



Manitoba Nunavut

Settlement and Integration Summit

Manitoba Nunavut Settlement and Integration

Summit: Final Report

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Executive Summary

At the request of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Manitoba Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Sector Association hosted the Manitoba Nunavut Settlement and Integration Summit on November 6 and 7 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Representatives from the settlement sector, all levels of government, not-for-profit organizations, private employers, and public services from both Manitoba and Nunavut were invited and encouraged to attend the summit.

The summit provided opportunities for participants to learn and to share their experiences and ideas focusing on four areas: creating a welcoming society, language needs, labour market participation, and core settlement services. Summit participants identified strengths, opportunities, needs, gaps in services, barriers, and issues relating to accessibility of services.

Building on a strong, extensive, complex, and collaborative history of continued success in the integration of newcomers to Manitoba, best practices and success stories of service providers from geographic areas with significant experience in the settlement process were shared. Summit participants stressed the importance of Settlement Services to the success of newcomers, throughout their settlement process.

Challenges that emerged from discussions included: service provision in remote and smaller geographic areas of Manitoba and in Nunavut, compounding problems associated with newcomers not becoming fluent in (speaking, reading, listening, and comprehending) English in a predominantly English-speaking environment, health care (especially mental health care), French language services, protection of vulnerable populations, understanding each others' cultural perspectives and differences, access to appropriate housing and transportation, funded services for clients who are ineligible for CIC funded services, unrealistic expectations of newcomers, and problems with mismatching credentials/skills to job requirements.

Discussing the strengths, needs, opportunities, and gaps surrounding four main topics (i.e., Creating a Welcoming Society, Language Needs, Labour Market Participation, and Core

Settlement Services) led to the emergence of several themes for continued development of settlement services in Manitoba and Nunavut, including: a continued collaboration and development among the settlement service providers and the increased involvement of the community at large, creating a comprehensive directory of all service providers to foster collaboration, referral, and communication among service providers, continued resources and development for language services, further development of services for the Francophone community, increased support for the health and welfare of newcomers, support for affordable housing, continued research, funding for services in locations without either funding or services, cultural diversity training for employees and newcomers, and promotion of a better understanding of Local Immigration Partnerships.

Section 1: Preliminary Information on the Summit

On November 6 and 7, 2014 the Manitoba Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Sector Association Inc. (MIRSSA), guided by the Manitoba Settlement and Integration Summit Advisory Committee, hosted the *Manitoba Nunavut Settlement and Integration Summit* at the Delta Winnipeg Hotel in downtown Winnipeg. The summit was available via web streaming and presentations were made in both English and French.

A majority (62%) of the 155 summit attendees represented Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)-funded service provider organizations and other stakeholders. One in ten attendees (11%) represented educators from mostly local school divisions, community colleges, and universities. Two in ten represented levels of government: provincial (9%), federal (7%), and municipal (4%). Five participants (3%) were employers. Forty-two simultaneous webcasts were registered. There were no participants representing Nunavut.

The first day of the summit included a welcome, introductions of the emcees, and greetings from local dignitaries. After Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Province of Manitoba representatives spoke about their perspectives and initiatives, summit participants (including remote participants) were provided the opportunity to ask questions of presenters and hear the responses. Experts from Immigration Research West and Rural Development Institute Community Consultation Project presented information about the most current research, and participants asked questions and heard responses. Sector perspectives and initiatives were presented by representatives from Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance, Western Region Working Group, Manitoba Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Sector Association (MIRSSA), and Manitoba English as an Additional Language Organizations (MEALO). Again, participants asked questions of presenters and heard responses. The first day of the summit ended with a reception. A representation of the full program is contained in Appendix One of this report.

The second day of the summit began with an opening address from the Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance. Summit participants were then assigned to one of four groups in

separate rooms; each group of participants then broke into smaller discussion groups (of 6 to 8 people). In each of the four groups, one of the four main areas for discussion (described below) was introduced and framed by experts. A facilitator guided the discussion and groups discussed the topic area (with help from the facilitator and some pointed questions), and group volunteers recorded discussion notes on flip charts. Based on requests from CIC, four main areas (or “pillars”) were addressed in the group discussions: creating a welcoming society, language needs of new immigrants, labour market participation, and core settlement services. The notes taken on the flip charts at each table and the notes taken by the note-takers during the final discussion were summarized to create the content in this report.

At the close of each session, groups shared the main points of their discussion with others in the room and the ensuing discussion was documented by note takers. Once the group was finished discussing each topic, they took a break and then moved onto the next pillar/area for discussion.

Summit participants are from a variety of backgrounds, have a variety of core competencies, and perform a variety of functions with respect to assisting newcomers to settle and integrate into their community. Because of this range, their knowledge may be quite general and specific to their own situation, or quite specialized.

Because no participants were able to travel to the summit to represent Nunavut, one executive interview was completed by phone with a representative of an economic development organisation supporting economic migration and immigration. The four pillars (presented by CIC) and associated questions were used as a framework for the interview. A summary of information from this interview is presented close to the end of section two of this report.

