(s)*

*Report type: e.g., Final Technical Report*
b. Report Contents

Project leaders may begin by reflecting on the main messages they would like to convey, then focus in detail on those messages. IDRC’s principal interests in report content are in both actual experience and what was learned. Reports should include a Table of Contents. The report should be composed of the following sections:

1. Executive Summary

The report should begin with a half-page to one-page synthesis of the project report. This section should be an informative summary of the key advances, significant research findings, important outcomes and innovative outputs of the project. The focus should be on project achievements in terms of research results and outcomes.

2. The Research Problem

This section should state the basic rationale for the project and the research problem or problems that were addressed. Often, the researchers’ understanding of the problems will have evolved since the project was approved. The report should describe this evolution and the reasons behind it.
3. Objectives

This section should state the general and specific objectives of the project specified in your Grant Agreement, with a discussion of to what degree each objective was met. If certain objectives were not met, outline the reasons why and the subsequent impact on the project. Objectives may also have evolved, and the reasons and learning involved should be described. The degree of fulfillment of any new objectives should also be assessed.

4. Methodology

Describe and discuss the research methods and analytical techniques used and any problems that arose. Research instruments such as questionnaires, interview guides, and any other documentation judged useful to understanding the project should also be included. Indicate and explain any changes in orientation that may have occurred since the project was designed. Indicate any particular learning about merits of different methods for addressing the project’s research problem and generating desired outputs and outcomes.

5. Project Implementation and Management

This section should discuss the primary activities supported under the project, highlighting how those activities contributed to the project’s objectives.

- What was done with available resources? Describe the activities supported under the project and their timelines.
- What was learned about the implementation and management of the project’s activities? Were certain aspects of project management and implementation particularly important to the success of the project?

6. Gender Equality and Inclusion

In this section, the research team is given the opportunity to reflect and report on the project’s contribution to gender equality and inclusion (GEI). In examining issues of GEI, research teams are encouraged to examine intersecting identities and experiences (e.g., ethnicity/nationality, citizenship, ability, education, class, caste, religion, indigeneity, sexual orientation, and geographic location) that can contribute to compounding vulnerabilities and potential
discrimination. Using the gender progress markers found in Annex A, the team should determine the category in which the project falls, articulate outcomes and results achieved toward the category, discuss if the project has shifted categories from previous reporting periods, and share any other pertinent lessons or reflections. In sections 7, 8. And 9 the team is also welcomed to include GEI aspects into their responses.

While addressing the gender progress markers, consider the following questions:

- Did the project aim to address underlying root causes of gender inequality/gendered power? Were there explicit approaches to address the underlying causes of gender inequality including social norms and other structural barriers? Are there demonstrable changes or progress towards change in social norms and other structural causes of inequality?

- How was gender considered throughout the research cycle? Were local partners including grassroots organizations who understand the underlying causes of gender inequality in context included in the research?

- Has the research process considered gender equity issues such as team composition, meaningful participation of those most affected by the research and building gender equity in local research leadership? Gender equity may include ensuring that emergent local research leaders from different populations are having opportunities to co-publish, publish and present their work or participate in forums.

### 7. Project Outputs and Dissemination

This section should delineate project outputs, defined as all research-related outputs and results of the project and publications and reports produced in relation to the project, submitted by the recipient to the Centre in any form now existing or hereafter invented. They are the directly achievable products of a project’s completed activities (e.g., policy briefs, journal articles, research papers, trained people, etc.)

- What were the main outputs of the project? Provide a list of all project outputs, including complete citations. Identify any outputs that were planned, but which have yet to materialize. Specify when these outputs will be completed, including plans for any future publications.
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- What were the main specific achievements in terms of research, capacity building, and policy/practice influence? What was learned about the production or realization of research, capacity, and policy or practice outputs – for example, problems that arose, or changes in orientation that occurred. What contributed to these outputs and what lessons did you draw from the experience?
- If appropriate, highlight any unique or innovative outputs.
- If appropriate, explain why outputs were not completed or were of poor quality.

Examples of outputs include:

**Research:**
- Research reports
- Technologies (broadly defined, including social processes)
- Milestones achieved in knowledge building and networking

**Capacity:**
- Numbers of individuals who have completed training or other (mentoring, etc.) capacity-development activities – in research, capacity development (e.g., training of trainers), and policy (e.g., training/informing/involving of policymakers, stakeholders, and opinion shapers)
- Milestones in capacity development of teams, institutions, networks, and partnerships, etc. (may include both human and others, equipment or infrastructure support, outputs)
- Comment on the sustainability of increased institutional capacities, and on particular contributions to capacity building of women or marginalized social groups.
- Achievement in individual and organizational capacity (e.g., are researchers in the organization writing better proposals, obtaining successful funding from other donors, displaying leadership, better able to do research, better able to conceptualize and ask research questions, better able to draw conclusions and synthesize, more effective in making linkages with other stakeholders, making effective interventions in global debates, and participating in South-South and North-South dialogues?).

