

Strengthening Refugee Services Through Community Resource Mapping

September 18, 2025

Parker Newburn (PN): All right. Let's go ahead and get started. Thank you, everyone, for joining our Throwback Thursday webinar on community resource mapping. My name is Parker Newburn, and I serve as the Program Officer for the Switchboard Community Support Line. For those who may not be familiar, the Support Line is a help desk that connects local community partners like all of you with the supports and resources they need to serve refugee newcomers more effectively.

I've been working with forcibly displaced populations for around 10 years now. More recently, I've been deeply involved in the private sponsorship of refugees space, helping to mobilize communities to really step into the work of resettlement. Now at Switchboard, my focus is on strengthening our state and community initiatives. Today, we're really diving into a topic that sits at the heart of that work, community resource mapping.

PN: Before we jump in, just a quick note. This webinar is part of Switchboard's Throwback Thursday series. If you've missed some of our most requested webinars in the past, this series brings them back so that you can catch the insights again. Recordings are always available afterward, but when you join live, you really get the chance to ask questions, engage with peers, and share your own experiences. Like all Switchboard trainings, today's session is open to all refugee service providers, whether you're at a state agency, a local resettlement office, or a partner group. Please don't just keep this to yourself. Share it with your colleagues once we send out the recording.

Here is where we are going today. By the end of this webinar, our hope is that you will be able to, number one, define community resource mapping and its purposes with real-world examples that matter for newcomer support. Number two, explain four core ways resource mapping strengthens integration, partnerships, and access to services. Number three, apply key tools and methods to effectively implement the six stages of resource mapping that we will go over today.

1. Strengthening Newcomer Support: Core Advantages of Using Community Resource Mapping

PN: We'll be moving through these objectives step by step, and I'll share case examples along the way to make it a little bit more concrete for us all. Moving on to our first objective, strengthening newcomer support, we will start by looking at the core advantages of community resource mapping. First, let's make this interactive. You'll see a QR code on your screen. Why don't you go ahead and scan it with your phone if you can.

PN: The question is, share an example from your own experience when your community resource strengthened the support and services you were able to offer a newcomer or client. Why don't you take a moment to think and add your response. These will show up anonymously on the screen, and I'll give you about a minute to do it.

[pause]

PN: Yes, warm handoffs, absolutely.

[pause]

PN: Yes, really holistic wraparound support for the clients that we're serving. Absolutely.

[pause]

PN: Provided translations for new newcomers. Amazing. Quicker pathways to self-sufficiency, language services, and cultural familiarity. All great examples. Peer support, absolutely. All great answers coming through. Consistent messaging, yes. Reducing duplication of services as well. Finding employment, absolutely.

[pause]

PN: Yes, lots of answers about collaboration between providers. Case coordination. Perfect. All great answers. I think we're going to move on, but thank you all for contributing. In the RISE study, researchers identified 10 pathways that really shape whether newcomers can integrate and thrive. Let's walk through the first set of those. The first is employment and economic self-sufficiency. For most families, being able to find a job and provide for themselves is the first marker of stability. Without that, everything else feels shaky.

The next is health and physical well-being. Many newcomers arrive with medical needs that may have gone untreated for years, and so access to doctors, clinics, and preventative care is critical for long-term health. Next is mental health. Beyond physical health, we know that trauma and stress are very real. Counseling, peer groups, and even community-based supports can make all the difference in helping someone adjust. The next is professional education and training. Credentials don't always transfer from a newcomer's home country, as we all know, and so programs that help people retrain, get certified, or continue their education are really essential for rebuilding careers here in the United States.

PN: The next is housing. Safe, stable, and affordable housing becomes the anchor point for everything else. If a family doesn't know where they'll sleep next week, it's hard to think about school or even work. Then childcare and children's education. Parents can't focus on employment or training unless their children are cared for and learning in safe, supportive environments. School and childcare centers are key to family stability.

