

Case #11

4. Decision Case

Family Business¹

As the telephone conversation with her client ended, novice social worker Araceli Aguilera felt stunned by new information. Araceli's client, Maria Perez, was a victim of sex trafficking. She had left her two daughters—Isabella and Jimena—in the guardianship of her father, Xavier Perez, when she fled sexual abuse by other family members. Now, Xavier was dead and the two girls were at risk of trafficking themselves.

As Araceli walked down the long hallway to her supervisor's office, she wondered, *How do we keep the girls safe while processing the paperwork for reunification? And who will help us with that now?*

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was established in 1951 with a mission to advance awareness about migration and increase economic and social sustainability for migrants globally. IOM was the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration, partnering with 157 member states and operating offices in more than 100 countries. IOM worked to ensure an orderly and humane management process of migration, including the cooperation of international agencies on migrant issues and service provision for migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people (International Organization for Migration, 2015).

¹This decision case was prepared solely to provide material for class discussion and not to suggest either effective or ineffective handling of the situation depicted. While based on field research regarding an actual situation, names and certain facts have been disguised to protect confidentiality. The authors wish to thank the case reporter for cooperation in making this account available for the benefit of students and practitioners (Wolfer & Scales, 2006, p. 29).

World Assistance of North Carolina

Established in 1944, World Assistance of North Carolina (WA) was the leading local nonprofit social service agency that provided services to refugees who resettled in North Carolina. With branches in High Point and Winston Salem, WA sought to provide services to refugees and other displaced persons "fleeing persecution" based on race, religion, nationality, and social and/or political affiliation. Through the Ending Human Trafficking (EHT) Program, WA worked with local law enforcement agencies to provide 24-hour support to identified survivors. This support included short- and long-term services to ensure the survivors' safety and success.

Additionally, WA offered services for unaccompanied children (UAC), counseling, immigration assistance, social adjustment services, job readiness training and placement, medical case management, and English language training services. All of these services were available to any WA clients.

WA was the initial referral center for victims of trafficking identified by law enforcement within the state of North Carolina. WA provided an initial assessment and screening to determine whether a client was appropriate for the EHT program.

To seek permanent residence within the United States, human trafficking victims must disclose their experiences of being trafficked. The information is needed to complete a Trafficking Visa or T visa. Created in 2000, the T visa allowed immigrants who were victims of human trafficking or a violent crime to apply for permanent residency, so as long as they cooperated with any ongoing investigations.

Similarly, a T visa *derivative* provided nonimmigrant status for the applicant's spouse, children, parents, and siblings if the human trafficking victim and family members met the qualifications. Family members could qualify for T visa derivatives in several ways. Trafficking victims under 21 years of age could apply on behalf of their spouses, children, parents, and unmarried siblings under age 18. Trafficking victims 21 years old and older could apply on behalf of their spouses and children. In each case, trafficking victims needed to apply for a T visa derivative for each qualifying family member using Form I-914, Supplement A, Application for Immediate Family Member of T-1 Recipient, and needed to submit it within a time frame specified by the United States government.

Araceli Aguilera

Araceli Aguilera was a 24-year-old Mexican American from Winston Salem, North Carolina. As a bright student growing up in a lower socioeconomic household, Araceli had the opportunity to choose between a failing local school district and a more successful school outside of her district. Because education was a priority, Araceli attended prep school, a private high school located in Greensboro, North Carolina, that provided an advanced college preparatory education. Through her experience at Bishop High School, Araceli met Dr. Patrick Greene, the president and CEO of Serving Youth at Risk, a nonprofit research institute that focused on issues affecting the welfare of North Carolina children. Araceli leveraged her networking skills to obtain a

prestigious summer job working with Serving Youth at Risk, where she first learned about research addressing human trafficking.

After high school, Araceli entered the University of North Carolina as a computer science major. But, as a rising junior, she felt a faith-related calling to work in cross-cultural social work. Her initial field placement was at International High School, a three-year program where students with English as a second language could take the appropriate standardized test in preparation for higher education. After graduating with a bachelor of social work (BSW), she continued directly in the master of social work (MSW) program. As an MSW student, she had an international field experience in Central America. Through this placement, Araceli learned advanced clinical skills by providing group sessions and case management for parents of children experiencing malnutrition as well as community social work by creating the social work protocol for a local child welfare project. Her work in this international social service organization prepared her for the complexity of government systems involved with international family permanency plans.

