Creating a welcoming community. << Together. >>
The role of a LIP in mobilizing cross-sector support for refugees

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Agenda

- PNSG and the role of LIPs
- PNSG action
- Next steps
We are a community collaborative designed to enhance the social and economic inclusion of newcomers to the Peel community (Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon)

• Formed before it became a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) in 2007 – preceded the LIPs in Canada

• Central Planning Table and 3 working groups (economic, social, service delivery)

• We are the backbone organization that represents newcomer voice at a variety of cross sectoral tables in Peel region.

• Like many other LIPs we recognize that newcomer integration goes beyond conversations with the settlement sector and all sectors need to be vested in the social and economic success of newcomers/immigrants.

• Funded by IRCC, ROP, Innoweave and UWPR with partnerships with Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), OTF, and MCIIT

• Function: champion/integrate/lead/research/plan
Between 2003-2012, Peel had welcomed over 14,000 (14,890) refugees with the majority of them making Mississauga home (9,830). Of the 310,410 immigrants from India in Ontario, 151,825 (48.9%) live in Peel.

DID YOU KNOW?

- 66.4% of Brampton's population is made up of visible minorities
- The top home languages in Peel are Punjabi in Brampton, Urdu in Mississauga, and Italian in Caledon
Central Planning Table

- Comprise of 24 voting representatives from a diverse range of sectors, 6 non-voting members: project funders and ex-officios
- Provides strategic guidance, expertise, leadership and overall project oversight

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<th>Sector</th>
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<td>Funders</td>
<td>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, United Way of Peel Region, Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, Region of Peel</td>
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<td>Trillium Health Partners, Mississauga Halton LHIN, Central West LHIN</td>
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<td>Government</td>
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<td>Employment</td>
<td>The Brampton Board Of Trade, Peel-Halton Workforce Development Group; ACCES Employment</td>
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Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are community-based partnerships that:

- Foster a systematic approach to engage SPOs and other institutions to integrate newcomers;
- Support community-based knowledge-sharing and local strategic planning; and,
- Improve coordination of effective services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration.

LIPs do not provide direct services to newcomers. Rather, they seek to increase the absorptive capacity of host communities by engaging a range of stakeholders and enhancing collaboration and strategic planning at the community-level.
What we have done as a LIP re: refugees in Peel

- Refugee **Myth and Fact sheet** with some general ideas on refugees, and what the actual realities are

- **PNSG’s Syrian Refugees fact sheet** – This contains statistics on refugees in Peel region, Canada’s response to the crisis and plans in the resettlement process

- The **Useful Links** document contains many useful links on Syrian refugees including online settlement resources supports for service providers, mental health information, government reports

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) **Population Profile on Syrian Refugees** including demographics, cultural considerations, health characteristics etc

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) information sheet on **healthcare access for Syrian refugees** through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)
continued

• **PNSG’s data tracking tool** created for service providers to track how many Syrian refugees are being served in Peel region. This will help collect and analyze data to see what additional supports are needed across Peel. It will also be useful for funders to see the supports that are being offered across Peel.

• PNSG hosted an **event for private sponsors on Jan. 21st, 2016**, with UWPR and ROP. This event was for private sponsors (groups and/or families sponsoring refugees) so that they are aware of services and supports in Peel region. This event allowed the settlement sector to provide displays and have conversations with these groups 1:1.

• PNSG has also conducted a **Capacity to Serve Syrian Refugees survey** with a high response rate of 40 agencies. The objectives of this survey are the following:
  • to compile a list of current services and programs that could be used by Syrian refugees including mental health, settlement, employment, etc
  • identify service gaps and help us get a better understanding of the information and support needed by service providers, community groups and private sponsors to better serve the Syrian refugees. The report will be ready shortly.
Some results:

• Lack of capacity to serve refugees with traumatic experience (mental health and traumatic counseling)

• Lack of financial resources to hire Arabic speaking staff and train front line staff

• Lack of knowledge of individuals and groups supporting Syrian refugees about services available for them

• How to connect and engage with private sponsors

• Lack of access to ESL classes (always very long queue times)

• Lack of access to affordable housing
Resources needed to enhance ability to support Syrian refugees

• Financial resources (translation of training software into various languages, provision of childcare support services, mental health and trauma counseling, translation of outreach and information materials, hiring of Arabic speaking staff, cultural competency training of front line workers, translation of early English literacy materials, etc.

• Resources for deaf and hard of hearing refugees

• Staffing and other resources to offer families especially children with homework help, emotional support and recreational activities on an ongoing basis

• Availability of multilingual, translation and interpretation services

• Resources to improve knowledge of front line worker and groups supporting Syrian refugees about their culture and faith and how best to support them
Strategies to better serve Syrian refugees

- Provide wrap around services including mental health and trauma counseling and provide training for front line workers
- Inter-agency roundtable to provide coordinated services – employment, language-training, workplace communications, business support, etc
- Hold consultation meetings with residents with Syrian ethnic origin
- Create partnerships between mainstream and settlement agencies
- Facilitating connections between private sponsorship groups and services
- How to customize language and employment training to address the needs of those who never worked outside home
LIP updates on refugee resettlement efforts- February 2016

LIPs across Canada have been responding to the Syrian refugee settlement efforts in various ways. Some are listed below:

• Creation of myth-busting literature on refugees, and some have added a local component.
• Organized information sessions for groups who are interested in sponsoring, or have already sponsored. In a few of these events, a services fair has also been set up connecting sponsor groups to agencies serving refugees.
• Cultural-sensitivity training and discussions on the successful social inclusion of refugees are also taking place in formal workshops or meetings across Canada.
• Engaging Municipal government and settlement agencies to have conversations relating to housing, employment support, language training, etc.
• Some LIPs such as Halifax have also been involved in making certain municipal services free for refugees such as transit passes.

The Pathways to Prosperity conference in Toronto in November/December served as a great opportunity for knowledge exchange between LIPs across Canada. It allowed many LIPs to come together in a formal meeting and informally throughout the conference to discuss and share plans around this work. The conversations and resource sharing continue through the use of an online forum called Basecamp.
Next steps:

- PNSG is creating a **Report (March 2016)** highlighting the work PNSG has been involved in in the last few months with Syrian refugee resettlement efforts in Peel. This will include results of the gap analysis findings (mentioned above), a myth and fact sheet on refugees, an information sheet on Canada’s response to the refugee crisis, statistics relevant to Syrian refugees in Peel, and high level notes from the December 8 community forum.

- **Adapting the Newcomer Profile tool** by adding a new refugee services layer as well as a qualitative layer of immigrant stories for the rural context in Caledon.

- Supporting service providers and their agencies with **Training** on how to use the Newcomer Profile tool.

- Increased amount of **Information sessions**, such as the one in January, for privately sponsored groups as well as refugees to assist in learning about services in Peel.

www.peelnewcomer.org/refugees
Thank you

Funders and Partners:

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