Creating a New Print Composer

Open the 'Project' menu from the main toolbar, and select 'New Print Composer'. In the pop-up window, create a title for your map. This can be a unique name to describe your map's purpose such as "Political Map of Liberia" or simple such as "Map 1".

A new window will be created with a blank page. This shows how your map will look printed out.

You will need to add the common elements of a map to the map canvas:

- Map
- Title
- Legend
- Scalebar

Each of these elements can be added by opening the 'Layout' menu on the top toolbar.

Practice:

- Add your map by selecting 'Add Map' from the 'Layout' menu. You will need to draw the box by clicking and dragging the corners.
- Add a title to your map by selecting 'Add Label' from the 'Layout' menu. Like the map, you will need to draw the box by clicking and dragging the corners. The default text is 'QGIS'. This can be changed in the 'Item Properties' panel.
- Change the font and size of your title.
- Add a legend to your map by selecting 'Add Legend' from the 'Layout' menu. Like the map, you will need to draw the box by clicking and dragging the corners. You can add or remove legend items in the 'Item Properties' panel.
- Add a scale bar to your map by selecting 'Add Scalebar' from the 'Layout' menu. Like the map, you will need to draw the box by clicking and dragging the corners.
- Move these items around your Map Canvas until you are pleased with the layout of your map. Think of your audience: will they understand the information you want to convey?
- Compare your map with your neighbor's map.
- Save your map as a PDF by opening the Composer menu and selecting 'Export as PDF'.