Because some employers were unavailable to attend the summit, a short qualitative questionnaire was provided to them. Feedback was obtained from 14 employers and this information is summarized at the end of section two of this report. The questions addressed employers’:

- Experience with newcomers in their workplace, including strengths and challenges

- Ability to find, retain, and promote newcomer employees
- Observations of the newcomer's settlement and language challenges
- Ability to creating a welcoming community and perception of what makes Canada a better place for newcomers
- Suggestions to improve the experience

Information in this report represents the information provided by participants who physically attended the second day of the summit, from the executive interview, and from employers who completed and returned the short survey. Even though there were several attempts to include a variety of participants, the following may be underrepresented: groups from geographical locations outside of Winnipeg and especially from locations in northern Manitoba, service providers not funded by CIC, employers, and representatives from Nunavut. Service providers that are yet unknown to those groups represented by the Manitoba Settlement and Integration Summit Advisory Committee were not represented.

Section 2: Summary by Category

On the second day of the two-day summit, participants were assigned to one of four groups and each group had separate space. The four groups were further split into smaller discussion groups. For each of four separate sessions, a subject-matter expert framed the discussion topic. Each discussion group further discussed the topic, listing strengths or opportunities, needs, indirect and direct gaps in service, and accessibility issues or barriers. At the end of each of the four sessions, all discussion groups presented their ideas to the rest of their larger group. By the end of the day, each of the four groups was provided the opportunity to share their ideas and concerns about the four main topics: creating a welcoming society, language needs of new immigrants, labour market participation, and core settlement services. Group notes were summarized on flip charts. The verbal presentation at the end of each of the four groups was summarized by note takers. The notes on the flip chart pages and the notes taken by the note-takers were used to compile the information presented in this section.

It is important to note that the information below is based on the participants' points of view. Something that a participant might believe to be an opportunity, need, gap, or barrier, *may* in fact be a lack of knowledge. In this report, no attempt is made to *correct* information provided by participants; misperceptions and lack of knowledge is an important finding. An attempt to highlight the communication and knowledge sharing needs of participants is made in this report.

Creating a welcoming society

Strengths

Participation and commitment of various stakeholders: Participants presented substantial evidence of programming, social grants, workplace policies, and formal and informal support from some municipalities, health authorities, school divisions, service providers, faith-based organizations, and neighbourhoods in the integration of newcomers. Many stakeholders in Manitoba are already engaged in helping newcomers to settle in Manitoba, and working to make our institutions and services more responsive to their needs. Participants report that community-based programming like the Neighbourhood Immigration Settlement Worker (NISW) concept works well in the communities that have one; the role of a NISW is strengthened when the worker has strong ties with other stakeholders.

Strong networks: Participants, especially those in Winnipeg and surrounding geographic areas, spoke of significant networks of service providers, although it was generally accepted that networking was less strong and opportunities to network were fewer as the distance from Winnipeg increased and where populations were substantially less dense. In very small and/or sparsely populated areas (compared to Manitoba's cities) formal, professional networks and organizations are often replaced by informal and personal networks of community members who simply help-out those in need. Several success stories were shared about the support of small-town and Northern Manitobans, and people of Nunavut.

Successes in smaller urban centres and rural areas: Participants say that many communities across the province have been hosting newcomers for many years and these communities currently have diverse populations, are quite used to the settlement process, and inclusiveness has become part of the character of the community. In some smaller communities in Manitoba, language barriers may be less significant than we would expect because of that smaller community's ability to speak the language of the newcomers.

Identified needs and opportunities

Better pre-arrival understanding of integration realities: Participants report that newcomers, employers, and the community welcoming the newcomers often have unrealistic expectations. Newcomers sometimes expect fewer work-related challenges, employers expect better job performance, and the larger community expects faster integration.

Need for increased participation from some stakeholders: Some summit participants suggested an increased need for employers, schools, and local community/municipal leaders to become more engaged in welcoming newcomers by providing and supporting mentorship and programming promoting professional, social, and physical activities (in workplaces, schools, and with newcomer youth). Participants suggest that an increased involvement of the newcomers' larger community will help them to adjust to their new environment and find more supporters (and friends) in their community, resulting in an increased or faster feeling of belonging for newcomers. Some participants suggested that Local Immigration Partnerships (LIP) could be used to engage the larger community (especially municipal leaders, Chambers of Commerce, business leaders, etc). Some participants see the need for professional development for teachers (in the school system).

Need for increased awareness of the benefits of immigration: Participants noted that to provide this support, some employers and community leaders may need to be informed about the need for and benefits of immigration in their community, how it works, and how they can become a positive force in the integration of newcomers in their community. Some participants recommended that marketing plans with logos, specific promotional material and a specific plan would help to inform business leaders, employers, and the wider community about immigration and educate them about the benefits of becoming involved.

Increased collaboration and knowledge sharing among service providers: Summit participants recognize the need for: a complete annotated directory of all available resources and services (and in what languages they are offered), an evaluation of existing services to reduce

duplication, an assessment of how services can be bundled more effectively, and a comprehensive assessment of what services are needed.

Community-led research: A continued and comprehensive research plan (e.g., assess needs, identify goals, evaluate, reassess to measure outcome, etc.), the documentation of best practices, and sharing of success stories are welcomed methods of learning for improved programming. For some in Winnipeg, there was concern about the downtown centralization of services, when many newcomers settle some distance from downtown.

In Nunavut, support from the territorial government: With many competing priorities, settlement services in Nunavut are not included in the core priorities of the current government.

Knowledge Gaps: Lack of understanding of local immigrant partnerships (that is, who plans, develops, implements LIP with what resources and who covers the costs).

Gaps in services

Ineligible clients: Participants note the need for support for ineligible clients, most notably Temporary Foreign Workers, some newcomers with visas (e.g., families of international students), and others not meeting CIC requirements.

Employer support: Participants noted the need for increased support from employers. Some employers are leaders in this area, but there are many others who do not demonstrate any significant engagement.

