

Operational data portal

07 September 2023

Key points

- Information on the web portal is publicly available. This means that it is available to everyone on the Internet, not only humanitarian actors. It is therefore vital to ensure that information and data are of good quality and have been formally cleared for posting.
- To facilitate posting, the information manager should customise the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for clearing web portal data, which are endorsed by the Representative in the content management strategy. Information products and data will not have identical clearance procedures. Some information may be given blanket clearance by the Representative or emergency coordinator, meaning that it can be posted on approval by a sectoral lead or sectoral working group. Other information may need personal clearance by the Representative or Deputy Representative. Clearance procedures will depend on local circumstances, as well as the information's reliability and sensitivity.

1. Overview

The UNHCR web portal provides a unified platform for visualizing, coordinating and disseminating information on a refugee emergency situation.

2. Main guidance

When and for what purpose

The web portal displays the latest emergency data, maps, population statistics, demographic graphs, UNHCR and partner reports and factsheets, operational highlights and situation reports, plus quick links to a variety of partner web sites. It centralizes all the operational data and information products on a refugee emergency that should be disseminated to partners, donors

and governments, who are its primary audience.

A coordinated and well-maintained web portal is a key tool in an emergency. It is also an excellent example of use of technology to sharpen emergency responses, coordination and service delivery.

How to use the template?

Step 1. Portal deployment

A few key issues must be considered before you request a portal.

- Will appropriate staffing be available to sustain the portal's content?
- What will be the portal's focus? Will it concentrate on an emergency or provide a snapshot of the refugee situation as a whole?
- Are regional portals already in place?
- Are administrative unit structures and names clear and in accordance with ProGres?
- If regions are to be used, how will 'region' be defined (as an operation area or as a geographic or administrative district)?
- How frequently will new figures be issued? How will new figures be consolidated at country and regional level?
- What population figures will be displayed? How will the figures be disaggregated?

To initiate deployment of a new regional web portal, the country information manager should first seek approval from the Country Representative. The Representative submits a Portal Deployment Request Form (template annexed to this Entry) to the Regional Representative and/or Regional Refugee Coordinator (as applicable), who consults relevant Country Representatives and information managers in the region and then forwards the proposal to the Bureau and FICSS chief of section.

For country-level portals, consultation with the Regional Representative is not required. The Country Representative may submit a Portal Deployment Request Form directly to the Bureau and FICSS. In Level 2 or 3 emergencies, the HQ Emergency Task Force may initiate a portal request.

Responsibility for managing web portal content ultimately lies with the UNHCR Representative, supported by the emergency team leader and information manager, who will create many of the products the portal displays. In association with partners and other stakeholders on the ground, the information manager will also be responsible for gathering, managing and coordinating the portal's content.

It is important to reiterate that each country or region should establish a content management strategy and clearly name the focal points responsible for updating portal content. The

information manager in each country or region is responsible for keeping the site up to date. Where resources are limited or bandwidth issues exist, regional information managers can be asked to manage content for a limited period. Headquarter support is available for configuring, maintaining and enhancing a portal's performance and capacity; HQ does not manage content.

Step 2. Structure, content and information management responsibility

Responsibility for web portal content has been defined as follows:

Regional (for example, Horn of Africa)

- Total refugee population per country: information manager working with the registration officer.
- Regional Refugee Plan, and financial information: information manager working with the Representative, sectoral leads and the public information officer. The overall framework and structure of the regional portal will be the responsibility of, and managed by the Regional Bureau. While data for country specific pages of the regional portal, will be generated by the country level Information manager.

Country (for example, Kenya)

- Overall aggregate population profile, arrival trends: information manager working with the registration officer.
- Highlights, news: information manager working with the Representative, sectoral leads and the public information officer.
- Documents (statistics spreadsheets, maps, updates, reports, meeting notes): information manager working with, and collecting and analysing information from, the sectoral leads.
- Calendar and events: information manager.
- Working groups should have a dedicated page for coordination purposes (contact information, highlights, calendar, working group documents): information manager and sectoral leads.

Sub-office level (for example, Dadaab)

- Population profile, arrival trends: information manager working with the registration officer.

- Highlights, news: information manager working with the Representative, sectoral leads and the public information officer.
- Documents (statistics, maps, updates, reports): information manager working with, and collecting and analyzing information from, the sectoral leads.
- Calendar and events: information manager.

Settlement or camp (for example, lfo)

- Population profile: information manager working with, and collecting and analyzing information from, the sectoral leads.
- Basic indicators: information manager working with, and collecting and analyzing information from, the sectoral leads.
- Who's Doing What, Where? (3W): information manager working with, and collecting and analyzing information from, the sectoral leads.
- CRI distribution report: information manager working with, and collecting and analyzing information from, the sectoral leads.