Araceli's passion for working with international clients was reinforced when she began working for North Carolina World Assistance. Her job consisted of comprehensive case management with victims of sex trafficking. In addition, Araceli was responsible for coordinating and facilitating the permanency paperwork needed for victims seeking asylum from human trafficking.

An Outing With Maria

Araceli's initial encounter with her first client, Maria Perez, was unconventional because it occurred while the two were traveling to their first Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) check-in. Araceli understood the importance of keeping her client safe and calm during this check-in, but this was Araceli's first interaction with ICE, too. She would need all of her social work practice skills for building rapport. As a new social work case manager, Araceli wanted to make sure she did everything right for her supervisor Lauren and for Maria.

First, we'll meet the officer. Araceli mentally rehearsed the checklist Lauren provided. Then we'll walk through the detector. I show the papers and then we wait in the waiting room. They walked into the check-in and it was just as she was instructed. First, they met the officer, walked through the metal detectors, and found the waiting room. Everything was as planned except the papers. *Was I supposed to keep the papers? Do I ask for them back?* Araceli couldn't remember what happened after they took the papers. Her furrowed brow softened as she noticed Maria's concerned stare fixated on her face. Araceli reassured Maria, "I know that this is a long process, but you are doing great."

After the check-in, as they returned to the car, hunger pangs reminded Araceli to ask, "Maria, are you hungry?"

Maria shrugged, uncertain.

As they drove past a sign advertising a Starbucks at the next exit, Araceli asked again, "Is Starbucks okay?"

Maria nodded and agreed to stop there for a light lunch. Araceli thought this would be a good time to say more about herself and some of the services provided by WA. As they waited for their food, Araceli began, "Maria, thank you for the bravery you showed in the meeting with ICE today. You were able to explain everything so effectively. You answered all of the questions appropriately. You should be very proud of yourself."

"No," Maria began shaking her head in objection, "I don't want to talk about my case here."

"Okay," Araceli responded, "well, can you tell me what you need?"

"Yes, I can tell you what I need," Maria answered hurriedly.

After the food arrived, Maria took a bite of her chicken wrap and grimaced. But she began identifying resources she needed to become more stable and independent. "I want to have my own place. My own person, that, umm," Maria paused to find the right words, "you know, that person that talks to you?"

The person that talks to you, Araceli wondered. *Who is the person that talks to you?* "The counselor? Do you mean a counselor?"

"Yes," Maria affirmed, "a counselor."

"Okay, we can see what services will be the best fit for you." Araceli thought of all of the counseling services available to Maria, as well as the other services she requested. As they left Starbucks and headed home, Araceli felt the tension of riding with someone unfamiliar. Araceli wondered if she should make small talk or continue the hour-long drive in silence.

Maria appeared exhausted and finished the ride with her head against the window. With no conversation, it felt like a long ride home. Araceli's thoughts were interrupted only by the low hum of the latest top-40 hits playing on the local radio station.

"You can come by the office to get the food vouchers," Araceli explained, as she pulled into Maria's apartment complex. "I'll be in contact about the therapeutic and case management referrals, and we will check about assisting with the other resources soon, okay?"

Maria nodded as she left the car.

Affidavit Sessions

Araceli would later learn about Maria's experience with human trafficking in much greater depth. Pieces of her story were revealed during subsequent ICE interviews (different from her initial ICE check-in) and later during conversations with Maria's immigration attorney. Maria would recount several occurrences of unlawful detainment of her identification documents, forced servitude, and coerced sexual encounters. Araceli would come to learn that Maria's boyfriend told her stories of freedom and prosperity in the United States, only to coerce her into a bonded labor arrangement that made her incapable of making any decisions regarding her life. Maria was advised by an immigration attorney that they would need to gather documentation.

"Maria, in order to complete your T visa packet we need an I-914 application for nonimmigrant status, passport photographs, a personal statement of the applicant's human trafficking experience, and other documentation that addressed victimization. Today you began this process by reporting your experience with human trafficking, but the process isn't complete. Do you understand this?" the attorney asked.

"Yes," Maria responded.

"You will provide the remaining documentation to Araceli, okay?" the attorney clarified. The immigration attorney ended the meeting by handing Maria a list of the remaining documentations needed.

