



Blog Writing

**writing about your
research for non-
academic audiences**



What's a blog?

Journal article = disciplinary conversation
Blog post = public conversation

When academics say 'blogging', we usually mean 'public writing' — writing outside peer-reviewed journals for broader audiences.

Personal blogs	Substack Wordpress Medium LinkedIn articles	Personal voice You build an audience
Edited news and commentary	The Conversation Guardian Development Mongabay	Public explanation Editorial policy, tone, sources Audience exists
Specialist dev blogs	Global Dev EADI, Global South studies	More engaged and aware audience Editorial policy



Why blog?

- Visibility and discoverability: reaching policymakers / practitioners / media
- Test ideas early
- Building networks and collaborations
- Translate research beyond the university
- Create a public voice and profile
- Make Global South research more visible internationally

Blogging is not 'less serious' than academic writing — it's a different form of communication.



Know your audience

Who is this for, and what do they already know?



- One audience per post
- One key message

EXAMPLE

<https://medium.com/@thabitsenior.jacob/tanzania-dp-world-saga-muzzling-of-dissenting-voices-must-be-condemned-fb338218a2b5>

Biggest differences

between academic writing and blogging

- Literature-led V reader-led
- Complex framing V point first
- Passive voice V active voice
- Caveats early V caveats later
- Jargon V jargon free
- Long V short sentences
- Complete references V links
- Neutral tone V clear voice



EXAMPLE

<https://theconversation.com/invisible-irrigators-how-small-scale-tanzanian-farmers-are-making-a-difference-71567>

VERSUS <https://www.safi-research.org/publications/index.html>

Possible elements of a blog



A blog post is not a simplified journal article.

- ✓ argument
- ✓ explanation
- ✓ reflection
- ✓ story
- ✓ example
- ✓ call to action

These elements can help
create an engaging blog

EXAMPLE

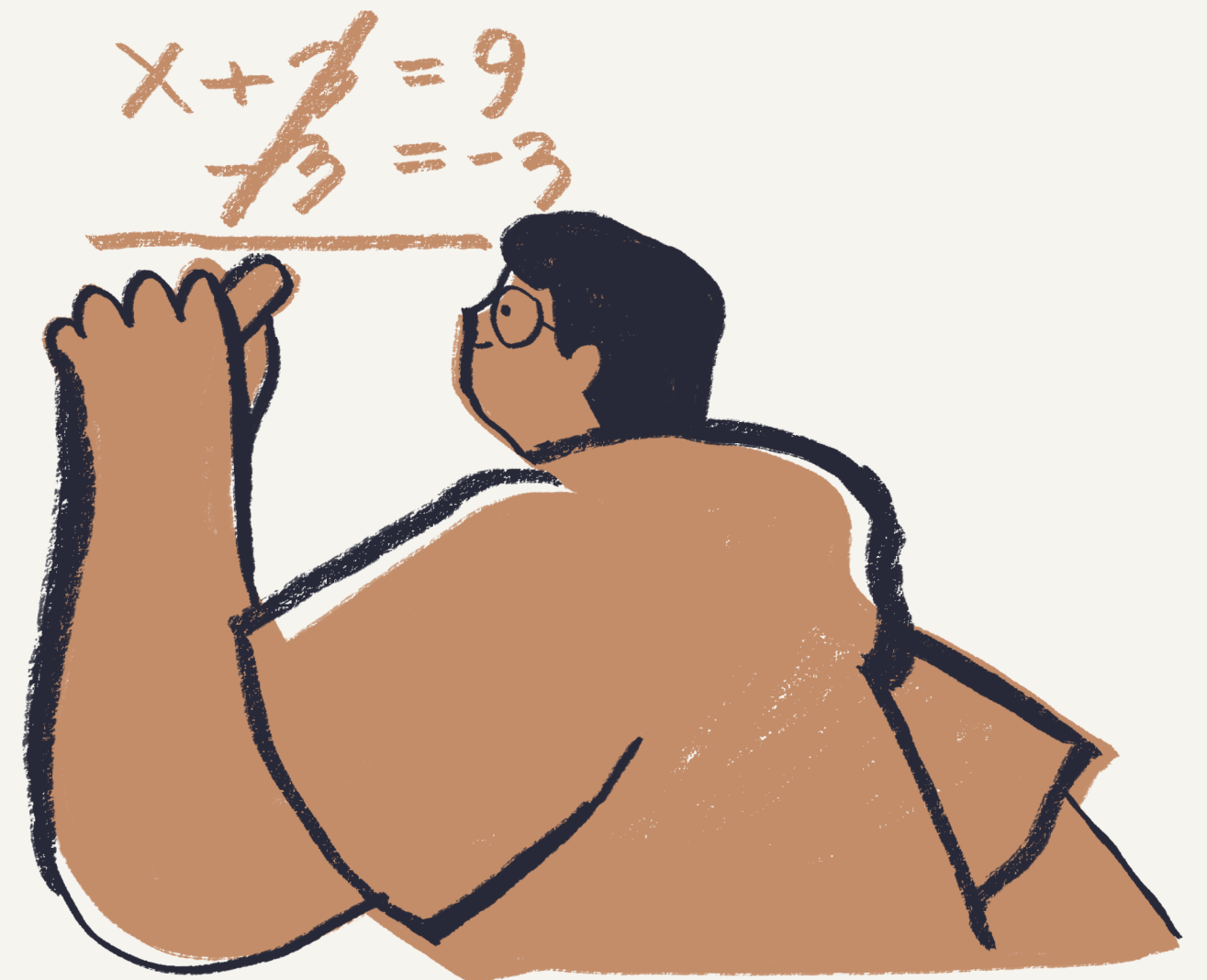
one
possible

Story telling formula

- What happened?
- Why does it matter (now)?
- What are you doing about it?
- How will you make a difference?

