

# 2021 PRAIRIES AND NORTHERN TERRITORIES SUMMIT

November 17, 24, and December 1, 2021.  
Virtual Summit

## Fall 2021 Summit

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FALL - AUTOMNE

**2021 PRAIRIES  
& NORTHERN  
TERRITORIES  
SUMMIT**

**SOMMET DES  
PRAIRIES ET  
DES TERRITOIRES  
DU NORD 2021**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY: PRÉSENTÉ PAR:



Saskatchewan Association of  
Immigrant Settlement and  
Integration Agencies

**SAISIA**



Funded by:

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Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

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## Acronyms

AAISIA	Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies
ACF	Assemblée communautaire francophone
ACOA	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
CCIS	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
CCLB	Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks
CFP	Call for Proposals
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ELL	English Language Learning
FMRI	Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration
FTP	Federal-Provincial Territorial
GARs	Government Assisted Refugees
GoC	Government of Canada
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
ICC	International Certificate Conference
IWS	Immigrant Women of Saskatoon
LINC	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
LIPs	Local Immigration Partnerships
LGBTQ2	Abbreviation that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (and other related terms)
OSR	Operation Syrian Refugee
PBLA	Portfolio-based language assessment
PTs	Provinces and territories
PR	Permanent Resident
PSRs	Privately Sponsored Refugees
RAP	Resettlement Assistance Program
MANSO	Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations
NAARS	Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services
NASC	National Afghan Steering Committee
NATO	North American Treaty Organization
SAISIA	Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies
SPOs	Service provider organizations
SWG	Settlement Working Group
SWIS	Settlement Workers in Schools
WELARC	Winnipeg English & French Language Assessment and Referral Centre
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## Introduction and Format

The 2021 Prairies and Northern Territories Fall Summit was a collaboration between AAISA (Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies), SAISIA (Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement Integration Agencies) and MANSO (Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations) and in partnership with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and provincial representatives. The non-profit umbrella organizations represent agencies that provide resettlement, settlement, and integration services to newcomers in the respective provinces.

Each organization hosts an annual conference for its members as part of their mandate to provide leadership and support to members and to help increase the level of service to newcomers through professional development, networking, and collaboration. This was the second Summit in the region in 2021 and was in a virtual format which provided a unique opportunity to join and provided attendees with expanded programming and inter-provincial best practice sharing.

IRCC facilitates the arrival of immigrants, provides protection to refugees and offers programming to help newcomers settle in Canada. It also grants citizenship and issues travel documents (such as passports) to Canadians. Funding for this Summit was provided by IRCC.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship.html>

The purpose of the Fall PNT Summit was to inform the participants of recent immigration activities by the Government of Canada (GoC) and by the agencies and partners. It was also an opportunity for the immigration community to connect and discuss updates. The program was designed to engage participants, provide answers to questions, and provide solutions to problems. Participants could engage with each other using text messages and video chats.

An overview of the Summit included Days 1 and 2: Sector-led content, and Day 3: IRCC-led presentations and discussions.

In February 2021, there were approximately 570 participants at the first PNT Summit and at the November/December 2021 Summit there was approximately the same number. Many of the attendees were from the umbrella agencies and the key immigration service provider agencies (SPOs). However in the Fall Summit, several partner agencies attended for the first time. The Northern Territories were represented. A list of the attendees by region is in Appendix A. This list is general as some registration details were “unknown.”

**Format.** The format was again virtual with most participants in their homes or offices. The Summit was held webinar-style and contracted through Spark Event Collective, Calgary. The moderators of each day were the Executive Directors of the umbrella organizations, MANSO, AAISA, and SAISIA. They provided an overview of the day, housekeeping and virtual location information, introduced presenters and panel members and moderated question-and-answer sessions at the end of each presentation. They kept the Summit on time and task.

The three days of the Fall Summit were separated into three separate weeks so that participants could better manage their work, could work with their clients, and allow for inspiration by what is happening across the region.

The Summit was conducted in English, some sessions and presenters conducted their session in French, and simultaneous translation was provided throughout the Summit. All presentations were available in English or French, either by audio or by closed caption onscreen print. The moderators were consistent in their session instructions as to how to access the materials in either official language.

Most moderators and presenters acknowledged the Indigenous and Métis land where they were located. The purpose of land acknowledgement is to provide a moment for reflection and appreciation for the gifts and people of the lands. All others are newcomers to this country at some point in time.

**Spark** provided recordings of the live video presentations. The video presentations included chat and message functions for questions/answers and to provide feedback. The moderators and presenters utilized Zoom for the communication, and the Summit was recorded and accessed on YouTube. The software also allowed spaces where common groups could gather to discuss various topics. The moderators encouraged participants to use chats to ask questions and provide clarifications. Most presentations were available on the presentation site. Some follow-up by Spark was required to obtain all materials. The open-forum conversations and cluster conversations were not recorded. The content from those sessions utilized for this report was from notetakers at each session as available.

Conversation and cluster conversations were held on Day 2, November 24, and on Day 3, December 1, were conducted simultaneously by IRCC and regional representatives. The cluster conversations on Day 3 provided an update and further clarification on the status of the identified clusters.

## Day 1

### Moderator Day 1: Vicki Sinclair, Executive Director, Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)

The moderator opened the session by explaining the Opening remarks. PNT region last met in February 2021. Vicki thanked all those who participated in this Summit.

To set the tone for settlement and integration and as an act of reconciliation, Chief Donny Smoke, Dakota Plains First Nation provided a few welcoming words and history on behalf of the Dakota nation to newcomers. He encouraged participants to learn about the Dakota nations in MB, SK, and one in AB. There is not a treaty agreement with the Dakota nations.

### Session 1: Keynote: Afghan Arrivals Update

**Presenter: Fariborz Birjandian**, Co-Chair of the Afghan Refugee Resettlement National Steering Committee, CEO Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)

Fariborz provided an overview of the current situation as well as the impact of the situation globally. He also provided an overview of the Government of Canada's work with provincial and territorial partners to assist in resettlement support of arrivals from Afghanistan.

The presentation was divided into several segments: the scope of the project, the planning, where the project is today, the expectations to the end of March 2022, what participants can do to help, and what the sector should be prepared for in the future.

**Scope.** Afghanistan has been in turmoil since 1981, almost 42 years of political turmoil. The allied forces tried to assist for over 20 years, but that has ended. Many persons have been evacuated. The evacuation did not go as planned and created chaos. Canada's first policy paper called for 6 000 persons to be evacuated to Canada, mainly those who had worked with Canadian agencies in the past. The Canadian immigration community prepared for 6 000. Everything happened in 15 days.

**Planning.** The National RAP working group was asked how to manage the arrival. A short policy document was designed to ensure that the arrivals were kind-centred and expert-driven. This project was unique in that it was quite unpredictable and no planning was conducted overseas or in Canada. The Government of Canada was in a care-taking mode due to the Canadian federal election so they could not be involved. IRCC had to show leadership and make decisions, and the existing partnerships developed with the sector across Canada were utilized to develop the short policy document.

The sector had only received 6 000 versus the usual 12 000 government-assisted refugees (GARs) anticipated in 2021 so there was capacity and a structure was developed to handle the immigration. The four regional implementation divisions engaged the 34 RAP providers across the country. Through this structure, two persons from each region started the planning and the planes started to arrive. About 3 700 people arrived initially in Toronto. Four or five major agencies handled the initial arrivals while dealing with COVID. Arrivals were in quarantine for two weeks. They were provided with food and basics, and each family received two or three devices. The RAP function began at that point. Staff from across Canada assisted with the arrival process. It was a learning process on how to handle mass immigration.

**Today.** The government was committed to bring 20 000 refugees to Canada during the election and subsequently, the Minister announced Canada would bring 40 000 Afghans to Canada by December 2023. In November 2021, about 4 300 people had arrived in Canada. About 3 000 were sent to 24 RAP agencies across Canada. The PNT region houses 12 RAP service providers.

The challenges were dealing with COVID, with a young population who were very educated, and with few that spoke English. However, the biggest challenge is that many of them want to stay in charge. One example of this was that many thought that Toronto is the best place to settle. However, they do not receive financial support to match the cost of living in Toronto. Many veterans/Canadians who worked in Afghanistan knew the arrivals, and the Canadians became very helpful during the settlement process.

IRCC created a Secretariat with a national coordinator for the RAP working group. Two persons were added to the Secretariat to support the initiative on a national basis. About 23 000 emails were addressed and were often urgent. These persons sorted, classified, and forwarded concerns. Many emails were from Afghanistan. A robust website was developed, and funds were centrally collected and channeled across the country. Today, information is collected monthly and provided to the National RAP working group.

The regions did their planning and 34 agencies across the country settled the refugees. At the end of November, 24 communities had received refugees; namely, 350 in Alberta, 300 in Vancouver, and the rest in Toronto.

IRCC assigned Corinne Prince as the Director General of his file. John Biles and Fariborz co-chaired the project. Changes occurred as needed. The project seems to be working quite well. Recognition should be given to the corporate sponsors who supported the project including an agreement with Airbnb that provided \$500 000 to house refugees, UBER credit, Canadian Tire, and others.

There is a huge appetite by Canadian employers to hire Afghans. This group has high human capital, and there are many children (under 18 about 60%). It is not difficult for children to adapt to the Canadian school system. However, many of these refugees have left family members behind. Mental health support, recreational support, and counselling are being provided.

The PNT RAP providers must be given a lot of credit. They have met collectively for the last two years and that cooperation and collaboration assisted with this effort. They meet every week and help each other.

Calgary became an arrival hub; the strategy had changed as refugees were sent to a location other than Toronto. Initially about 265 arrived in Calgary, were processed, and sent to Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and other locations within the PNT region. It is planned that 200 will be sent to St. John's NF and a planeload to Halifax, NS. About 5 000 are to come from the United States to Calgary to be processed and sent to other locations. Edmonton will receive 180 persons by the end of 2021; these arrivals will be human-rights advocates who had to leave Afghanistan for safety reasons. Another 1 000 PSRs are coming as well.

Refugees have evacuated to many countries. They may arrive in Canada with or without their applications being processed.

**Expectations to the end of March 2022.** There are many variables for Canada to monitor. Fairborn's advice to agencies is to be "over-prepared." Funding has been moderately available. There was no Minister until late October 2021 after the election. Decisions were made shortly after his arrival. It is anticipated that Canada will like receive 7 000 to 8 000 arrivals shortly and another 12 000 by the end of March 2022. It is projected that the arrivals will be 50 percent GARs and 50 percent PSRs but this is dependent on government decisions. Much should be clarified before Christmas 2021.

The plan affecting the PNT region is to land in Calgary and to settle in different communities while encouraging them to settle in smaller communities. There are many Afghani communities across the country. Immigration agencies must work collectively to get maximum community engagement.

**What can you do?** Everyone must be involved, but the involvement must be managed. Security and privacy are issues for everyone. Do not identify persons by pictures. RAP providers should support your agencies as the tasks are well defined. RAP providers can help an agency to do the structural, initial work. As persons move to their homes, support can be provided to the refugees. The RAP agencies are the lead agencies, and they should not be compromised. Help will be provided to your settlement agencies. The lead agency in Edmonton is the Catholic Social Services. There is a RAP spokesperson for each region.



The settlement of Afghans is going to be long-term. The National working group developed a national needs assessment (NAARS) for GARs before this Afghani project was developed. A panel of experts developed the process, and the collection of the information was an opportunity to capture the basic data of all the GARS no matter where they settle. It provides basic knowledge of progression and information for policy direction. It is going very well for the first time. That information will be available to SPOs to profile the demographics of refugees and to suggest what works and what does not work.

Fairborn recommends to IRCC that the national settlement council begin to talk about broader settlement issues such as LINC availability, community connections, employment programs and others. Everyone can assist with this project.

Community engagement, because of the sensitivity of these refugees, is important and the processes are followed. Settlement workers were asked to work with their communities to educate them about the immigration sector, how the sector is organized, and reinforce the expertise of the sector.

All persons are working in harmony is something to be proud of. We are constantly adapting. Amazing people are working on this file. Fariborz is preparing a paper to “tell the story” for the government.

**Questions:**

Q. Where is the best, most up-to-date information?

A. Links were shared in chat.

Q. What types of communication are suggested for family members still in Afghanistan?

A. There is no policy clear in November 2021. Currently, there is a policy for PSRs; however, the current PSR policy must be adjusted. If refugees are coming as GARs now, they have the 12-month funding window but adjustments must be made. It is heart-breaking for those still hiding/living in Afghanistan. As mentioned, IRCC has a group of staff looking at emails and how to address them. It is important to manage the expectations. There are probably 2 million people who wish to leave.

Q. Are there videos developed to send to encourage newcomers to settle in smaller communities?

A. Not yet. They could be developed locally to introduce the community. There are tourism videos already developed, but consider anything that could help them to consider moving to the community.

Q. What is the policy of prioritizing Afghans and will it affect refugees from other countries?

A. It will impact as there is a capacity issue. The flow of other GARs has not changed so far. It might be in the future, but the issue is the capacity and meeting expectations (housing, location, culture, expectations, etc.).

Q. With this increase of refugees, what has happened to the other functions of IRCC such as permanent residency, citizenship, etc.?

A. The two streams of immigration did not change (temporary foreign workers and refugees). PSRs had slowed a bit but there has been a sharp increase of numbers coming in the last six months. International students slowed down but it is open now; other immigrants are pending. Many people are wanting to come (approximately 100 000) and it will happen soon, but the risks must be mitigated, ensuring that they can support themselves. COVID is a major consideration.

## Session 2: Exploring the future of technology in the Settlement Sector

Jour 1 Explorer l'avenir de la technologie dans le secteur de l'établissement

**Presenter: Alysha Baratta, PeaceGeeks.** Product Manager, *Arrival Advisor* // Chef de Produit, *Arrival Advisor* app Coming from the West Coast and the traditional territories of the First Nations. Alysha invited participants to go to [native-land.ca](http://native-land.ca) to enter their address and to find the territory upon which they reside. The research and slides are available to all participants. [alysha@peacegeeks.org](mailto:alysha@peacegeeks.org)

This session discussed technology's ability to serve settlement agencies and newcomers to Canada, specifically its strengths, limitations, and common pitfalls to watch for. Considerations the sector should keep in mind when seeking or designing ethical and effective technological solutions for their work were offered.

From an audience poll, the presenter asked the role of the participants. The participants were: 30% frontline workers; 28% managers, IRCC policy; and 20% umbrella groups, LIPs, and others.

PeaceGeeks are developers, designers, immigrants, activists, and peacebuilders. The *Arrival Advisor* is a free, multilingual app for immigrants and refugees in BC to find trusted information and services. They are developing a similar app for **Manitoba** (coming soon). Their website is <https://arrivaladvisor.ca/>

The presentation focused on two areas: situating technology in the sector and considerations for digital productions. The findings were from the settlement sector and technology task group report and the PeaceGeeks report that came out this year. Essentially it recaps what you have experienced in the sector.

**1. Situating Tech in the sector.** There are new opportunities for the settlement sector. PeaceGeeks has been working with technology sector task groups this year. Key themes have prevailed.

- The pandemic further demonstrated the need for innovation and adaptation has started quickly.
- The current situation has pushed organizations and staff to the breaking point.
- New budgets and capacities are needed to meet the technological realities, including digital literacy, regional nuances (urban/rural), and the technology learning curve for both staff and newcomers.

Findings from a recent survey.

- Only 17% of newcomers said that technology skills were relevant, but only 50% said they know how to send and receive an email, and 34% had privacy concerns. This raises the question of what are the skills of our newcomers? Findings indicate that there are digital disparities correlated with income, age, education, race, indigeneity, and ability.
- Eighty (80) percent of newcomers have their own phone or access to a friend's phone. The cost of accessing the internet is the biggest barrier.

Are there funding opportunities? The costs are huge to provide technology to newcomers.

- There are funds for anti-racism and equity, but perhaps SPOs could use some of this funding to address the disparities in socioeconomic and demographic populations.
- Lending library and public internet access facilitation are required.
- English/French fluency does not equal in digital literacy. Tech-savvy newcomers teach peers in their first language.

- Facilitate learning/digital literacy exchanges and increase digital skills training programs.

There is a Digital Maturity framework for nonprofits and their staff. For staff, there is a list of new roles: digital navigator, data protection/privacy advisor, instructional designers, digital pedagogy specialist and others.

There is a national community of practice. There are digital benchmark scores to assess clients' needs. Frameworks are available to assess the organization's digital maturity.

## 2. Considerations for digital products to serve newcomer populations.

Product design involves building a digital product whether it be an app, website, SMS service or another online service. It offers value to the users while meeting organizational needs. Product design focuses on the problem. This presenter is a product designer.

Steps:

- Solve the problem before developing a solution. A designer asked what is the problem and what are we trying to solve and for whom? The designer/s talk with the users and listen to their stories. Where is the problem happening? Ensure the solution is not at a high level; for example, if the problem is, "I don't know where to find information?" develop a short-term outcome by mapping the newcomers' stories. Develop a storyboard to see how the problem can be solved.
- Be aware of the **surfacing assumptions** that would have to be true so that your solution will work. Assumptions may include:
  - Desirability – does anyone want?
  - Feasibility –can we build it?
  - Usability—is it usable?
  - Ethical—is there potential harm in building this solution?

