**Problem statement template**

The problem statement can be created using the 5 **W**s below. First, bring the people who are interested in the problem or impacted by it together. As a group really understand what the problem is (there may be several problems so take time to do a root cause analysis to help focus and differentiate the problems – address one problem at a time.

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| **Write the problem statement using the 5 Ws, then develop a plan to fix the problem and improve the service****First, identify the problem:*** **Define** and understand the problem (**W**hen, **w**here, **w**ho)
* **Measure** the problem using reliable data (**W**hat)
* **Analyse** the root cause of the problem (**W**hy)

**Second, act to resolve and improve in a sustainable way:*** **Improve –** fix the root cause (activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes)
* **Control –** what needs to ongoing activity to ensure problem is resolved in a sustainable way (activities and inputs)

**When does the problem occur?** **Where does the problem occur?** **What is the size/scale/impact of the problem?** **Who is experiencing the problem?** **Why is the problem occurring?** |

After you have written the problem statement go on to look at how you can **improve** and **resolve** thisstate. Think about the measures and outcomes that will demonstrate that the problem is fixed. Think about the activities needed to change and improve the problem. There may be other additional benefits as you work to fix the problem, identify these and, identify all the resource that you need to get going with the activity plan. Remember to fix a timeframe to the plan: also work with the group who came together to identify the problem, so that all interested parties can champion the work and agree that the outcomes are finally agreed.

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| **Problem statement:**  |
| What **activities** will need to be undertaken as you work to resolve the problem? | What **inputs** will you need, i.e., the resource to carry out the activities, this will include both budget and human resource | What **outputs** will be achieved as you work towards the outcomes (what key milestones will you expect to see along the way)? | What **outcomes** will demonstrate the problem has been sustainably resolved |