

Who does what where (3W)

24 March 2023

Key points

- 3W is a practical tool of information management for coordination and gap analysis.
- Keep 3W simple at the start of an emergency; focus on coordination. Extend the matrix later to include activities and projects. Making 4W complex too early will generate highly latent results.

1. Overview

The **Who's doing what, where** (3W) tool is a valuable information management tool for coordination and activity gap analysis. In emergency situations, 3W should be kept simple; but additional Ws may be added as the situation evolves (**When? Why? for Whom?**), expanding the tool to 6W.

An information management officer may lead this process, with support and collaboration from programme, protection and sector leads, the external relations officer, and senior managers.

2. Main guidance

When and for what purpose

Creating, maintaining and sharing the 3W with external partners throughout an emergency promotes UNHCR's coordination and communication role in information management. Raw data from 3W can support emergency programme monitoring, and contribute to overall gap analysis by representing capacity that can be compared to needs.

Steps to be taken

Step 1. Responsibility and reporting

Ideally, at the start of an emergency, the Information manager should use the 3W template included with this entry to establish a 3W in their operations, and also oversee the dissemination of related 3W information internally and to partners. The Simplified Reporting Template (also included with this entry) can be used in situations at the start of an emergency when the level of information available is not yet sufficient to complete the 3W template, however a lesser degree of 3W information is required for coordination and reporting purposes.

It is important to set up a regular and predictable clearance and dissemination plan for the 3W, because partners need to know what they can expect and when to expect it. The Representative should be briefed regularly, and should agree to a frequent 3W dissemination schedule (at least two or three times a month, externally and internally).

Once cleared by the UNHCR Representative, the 3W may be mapped and uploaded on the UNHCR web portal. Where possible, make use of creative dissemination techniques (mass SMS, e-mail lists) and ensure that hardcopies are available at information kiosks and included in briefing kits.

Step 2. Key Information

A 3W is populated through networking (in meetings, humanitarian briefings, sectoral working groups), informal contacts, and the monitoring work of field staff. It tracks information on sector and sub-sector actors, the location of activities, funding, and whether information is public.

Whenever new members join coordination or sectoral meetings, make contact and gather information for inclusion in the 3W, a copy of which should be shared. If a UNHCR Portal is established, information should be consolidated and updated on this platform as soon as possible. You may need to support this with offline 3W matrixes (see Annexes 1 and 2).

How to use the template?

Criteria for inclusion in (and exclusion from) a 3W should be decided at national level, under the guidance of senior management. For example, should donors as well as implementers appear? Should planned activities appear if they have not yet begun? Should activities appear only if Government has authorized them?

Such questions should be considered explicitly when deciding who and what to track in the 3W matrix. Columns and filters can be added to the spreadsheet template, to separate different forms of humanitarian activity (planned-started-completed, donor-implementer, officially authorized, etc.) making it possible to derive different 3W matrices for different purposes. Senior management should determine what 3W matrices appear in public domains, such as the web portal.

Annexes

[Simplified 3W Reporting Tool for Coordination](#)

[3W Excel Reporting Template](#)

3. Links

[UNHCR data portals / information management toolkit](#)

4. Main contacts

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