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Strengthening Refugee Services

Through Community Resource Mapping

switchboard
connecting resettlement experts





Today's Speaker



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Switchboard Throwback Thursdays



Did you miss a Switchboard webinar? Catch our top sessions, back by popular demand, now with **Switchboard's Throwback Thursdays!**

Our new **Throwback Thursday series** brings back our most-requested webinars, giving you a second chance to catch the insights you need. While recordings are always available, joining live offers a unique opportunity to ask questions and engage with fellow service providers.

As with all our sessions, this webinar is open to **all refugee service providers** across state agencies, resettlement organizations, and partner groups.



Learning Objectives



By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1

DEFINE

community resource mapping and its purpose, and identify real-world examples relevant to newcomer support

2

EXPLAIN

four core ways that community resource mapping supports newcomer integration, strengthens partnerships, and enhances access to services

3

APPLY

key tools and methods to effectively implement the six stages of community resource mapping



Strengthening Newcomer Support

Core Advantages of Using Community Resource Mapping



Share an example from your experience when community resources strengthened the support and services you were able to offer a newcomer client.

Some Key Needs of Newcomer Clients...



Some Key Needs of Newcomer Clients...





It takes a village

African Proverb



Community Resources

Anything that can be used to improve the quality of community life

Examples of Community Resources



Individuals

Organizations

Institutions

Businesses

**Physical
Structures**

Networks

Associations

Transportation
Systems

Languages

Frameworks



Community Resource Mapping

The process of identifying and aligning assets within a defined area to accomplish stated objectives



Case Scenario: Layla

Layla, a single mother from Syria, has just arrived in Riverbend with her two children, ages 7 and 12. Eager to settle them in quickly, she visits a community center for support. The staff want to help her access English classes, health care, and school enrollment, but their information is scattered. Some contacts are buried in emails, others scribbled on sticky notes, and much of it based on memory. They give Layla one number for an ESL program, but when she calls she learns the program no longer exists. She leaves feeling discouraged, uncertain of where to turn next, and worried she will not find the help her family needs.

This scenario shows the challenge many providers face when resources are not organized in a reliable way. Without a clear picture of available services, even well-intentioned staff struggle to guide newcomers. A community resource map addresses this problem by creating a central, accurate, and up-to-date tool that highlights local services. With a map in hand, providers do not have to rely on scattered notes or outdated contacts, and families like Layla's can more quickly find the language classes, health care, schools, and other supports they need to begin rebuilding their lives.



Based on Layla's experience, why is community resource mapping so important?



2

Strengthening Newcomer Integration Through Community Resource Mapping

Four Core Supports

Community Resource Mapping Supports



**1. Engagement of
Community Members**



**2. Cultivation of
Partnerships**

**3. Coordination of
Services**

**4. Client Access to
Resources**

Engagement of Community Members



- Builds ownership by involving residents and newcomers in the mapping process
- Surfaces local knowledge about informal and formal resources
- Strengthens trust between communities and providers
- Encourages collaboration beyond traditional service systems
- Improves access to resources

Cultivation of Partnerships



- Creates a shared tool that multiple organizations can use
- Highlights overlapping efforts and opportunities for collaboration
- Encourages joint planning to address service gaps
- Builds stronger networks for long-term sustainability

Coordination of Services

- Reduces duplication by showing who provides what
- Clarifies referral pathways for providers
- Improves efficiency in connecting clients to services
- Enhances communication among service partners





Client Access to Resources

- Provides accurate, up-to-date information in one place
- Helps clients navigate complex service systems
- Reduces delays and confusion in accessing support
- Makes resources more visible and accessible



Case Scenario: Layla

A week later, Layla returns to the same community center. This time, a volunteer has access to the new community resource map.

Within minutes, they connect her to ESL classes at the public library, a local health clinic that accepts her insurance, and an after-school program for her children. Layla feels relieved knowing that the information is accurate and up to date.

The process also reveals wider benefits. The library and community center are now coordinating to share referral information, building a stronger partnership. Service providers can see where gaps exist, like in child care and employment programs, and begin planning together to address them. The resource map doesn't just help Layla's family integrate more quickly—it also helps providers collaborate effectively to ensure newcomers can access the services that support their long-term success.