Community bridging programming: There is a continued need for direct and indirect education for community builders (e.g., outreach for newcomers to transition to the larger community).

Access to language interpreters and translators: There continue to be unmet needs for translation and interpretation in some services (e.g., legal, medical, etc.) and for the translation

of information that can be shared by service providers, volunteers, and other formal and informal supporters of newcomer integration.

Support for the protection of vulnerable newcomers: For a variety of reasons, newcomers can be vulnerable. Language barriers, lack of understanding of local bylaws, consumer rights, laws, and of widely accepted “Canadian values” can make newcomers vulnerable and create serious problems and challenges.

Accessibility and barriers

Lack of preparedness to thrive with cultural differences: Racism, bias, lack of knowledge and understanding of other cultures (of Canadian born citizens as well as newcomers) creates significant barriers for newcomers and their host communities. Summit participants specifically mentioned – in a different topic area - tension between the newcomer population and Canadian indigenous people and the need to create better dialogue among people of varying cultural backgrounds. Education (of newcomers, service providers, and the general public), research about immigration and related topics (e.g., employment projections), and the importance of ESL¹, employment, and housing for newcomers is seen by the summit participants as significantly important in welcoming them to the Manitoban community. Some participants report that some media perpetuate the situation through biased reporting.

Interpretation and translation services: Language barriers prevent newcomers from accessing and benefiting from services. Participants express a need to improve availability and access to interpreters in service delivery.

Federal policies and priorities: Changing federal policies and priorities and related funding changes impact service provider funding, options for programming, and eligibility for newcomers. Services provided in past years may not be available in future years. Services

¹ Although we use ESL throughout the report, Manitoba service providers have traditionally used the phrase English as an Additional Language (EAL) to describe English language classes for newcomers.

provided to some members of newcomer families (e.g., immigrants) are not provided to others (e.g., their Canadian-born children). Lack of face to face support from government offices is seen as a significant barrier to some summit participants.

Language needs of new immigrants

Strengths

Strong network of service providers: Summit participants report that settlement service providers in Manitoba have a strong history of best practices and collaboration.

Strong and diverse language programs: Manitoba has a variety (of times, types, in typical social settings, for example, visiting a grocery) of language programs with strong educators who are committed to continual improvement. Participants report recent funding improvements as well. Service providers are standardizing language services, creating a centralized referral hub, better integrating service sectors and across agencies in English and in Winnipeg and in the some larger communities. They also praise the support of organizations such as: Manitoba English as an Additional Language Organizations Inc. (MEALO), Manitoba Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Sector Association Inc. (MIRSSA), Winnipeg English Language Assessment and Referral Centre (WELARC), and tutela.ca (an online community of ESL/FLS professionals).

Meeting the diverse needs of newcomers: Participants noted that some programs in Winnipeg are accessible to people with disabilities, have a child care component, are for specific groups of people (e.g., business people), and include Francophone newcomers. They noted that the secondary benefits to the language programs included creating a social outing for newcomers in which they can network.

History of continual improvement and professional development: Most participants listed using the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) portfolio, taking a coordinated approach, using a variety of learning options, availability of online tools and resources (which close some accessibility gaps), coordinating professional development, ensuring the availability of dedicated teachers, language coaches, and professionally-trained volunteers as the strengths of Manitoba's language services.

Identified needs and opportunities

Help to provide access to language services: Transportation (especially in communities with no public transportation), child care, and blended or online classes would increase participation.

Better linking of ESL and Settlement Services: Where applicable, participants say it would be beneficial to have the Neighbourhood Immigration Settlement Worker (NISW) be at the same physical location of ESL and other service providers.

Support for ongoing professional development: Some summit participants are concerned about the qualifications of teachers and their ongoing upgrading and training. Others want professional development for service providers using the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) and the Niveau de Compétence Linguistique Canadien (NCLC). Participants see a need for the further implementation and understanding of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), and better understanding of both the National Language Placement and Progression Guidelines (NLPPG) and the Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) for teachers. They wanted to see increased blended learning and they envisioned a role for school teachers.

Improved services, better content, reduced waiting: Participants reported that *in some locations*, assessment waiting lists are too long, programming should better connect to what the student is involved with (e.g., what is happening at school, at the workplace, in the community, at work, etc.). They are also concerned with the limit to the number of hours of ESL available to newcomers. Even in Winnipeg, where WELARC provides centralized assessment and referral to newcomers, navigation of the system is problematic according to some summit participants, who requested centralized wait and class availability lists. Summit participants want language assessment for specific purposes (e.g., training/post-secondary education, jobs).

Accessible funding information and content: Some summit participants expressed difficulty working within the policies and procedures for the use of ESL funding. They also requested content that is not copyrighted, so that it can be accessed by everyone and can be translated easily.

Support from other institutions and groups: Summit participants would like an improved collaboration of services with government departments and they recognized the need for plain language services for the media, for government, and other institutions.

Gaps in services

Improved content: Summit participants discussed gaps in language services content. They say children need better skills prior to attending school. Those in the Manitoba school system, (especially 15 to 18 year-old students), in post-secondary, and in work settings, need enhancements in the existing content so that it is more closely connected with what is occurring in their daily lives. Older newcomers, those with special needs (including those with mental health issues) also need specialized programming. Some newcomers need curriculum that includes trauma, discrimination, human (including women's) rights, Workplace Health and Safety, child-rearing, and cross-cultural content.