Next, we have social bonding. Newcomers need close ties within their own cultural or ethnic community to feel encouraged and supported in daily life. With social bridging at the very same time, it's just as important to build friendships and networks

across communities so newcomers feel connected to their new neighbors and not isolated. As well, there's English language development. Language, as we all know, is the key that unlocks almost everything. Jobs, health care, education, and even being able to connect with your child's teacher or doctor.

PN: Cultural learning and opportunities. Whether through workshops, libraries, or informal gatherings, these opportunities help families understand local customs and start to feel at home. As well, there's safety and stability. If a family doesn't feel safe from discrimination, violence, or instability, it's hard to focus on anything beyond just survival. Finally, civic engagement. Being able to vote, volunteer, or even attend community meetings helps newcomers feel they truly belong and have a voice in shaping the place that they now call home.

Keeping all of these pathways in mind gives us a clear picture of what's at stake when we talk about resource mapping. It's not just a technical exercise. It's about ensuring families can access the full range of supports they need to rebuild their lives. There's a proverb I'm sure that all of us know that says, it takes a village. When it comes to welcoming newcomers, it's not just a nice saying. It's a reality. No single agency can do it all. No single organization can do it all.

PN: Without coordination, families fall through the cracks. Staff may duplicate efforts, or worse, send people in circles with outdated information. Community resource mapping helps us bring the village into focus. It makes visible what's already there, and it highlights where services are missing, and, as well, connects newcomers to a web of support instead of a patchwork of disconnected services. What are community resources? Broadly speaking, community resources are anything that improves the quality of community life.

That's a really wide definition on purpose because when we're talking about supporting newcomers, resources aren't only formal services like clinics and schools. They can be informal, community-driven supports as well, like a retired neighbor, for example, who helps translate or small business that donates space for classes. Community resources are every asset. People, places, relationships, systems, and even local knowledge that make a place more livable, welcoming, and supportive.

PN: Some examples of community resources include individuals, even those [that] you serve. A bilingual parent, for example, who helps neighbors fill out school forms. This is community capacity in action. Organizations and institutions, like public libraries that host ESL classes or digital literacy workshops. Then businesses as well. A grocery store that stocks halal food, for example, or culturally familiar foods, or a cafe maybe that donates pastries for newcomer gatherings.

What about physical structures? A community-centered gym used after hours for youth soccer, for example, or maybe for women's exercise groups. What about networks, like Facebook or WhatsApp groups that share job leads and housing tips? What about associations, like faith congregations, rotary clubs, and ethnic associations that can mobilize volunteers and supplies quickly? As well, there's transportation systems, a bus route, for example, that connects a neighborhood to the clinic, or a volunteer driver program organized by a local church.

PN: As well, there's languages, community interpreters, and cultural brokers who bridge conversations with school and health care providers. Lastly, frameworks. Maybe a city refugee task force charter or shared referral protocols. These structures are resources because they enable coordination. What is resource mapping? Community resource mapping is the process of identifying and aligning assets within a defined geographic area to accomplish stated objectives. It's more than just a contact list or a directory.

Mapping means we first clarify our purpose, then systemically surface assets, and finally align them toward that purpose, closing gaps, reducing duplication, and strengthening pathways. Done well, the result is a living shared tool, not a stale spreadsheet used by providers and, where appropriate, directly by clients. Moving on to a quick case study that we're going to reference back to throughout this webinar today. This case study is about Layla. Layla is a single mother from Syria who has just arrived in Riverbend with her two children, ages 7 and 12.

PN: 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 is based on memory. They give Layla one number for an ESL program, but when she calls, she learns that the program no longer exists. She leaves feeling discouraged, uncertain of where to turn next, and worried that she will not find the help that her family needs. The scenario shows the challenge many providers face. Resources are not organized in a reliable way.

Without a clear picture of available resources and 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 support that they need to begin rebuilding their lives.

