Digital Mental Health for Refugees

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2015
65 million forcibly displaced,
20 million refugees
1 million asylum applications in EU
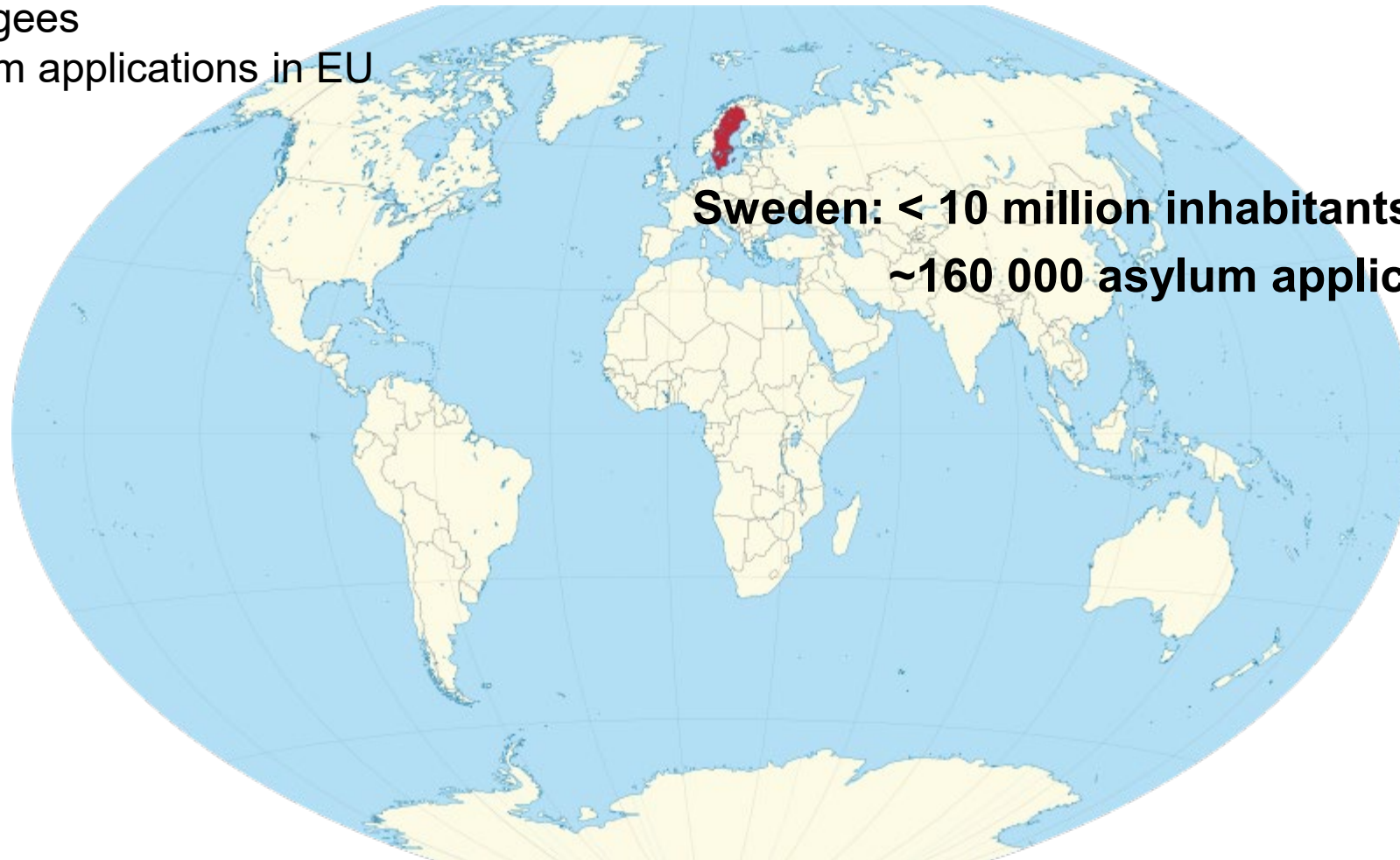
Sweden: < 10 million inhabitants

~160 000 asylum applications

Ref: US 320 million inhabitants, 172 700 asylum applications

Needs

Many refugees suffered from mental health problems due to hardships before, during and after migration

- Limited knowledge about mental health in refugee populations

- Limited resources to approach mental health problems

- Urgent need for evidence based efficient methods to detect and intervene with mental health problems