Better linking between school and settlement services: Summit participants see an important role for Manitoba Education in terms of the continuation of ESL and blended learning to help newcomer youth to better learn to speak, listen, and understand English in a context and with content that they can relate to. Some suggested that teachers should be trained so they understand language tools and assessments.

Accessibility and barriers

Improved accessibility: Language services would be improved through enabling more access to the programming. Those at work need more evening and weekend opportunities and occupation-specific/professional content. Women need more opportunities with child care and/or opportunities later (i.e., once their children are in school). Groups that don't currently fit the existing delivery models, including those immigrants who are ineligible (e.g., mothers who are new Canadians and have time to get the training they could not earlier due to the lack of child care) as well as family of Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) need access to language training. Summit participants say the new Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) model calls for

the separation of newcomer and Canadian children and means reduced availability and flexibility of Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II) employees.

Geographic barriers: Accessibility of language services is more challenging in smaller communities, in the North, and in Nunavut where newcomer numbers are relatively low (compared to other locations in Manitoba) and service providers are not able to have the range of programs that are available in larger communities. Northern and the south-western portions of Manitoba need faster assessments (perhaps online assessments to reduce months of waiting) and more resources for services; there are no language services in The Pas and no ESL past level 6 in Thompson.

French language services: Summit participants who work directly with newcomers with stronger French (than English) language skills spoke of the barriers involved with speaking French in a community which predominantly uses English as the language of business. This group has the same accessibility problems as ESL providers (reported above), but the problems are amplified by the fact that far fewer people in Manitoba and Nunavut speak French than English.

Labour market participation

Strengths

Newcomers' Focus on employment: The most notable strengths in the integration of newcomers into the labour market is the focus on employability and the newcomer's desire and *determination to work* (perhaps not immediately in the most appropriate job) and *determination to get work as soon as they can*.

Strength of existing programs: Participants value existing programs that teach employability skills, paid training programs, bridging programs and self-employment programs. They also cite the value of funding available through Apprenticeship Manitoba and Employment Manitoba's Professional Immigration Pilot (PIP). Recognition of Prior Learning (PLAR) programs and workplace education programs including English at Work also play important roles in helping newcomers integrate into the labour market.

Labour needs: Manitoba and Nunavut continue to have opportunities for skilled labour. Some smaller communities (e.g., Nunavut and several small communities in Manitoba) have a much greater need for skilled labour than others.

Identified needs and opportunities

More and better pre-arrival services for newcomers: Summit participants identified as the most significant needs to include earlier (i.e., pre-arrival) preparation for the newcomer. Prior to arrival, the newcomer should have an accurate understanding of job availability in this labour market, the job requirements, the expectations of a typical Canadian work environment (e.g., being on time, expected hours of work, timed breaks) and the geographic realities of accepting a job (e.g., if work is in a rural area, the employer may expect the newcomer to realize they need to supply their own transportation and the newcomer may not necessarily think of that requirement). There is a significant need for newcomers to gain a greater understanding about

Canadian employment standards, employer expectations, worker rights, and cultural differences. Newcomers need a better understanding of the shortages and future demands of the labour market (including a conduit to opportunities in rural communities, the North, and Nunavut), what technical and soft skills are required, how to translate their home situation to the Canadian labour context (i.e., what skills, education, etc. is equivalent and transferable).

Greater understanding of newcomer needs by employers: For employers, there is a significant need for a greater understanding of newcomers in the workplace (e.g., the transitional differences and needs of hiring a TFW and a war-affected refugee) including customizing new employee training to the newcomer's specific needs (e.g., language, psychosocial, child care/support, suitable clothing), cultural differences, and language issues training (e.g., provide some flexibility where specific job-related terminology must be learned by the newcomer).

Better match between newcomer skills/credentials and employer needs: Participants report improvement in foreign credential recognition (including the Recognition Counts program) and with volunteer programs. However, employers report that matching continues to be problematic. Better and faster matches between a newcomer's credentials and what is required by employers is critical. Also needed is a process for reacting to labour changes more quickly.

More and better employer-based programs: Summit participants say that encouraging employers to offer in-house ESL training (e.g., English at Work) and mentorship in the workplace will improve the newcomer's performance on the job and will provide them with better opportunities for promotion. Ideas mentioned include fostering supportive work environments at places of employment; sponsoring a mentor or liaison who helps interpret client behaviour and employee expectations, and providing multicultural awareness. Employers could consider providing funding for non-newcomers to learn French, especially in rural areas where English speaking SPOs are well established to provide a welcoming work environment for French-speaking newcomers. They could also consider a partnership with a French-speaking community to provide French speaking support in a place in which French-speaking newcomers already feel comfortable.

Better involvement from the employer community: Participants would like to see more promotion to employers of the benefits of hiring newcomers, more job fairs with employers in the community, employers sharing best practices for newcomer engagement, mentorships, and internships (including cooperative models). Some employers need an increased commitment to diversity and may benefit from a Legislated Employment Equity Program (LEEP) (a program of the Canadian government that ensures federally regulated employers maintain an employee base which reflects the composition of the Canadian labour force).

Different involvement from government organizations: Summit participants suggested that government organizations participate in the integration of newcomers into the labour market in different ways. Specifically suggested was having Worker's Compensation provide coverage for volunteer opportunities.

Better transition for newcomer students: Working with colleges and universities to help newcomer students transition to employment will help them to start an appropriate career paths.