Questions to be answered may be as follows.

- What are some of the assumptions that would have to be true?
- What resources are needed to build the app?
- What is the cost of the lost opportunity? Assumption: users have space on their phones to download and use the app across cultures.
- Security issues – what kind of info are we collecting? Lots of concerns.

Users must have skills to use the application, and the developers must have content relevant to the users.

In conclusion, the settlement sector as well as the general population is in a world of transition. The sector can and should engage in the digital world to be the leaders in setting moral boundaries for newcomers.

The moderator facilitated the question-and-answer session.

Q. Where was the data collected?

A. In the study, most data were collected in refugee camps – sample size of 300. Check out the report.

Q. What works well and what does not – cultural implications?

A. Word of mouth is the most trustworthy from a trustworthy person. Nurture relationships in person and in technology.

Q. Any use in Saskatchewan?

A. Not sure – just in BC and MB at the current time. There is a lot of benefit to being accessible in and outside Canada.

## Session 3: Indigenous EAL Language Curriculum and Resources

### Day 1 Indigenous EAL Language Curriculum and Resources

Service providers from both LINC and Informal Language programming were asked to join this session that highlighted the Indigenous EAL curriculum and resources that have been developed across the PNT. Language instructors from Enhanced English Skills for Employment and English Online will share ways they have adapted the Kichi-Asotamatowin: Land & Treaties EAL Curriculum in their classrooms. Indigenous Engagement Coordinators from Immigration Partnership Winnipeg will also attend and provide their input on questions about content and culture.

**Moderator. Teresa Burke, Director of Language Support, Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)**

#### Panellists:

**Adrienne Breyfogle** IOTK (Indigenous Orientation Toolkit) Project Coordinator, Immigration Partnership Winnipeg.

**Dina Demburg**, Head Teacher, Enhanced English Skills for Employment

**Karen Loeb**, EAL Teacher & Curriculum Developer, Enhanced English Skills for Employment & English Online

Each panellist made a presentation, answered questions, and the participants broke into groups.

**Adrienne:** The IOTK project goals are to provide newcomers with information on Indigenous culture, history, customs and beliefs, and contemporary issues. It is intended to facilitate bridge building and foster relationships between the Indigenous and newcomer communities. There is a critical need for this information for Newcomers.

The toolkit includes facilitator guides, EAL modules, and short videos. The development process was collaborative including key partnerships; the partners assisted with the development of the IOTK.

The seven themes of the materials are Land and Treaties, Assimilative Policies, Worldview and Spirituality, Resilience and Resurgence, Families, Métis, and Connection to the Land. The IOTK approved the themes and their content. Curriculum writers provided content and structure for approval. The guides are in development now and two guides are finished. Contact Adrienne directly for more information.

**Teresa Burke (MB).** Teresa's curriculum work focused on Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 93. The design comes from the morning star (hope and guidance), and Kichi Asotamatowin means sacred promises to one another.

The Land & Treaties Curriculum is designed to:

- Provide authentic, vetted, and accurate Indigenous resources. There are similar projects in SK and AB.
- Provide Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and Portfolio-based language assessment (PBLA) aligned teaching materials.
- Provide portfolio-based language assessment for Canadian Benchmarks Literacy up to CLB 7-8, for Conversation Circles, or other informal language training.

They are discussing translation into French with other agencies.

**Karen Loeb** provided participants with examples of how to use this curriculum with clients. This topic elicits a lot of interest from newcomers. Some of the challenges have included teaching to lower-level English speakers and the time constraints make it difficult to get into great depth with newcomers. This is an initial, experience for newcomers. It was a great benefit for settlement workers to learn about treaties and residential schools.

The curriculum is divided into four main skill areas: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Karen has been using it online, one-to-one instruction. It is available in pdf format. These can be shared. Make the information current/applicable to your context. Go to <https://tutela.ca/> to view the materials.

**Dina Demburg** indicated that Enhanced English Skills for Employment (MB) serves newcomers who focus on the workplace, its culture, and the skills required. Each skill has a separate 10-week course/curriculum. Newcomers must have an English Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) between 5 and 8. The Land and Treaties curriculum was adapted and offered as extra-curricular activities including a fun quiz (individual), word-of-the-week (group, interactive), and was administered every week. These activities have question-and-answer components.

**Breakout Rooms.** Participants moved into virtual breakout rooms by province or territory to:

- Share examples of what they were doing.
- Provide key recommendations for the participants.

The notetakers of each chat room were to report back to the group.

The writer of this report did not have access to those notes. If you require further information, contact Moderator, Teresa Burke, Director of Language Support, **Manitoba** Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)

## Session 4: Schooling and the Pandemic

Moderator: Maryam Karimi, PNT SWIS Coordinator, SAISIA

The recording for this session was not available. The notes from the presentation are summarized from PowerPoints. The follow-up panel discussion was recorded and is summarized below the presentation.

**Co-presenters of the presentation:**

**Dr. Willow Samara Allen**, Leadership Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria.

**Dr. Amanda Gebhard**, University of Regina, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Social Work.

**Cecile Fagot (picture)**. Welcoming Francophone Community Coordinator, La fédération franco-ténoise and the Welcoming Francophone Community (Communauté Francophone Accueillante or CFA).

**Dr. Fritz Pino**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina.

The presenters acknowledged and recognized the following. The funding for this research was obtained from Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) with support from SAISIA namely Maryam Karimi, PNT SWIS Coordinator and Ahmad Majid, Executive Director.

The research advisory team was:

- Maryam Karimi, Harjeet Kaur, Cinthya Luque, Janine Hart;
- The settlement workers in schools (SWIS); and
- Student researchers from the universities.

The research questions were:

- How was SWIS responding to educational inequalities?
- What are the recommendations for the SWIS program?

The theoretical frameworks from which the findings were derived came from:

- Community-based research (advice in participant recruitment; in data analysis, in the formulation of recommendations), and
- Anti-racism theory.

The data was collected from 8 focus group discussions with a total of 30 participants. Participants were recruited via email from SAISIA and service providers.

The following are the findings from the study.

1. Role and responsibilities of the students.

- Shifted, expanded, and amplified. Students had expanded roles (mentor, interpreter, protector, and others).
- Students adapted to new modes of delivery and service provision. They started and maintained relationships online. How do you build trust in a new country with new people? They depended heavily on interpreters.
- Students supported other students dealing with exacerbated barriers and with inequalities during Covid.

2. Barriers presented by virtual learning and technology during the pandemic.

- Online learning takes significant time and SWIS workers are limited in terms of resources they can provide to students. Families require support also.
- Newcomer students and families often do not have access to technology (hardware and software) or not enough technology for the family. The digital divide: lack of digital literacy and communication is hard. Even if they have the hardware/software, they don't know how to use it.
- There were differences in cultural values when using technology. More value is placed on face-to-face interactions and less expectation to be constantly online.

3. Interrupted channels of communication between settlement workers, teachers, students, families, and schools.

- Students were not aware that settlement workers' support exists or how to contact them. Communication is key. Teachers don't always know what to do.
- School systems are uninformed about the SWIS program, and some school administrators do not understand the benefits/importance of what settlement workers can provide.
- Schools may not communicate with the settlement workers or only when significant issues arise (grades are poor, non-attendance at school).

4. Recognition and support for SWIS by educators and schools.

- Recognition, validation, and understanding from the wider school community are crucial. Settlement workers are inconsistently recognized and valued by school staff and administrators.
- Institutional support and validation are needed to build equitable school communities.

There needs to be education about supporting newcomer students and racist stereotypes, and it is a responsibility that needs to be shared by the entire school community.

Recommendations for SAISIA. (Coordination, Collaboration, Communication, Effective Implementation).

- Strategic.
  - Support SWIS in their pursuit for meaningful and quality service provision.
  - Develop a permanent multi-sectoral task force to address newcomer immigrant and refugee students' unique needs.
  - Channel resources to enhance the research and evaluation strategy of SAISIA by hiring a consultant to assist in identifying gaps in service delivery during the pandemic.
  - Develop quarterly or annual province-wide data collection protocols for all SWIS programs.
- Operational.
  - Enhance existing mechanisms that bolster communication and connections amongst SWIS and their settlement agencies and resources on doing settlement work during the pandemic.
  - Facilitate interprofessional and interagency collaboration to create a comprehensive approach to newcomer students' and families' integration.
  - Allocate more resources to support SWIS with technology training and education.
- Capacity-building.
  - Institute mechanisms and structures where SWIS can safely report incidents of discrimination and racism.
  - Enhance professional development training on anti-racism education.
  - Develop strategies and programs that will aid in strengthening the mental, physical, and emotional wellness of SWIS workers during the pandemic and beyond.

Recommendations for Ministries of Education

- School policies and programs.
  - Allow settlement workers the same rights as teachers for entering schools during pandemic restrictions.
  - Offer ongoing anti-racist education professional development to all school staff.
  - Critically examine deficit models for meeting the needs of immigrant and refugee students.
- Collaboration and support for SWIS

- Support SWIS by providing resources to programs and activities that promote and enhance relationships among newcomers and Canadian-born settler students. Information and competencies threaded through the curriculum.
  - Promote the significance of SWIS
  - Promote a collaborative approach with SWIS and settlement agencies to ensure a balanced and equitable workload for SWIS/everyone.
- Systemic considerations.
  - Develop strategies and programs with faculties of education for pre-service teachers to emphasize the work of settlement workers in schools.
  - Create open and transparent communication, consultation, and dialogue with Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

#### Recommendations for IRCC

- Funding.
  - Increase funding support for SAISIA to expand SWIS programs.
  - Offer permanent positions for settlement workers in schools.
  - Increase funding of rural settlement agencies in [Saskatchewan](#).
  - Offer more funding opportunities for settlement agencies to utilize settlement staff and community members' talents, knowledge, and skills.
- Opportunities.
  - Support SWIS who wish to further their knowledge and education of settlement and immigration and related areas through university courses.
  - Offer opportunities for immigrant SWIS to engage in professional development that would expand their options and economic stability.
- Knowledge sharing.
  - Recognize digital literacy training as a core settlement component for newcomers.
  - In the first point of contact for newcomers (e.g., at the Canadian border), share information about SWIS services as part of the standardized initial intake immigration process.
  - Provide current feedback to SAISIA and/or settlement agencies in terms of the number of newcomers and refugee intake.

**Panel discussion.** During the pandemic newcomer parents and students face many challenges. This panel will focus on how the school and SWIS can work together to support the students. Each panellist shared their thoughts and the participants moved into smaller groups. The notes from the groups are summarized below.

- **Janine Hart**, Executive Director, Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre, [Saskatchewan](#). This is the largest geographic school division in [Saskatchewan](#) and serves 16 schools. The SWIS Centre must work creatively to meet the needs of newcomers within the division. This year “the youth found their voice.”

COVID presented many challenges SWIS caseworkers provided some activities outside of the classroom. The isolation of newcomer students is difficult. There are few numbers of newcomer students and issues of racism arise. The SWIS workers are supportive.

SWIS workers collaborate with others within the region, and it has helped to change the narrative of the reality of SWIS in small centres.



**René Mateso**, SWIS Team leader, Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) Inc., Winnipeg, [Manitoba](#).

Many points René experienced were covered in the research and the report of Dr. Allen and the other presenters. He reiterated that SWIS workers do not have a space in all schools. Many schools try to accommodate SWIS workers but some do not. Sometimes, workers even go into their vehicles to meet with students. They often feel they are not part of the school team.

Transportation for parents is a problem and students must walk to school a couple of times a day which is a problem in the winter. Schools that have a lunch program is often too expensive for newcomers.

It is difficult for SWIS workers to serve students online as students don't have access to the internet and devices/computers. Some schools have offered computers to the students. Many students do not attend online learning because of access problems.

The best thing to be improved is communication. Many teachers do not know who the SWIS workers are and why they are in the schools. Some solutions may be:

- Pictures of the SWIS workers for the staff to view.
- Meetings with school staff, parents, and students.

SWIS workers are not aware of the educational issues; they are social workers.

It would be beneficial for SWIS workers to meet with rural and urban counterparts within the province to share experiences.

**Ngena Ali-Ebenga Ali-Ebenga**, Coordonnateur des services d'établissement dans les écoles // Settlement Worker in Schools Coordinator, [Alberta](#).

The writer could not access this session in English.

**Christine Boyle**, Assistant Principal, East Glen High School, Edmonton, [Alberta](#).

Christine highlighted the critical work that the SWIS workers do in their high school., East Glen High School. The school has 850 students with diverse backgrounds. About 25 percent of the students are English speaking and 75 percent have arrived in Canada and speak various languages. The needs of the students have grown over several years. SWIS students assist with the cultural needs and learning needs of other students. SWIS workers assist with city and community orientation. SWIS workers do have office space.

The partnership between East Glen and SWIS works very well. The year begins with the three-day Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW) program to orient staff and students about SWIS workers' work. Peer leaders are chosen from students and are a key part of the team. These students earn work experience credit for their high school diplomas. Usually, 100 new students come every one or two months. A Culture Club begins in the Fall and includes newcomers and Indigenous students.

The SWIS workers know the families and help with school-parent communication and with the school transitions. They even assist with LINC training and with the transition from high school to postsecondary school.

Q. What is the process when students leave high school (20 years) and move to postsecondary school?

A. Christine. Students need to register with Catholic Social Services (CSS) to get their LINC testing for the postsecondary institutions. This was difficult for students to do themselves. The high school works with CSS to facilitate the process and the SWIS worker assists. That is a key piece of the process.

**Breakout Sessions.** The participants then moved into three breakout sessions and were asked to respond to two questions.

- Given what you understand of the SWIS program, how would you describe the essential role of SWIS workers?
- Do you feel you have the support resources and collaboration to fulfill your responsibility?

The facilitators for the sessions were:

- **Oliver Kamau**, Director of Programs, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association.
- **Ricardo Morales**, Integration Services Director, Community Development at Calgary Catholic Immigration Society.
- **Lisa Janz**, Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) Inc.

The moderator facilitated the reporting of the groups.

#### **Summary from the groups.**

- There was a general discussion about the tasks that SWIS workers conduct. There was a discussion about how others can connect with the school: the principal and the community support worker are good first contacts. Communication is key.
- There were many challenges shared. There were some good suggestions from Saskatoon where they have a SWIS advisory committee table with a superintendent from a school board, provincial reps, principals, and language assessment centres. They discuss the role of SWIS.
- Another model is that the school can be used for the promotion intervention model by the school, supported by the school. That is part of the formal school role.
- Include settlement services information in the “Welcome to Canada” packages so newcomers are aware. In rural and smaller communities, the SWIS worker is the “go-to” person.
- It is difficult to pin down the role of the SWIS worker including the cultural component of their work. The focus of the SWIS worker is at the school and after school. This is the way to connect families to resources.

*This was my favourite session. I enjoyed the inspiring story of the vice-principal, Christine, and her relationship with SWIS workers.*

Summary of Session 4: Maryam Karimi. There is more work to be done. Thanks for sharing ideas today. We need to continue this conversation.

## Day 2

Moderator: Sarosh Rizvi, Executive Director, Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA)

The moderator thanked over 500 participants attending the Summit. The theme of the second day of the Summit was more sector-led content and ideas to solve problems at a local level. There were opportunities for collaboration across the region.

Sarosh acknowledged the Indigenous nations and lands of [Alberta](#).

### Session 5: Case Management

Dr. David Este. Professor Emeritus of Social Work, University of Calgary.

Title: A social justice model of case management.

Dr. Este has been a social worker since 1980. In about 1992, Dr. Este wrote a chapter on cultural competency for managers. He suggested social workers remain knowledgeable about the diversity of the audience they were serving, retain the skills needed for a case manager, and suggested a value set that case managers needed to perform their function.

In reference to current casework with refugees, Dr. Este reviewed the case management literature for immigrants and could not find anything. After further research, he decided on a social justice model of case management. The first part of his presentation dealt with traditional models of case management, and the latter on a social justice process of case management. References were provided to Summit organizers.

A basic definition of case management is defined as to

*a health care/social service process in which a professional helps the service user develop a plan that coordinates and integrates the support that the service user requires to optimize their health and psychosocial goals. (Giardano, 2021).*

Case management is an active process and typically involves at least two individuals. A service user is trusting the professional to provide a care plan. Traditional tasks of case management include:

- Outreach activities to identify and list the most appropriate service users.
- Screening the user and the needs of the service users to match the purpose of the program. Often there can be a mismatching of the user's needs to the program.
- A comprehensive assessment whereby the case manager collects in-depth information about the user's social situation and physical, mental, and psychological functions.
- Care planning for the services is based on the assessment. The key piece of case management is the assessment; it is the driver of the interventions.
- Service arrangement, a contract of both formal and informal providers for the user.
- Monitoring by the case manager to assess/evaluate the impact of the plan for the service user/s and make changes where required. What worked? What did not work well? What do we need to improve the service to the user? This is a key step in the process.