Here's another question for you all. Based on Layla's experience, why is community resource mapping so important? Why don't you just take a minute to respond, and let's see what patterns show up.

[pause]

PN: Yes, absolutely. It creates coordination so that clients aren't sent in loops or sent to dead ends. Efficiency. Quick responses. Yes, I like that. Helps to identify services quickly. Helps with tracking services, absolutely. Again, another timely care. So that Layla doesn't feel alone, absolutely. Yes, absolutely. It makes services available in reasonable time. Lots of quick response, quick support. No repeat efforts, so reducing that duplication of services. Providing more options and greater accessibility for newcomers.

I like the response of it connects people, connects providers. To make sure that there's that safety net. Wastes less of staff time. Absolutely, especially in times like these, we want to save as much time as possible, or dedicate and organize our time as well as we can. Empower staff, absolutely.

[pause]

PN: Builds trust, yes, absolutely. All great answers. Thank you all so much for contributing.

2. Strengthening Newcomer Integration Through Community Resource Mapping: Four Core Supports

PN: Moving on to our second objective. Strengthening newcomer integration through community resource mapping.

We're going to explore the four core supports. Like I said, there are four core ways that community resource mapping supports newcomer integration. The first is engagement of community members. This is about inviting residents and newcomers into the process so the map reflects real life, not just paperwork. When people participate, they share insights we'd never find from a desk. The second is cultivation of partnerships. A shared map gives us a shared tool. It makes overlaps and gaps visible so organizations can plan together instead of working in parallel.

The third is coordination of services. Mapping shows who does what, which clarifies referrals and reduces duplication. That's an answer that a lot of you put in that last Slido, reducing duplication. That coordination translates into faster, cleaner client connections. Then lastly, number four, it assists with client access to resources. Ultimately, all of this makes it easier for families to navigate systems because accurate, up-to-date info in one place is actually usable. Let's dive deeper into each of these.

First, engagement of community members. When you invite residents and newcomers into the mapping process, it builds ownership. People see themselves in the solution. Their participation surfaces local knowledge about informal and formal resources, things like informal childcare, mutual aid, or language help that you might otherwise miss. That involvement strengthens trust between communities and providers because people feel heard and represented.

PN: It also encourages collaboration beyond traditional service systems. Partners like faith groups, small businesses, and neighborhood clubs start showing up. Importantly, all of that improves access to resources because the map ends up matching reality, not just assumptions. The second, cultivation of partnerships. A good resource map creates a shared tool that multiple organizations can use, like schools and clinics, nonprofits, libraries.

Seeing everything together highlights overlapping efforts and opportunities for collaboration. You can literally spot where you're duplicating work or missing an area. That makes it easier to encourage joint planning to address service gaps instead of each agency trying to patch things alone. Over time, this steady coordination builds stronger networks for long-term sustainability, relationships that last beyond just one grant cycle. Number three, coordination of services. By laying everything out right, the map reduces duplication by showing who provides what.

PN: No more three agencies unknowingly running the same class at the same block. It clarifies referral pathways for providers so staff know exactly where to send a family. That clarity improves efficiency in connecting clients to services. Less time lost, fewer dead ends. Across the board, it enhances communication among service partners, which means fewer surprises and much better handoffs. Lastly, client access to resources. A strong map provides accurate, up-to-date information in one place, which helps clients navigate complex service systems without getting bounced around.

That directly reduces delays and confusion in accessing support. Families get quicker, clearer answers. Because everything is visible, it helps make resources more visible and accessible to everyone, not just to folks who happen to know someone on the inside.

PN: Returning back to our case scenario with Layla... A week later, Layla returns to the same community center. This time, a volunteer has access to the new community resource map that Riverbend has created. 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 stronger partnerships. Service providers can see where the 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. Your turn again. Another question for you all. What are some ways community resource mapping strengthens integration, partnerships, and access to services? Scan the QR code and share your thoughts. I'll give you a minute to do so.