Better career planning for newcomers: Participants state that some newcomers have difficulty transitioning from a mindset of working to pay for the basic necessities to progressing in the workplace by becoming more career-oriented. Attaining improved language skills, integrating into a Canadian-style workplace and leadership styles, and being sensitive to cultural differences of everyone in the workplace will help give newcomers guidance needed for them to become more eligible for career advancement in future years. Consider transition programs for newcomers seeking employment in fields that require 'citizenship' e.g., language skills, and academic requirements (e.g., RCMP).

Better opportunities for vulnerable newcomers: Promoting meaningful work, volunteer, and mentorship programs for youth (e.g., 13, 14, 15 year-olds) who have been major breadwinners will help keep this vulnerable group of newcomers interested in gainful, legal employment. Including newcomers in coordinated volunteer programs and programs for them to acquire

essential skills may help more of those in the newcomer family to find meaningful employment. Also needed are better employment opportunities for newcomers with disabilities.

Support of local government and business organizations: In some communities, the local government could be more supportive to welcoming newcomers into their community's labour force. Participants from some smaller communities suggested that the local municipality and Chamber of Commerce could do more to create a strategy and support programs to welcome newcomers to unfilled jobs. In Nunavut, even though there are tremendous employment opportunities, there are significant challenges with getting newcomers fully integrated in the community as there is no official structure or organisation facilitating the process.

Gaps in services

Geographic challenges: Manitoba Start is cited as an excellent resource for newcomers to Winnipeg and surrounding area, but not for rural areas and the North. Nunavut lacks a similar tool. Also of importance are the differing needs of economic regions and their specific situations, not adequately satisfied by the Labour Market Opinion (LMO) process (especially in Nunavut). (In July 2014, LMO became the Labour Market Impact Assessment, or LMIA.)

Accessibility and barriers

Language barriers: Lack of Basic English language skills prevent newcomers from getting appropriate work and progressing in that work. The lack of occupation-specific ESL programs prevent newcomers from attaining those skills more easily than what they might be able to attain on their own.

System complexities hinder newcomer successes: Navigating Canadian workplace cultures, job search engines, the proliferations of non-standardized online application processes, getting the

required credentials, additional training (and the associated wait lists) are cumbersome for newcomers seeking or attempting to find more appropriate employment.

Geographic challenges and barriers: In some locations, lack of appropriate housing, lack of transportation, and lack of child care are barriers to newcomers seeking or attempting to find more appropriate employment.

Core settlement services

Strengths:

Experienced, inclusive, adaptive, and professional service providers: Summit participants recognize the importance of core settlement services for newcomers, both upon arrival, as well as throughout the settlement continuum. The more significant specific strengths listed by summit participants include the strong, organized, collaborative, and structured system that currently exists in Manitoba with well-trained, professional, flexible, and innovative staff. Where they exist formally, youth and family programs, cross-cultural mental health program, Francophone intake, and the “one-stop-shop” model are strong.

Existing, well-used, and effective programs and collaborators: Existing programming (some CIC-funded and some not), the ability of project officers to exercise some discretion to address local needs, MEALO as an organization for adult ESL service provider organizations, and MIRSSA as the umbrella organization for the settlement sector are considered more significant strengths. Specific programs, collaborations, and tools listed as having more importance include Network of Organizations for War Affected Newcomers (NOWAN), settlement worker collaboration with school divisions, and the Centralized registration and referral database (IRAES).

Identified needs and opportunities

Geographic challenges: Services are lacking in the northern and south-western parts of Manitoba and in Nunavut. In some locations, there no services, no awareness or communication regarding existing services, and poor accessibility and location of existing services .

Support for whole families: Families need more support to thrive, including better access to licensed child care, support in family specific issues (like parenting classes), and interventions to

help support men in their adaptation. Participants see roles for many mainstream and public organizations in supporting newcomer families.

Improved access to information for settlement workers: Summit participants request common policies and procedures for service providers, more networking opportunities and knowledge exchange (especially those that include SPOs and front-line workers), a CIC-centralized phone hotline with information and help for SPOs, and a current, easily updatable, and annotated directory of SPOs. They also want to see successes and best practices in the centralized model replicated in other areas.

Psychosocial support, education, programming, and support: Participants would like programs specifically for children and youth, and programs to help the newcomer family communicate about adaptation issues. Participants would also like to work toward creating a better dialogue between newcomers and First Nations communities.

Improved access to core settlement services: As immigrants settle away from the downtown Winnipeg core, participants wonder if more NISW support and settlement services might be located away from downtown Winnipeg. In some cases, participants wonder if it makes sense to have settlement services at some significant employment sites.

Centralized and Qualified Interpretation: Participants see a need for centralized and qualified interpretation (via technology) funded to scale to a national level. Qualified interpreters are especially required when meeting with physicians, lawyers, etc., and their understanding of what is discussed is critical.

Promote core settlement services: Participants recommend the promotion of basic settlement services to the general public.

Medical/health care: Summit participants want medical care for privately sponsored refugees. Throughout the province, summit participants asked for better psychosocial, mental health, and sexual and reproductive care programs and support (with interpreters). They want better support for vulnerable clients, specifically women, those with disabilities (developmental and

physical), seniors, and the GLBTTQ community. Included in this request is education about different cultural understandings of mental health, sexual health, reproductive health, healthy relationships (including sexuality and risky behaviour), and cultural perspectives on basic safety issues.

Support for ineligible clients: Participants would like support for ineligible clients.

