Disclosing and identifying international protection needs in the Middle East and North Africa

Training Module, Part 5: Referral and Coordination

Center for Human Rights, Gender and Migration

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

MENA Community Protection Network

supported by

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Lesson Objectives

Review research findings

Improving national and cross-border networks

Self-audit: Referral and coordination

Regional mapping tool

Reflect, share, and discuss

Findings from Research

2020 study by the UNHCR and the Center for Human Rights, Gender and Migration at Washington University (USA)

Review: Referral and coordination to support individuals in need of international protection

Research participants shared several perspectives related to referral and coordination among actors supporting refugees and asylum seekers in North Africa's mixed movement:

- border or entry authorities may be unaware of procedures for identifying, admitting, and referring possible refugees and asylum seekers;
- limited specialization of border authorities (eg, due to frequent rotation of officers from entry points to internal police posts; ability to refer individuals encountered at border to UNHCR or IOM possible on an ad hoc, not systemic, basis);
- often robust SOPs for referrals upon rescue at sea, but not as consistent in other contexts;
- referrals are sometimes based on informal, personal connections between service providers, rather than formal mechanisms;
- community-based referrals are essential and should be clarified, supported;
- geographic distances require coordination to bring applicants to UNHCR;
- clearer linkages between asylum and anti-trafficking systems and providers would strengthen protection.

Strategies

Research participants shared several strategies employed in Morocco and Tunisia to strengthen referral and coordination

- Service providers active in a metropolitan area are “mapped” on a printed document, which includes services offered and contact information; map is diffused widely to all state and non-state actors;
- Governmental and non-governmental institutions and civil society all engage in coordination structures to ensure sustained access to services for refugees and migrants;
- Brochures are disseminated to police and border agents, explaining definitions, rights, and referral of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, and victims of trafficking in persons;
- Service providers engage community representatives who bring information from the organization to the neighborhood, detect protection or support needs in the community, refer cases directly to agencies;
- Women’s empowerment groups and community liaisons are trained on asylum eligibility and detecting and referring possible asylum seekers to UNHCR
- Facebook campaigns are developed with international agencies and local advocacy groups for diverse communities in multiple languages, to share information about asylum and helpful service providers;
- “Rights passport ” for victims of trafficking are distributed, detailing shelter options, how to contact the police, etc.
- State institution for victims of trafficking develops and implements a national referral mechanism with standardized indicators;
- Legal aid organizations have confidential “reference sheets” that asylum seekers or migrants can fill in to indicate their needs for legal assistance; individuals will only be contacted if they check a box asking to be contacted by the organization;
- Agencies and organizations develop shared referral forms with internal SOPs for referrals; shared referral forms for specific vulnerable groups are also developed (eg, LGBTIQ+ people).

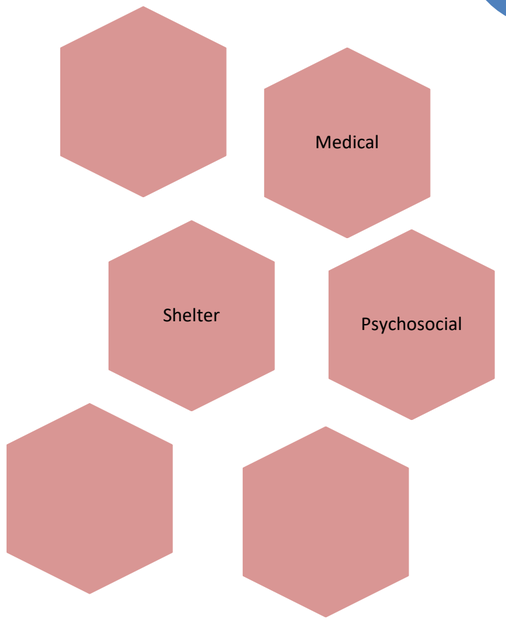
Caution re: disclosure, referral, coordination