[pause]

PN: Yes, absolutely. Elimination of duplication of services. Identifies gaps. Streamlines. Yes, streamlines referrals, streamlines access to supports and programs. Awareness of others' work, that's really important. Making sure that we know what other providers are doing, what supports they're offering to newcomers. Accurate referrals. I like the "accurate" in there so that we're not just sending folks in circles to programs that no longer exist or that they're not eligible for. Building the bridge, absolutely.

Personal agency, I really like that. It empowers clients to also find resources themselves to make those community connections themselves. Clarity, absolutely. Resource mapping really helps clarify what supports are still available in communities. Creates community among service providers, absolutely. With increased collaboration comes this increased knowledge of one another's services, but also just an increase in camaraderie and community among service providers in the area.

PN: Maybe camaraderie among service providers that you didn't think about before, like your local library or like the local health clinic that also supports refugee newcomers. Builds trust, absolutely. All great answers.

3. Six Stages of Community Resource Mapping: Key Tools and Methods to Effectively Support Each Stage

PN: Our final objective today, and this is where we'll spend a lot of our time in, is learning the six stages of community resource mapping and the tools to support each one of those stages. Like I said, there are six stages in the community resource mapping process.

The first is pre-planning. This is where you check for past efforts, identify who should be at the table, and honestly assess time and budget. The second is planning. You form a task force, set a clear vision, and establish SMART objectives with indicators. This gives you direction and accountability. The third is information gathering. You collect the raw material, formal services, informal supports, and local knowledge using scans, research, visits, meetings, interviews, and surveys.

The fourth is analyzing. You turn data into insight, spotting gaps, overlaps, and access issues, and shape it into a client and provider-friendly map. The fifth is monitoring and evaluation. You track progress to the goal, adjust as needed, and learn from the process so the next version is stronger. Lastly is sharing. You communicate at the right moments, in the right formats, to the right audiences so that the map gets used, updated, and most importantly, owned by the community.

PN: Now we're going to dive into each of those separately. The first, pre-planning. In the pre-planning stage, you think about what needs to be done before you get started. Ask yourself, has anyone taken on a community resource mapping exercise in your community already? If so, what are the results, and what can you learn from that attempt? If possible, I would reach out to the facilitator of that effort. They may be willing to share lessons learned with you. Along those same lines, who else in your community might be interested in joining the exercise? One way to find out is to ask at your quarterly consultations.

Finally, consider what time and financial resources are needed to take on a mapping exercise. Be honest in your assessment. Once you have a sense of this, you could contact your local foundations or municipal offices, for example, to discuss their interest in and need for mapping. They may be willing to commission you to take it on, for example, or if not, you could ask if another organization might share the expense with you.

Moving on to a continuing of planning. One of the first things you'll want to do is create a task force. This goes beyond identifying people who might be interested and focuses on those who will be actively involved. Assign roles, including a convener, someone to convene the group, someone with both the time and the community's trust. Second, set a vision or overarching goal that relates to one of the 10 integration pathways we discussed earlier. The goal should be broad and aspirational, something the task force cannot achieve alone.

PN: Finally, establish SMART objectives. Establish these objectives to support you in accomplishing your vision and facilitating refugee integration. Keep in mind that different objectives will require different community resources. SMART objectives are, remember, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. Identify indicators to help you measure your objectives. Here's an example of what it looks like to initiate this planning part of the process. Then I'll tie it back to Layla's scenario as well.

An example, vision, or overarching goal would be [to] 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. Now, the SMART objective for that would be within six months, design and launch a community resource map for Riverbend that includes at least 50 verified resources across five core service categories. For example, ESL, health, education, employment, and child care.

Then train 80% of local providers to use it in client referrals. See how those are actionable and measurable? Then, an indicator for that, like we said, would be the percentage of local service providers actively using the resource map in client referrals. The target that we identified was 80%. Eighty percent of those local service providers would be trained on how to use that resource map and will be able to use it to perform referrals. We'll put in the chat a guide to SMART objectives so that you can adapt this to your own context and to your own mapping efforts as well.

