Effective Writing and Reporting Techniques for Protection Actors

South Sudan
Thursday, 6th March 2025

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Overview

10:30 – 10:40	**Welcome and Training Objectives**
10:40 – 10:45	**The Essentials of Reporting (What, Why, Who and When)**
10:45 – 11:00	**Tips for Good Writing and Reporting**
11:00 – 11:05	**Reporting in the Protection Context**
11:05 – 11:10	**Recap of Key Messages**
11:10 – 11:35	**Learning from Each Other – Challenges and Solutions**
11:35 – 11:55	**Feedback, Resources and Answers – How Can the Protection Cluster Support YOU?**
11:55 – 12:00	**Wrap Up**

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Training Objectives

This refresher training aims to give you a foundational understanding of the report writing process in the humanitarian, and specifically protection, context.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this training you will be able to:

➤ Describe your own responsibility and support mechanisms avaliable in the report writing process.

➤ Explain why report writing is important and how it can be used by both those writing and receiving the reports.

➤ List elements of a good quality report.

➤ Apply relevant Cluster reporting requirements.

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The Essentials of Reporting

(What, Why, Who, When)

What do we mean by Reporting?

- A report is a **spoken or written account** of something that one has observed, heard or investigated for which one is responsible and accountable.

- A report contains **information that has been collected** from the field or operational areas of use, which is **presented to its readers**, namely internal staff (Protection Cluster) or donors.

- Reports **track progress** against objectives, outputs and activities to inform and assess results.

- Reports of different types can be used at all points in the implementation cycle of a project or programme.

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Why Do We Report?

We don't write reports because we have to, or have been instructed to do so by coordination teams. Reports are an essential part of our work in the sector and spending time on them has multiple benefits for everyone:

- **Accountabililty**: Reporting is an important tool when it comes to accountability. We are accountable to the people we support and to our staff, as well as donors. Reporting reflects that we are fulfilling our responsibilities and achieving the objectives highlighted in our proposals.

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Why Do We Report?

- **Re-gaining Focus:** Reports focus our work in an objective way. They are an opportunity to take stock of the environment in which we are operating, and reflect on which adjustments need to be made.

- **Important Learning:** Reports offer a change to collect information, draw conclusions and increase overall monitoring quality.

- **Recording**: Reports are a useful tool both for immediate use and as a record of information in a sector where staff turnover can be high.

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What Are We Reporting On?

- **Situational Updates:** events that have occurred in the area of operation, as well as external factors affecting that area (e.g. Sudan conflict)

- **Protection Gaps, Needs and Risks**

- **Affected Population Data**

- **Protection Partner Response:** provision of services and partner presence

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Who Are We Reporting To and For?

- Protection Cluster partners / PROMO members submit reports to the Protection Cluster Coordination teams at sub-national or national level.

- Protection Cluster Teams use this information to monitor the response, and for advocacy purposes: e.g. donors, humanitarian management, global efforts, other funding mechanisms.

- Protection Monitoring Systems, PROMO Spotlights, Protection Cluster Monthly Updates and communications

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Who Are We Reporting To and For?

- **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Reporting benefits your own <u>organisations and teams</u>, allowing you to take stock of the situation and for self-reflection on impact, progress and approach.

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Tips for Good Writing and Reporting

Characteristics of a Good Report

1. STRUCTURE

2. CONSISTENCY

3. RELEVANCY

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Characteristics of a Good Report

1. STRUCTURE

Follow the relevant reporting guidelines:

- **-Start** with a previous report. A previous report is a good starting point for a new one.

- **Integrate** new information into your report, **removing** old content as you write the report

- **Do not change** organisation, headers and categories

- Be concise and precise

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Characteristics of a Good Report

2. CONSISTENCY

- **Avoid changing** previously reported information

- Reporting is telling a story

- **Include** information on the implementation of previous reports -> periodic reports, and demonstration of evolution / progress

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Characteristics of a Good Report

3. RELEVANCY

- **Include** as much as possible recent statistics

- **Stick** to activities during the reporting period (don't include recent information outside of reporting period)

- **Cross-check** information presented in the report is matching information in other places, e.g. log-frames, workplans and relevant financial information.