There are many case management models in the literature for different populations and fields of practice. Many models emphasize technical and process emphases.

Dr. Este wondered about the emphasis on social justice. The literature suggests there are three ethical mandates for case management: social justice, inclusion, and equity. These three concepts are interrelated and achieve objectives for a vision (what do we want?), passion, commitment, clear intention, and a call to action. There are concepts that case managers need to do to ensure our work is related to the three mandates.

- Social justice is a state of egalitarianism with freedom, human rights, privilege, and common good being at its core. It is a belief in human equity and is a virtue that invites the deliberate removal of inequities among people in society.
- Inclusion refers to the process of welcoming, acceptance, and empowerment of service users/individuals with whom you are working. The core components are equity, openness, acceptance, and belonging. It is taking a non-judgmental stance.
- Equity refers to the fair and just treatment of individuals and families by a case manager. How do one exercise and advance human rights principles towards others and self? It focuses on a level of support and assistance that meets the service user's needs and who they are. The implications from a lens of equity are that the case manager should focus on providing a level of support and assistance that meets the service user's needs fairly and equitably. Aspects include age, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation and preference, race, culture, value, belief systems, education, family values/dynamics, immigration status, ability and disability, religious beliefs, social-economic status, living situation, and others.

Case managers must engage with newcomers with humility. The case manager becomes the "student" and the newcomer becomes the "teacher." The caseworker needs to have a clear understanding of the immigrant's journey. During the assessment phase, key questions are asked.

- What factors prompted the individual/family to migrate? There is a major difference between immigrants and refugees.
- What was the immigration process? This is especially important to refugees who have been in camps, possibly for years.
- What is their experience of living in Canadian society to date?

Dr. Este suggests that the actions of socially "just" case managers include the following.

- Acknowledge and respect people with various identities/markers. Do not generalize; for example, the black community in Canada is not homogeneous.
- Support the development of infrastructures needed for all people to survive.
- Acknowledge the existence of current inequities. *"Operate with our eyes open."* Current inequities exist and probably always will, but we must acknowledge them and come up with strategies to address them.

Case managers have a dual responsibility to work with immigrants and refugees and to work with their communities and advocacy groups. The case manager should provide opportunities that allow for open dialogue and authentic discussion about sensitive issues. A case manager must be patient to recognize the benefits of the process.

*Be aware of each of our perceptions, experiences, and biases. Recognize them and the most challenging question is how do these impact your work?*

The moderator facilitated the question-and-answer session with participants.

Q. How does one balance ethics and guidelines of social work with the needs of newcomers who ask for advice, input, and direction? How should a practitioner/agency address this dilemma?

A. Dr. Este does not see a conflict between the ethics of social work, working with newcomers, and providing them with advice. There is a code of ethics that the social work profession needs to abide by and practice. Most newcomers ask for provisions that are realistic and that address their needs.

Q. What are the major factors that have led to the gap in the social work literature referring to immigrants and refugees?

A. Today in the faculty of social work at the University of Calgary, case management as a tool is not in our course outlines and thus, academic research has not been pursued. Dr. Este is keenly interested in finding out about the newcomer model.

Q. Can you discuss the benefits of cultural humility especially in case management?

A. In Dr. Este's former work with case management, he made the case for cultural competency, but as he began to think about the limitations of cultural competency — who determines cultural competence? This had led him to the assumption that cultural humility is a better concept. The goal is to become better aware.

Note: The slides will be updated with the references/citations and will be added to the site.

## Session 6: Vaccine uptake and vaccine hesitancy amount Immigrants in Fall 2021: An update from Canada and the USA.

Traditional Territories Acknowledgement. The University of **Manitoba** campuses are located on the original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples and the homeland of the Métis Nation. Respect for the treaties was recognized.

Presenters:

**Jack Jedwab**, Association for Canadian Studies

**Lori Wilkinson**, University of **Manitoba**, Immigration Research West

As the Delta variant continued to spread and mutate, efforts to increase vaccine uptake among all subgroups of the Canadian population continue with a greater sense of urgency. The data of this study were collected weekly between March 2020 and October 2021 and reveals that although vaccine uptake had increased, especially when vaccine mandates began to be introduced, there remain worryingly large groups of adults who remain unvaccinated. This becomes particularly troubling the vaccination of children between the ages of 5 and 11 years commences. The proportion of the children and young adult population that are newcomers or children of newcomers is large. In some areas, over 65 percent of the school-aged population forms this group. The presentation gave an update on the vaccine rates among newcomers to the United States and Canada and identified some of the factors that influence vaccine hesitancy.

The results extracted for this presentation were from a three-county, omnibus project examining the social, economic, and socioeconomic outcomes of the immigrants, refugees, and racialized persons including indigenous peoples from Canada, the US, and Mexico.

This presentation is from a September/October 2021 poll from a collaborative initiative with the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) and near the end of this presentation, the data is from the latest survey (November 7, 2021) that deals more with vaccine hesitancy.

Why was the comparison with the United States? The researchers wanted to know if, in Canada where there was a push for vaccinations, the uptake of vaccination has resulted in higher vaccination rates. Also, they wanted to know if there was something generic about immigrant status vs. non-immigrant status.

The main objective of this presentation was to discuss vaccine uptake. There was concern that immigrants (recognized as a diverse group) might exhibit a disproportionate degree of vaccine hesitancy and special attention should be directed toward them.

For the data/charts of these results, please see the PowerPoint associated with this session. Summary statements are included below.

The research question answered was: do immigrants and non-immigrants in Canada and the United States differ around rates of vaccination uptake and over their vaccination concerns (view of gender, age, and political orientation)?

The study examined racialized groups based on immigration status (non-immigrants vs immigrants) to determine whether immigration is a better predictor of attitudes and behaviour than are identified markers (race, age, etc.). A comparison with the United States provides insights into whether immigrant status transcends national boundaries regarding views around vaccination.

The survey respondents reported that nearly 90 percent of Canadians over the age of 12 have been or intend to be fully vaccinated. The report found that over the last few months, the number of vaccine-hesitant people is gradually shrinking. About 10 percent of Canadians said they won't get vaccinated and don't intend to as compared to about 30 percent in the United States. Most people in Canada have decided to get vaccinated.

In the United States, about 35 percent say they do trust immigrants/newcomers when it comes to COVID 19, but about 53 percent in Canada do not trust immigrants/newcomers when it comes to COVID 19. That is a concern.

Ninety (90) percent of both non-immigrants and immigrants said they are vaccinated for COVID 19 in Canada. The numbers in the United States are much lower: 68 percent for those born in the United States (non-immigrants) and 79 percent for immigrants.

Looking at the racial status and vaccination rates, those racialized persons in Canada who responded to the survey (indigenous, black, white, Latin, Chinese and others) said they were vaccinated is high (83% – 96%) while in the United States the number is lower (59% to 83%). There is a difference between Canada and the United States.

The survey found that there was little difference in vaccine hesitancy between non-immigrants and immigrants in Canada. There was a much greater difference in the United States where immigrants were more likely to take the vaccine than non-immigrants.

One of the ways to measure vaccine hesitancy to COVID 19 is to measure if people are hesitant of other vaccines, by ethnic and racial identity. In Canada, 10 percent of all survey respondents feel vaccines are dangerous whereas, in the United States, 20 percent feel vaccines are dangerous. A couple of differences are that persons who identify as being “black” find vaccines as being particularly dangerous in both Canada and the United States whereas those identifying as being “Hispanic “in the US describe vaccines as dangerous to the same extent.

Should vaccines be given to children 5- to 11-year-old children? There are differences of agreement between respondents in Canada (65%) agreed and in the United States (53%) once vaccines are approved for children. Overall, there are reasonable rates of parents agreeing that children under the age of 12 should be vaccinated, but there is some hesitancy with the parents of Asian descent in both Canada and the United States. Also, the rates of vaccine hesitancy for children under the age of 12 are higher than those of those above 12. Notably, immigrants indicated that they are more likely to have their children vaccinated than non-immigrants in both Canada and the United States.

Unvaccinated men and women are mainly comprised of non-immigrants in Canada. In the overall group not vaccinated, non-immigrants are mainly represented. The evidence does not suggest there are many reasons for distrust of immigrants regarding COVID.

In Canada, non-immigrant respondents between the ages of 35 and 44 are far more likely to be unvaccinated than immigrants. Immigrants are more apt to be unvaccinated at higher age levels.

Beyond the identity considerations (race, age, immigrant status, etc.), other factors may contribute to vaccination rates. One is by political leaning (right or left on the political spectrum) and by immigrant status in Canada and the United States. In Canada, the right-leaning non-immigrant respondents are less likely to be vaccinated (74%) than those who are left-leaning non-immigrants (95%); a difference/gap of 21% of vaccination rates. The right-leaning immigrants are also less likely to be vaccinated (84%) than the left-leaning immigrants (96%); again, a difference/gap of 12%. The same ideological divide is evident in the United States but higher. The vaccination decisions by ideology show a difference and would be considered an indicator of vaccination.

What are some of the socio-economic predictors for vaccination namely, education and income status for Canada and the United States (immigrant and non-immigrant status not considered)?

- Education status (high school or less to graduate level) is not as much an indicator in Canada (only a 7.9% gap) as in the United States (48% gap in terms of vaccine uptake).
- Income levels. There is a difference/gap (11.5%) between income levels and vaccination rates in Canada. This difference is significant and should not be dismissed. It is a much greater indicator in the United States (27%).

Education and income levels are stronger predictors of vaccine hesitancy or uptake in the United States than in Canada.

Why did persons get vaccinated in Canada? The principal consideration was to connect with family and friends and the other considerations were not to lose their job and social considerations. There were some differences between age cohorts in that the younger group wished to connect with friends (social connections).

The reminder the Re-opening Canada at the Metropolis Conference will take place in Vancouver from March 24 to March 26, 2022. <https://metropolisconference.ca/en/>  
Links were in the chat.

The moderator facilitated the question-and-answer session.

Q. Please clarify the Chinese/Asian category. Does the Chinese category in Canada further break down the population into Asian, East Asian, and others not captured in those groups?

A. For these studies, in Canada it is Chinese and in the United States, it is Asian Americans. This is aligned with the terms used for the Canada Census. The United States does include people who are outside the Chinese category. There are differences between Canada and the US identifying in populations: black, Hispanic, and others.

Q. Was there an effort to include responses from Indigenous communities in Canada?

A. Yes, the presenters have data on these communities but it is not reported yet. They will share this information (quantitative and qualitative) with participants in Canada, the US, and Mexico. The website will be populated on their website, Association for Canadian Studies. <https://acs-aec.ca/en/covid-19-social-impacts-network/>

Q. Why would non-immigrants feel more hesitant about vaccines than immigrants?

A. The presenters suggest that fake news may contribute. The results presented now are from wave 3 from our study, and in wave 4 it will be probed further. Most immigrants are getting information from family and friends and social media platforms. The information on social media platforms is not necessarily incorrect, but the source of the information provides credibly.

Q. Is the difference between left-leaning and right-leaning findings for the immigrant cohort statistically significant?

A. Remember these are self-assessments – what political spectrum do they support? Yes, they were, especially in the United States.

Q. Are there plans to do studies around religious affiliations and levels of religious affiliations.

A. There is a problem about asking in general, but are they practicing/active in their religion. If they are not active, does that affect vaccination or not being vaccinated? It is hard to measure religiosity.

Q. Those from the Philippines have a larger representation in some areas. Are they identified?

A. Not in this study but the numbers are not high enough to generate findings. The largest number of immigrants in Canada were from India (25%). Those from the Philippines (in third place) have decreased in the last year or two. The Metropolis conference in Vancouver this year will be able to answer more of those detailed questions (see below).

Q. What are the presenter's top three "ah-hah" moments from this study?

A. A key learning is the reasons why/how Canadians distinguish themselves from Americans regarding vaccine uptakes. Some of this information seems to differentiate Canadians from Americans and the broader issues across society. There is a clear difference in the attitudes between Canadians and Americans. This includes trust in all governments; it is declining in Canada but not as low as in the US. Trust is significant in other areas e.g., medicine, WHO, and others. Trust is a huge issue in the responses of participants in the last 20 months. Who do they trust and how much do they trust? More research is required.



Other current findings for further investigation include the following.

- There are segments of the Canadian population that say they are anti-vax and they feel vaccines are dangerous and yet they got vaccinated at a higher rate than those in the US. The culture of vaccination in Canada is more positive than in the US.
- Explore the mental health side of COVID – what does it look like? Who is most affected? What are its manifestations?
- Personality (traits) affecting vaccination and mitigation actions. We are learning about ourselves.
- Relationship between the vaccinated and the unvaccinated. It is a source of major tension in the surveys. There are significant issues around social cohesion/polarization issue.

Q. Are education and income levels major predictors?

A. Yes, and this needs to be further investigated especially in the United States. Immigrant status is a weak predictor in Canada.

## Open Forum Conversations:

### Language

There were no notes provided to the writer.

### Employment

**Question 1.** What types of work placement are clients placed into and are these work placements temporary or long-term career goals?

- Immigrant Centre **Manitoba**. There are no structured work placements. They focus on entry-level job placements until newcomers can obtain their “dream” job or go to postsecondary education. The strategy is to empower clients to find jobs themselves. They do provide support for clients with resumé development. They help everyone from a person who has picked up a pencil for the first time at age 47 to PhDs, doctors, and others with higher qualifications who are waiting for credential recognition (may take up to two or three years). Entry-level positions are easy to find and credential recognition is a long, expensive process. Currently, there are many open positions (500 – 600), and the Immigrant Centre cannot meet the demand from employers mainly in the manufacturing and service sectors. Childcare is often a challenge.
- Northern **Saskatchewan**. They do not have community-based organizations and no employment services for an entire region. The official service is out of Prince Albert which is three hours away and not easily accessible. There are several seats reserved for newcomers within the regional colleges for cost-free basic training (basic skills, resumé preparation, first aid, etc.) but the training spots are not full. There is an extremely high unemployment rate in Northern **Saskatchewan**.

Newcomers want to work and said they are not looking for schooling. They wanted practical experiences in **Saskatchewan** to earn a living and be part of the community. They want to know the community and the community members while feeling they are contributing.

As a result, the province has developed a work placement program with no required in-class learning, but training is available for positions that require training such as food safety. It is a four-month placement with an employer. The program is not yet in place, but it will be soon. The immigration service provider finds the newcomers to move into these placements. Placements in the hospitality industry may offer no room for advancement, but placements in daycares may lead to further credentials in early childhood education (ECE). There must be a minimum of 25 participants in the work

placement program and minimum wage is offered. The employer will pay the employee for one month and will gradually decrease its pay for the remaining months unless the employer intends to hire the newcomer to fill current employment gaps. The immigrant service providers assist with the process and make the connections.

- **Saskatchewan** Polytechnic New Start Program. The program was started to meet the needs of the **Saskatchewan** Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP). Many nominees participate but others can participate as well including their family members. It is online training for the purpose of increasing credentials. It is successful in the cities but did not have the same effect in rural communities.
- **Manitoba** work placement depends on the immigration stream from which the newcomers arrived. For example, if an immigrant came through family sponsorship or private sponsorship, the spouse will usually start to work in Canada. If the newcomers came through the nominee program, there is more pressure to start working soon as they do not have financial support. In all these situations, there is a lot of pressure to start working. There are not a lot of GARs in the work placement programs as they have short-term support.
- **Saskatchewan** has a Driver Education Grant Program for newcomers. It covers the cost, or a portion of the cost, for eligible newcomers to complete their six-wheel drive (6WD or 6×6) training so they can get their license to secure or maintain employment. This is not available across the province. The Newcomer Welcome Centre in Moose Jaw, **Saskatchewan** has the same program (or one very similar) which they call Newcomer Driver Education Funding (NDEF).
- Red River College in **Manitoba** is also focusing on micro-credentials and utilizes Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL or PLAR).

Generally, there is a movement toward micro-credentials where there are gaps rather than pursuing (postsecondary education or training) or waiting for credentialing.

**Question 2.** What approaches or specialized training would you recommend to better support clients in reaching their career goals? Any success stories on how to help clients?

- **Manitoba.** Utilizes Maslow's hierarchy of needs to help people meet needs (pay for rent, food) as they work toward their other longer-term goals. They are flexible in meeting with newcomers as some have jobs and/or home demands. They provide evening appointments via Zoom to meet with employment facilitators.

A needed change is to have credentialing made easier, less expensive, and to allow newcomers to feel valued about their credentials in Canada. There has been little change in the last 20 years. The employment facilitators try to get newcomers into entry-level positions within their field so that they can expand their skills and make them feel valued.

The importance of the Mentoring Programs is critical. There are some programs below.

- Windmill Loans and Career Loans program
- Internationally Educated Health Professionals: Article UM to help foreign-trained health professionals qualify for **Manitoba** practice
- **Saskatchewan** Polytechnic Micro-Credential Program
- Edmonton: The **Alberta** International Medical Graduates Association (AIMGA) supports international graduates who come to **Alberta** and facilitates pathways for them to join medical professions in the province.
- Rural **Saskatchewan.** The credential program has not changed here for the last 20 years  
Is there a document that exists that people use to suggest positions?