In order to complete the I-914 form, Maria had to recount her incidents of sex trafficking again, this time to immigration attorney Hilda Fong. These sessions were similar to the ICE interviews, but Fong typically spread the process over several sessions to reduce retraumatization of clients. It had taken several weekly sessions to capture enough of Maria's story, and the 90-day application due date was swiftly approaching.

It was the fourth meeting to complete the I-914 form. Like the others, this meeting would include Maria; Araceli, to provide support; and Hilda, who had worked really well with Maria in the other three interviews. Hilda showed great ability to connect with Maria and make her comfortable in sharing stories of her human trafficking past. In response, Maria had been very forthcoming about her experiences and Araceli was excited that she would be one step closer to gaining asylum in the United States.

To begin, Hilda reminded Araceli and Maria of the purpose for the meeting and summarized the last interview to refresh everyone's memory. "Maria, you stopped right before you met Jose Gutierrez," Hilda concluded. "Do you mind beginning when you met him?"

Araceli knew this would be a hard interview for Maria. As Araceli prepared Maria for this final interview, Maria began to disclose her initiation into sex trafficking and the grooming that took place while she lived with Jose.

"Yes," Maria affirmed, "he had connections in Houston and Raleigh. He contacted a coyote that smuggled me from Tijuana through Juarez, Mexico. We crossed the border in El Paso, stopped in Houston, and finally in Charlotte. It took just over a month to get here. I had to leave my dear father and two little daughters, but I made it."

"Maria, can you tell why you ran away with your boyfriend?" Araceli encouraged.

"Yes. I needed to get away from my past. My mother sold me," Maria recounted, "sold me to everyone who wanted me. That's what my family does. It's like the family business. And that's why I moved in with my father, to get away. That's how I moved from Vera Cruz to Tijuana—and that's where I met Jose. And when I met him—I fell in love," Maria remembered.

"Thank you, Maria. This is very helpful," Hilda interjected, "but we need a little more information about how you were trafficked and why you are petitioning to have your daughters join you in the United States. We want to ensure that we provide as much detail as possible so that your visa meets the criteria for approval."

With her head bowed, Maria began to describe how she was trafficked across the border and her decision to leave her daughters with her father.

"I didn't think Jose would hurt me. He said he loved me—and after being sold by my mother, for sex—I just wanted someone to love me," Maria stated, shifting in her seat. "He promised we would make a life together in America. He said to leave my babies and we would send for them when we were settled. But it took longer than he thought to get to Charlotte. It took a whole month to get here."

"Okay," Hilda encouraged. "What happened when you finally arrived in Charlotte?"

"He found us an apartment and I found a job. Everything was fine. I paid the bills and began making friends. We were living the American dream—until he got mad. He said he didn't like me hanging out with my friends. He made me give him all the money I made at my job. He kept saying, 'You owe me, you owe me.'"

"What happened after he began taking your money?" Hilda probed.

"At first he made me, you know, have sex with his friends," Maria stuttered. "He would beat me if I refused, so I did it. And then he wanted me to have sex with men I didn't know. He would offer me up like I was for sale. He'd force me in a room with a man and lock the door. I couldn't come out until we had sex—and they would pay him." Suddenly, Maria began sobbing. "It was just like my mother all over again."

She's shaking, Araceli observed. Should we keep going? Araceli questioned. We need to complete the affidavit if she wants to achieve her goal of independence, and we're running out of time to file the paper work. Then Araceli's social work professional skill began flashing through her brain: Ensure the client's safety. Meet her where she is. De-escalate the situation.

"Thank you for being so brave," Araceli said, leaning over to comfort her client, "thank you for trusting us with your story." *This is too much for her, Araceli thought. It's too much for anyone.*

Araceli and Hilda waited a few moments while Maria calmed herself.

"Can you tell Hilda," Araceli encouraged, "how you got connected to WA?"

"Well, one night after he forced me to have sex with some guy," Maria confessed, "we started fighting. He was beating me up and someone called the police."

"How did that connect you to WA?" Hilda asked for clarification. "Did the police take you to World Assistance?"

"No. The police asked me for documentation and I didn't have any. They heard my accent and arrested me for deportation. They sent me to—detention," Maria explained. "They said I had assault, umm, charged with assault from the fight."