Gaps in services:

Geographic challenges: As many services are based on population, there are significantly fewer services and significantly fewer opportunities to access the services available as newcomers settle farther from Winnipeg. This is especially significant in very remote areas, and most specifically in northern and south-western Manitoba and in Nunavut. In Manitoba communities, the services most frequently mentioned as lacking include language assessments, support for language training (including child care and transportation), and mental health care (specifically for PTSD and grief support).

Continued need for multilingual service delivery: Participants see great value in continuing to offer services in a variety of languages.

Helping vulnerable newcomers become and stay safe and healthy: Participants share concerns about the protection of women, seniors, those with a variety of disabilities (including speaking difficulties), and GLBTTQ and suggest that current programming and services are insufficient.

Inclusive core settlement support: Services for international students, temporary workers, refugee claimants, returning citizens, ineligible clients, and stay-at-home parents are sparse or lacking.

Few French language services in a predominately English-speaking city: A lack of French language services for all supports/programs outside of Winnipeg is problematic.

Accessibility and barriers

Language: Several participants mentioned that providing services (including professional services) and information in a newcomer's first language helps with their understanding and involvement. More interpreted and translated services, including those online would be beneficial. Participants cite that misinformation of newcomers is common and problematic and they speculate that some of this misinformation is due to the lack of interpretation or poor translation.

Ineligibility: If a newcomer is ineligible for a service – at any time during their settlement process – it is unlikely that they will be able to access those services in any other manner.

Funding: Without funding, programs and services do not exist. Transportation, housing, and child care are consistently listed by participants as barriers to core settlement services. In smaller communities, funding often limits the office hours and number of employees of settlement service providers.

Employer Consultation

Fourteen employers responded to a questionnaire posed by the Manitoba Settlement and Integration Summit Advisory Committee. This section summarizes their responses.

Employer experience: All employers reported overall positive experiences with newcomers in the workplace. When newcomer's credentials, experiences, skill set, and attitude match the job requirements, employers are able to create a diverse, productive workplace that frequently reflects the diversity of those their business serves. Significant challenges include accurately matching the newcomer's skills, credentials, and experiences to the needs of the business, the desire of some newcomers for long leaves of absence to return to their home country (which leaves the business without a needed employee), the length of time needed to attain a work permit, lack of housing for newcomers to settle in the community where they work, lack of desire for newcomers to want to live in the community where they work when a more desirable location is relatively close, lack of social support for newcomers in smaller communities, and asking culturally appropriate interview questions. The lack of English language skills (described in more detail below) is a significant challenge to success in the workplace.

Finding, retaining, and promoting: Employers hire immigrants (eg: Temporary Foreign Workers) because they are unable to find suitable employees by other means. Challenges in **finding** employees in the pool of newcomers includes accurately matching potential newcomers to the job requirements, finding and communicating with appropriate professional references listed by the newcomer, and quickly moving the newcomer into the community and workplace. **Retaining** newcomers is problematic when the newcomer (perhaps feeling underemployed) looks and finds another (perhaps more suitable) job once they arrive to the workplace. **Promoting** newcomers is sometimes difficult because of English language (i.e., reading, writing, listening, and comprehension) skills and because newcomers are frequently dissatisfied with an entry-level position and think they should be promoted before employers believe they are ready.

Not having adequate English language skills concerns employers, especially when newcomers are presented with workplace policies (e.g., gender equality), contracts, reporting structures, and regulations (e.g., Workplace Health and Safety, WHMIS) that they are legally required to understand. Newcomers who work in complex industries (e.g., healthcare) and in potentially dangerous workplaces put themselves in compromising positions that may affect the health of others and themselves and this concerns employers. The transition to Canadian work cultures and management styles are sometimes difficult for newcomers and limits their career progression. Employers report that newcomers integrate into the workplace and into the community more successfully when they speak English at home.

Settlement and language challenges: Employers say that a newcomer's settlement into the workplace is strengthened when there are settlement services and/or when the local community is involved. Some employers report being involved in the basic settlement of the newcomer during their early employment (including helping them shop and attain basic services and including them in social activities that are not part of the work environment). In some locations, affordable housing, appropriate child care, and ESL training is hard to find. They also report that some newcomers do not thrive because of their unwillingness to integrate.

A welcoming community: Although employers say that the diverse multi-cultural Canadian mosaic environment is a rich environment for newcomers, they seem divided about their responsibility for creating a welcoming community. Some employers say that is the responsibility of settlement service providers and other employers choose to become more personally involved in creating a supportive environment for the new newcomer family. Some employers say their workplace values and principles create a welcoming, accepting and tolerant environment for everyone. Other employers say that pairing a newcomer with someone similar helps the newcomer to feel comfortable and begin make the transition to feeling like a regular member of the community.

Suggestions: Employers made several suggestions about how newcomer employment and settlement might be improved. The most frequently reported request was to address English language skills. Other suggestions include:

- Improve the assessment and matching of newcomer skills, credentials, and attitudes with those required by the job
- Have cultural diversity training for employers (leaders) and diversity training for the employee (on Canadian culture)
- Allow low-skilled/general labour workers in for low-skilled labour shortages; encourage business to work with settlement services to encourage holistic integration of newcomers
- Allow for faster extensions of work permits
- Provide appropriate housing
- Ensure newcomers are committed to learn English and integrate; choose those who will become good citizens
- Ensure newcomers have a realistic understanding of existing job opportunities/prospects and wages; use median for wage and not low and high cut-off
- Provide settlement services that help newcomers find shopping, housing, learn their way around, banking
- Provide ESL in workplaces and don't take away eligibility to take language classes
- Speed up the immigration process and make it less expensive
- Ensure cultural education is provided to newcomers as well as Canadians

Section 3: Overall Impressions

Several themes emerged from the discussions at the summit, the employer survey, and the executive interview. They are described below.