Note: Population figures and 3W information are added at settlement level and aggregated upwards at the country and regional level.

Step 3. Metadata

When posting data on the portal, the following metadata should be included:

- The date of the data's validity.
- The source organization(s) of the data.
- Information on the method of data collection; other notes or comments.

Step 4. Sector-specific portal clearance

Sectoral groups, at both country or field level, may ask to post sector-specific assessments on the portal. Recommendations should be agreed consensually and are registered by the information manager at meetings of the RIM WG.

Step 5. Highlights

Highlights are 'bite-sized' newsflashes. They should not be confused with 'news'. Highlights uploaded on web portals are limited (without exception) to 160 characters.

A sectoral working group may propose highlights. Its chair should e-mail draft highlight text to the information manager, for clearance in accordance with the relevant SOP.

Step 6. News clearance

The senior public information officer or information manager may suggest news items to be considered by the Representative for publication. The information manager is authorized (by the Representative) to upload to the website news items from UNHCR's main public website, on request from the senior public information officer. News items from non-UNHCR websites must be cleared by the Representative (at the request of the senior public information officer) before the information manager can upload them.

Step 7. Interactive maps

An interactive map displays population figures by country, region and settlement. Infrastructure (schools, border-crossing points, warehouses, etc.) may be added and linked to specific partners. Linking infrastructure to partners is optional; if done, it is important to ensure that points are correctly attributed to all the partners involved. The information manager can decide which points he or she wants to make visible, using a checkbox in the portal's administrative interface.

Step 8. Documents

The number of tags (sector, partner, document type and category, language, location) that can be attached to documents is not limited. Because tags make referencing and searching much easier, it is recommended to attach as many tags as possible.

Step 9. Who is doing what, where? (3W)

3W information is created and maintained by the information manager. 3W information needs to be updated manually in the portal, based on reports from a 3W information system. Each partner will have a page on the portal, with logo and information about the organization, that can be updated. The information manager can use the RIM WG to supply partners with up-to-date information for their pages.

Step 10. Assessment Registry

Assessment Registry information is created and maintained by the information manager. It needs to be updated manually in the portal, based on assessment reports provided by partners, governments or UNHCR. Core metadata and descriptions of assessments need to be added individually. If an assessment document is available for circulation it can be added to the registry.

Step 11. Reporting bugs

When reporting a bug, be as detailed as possible. Indicate clearly the circumstances in which the bug arose and its incidence. To enable the development team to reproduce the bug, describe step by step what happened. Include information on the following:

- What actions did you take and what resulted, and what did you expect the result to be? (For example: "I edited the title of a news article and it did not change or save.")

Always provide detail. In the above example, for instance, clearly indicate the steps taken, the

news article that you edited, and the title of the new file that did not save. The development team will find it helpful if you provide screenshots. Indicate which browser you use and its version number.

Bugs can be reported either to the generic email address (webportal@unhcr.org) or via the online feedback form that can be found in the administration section.

Step 12. Portal features

Sectoral working group pages. These make it possible to display information by sectors, themes and geographic areas. Sectors may use this feature of the web portal to centralise their working documents, contact information, events calendar, highlights, and pictures.

Key Response Figures. These highlight specific figures that are relevant to an operation, helping to tell the story of the response in a succinct, comprehensible way.

Raw data export. Raw data is available for download from different location levels (regional, country, etc...) and from selected modules (timelines, 3W, the funding chart).

Funding module. This visualizes the financial requirements of the response, including gaps between budget and resources, disaggregated by country.

Image gallery. This feature uploads photographs to settlement, country or regional pages, and working group pages.

Links. This facility provides links to operational websites and partner information that are relevant to the emergency and the response.

RSS Feeds. RSS feeds feature news stories related to the refugee emergency.

Storyline page (optional). The storyline module is administered by UNHCR and tells refugees' stories, from the perspective of UNHCR, our partners, and the refugees themselves. The module may also feature news stories, videos and photos that highlight the human side of an emergency. It must be emphasized that a portal's purpose is to facilitate operations; it is not a public relations site. Before adding this page to your site you should clear the decision with PI/PR focal points locally, and put in place a strategy for updating the page with content that does not come from UNHCR.org or related sites.

Annexes

[Web portal guidance memo for emergency coordinators](#)

3. Main contacts

UNHCR DPSM / FICSS. At: HQIM@UNHCR.org