



**MANSO**

MANITOBA ASSOCIATION  
OF NEWCOMER SERVING  
ORGANIZATIONS

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022



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# 1

## BACKGROUND

To provide direction over the next 5 years, the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO) engaged in a strategic planning process with the Board of Directors and staff. The planning process was guided by MANSO staff.

To inform planning, 44 representatives of MANSO members and staff met on October 19th, 2016 to reflect on external trends or challenges (Appendix 1) that may impact the organization; MANSO's vision and mission statements (Appendices 2 and 3); and critical issues and sector gaps for MANSO to address.

Following the October 19th visioning day, a facilitated strategic planning session held on December 13th, 2016 brought together MANSO staff and the Board of Directors. With consideration of the proposed strategic issues, trends and challenges, staff and board engaged in discussions to identify goals and priorities for the organization in the coming five years, discuss the current mission and vision statements, and begin to identify strategic priorities.

The plan was reviewed by the Board of Directors on January 19th, 2017 and adopted by the board on March 23rd, 2017. A draft workplan has also been developed to support the implementation of the plan.



## STRATEGIC ISSUES

Based on the input of MANSO members, staff and the Board of Directors, the following were identified as issues that MANSO needed to address in strategic planning.

### 1) MANSO's organizational stability and connections with members

As a newly-amalgamated association, MANSO has the opportunity to establish processes that support organizational stability, strengthening policies and practices, maintaining interactions and connections with members, aligning with the needs of communities served (members and clients), and exploring its structure. Proposed approaches included maintaining Directors of Language and Settlement, considering a rural coordinator, and ensuring board and committee representatives with lived experience reflect MANSO membership.

In addition to internal structure and governance, the organization's strategic plan or "vision" for the years ahead can provide leadership for members. Board and member committees can have greater focus, to better support the aims of the organization.

### 2) A voice of members and responding to critical issues with consistency

As the provincial representative of newcomer settlement and integration organizations, with a newly broadened membership base, MANSO is well-positioned to be the "voice" of Manitoba's newcomer-serving sector. The organization can continue to strengthen relationships with federal, provincial and municipal levels of government; being a "bridge" between government and SPOs, sharing information in a timely manner between members and government, and ensuring

consistency of information and messaging between parties.

MANSO is also positioned to strengthen collaboration with partners, working toward shared, mutually agreed upon actions. Often in partnership, opportunities exist for MANSO to respond to emerging and critical issues, addressing service and policy gaps that impede the sector's ability to welcome and integrate newcomers as well as mitigate anti-immigration sentiment that may exist in the community. In developing responses, it is critical that MANSO's work be informed by members, research, best practices and evidence – as well as the voices of the communities served.

### 3) Capacity of SPOs

Increasing numbers of newcomers and systemic challenges – such as inadequate or unaffordable housing, accreditation hurdles, and access to child care – create pressures on SPOs. While working at a system level to represent needs of its members, MANSO can continue to build the capacity of SPOs, paying attention to emerging service gaps.

Ongoing training, provision of information and resources, relevant timely resources, and enhanced web presence and tools, can enhance the professionalization of the sector and better equip members.

# 2

## FRAMEWORK

### VISION

Manitoba welcomes, supports and engages newcomers.

### MISSION

To facilitate newcomer integration by providing leadership, support and a unified voice for settlement and integration organizations.

### VALUES

#### 1) Inclusive

We are made up of the communities we serve; we respect the diversity of our member organizations and the people they serve, and build on their unique voices, knowledge and experiences to build welcoming communities.

#### 2) Collaborative

We learn, share and work together to achieve our goals.

#### 3) Excellence

We are determined to do our personal and professional best, striving to adapt, learn and innovate as agents of change.

#### 4) Accountable

We are accountable to our member organizations and each other, driven by the needs of the communities we serve.

#### 5) Advocate

We are the voice of the sector, and advocate for the interests of member organizations and the people they serve.

### LONG-TERM IMPACT

- *Responsive, consistent and coordinated settlement services*
- *Improved newcomer integration outcomes.*

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

MANSO's response to the issues identified through the planning process, goals and objectives provide a roadmap for the next five years – toward achieving MANSO's desired long-term impact.

#### Goal 1) Strengthened sector capacity to respond to settlement needs

- 1) *Strengthen delivery of professional development for the sector and work towards professionalization for settlement practitioners.*
- 2) *Support sharing of promising practices among service providers and enhance our ability to describe the long-term impact of the work we do.*
- 3) *Promote collaborations and partnerships among MANSO members.*

#### Goal 2) Responses to emerging and critical issues are coordinated

- 1) *Support evidence-based research to inform policy and best practice.*
- 2) *Strengthen and support processes to respond to identified settlement and integration issues.*
- 3) *Strengthen intra and inter sectoral communication approaches.*

#### Goal 3) MANSO is a respected and recognized voice

- 1) *Strengthen sector participation at Federal, Regional, Provincial, and Municipal tables*
- 2) *Strengthen and coordinate advocacy on newcomer settlement and integration needs.*
- 3) *Develop a strategy for engaging in public conversations on immigration and settlement.*

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Based on the current MANSO mission and stakeholder feedback, the next five years will be guided by the following strategic priorities:

### 1) Organizational Participation

Strengthening operations and governance, including policies and practices, will help ensure the newly amalgamated association is able to focus on achieving its mission.