Maria sunk down in her seat. "I didn't assault him. I just couldn't stay with him anymore. I never tried to assault him," Maria said weeping. "I just wanted to save my life."

"I know it's tough, Maria," Araceli comforted. "Do you need a break?"

Maria nodded.

"Hilda, is it okay if we take a 15-minute break?" Araceli asked.

"Sure. I'll get some coffee. Would either of you like coffee?" Both nodded. "I'll walk slowly," Hilda whispered.

When the door closed Araceli hugged Maria. "You're doing a great job. What can I do to help make this interview easier for you?"

In a moment of clarity, Maria looked up and asked, "Can we do some grounding meditation? I have my sea meditation sounds on my phone."

"Sure," Araceli agreed, "we can do a grounding meditation while we wait. Is that one of the coping skills you're learning with your counselor?"

"Yes," Maria said nervously. "And I've been practicing my coping skills—walking, listening to music, lighting my candles—I just don't want to take any medicine."

"Okay, we'll do this grounding exercise—and then we'll get back to the affidavit. Is that okay?"

Maria nodded.

Fifteen minutes later, Hilda returned with two cups of coffee.

As Maria slowly ended her grounding exercise, Araceli questioned, "Are you feeling better? Do you think you can finish the interview today?"

"Yes," Maria whispered through her last deep exhale. "I can finish the interview now."

"That's great, Maria," Araceli encouraged. "We're hoping that soon we'll be able to submit your T visa derivatives, you know, the papers to bring your girls over."

"I know," Maria sighed.

Maria began to recount her most recent sexual exploitation at the hands of Jose. "Maria, can you explain why you continued living with Jose, after all this abuse?" Hilda inquired.

"He said he'd kill me," Maria said in a muffled voice. Her head was bowed with her gaze fixed on the table, as she repeated it again. "I was really scared. I didn't have anywhere I could go because he knows where my family lives. I knew that if I left him, he would really hurt my family to get to me."

"Thank you, Maria, I really appreciate you sharing all of that with us," Hilda responded, after further elaboration. "I know it wasn't easy. I just needed to clarify the force, fraud, and coercion aspect of your trafficking case and you helped me with that." Hilda added, "Thank you for being so brave." With that closing statement, Hilda concluded the interview and notarized the I-914 form.

Family Reunification

Araceli was excited when they received formal notification that Maria's T visa was approved and she was granted asylum in the United States. Her excitement grew because they could now finalize the application for a T-3 visa derivative to allow reunification with Maria's daughters. Araceli telephoned Lorenzo Gutiérrez with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to learn the final steps needed in the permanency placement plan to include in Maria's case plan.

"I just wanted to update you on Maria's visa status," Araceli began. "We received Maria's T visa approval, so we don't have to worry about deportation anymore."

"Great, Araceli," Lorenzo exclaimed. "Do you have any recent information about the girls' documentation? We're still waiting on their passports and birth certificates. Has Maria given them to you?"

"No. You should have received all of that information from Maria's father, Xavier Perez," Araceli responded. "Has he not provided that information? That should have happened months ago."

"We haven't received any paperwork," Lorenzo sounded impatient. "It's holding up our paperwork and, as you know, if we miss the submission deadline we will have to start all processes from the beginning. Have you heard anything from Ms. Perez?"

"No," Araceli offered, "but she'll be coming in for a meeting, so I can ask for an updated status. Will you be in the office later for a possible conference call?"

"Absolutely. Thanks for taking care of this, Araceli. We want to ensure the safe procurement of Isabella and Jimena. I'll be looking forward to your update."

Later that afternoon, Maria arrived on time for her case management session with Araceli. This surprised Araceli because Maria routinely arrived 20 minutes late for sessions.

"Hey Maria, come on in," Araceli greeted her client with a smile. "How are you feeling today?"

"I'm doing okay," Maria responded. "How are you?"

"I'm good. Thanks for asking. I'm so glad you were able to come in today," Araceli said as she motioned Maria over to her seating area. "I know it hasn't been easy for you to get off work for our meetings, so I just wanted you to know how appreciative I am that you could make it today."

"Yeah," Maria shrugged.

"We just want to make sure we can get all of the documentation to process your daughters' T-3 visas," Araceli reiterated. "Does that make sense? Have you been able to contact your father about the documents? If we don't get those documents it will hold up the process."

