INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WASTE PICKERS

A union of waste picker organizations representing more than 500,000 workers across 39 countries

wastepickersinternational.org

IAWP publication guidelines

April 2026

Index

1 Types of publications 4
2 Elements of the publication 5
2.1. Title page (cover) 5
2.1.1. Title of work 5
2.1.2. Authorship and attribution 5
2.1.3. Logos and branding 5
2.1.4. Date of publication 5
2.1.5. Publication series 5
2.2. Imprint page (colophon) 5
2.2.1. Authorship 5
2.2.2. Commissioning statement 6
2.2.3. Acknowledgements 6
2.2.4. Disclaimers and disclosures 6
2.2.5. Suggested citation 6
2.2.6. Photo credits 6
2.2.7. Copyright and licensing 6
2.2.8. Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) 6
2.3. Executive summary / Abstract 7
2.4. Table of Contents (ToC) 7
2.5. Lists of figures, tables and appendices 7
2.6. Core content 7
2.6.1. Introduction 7
2.6.2. Methods 7
2.6.3. Results / findings 8
2.6.4. Discussion 8
2.6.5. Conclusions and recommendations 8
2.7. References 8

2.8. Appendices 8
2.9. About this publication 9
2.9.1. About the authors 9
2.9.2. About IAWP and partner organisations 9
3 Core style rules for researchers 9
3.1. Referencing system 9
3.2. Spelling and punctuation 10
3.3. Hyperlinks 10
3.4. Latin abbreviations 10
3.5. Numbers, dates and currencies 10
3.6. Country designations and maps 11
3.7. Audience-sensitive and inclusive language 11
3.8. Ethics, transparency and power in research 11

1 Types of publications

This section defines the core publication categories for the IAWP. While our website currently hosts Mapping Exercises, Position Papers and Reports sections under 'Publications', the following categories could be useful as the organisation expands its research output.

Working papers: Academic-style publications that contribute to the evidence base and present original or in-depth research. Their purpose is to generate and advance knowledge. The audience comprises researchers, analysts, and specialised policy audiences. Includes:

- Thematic papers synthesising evidence across projects, countries, or experiences around a broader theme
- Research paper: presenting original data, including detailed methodology, results and analysis.

Briefs: Short, accessible publications translating evidence and experience into targeted insights for advocacy, policy and practice. Their purpose is to translate evidence into usable insights. The audience comprises policy-makers, advocates, practitioners, and partners. includes:

- Policy brief: Highly condensed translation of evidence into clear options or recommendations for decision-makers. Focus on problem framing, key findings and "what should be done".
- Technical briefs: Concise explanation of a technical approach, methodology or tool used in programmes or research.
- Organising/practice briefs: Documentation of lessons from organising, programme implementation, or field experience (often drawing on case studies).

Resource papers: Supporting documents that compile or document evidence to inform advocacy, research or programme design.

- Mapping exercise: A systematic identification and analysis of actors, policies or technical gaps within a specific geographic or thematic area.
- Case study: Narrative of what happened, where and why in one setting (for example, impacts of a legal reform in country X). Mix of qualitative evidence, timeline and lessons.

Position paper: A document outlining the Alliance's official stance on a specific issue, justified by selected evidence and core values. The purpose is to articulate institutional positions for advocacy or public debate.

The standards outlined in this manual apply to all publication types listed above. Formal Resolutions and Statements are exempt from these formatting rules.

2 Elements of the publication

For researchers working with the Alliance, all reports and publications should generally follow a simplified IMRaD structure (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion), supplemented by the following front- and back-matter sections.

2.1. Title page (cover)

2.1.1. Title of work

- Titles must be concise, specific and engaging.
- Include key concepts (such as the specific population, geographic location and the main issue or intervention) to ensure the document is easily discoverable in digital searches.
- Avoid unexplained acronyms or technical jargon.

2.1.2. Authorship and attribution

- Authorship should be introduced on the cover only by the authors' names. (Example)
- If the research has a lead researcher, their name should be listed first. Other researchers and studies with no lead researcher should list names in alphabetical order according to their first names.

2.1.3. Logos and branding

- Include the logos of all organisations that fund or support the research.
- Unless otherwise specified in a grant agreement, logos should be displayed in the following order of prominence: primary partner, publisher, funders and then relevant partners. This applies only to IAWP in-house publications and does not apply to publications commissioned by IAWP and produced by external institutions (such as WIEGO or Tearfund).

2.1.4. Date of publication

- State the month and year of the final release. Example: January 2026.

2.1.5. Publication series

- If the work is part of an ongoing series, the series title and document number must be clearly visible on the cover. (Example)

2.2. Imprint page (colophon)

The page immediately following the cover contains the publication's technical, legal and institutional metadata.

2.2.1. Authorship

- To ensure consistency across all Alliance publications, follow this hierarchy:

Lead Researcher: The person who took primary responsibility for the study and drafting the document.

Co-Authors: Listed in alphabetical order by their first surname.

- List individuals as co-authors only if they contributed meaningfully to the design, data analysis or writing of the publication.
- More information about the authors can be added in the end section.