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Tips for Good Writing

Be Specific

Use specific names and dates when referring to places or activities

Don't use: "some of the families" or "most of the children"

Use instead: "two out of ten of the families" or "95% of the children"

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Tips for Good Writing

Be Specific

Use specific names and dates when referring to places or activities

Don't use: "our Protection teams carried out risk assessments in two villages at the beginning of March"

Use instead: specify which two villages and the exact dates that the assessment was carried out

Tips for Good Writing

Avoid Vague Statements

Don't use: "while delivering awareness raising sessions, we came across some challenges, which we solved during the next sessions"

Use instead: explain what the challenges were, how you overcame them and what you plan to do differently in the future

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Let's Test it Out

"During the UNMISS visit to Budang, it was observed that many children are subjected to suffering incited by the ongoing armed violence in surrounding areas"

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Let's Test it Out

*"During the UNMISS visit to Budang, it was observed that **many children** are subjected to **suffering** incited by the ongoing armed violence in **surrounding areas"***

Wherever possible, try to include as much detail as much as possible:

- **How many** are affected?
- **What** exactly is happening?
- **Where** is this happening?

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How About…

"*During the UNMISS visit to Budang, it was observed that* **an estimated 100 children** *are exposed to* **risks of death, injury** *and* **psychological distress** *incited by the ongoing armed violence in* **surrounding Dalbur and Riak**"

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Let's Test it Out

"The number of children working in the street has increased within Wau municipality that needs attention from the Child Protection AoR"

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Let's Test it Out

"The number of children working in the street has **increased** *within Wau municipality that* **needs attention** *from the Child Protection AoR"*

Wherever possible, try to include as much detail as much as possible:

- **How many** are affected / what is the extent of the increase / decrease?
- **What** exactly is required by Protection actors or others?

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How About…

*"The number of children working in the street has **increased by approx. one third** within Wau municipality, that needs **child-friendly spaces** and **mobile MHPSS services** from the Child Protection AoR"*

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Let's Test it Out

"Protection Cluster partners continued to provide psychosocial services to the affected population in return communities while strengthening the community support system, peaceful coexistence between IDPs and refugees, and the host community members for social cohesion through awareness and community engagement"

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Let's Test it Out

*"Protection Cluster **partners** continued to provide psychosocial services to the affected population **in return communities** while strengthening the community support system, peaceful coexistence between IDPs and refugees, and the host community members for social cohesion through **awareness and community engagement**"*

Wherever possible, try to include as much detail as much as possible,:

- **Which** partners are responding?
- **What** specific service are being provided?
- **Who** are the target recipients of these services?

How About...

*"Protection Cluster partners **Community Aid** continued to provide psychosocial services to the affected population **in return communities across Bentiu** while strengthening the community support system, peaceful coexistence between IDPs and refugees, and the host community members for social cohesion through **7 awareness raising sessions and community engagement with local community leaders**"*

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If In Doubt…

Where you are unable to provide quantifiable data, estimates or guiding language can be used to frame information:

"incidents of land grabbing have **significantly** increased"

"cases of GBV have shown a slight decrease"

"number of cases of trafficking in persons has severely increased"
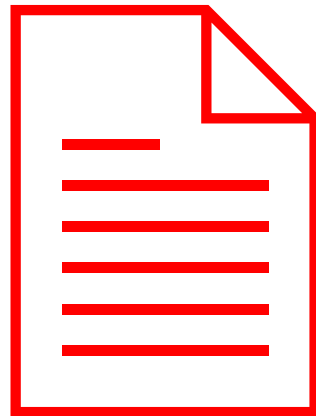
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Recap...

- ✓ Be Specific
- ✓ Avoid vague statements
- ✓ Where possible, quantify statements
- ✓ If not, use guiding language
- ✓ Provide details: Who, Where, When, What

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Why is Reporting on Protection so Important?

- Protection is a fast-changing environment
- People-orientated activities are particulary context-specific
- Sensitive issues require sensitive approaches
- Comprehensive and quick overviews of a situation or operating environment are essential
- Protection and coordination are staff heavy – effective reporting can help justify higher project costs
- Buy in from 'non-protection' actors is essential (centrality of protection)

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Recap of Key Messages

- The process of reporting is as important as the outcome

- Good quality protection reporting benefits Protection Cluster and Cluster partners mutually

- The protection context requires accurate and reliable data in a fast-changing and often sensitive environment

- Information in reports should be **structured, consistent** and **relevant**

- Good writing is specific and avoids vague statements, including wherever possible details (who, where, when, what)

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Hearing from Each Other

Questions for Reflection and Further Trainings

- What challenges do you find when writing reports?

- Are some protection issues harder to report on than others?

- What measures have you put in place to overcome these challenges?

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Feedback, Resources and Answers

How can the Protection Cluster better support YOU?

What resources are available?

Additional Resources

- An Introduction to Proposal and Report Writing – FREE online course, provided by Save the Children

- Global Protection Cluster Protection Advocacy Toolkit

- For more information – Emma Wynne (Global Protection Cluster) - wynne@unhcr.org

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THANK YOU!

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