"You didn't get them?" Maria responded with apparent surprise. "I sent my father money. He said he would send them."

"When I asked you about this during our phone check-in a few weeks ago, you said the same thing. Did you send more money since then?"

"Yes," Maria affirmed. "I sent him more money, specifically for the birth certificates."

"Have you talked with him again?"

"Yes," Maria nodded, "he said he needed 50 dollars to get the documents."

"Fifty dollars? He doesn't need 50 dollars. Lorenzo from IOM stated that because we're using the IOM services, document processing is free." *Something's not adding up.* Araceli was puzzled by this information. *I remember telling you that all of the services with IOM were free. That's why we chose to partner with IOM,* she thought, *so that it wouldn't be a financial hardship on you.* Araceli caught herself shaking her head as she heard Maria respond.

"My father says that it costs 50 dollars to get the certificates," Maria reported, "so I sent him the money."

"Maria, let me check with Lorenzo. I think the processing should be free."

Araceli telephoned Lorenzo. "Hi Lorenzo, this is Araceli again. I'm with Maria Perez. Do you have time for a conference call?"

"Sure. Hi, Maria. How are you doing today?"

"I'm doing fine, Mr. Gutiérrez. How are you?"

"I'm well. We wanted to touch base with you regarding your daughters' identification cards and birth certificates. Were you able to contact your father to let him know that we need that information?"

"Yes. I sent him the money to pay for it and everything."

"Money? Ms. Perez, these services are free. We contacted the front desk to determine if your father dropped off any packages and his name is not in the visitor's log. Are you sure he's coming to the correct address?"

Maria assured them that she gave the correct address and showed the money wire receipt proving that she'd sent money for the purpose of securing her daughters' documentation.

"Well, Ms. Perez," Lorenzo interjected, please follow up on your end and we will see if anything comes in the mail. Please remember that all services with IOM are completely free. No charges at all."

"Yes, Mr. Gutiérrez," Maria agreed. "I'll see what happened."

"Thank you. Have a good rest of your visit with Ms. Aguilera and I'll touch base with you soon. Good-bye."

"Maria, do you think your father knows how to get to the IOM offices in Mexico?" Araceli asked, after hanging up the phone. "Does he need the money for transportation to the office?"

"No, no," Maria stuttered. "He has a ride. My aunt said she'd give him a ride if he couldn't get there."

"Do you have any idea why he might need the money since we have now confirmed that IOM's services are free?"

"No, I don't. I do know that there is a lot of corruption and violence in his area. That's why I wire the money directly to him instead of sending a money order in the mail. It's safer that way."

"Do you think he's in any danger?" Araceli probed.

"He didn't tell me that," Maria shook her head no. "He would have told me that." Maria's breathing became more stifled as her brow furrowed. Her gaze seemed distant, as if she were searching for something in the next room.

"What's going on, Maria?"

"I don't understand how he could do this to me," Maria nearly shouted. "I send him money to get the documents and he doesn't even need it. Why would he take money from me when he doesn't need it?"

Araceli couldn't understand why Xavier had asked for 50 dollars but attempted to deescalate her client.

"Just contact your dad for me, one more time," Araceli instructed, "to make sure he's safe and understands what we're asking of him. Remind him that if he uses the IOM Mexico offices, all of the services are free. Tell him to ask the IOM worker to call you when he's in the office so that you can explain all of the needed documentation. Can you do that for me, Maria?"

"Yes, Araceli. I promise, I will."

"Thank you. You have been so helpful during this entire process," Araceli reassured. "I'll follow up with our offices about next steps."

"Yes. I can do that."

"Good. I'll write that into your case plan and follow up with you next week. Is there anything else you need from us this week?"

"No, Araceli. You all have helped with so much. Now that I have my visa I can get a better job. You all have done more than enough."

"Well, you've done all of the hard work. I like the way you are progressing with your case plan. As soon as we can finalize this reunification visa we will be on the road to reuniting you with your girls."

"Thank you so much, Araceli." Maria could barely contain the tears welling up her eyes. "It's been five years since I've seen my daughters. I can't return to Mexico to visit and I'm afraid to try and smuggle them over."

Before leaving they summarized the list of things that needed to be completed before their next visit, Maria wrote herself a list as a reminder, and she left.