2.2.2. Commissioning statement

List all organisations that commissioned the study in alphabetical order using the following format: "This publication was commissioned by [Organisation A], [Organisation B] and [Organisation C]."

2.2.3. Acknowledgements

Use this section to thank those who supported the work but did not meet the criteria for authorship. This includes: Community members (waste pickers and local organisers who facilitated the research), local staff (administrative or logistical support teams) and other organisations involved in the research.

2.2.4. Disclaimers and disclosures

Depending on funding requirements, include one or both of the following:

- Donor Disclaimer: "This publication was produced with the financial support of [Donor Name]. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of [Donor Name]."
- Institutional Disclaimer: "The opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of the IAWP."

2.2.5. Suggested citation

To assist researchers and ensure consistent tracking, provide a suggested citation in APA Style: "Author Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of work. City: IAWP."

2.2.6. Photo credits

Credits for the cover image should be included, following this format: "[Description of photo], [Photographer Name/Organisation], [Year]." If any of this information is not available, it can be omitted.

2.2.7. Copyright and licensing

- Include the phrase: Copyright © IAWP. This report can be replicated for educational, organising and policy purposes as long as the source is acknowledged.

2.2.8. Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

- All newly published IAWP works receive a DOI to ensure the publication remains findable even if website URLs change. The DOI link must be included on this page.

- DOI link will be generated via ZENODO platform
- Important: Once published, the file cannot be changed or deleted. An updated version can be uploaded, if necessary.

2.3. Executive summary / Abstract

The Executive Summary should provide a standalone "snapshot" of the publication. It must be written in clear, non-technical language. It is not necessary in briefs and shorter documents.

- Approximately 150–250 words.
- Briefly state the problem, the geographic/social context, the methodology used, the key findings and the policy implications.
- Prioritise what was found and why it matters for waste pickers' rights or policy-making.
- Keywords: Include a line with 3–6 terms reflecting the main topics, populations and geography. Use terms that funders and partners are likely to use in search engines ("extended producer responsibility," "waste pickers," "informal economy," "informal waste and recycling sector," "just transition").

2.4. Table of Contents (ToC)

- A Table of Contents should be added for any publication exceeding 10 pages.
- Use a hierarchical decimal numbering system for all headings and subheadings (1., 1.1., 1.1.1.). Exceptions: Do not number the Executive Summary, Recommendations, or back-matter elements (Appendices/References).
- For digital publications, the ToC should be hyperlinked to the corresponding sections to facilitate navigation.

2.5. Lists of figures, tables and appendices

- If a publication is technically dense or exceeds 20/25 pages, consider the inclusion of a formal list of visual elements following the Table of Contents, such as tables and figures.
- Appendices: should be used for supplementary material that is too detailed for the main body (such as full interview questionnaires or raw data sets).

2.6. Core content

The main body of the report should follow a logical flow that allows the reader to understand the "why" "how" and "what" of the research.

2.6.1. Introduction

- Set the stage for the research. Why is this study being done now?
- Clearly state the research questions or the specific problem the publication aims to address.

2.6.2. Methods

- The methodology must be transparent enough to be repeatable.

- Describe the time period, geographic location and specific communities involved.
- Detail the sampling methods, tools used (surveys, interviews) and analysis steps.
- Explicitly state how ethical approval or community consent was obtained. Document how risks were mitigated and how partners/waste pickers were involved in the design and interpretation of the data.
- After the approval of IAWP publication guidelines, the IAWP team will create an ethics form for partners and researchers to use while working with the waste pickers.

2.6.3. Results / findings

- Present findings in a logical order, directly linked to the research questions.
- Report both expected results and "negative" or unexpected findings. Do not omit data that contradicts the original hypothesis.

2.6.4. Discussion

- Explain what the findings mean, how they compare to previous work and what is new.
- Address limitations (data gaps, biases, access issues) and what this means for confidence in the findings.
- Highlight implications for programmes, policy and future research.

2.6.5. Conclusions and recommendations

- Summarise the main takeaway messages and practical recommendations (could be listed in bullet points, as this example).
- Make recommendations that are specific, feasible for IAWP and partners and clearly linked to the evidence presented. Recommendations should also identify and be tailored to the relevant target actors, such as governments, brands, employers and other key stakeholders.

2.7. References

- The Reference list must be an alphabetical compilation of every source cited within the text.
- Use APA 7th Edition referencing style.
- Follow APA reference-list formatting (hanging indent, double-spaced).
- Ensure that every in-text citation has a corresponding entry in the reference list.

2.8. Appendices

- Appendices house supplemental material that is too detailed for the main body but essential for transparency.
- Label as "Appendix A", "Appendix B", etc.
- Each appendix must begin on a new page.
- Include items such as raw data tables, survey questionnaires, interview guides, or complex mathematical calculations.

2.9. About this publication

2.9.1. About the authors

Include a brief biography of each author (maximum 50 words). This should include their academic or professional affiliations, their current role and their professional email address. If a full biography is unavailable, provide a simple list of authors and their primary affiliations.