*Career counsellors know this and it's up to them to provide newcomers with positions based on their skills.*

## SWIS Youth

**Question 1.** What are issues/pressures regarding your program when settling newcomers in school (for SWIS workers) or community programs (for Youth workers)?

- In rural areas there is a lack of services especially leisure and recreational activities for both newcomers and Canadians.
- Collaboration with school staff such as EAL/ELL teachers does not seem to be as smooth as it can be; examples include newcomer referrals, information regarding newcomer lists, and parent contact information. This has resulted in delays and difficulties to support newcomer clients. Sharing personal information is difficult for SWIS workers, and not all school administration and staff are keen on sharing information.
- There are challenges with high-need families and single-parent families. These include limited resources, transportation, and referrals are difficult. Immigrant agencies have limited resources and capacity.
- Schools are hiring fewer EAL/ELL teachers which is a challenge as they are the main source of contact for many SWIS workers. There is a growing gap in the awareness, knowledge and relationships with SWIS programs; there is a loss of knowledge and trust. SWIS programming can be highly affected by the willingness of EAL/ELL staff support. One way is pivoting into a space that is shared spaces and meeting with school staff and SWIS workers.
- The cultural settlement needs of students such as prayer places are not always available. It is difficult to get support for newcomer clients.
- Enhanced Settlement Workers in Schools (ESWIS) provided by the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers is a new initiative from IRCC. It offers a collaborative, wraparound approach with a specialist, community services, and school administration and teachers.
- There needs to be more collaboration and synergy between various service providers and agencies.
- There is a trend of youth wanting to volunteer in Canada, both for current school credit and future employment. Settlement agencies have worked in partnerships with local employers; there has also been a noticeable growth in youth volunteering. One respondent mentioned that there seem to be greater barriers for newcomer youth with employment.

**Question 2:** What are some potential solutions or resources that can be effective in easing the pressures?

- Opening communication and processes for collaboration. Ongoing meetings and communication with the school results in stronger collaboration and referrals.
- Streamlining or creating more effective ways for referrals especially in schools.
- Immigrant agencies that have strong relationships with the school boards had put in a lot of groundwork to build strong relationships with school staff.
- An advisory committee with school staff.
- Work closely with youth program facilitators and youth employment counsellors. This has been effective.

**Question 3:** What are your concerns and wishes?

- Predictions from IRCC on language, demographic and numbers of newcomers to better prepare for the school year.
- Having a bank of interpreters is good practice for agencies.
- One school receives and provides service to newcomer students.
- Wish to have more ongoing and consistent programming.

**RAP Open Forum**

The following is a summary of the open forum conversations held on Day 2 of the Summit.

- Increase RAP allowances for clients as the current allowance is very low and it is challenging to depend on especially for single clients, and those in areas with higher costs of living.

*This point was the most strongly emphasized throughout the session as the most pressing need across the PNT.*

- There was broad agreement across service providers that RAP requires more funding and capacity to better meet demands. Clients often have very high, complex needs, and there is a higher volume of clients which necessitates more funding to retain talented settlement staff to meet the diverse needs of clients.
- Secondary migration complicates the funding issue further. It creates many challenges and causes RAP dollars to become increasingly stretched. The mobility of newcomers is a challenge. It is suggested that these newcomers be tracked and encouraged to stay in their destined communities, at least for the RAP service year to ensure consistent resource distribution and service provision. If not, is it possible to have more flexible funding allotments to meet the needs of these secondary migrants?
- Many staff are overworked and are facing possible burnout and mental health challenges due to the intensity of the work. There are concerns about losing talented staff due to the demanding and emotionally taxing nature of the work.
- Securing appropriate and affordable housing is a universal challenge for RAP service providers, especially for large refugee families.
- It is integral that RAP providers work with the community; a “whole-of-society” approach is required to settle and retain refugees in the community to ensure their meaningful integration. There is a need to build broad community refugee support and awareness to ensure a welcoming, safe community for refugees to settle for the long term. Community mentors and champions from ethnocultural communities are also integral.

*Community education and awareness is an important piece of this puzzle, including anti-racism and DEI training.*

- Trauma-informed practice is important for community/wraparound service providers to ensure they are providing appropriate and sensitive service to refugee clients.
- Translated and plain language documents, resources (oral and visual) are essential to ensure equity of access and broad awareness.

## Session 7: Urban Systems Approach

### Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services (NAARS)

#### Presentations from:

Alex Racine, IRCC, Issues Management Officer overlooking the urban transformation initiative.

Dayna Hinkel, Manager, **Manitoba** Start

Ijeoma Nwamuo, Executive Director, International Women of Saskatoon (IWS)

Jana McKee, Program Director, Seven Oaks Immigration Services (SOIS)

José Chinchilla, Settlement Coordinator, Seven Oaks Immigrant Services (SOIS)

Alex Racine, IRCC. Alex welcomed the session participants. He overlooks the urban transformation initiative including the standardizing centralized NAARS and the zonal outreach and referral processes. The purpose of this session was not to suggest that one NAARS process is better than the other, but it is to give insight into some of the good work that has been done in the region so far.

#### Ijeoma Nwamo, International Women of Saskatoon (IWS)

Ijeoma acknowledged the land upon which the IWS stands: Treaties 4 and 6 territories and the homeland of the Métis.

NAARS strategy for Saskatoon urban centres. On the formal side, the International Women of Saskatoon (IWS) has taken the lead as the contribution holder for the NAARS and as such is a neutral community facilitator for the service locations of Regina and Saskatoon. The focus is on permanent resident clients.

The partnership includes the English and Francophone settlement communities in **Saskatchewan**. The vision is to use a client-centred service approach for the uptake of settlement services and exceptional client outcomes.

Before the program was launched, IWS had to consider the external and internal factors. They identified the stakeholders, brought multiple stakeholders together, and created a safe space for critical and candid conversations about why NAARS needed change. Challenges and problems were defined and solutions were presented. Trust was built by all partners disclosing who was doing what so that all could understand the current circumstances. Themes were brainstormed and a common questionnaire was to be completed in the interview process. It was critical to work together to strengthen the internal operational capacity of all partners and to agree on the way forward.

The internal strategic framework was revised. Guiding principles were reviewed and revised as follows.

- Neutrality. For example, in language assessment centres a neutral party was critical.
- Best interest of the clients.
- Transparency of the processes.
- Fairness to all parties involved.
- Cultural considerations for Francophone clients.
- Accountability to internal and external stakeholders (to IRCC, partners such as the Board of Directors, and the membership of the organization).

Innovative design thinking and systems thinking were used to plan the changes. Design thinking takes into consideration the needs of the client and the complex needs of the community whether it is the settlement sector system in [Saskatchewan](#) and Canada as a whole. The goal is to find a healthy balance while enhancing efficacy, efficiency, and effectiveness. All factors much work together. An example of an application is the process of interviewing.

The partnership agenda is built on the following factors.

- Coordinate. IWS convenes and supports the partnership to ensure goal alignment.
- Collaborate. Despite the divergent views and skills of the partners, there was a commitment to work together to achieve a shared goal.
- Cooperate to achieve a culture of team support. A commitment to ensuring that no one is doing anything to undermine the other and their capacities to deliver on responsibilities.
- Communicate respectfully to share ideas, information, and concerns. Share the reports, the data, and the trends with partners to better serve the clients.

The results were as follows.

- NAARS advisory committees and a draft terms of reference were developed for each PNT region.
- A unique partnership with ACF (Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise) was established to further the Francophone pathway. French clients who want services in French will have service.
- A program differentiation between basic NAARS (those with non-complex issues) and triage services to case management was made. Which clients go where?
- Delivery tools/interview templates were refined with the assistance of the partners. The needs and assets assessment process were shared across the region.
- Data collection and reporting mechanisms were established for IRCC and others.

Implementation strategies were created.

- Division of labour – zone agencies for core coordination and agencies for core management.
- Standardized NAARS content/forms (the what).
- Centralized client referral processes (the how).
- Reassessment strategy for clients coming back after four to six months of the initial assessments.

The following are promising practices that evolved from the strategy.

- Gender-based and anti-oppressive framework and trauma-informed practice.
- The neutral position and the absence of conflict of interest.
- Individualized NAARS interview unless there was an exception for a family interview.
- Use of multiple delivery methods: in person at offices; online via Zoom/other; offsite at partner agencies; and home visits for in-home services.
- Flexible work schedules including Saturdays.
- Clients' access to either a comprehensive (refugees usually) or simplified NAARS depending on their needs.
- Translated simplified NAARS in various languages.
- Using independent interpreters to ensure a credible process (no family members in an interview).
- Clients utilize the *Welcome to Saskatchewan* mobile app and language assessment centre (LARC) services. The first app in the province.
- Access to Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) and information on child-raising supports.
- NAARS representatives were at the table with PNT representatives to speak on behalf of [Saskatchewan](#) and its activities, initiatives, and what is needed for the urban centres.

## Dayna Hinkel, Manitoba Start

Urban System Approaches: IRCC funded the **Manitoba** needs and assets assessment and referral services project implementing technology to complete this project (PeaceGeeks project).

There were three components to the full approach.

1. The **Manitoba** needs and assets assessment and referral services centralized intake. For a decade this system has operated. The new plan has been revised and expanded over the last year with 22 **Manitoba** settlement partners using the IRCC Winnipeg urban systems approach zone map and referral flow charts and NAARS guide. The project consulted with the IWS (Saskatoon) as its NAARS process as it was launched first.

This process allows for the collection of client information on behalf of IRCC to timely refer and connect newcomers to the defined Winnipeg settlement zones, mini zones, language supports, Francophone pathway, and case management triage when high-need clients arrive.

The standardized NAARS is very lengthy and has robust data and information. The question remains about how to store and analyze the data. This year, **Manitoba** Start chose *Better Outcomes* as the vendor for NAARS. Many organizations use it already and knew it could extract what they needed including a client settlement plan. Currently, they are converting the NAARS form into the database. They are piloting the form with a focus on data collection and referrals. The referrals will be sent by email to our settlement partners.

They are developing a dashboard to represent **Manitoba** information. It will filter information by zone and immigration category. Additional referral information will be added as it is developed. It is planned that this dashboard will be live in January and have data to review in February.

They are developing a client settlement plan within the software. After completing the NAARS, the client will leave with a settlement plan (paper and/or electronic). All details are will be included.

2. The Winnipeg information for newcomers' information orientation (WIN).

WIN will be launched in late 2021 in English and in French. It will give newcomer settlement providers and Winnipeg organizations access to Winnipeg information and resources and will augment zone and service provider information. A package has been developed (workbook and other resources). All resources have been reviewed. The settlement provider portal at **Manitoba** Start will share the settlement and orientation resources.

3. **Manitoba** *Arrival Advisor* app is a free mobile app for newcomers to navigate their settlement journey. PeaceGeeks has adapted this app for **Manitoba**. The topics of the app come from the WIN project and the services are coming from a project partner, MB211. Users can search and view topics or they can answer a series of questions and will be connected to services. This app will be launched soon in English and French. One new language per year will be added for each of the next three years.

Thanks to IRCC Winnipeg providing timely, client-centred information to newcomers.



**Jana McKee and José Chinchilla** Seven Oaks Immigrant Services (SOIS), North West Winnipeg.  
Jana and José acknowledged the Treaty 1 territory upon which they reside.

The outreach is very simple in their region. Seven Oaks goes where the people are and interacts with the community people, agencies, and businesses. They help newcomer individuals and families in the NorthWest Winnipeg community and beyond by offering information, support systems, enhanced skills and community connections that aid their integration into life in Canada. We do this to empower immigrants and our community to be healthy and thrive.

The process includes three steps. They went to the communities to trace resources, programs, and community partners. Secondly, they returned to connect with the resources, businesses, community centres, churches, and services. They then informally interviewed their clients asking what they were doing before COVID and after.

From this initial interaction, advisory boards are established. They meet and discuss how they can work together. A key to reaching is the “elevator pitch” – ongoing outreach. Every staff understands their role and engages with communities. They reached out to include newcomers and offer what immigrant services they need.

Most of the staff work and live in the communities and know community partners. Connections are easy to make with the permanent residents and the newcomers by making use of opportunities available to the staff.

Building and nurturing relationships are important. The staff have been invited to events and worked with other agencies in the community to better meet the needs of newcomers. They bring an educational component into their service, and they are partnering with agencies to have a health focus as well.

The moderator facilitated the question-and-answer session.

Q. **Manitoba**. Will there be a WIN website for service providers outside Winnipeg?

A. The current funding agreement is for urban service providers. IRCC would have to fund rural service provision.

Alex: IRCC plans to have the WIN rollout in the urban centre and then roll out the programs to the small centres as well. There will be some differences.

Q. Seven Oaks. Do you have best practices to ensure that newcomers have access to settlement services and initial services such as **Manitoba Start**?

A. The newcomers that arrived before and during COVID were isolated first. Then the settlement workers ensured that they met with people in the community to make them aware of the services. Subsequently, the workers are connecting the newcomers to programs. The newcomers become aware of the immigrant services in general, with the assistance of the settlement workers, and they make appointments to ensure services are provided. When there seems to be a clear path and connection, the settlement plans are developed. Seven Oaks is trying to pilot an online NAARS supporting the clients. **Manitoba Start** has that capacity.

Q. Is it possible to share the standardized NA forms?

A. Yes, reach out to your IRCC program officer. IWS can send out the forms.



Q. Does the app inform users that once in Canada, it is safe to disclose a disability or permanent barrier? Does the app provide an option for disclosure?

A. On the Welcome to [Saskatchewan](#) site, IWS benefits tab, all the social benefits are listed including disability benefits. The reader can click for additional information. When newcomers come for the needs assessment, more information is clarified. All agencies have passwords and no information is shared in the interest of the client. There is no privacy breach.

The [Manitoba Arrival Advisor](#) app connects newcomers to services. It provides a broad overview. If required, they can share emails in a passworded environment with an agency person.

## Open Forum Conversations:

### NAARS

There were no notes provided to the writer of this report. There was considerable information provided to the participants during the Urban Systems Approach ( NAARS) on Day 2.

### Postsecondary

The following is a summary of the open form conversation on Day 2 of the Summit.

**Facilitator:** Stuart Schwartz, Red River College

**Question 1:** Thinking about the IRC-funded services that your organization provides, what unique role do Canada's post-secondary institutions play in the immigration landscape?

- They are partners with the community/region and with settlement providers.
- Tailored programming. Postsecondary institutions should target programs to meet the changing needs of newcomers. This includes listening, adapting and continually adapting programs to ensure relevancy to the population they are serving.
- There is a need to determine the challenges that the institutions face. What do they need to know? For example, how to approach newcomers to ensure the information they have is actionable. It is important to know the plans of their newcomer students so that instructors can meet their specific needs; for example, the micro-credentialing of skills.
- Creating micro-credentials to demonstrate that the newcomers have developed soft skills such as conflict resolution which is communication-based. Soft skills are needed to succeed in the employment market.

**Question 2:** Colleges and Institutes in Canada recently released a study on the role of newcomers in Canada. It suggested newcomers drive Canadian economic growth, and it recommended the creation of a national workforce-focused language program. Is the communication specific to the workplace something that is seen as a potential gap? Does this recommendation make sense to you?

*This is essentially micro-credentialing.*

- Assess the foundational skills that newcomers arrive with, and build the skill sets to create employment success. This can improve language skills.

- Employment gaps are often filled by an immigration strategy; for example, the Atlantic immigration pilot program and the rural newcomer immigration pilot. The strategy would be designed for a geographic area and to address labour market gaps

**Question 3:** Are there any promising practices currently occurring in your organization?

- Creating and offering tasks that demonstrate soft skills to be used in the workforce.
- Linking soft skills such as effective communication and group work to job tasks.
- Applied Research:
  - Partnerships between the postsecondary researchers and LIPs to develop a community study that drives policy change and leads to more funding.
  - Creates greater success and adapts to the changing demographics and needs of newcomer clients.
- Bringing in post-secondary students into partnerships.

## Literacy

The following is a summary of the open forum conversation held on Day 2.

**Facilitator:** Daniel Green

**Question 1.** Training literacy teachers can be difficult, especially when classes are mixed between regular-stream and literacy-stream students. What resources are available? What kind of training is valuable to give to instructors?

- Tutela.ca has five literacy workshops.
- Bow Valley College, Calgary, has a post TESL certificate, Material Design Module.

*is very useful. It is not free but has had positive feedback from many who have taken it.*

- TIES (Calgary Immigrant Educational Society) and Literacy Center of Expertise offer specific training. Their website: <https://www.immigrant-education.ca/>
- Avenue online portfolios are very useful. They may be the future of portfolio-based language assessment (PBLA) storage.
- Edmonton Catholic School Division LINC has a website that divides Literacy levels into CLB, high and low. Skills lists can help train teachers.
- Digital navigators provide training that is also quite useful.

**Question 2.** How has being online been--challenging or rewarding?

- Rural Saskatchewan. They have been doing an online pilot for CLB 2/3. There are many students, but they are not progressing very fast with *Languishing Learning*. Currently, they have an instructor but the students are not attending regularly.
- Small classes are quite useful for teaching online. Class sizes are small but regular students usually come.