Value of settlement services: Contributors to the Manitoba Nunavut Settlement and Integration Summit (including those contributing information via presentations) are convinced that core services, including employment services, are absolutely essential to the success of newcomers both when they arrive and as they continue to move along the settlement continuum. Research indicates very strong correlations between a newcomer's success (which is heavily influenced by their feeling of belonging and having appropriate employment) and attainment of those services provided by core settlement service providers.

Language skills: Participants say that effective speaking, reading, listening, and comprehension of English are critical to the success of a newcomer's integration. Employers consider effective English skills as a key to a newcomer's continued career success and an important factor in their progression within a workplace.

Until the newcomer has appropriate language skills, interpretation services are necessary in specific situations (e.g., working with legal or medical professionals, and for understanding rights, responsibilities, policies, contracts, laws, and in specific workplace situations). ESL services in Winnipeg are strong, but some communities outside Winnipeg have fewer and less flexible services, rarely with associated transportation or child care needs. Without assistance with child care and/or transportation (especially in communities without public transportation), there is great concern about individuals (especially women with children) becoming isolated and having their eligibility expire before they are able to find child care and take lessons.

With this importance placed on learning English, it is critical that newcomers be provided with timely language assessment and ESL classes, something reported to be lacking in smaller communities in south-western Manitoba as well as in northern Manitoba. Interpretation services are also reported to be lacking in these same communities.

Francophones in a predominately English-speaking community: English is far more commonly used in Manitoba and in Nunavut than French. The importance placed on ESL leaves Francophones in a compromised situation. Although select geographies and provincial and federal offices provide services in French, newcomers who speak French may have difficulty and be less successful in fully integrating into any community in Manitoba without learning basic English because many basic services are not offered in French at all locations. Knowing these restrictions limits French-speaking newcomers, perhaps meaning they may not completely or successfully integrate without learning English. Also limited are the availability of French-speaking professional services (e.g., in medical or legal services) and settlement services for French speaking newcomers.

Health and welfare: Participants report a lack of appropriate mental health services throughout the province. Participants have a strong desire to provide support to the many newcomers who are potentially vulnerable to violence, confront barriers in education, and being involved in criminal activity. Specifically mentioned as vulnerable are women, those with developmental and/or physical disabilities, seniors, and the GLBTQ community. Additionally, those who have experienced trauma may suffer from significant mental health problems upon arrival to Canada, or later, once their situation has stabilized. Newcomers may also have different perceptions of mental wellness than that currently understood by health care professionals in Manitoba and coming to a common understanding of mental wellbeing may be difficult with cultural and language differences. The ineligibility of some newcomers for CIC funded services exacerbates the problem. Language and the lack of appropriate interpretation services is also a problem when considering the health and welfare of newcomers.

Access to affordable housing: In many communities, the lack of affordable and appropriate housing complicates the newcomer's integration because they may need a second job to balance their household budget. Additional work time reduces the time they have to work on other skills (like language), and may lessen the ability of the other members of the family to access other services.

Comprehensive research plan: Summit participants want to see more research that they can use to provide more and better services. They request a comprehensive and long-term research plan that allows for continued needs assessments for planning and new programming and a continued ability to evaluate and improve their existing programs.

Geographic differences: Population density in Manitoba means that newcomers to smaller communities are not provided the same levels of service as they would have in larger communities. Communities in northern and south-western Manitoba have very limited services and in some cases, no services.

Better tools to facilitate collaboration among service providers: The settlement services industry would benefit from a comprehensive, searchable, and updatable provincial annotated directory (i.e., a database) of services including all service providers, their contact information, and a description of their services, as well as an updated and comprehensive service map and continued use of and updating of IRAES. These tools will help service providers to better assist newcomers.

Collaboration, bundling, standards of service: With many service providers across the province, an assessment is needed to reduce duplication, make an attempt at bundling some services, creating standards of service. Newcomers need the right services at the right time. Specifically choosing what standards of service are acceptable in all geographic areas and for all services may help in funding decisions and will provide clarity for the expectations of newcomers, service providers, and other stakeholders. Umbrella organizations like MIRSSA and MEALO will be useful in identifying settlement service providers.

Cross-sectoral partnerships: Participants cite the need for continued involvement of municipal governments, employers and the public sector including education and health in creating welcoming communities for newcomers. Participants see promise in the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) model, but also express desire for continued investment in this type of work where LIPs are not funded.

Involving the greater community: Newcomers and settlement and integration service providers will benefit from involving the general public. Manitobans should be educated about the need for and benefits of supporting immigration. Promotional, marketing, and media plans are needed to promote the welcoming of newcomers and to encourage institutions and employers to use plain language, combat racism, and understand and value cultural differences.

Section 4: Conclusions

Manitoba has a commendable history of welcoming newcomers into many of its diverse communities. Service providers and other stakeholders in many communities have been very successful supporting newcomers and integrating them into the community. They have many success stories, lessons learned, and best practices that are being shared in other Manitoban communities that are newer to welcoming newcomers into the community. A successful integration into a community relies on settlement programs, funded and volunteer service providers, volunteer groups in the community, and availability of suitable employment for the newcomer and ongoing engagement of all stakeholders. The experienced, committed, and continually improving professionals who work in the sector have many success stories they will continue to share with their colleagues both within the province and with those in other provinces and territories. A positive economic climate, great demand for skilled labour, and lack of skilled-workers in Nunavut and specific locations in Manitoba provide jobs for newcomers. Employers consulted are working to support the integration process of newcomers in their workplaces. Although increased understanding of and support for newcomers and their varied needs by employers and the general public help newcomers to integrate successfully and perhaps more quickly, settlement services remain an essential component of integration.