2.9.2. About IAWP and partner organisations

- Include the following institutional biography: "About the International Alliance of Waste Pickers (IAWP). The IAWP is a democratic international union of member-based organisations of waste pickers spread across Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America & Caribbean and North America, committed to advancing the rights and strengthening the organising of waste pickers. Learn more: https://wastepickersinternational.com/
- Partner organisations may also add a "mini-bio" (max 50 words) if desired.

3 Core style rules for researchers

Alliance publications are read globally, often by individuals whose first language is not English. Furthermore, English versions can serve as the source text for translations into other languages. To ensure our message is accessible and translatable, all writing must follow the C2PS principle: Concise, Clear, Precise and Simple.

- Prefer short sentences and plain language.
- Cut redundancy and filler words.
- Each paragraph should have one main idea; each sentence should move that idea forward.
- Avoid unnecessary technical jargon.
- Define any essential technical term once, briefly.
- Spell out acronyms in full upon first mention, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Example: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).
- Use acronyms only when necessary.
- Do not use metaphors, slang or culturally specific idioms, as these rarely translate accurately and are not easily understandable to non-native English speakers.

3.1. Referencing system

- To standardise publications, research developed for the IAWP should use the **APA (7th Edition) Author-Date system**.
- All original research commissioned by or written for the Alliance must follow the APA format for both in-text citations and the final reference list. In-text example: (Saltalippi & Luppi, 2025). Reference example: Saltalippi, M., & Luppi, P. (2025). Title of report. IAWP.

- If a publication was originally published in an academic journal or by another institution using a different referencing style (Chicago, Vancouver, etc), it is not necessary to convert the citations to APA.

3.2. Spelling and punctuation

To maintain consistency across global communications, the Alliance uses British English as its primary standard.

Exceptions to British spelling - The following must always retain their original official spelling, even if it follows English conventions from other countries:

- Official names of organisations: (International Labour Organization, World Health Organization).
- Titles of publications: Cite the title exactly as it appears on the original work.
- International instruments: (Treaties, Conventions or Declarations).

Whenever text in a language other than English is used, it should be shown in italics, with an English translation provided when it is first used.

3.3. Hyperlinks

As most Alliance documents are read online:

- Include hyperlinks to key reference documents where they are freely accessible.
- Avoid linking to subscription-based publications that may not be accessible to all readers.
- Ensure that links are accurate and functional at the time of publication and prefer inclusion of DOI link over standard link, when available.

3.4. Latin abbreviations

Latin abbreviations can be exclusionary, as they are often unfamiliar to non-academic audiences and do not translate directly or intuitively into other languages. Therefore, do not use Latin abbreviations in running text. Use English equivalents instead:

- e.g. → for example, for instance, such as
- i.e. → that is, namely
- etc. → and so on
- viz. → namely, in other words

Exceptions:

- “et al.” and “et seq.” may be used in references only.

3.5. Numbers, dates and currencies

- Numbers: Spell out numbers from one to ten and use numerals for 11 and above.
- Dates: Use the format 1 January 2026, do not use ordinal indicators (1st, 2nd).
- Time: Use the 24-hour clock where clarity is required (14:30).

- Currencies: Write the full name followed by the ISO abbreviation in parentheses. Example: United States dollar (USD), Brazilian real (BRL), Indian rupee (INR).

3.6. Country designations and maps

- Naming conventions can be politically sensitive. As a primary rule, use the terminology preferred by the waste picker organisations affiliated to the Alliance within that specific country. Our language should reflect the self-identification of our members.
- Avoid outdated, colonial or informal political designations.
- Ensure the chosen name is used consistently throughout the text, tables and maps.
- In cases where local organisations disagree on a designation, or where the political context is highly contested, refer to the United Nations Terminology Database (UNTERM) for the internationally recognised standard.
- If a specific name is required by a funder or member but remains contentious, insert a footnote or disclaimer on the imprint page: "The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the IAWP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area."
- When using maps that include disputed territories, cite the source and include the relevant disclaimer noted above. If needed, consult the United Nations guidelines with respect to the drawing of boundaries.

3.7. Audience-sensitive and inclusive language

- IAWP publications serve a diverse global audience, including waste pickers, trade unionists, NGO staff, funders and policy-makers. Our language must be accessible, respectful and free of bias.
- Use visuals (graphs, simple tables, diagrams) and brief success or challenge stories to improve accessibility.
- Avoid generalisations based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national extraction or social origin, birth or other status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.
- Avoid using the masculine pronoun as a generic form. Use gender-neutral constructions ("they", "waste pickers", "participants") and refer to specific individuals using their correct pronouns.
- Disability or illness: Prioritise the individual over the condition. Ex: persons with disabilities instead of disabled people.

3.8. Ethics, transparency and power in research

- As an alliance of waste pickers, we are committed to research that empowers rather than exploits.
- Explicitly discuss community and grassroots organisations' involvement and efforts to avoid extractive practices.
- Clarify any conflicts of interest, funding sources and data sharing arrangements.

INTERNATIONAL
ALLIANCE OF
WASTE PICKERS

www.wastepickersinternational.org

For further information please reach to nicolas@wastepickersinternational.org