*Smaller is usually better.*

- Classes that offer child care are usually full.
- There is poor enrollment in many classes. Some classes have 7/20 attending and no one on the waitlist.

- Some students are waiting for COVID/online learning to be finished and are not responding to calls to join classes from a waitlist.
- It would be great if *Avenue* had a Literacy Default Layout that was very minimal.
- Education assistants and technology assistants are quite helpful, but those positions have unstable funding.
- They have very flexible homework completion dates (all due on Friday, for example).

**Question 3:** How are the needs different between foundational/lower levels and CLB 3L and 4L?

*It is quite stressful to plan terms and classroom arrangements.*

- Everyone uses Avenue as there is always some face-to-face interaction. Literacy learners are in all classes.
  - Levels 1 and 2 meet face-to-face to make things easier but meeting online is not as efficient as with the higher levels.
  - Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS of BC) has a website with lots of resources to look at for digital literacy.
  - Loaning desktops and laptops is very effective; phones are harder to use for learning.
  - However, students should be reassured that they will not have to repair/replace loaned laptops but they should be careful with them. Some students refuse laptops because of this.

### Community Connections (volunteering)

The following is a summary of the open forum conversation held on Day 2 of the Summit.

**Facilitator:** Icasiana de Gala

**Question 1:** What are the challenges that you are experiencing with COVID-19 concerning volunteering and what did you do?

- There are few volunteers due to COVID-19.
- Volunteers are concerned about the vaccination status of the clients.
- Burnout among volunteers who come back each year is prevalent.

*We need more of these volunteers.*

- Some volunteers do not have the digital literacy capacity or the equipment/internet to host a session that they might have done in person.
- The agencies do not have many donations. Settlement workers may investigate marketplace items and sales/garage sales to grab items for clients. An organization posts on Facebook, and the workers may connect the client to the resource. Some organizations have been directing donations directly to clients themselves.

**Question 2:** What programs need volunteers? And how do you get the volunteers to connect with you?

- There are volunteers for activities such as citizenship test tutorials. These volunteers are usually retired persons.
- Tutors can assist volunteers with virtual platforms at the service centres.
- Volunteers assisted with paint nights, yoga, etc. which were held virtually.

*A business with a QR code links interested persons to our volunteer package.*

**Question 3:** Do you find it easier to promote events with attractive titles (such as Zumba/Paint night) rather than asking for volunteers?

- Volunteers for Zumba and artistic events are readily available.
- If volunteers with certain skills can be identified, workers can create a volunteer event.
- Settlement workers look for volunteers from work experience/life skills classes in high schools that have a volunteering component; e.g., Life Skills classes. However, due to COVID, the schools have stopped some work experience and life skills volunteer classes.
- There are volunteer opportunities for the newcomers themselves. Newcomers want employment, and there are volunteer opportunities that may lead to employment such as child care. Parents often leave their children at settlement childcare centres when they are taking English classes. This action can lead to volunteer occasions and even a career path.
- Clients are a great source of volunteers, especially if they do not have work experience because provided them with work experience and can assist with mental health issues (isolation).

**Question 4:** Do you find that you are getting fewer volunteers compared to other non-profits?

- An organization that has enough volunteers may refer them to other organizations.

*Another time, they can refer back to us. It is easier to work together rather than against.*

- Edmonton Immigration Services Association (EISA) has a volunteer system with many settlement practitioners assisting with summer camps, after-school academic support programs, and information sessions. A human resource manager oversees accepting volunteers (referrals, screening). A youth team oversees programs within the schools. There are volunteers from the University of Alberta and colleges in Edmonton. However, they still need more volunteers for programs – such as ethnocultural.
- To attract volunteers, participants suggested putting ads on Facebook; having service points in high schools and community centres, and hiring summer students can facilitate involvement during the school year (retired teachers may assist).

### Community Connections (youth)

The following is a summary of the open forum conversation held on Day 2 of the Summit.

**Facilitator:** Oliver Kamau.

The Youth programs had some specific and unique challenges during the pandemic and often have not participated in settlement programs as often as pre-pandemic.

- A lot of Youth have decided not to pursue their post-secondary education but were working and not participating in youth programs.
- The lack of access to technology (a lot of families have limited access to computers).
- During COVID, youth are more open to talking about their mental health and their challenges.
- Unique peer groups have formed whereby youth from higher grades have started assisting and mentoring students in lower grades.

Workers should encourage youth to access scholarships and student loans which would encourage them to pursue their post-secondary education.

## Day 3: Full day of programming with IRCC. Discussion of programs in the context of each region.

Moderator: Ahmad Majid, Executive Director, [Saskatchewan](#) Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA)

Ahmad welcomed and acknowledged the Indigenous land on which SAISIA and its members gather. Treaties 2, 4, 5, and 6 territories, the traditional gathering place of 31 Indigenous peoples and the home of the Métis. Celia Fiddler of Waterhen First Nation offered the prayer, greeting, and message for participants.

### Session 8: The IRCC Afghanistan (re) settlement initiative: The early response, the present, and planning for the future.

**Keynote: The IRCC Afghanistan (Re)Settlement Initiative:** The Early Response, the Present, and Planning for the Future.

Presenters were:

**Corinne Prince**, Director General, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

**John Biles**, Acting Senior Director of Operations, Afghanistan Settlement Branch, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Government of Canada // Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

The presentation was an overview of the urgent settlement decisions made in the first months of the emergency response, the evolution of the (re)settlement journey, and a look at the future of what IRCC believes the ongoing response to the commitment to resettle 40,000 Afghan nationals will look like, including the importance of a “whole of society” approach.

**Corinne.** There is a new branch in IRCC called the Afghanistan Settlement Branch. This branch works with the sector to respond to the Afghan mission. There is a new Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, the Honourable Sean Fraser, appointed in late October 2021.

Afghanistan is experiencing a humanitarian crisis. During the evacuation, the Government of Canada (GoC) was able to get 3 000 refugees out of the country, thanks to the efforts of many and in a coalition effort.

Canada is committed to resettling 40 000 Afghans with efforts to build a sustained response over the medium term. No one level of government can do this alone. Staff across many departments, a network of visa officers, provincial governments, settlement agencies and many others must work together.

The resettlement will be completed through two programs.

1. A special immigration program for Afghan nationals and their families who assisted the GoC. They will be supported as GARs for the first 12 months of arrival.

2. A special humanitarian program focused on resettling Afghan nationals outside of Afghanistan who don't have a durable solution in a third country. This could include women leaders, human rights defenders, persecuted religious or ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and journalists and those who assisted Canadian journalists. This group of Afghans is a mix of GARs, PSRs, and family reunification persons. This work will be done with trusted overseas partners including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR has received referrals from the United States (US) and NATO. Canada can expect referrals to begin in 2022. They must be identified and screened before arriving in GoC.

In Fall 2021, the GoC entered into an agreement with the US for referrals. They will be sending those newcomers to the Calgary port of entry. The humanitarian portion will extend to the end of 2023. Private sponsors can apply.

Canada has clear priorities as follows.

- Respond to refugee needs.
- Build and utilize preservice partnerships with provinces, territories and SPOs.
- Fulfill our dedicated resettlement commitment to Afghan refugees.
- Enable the successful settlement and integration of newcomers.
- Deliver a high degree of confidence and support.

**John Biles.** To date, there are some key figures to note. There are special immigration programs for Afghans who assisted the GoC. Of those, 14 550 applications have been received: 9 575 have been approved and 3,555 people arrived in Canada under the special programs.

*This is not operation Syria. This is not a processing challenge; it is a transportation and access challenges.*

There was a surge during the evacuation phase, but in the later phase, it has been episodic. Entire families were evacuated who had not been processed and regardless of their immigration status. This is unusual.

More energy has been spent navigating the complexities. IRCC intends that every part of the resettlement network will be engaged. Only 22 agencies have received families at the time of this Summit. One family will not be sent to a community where there are no other Afghan families for support. A cluster of families may be sent to one community. The final destination of families will not be determined until they get to Canada.

It is a more complicated process than usual. The 5 000 refugees from the US and another 1 000 from Albania have been/will be sent to Calgary. They will be quarantined, processed, and the communities to which they will be sent will be determined at that time. There have been a few mass arrivals, and they have stayed together and found housing in a cluster. This would include a group of girls from one school who were able to be housed together in Saskatoon.

The early days of the resettlement are described as follows. The planning discussions began in mid-July. It was a centralized approach whereby a tent city solution was formed at Pearson Airport and Afghans were quarantined in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Polycultural Immigration and Community Services (Metro Toronto and Peel Region) managed the quarantine hotels. There were daily meetings with the Minister of Health, local health authorities, and the Public Health Agency of Canada. COVID-19 testing

was conducted on days 1 and 8 in the quarantine hotels. Standardized needs and asset assessments were administered for the Afghan GARs,

The complication of the family arrivals was that individuals had mixed immigration status, and often no immigration papers. There were 400 temporary resident permits issued, pending their PR applications.

*A lot of paper was being processed in hotels.*

**Resettlement Planning.** Toronto First to Toronto Last. Initially, the settlement was focused on Toronto with an effort to settle the refugees in Canada first. The numbers exceeded the capacity of Toronto. This has resulted in a five- to a six-month stay in hotels. In the future if individuals have strong family ties, they will be accommodated in Toronto.

IRCC is now directing mass arrivals to Calgary first and if possible, to Saskatoon, Winnipeg, St. John's, Halifax, and Edmonton. There are some NATO-identified persons to arrive in Regina.

#### **Corinne: Lessons Learned.**

Some of the key lessons learned from the Syrian refugee resettlement initiative included:

- The importance of information-sharing with stakeholders.
- The value of partnerships and teamwork.
- Harnessing public support.
- Having operational flexibility and developing innovative approaches to processing.
- Designating Syrians as *Prima facie* refugees (meaning, under UNHCR guidance, they did not need to prove their refugee status).
- The importance of pre-arrival orientation.

The relationships between IRCC, our partner organizations, and volunteers are very important. IRCC has been overwhelmed by the support and the generosity of corporate Canada, individuals, and civil society. There have been huge amounts of goods and services delivered to the hotels after the families arrived. It is important to be flexible and innovate "on the fly." All processing had to be done after they landed and not from the refugee camps.

*These families have been running to planes with only the clothes on their backs.*

Many of these refugees are still experiencing extreme trauma and are not ready to begin processing. This has to be handled.

**John Biles.** The PNT knows "how to do the settlement." There has been good work done across the region.

IRCC and partners have identified the following major areas for increased or continued focus.

- The need for end-to-end planning for a major initiative of this kind. The sector started on Operation Syrian Refugee (OSR). In the later stages of the resettlement phase, the sector worked together. The average individual refugee accesses services for seven to ten years (to naturalization). This projection will assist with later-stage planning.
- The need for accurate and complete refugee information (standardized NAARS).

- Provincial pre-arrival services are essential. There is an upswing from communities to navigate the system.
- Having a focal point for stakeholder coordination and communication in service areas and provinces.
- Bolstering settlement program elements. Case Management was well underway before the Afghan project, but it still needs to be dispersed to smaller centres. There will be some new RAP centres.
- There are timeframe capacity issues (the volume and pace of activities are critical and often unpredictable).
- Ensuring Official Languages obligations are respected. Build connections in the two linguistic communities; it is built-in and essential to this initiative. The efforts of the partners to identify Francophone interpreters and translators are appreciated.

### **New structures at IRCC – Supporting Afghan Resettlement.**

The resettlement of the Afghan refugees required structural changes within IRCC.

- July to August 2021. The National Afghan Steering Committee (NASC) was created, co-chaired by the Executive Director of the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (Fariborz Birjandian, CCIS) and the acting/Deputy Director-General, Resettlement (John Biles). A similar structure had been started previously. Each region has a focal point lead for potential employers, veteran groups, and a doorway to settlement.
- Mid-August. The Settlement & Integration Sector. The Afghanistan Engagement Team was created at IRCC. John was involved in the operations side and Corinne came back to handle to policy side.
- Early September. The formation of the Afghanistan Task Team. On the immigration side, the processing is complicated as they are negotiating with several countries at one time. The immigration and settlement side of the government had to connect with the immigration operations and thus the team was formed.
- Mid-October. The Afghanistan Settlement Branch was created with Corinne Prince as Director-General. All related personnel moved together. Canada is still receiving 12 500 non-Afghan GARs as well as those from Afghanistan and those operations will continue as well.

Canadian citizens, organizations, and individuals can get involved in many ways. IRCC suggests the following.

- Housing is the biggest barrier (during a pandemic and national housing crisis).
- Volunteers are always needed.
- Cash donations are best. Service providers can purchase what they need for clients.
- In-kind support once the families get to their final destination.

The key needs and challenges of the Afghan newcomers are many, but the following are priorities.

- Information and orientation.
- Employment. Companies are willing to accept Afghans.
- Housing.
- Language training. They can begin with some online training while they are in quarantine.

Settlement workers are working with many agencies to ensure settlement providers are ready for Afghans and their families. The future is unknown at this time.



IRCC is planning for the arrivals of Afghanis living outside of Afghanistan at this time. They anticipate about 6 000 to 7 000 by the end of 2021 and another 4 000 to 5 000 by the end of March 2022. These processes are active now.

There are going to be many new arrivals in the coming months, including the first PSRs.

- Three flights will come in December 2021 to Toronto and broader areas of Ontario.
- There will be a flight to Calgary and the PNT around December 15 with PSRs for AB and BC.
- There is a partnership with NATO for flights to Newfoundland, to Halifax, and 5 000 US referrals to Calgary, and many more.

*The future will see us increasingly turning to the service providers for help to welcome and assist thousands of Afghan refugee arrivals.*

IRCC wants to hear the views of service providers on collaborative efforts to support Afghan refugees who need protection to increase their chances for successful integration into our communities across Canada. IRCC will keep partners apprised through the umbrella groups including the LIPs.

*We must compliment not duplicate or complicate our efforts.  
We will be at this for many years to come.*

The moderator facilitated the question-and-answer session.

Q. How can we help support religious minorities that have made it to a third country but are being religiously persecuted eg. Sikhs?

A. They are a priority for IRCC support.

Q. What are the problems associated with the lack of pre-arrival information and application?

A. The major concerns are:

- The identification of their basic needs and their lack of knowledge about Canada.
- Housing is the biggest challenge. RAP follows provincial rates and there is a huge difference in rates. There are hurdles with property owners and with provinces and territories. IRCC did not have anything to share at the Summit, but there will be some approvals on some proposed solutions.
- Afghans want to know where the Afghan diasporas are located and they wish to resettle there.
- Foreign credential recognition as this cohort is highly educated.

Q. Will there be an additional allocation under the sponsorship agreement program to sponsor Afghan PSRs?

A. The current allocation is \$ 8000 for GARS and \$7 000 for PSRs. Parameters will be further established.

Q. Will there be reallocations for the locations when newcomers want to move?

A. The allocations will roughly be the same as for arrivals in each region.

Q. Do GARS or PSRs use food banks? How is IRCC ensuring that accurate information is being related?

A. The use of food banks was encountered with OSR. IRCC did provide some increases in some circumstances. There are rates per person per day and IRCC does a RAP rate review in each province each year. There are sufficient resources provided so the use of the foodbanks should not be necessary.

There have been several negative media stories about this issue. IRCC is handling the arrival of 40 000 refugees during a pandemic and a housing crisis. There have been glitches and they have had to change caterers, provide culturally appropriate food; and others concerns. IRCC and service providers have had to educate the Canadian public as well as refugees.

*We are living a perfect storm.*

Q. Do we know how many Afghans will be allocated to each province?

A. This cohort is so different. The situation in Afghanistan is very volatile; they move to other countries and then negotiate their arrival. We know there is a federal commitment of 40 000 but not over what period. Roughly a jurisdiction will get the same percentage as a region would receive of GARs over the same time.

*Things can change daily.*

## Session 9: The importance of iCARE

Ahmad Majid, Executive Director, SAISIA

**Jeslyn Thibedeau**, Assistant Director, Settlement and Integration Policy (SIP), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

**Justin Cavacciuti**, Policy Analyst, Settlement and Integration Policy Branch (SIP) Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

The purpose of this session explains how iCARE data is placed into the larger settlement program and where context is important.

The session will be facilitated by Jeslyn and Justin.

The presentation is highlighted from the Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report: Summary Findings from IRCC's first settlement outcomes report 2021. The presentation will highlight how iCare data is used in research. Note: this report was written before COVID. It is available at:

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/documents/pdf/english/corporate/publications-manuals/settlement-outcomes-highlights-report-2021.pdf>

**Immigration and Settlement Program.** The settlement and immigration program is integral to a diverse, inclusive, and prosperous nation. It is a “whole-of-society” endeavour and the Federal Government is the key and central player. It is a shared responsibility with all levels of government and civil society as a whole. The settlement program assists newcomers to overcome barriers to participation in social, cultural, civic and economic life in Canada. Funding is allocated to provinces and territories and is centrally managed nationally. This does not include the transfer to Quebec. Before COVID, the settlement sector was experiencing an increased volume of newcomers and SPOs did a great job of providing service to them.