What are some ways community resource mapping strengthens integration, partnerships, and access to services?



3

Six Stages of Community Resource Mapping

Key Tools and Methods to Effectively Support Each Stage

Stages of Community Resource Mapping



1

Pre-Planning

2

Planning

3

**Information
Gathering**

4

Analyzing

5

**Monitoring &
Evaluation**

6

Sharing

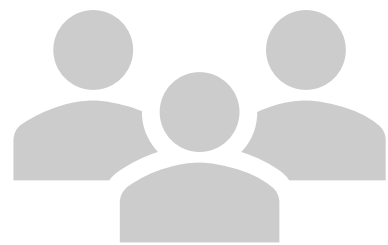


1. Pre-Planning

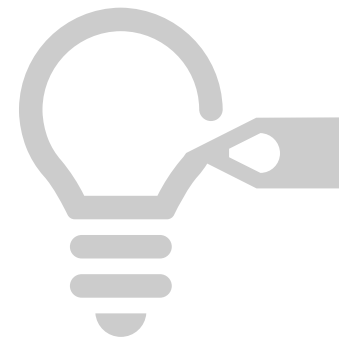
- Has this been attempted before?
- Who might be interested in joining us in this work?
- What time commitments and financial resources are needed to make this happen?



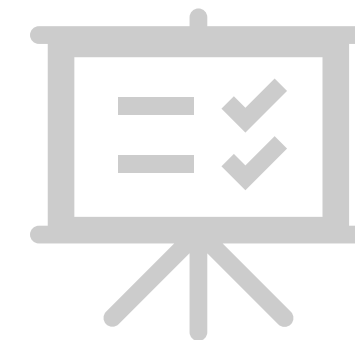
2. Planning, Part I



Create a
taskforce



Set a vision



Establish
SMART
objectives

2. Planning, Part I



Example

Vision or Overarching Goal: Ensure that all newcomers and service providers in Riverbend have quick, reliable access to accurate and up-to-date information about local resources, reducing barriers to integration and strengthening coordination across the community.

SMART Objective	Indicator	Target
Within six months, design and launch a community resource map for Riverbend that includes at least 50 verified resources across five core service categories (e.g., ESL, health, education, employment, childcare) and train 80% of local providers to use it in client referrals.	Percentage of local service providers actively using the resource map in client referrals.	80%



2. Planning, Part II

- Determine how you will gather information
- Select a mapping system
- Agree on how information will be shared

3. Information Gathering

- Community scans through Quarterly Consultations
- Online research
- Site visits to cross-sector partners
- Meetings with local Chambers of Commerce and city officials
- Interviews with faith communities/houses of worship
- Surveys to area stakeholders



4.720 **68**

3,056 deaths	10,074 cases
1,944 deaths	1,000 cases
827 deaths	1,200 cases
429 deaths	1,200 cases
66 deaths	1,107 cases
55 deaths	1,000 cases
46 deaths	1,000 cases
35 deaths	1,000 cases
25 deaths	1,000 cases
22 deaths	1,000 cases
16 deaths	1,000 cases
13 deaths	1,000 cases
8 deaths	1,000 cases

- Gaps in service
- Overlaps in service
- Issues of accessibility
- Resources that might allow for the establishment of new refugee communities

[illegible]



4. Analyzing



Consider

- Your vision/goal, SMART objectives, and outcome(s)
- Pathways to integration
- Areas of overlap
- Gaps in service
- Barriers to enhanced collaborations

5. Monitoring and Evaluation



Monitor progress towards SMART objective(s)



- Define indicators (how you will measure your objectives)
- Establish baselines
- Re-evaluate SMART objective(s) and indicator(s) to confirm appropriateness
- Measure midpoint progress
- Report at the end of the period

Evaluate the process

6. Sharing

- When: beginning, middle, and end
- How: in person, summary report, press release, flyer
- With whom: clients, service providers, elected official, neighbors





Case Scenario: Layla

As more newcomers arrive in Riverbend, local organizations realize they need to expand their resource map beyond a quick referral tool.

