

Writing and Reporting Guidance for IM Officers

In your daily work as IMO you might face the need to draft text for presentations, infographics, cluster inputs for other documents such as the SRP or OCHA Situation Reports... or simply for e-mails related to internal or external communication.

- **Client orientation:** the same data can be presented in many different ways. Think about your audience before starting the drafting process:
 - Who will read it? How familiar will they be with the subject matter? What is their need for information? Should you be presenting your data from an operational or strategic angle?
 - Include only information the reader really needs; omit redundant information. However, if your reader needs complex, legal, or technical information, do not omit it just to make the document shorter.
 - Remember that the same document may often reach multiple audiences.
- **What story do you want to tell your audience?** Your dataset may contain a lot of information – what is it that you want to highlight? Take a few minutes to narrow down what exactly you want to emphasize and what messaging could be appropriate for those who you expect to read it.
- **Structure:** The writer needs to determine the main elements of the document structure before writing individual sections and paragraphs and should answer the question of how best the story of the report can be told. If there is a template for a particular type of document then the most recent template should be used.

TIPS FOR IM OFFICERS IN EMERGENCIES

Get out there

- ✓ Go to the field if possible, get first-hand knowledge
- ✓ Be pro-active
- ✓ If you wait, you might be the last one in the queue

Know what to include

- ✓ Think about what your audience cares about **right now**?
- ✓ What is of interest to the cluster or organisation?

Don't bury the key message

- ✓ Structure the report to convey immediate issues: "So what" or "What's in it for me."

Mention your source

- ✓ Always remember to mention the source of your data
- ✓ If not possible, then state clearly that the information cannot be confirmed
- ✓ Assume everyone can access your document, especially if it is made available online

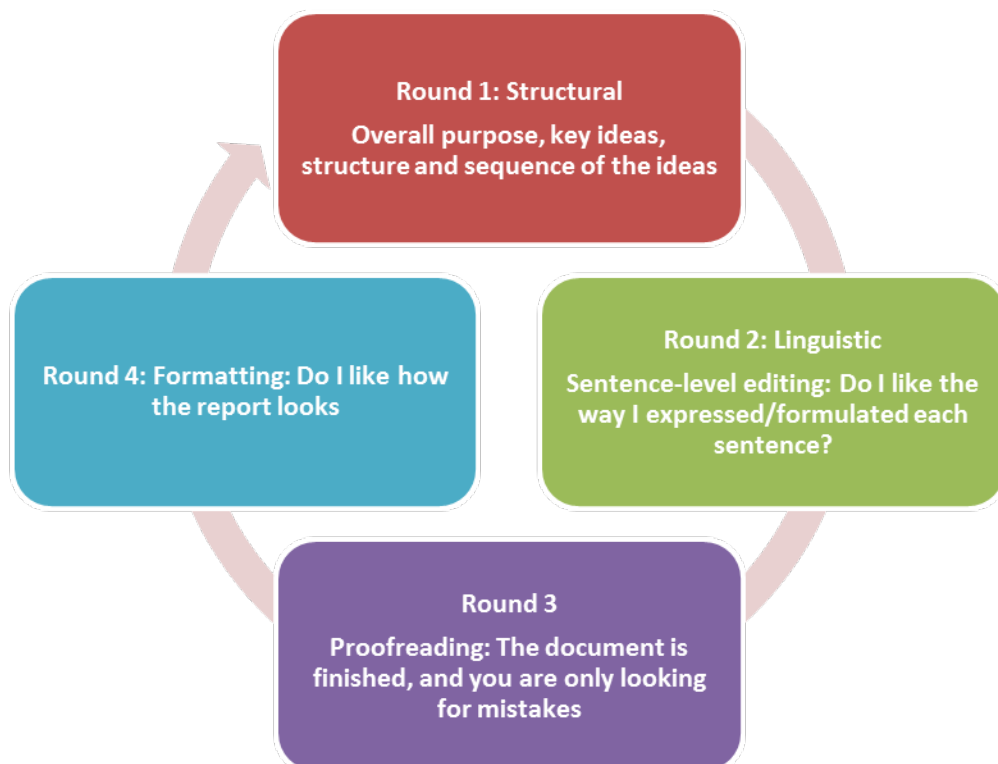
Make reports accessible

- ✓ Once cleared, send it to your audience.
- ✓ Make sure your distribution and/or contact lists are complete and updated.

Give and get feedback

- ✓ Seek feedback on all your information products.
- ✓ Give feedback to those who provide you with information.


