

Process for writing a general advocacy note

An advocacy note gives us the opportunity to share our knowledge and understanding of a context and to ask key stakeholders for support – it might be their attention, their consideration, scaled up support, or an action of some kind.

Step 1. Strategic thinking

Before you start writing an advocacy note, think about its purpose and the information needed to present a strong argument. Consider the following questions before start writing:

- **What for?** Define the problem you are trying to address. If there are many issues that require your attention, you can prioritize the most urgent ones or those that could bring bigger gains if addressed.
- **What evidence do you have to illustrate and strengthen your argument?**
- **Who are your target audiences?**
- **What can your target audiences do to address the issue?**

Step 2. Writing process

Once you are clear on the objective, key audiences and recommended actions, the following outline can help you to write a strong advocacy note:

1. **Title:** Use a short and compelling title outlining your key ask that will be further developed in the document. Consider using a subheading for additional information, if needed.
2. **Opening statement:** Open with a statement that gets your audience's attention right away, perhaps using a prominent fact or statistic. This is your lead-in and should be only one paragraph with a sentence or two describing the main problem and action needed.
3. **Background information:** In two paragraphs, describe the country context. You can also describe the impact of global challenges in your context (ie: widespread drought in the region due to climate change, increasing food prices due to the conflict in Ukraine, ...). Finish this section with information on the nutrition needs, number of children affected and the humanitarian response. Describe work with other clusters and national authorities, where relevant. You can also describe in one sentence the work and priorities of the nutrition cluster.
4. **Challenges ahead:** You can detail here any gaps and challenges to an effective response – for example, funding challenges, de-prioritization of nutrition, lack of supplies, or reduced access. Explain why it is important to act and the impact if gaps and challenges are not addressed (ie: number of children that can't be reached due to gaps).
5. **Provide facts and data about the problem:** To support your position that a problem exists, data is important. Look for facts that are relevant to your audience. It can be displayed in the text or in a visual format such as a graph or a chart always ensuring an ethical use of data. Some sources of information include: [HRP/HNO](#); [Financial Tracking System](#); [IPC information](#); [GNC Dashboards](#).
6. **Give an example of the problem.** An example or story humanizes the issue and makes it real and more compelling. Make sure the example is relevant to your audience.
7. **Connect the issue to wider agendas.** Connect the issue to the audience's interest and explain how it contributes to wider agendas, such as: strengthening nutrition in contexts of fragility, multisectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration, humanitarian-development nexus, or the realisation of the Grand Bargain commitments on accountability to affected populations or localization of humanitarian assistance.
8. **Your asks.** Clearly state what you want your key target audiences to do. The more precise you are on the **WHO has to do WHAT and WHEN**, the clearer your target audience will be in understanding what are you trying to achieve and what it is expected from them. Consider recommendations for different stakeholder groups. For example: governments, donors, the wider humanitarian community, development partners, etc.

Tips to write advocacy notes:

1. Introduce the Nutrition Cluster and its work.
2. **Be brief.** Keep the document to 1-2 pages with short paragraphs of 1-3 sentences ensuring that in general each paragraph covers just ONE topic.
3. **Be simple.** Use short sentences and avoid technical language, jargon and abbreviations unless you are talking to technical people.
4. Improve your advocacy note with good **editing and revision**.