PN: Moving on to planning, part two. Once you have your vision and SMART objectives, there are three planning decisions to make before you start collecting data. The first is [to] determine how you will gather the information. Will you prioritize consultations maybe, site visits, interviews, or surveys, and in what order? Second, select a mapping system. That might be as simple as a spreadsheet connected to a basic map or as advanced as a dedicated platform. The important thing is that it's manageable and sustainable for your team.

Third, agree on how information will be shared. Decide upfront what will be public, what stays internal, and who will be responsible for updates. Laying these foundations makes the information gathering stage much smoother and avoids headaches later on. Moving on to stage three, information gathering. Stage three is really the heart of the work, figuring out what's actually out there. There are several methods that you can use. One, you could start with community scans through your current quarterly consultations.

PN: Those meetings already bring the right people together so that they're a natural place to capture resource information. Maybe you could do online research to capture regional and statewide options. You could plan site visits, maybe, to cross-sector partners like libraries, schools, or community centers because walking the space often reveals details you won't find on a website. You could set up meetings with local chambers of commerce or city officials to understand the business landscape and municipal programs available.

You could conduct interviews with faith communities and houses of worship since they often hold connections across multiple networks, businesses, associations,

grassroots groups. Finally, you could send surveys to area stakeholders. Tools like Google Forms or Survey Monkey are all free, easy to use, and quick to analyze.

PN: Really, the point is however you choose to do it, make sure that you're capturing both the formal services and the informal supports that families in the community actually rely on. I'll make sure, like we said, to send out these slides with the recording so that you have all of these ideas and tips as well. Moving on to the fourth stage, which is analyzing. This is where raw information becomes a usable tool. When you analyze, you're asking, where are the gaps in service? Where are the overlaps in service?

Are there issues in accessibility? For example, a provider who offers services in the right language but doesn't accept the right insurance. Are there resources that might allow for the establishment of new refugee communities in areas where people aren't yet living, but where supports exist? Importantly, you want to design outputs that are usable for everyone, including people with little or no literacy. That could mean maps with icons, color coding, or very plain language descriptions. The goal is a tool that works for both providers and clients.

PN: Continuing with analyzing, as you analyze, there are things to consider. Does the data align with your vision, your SMART objectives, and the outcomes that you identified? If not, maybe it's worth just cataloging but not focusing on that data. How do the resources move families forward in the integration pathways we talked about earlier? When you see areas of overlap, should some services be consolidated or redirected to underserved areas? How do you address the gaps in service?

Sometimes mapping itself is what shows funders or partners the need in a way that numbers alone could not. Finally, what are the barriers to collaboration? It could be geography, it could be funding restrictions, or even personalities. Naming those barriers helps you know what needs extra attention. At the end of the stage, you should list out the issues you found, the recommended actions, who's responsible, and due dates. That's how you make sure that the insight is turned into action.

PN: Moving on to the fifth stage, monitoring and evaluation. This is all about making sure that the map actually works. You start by monitoring progress towards your SMART objectives. That means you need to define indicators, how exactly you'll measure progress. Then you establish baselines so that you know where you're starting. As time goes on, you'll want to re-evaluate your SMART objectives and indicators to confirm that they are still appropriate. Halfway through, maybe, check in and measure midpoint progress.

At the end of the project period, you'll report on outcomes. Don't just measure the products, evaluate the process [itself]. That could be through surveys, focus groups, or interviews with providers and clients. As a best practice, share the feedback with stakeholders. That transparency builds trust and helps keep the project alive into the future. Moving on to the sixth stage, sharing. You'll want to think about when to share. Sometimes, at the beginning, to build buy-in. Sometimes, in the middle, to get feedback.