- Less can be more: try to be concise and to the point. Particularly if your clients are decision makers, they may not have a lot of time. What is your key message? What are supplementary details that are not necessary to elaborate in great length?
- Make sure you understand your data: if you are not on top of things, it will be difficult to explain it convincingly to someone else!
- Consistency: try to maintain consistency within and between documents. This affects both data presented as well as formatting (e.g. dates, currency...)
- Short sentences: Keep it simple, especially if you are communicating in a foreign language. Split long sentences.
- Use of paragraphs: Limit your paragraphs to one topic or idea. Establish the subject matter of the paragraph (or series of paragraphs) at the beginning and then develop the information through a logical sequence of sentences.
- Don't forget to mention the corresponding reporting period as well as the release date of your report.
- Avoid unfamiliar acronyms and abbreviations (or at least spell them out the first time)
- Reviewing and proofreading: Do not edit a document immediately after writing it. Always allow time between drafting and reviewing. If you are close to a submission deadline, give yourself at least thirty minutes to take a break before looking at your document again.



Writing and Reporting Guidance for IM Officers: OCHA Situation Reports

Your cluster might be requested to submit inputs to OCHA Situation Reports on a regular basis. Typically, these will be a few bullet points following an established format. Please refer to the previous section on how to draft your inputs.

Country Emergency Situation Report No. XX | 3

 **Education**

Needs:

- Xxx


Response:

- Xxx
- Xxx

Gaps & Constraints:

- Xxx
- Xxx

XXm
XXXX

 **Food Security**

Needs:

- Xxx


Response:

- Xxx
- Xxx

Gaps & Constraints:

- Xxx
- Xxx

XXm
XXXX

 **Health**

Needs:

- Xxx

Response:

- Xxx
- Xxx

Gaps & Constraints:

- Xxx

XXm
XXXX

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)
 Situation Report No. 50 (as of 18 March 2015)

OCHA

This report is produced by OCHA/CAR in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period between 4 and 18 March 2015. The next report will be issued on or around 2 April 2015.

- I Key figures and dates:**
1. Report #
 2. Date of release
 3. Reporting period
 4. Date of next report

Highlights

- At least 10 people were killed and several injured following an armed-group attack in the north-east, near the Chadian border.
- The number of IDPs in Bangui continued to decline, but violence in several provinces caused new displacements.
- High levels of food insecurity are expected to persist until the end of the lean season in August.
- The UN Security Council concluded a two-day assessment trip to the CAR on 11 March.

CAR Humanitarian Issues and Hotspots



Sources: UNDSS, OCHA, CCCM and UNHCR

- II Always identify sources!**

436,300 IDPs in CAR, including	11% Funding available US\$68.2 million against the SRP 2015 requirements of \$613 million)	4.6 million Population of CAR
49,113 in 35 sites Bangui (as of 4 March)		2.7 million People who need assistance

- III Summary of critical highlights:**
1. Latest funding stats (FTS)
 2. Total affected, targeted, vulnerable populations, areas of greatest impact
 3. Use heat maps and other easy-to-read visuals as the audience includes non-humanitarians

Situation Overview

The overall situation in CAR remained volatile. Criminal activities continued in Bangui, and armed groups clashed in areas of Mambéré Kadéï, Nana-Grébizi, Nana-Mambéré, Ouaka, Ouham, Ouham-Pendé, and Sangha-Mbaéré provinces. Insecurity on roads and in IDP camps remains a major constraint for relief organizations attempting to deliver adequate assistance. In Ouaka Province, the Central African Republic Population Movement Commission indicates some 5,000 new displacements (from 52,000 people at the end of February to 57,000 as of 12 March).

At least 10 people, including two children, were killed and several others injured during an armed-group attack in Nganoundaye, a few kilometres from the Chadian border. Many residents fled the violence and sought refuge in the bush.

There are reports of a slight increase of some 1,000 IDPs returning from displacement sites in Bangui to their districts of origin, not indicative of security improvements. The internal displacement figures declined in Bangui, but other areas continue to be affected by outbreaks of violence resulting in further displacements.

All areas are expected to experience Crisis IPC 3 or higher levels of food insecurity through the end of the upcoming lean season in August. This is due to significant crop production shortfalls, premature depletion of household food stocks and destabilized household livelihoods, according to a February report released by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network. The report indicates that IDP populations in localized areas could experience Emergency IPC 4 level food insecurity.

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V Follow your reporting and visual style guides

IV Identify focal points for corrections to the report or for partners to send information: In-Country; HQ