Services are funded by contribution agreements and delivered by third-party providers. To reach the overall objectives of the programs, IRCC tries to ensure sector capacity, professional development, best practices, and building knowledge of the program clients.

**Measuring and Reporting on the Settlement program.** Why do we need to measure? We want to ensure it is meeting the needs of clients, delivering programs in the best way possible, and that we are learning from wins and learning from our challenges. Both IRCC and organizations do a lot of work in this area. There is also research being done by IRCC, academics, umbrella organizations, LIPs, and others. There is also evaluation which provides a periodic, in-depth study into the programs.

Behind the scenes, IRCC writes a Treasury Board submission to access the funds for the programs and within the submission are included outcomes that the program is intended to achieve. Annually, Treasury Board asks IRCC how the outcomes are being achieved. The Settlement program must also report to Parliament and the Cabinet and the public; all information is available online.

**iCARE data collection.** How does Immigration report on the almost \$800M for this program? The first step is to look at outputs, the foundation of outcomes measurement reporting. Outputs are numerical and descriptive (for example the numbers of clients, the number and length of services, formats and descriptions of activities, and topics discussed) and well as the funding attributed to these services. iCARE provides Settlement with all of the output information related to clients and the services they receive in as timely and accurately as possible. Who are the clients? Who benefits the most? There is much more information collected.

**What does success look like?** What are the expected outcomes of direct services? The outcomes are immediate, intermediate, and ultimate outcomes. The context is important including the newcomers themselves as they arrive as well as their status (GARs, economic class, etc.).

**Data ecosystem and measuring services.** iCARE (who) is the tip of the iceberg and several databases provide the whole immigration picture (GCMS {demographic info}, Newcomer outcomes survey {launched again November 2021}, IMDB {StatsCan longitudinal tax info}). Other information includes the GCS (contribution agreement information) and the APPR (annual performance report).

**The Settlement Journey – reality and data.** There was a journey of a fictional person and how this newcomer's information is collected from entry to settlement. The iCARE does provide the date, the duration, which organization provided the service, the location of the service, the language in which the service was received, and support services. There are pre-arrival records, delivery and program records, including dates, topics, assessments, employment records and status.

**The Larger outcomes landscape.** The outcomes described are much larger than what is reported here but IRCC must measure the steps/inputs/immediate outcomes to get to the larger outcomes. The importance of community is also important to the context in which the newcomer enters. On a national scale, it is not possible to collect all nuances, that is where evaluation and research information is collected. iCARE is the foundation for outcomes work and to protect funding.

**The Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report.** Through the analysis of all the departmental data sources, settlement was able to form a baseline document from which comparisons can be made in future years. It was also compiled to further the settlement mandate for evidence-based programming. This was the first time that all of the information was compiled. Settlement can look for priorities, conduct further research, and understand the effectiveness and efficiency program.

### **Thematic findings from the Report.**

- The starting line for newcomers is different. For example, not everyone wants a job. There should be a suitable range for newcomers.
- There are indicators that tailoring services to specific clients based on demographic features or other characteristics may increase efficiencies in service delivery for optimal outcomes.
- There are key differences in service usage by immigration category; e.g., refugees use the most. Charts are provided in the report. The need for service will be different and even beyond the immigration category e.g., age, gender, and others.
- The first years of service to newcomers are crucial. As time in Canada increases, the newcomers become more self-sufficient. The timing of service makes a difference to outcomes.
- Support services, such as interpretation, child care, and transportation, are important for some clients' success. This will need to be revisited during and after COVID.
- Gender is a significant factor. For example, program delivery to women is important: where and when. Women need child care; women tend to take work placements whereas men favoured mentoring; and others. Further examination of demographic characteristics is required.

Future plans include establishing attribution (context), understanding the program's value for money by determining which services have the most impact; reviewing the programs' definition of success for more specific newcomers; and drawing upon the breadth and depth of this first report to further understand the challenges of newcomers in Canada.

*iCARE helpdesk is available.*

The question-and-answer session was facilitated by Justin. Some questions were answered via the chat.

Q. Many newcomers ask for a translation of documents but SPOs don't have resources for this.

A. This is a gap, and this is exactly the type of information required. If it is a big gap, provide that information in the APPR.

Q. Will follow-up studies focus on gender, age, and ethnicity?

A. Yes, data is available. The approach is to embed this information into various demographic variables in each project; always looking at gender, age, etc. The teams are working on this.

Q. iCARE uses a results-based management (RBM) model. Is it possible to see the RBM and logic model look like a whole?

A. The settlement logic model has been sent out in the past. Check to see if it is online. It can be sent out if you request it. The individual indicators may be available as well. It would be embedded in the contribution agreements.

Q. There were questions on the APPR which Justin has recorded mainly about the use of the information in the APPR.

A. In the future, they look at APPR when looking for challenges, barriers, needs assessments, and others. They plan to adjust the questions to be in line with current program activities. The content must answer/focus content on the specific questions.

Q. How do you measure outcomes for the youth service? Economic outcomes will not be measured soon.

A. Currently there is an evaluation of SWIS being conducted. They may look at the longer view of economic outcomes. All evaluations are on the website.

Q. Do you focus on the settlement agreement or the APPR?

A. For the purpose of the report referenced in this session, they viewed the APPRs as well as the RAP studies.

Q. Will the iCARE report revert back to narrative reports? iCARE requires extra work and sometimes incorrect data.

A. This comment will be passed along.

Q. How is qualitative data collected?

A. Qualitative data directly from the clients and from the organizations and to clients to get a sense of whatever they want to measure. Any evaluations that occur have lots of qualitative data collection methods are used.

Q. How can SPOs contribute and how will you be doing that?

A. For smaller research projects they would identify the service, the questions to be answered, and reach out to the SPOs to find the context and collect the data.

Q. How important is the location of the service, postal code, the type of location of the client location of the service?

A. This information is extremely important especially during COVID because they are seeing a shifting of the service and the location of the client. To see the service delivery point, they need the postal code of the service provider and the client. They look at the community, etc. There has been some mapping going on. The more accurate the better.

## Session: Welcoming Francophone Communities.

**Moderator: Cecile Fagot**, Welcoming Francophone Community Coordinator, La fédération francoténoise, SAISIA

### **Presenters.**

Déborah Chevalier, CFA, Yellowknife, SAISIA

Chantal Morin, Program Coordinator // Coordinatrice de Programme, WFC initiative of Moose Jaw/Gravelbourg // CFA de Moose Jaw/Gravelbourg

Charlotte Lapôtre, , Coordonnatrice - Communications et projets spéciaux // Coordinator - Communications and Special Projects, Carrefour Nunavit

Erwan Oger, Coordonnateur, CANAF, Centre d'Accueil des Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones, Calgary [Alberta](#).

Salwa Meddri, Manager / Gestionnaire, Réseau en immigration Francophone du [Manitoba](#)

The presentation was in French and there were some problems with the closed caption translations and audio translation. The writer was not able to access French materials from the software. These overviews are brief.

An update was provided on the work being done by Welcoming Francophone Communities. It was implemented in 2020, participants heard how Welcoming Francophone Communities have developed over the last year and gain insight on the work being done to create inclusive communities for French-speaking newcomers to Canada.

Panel members provided an update and a question-and-answer session followed.

**Déborah Chevalier.** Deborah recognized the territory, Yellowknife Dené First Nation and the North Slaves Lake Trades Alliance upon which she resides. The Francophone community initiative was implemented in Yellowknife and she coordinates the initiative. The mission is to provide, encourage, and defend the interests of the franco-tenois to increase the vitality of the **NorthWest** Territories to offer services in French in areas such as health, justice, education, and immigration. The office is located in the newcomer welcome centre which brings together all immigration services in Yellowknife.

It is a pilot project that has an advisory committee of five members representing the community and three Francophone organizations. Some are citizens and some are new arrivals.

The community plan was drawn up by the advisory committee based on community needs. This includes the need for belonging, security, and the need to build ties to the community. They meet these needs through activities and resources. They are based on five axes of development:

Inclusive leadership.

- Access to reception and establish services.
- Access to public spaces.
- Welcoming civic engagement and participation.
- Economic development.

All activities are carried out in partnership with Francophone organizations.

They have established SWIS connections in schools, a Francophone cultural centre in Yellowknife, and the economic development council. They have a partnership with the CFA. Together they hosted a day bilingual cultural and orientation event at the farmer's market. The goal was to bring community leaders together with newcomers so they develop a sense of belonging. There were over 100 people and 12 SPOs who came to welcome 19 newcomers, French and English, to the community. They danced to the music of the drums and the mayor handed out welcome certificates to the newcomers.

They offer other community connection activities so that newcomers can get to know the community and its history and culture. They arranged trips; and they are arranging other cultural activities. Some of the activities include a buddy system whereby a newcomer is partnered with a local resident for learning and recreational activities. Resource materials are provided in French. Shortly, all resources at the health centre will be provided in French. They are planning a launch of Francophone services in other communities in the NWT. They offer community resources in French so that newcomers feel welcome and that resources are accessible. During the national Francophone week, they held an exhibition of Francophone arts and cultures. Employers are encouraged to hire Francophone newcomers in their businesses.

An annual conference including the organizations from the **NorthWest** Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon is held to raise the awareness of the Francophone immigration process emphasizing the value of

multiculturalism in the workplace. During the conference, current employers will share their integration experiences and best practices.

This group is active in the community. Slides will be translated into English and will be available to participants.

**Chantal Morin.** CFA [Saskatchewan](#), Moose Jaw, SK. The Francophone welcoming community offers various activities to build a more welcoming Francophone community and aims to develop inclusive leadership and economic opportunities for newcomers in the Gravelbourg, Le College Mathieu, and Moose Jaw areas.

This is a pilot project led by IRCC with 14 Francophone communities, the Federation of Francophone and Acadian Communities (FCFA), and the Atlantic Committee on Francophone Immigration (CAIF). There is a selection process for communities that wish to participate. The purpose of the initiative is to make Francophone newcomers feel welcomed and valued in their communities. They have developed a resource as a bilingual guide for newcomers. They have pages and videos on Facebook.

*The relationship of the two communities makes a single welcoming community.*

Slides will be translated into English and will be available to participants.

**Erwan Oger**, CANAF, Centre d'Accueil des Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones, Calgary [Alberta](#). Erwan acted as the economic integration coordinator for the Province of [Alberta](#). The CANAF is a reception centre for Francophone newcomers. They offer employability services in Calgary. They offer services and host events throughout [Alberta](#).

They are based in Calgary and have had a multitude of non-profit organizations in the community consulting with them. The planning is taken on by an organization that gathered together the Francophone immigrants from [Alberta](#). They worked with a community advisory committee to develop a common action plan, and they are in the implementation phase of the operational phase. They are located at the reception centre for new French-speaking arrivals under a contribution agreement with IRCC, signed in 2020. They have had a slightly later start than other colleagues in the region. They launch the centre in April and have started activities.

They have great public engagement throughout the Francophone community during the engagement phase from non-profit service providers and support organizations. Immigrants have been invited to submit projects to the community advisory committee who recommends the adoption of certain projects. These projects are now in the executive phase and five of them are a diversity ambassador reception program for migrants from the Calgary airport. There is a communication strategy to support this reception and make it possible to get in touch with these Francophone immigrants. This facilitates communication with other Francophone settlement services. There are special services for an African Francophone group that has not started as yet. Its mandate is to communicate within the community through its diversity ambassadors.

Calgary is a large, diverse region and there are plans to build bridges between the different Francophone communities by creating activities within the broader communities. They provide welcoming services at the airport, employment services, youth services and a youth centre, as well as community connections. They also provide training for teaching staff in the French school system. The purpose of this project was to raise awareness and better prepare teaching teams to serve young learners who recently arrived

in Calgary. This also contains a critical incident workshop for staff and parents to mitigate cultural misunderstandings and assist family-school relations. These are five projects set up with partners with great collaboration for employability and communication. Therefore, these projects address diversity and inclusiveness and are for the benefits of immigration of bilingualism la Francophonie for the city. Look at their website for further information.

Transcripts will be translated into English and will be available to participants.

**Salwa Meddri**, Manager / Gestionnaire, Réseau en immigration Francophone du **Manitoba**.

In **Manitoba**, three communities are designated bilingual and are welcoming Francophones: the municipalities de Taché, the municipality of La Broquerie, and the city of Saint Anne all located in southeastern **Manitoba**. There are 17 criteria that designate a bilingual community. These include fair or established reception services with a welcoming environment, favourable to French-speaking newcomers. With CFA initiatives, various partners are involved in various activities such as the French-speaking reception which deploys reception and establishment services. The Francophone employment services are an integral part of the community.

Resources are available on their website. Slides will be translated into English and will be available to participants.

**Charlotte Lapôtre**, Coordonnatrice - Communications et projets spéciaux Carrefour Nunavit Iqaluit communauté. Nunavut is the largest territory, created in 1999, and has a population of 35 000. It has 25 communities, accessible only by airplane, and the cost of living is high. At present, the official languages are French and English, with an official languages law ensuring the French official language. Only 4 percent of the population is Francophone, mainly located in Iqaluit.

Their project implementation included a welcoming French-speaking community in six stages. There were studies carried out, by various individuals, along with focus groups from which an action plan was developed. The implementation of various activities was recommended. The purpose of the initiative is to provide a friendly and welcoming place to promote a Francophone environment including providing services in French, an inclusive environment, and a welcoming community for Francophones. They have provided equitable access to reception and settlement services including a reception at the airport, economic opportunities, and services to visitors in two languages.

Slides will be translated into English and will be available to participants. Questions were answered in the cluster group.

## Session: Cluster Conversations

The last session of Day 3 was cluster conversations. The clusters at the November/December 2021 Summit were SWIS, Case Management, Employment and Mentorship, Informal language training (under Community Connections), Newcomers and disabilities. Gender-based violence and LGBTQ2. These were the same as those identified at the February 2021 Summit. IRCC initiated clusters to identify and generalize best practices evaluations to help conduct future service delivery. What has been accomplished?



These cluster conversations were not recorded; thus, the content below is summarized from the notes provided by the notetakers.

## SWIS/TEE

The following is a summary of the cluster conversation on Day 3 of the Summit.

**Facilitator:** Joe Espina

**IRCC Management:** Alex Racine

**Notetaker:** Geneviève Therrien

The SWIS cluster has started and the results of the SWIS evaluation has just been completed in Fall 2021. There are different levels of SWIS identified across the PNT including enhanced SWIS and travailleurs d'établissement dans les écoles (TEE).

**Question 1:** How has COVID impacted your SWIS provision over the past year?

- CCIS, Alberta, has youth programming located in High River, Okotoks, and Rockyview. They work with kids during lunch hours to provide extra support, avoid social exclusion, and help with the navigation of the school system.

The schools stopped all external programming during COVID including the SWIS program. The SWIS workers looked for ways to connect individually with students and switched to a more of a mentorship model. They connected with students in community groups if the students were attending those groups.

The schools are now asking SWIS workers to come back. They have changed the programming so we can be there for students.

It was detrimental that SWIS was seen as external. SWIS workers should be part of the school's intervention team. This would allow staff and students to approach workers more easily. SWIS workers are integral to students' living and have a duty to care.

- Regina. SWIS is currently virtual. The worker in this discussion is learning about SWIS and is meeting with students virtually. COVID has made it difficult for SWIS workers to build trust with students because contact is not in person.
- SAISIA. SWIS has been offered virtually. More SWIS workers should have additional training with technology for online support and to assist with the digital literacy of newcomer students. Also, there could be more anti-racism training delivered to school staff.
- MANSO. SWIS workers are exhausted, but they are present in the schools in rural areas and Winnipeg. They have adapted; they have created homework clubs and other activities to connect with more students.

*I am always amazed at how they connect to students.*

**Question 2:** Does anyone have any silver linings/positive outcomes from this year?

- CCIS, Alberta. We have had several positive outcomes. SWIS workers have offered Saturday sessions in libraries. Schools have started to invite us back to the schools. Schools are starting to identify the importance of SWIS workers in schools and their roles.

Youth are reaching out and asking to get together in person. There is a mental health implication in some of these requests. SWIS plays a role in school connectedness, parent support, mentoring, settlement support, information for newcomers, assisting new students at schools (Models of Intervention).

- During COVID, SWIS was able to provide 150 computers to students and that is going on.

**Question 3:** Has anyone (SWIS workers) had trouble getting into school this past year?

- When schools were shut down, SWIS workers were keeping in touch with parents and students online. The online aspect allowed workers to connect and parents were involved.
- Working from home is not the ideal way to offer SWIS programming as workers need interpersonal connections, especially with students in junior and senior high school.
- When schools were open and agencies could enter, SWIS could go into the schools. Whether the SWIS worker works from home or in the school, it is important to keep in contact with at least one person in the school. Schools sometimes wait until an issue is critical.

**Question 4:** Does anyone have any strategies on how to reintegrate SWIS workers back into schools? There were no responses to this question.