**Policy and practice:**
8. Project Outcomes

This section should describe project outcomes, which include changes in behaviours, attitudes, practices, capacities, policies, relationships, technologies, etc. that promote sustainable and equitable development and reduce poverty. They may result from the research process or the application of the research findings. It is important to consider both tangible achievements (outputs) and resulting consequences (outcomes), together with derived learning.

The analysis of outcomes should take into account social, gender, and environmental dimensions wherever appropriate and possible.

- What were the main outcomes of the project? How did the project contribute to:
  - Scientific, research, or knowledge innovations?
  - Changes in behaviour, capacities, actions, or relationships of researchers, networks, or research institutions?
  - Changes in behaviour, capacities, actions, or relationships of research users or those affected by the research process or findings?
  - Policy influence (e.g., expanded policy capacities of researchers; broadening policy horizons of policymakers; and affecting policy regimes)?
  - Technology development, adoption, and adaptation?
  - Changes in the state of economic, social, health, political, or environmental conditions?

- What was learned about approaches or broad design elements for conducting research, building capacity or influencing policy or practice in the field and circumstances of the project? What problems arose, and what changes in orientation occurred? Were certain aspects of project design particularly important to the degree of success of the project?
- What contributed to these outcomes and what lessons did you draw from the experience?

9. Overall Assessment and Recommendations
This section should include a summary of your assessment of your partnership with IDRC and any recommendations that you would like to make to IDRC, derived from the background information provided in previous sections of this report.

- Comment on the usefulness in achieving the project’s objectives through any partnerships with Canadian or other researchers, with Canadian or other capacity or policy-oriented organizations, and with other donors.
- What contributions to development did the project make?
- What would you do differently as a result of this experience, and what general and useful lessons can be derived for improving future projects?

Briefly provide your own views on the value and importance of the project relative to the investment of time, effort, and funding. Include any recommendations that you would like to make to IDRC. Candid observations about the overall experience with the project are encouraged. However, any sensitive or confidential information should be addressed through a direct exchange with the program officer and documented and filed separately.
### Annex A

#### Gender Progress Markers

| Gender aware | • Gender equality and inclusion is considered in the research project’s rationale but is not an operative concept in the design and methodology. |
| Gender sensitive | • Gender equality and inclusion is considered in the research project’s rationale and is addressed in the project design and methodology but does not (yet) extend to analysis and action to address gender inequalities.  
  • Awareness of intersectional issues, root causes in program area of research or field.  
  • There is minimal gender fade (the inability to incorporate gender analysis in the research methodology or implementation itself in spite of awareness and intentions of having included gender in the rationale) |
| Gender responsive | • Gender equality and inclusion is considered in the research project’s rationale, design, and methodology and is rigorously analyzed to inform implementation, communication, and influence strategies.  
  • At the start, the project is clear about gendered outcomes in the rationale for issues and targeting. Gendered (intersectional) relations are considered and built-in to call/concept note, grant contract, proposal and/or evaluation grids (pre and post).  
  • By the end of the project, in addition to the previous marker, project has addressed gendered intersectional relations in the research. This may include, depending on the intervention, sex-disaggregated (and other relevant intersections) instruments, data collection and meaningful participation of targeted marginalized groups. There have been gender considerations related to legitimacy (team composition and gender expertise) and support for capacities in gender and relevant analyses.  
  • Results of gender analysis are used to inform implementation strategies an influence outreach, communication and policy strategies. |
| Gender Transformative | • At the start, in addition to the previous marker, the project aims to address the root causes of gender inequality and underlying power dynamics and norms that perpetuate gender inequalities relevant to the research.  
  • By the end of the project, in addition to the previous marker, there is evidence of gendered outcomes achieved or well-positioned to be achieved. Gender was well-considered throughout the research cycle including legitimacy (team composition and broader governance including advisors, links to gender experts) and
positioning for use (forms of meaningful engagement, dissemination, forums, networking, authorship, co-authorship, knowledge translation).

- As part of addressing underlying dynamics and root causes, the project has led to changes in social norms and social relations and gendered power dynamics at different levels. How that is done will vary depending on research and intervention but there is related evidence of change or progress towards change.
Annex B

Digital File Formats Supported by the IDRC Digital Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item type</th>
<th>File extension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>PDF document</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoint presentation</td>
<td>.ppt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP3 audio</td>
<td>.mp3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPEG-4 video</td>
<td>.mp4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QuickTime video</td>
<td>.mov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows Media video</td>
<td>.wmv</td>
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