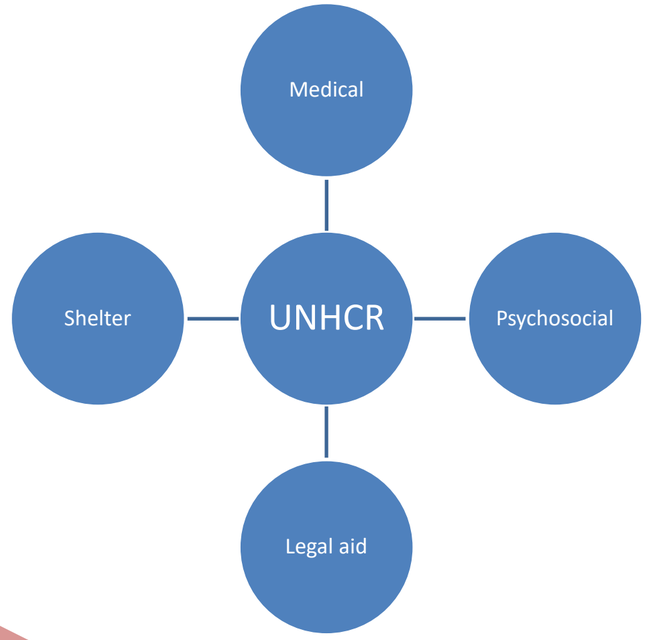
Research flagged two disclosure-related challenges that can arise in the course of referral and coordination among service providers:

1. Preserving confidentiality.
2. Avoiding potential re-traumatization through repeated intake processes.

Self-audit:
Referral and coordination systems and practices

Which service providers in your city provide assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants? How would you describe the ways in which they are (or are not) connected and refer clients to each other?
(Please try to draw it!)





Self-audit activity

1. What services does your organization offer to refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants?

Self-audit activity

2. Where do you refer refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants for services you don't offer? Do you have formal referral agreements with any of these organizations?

Self-audit activity

3. How successful are your referrals?

- What percentage of time do the people you refer to another organization make it to that other organization?

- How often do they actually obtain care there? How do you know?

Self-audit activity

4. What referrals are you unable to make? Why?

Referral Scenario

Scenario: Sofia

Sofia was just rushed to your office by Nadia, a community liaison working with Syrian and Yemeni women. Nadia reports that Sofia was found in the street this morning, beaten and left unconscious. Sofia complains of a sharp pain in her abdomen and says she has nowhere to stay, is afraid her attacker will come looking for her. When asked if she knows the attacker's identity, Sofia looks ahead and says nothing. You can tell Sofia is terrified.

What kind of services might Sofia need right away?

What services can you offer Sofia right away at your organization?

Referring Sofia

If Sofia needs shelter, where would you send her? How?

If Sofia needs medical care, where would you send her? How?

If Sofia needs counseling, where would you send her? How?

If Sofia needs legal aid to report the attack, where would you send her? How?

