Planning for Impact- Writing retreat
In-person workshop at Hyderabad, India
(11th-13th December 2025)

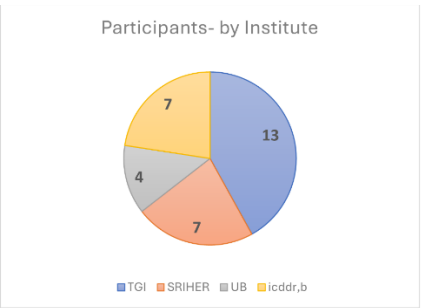
A three-day workshop was organized as part of the 3rd GHRC-NCD & EC annual meet at Hyderabad, India. The workshop was organized in a writing retreat format in accordance with the theme on "Planning for Impact".

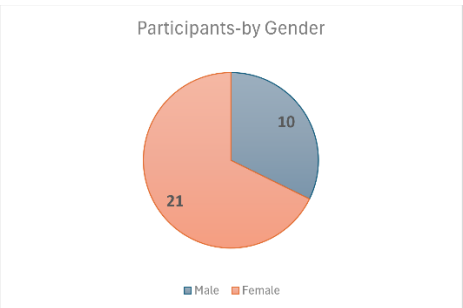
Intended learning objectives

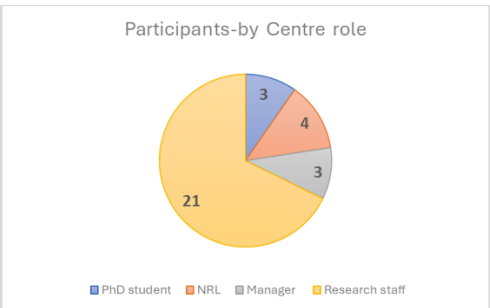
- To understand the concept of windows of influence to recognize critical moments for policy engagement
- To translate complex research findings into clear, concise, and accessible lay summaries, tailored to non-specialist and policy audiences
- To obtain one-to-one constructive feedback from mentors & peers in scientific writing

Pedagogy: Mix of teaching sessions & group presentations with dedicated time for writing and mentor interaction

Number of attendees: 31 participants across TGI, SRIHER, UB and icddr,b (online participation) attended the workshop. The agenda of the workshop and participant list is attached (Annexure 1 & 2 respectively). The breakup of participants by role, gender and institute is given in the figure below.







Workshop sessions

Policy analysis & Policy brief session
Faculty: **Laura Downey, RCS-Co-Lead, GHRC TGI Sydney**
The session involved a lecture followed by an interactive discussion with participants on ideal policy influencing window, ways of interacting with policymakers and aligning one's research with government priorities.

Streamlining publication submission process
Faculty: Subhashini T, Scientific administrative assistant, Project Associate-I, GHRC, SRIHER India
The session touched upon the why streamlining the submission process is crucial to avoid desk-rejection including discussing some pre-submission quality checks and post submission workflow.

Developing Infographics
Faculty: Sarah Iqbal, KM manager, GHRC, TGI India
A Pre-workshop session was organized where tips were shared with participants on developing an engaging infographic. Participants were requested to develop one per team and submit ahead of the workshop. During this session, each team presented their infographics and obtained constructive feedback from the faculty, to improve their work.

Writing a lay summary
Faculty: Laura Downey, RCS Co-lead, GHRC TGI Sydney
Participants were requested to submit a lay summary of their research/manuscripts ahead of the workshop. During the sessions, faculty used each submission to discuss and shared tips to develop and effective lay summary.

Communicating research with media
Faculty: K V Kurmanath, Guest faculty, School of Digital Media & Communications, Mahindra University
During the two-hour session, Dr Kurmanath described the guardrails, dos and don'ts' s of communicating research with journalist, and led the audience to think of their research findings from a journalistic point of view. He also shared some interesting examples of how complex research should be communicated in a simple manner to gauge community's interest.

Social media session
Faculty: Neha Sen, Communications officer, GHRC, TGI India
Participants were requested to share some information on their research work key words (adjectives & verbs) to define it and discuss it across teams during the session. The session covered the importance of hashtags, tagging relevant stakeholders and communicating one's research in different ways across different platforms.

Tacit Knowledge session
Faculty: Chhavi Bhandari, CEI Lead, GHRC, TGI India & Sarah Iqbal, KM manager, GHRC, TGI India
The third tacit knowledge with academy members focussed on impact pathways. The faculty discussed how short-term activities can be mapped to mid-term and long-term goals using real examples.

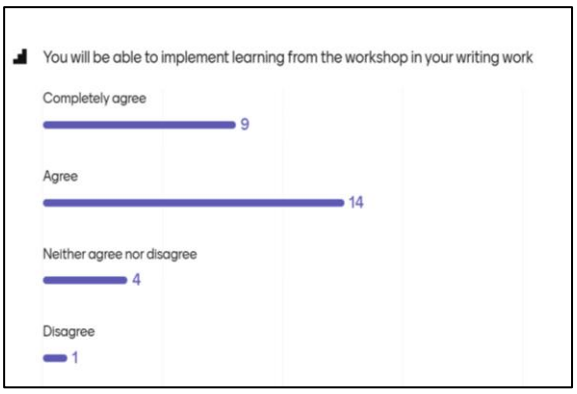
Write in Peace sessions
Mentors: Christopher Millett, Vidhya Venugopal, Laura Downey, Asri Maharani, D Praveen
Dedicated time for writing was blocked across two days for all participants. Ahead of the workshop, participants had submitted a total of 24 concept notes on the writing output they wished to work on.