EXAMPLE

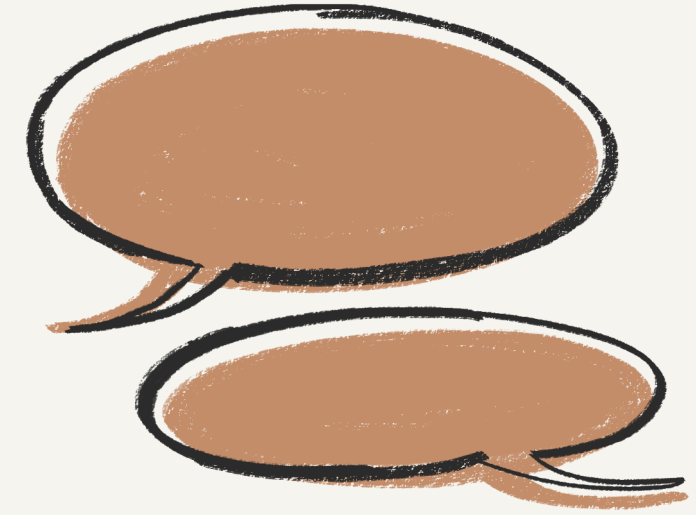
<https://theconversation.com/african-countries-must-consider-legal-challenges-to-sugar-taxes-before-pursuing-policies-156230>



Tips to improve writing

Explain your research to a friend

A good blog post is not about saying everything you know. It's about helping the reader understand one important thing.

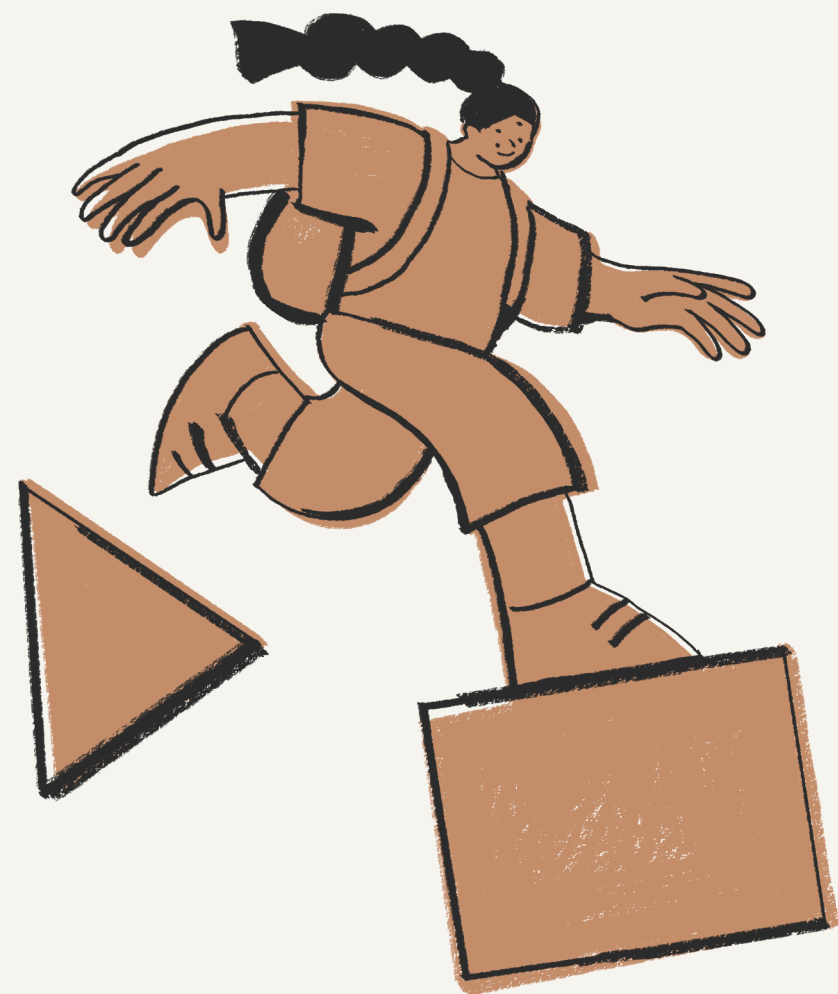


Tips to improve writing

- Write like a busy person is reading
- BLUF: front-load the point
- Cut the number of words
- If a sentence is over two lines - review it
- One idea per paragraph
- Use subheadings
- Avoid “development-speak”



Don't assume
knowledge
and skip jargon!



Skip words!

- stakeholders
- interventions
- capacity building
- leverage
- vulnerable populations
- beneficiaries
- donor publics
- mixed methods design

Get started

**Without over
thinking it!**



- Pick one thing you want to write about
- Read blogs that exist or you want to write for
- Practice writing and get feedback
- Don't pitch your dream first - start at a known place

how to guides



- [Global South: \(video, slides, how to Craft an Impactful Blog Post blog, list of Global South Studies blogs](#)
- [Utrecht University how to guides](#)
- [The Conversation Training Resources](#) Practical guidance on: pitching, writing for non-specialists, journalistic structure and editing process
- [GlobalDev Blog](#): Short, policy-facing development writing with Global South authorship.
- [LSE Impact Blog](#): A good resource on academic communication, impact, blogging and public scholarship.
- [Rising Scholars](#): Research communication resources focused on Global South contexts.
- [SciDev.Net](#): Free training via [Script](#) for of accessible science/development journalism.
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- **EADI**: European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes:
<https://www.eadi.org/news/blog-debating-development-research>
- **Development Studies Association**: <https://www.devstud.org.uk/category/blog/>