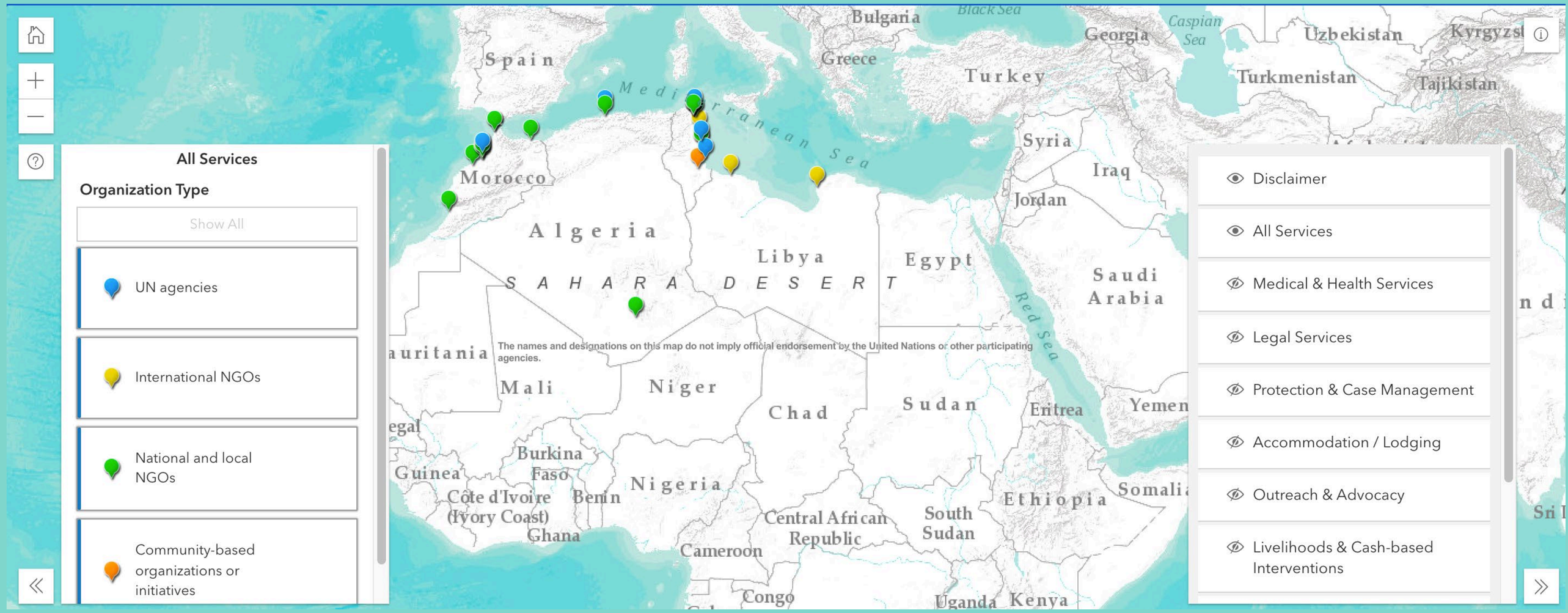
If Sofia indicates a need for international protection, where would you send her? How?

If Sofia needs protection from traffickers, where would you send her? How?

Regional mapping tool

MENA
Community
Protection
Network

Map



Map Objectives

- Reduce risks and **improve access to protection** for displaced persons by developing a focused mapping of **safe services** and **community-based protection initiatives** that adhere to **basic humanitarian principles** in the MENA region.

- Assist agencies, states, service providers, and communities in the MENA region with **identifying gaps in service provision regionally** and **strengthening coordination around cross-border referral pathways** for **different profiles** of persons of concern

Map Benefits

1. **Learn about multi-sectoral services** and other protection and support offered to refugees, displaced person, and others on the move in the MENA region;
2. **Increase the identification** of people with international protection needs, survivors of torture, victims of trafficking, GBV survivors, children at risk, and other people with specific needs along all stages of the displacement cycle;
3. Strengthen displaced persons' **access to protection, case management, and multi-sectoral services across borders** in the MENA region;
4. Support the empowerment and resilience of communities and the most vulnerable populations through the **reestablishment of community networks and access to support services** linked across countries in the MENA region;
5. Establish and maintain **cross-border referral pathways** in accordance with the principles of confidentiality and the respect for the wishes and needs of the affected populations, which could also facilitate **cross-regional coordination**;
6. Participate in a regional protection network that can promote the **exchange of good practices, build trust, and facilitate referrals**;
7. Implement **cross-border awareness-raising campaigns and communication with communities** and other actors regarding available services and protection along the displacement cycle;
8. Benefit from **capacity building and horizontal learning**, sharing policy guidelines, tools, and lessons learned;
9. Access **additional coordination and protection tools** that can enhance protection and increase the quality of services provided to refugees and other people of concern in origin, transit, destination, and return countries.

Map Demonstration & Discussion

- Would your organization be interested in joining the regional community protection network mapping effort? How would it be useful or helpful to you and the people you serve?

What feedback do you have about this initiative? How can the map and its network best be utilized to support your work and coordination / referral efforts?

English version:
https://unhcr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=fff133cff4094c738b17c131f54fbc41

French version:
https://unhcr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=d2219402259642f7b4503d95b039e86b

Survey link for application:
https://enketo.unhcr.org/x/Gr4mooYx

Closing reflections

Thank you

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