Definitely at the end so that the community can use the results. Then consider how to share. Maybe it's in an in-person presentation. Maybe it's a summary report.

PN: Maybe a press release or even a flyer. The method should match the audience. Speaking of audience, thinking clearly about with whom to share. That might include clients themselves, other service providers, elected officials, neighbors, and of course, the stakeholders from your quarterly consultations. When you share broadly, people see the value and are more likely to contribute resources in the future.

It shifts the mindset from your project to our project. That shared ownership is what sustains resource mapping long-term. Going back to our case study with 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 to clarify their purpose and goals, which is the pre-planning part, and then forming a team of providers, volunteers, and community members, which is the planning part.

Together, they start gathering information from schools, clinics, libraries, and faith communities. That's the information gathering part. They review the information for accuracy, spot missing services such as child care and job placement, and discuss how to fill those gaps. That's the analyzing part of the process. The group decides who will keep the map current and sets up regular reviews to track its effectiveness. That is the monitoring and evaluation part of the process.

PN: 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. The sharing part of the process. 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? Again, feel free to scan the QR code and share your thoughts. I'll go ahead and just read quickly those six steps again.

The first step is the pre-planning. The second step is the planning. The third step is information gathering. The fourth step is analyzing. The fifth step is monitoring and evaluation. The sixth one is sharing it out. Planning. The planning part. Creating the task force. Wondering if you'd be willing to share a follow up on why that might be difficult. Monitoring and evaluation, absolutely. Having the staff capacity to continuously monitor and evaluate the resource map.

PN: Making sure that the resources are verified and up-to-date, absolutely. With the task force, the lack of time, both the meeting time and the time to gather everyone together. Find times that work for most folks as well. Finding a convener for that group, that task force, is also difficult when folks are spread pretty thin. Someone put planning because things might change. Absolutely, and things do change. This is not a linear, step-by-step process. It's cyclical in that you can always go back and adjust as needed to the planning part. Information gathering, I think that's a difficult part, in that trying to wrap your head around the resources in your community is a lot.

It requires a lot of time and work. One of the things that might help is to ask yourself, has someone done this before? Establishment of leadership. Again, that convener, someone that can really lead the task force, finding someone that has the capacity and time to do that. Making sure that you're including in that task force small and large organizations. Something I didn't mention as well, making sure that you're trying to get clients in that task force as well, for input on any community resource map that benefits clients, really important key.

PN: Choosing the best interface system. What mapping system—That goes into the technology of it all, trying to upscale if we don't have that expertise to be able to build something out on a map online. Creating a shared mindset among organizations, absolutely. I think in that collaboration, I said one of the barriers that we would want to list out might be personalities. Really, I recognize that that also might be a barrier. Loss of community resources makes mapping community resources difficult. Absolutely, it does.

The information gathering, that's why the verification of resources is so important, making sure that we have the availability and time to do that. All great examples. Thank you all for contributing.

4. Q&A

PN: We've reached the part of our webinar where we just wanted to open it up to you all. If you have questions, again, please feel free to use the Q&A function of the chat. Some questions are already coming through. Let's see. How to best navigate identifying and connecting refugees to community resources in these uncertain times for refugee resettlement?

I think the key is to start small and to stay flexible. Even when policies shift, local resources remain for the most part. I know that some community resources might go offline, but for the most part, there are community resources that remain despite shifts in policies. Focusing on what's available in your community right now and keeping your map as a living tool that can adjust with the changes. I recognize that that requires human resource, time, dedication. I understand that that's a barrier of funding as well.

PN: As much as possible, trying to find ways that we can keep it as a living tool and adjust those resources, verify the community resources as time goes on, as policies shift, as communities change. Are you able to provide some real-life examples of systems interfaces that have proven successful? Absolutely. Our friends over at USA Hello have a really extensive Find Hello resource map, if you're ever interested in looking.