**Question 5:** Where are the results/findings of the four areas to which the PNT SWIS were tasked at the February Summit? These included: streamlining programs throughout the region; developing standardized job descriptions, standardizing SWIS NAARS (a draft, and identifying the core and non-core activities of SWIS relationships). They were to be presented to IRCC by September 30. We are waiting for senior leadership to review these drafts.

- It is being reviewed at IRCC (NHQ).
- Did you send out the draft document of SWIS Job descriptions to all SWIS in PNT for comments and contributions? They were not sent to SPOs because they had representation who was involved in the development. There was a balance of geographical regions.

**Question 6:** In the last Summit breakout session (November 24) dealing with SWIS youth, some concerns are related to SWIS.

- Rural areas experienced a lack of services, especially leisure and recreational activities for both newcomers and Canadian youth
- With the return to school, some agencies have found it difficult to secure cultural settlement needs such as prayer places for clients.
- Many SWIS workers have the main point of contact as the EAL/ELL teacher in the schools. With the reduction of these teachers, there is also a growing gap and inconsistency of awareness, knowledge, and relationships with SWIS programs.
- Southern Alberta. *United Voices* is an immigrant wellness summit with the theme of “What does Belong Look Like?” It is a collaborative initiative developed with different settlement services. Last year, everyone could bring 10 to 15 youth and over 200 youth participated. The idea was to keep the concept of the SWIS worker role to support newcomer youth.

## Case Management

The following is a summary of the cluster conversation on Day 3 of the Summit.

**Co-leads** Joe Espina and Andrea Ferguson.

**IRCC Management:** Alex Racine

**Notetaker:** Geneviève Therrien

Case Management is a group of services that deliver similar specialized services to clients from a particularly vulnerable population group. Case management events were held in Winnipeg in March 2017, in 2018, and Saskatoon in October 2018. The Working Group performed an environmental scan determining client-to-worker ratios. This led to the development and implementation of the Indicator Tool and the adoption of definitions for the four case management levels.

Currently, those in the cluster are seeking consistency in services offered and working towards the demonstration of improved outcomes.

Questions and comments from Alex, IRCC.

**Does anyone have feedback on the recommendations or concerns on standardizing case management? Are there recommendations on what should be considered?**

It does not need to be an urban-only conversation. Is there anything else that should be considered when looking for consistency across the region?

A committee will be made up of representatives from organizations across the regions. They will work with the PNT leads to develop a work plan for the cluster. These will be the milestone that we hope to achieve very soon.

The definitions of the indicator tool will be refined (not a triage tool but used to determine if triage is required). IRCC has amalgamated the feedback regarding the tool and hopes that everyone will pilot the tool. They hope that the tool includes feedback from everyone and that it is a stepping stone towards standardization. They are developing some mock scenarios to pilot the tool to see if urban centres have similar results.

**Question 1:** Is the committee looking at a unified triage that may be provincial-wide or locally?

A. It is borrowed from all urban centres. If it is Winnipeg-specific, it will be diverted to Aurora for case management triage while continuing with the zone referral.

**Question 2:** [Alberta](#). We are curious to see what the other provinces are using?

- Winnipeg is using Aurora primarily. Family Dynamics doing the triage.
- In [Saskatchewan](#) some triage is already happening. It was implemented since June 2020. IWS does needs assessment and triage with our partners. They refer clients who do and who do not require case management; it is predetermined based on the client's case management level. A case management indicator matrix has been developed. They have indicators of about 14 themes of the needs assessment. For example, under housing, there are six or seven indicators. There are a few indicators that match the questions on our NAARS form. It is a starting point but there is a comprehensive approach to it, especially for domestic violence.

**Question 3.** How do the centralized NAARS process and the case management triage move simultaneously in the province or inter-provincially?

- IRCC: The model that IWS described is the model also used elsewhere where the organization does the triage. The idea is finding consistency in the triage itself whether it's centralized, standardized or an external SPO. IWS notes that it's a work in progress and requires tweaking.
- The worker decides whether the client needs therapy services or programs. It looks like a referral process. If there are children, it can be outside or inside the SWIS program. Whoever meets the client first does the needs assessment and depending on that, a referral will be made depending on the urgency of the need.
- In the initial needs assessment, the caseworker does not always address all issues. For example, a youth worker may not deal with complex family issues because they want to focus on the youth.
- Not all clients need or they decline a comprehensive needs assessment. Even with the simplified NAARS, it does not just focus on employment; 14 different themes may be useful even if the client is not aware of the support.

**Question 4. How does one deal with client unwillingness?**

- Some of the reasons for a client's unwillingness to participate in the process are language barriers, low digital skills, and lack of trust. Staff is encouraged to step into action with whatever need to be they identified. Work with them and start building relationships to build their trust so they feel comfortable later when other domains are identified. After a few weeks, staff can complete the NAARS process; it is complicated.

*Clients are not always willing to step forward and do the whole process.*

## Employment and Mentorship Services

The following is a summary of the cluster conversation on Day 3 of the Summit.

There were 12 – 15 participants in this session.

At the 2020 Summit, there were callouts for interest in the cluster participation. Once interest is established, groups can be formed.

**Question 1:** Are there any gaps identified since the last summit?

- Suggestions were made to have discussions with umbrella organizations to assist with partnerships between employment organizations and service providers.
- Do umbrella groups suggest that there be more SPO training on racism, workplace harassment, and HR policies within agencies?

**Question 2:** How do we make provide a more inclusive environment during networking events?

- **Alberta.** A person who worked at a settlement agency with a Muslim male was not aware that handshaking was not allowed between men and women. This experience helped frame other ways of interacting with volunteers/clients in a more inclusive workspace. Discuss bias with staff and others settlement agencies.

**Question 3:** What are the benefits of team building?

**A.** Teambuilding is important in a virtual environment. If a newcomer is starting a job in a virtual environment, there could be new work culture components emerging that would benefit newcomers.

- **Saskatchewan.** Newcomers must learn about the Canadian work culture, working in a multicultural environment, respect, and professionalism. Ensure that clients don't go into the workplace blind to any topics: what to expect in the workplace; offensive language; and others. SPOs have ongoing training that should be refreshed frequently. Are suitable HR policies in place to ensure that all employees are respectful to each other and multicultural workspaces.

**Question 4:** Is there a guideline to create a standardized program for employment and mentorship training?

- The content is now created by the SPOs. The information is updated and reviewed quarterly to ensure relevancy. Suggestions include:
  - Review employment trends in rural and urban communities.
  - Building relationships with all providers in working groups. When the group meets, they are more willing to share and participate because they have that one-on-one relationship with the organizer.
  - Maintain a Francophone perspective in all calls/meetings (Anglophone as well).
  - Include an assessment/evaluation for feedback and suggestions to move forward.
  - Utilize Career Fairs from Talent Pool.
  - Trades Ontario had an immigrant trades information day, interviewing immigrants who, for example, moved into trades, those trained, and those who started their businesses. The comment indicated that the virtual event was very successful. There is interest in **Manitoba**.
  - A language skill program partners with an employment organization that matches newcomers with employment opportunities based on their skills.

**Question 5:** The sector wants to be more inclusive of Francophone newcomers. Employers who are predominately Anglophone are wishing to hire more Francophone employees. What advice can we share with employers.? How do we reach out to and incorporate Francophone newcomers?

- IRCC would be happy to facilitate making some connections between the Francophone community and SPOs, expanding outreach and connecting communities. Maybe some Francophone SPOS can within the umbrella organizations offer advice and services.

### Community Connections: Informal Language Training

The writer of this report did not receive notes from this session. There were some discussions of informal language training on Day 1, Session 3: the Indigenous DEAL Language Curriculum and Resources session.

### Newcomers with Disabilities

The following is a summary of the cluster conversation on Day 3 of the Summit. There were seven attendees noted.

**Facilitator:** Brigitte Desrosiers and Jean-Philippe Thole

**IRCC Management:**

**Notetaker:** Annick Kieffert

There was an associated PowerPoint which is available in the Summit resources in both English and French and will be available to those who request them.

Brigitte welcomed the participants and introduced herself, the cluster's co-facilitator, Jean-Philippe Thole, and the note-taker, Annick Kieffert. She explained that her role was to present the background and the previous cluster work; to lead the participants through some probing questions, and to ensure everyone gets an opportunity to participate if they wish.

She indicated that this session is meant to be a brainstorming activity to help shape the cluster. Once established there will be callouts to relevant SPOs for those interested in participating in the cluster. She noted that notes from this session will be made available to the cluster group when it is established.

Brigitte went through a series of slides introducing the cluster concept, its history, and the planned path forward. She discussed where to start looking forward and the perceived gaps. The cluster strategy calls for a medium-term plan as well as a long-term plan to meet the needs of newcomers.

**Traicy Robertson, Manitoba Possible**, discussed her work with MANSO. Various agencies across Canada are trying to find agencies to refer disabled clients and obtain assistance. There are different pathways in various jurisdictions and they are different. Clients with disabilities in EAL programs have often plateaued and not improved. They know their employability chances will be affected. The service providers may be aware of the disabilities but they have not been identified. The service providers have partnered with other organizations to map out what is available and to identify a possible path for their clients. Is there a possibility of having specialized facilities where newcomers can be assessed and get the resources that they need? From there, they would be able to get proper support.

**Manitoba Possible** has reached out to Winnipeg English Language Assessment and Referral Centre (WELARC) to access language services for newcomers who are blind. The Canadian Institute for the Blind (CNIB) was not interested in providing language training. **Manitoba Possible** has a proposal into the **Manitoba Deaf-Blind Association** for a teacher to offer classes.

Brigitte began the question-and-answer period by giving some background as to her role and then opened the floor to questions and discussions.

**Question 1:** Do service providers know about your services?

- **Manitoba Possible.** Yes, they have worked hard to build relationships. If it's not something obvious, Bridge Care ( provides a single point of access for the initial health assessment and primary care services for newly arrived, government-sponsored refugees) will make the referral. If the client is a RAP client and a disability is detected, referrals will be made.

There may be some waitlists and they are varied. Some referrals can take up to a year e.g., to see a developmental psychologist. There are waitlists for a community living facility and to see a social worker.

For children with learning disabilities, some schools will carry out development tests but not all of them have the resources, Again, there are waitlists to see pediatric development specialists and others. They cannot get certain supports until they are a client of Children's disABILITY Services.

**Question 2:** Are assessments done in their first language?

- There is one developmental psychologist in Winnipeg who has developed a culturally friendly test, but it's not based on standardized testing for other clients. After referral, the Province will assess newcomers, but it's not a culturally appropriate assessment. There are limited resources to which they can be sent. A test developer would provide more guidance on how we can modify the test itself to get the clients on a level playing field.

But even through all of that, we were able to reach more clients online during COVID-19.

- WELARC has found ways to help clients who identify as disabled in advance. They have reached out to the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) to find out what we are allowed to do before seeing the client. Clients with disabilities often have a long wait to get into languages classes.

*There's no way we can create one blanket guideline for persons with disabilities because each one will need something different.*

- One suggestion by the group was to create a fund that will stay with the client. The fund could be housed by a service provider such as Manitoba Possible or WELARC. When a client gets into language classes, they could utilize the fund to purchase a tablet, access tutoring, or other resources. That fund could follow the student.
- For those that have plateaued, access to a specialized classroom would give them a better settlement outcome. There may be one central facility where clients can attend, something like a newcomer support unit. There they can make connections and have a support team. The support group may be representative of the community, e.g., Chinese, Ethiopian, etc. Translation and interpretation services are important.

The service area range/zone may be a city such as Winnipeg or Brandon.

- Relationships must be built. Making people aware of the services required for the disabled enables the services providers to know who does what and where those referrals can be made.

**Question 3:** Various SPOs in Edmonton wanted to know how to better support disabled clients.

- Disability specialists were invited to speak at language advisory committees comprised of SPOs. The various SPOs in Edmonton wanted to know how to better support the clients/learners.

**Question 4:** Who should take the lead?

- In Winnipeg, Manitoba Possible has been working with MANSO. The clusters offer the opportunity to develop a model that can be created based on the work that is being done now. The clusters allow service providers to work with others in the region and across the country to develop a model. The lead person would be part of a national committee and link to other initiatives. Services, processes, and trajectories could vary in different areas.

**Question 5:** Does Manitoba Possible have meetings with other provincial leads?

- Yes, MANSO has been doing some work with AAISA. There is an organization called Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative Ltd in Edmonton, and they have a contract with Family Support for Children with Disabilities.

## Gender-based Violence (GBV)

The following is a summary of the cluster conversation on Day 3 of the Summit.

Facilitator: Raquel Alvarado

IRCC Management: Raquel Alvarado, Renee Barnabe, Jill Childerhose.

Notetaker:

There were 8 to 12 persons in the conversation from IRCC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Raquel explained the history of the clusters and the intent to establish interest and reach out to relevant SPOs. She explained that clusters are groupings of providers across the five PNT jurisdictions that deliver similar services, provide specialized services to a potentially vulnerable clientele, or with similar community/institutional characteristics.

The clusters were initiated because of the inconsistency across the five PNT jurisdictions in the areas of professional development opportunities, programming, service availability between large urban centers and smaller centers, and others. The goal is to improve opportunities, to collaborate and enhance services for vulnerable populations, and to priorities and investment opportunities. These will be based on the previous successes in the regions.

**What has been accomplished so far?** There have been numerous learning events, program evaluations, and virtual learning opportunities. There are regular occasions for engagement and teamwork with peers across the region. The evolution of some clusters will become Communities of Practice with widespread implementation of best practices, and greater support for small centres and the North.

The cluster at this time are: Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) & Travailleurs d'établissement dans les écoles (TÉÉ), Case Management, Employment and Mentorship Services, Informal Language Training (Community Connections), Newcomers with Disabilities, Gender-Based Violence, and LGBTQ+

**Cluster leadership:** There are two co-leads, one from IRCC and one from an SPO. They will work jointly to facilitate the logistics for the cluster. A steering committee is comprised of representatives from SPOs across the regions and works with the PNT lead on developing and implementing a work plan for the cluster.

**Where to start:** The cluster is seeking consistency in services and improved outcomes.

### Summary of Gaps:

- Women-only programs feel left out of the conversation with IRCC.
- IRCC does not fund much gender-based violence (GBV) programs and there are minimal resources for men experiencing GBV.
- The service providers in the cluster are lacking Francophone resources.

### Medium-term plans identified:

- Addressing cultural bias towards men.
- Culturally appropriate resources.



**Long-term plans identified:**

- Educating newcomers before they arrive in Canada; creating a better pre-arrival strategy.

**Question 1:** Did we accomplish any of this medium- or long-term plans?

- **Saskatchewan.** The identification of the pre-arrival strategies is beneficial. Early conversations with families to prepare them for what is ahead are useful. Newcomers are stressed when they arrive. The resources for men are useful.
- It's a good point to catch it earlier at pre-arrival and arrival. There are cases of emotional/intimate partner violence added on top of language barriers and childcare barriers.

It is good to hear that the gaps identified are relevant. Other gaps?

- The GBV clients may end up floating around and cycle back in around years later and by then it's worse. They have lost faith in the system. They may have mental health issues; they can't get work; and it is another cost to the system. We need to catch them early.
- Expand service provider training for how to work with newcomer women and men so they know how to support them in the crisis and how to refer them to the right resources for long-term help.

*I received a paper with a note saying, "help me I'm being abused" from an attendee. When newcomers see there is an opportunity to express what's happening in a secretive way, that helps, but sometimes people are only able to give hints if the husband is present.*

- An experienced service provider in a small city in **Alberta** is lacking services for newcomers, but especially for women experiencing violence. It has never been addressed. If the service providers can meet with the client one-on-one, they may resolve some issues such as shelter protection.
- In-house support and culturally appropriate programming are important. In shelters, food isn't culturally appropriate. Children/youth suffering too and they do not know where to seek assistance.
- More training and support to provide information and skills on healthy relationships, coping skills, laws, what is abuse, violence, where to look for support, and other concerns. Newcomers may not need the information right away, but it will become handy for them when needed.

**Question 2:** How has COVID affected the issues?

- SPOs have indicated that there is a concern about women. Women being at home, facilitating homeschooling, and not being able to leave the house. They are not able to make community connections outside of the home.
- COVID made isolation worse. They would rather not leave home to access services. There was a disconnection with service providers—trust has been lost.

**Question 3:** Is IRCC funding GBV programs? If so, are they effective? Are they translated/interpreted?

- Newcomer women are struggling with learning, home affairs, and employment because of a situation at home. An indicator of GBV may be a woman who is in the case management system for an extended period because issues are not being addressed.
- Could IRCC fund each organization to employ an in-house social worker (long-term). Clients would not have to be turned away. Newcomers may have problems speaking to external supports. Another suggestion is to have one social worker/support in the community identified to work with newcomers. (medium-term).

**Question 4:** What are some of the access points IRCC could use to reach a lot of these women directly? Where are they interacting the most with IRCC for us to reach them?

- Service providers in Saskatchewan have been forced to streamline. Home dynamics are caught when doing needs assessments because of longer conversations with newcomers. There needs to be a mandated approach in the NAARS protocol. At this point, it's not required for the clients to come to us.