Screening and Assessment of Mental Health problems

Online Screening and Assessment of Mental Health problems

iTAP - Internet based Tiered Assessment Procedure
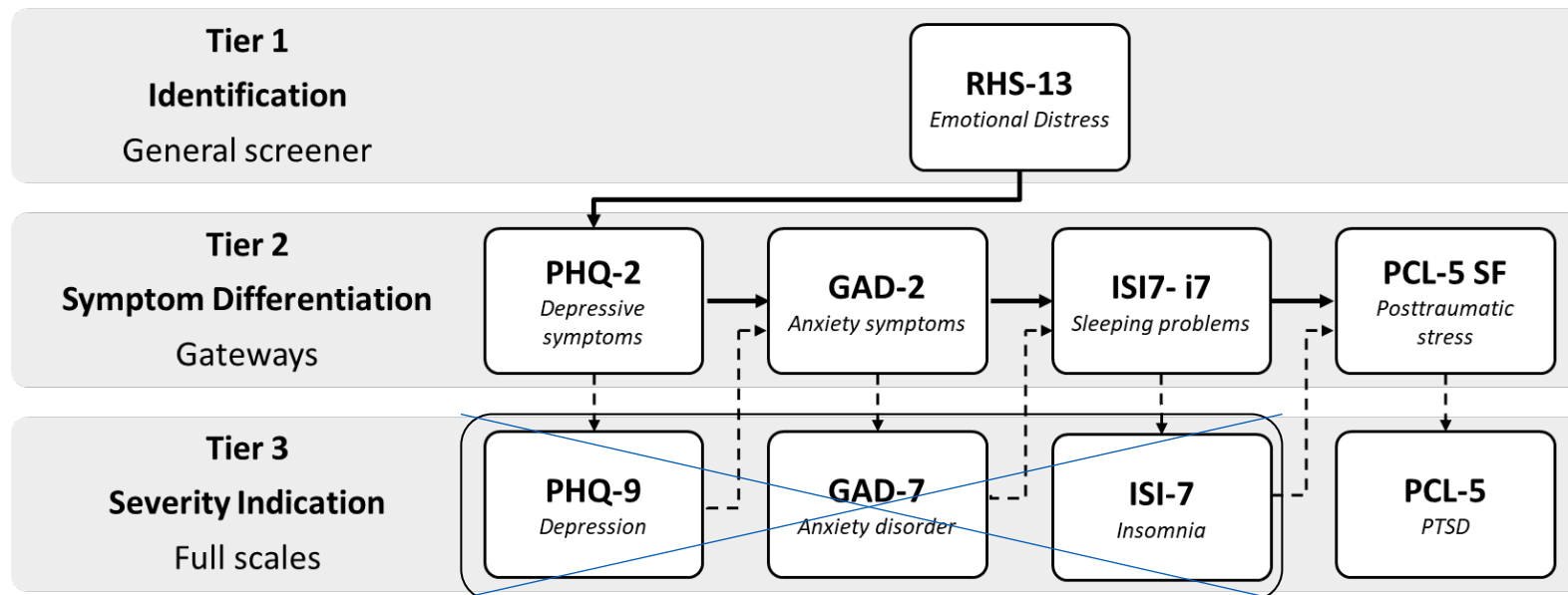
Key features of assessment

Adapted and psychoeducative information

Adapted translations

Online screening is accurate in assessing symptoms of mental health problems

Refugees want to be asked questions about mental health, on as well as off line

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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Instruments available from the project

Instruments in Dari, Farsi, Arabic, Tigrinya, Somali, English, and Swedish:

 RHS-13, Refugee Health Screener, screening emotional distress

 PHQ-9, Patient Health Questionnaire-9, screening/assessing depression

 GAD-7, Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7, screening/assessing anxiety

 PC-PTSD, Primary Care PTSD, screening for risk for PTSD

 WHOQOL-BREF, WHO Quality of Life, assessing quality of life

Instruments in Dari, Farsi, Arabic, Tigrinya, English, and Swedish:

 ISI, Insomnia Severity Index, ISI, assessing insomnia

 SCS, Symptom Catastrophizing Scale

 WHODAS, WHO Disability Assessment Schedule, assessing health and disability

 HSCL, Hopkins Symptom Checklist-25, assessing anxiety and depression

 HTQ, Harvard Trauma Questionnaire, HTQ, assessing posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

 ORS, Outcome Rating Scale, ORS, surveiling intervention process

Instruments in Dari, Farsi, Arabic, English, and Swedish:

 PCL-5, PTSD Checklist for DSM-5, screening/assessing PTSD

 PG-13, Prolonged Grief, screening/assessing compicated grief

 SGTI, Single Item Trauma Inventory, screening PTSD

Possibly more…

Selected publications

Bjärtå, A., Leiler, A., Ekdahl, J., & Wasteson, E. (2018). Assessing severity of psychological distress among refugees with the refugee health screener, 13-item version. *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, *206*(11), 834.

Leiler, A., Bjärtå, A., Ekdahl, J., & Wasteson, E. (2019). Mental health and quality of life among asylum seekers and refugees living in refugee housing facilities in Sweden. *Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology*, *54*, 543-551.

Leiler, A., Hollifield, M., Wasteson, E., & Bjärtå, A. (2019). Suicidal ideation and severity of distress among refugees residing in asylum accommodations in Sweden. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *16*(15), 2751.

Sarkadi, A., Bjärtå, A., Leiler, A., & Salari, R. (2019). Is the Refugee health screener a useful tool when screening 14-to 18-Year-old refugee adolescents for emotional distress?. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *32*(Special_Issue_1), i141-i150.

Leiler, A., Wasteson, E., Holmberg, J., & Bjärtå, A. (2020). A Pilot Study of a Psychoeducational Group Intervention Delivered at Asylum Accommodation Centers—A Mixed Methods Approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(23), 8953.

Meurling, J., Rondung, E., Leiler, A., Wasteson, E., Andersson, G., Richards, D., Shahnavaz, S., & Bjärtå, A. (2023). An online tiered screening procedure to identify mental health problems among refugees. *BMC psychiatry*, *23*(1), 7.

D-MEHER

Digital MEntal HEalthcare for Refugees

Aim: To better understand how digital tools can be used to facilitate access to mental healthcare for refugees from a provider perspective.

If you have experience with working with digital tools in the refugee mental health area, in research or practice, we are very interested in taking part of your thoughts and ideas on what have been successful or difficult.

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