I believe they have over 6,500 resources mapped nationwide. Those are for refugee newcomers. That is a map that is, I believe, really accessible, is in different languages, is easily searchable, has different service categories that you can hone in on, different ways to hone in on the resource based on geography and zip code. There is also the Refugee Welcome Collective, RWC, which is part of Church World Service, [who] has a great state-by-state resource map that they have on their website.

PN: That's also another example of different resources that can dive into different communities and look at different resources, and list them, and list contact details for them as well. Those are just a few [examples off] the top of my head, of resource maps that are widely used and accessible for both providers and clients. The best deliverable for the map. That is something that I believe that your task force will want to determine. That'll be based on what need you see in the community. Is it a PDF that can be easily shared?

Maybe a con to that would be, is it easily searchable? What happens when we want to send out updates? Are you going to send out a new PDF to all these providers? Then it creates a lot of outdated PDFs. If you expect to continue to update this resource map, you might want something that is living, that people can access and trust that it's up to date. I would say that that is probably the most effective way to do that. That might be a website or an Excel sheet. Excel sheets are easy to search.

PN: That might not have the map itself, but I'm sure there's ways to tie a map or feed it into a map as well. You can search in the Excel sheet based on state, city, and service category. Awesome. Find Hello, how often is it updated from Alaska? I recently added some to the list, but haven't been updated to services locally. That would be a question for our partners at USA Hello. I'm not sure how frequently they update their Find Hello map. How do you get as many people involved as possible in community resource mapping?

Honestly, I think the best way is to show quick wins, to show people how great of a resource it is and how helpful it is. If people see that their input is actually being used, that their organization shows up on a map, for example, or that the referrals improve, I think that they're more likely to get contribute. I would say invite people early. Make participation simple. Try and make it as a light of a lift as possible. Then always just share credit so that folks feel like their contributions are important.

PN: What are the most effective strategies to identify and map community resources that can support our clients' needs? I think we shared some really helpful tools in the webinar. I'm happy to make sure that we get that sent out to you. A copy and a recording of this as well will all go out to you. In terms of effective strategies to identify and map those community resources, I think is to first identify as a starting point, what is the most prevalent need in your community?

Are folks looking for legal services? Are folks looking for child care? I think trying to understand as part of that pre-planning part of the process, identifying what are the greatest needs in your community, and using that as a jumping point to dive into doing online research or going and doing site visits to local resources like local libraries, doing surveys to providers. All great ways to identify community resources. Then you want to verify them, and then analyze that and put it into a really accessible format for clients and providers. Are there any new resources for rapid or instant language translating?

PN: In terms of resources for rapid or instant language translating, if we're talking about that in the context of it being a community resource that would be mapped, I think a lot of online services are available for close to instant language translating. There's a lot of movement with AI around language translation. Not to promote that, but I've heard that that is a helpful resource that people are using more and more. Some struggles are finding low-barrier resources, but they are out there in your local community, so keep searching if you email their team.

Oh, no—some struggles are finding low-barrier resources, but they are out there in your communities. Great advice. Thank you so much. What about how to navigate making info public for bad actors, especially in this climate? That's something that you're going to want to talk to your task force about. This goes back to the format of a resource map. Do you want it to have something public-facing, or is it something

that folks can access with a password, or is it something that is handed just to providers and clients on a case-to-case basis, if that is a concern?

PN: I'm assuming the concern probably comes from having something that bad actors can just easily search and identify organizations that they disagree with and target those organizations. I think your concern is real. I would just bring that to the task group and ask, "How public are we wanting to make this, especially if we're going to include contact details for referral pathways?" I think that's important. How do I know if a service provided by another organization is equivalent to ours?

If I understand that question correctly, it goes to the duplication of services, which is a really good question. I think equivalency comes down to outcomes and eligibility. Ask yourself, "Does this other service meet the same need or the same outcome that my program is aiming to achieve at the same level and for the same population?" If yes, then it's equivalent. If not, it may complement rather than duplicate. I would first start by just identifying whether this is a complementary service or whether this is a true duplication of services. Then I would coordinate with that program or organization to see how you can coordinate cases if needed or if there's a referral pathway.