- a. Diversify funding for core activities and special projects*
- b. Frame clear Terms of Reference and Goals for each committee*
- c. Develop frameworks for active member participation in MANSO through board, committees and member activities.*

### 2) Responsiveness and Accountability

Strengthening structures and processes to connect with SPOs and newcomers will increase accountability and support MANSO's ability to respond to emerging and critical issues and to speak with a unified voice on behalf of members.

- a. Strengthen capacity to support francophone service providers, including increased number of tools available in French*
- b. Develop policy or advocacy positions on key issues in collaboration with our members*
- c. Develop structures and processes to inform MANSO on the perspectives, needs and priorities of newcomers*

### 3) Partnerships and Collaboration

Engaging with relevant stakeholders, with clarity regarding roles and relationships, can reduce duplication and support MANSO's ability to respond to identified issues.

- a. Develop stronger partnerships on professional development (i.e. with AAISA)*
- b. Collaborate with Local Immigration Partnerships on strategies for achieving shared goals.*
- c. Strengthen relationships among private sponsors and settlement service providers*



# APPENDIX 1

## TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

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- ◆ **Systemic challenges** confront newcomers. Members spoke about the need for affordable public housing, sustaining training and education, credential accreditation to support newcomers working in their field, and child care as variables that impact newcomers' lives.

*Housing & childcare – systemic challenges and how they impact SPOs.*

- ◆ The **influx of newcomers** - notably the Syrian response – puts pressures on service providers, and existing systems and resources.

*Syrian / refugee influx – short term funding, funding uncertainties, immigrant # uncertainties and the BALANCE between that.*

- ◆ There are barriers to meeting the needs of **clients deemed ineligible for services** by funders, such as visitors, students, temporary foreign workers. Members spoke of exploring the current definitions to broaden or clarify eligibility for services, with a goal to better meet client need.

*Additional people that agencies work with (ineligible clients).*

*Agencies are stretching themselves to try to provide service (under the table).*

*What is a newcomer – what is definition? How long are they newcomers?*

- ◆ **Service gaps** for newcomers are emerging in a number of areas, and members face increasing complexity of need. This includes mental health, newcomers with disabilities, and delivering language training with accompanying needs like child care services. Members seek information, supports, training, and funding to be better support the professionalization of the front line.

*More resources [needed]... Additional training for instructors for disclosure [related to mental health].*

*There are critical issues around disability, especially with developmentally delayed refugees and access to services/supplies.*

- ◆ MANSO has to **strike a balance** advocating on behalf of the sector and maintaining a positive, productive relationship with funders. A challenge lies in meeting the priorities of sector and funder, navigating relationships while staying abreast of the spectrum of issues facing the sector.

*To be a voice for the sector, representing issues to IRCC & Province.*

*Need to steer our own boat and also bite the hand that feeds them. Not be controlled.*

*Caught between what the sector needs and what funders want.*

- ◆ **Financial uncertainty** that undermines stability and certainty of programming was repeatedly identified as a challenge. Examples included declining funding, the disconnect between available funding and the level of funds required, and meeting complex needs that accompany service provision (e.g., language services and child care).

*There is a challenge in finding alternative funding/diversified funding*

- ◆ The sector encounters **anti-immigration sentiment** that inhibits welcoming newcomers to communities, and may undermine public support of MANSO and members.

*Racism / negative impression of immigration – over time public may not support it.*

*There is a lot of global anti-immigration rhetoric – how do we get ahead of the game?*

- ◆ Members called attention to **language services** – meeting needs in the classroom as well as language services that support broader needs – and spoke about the need for greater flexibility from funders to respond to immediate and emerging language needs, as well as the need for fully qualified EAL instructors.

*Language services are under stress – lots of pressure from professionals to have very high benchmarks*

- ◆ With increasing pressures on service providers across all areas of need, there is ongoing translation service pressures on francophone members, and ensuring that services are available in French.

*Health services in French*

*Interpretation training; training on health and mental health*

*Translation services tend to land on French partners.*

*Need more bilingual resources.*



# APPENDIX 2

## DISCUSSION REGARDING MISSION

.....

MANSO's current mission is: to provide leadership, support and a unified voice for the settlement and integration sector, including core settlement services, language training, employment services, and welcoming communities.

