



PHYSICAL THREAT BULLETINS

Physical Threat Bulletin - Concerns of Human Trafficking Arise in Morocco During Disaster Relief



TLP:WHITE

Sep 20, 2023

Summary:

Officials are concerned about the recent online content promoting men to marry underage girls and other forms of exploitation following the recent earthquake in Morocco, particularly in the Al Haouz region. Online posts made by individuals who are believed to be volunteers assisting with relief efforts advocating for Moroccan men to travel to remote villages to “save” young girls. At least one man has since been arrested after posting online about traveling to quake-hit zones with intention of sexually assaulting young girls.

The National Committee for Coordination Measures to Combat Human trafficking and Prevention has warned against online content that target victims of the earthquake and warned that these posts are punishable under the Human Trafficking Law. King Mohammed VI has also conferred “Ward of the Nation” status to the children who have since been orphaned by the quake in the hopes of preventing any hazards.

Overcrowded hospitals are also posing a unique problem to the recovery efforts. Pregnant women are either unable to access the closest hospitals since many villages remain cut off because of damages from the earthquake or unable to get the care they need due to a lack of trained personnel. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is hoping to open mobile clinics and options for safer deliveries in the wake of disaster. The UNFPA also

runs a development program in Morocco that is focused on training midwives to provide care to those that are unable to travel to the closest hospital.

Analysis:

Every natural disaster poses its own unique risks during the recovery process depending on the location of the event and those who have been impacted. Organizations who travel to areas affected by a natural disaster should attempt to formulate a recovery plan that meets the needs of those that have been negatively impacted.

As natural disasters increase in their number, severity, and duration around the globe, issues of gender-blind relief responses are arising. Women and children are 14 times more likely to die in the aftermath of a natural disaster. The increase in migration, both into the affected region and out, can provide an environment in which human trafficking can thrive. Early identification of potential threats through social media posts made online can help local officials in arresting individuals before they are able to take advantage of the situation.

Mitigation:

Natural disasters and their aftermath create chaos amongst recovery efforts. Relief organizations are in the position to not only provide aid to those that have been impacted by the event but also have the opportunity to identify and assist victims of human trafficking and sexual assault and harassment.

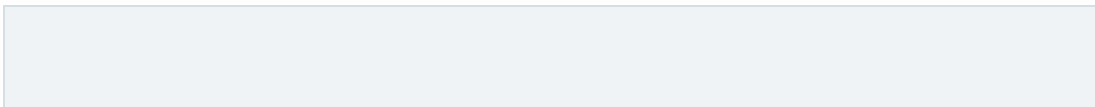
Organizations that are looking to assist areas impacted by natural disaster should invest resources into training workers to look for indicators of human trafficking and sexual assault and harassment.

Sources:

[Moroccan Girls at Risk of Sexual Assault, Forced Marriage After Earthquake Women Are Hit Hardest in Disasters, So Why Are Responses Too Often Gender-Blind?](#)

[Natural Hazards, Disasters and Violence Against Women and Girls: A Global Mixed-Methods Systematic Review](#)

[Morocco's Earthquake: Committee Warns Against Content Promoting Human Trafficking](#)



Reference(s)	Morocco World News , Al Jazeera , undp , bmj
Physical Threat Type	Natural Disaster

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Tags Relief, Disaster, Morocco, Earthquake, victims

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