A small coalition begins by clarifying their purpose and goals **(pre-planning)** and then forming a team of providers, volunteers, and community members **(planning)**. Together, they start gathering information from schools, clinics, libraries, and faith communities **(information gathering)**.

They review the information for accuracy, spot missing services such as child care and job placement, and discuss how to fill those gaps **(analyzing)**. The group decides who will keep the map current and sets up regular reviews to track its effectiveness **(monitoring and evaluation)**. Finally, they share the resource map widely, posting it online, distributing copies to service providers, and training staff to use it with newcomers like Layla **(sharing)**. For Layla, this means every time she asks for help, staff know exactly where to guide her.



Looking at Riverbend's approach, which of the six stages do you think would be most challenging in your own context, and why?



Questions 

Learning Objectives



Now you are able to:

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Help us help you!

Scan the QR code or click the link in the chat to access our feedback survey!

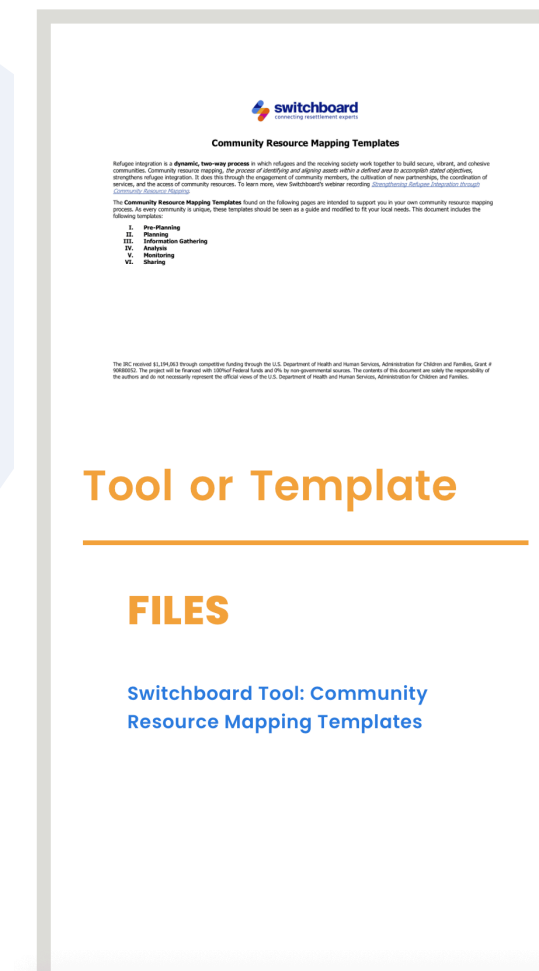
- Five questions
- 60 seconds
- Help us improve future training and technical assistance



Recommended Resources







- Blog: [Mapping Connections: Building Effective Resource Directories for Newcomer Communities](#)
- Blog: [Tips for Creating Your Own Local Refugee Health Care Provider Directory](#)
- Blog: [Community Resource Mapping Templates](#)
- Toolkit: [Building and Sustaining Community Collaborations for Refugee Welcome](#)
- Toolkit: [Leveraging Feedback in Community Engagement](#)
- Blog: [Four Steps You Can Take to Start Measuring the Success of Your Project](#)
- Guide: [Using Local Resources to Meet Health Needs: A Guide for Refugee Service Providers and Community Organizations](#)



Community Resource Mapping Templates

These Community Resource Mapping Templates are intended to support you in your community resource mapping process. Community resource mapping is the process of identifying and aligning assets within a defined area to accomplish stated objectives. It supports integration by engaging community members, cultivating new partnerships, strengthening referral pathways, and coordinating services. You may also hear “community resource mapping” called “landscape mapping.”

These templates are intended to support you in your community resource mapping process. As every community is unique, these templates should be seen as a guide and modified to fit your local needs. This document includes the following templates: Pre-Planning, Planning, Information Gathering, Analysis, Monitoring, and Sharing.

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