### General

Not sure re: the detailed list of examples after 'sector', e.g., core settlement services...

It's very much determined by IRCC's categories. Maybe end at 'settlement and integration'? (note: we are a larger settlement plus provider and I feel it's ok to not delineate 'language training'.)

Just curious why employment services are singled out? There is housing, mental health, etc... Definition of "core" settlement services? Compared to?

It is important to capture that language and employment services are crucial for settlement and integration.

Instead of language training, "appropriate trainings" would be better.

It works until "integration sector". The second half should, in my opinion, refer to how the result of MANSO and member relationships will relate/affect/improve outcomes for immigrants in Manitoba.

MANSO has been actively leading and engaging its members by organizing PD events for member organizations to improve the skills and capabilities of staff. MANSO has been effectively representing all members in the national level and by consulting the members.

MANSO has been a wonderful advocate and engaged with what settlement organizations are doing. I salute you.

Needs of the individuals and agencies are always changing and I feel that MANSO works hard to find out what the needs are and address them in the best way possible. MANSO is staffed with open and diverse individuals who I believe are always looking to improve in order to better support.

This is accurate from what was presented by all groups.

MANSO is an excellent support and resource. Whenever we ask for assistance, they are always there. In fact, they are often ahead. Given their resources, they are [an] invaluable resource to settlement sector organizations. (we/they need to be willing to advocate with IRCC and bite the hand that feeds them.

Very good. Reference to partnerships? Reference to benefits/outcomes?

Captures the scope of what we do and who we do it for.

It might be a bit long but it is all inclusive.

So clearly states the objective of MANSO and are consistent with members' expectations thoughts and concerns that were expressed today.

This is the mission – it's the next part – goals, process, events, etc. that interests me! Does this need to be specific about the "benefit"?

In broad from, the mission is reflective of MANSO's current role, however, may need to be revised and responsive to the changing needs of the sector. Like SPOs, MANSO is also in a constant flux of change but must remain focused on the vision.

### How

BUT I think the word "independent" should be somewhere i.e., "and an independent, unified voice."

Is there a place for health, education and/or housing? Not sure but these issues are definitely part of what MANSO does.

MANSO is making sure it's noticed and that sectors (municipally, provincially, and federally) are very aware of what we want for the future and our "clients" and we will continue to advocate for them to the best of our ability.

Advocacy – Is that included in "leadership"?

Addition about having a strong voice at the municipal, provincial and federal levels on issues/gaps identified by service providers in the sector.

Based on what I heard this morning regarding the delicate balance MANSO must maintain between advocating and being on good terms with funders, I think it's important to say that the voice is "independent" or "impartial."

I would like to see something about advocacy and leadership around educating the larger community on the immigrant experience and issues.

I believe the mission statement is a good reflection of what MANSO should be. I think it can be a stronger voice and advocate for member agencies. It needs to become a bigger player on the national scene and maybe that piece needs to be included in the mission statement.

Again I believe this mission is reflected but can be strengthened. MANSO does provide a unified voice, however, there are some areas that a stronger level of communication and advocacy is needed. Areas are listed in Q1.

I agree with the mission but I believe that it's missing some important factors that we discussed today. I believe that new workers training should include an orientation to integrate the new workers into the sector and able to perform positively in their role to provide services.

But we need to work more closely to include the francophone aspect of it.  
Requires attention to P.D.s success for every level.

Words like connecting between SPO's, btw SPOs and government might be helpful. Also, educate and advocate.

Could play a stronger role in bringing EDs/SPOs together to lay out a strategic plan (unified and collaborative) in advance of each CFP.  
strong role in Syrian response

Vital communication bridge between IRCC and SPOs

building partnerships though IPW with non-traditional SPOs and groups

MANSO should work collaboratively with all stakeholders to support the settlement sector. Conduct research that is evidence based to support the work of settlement sector.

Great work for providing PD for front line agencies. Networking for all the agencies which we want to have more.

It is excellent idea to keep all service provider services training people to reflect though MANSO mission.

## Who

I also feel that MANSO represents newcomers by representing the settlement sector. So, I wonder if this could be included. I would like the newcomer voice to be represented clearly.

Still far too Winnipeg centric.

I like "welcoming communities" because that covers many of the non-traditional settlement supports and the private sponsor groups.

I am wondering if the ethnocultural communities can be included too.

# APPENDIX 3

## DISCUSSION REGARDING VISION

Newcomers to Manitoba are welcomed, supported and engaged.

### General

Something about living in inclusive communities. Something about voice and leadership. Something a bit more dynamic, newcomers form the fabric of our evolving identity, nation and community.

MANSO is an excellent support and resource. Whenever we ask for assistance, they are always there. In fact, they are often ahead. Given their resources, they are [an] invaluable resource to settlement sector organizations. (we/they need to be willing to advocate with IRCC and bite the hand that feeds them.