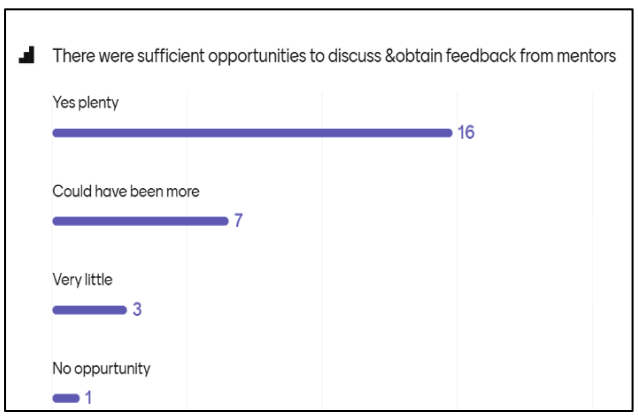
Concept notes were randomly allocation to mentors (4-5:1) who provided written feedback outputs which was shared with the participants ahead of the workshop to facilitate discussion. Slots were blocked for 1-1 discussion between mentors and mentees to further discuss their planned outputs in detail including feasibility, solving bottlenecks, sharing resources for supporting writing and developing a frame. Online 1-1 meetings were organized with icddr,b participants and their allocated mentors.

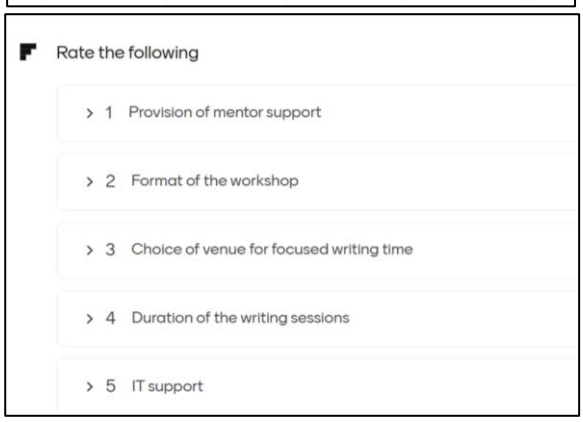
Participant feedback

Anonymous feedback was collected from workshop participants via Menti-poll during the last day.

- **76% participants** found the pre-workshop sessions **helpful** in supporting their writing work.
- **Networking opportunities** were found to be the **most useful** aspect of the workshop. Others include
  - Obtaining feedback from mentors
  - Different perspectives during discussions with peers and mentors
  - Enabling environment to work on their outputs
- A **full day packed scheduled** was seen as **a challenge** among participants, including some teaching sessions which ran longer than planned.
- Participants have suggested to have **better wi-fi networks** for future workshops and **more in-person group activities** will be helpful







Key learnings (from reflections & feedback)

- More time to be dedicated to writing, less number of teaching sessions
- Separate meetings to be planned for cross-country outputs

Informal Networking: Exploring the city!

Half day ahead of the workshop was dedicated to city exploration which provided all the participants an opportunity to interact with each other in an informal setting. A separate networking dinner hosted within the resort premises provided some time discussing about childhood, travel memories, Cinema and thanks to Rizka's brilliant emcee help us find some moves on the dance floor!

A big thank you to all our mentors, administration team, our participants, and to the city & team at Hyderabad for being a gracious host!

Until we all meet again!

Annexure 1

Date	Duration	Topic	Faculty
11th Dec	9:00- 9:45	Practical tips for writing lay summary, summary box and policy brief for advocacy	Laura Downey
	9:45 -10:15	Meet your mentors- write in peace session (group meeting)	All mentors & participants
	10:15-10:30	Tea Break	
	10:30-13:30	Write in Peace session-1	Mentors: D Praveen, Chris Millett, Asri Maharani, Vidhya Venugopal, Laura Downey
	13:30-14:30	Lunch	
	14:30-17:00	Write in Peace session-contd..	
	17:00-17:45	Presentation by Ms Suba (SRIHER) on Best practises in streamlining publication process Reflection of session 1	All
12th Dec	8:30-9:15	Developing Infographic summaries	Sarah Iqbal
	9:15-10:00	Policy analysis- actors, processes, importance, window of influence	Laura Downey
	10:00-10:15	Tea Break	
	10:15-11:00	Group Meeting with mentors	All mentors & participants
	11:00-1:30	Write in Peace session-2	Mentors: D Praveen, Chris Millett, Asri Maharani, Vidhya Venugopal, Laura Downey
	13:30-14:30		
	17:00-17:30	Reflection of session 2	All
13th Dec	8:30-9:30	Write an abstract/lay summary/summary box	All participants-moderated by Laura
	9:30-11:30	Communicating research findings to media	Kurmanath K V
	11:30-12:30	Practical session- Creating & posting content on social media	Neha Sen
	12:30- 1:00 pm	Feedback & Closure of the workshop	Aakanksha Mehrotra
	1:00 pm---	Lunch	

Annexure 2

TGI, India	SRIHER, India	UB, Indonesia	icddr,b Bangladesh
1. Renu John 2. Sabhya Pritwani 3. SrilakshmiY 4. Kiranmayee 5. Akhil Gurram 6. Praveen Puchileria 7. Maroof Khan 8. Deepika Luthra 9. Aakanksha Mehrotra 10. Sangeeta Sharma 11. Mamta Thakur 12. Ayushi Dhasmana 13. Chris Mary Kurian	1. P K Latha 2. Somnath Panda 3. Rekha S 4. Raaja Maarthi 5. Sajeeth Kumar 6. Akshaya P Singh 7. K G Gayathri	1. Eko Teguh P Adi 2. Dwi Sari P 3. Raissa Manika 4. Fildzah C Yunita	1. Noshin Farzana 2. Sharif Irfat Zabeen 3. Kamruzamman Sheikh 4. Fazley Amin 5. Sojubul Islam 6. Mahabuba Hasan Lima 7. Ridwana Nahrin