If one's at capacity, you can refer to the other program. Just increase collaboration in that way and talk through referral pathways should capacity be reached at any of those organizations. What are ways to vet resources before posting them to a service map? Really great question. I think you always want to check credibility and accuracy. If there's a number, I would call the number. If there's a physical location, I would actually visit the location. If you're just mapping city resources and you can drive or visit that location, definitely visit it in person.

PN: I would also confirm with multiple partners, asking other partners, "Have you used this resource? Have you found it helpful?" You could also build in a review cycle so resources expire if they aren't re-verified. I've seen that work as well, or there's at least a notification that says, "This hasn't been verified in six months." Call to make sure that hours of operation are still up-to-date. Eligibility information is still up-to-date. It doesn't have to be perfect on day one, I would say. Don't be too afraid to launch something if you don't feel like it's perfect and everything is perfectly verified.

Just make sure that it's reliable enough that families and providers trust the tool. We don't want perfection to be the enemy of progress. Any other questions? This is a good question: How can we improve an overloaded, underfunded resource navigation system like 211? Smaller providers avoid being placed on the database because they immediately get overwhelmed. I will speak to the part of the question that touches on just overloaded and underfunded general resource navigation. If you're not able to get resources on existing resource maps, I would say start your own and start just as a community resource map.

I understand that there's an ease to trying to contribute to what's already there, but if they truly are not updating it, or if the services that you try and put on there aren't being uploaded, or if there's a disconnect between what's on there and what's on the ground, that's a gap. If you have the capacity, your office has the capacity to fill that gap, I would try and do so. Like I said, start small. Start with specific service

categories. Don't feel like you need to hit all core service areas. Start within a certain geographic region and go from there. If that's a gap, I would try and fill it if you can.

PN: Any other questions? I think with that, we will move on and circle back to our learning objectives that we started our webinar with. At the start, I said that you will be able to, one, define community resource mapping and its purpose with real-world examples relevant to newcomer support, as well explain four core ways that mapping strengthens integration, partnerships, and access to services. Finally, apply key tools and methods to effectively implement the six stages of mapping that we identified.

Now, hopefully, you can do exactly that. Before we wrap up, we'd love your feedback. If you can, please scan the QR code or click the link in the chat to access our survey. It's just five questions, and it takes about 60 seconds. We're going to do it all together right now, 60 seconds. Your input really does shape how we improve future training. Please just take a minute now and fill it out if you can. I'll sit here for about a minute or so to give you space to do that.

[pause]

PN: Thank you so much. Like I said, your feedback really matters, and it helps us really refine the resource and learning offerings that we produce. I'm surprised no one asked about Switchboard resources that could help with resource mapping in the questions section. Here are a list of recommended resources that we have put together at Switchboard to really assist you in creating those resource maps.

With the blog, we have mapping connections, building effective resource directories for newcomer communities, another blog on tips for creating your own local refugee health care provider directory, a blog on community resource mapping templates, a toolkit, building and sustaining community collaborations for refugee welcome, another toolkit on leveraging feedback and community engagement, a blog on four steps you can take to start measuring the success of your project, and an info guide on using local resources to meet health needs, a guide for refugee service providers and community organizations.

Links to these resources will be shared via email in the slide deck within 24 hours of this training. As always, please stay connected with Switchboard. You can always reach us at switchboard@rescue.org or visit our website, www.SwitchboardTA.org. Follow us on social media @SwitchboardTA, so on LinkedIn. You can also scan the QR code on the screen, which takes you straight to our website as well. On behalf of all of us at Switchboard, thank you so much for learning with us today. We hope to see you at a future training.

The IRC received competitive funding through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant #90RB0053. The project is 100% financed by federal funds. The contents of this document are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.