They're already doing a lot and are willing to do more and more.

Welcomed, supported, engaged, empowered? Or effectively integrated.

Rather than only engaged, we want to ensure that they have opportunity to be integrated into the social, cultural and economic life in Manitoba (Canada)

BUT it could be good if we add "respected" before "welcomed"

I think the statement is true but not a strong enough statement. Almost too vague.

Short and concise but also vague enough. My only comment is that a newcomer can sometimes be an indigenous person moving from a reserve to the city.

This indirectly reflects MANSO's role; MANSO supports the sector which, in return, supports newcomers. By making sure SPOs have what they need to support clients, MANSO ensures newcomers are supported. Support to transition from newcomer to Manitoban accessing privileges and participants as equal citizens.

Together with the front-line sectors, MANSO plays a bigger role and voice for the newcomers, bridge for the agency and funders. But we still need to do more.

But it will be great to have a piece on integration of newcomers.

Not much else to say – it's apple pie and motherhood. What about "inspiration"? There's no punch to the statement.

MANSO with its member organizations are doing a great job by ensuring that newcomers are welcomed, supported, and engaged. Most newcomers are reached and tapped. There are many programs that focus on the welfare of newcomers and address their needs and issues. Staff are doing their best to support and accommodate newcomers – even walk the extra mile.



MANSO focus on health, settlement and empower all newcomers through service providers.

### Agreement

A work in progress. It is reflection of the work and efforts on behalf of newcomers, even though it is a moving target from time to time.

YES: I feel the vision statement reflects the role but we aren't there yet. The work is ongoing to reach this vision.

I believe that the vision is correct but not completed. I think the vision should extend from newcomers to include also the workers and sectors involved with them.

This is what MANSO is working to make happen and I believe that MANSO is exploring every path that will lead successfully to that.

Yes, very good. Can't think of anything else.

The vision captures the essence of what our organization wants to see in our membership with MANSO.

This statement covers all discussed challenges and validates the unified intent of all members.

I feel that this vision still is the ultimate goal of the settlement sector which are MANSOs membership.

### Disagreement

MANSO not only serves newcomers but the sector that supports them. I realize that is covered in the mission statement but possibly, somehow, ingrained here too. OR should it be more broad to reflect the life the newcomer will be living after receiving services provided by MANSO members

I think the vision is too general or doesn't indicate the purpose – welcomed, supported and engaged “to integrate full with Canadian society.” I also think the manner in which they are welcomed could be included – something like, “in a respectful and humane way.”  
It would be good to define as “ALL newcomers”

MANSO is a voice for the sector firstly then newcomers after. “A voice for the newcomer sector to engage and support all.”

I think the vision is very broad and all encompassing. As discussed today, MANSO's role is becoming more specific. The discussion today was very wide and our role needs to become more specific – may take time as we are a very new organization

“Empower SPOs to secure newcomers”

MANSO's role has changed since this vision statement was made. I'd like to see a vision statement that sounds less like a service provider organization delivering front-line services and more like an umbrella organization that has a voice nationally – needs stronger words.

It is not accurate. The vision is too broad, short-term and does not include all the relevant stakeholders e.g., MANSO members

MANSO, as the umbrella organization for the settlement sector, should play a major role in advocating for services that will ensure that newcomers are welcome, supported and feeling safe to access services that are culturally appropriate and tailored to meet the needs of newcomers

By supporting and advocating to agencies

NO: the part that is missing is UNITED VOICE for newcomers to MB. As the umbrella organization, there is greater strength when it is a united voice than when the smaller voice tries to be heard or doesn't know how to be heard.

I think the vision statement does accurately reflect the role MANSO plays, however, there are areas for improvement...A stronger voice of MANSO when it comes to communication and advocacy with appropriate government bodies will help to facilitate the settlement community's work.

Maybe add something about supporting the settlement sector and being a voice for all agencies working with newcomers. (now that I look at the mission, I see this is covered!)

Could play a stronger role in bringing EDs/SPOs together to lay out a strategic plan (unified and collaborative) in advance of each CFP.

strong role in Syrian response

Vital communication bridge between IRCC and SPOs

building partnerships though IPW with non-traditional SPOs and groups

Would be nice to also recognize developing partnerships with stakeholders outside of the sector. So important for overall success.

'Newcomers' needs to be defined to include citizens, private sponsorships. 'Welcome' includes speaking to business, municipal, provincial jurisdictions in order to support/understand welcome.

In the discussions of the morning, there were areas that can be strengthened that will add support to this vision. More support is needed for clients when it comes to mental health, child care, housing, and the connection to resources.

Newcomers could be seen as ambiguous. TFWs and Canadian citizens coming from South America and Mexico could also fall under the newcomer title. The rest of the vision is accurate.