The Final Call

Over the next few weeks, with a new job and new apartment, Maria's appointments were more sporadic. But one day she came to Araceli's office in a panic. "He's dying, he's dying!"

"Who's dying?" Araceli asked, confused.

"My father. He's sick. I didn't know. No one told me." The information spilled out.

"How did you find out?" Araceli asked.

"When I called to inquire about the documents," Maria explained, "my Tia Letty answered the phone and told me he was in the hospital."

"What happened, what's wrong?" Araceli asked. "How serious is it?"

"I don't know," Maria began sobbing uncontrollably. "No one wants to tell me anything—and I can't even go and see him. What if he dies and I never get to see him? What if he dies?" Maria's voice drifted off.

Araceli just sat with Maria as she cried. After several minutes, she asked, "Maria, why don't they want to tell you?"

"They said they didn't want me to worry. They know I can't return to Mexico because of the T visa. They know if they told me I would try to go see him. They said they didn't have money for the phone calls, so they wanted to wait to see if he got better before letting me know he was sick. They didn't want me to worry about my daughters."

She went on, "It helps to explain a lot though—about why I didn't hear from him."

Maria was talking so fast that Araceli could hardly keep up. Araceli knew that Maria was stuck in America even if her father died, as required by the T visa. *Who's watching the kids? Are they eating or going to school?* Araceli's thoughts quickly turned to Maria's children. *Who would be the guardian of her daughters? Who could get clearance to keep them if Xavier is sick? We've got to create a safety plan and update contact information for Maria's relatives in Mexico,* Araceli thought.

After Maria told Araceli what she knew, they began to work on a safety plan for Isabella and Jimena and to update IOM on identifying another guardian for Maria's daughters. The safety plan would assist IOM in identifying responsible relative placements should the girls need to be moved. The safety plan outlined names and numbers of Maria's relatives who lived in the area as well as her understanding of "fit for placement." Maria was extremely concerned about placing her daughters with her maternal side of the family due to her own history of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation by those family members. After completing the safety plan, Maria left to try to contact her father and gather updated information regarding his medical condition.

Despite repeated attempts, Araceli was unable to reach Maria by phone for three weeks. Finally, Maria answered her call.

"He's dead, Araceli," Maria announced abruptly.

"What?!" Araceli replied.

"My dad is dead," Maria clarified.

"I'm so sorry, Maria," Araceli responded. "I know how much he meant to you. What can I do to help you in this process?"

"Nothing. I'm working on it. I went to church, lit some candles, and said my prayers. Some days it's so hard to get out of bed. Some days I think going back to Mexico is worth risking all of my residential status just to get my girls." Maria paused, then added, "I need to get my girls!"

"That's what we're trying to do through IOM," Araceli reassured. "Maria, who's going to care for your girls now that your father has passed? Do you have any thoughts on who might be able to take care of your girls right now?"

"I don't know." Maria paused. "I have two aunts who might be able, Delores and Letty, but they're older and I'd have to send money to help them."

Araceli knew that if the girls went into the foster care system there would be no way to track them in Mexico. Araceli's communication was already limited in Mexico because IOM's communication protocol required that only IOM could communicate on behalf of her client. *Keeping the girls with a family member was the safest option for a fast procurement procedure, but who could keep the girls?*

"You have a sister, Teresa. Could she watch the girls?" Araceli asked, recalling the family members Maria had mentioned previously.

"No, no!" Maria exclaimed. "Her husband is the one who abused me—three times! I don't want my girls with him—or her."

"Do you have any other relatives?" Araceli asked again. "Anyone at all?"

"None other than my mother. But she will never get my girls!" Maria stated emphatically.

What do I do? How do I place these girls until the paperwork can be completed for the T-3 visa? Do I advocate for the placement of the kids with her sister, whose husband abused Maria, if only on a short-term basis? Questions raced through Araceli's mind. If IOM would only let me do a quick home visit or at least talk to a fostering agency, I could put safety and communication plans in place to make the procurement easier. The weight of these decisions was almost too much for Araceli to bear. How do I make sure the girls are okay? What happens if the girls disappear and Maria can't be reunited with them?

As Araceli walked down the long hallway to her supervisor's office, she wondered, *How do we keep the girls safe while processing the paperwork for reunification? And how can we facilitate or support the coordination and decision making between Maria and IOM?*