Overall, the settlement services in Manitoba are extensive and complex though variable geographically. It is more developed and specialized in areas that have been welcoming newcomers for longer periods of time and where newcomer populations are larger. Less experienced (i.e., south-west Manitoba) and less population-dense (i.e., northern Manitoba) geographies lack the range of services and supports found in other regions. The settlement sector in Nunavut is less rooted in the community because there is no official structure that facilitated the process; however, giving the transitional status of the territory (in average people stay 3 years in Nunavut) there are a lot of newcomers entering Nunavut every year. Nunavut has no official settlement services.

Manitoba does not have a comprehensive listing of settlement services and supports which would assist service coordination and referral and to identify service gaps. Issues most concerning to summit participants include access to English language classes, French language services in predominately English-speaking communities, appropriate skills/credentials matching to the job, healthcare (including mental health), and supports for the more vulnerable. Summit participants look to continued research for direction and the greater involvement of the general public for future success.

Appendix One: Summit Program



Program

November 6 & 7, 2014 | Delta Winnipeg Hotel



Summit Program - DAY 1

Thursday, November 6th, 2014

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Victoria-Albert	Registration and Breakfast
9:00 - 9:50 a.m. Victoria-Albert	Welcome, Introductions & Greetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of Summit Emcees, Carlos Vialard and Robert Vineberg - Introduction and Purpose of the summit - Greetings by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treaty Commissioner James Wilson • Hon. Erna Braun, Minister of Labour and Immigration, Province of Manitoba • Diane Mikaelsson, Citizenship and Immigration Canada • City of Winnipeg (TBA) • Doug Dobrowolski, Association of Manitoba Municipalities - Announcement of National Francophone Immigration Week, Daniel Boucher, Société franco-manitobaine
9:50 - 10:15 a.m. Victoria-Albert	Nutrition Break
10:15 - 12:15 p.m. Victoria-Albert	Federal and Provincial Government: Federal and provincial perspectives and initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Derek Künsken, Diane Mikaelsson and Lucille LeBlanc - Province of Manitoba, Lei Wang, Liz Robinson, Margot Morrish
12:15 - 1:05 p.m. Victoria-Albert	LUNCH
1:05 - 1:15 p.m.	Newcomer Story: Salwa Meddri
1:15 - 2:45 p.m. Victoria-Albert	Role of Research: Current research activities and outcomes for Manitoba <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immigration Research West, Robert Vineberg, Lori Wilkinson - Rural Development Institute Community Consultation Project, Rachael Pettigrew
2:45 - 3:05 p.m. Victoria-Albert	Nutrition Break
3:05 - 4:20 p.m. Victoria-Albert	Sector Representation: Sector perspectives and initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance, Chris Friesen - Western Region Working Group, Jean McRae - Manitoba Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Sector Association, Laurie Sawatzky - Manitoba English as an Additional Language Organizations (MEALO), Shannon MacFarlane
4:20 - 4:45 p.m. Victoria-Albert	Wrap up
5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Campaign A & B	Reception Performance by Kelly Bado, Cash Bar



Summit Program - DAY 2

Friday, November 7th, 2014

TIME	ACTIVITY			
7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Victoria-Albert	Breakfast			
8:30 - 8:55 a.m. Victoria-Albert	Opening Address Chris Friesen, Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance			
8:55 - 9:00 a.m.	Transition to break-out rooms			
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.	Focus Group 1 Campaign A	Focus Group 2 Campaign B	Focus Group 3 Victoria	Focus Group 4 (Bilingual) - Albert
	Welcoming Communities Abdikheir Ahmed	Core Settlement Services Laurie Sawatzky; Jorge Fernandez	Language Training Shannon MacFarlane	Labour Market Integration Ben Poliquin; Cheri Wright-Kaguah
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	Nutrition Break			
10:45 – 12:15 p.m.	Labour Market Integration Ben Poliquin; Cheri Wright-Kaguah	Welcoming Communities Abdikheir Ahmed	Core Settlement Services Laurie Sawatzky; Jorge Fernandez	Language Training Shannon MacFarlane
12:15 – 1:00 p.m. Victoria-Albert	LUNCH			
1:00 – 1:10pm	Newcomer Story: Mandela Kuet			
1:10 – 1:15 p.m.	Transition to break-out rooms			
1:15 – 2:45 p.m.	Language Training Shannon MacFarlane	Labour Market Integration Ben Poliquin; Cheri Wright-Kaguah	Welcoming Communities Abdikheir Ahmed	Core Settlement Services Laurie Sawatzky; Jorge Fernandez; Salwa Meddri
2:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Nutrition Break			
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Core Settlement Services Laurie Sawatzky; Jorge Fernandez	Language Training Shannon MacFarlane	Labour Market Integration Ben Poliquin; Cheri Wright-Kaguah	Welcoming Communities Abdikheir Ahmed; Bintou Sacko
4:35 – 4:45 p.m. Victoria-Albert	Summit wrap-up and Closing remarks			

MIRSSA acknowledges the very significant contributions of our Advisory Committee:

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