Raquel thanked everyone for the discussion.

## LGBTQ+

The following is a summary of the cluster conversation on Day 3 of the Summit and a summary of the notes provided from the group that attended the conversation.

Facilitators: Ricci Germentiza, Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology,

IRCC Management: Tania Escalante, Carly McFall

Notetaker:

### Medium Term Plans Identified

- Ensuring women have a secure and safe space in the workplace is a great step forward. This should be expanded to include trans and non-binary individuals as well.
- There has been headway made by getting newcomers to understand their privacy rights and their right to safe spaces. When asked if there had been any progress from the knowledge, there were no comments. The group suggested moving this to a longer-term goal.
- In some language classrooms, the pride flag is displayed. This triggers conversation and ensures that individuals are welcome.

*It would be nice if there was an initiative in a place where we could all promote inclusion in our programs.*

### Gaps.

- It is important to shift our language and take care in not “outing” any clients who may not be at that stage yet.
- One participant suggested that some individuals have not been told they can have privacy in their disclosure of personal information.

### Long-Term Plans Identified

- Did we accomplish any of the long-term plans identified? Tania noted that no formalized process or project deals with outreach and education. As a result, none of the items have been addressed or targeted.

### Gaps

- There is not a defined cluster yet. There is not a great deal of momentum currently. Service providers need to get this cluster moving. There needs to be an interested, formalized working group. The cluster does not need to have just IRCC funded SPOs.
- There is a disconnect between what SPOs are providing. It would be helpful if program officers had a list of SPOs who were doing specific tasks or addressing certain needs. It was suggested that formalized programming include resources that could be used in EAL programs. If there are in the future, can they be directed to SPOs.

### **Maintaining Momentum**

- The cluster needs to be formed and a callout to SPOs need to be made. Tania asked attendees to look within your organization and reach out to IRCC to put this in motion. The work must be collaborative so that the group can work well. It is not ideal for IRCC to make changes that are not collaborative. This would omit the importance of the experiences and perspectives of the organizations, initiatives, and SPOs.

There is still work to be done.

### **Session: Supporting your team's mental health.**

Ahmad Majid, Executive Director, SAISIA

Kari McCluskey, Lost Prizes Coordinator/Contract Faculty of Education, Aurora Family Therapy Centre

A recording was not made of this session to ensure all participants felt comfortable to share. Kari McCluskey did share a resource that is available to participants. She has shared her email address for further inquiries; [k.mccluskey@aurorafamilytherapy.com](mailto:k.mccluskey@aurorafamilytherapy.com).

A PowerPoint of the Community Resiliency Model (CRM) was provided to participants. The CRM is a set of biologically-based wellness skills aimed to reset and stabilize the nervous system. This document is also available as a resource in the Summit proceedings.

## Summary

In the last Summit report of early 2021, it was recognized that change was happening and that COVID was the accelerator. At the second Summit in late 2021, change was accelerated even more with the current and proposed arrival of 40 000 Afghans. These newcomers have had no pre-arrival service and often arrive with only the clothes on their backs. This process was new to the Settlement sector. This 40 000 were in addition to the 12 000 GARs who were scheduled to arrive in somewhat (no COVID) normal circumstances.

As a result of the work done prior to the summer of 2021, IRCC, umbrella organizations, and SPOs were much better prepared to meet the needs of Afghan arrivals. This report very much focuses on what has transpired in 2021.

**Delivery of the Summit.** The Summit was again delivered virtually with the full range of components available for interactivity (chats, translations, interpretation, records of sessions, lists of speakers and resources, access to PowerPoints and other resources). There were a few problems this time with interpretation and access to all recorded sessions. This can easily be resolved at another time.

The moderators of each day were the Executive Directors of the umbrella groups namely MANSO, SAISIA, and AAISA. They provided excellent leadership and management of the Summit with their greetings, overviews, and summations. They did so with respect for their audience as well as the Indigenous and Métis lands on which they were located.

This Summit seemed to have integrated Indigenous and Métis practices and traditions in a normalized way. Most sessions recognized the land upon which they were located. Some sessions discussed how they settled newcomers into the “all” communities. Some newcomers are settled in predominately Indigenous communities. Newcomer and Indigenous content, resources, and delivery methods were integrated interchangeably. SPO staff mentioned how much they learned of the Indigenous and Métis cultures while delivering related content to newcomers. This was a very welcomed finding.

**Update on Afghan Arrivals.** Fariborz Birjandian, co-chair of the Afghan Refugee Resettlement National Steering Committee and CEO of Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), discussed the impact of the Afghan arrivals in Canada, federally and provincially, as well as globally. Many countries are involved in the settlement of the Afghans. When they were first evacuated, 6 000 refugees arrived in Canada within 15 days during COVID, and up to 40 000 are anticipated within the next year. The population is young, well educated, and some speak English.

Corinne Prince was assigned as DG and John Biles and Fariborz co-chaired the project. IRCC created a Secretariat with a national RAP coordinator and two persons to support the initiative. The National RAP working group was asked to provide guidance to the group. The regions did their planning and 34 agencies across the country settled the refugees. The first arrivals came to the Toronto area and now Calgary and other cities are arrival hubs. Canada is accepting refugees from other countries to which Afghans were evacuated including.

The project seems to be working well. There are capacity issues with housing and others to manage a large number of refugees on such short notice. There is a huge appetite by Canadian employers to hire Afghans as they have vast human capital. About 60 percent are under 18 years. Fariborz recommends

that IRCC start talks on broader settlement issues such as LINC availability, community connections, employment programs, and others. Community engagement is key. There were several specific suggestions in the question-and-answer session.

**Technology in the Settlement Sector.** Alysha Barratta, PeaceGeeks, again provided updated information on technology for the settlement sector. The session discussed technology's ability to serve settlement agencies and newcomers. There were considerations when designing ethical and effective technological solutions. She also outlined a new digital maturity whereby job descriptions and staff roles have changed to meet technological demands. There is a national community of practice and benchmark scores to assess clients' needs.

The *Arrival Advisor* is a free, multilingual app for immigrants and refugees utilized in BC and adapted and available shortly in MB. The pandemic further demonstrated the need for innovation and adaptation, and it has started quickly. Staff and their organizations have been pushed to the breaking point and funding has been provided, but more is needed to meet the technological realities.

Newcomers' skills are limited for training and information purposes. Access to the internet is expensive. Alysha asked participants to be innovative to address newcomers' needs and the associated costs. She suggested techniques to do so.

There were several specific suggestions in the question-and-answer session

**Indigenous EAL Language Curriculum and Resources.** Teresa Burke, Director of Language Support, at MANSO facilitated a panel of specialists who have or are developing Indigenous resources and skills for newcomers. These resources include information on culture, history, customs and beliefs, and contemporary issues. The resources are intended to bridge the gaps and foster relations between Indigenous peoples and newcomers. The Indigenous Orientation Toolkit (IOTK) is one such resource. It provides authentic resources as well as language instruction and portfolio-based language assessments for language instruction from Literacy to CLB 7-8. Examples of how to use this curriculum were provided. The curriculum work focused on the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 93.

Enhanced English Skills for Employment (MB) serves newcomers who focus on the workplace, its culture, and the skills required. Newcomers must have CLB 5-8 to participate. The Land and Treaties curriculum was adapted for the modules in this program.

**Schooling and the Pandemic.** Maryam Karimi, the PNT SWIS Coordinator, moderated and facilitated a session of co-presenters from the Universities of Victoria and Regina. This group received SSHRC funding and support from SAISIA. The research questions were: how was SWIS responding to educational equalities, and what are the recommendations for the SWIS program? The theoretical frameworks came from community-based research and anti-racism theory. The data was collected from 8 focus groups with 30 participants recruited by SAISIA and service providers.

Findings established that the students' roles have shifted to that of a mentor of other students, interpreter, and other roles. They have adapted to new modes of delivery and service provision as they are establishing relationships online. The barriers presented by online learning are that it takes much more time and that the SWIS workers' time is limited. Their families needed support as well. They often did not have the access to technology (hardware, software, internet) or enough technology for their entire family. Newcomers place more value on face-to-face interactions. There were interrupted

channels of communication between the school/teachers, students, and SWIS workers. They were often not aware of what support SWIS workers could provide.

The study provided recommendations for SAISIA, Ministries of Education, and for IRCC.

During a follow-up panel discussion, some concerns were addressed as well. An administrator of a large geographic school division in rural Saskatchewan (serves 16 schools) found the isolation of newcomer students difficult. There are few numbers of newcomer students and issues of racism arise. The SWIS workers are supportive.

In Winnipeg, SWIS workers do not have offices/work areas in schools even though some attempt is sometimes made to accommodate them. Transportation is a problem for students, and they often don't have access to the internet and devices at home. Communication is key for all involved.

An excellent model was provided at East Glen High School in Edmonton. About 75 percent of their students have arrived in Canada and speak various languages. The partnerships between East Glen and SWIS work well. SWIS has offices at the school. Usually 100 new students come every one to two months. One of the unique aspects of this scenario is that many of their students go on to postsecondary school, facilitated by SWIS, the school, and Catholic Social Services as the service provider.

Breakout sessions followed the presentations. The moderator facilitated the group summaries.

**Case Management: A Social Justice Model.** Dr. David Este, University of Calgary, has been a social worker since 1980 and suggested that social workers remain knowledgeable about the diversity of the audience they are serving and retain the skills of a case manager. He indicated that there is a reference to case management and particularly to newcomers in the literature. He gave a good definition of case management and its processes. He discussed what is expected of a case manager.

He addressed social justice and its three ethical mandates for case management: social justice, inclusion, and equity. He outlined concepts that case managers need to ensure their work is related to the mandates.

He also emphasized that case managers must engage with humility and have a clear understanding of the newcomer's journey. Case managers have a dual responsibility to work with newcomers and to work with their communities and advocacy groups.

The moderator facilitated a question-and-answer session. Slides and resources are available.

**Vaccine Uptake and Vaccine Hesitancy.** Researchers associated with the Association for Canada Students and the University of Manitoba presented a snapshot of their ongoing research related to social, economic, and socio-economic outcomes of immigrants. This presentation was focused on vaccine uptake and hesitancy and often compared the Canadian sample to a United States sample.

There are many variables in this presentation, but the key points most applicable for the PNT region may be the following. Of their respondents, about 53 percent said they do not trust newcomers when it comes to COVID. That is a concern. In reality, about 90 percent of both non-immigrants and immigrants said they were vaccinated. In Canada, unvaccinated men and women are mainly non-immigrants and

mainly between the ages of 35 and 44. Socio-economic factors such as education, income levels and not strong indicators of vaccine uptake in Canada.

The principal reasons that persons get vaccinated in Canada were to connect with family and friends, not to lose their jobs, and social connections.

In summation and based on this study, there is no reason to be hesitant of newcomers' vaccination uptake in Canada.

The moderator facilitated a question-and-answer session.

### **Open Forum Conversations, Day 2:**

#### Language.

There were no notes available and the session was not recorded.

#### Employment

This session was not recorded. The following is a summary of the notes provided.

Some city SPOs do not provide structured work placements. They may assist with the development of a resumé. Entry-level positions are easy to find. Of those who do provide other services, they focus on the basic needs of the newcomer is getting them a job and then assisting them with longer-term goals. The importance of mentoring is critical. Some agencies assist newcomers with credentials, micro-credentials, and pathways to join their profession. Rural and Northern SPOs may or may not have SPOS or employment services. They must work closely with the community and colleges to prepare newcomers for the workplace.

#### SWIS Youth,

This session was not recorded. The following is a summary of the notes provided.

Collaboration with school staff including the EAL/ELL teachers is key. There are always challenges with high-need families. The cultural needs of students are not always met. In rural areas, there is a lack of services for both newcomers and residents.

The Enhanced Settlement Workers in Schools (ESWIS) is a new initiative from IRCC. It offers a collaborative, wraparound approach with a specialist, community services, and school administration and teachers.

There is a trend of youth wanting to volunteer both for current school credit and future employment.

#### RAP

This session was not recorded. The following is a summary of the notes provided. There is a full session on RAP called Urban Systems Approach (below). This was a conversation of interested RAP individuals.

RAP client allowances need to be increased (most pressing need). The cost of basic needs of housing, food, and services has increased.

General RAP funding should be increased to better meet the high, complex needs of clients and the increased numbers of clients.

Secondary migration is another funding issue. Newcomers can be mobile which further creates problems and challenges to RAP funding. Is it possible to have more flexible funding allotments to meet the needs of secondary migrants?

Staff are overworked and facing burnout. The job is emotionally demanding and the nature of the work is taxing.

The “whole of society” approach is intended to see newcomers through to integration. There is a need for broad, community support to allow this to occur. Community mentors and chamois are integral.

### **Urban Systems Approach (NAARS).**

The urban transformation initiative includes standardizing NAARS and the zonal outreach and referral processes. The purpose of the session was to give insight into some good work that has been done in the region so far.

The Internal Women of Saskatoon has taken the lead as the contribution holder for the NAARS and is the community facilitator for Regina and Saskatoon. The focus is on permanent resident clients. There is a partnership with the Francophone settlement communities in Saskatchewan. The process was described including internal and external factors and identifying stakeholders.

An internal strategic framework was revised with guiding principles. Innovative design thinking and systems thinking was used to plan changes. A NAARS advisory committee and draft terms of reference were developed for each PNT region. A unique partnership with ACF was established. There is a difference between basic NAARS and triage services. Delivery tools/interview templates were refined. Data collection and reporting mechanisms were established with IRCC and others. Implementation strategies were created, and there were promising practices recognized.

The urban systems approach in Manitoba implemented technology (PeaceGeeks) to complete the project. A centralized intake is operating, and the plan was revised and expanded with 22 settlement partners. This process allows for the collection of client information on behalf of IRCC. The standardized NAARS is lengthy but has robust data and information. They are determining how to store and refer the information.

The Winnipeg Information for Newcomers information (WIN) will be launched late in 2021 in both official languages. It will give newcomer settlement providers and Winnipeg organizations access to Winnipeg resources and zone and service provider information. IRCC plans to have the WIN rollout in Winnipeg and then move it into rural areas.

The Manitoba *Arrival Advisor* app is a free mobile app for newcomers to navigate their settlement journey. The topics come from the WIN project.

Seven Oaks Immigrant Service, NorthWest Winnipeg. help newcomer individuals and families in the North-West Winnipeg community. It is a simple three-step process. They connect with the newcomers, connect with the community, and then match newcomers with opportunities to learn and work within the community.



The moderator facilitated a question-and-answer session.

### **Open Forum Sessions.**

#### NAARS

There were no further notes given to the writer.

#### Postsecondary Education

Postsecondary institutions are partners in the community and with service providers. Can they provide more targeted programming for newcomers? Can they provide micro-credentials for newcomers and assist newcomers with soft skills to succeed in the employment market?

A recent study on the role of newcomers in colleges and universities suggests that they create a national workforce focused language program; the assessment of students' foundational skills including language; and building skillsets for employment.

There are applied research projects in partnerships with postsecondary researchers and LIPs to develop community studies. There was a presentation of such in this Summit – Schooling and COVID.

#### Literacy

Training literacy teachers can be difficult. Resources were shared to provide assistance. Online literacy training has been challenging. There are many students but they are not progressing and often do not attend classes. Some literacy learners are waiting until COVID is over and then they can attend in person. Small online classes are better. Some suggested that child care services be provided so that newcomers can attend.

#### Community Connections (volunteering).

There have been few volunteers during COVID. Some are concerned about the vaccine hesitancy of newcomers, and volunteers often lack digital literacy and could not work in an online environment. Many volunteers are burnt out from long-term service. Some settlement agencies share good volunteers, but in general, settlement agencies need more volunteers.

#### Community Connections (Youth)

Youth programs have had challenges during COVID. Many youth have not participated at the rates that they did before the pandemic. There is a lack of technology in their homes. When they are connecting with youth workers, it is often about mental health concerns and their challenges. Unique peer groups have evolved whereby older youth are assisting and mentoring younger students.

**The IRCC Afghanistan (Re)Settlement Initiative.** Corinne Prince (Director General, IRCC) and John Biles (Acting Senior Director Operations, Afghanistan Settlement Branch, IRCC) provided an overview of the urgent settlement decisions made in the first few months of the emergency response, the (re) settlement journey, and a look at the future.

A new branch was formed, Afghanistan Resettlement Branch, to respond to the mission. A new Minister was appointed in late October 2021. Canada is committed to re-settling 40 000 Afghans over the medium term. Resettlement will be completed through two programs: a special immigration program for Afghan nationals and their families who assisted Canadians and a special humanitarian program

focused on resettling Afghan nationals outside of Afghanistan who don't have a durable solution in a third country.

Canada has clear priorities.

Today there are special immigration programs for Afghans who assisted the GoC of which 14 550 applications have been received and 9 575 have been approved. There are 3 555 people who have arrived to December 1, 2021.

This is not an operation Syria. It is a transportation and access challenge. Much time has been spent on navigating the complexities; it is a more complicated process. Staff across many departments, a network of visa officers, provincial governments, settlement agencies, and many others must work together.

Resettlement planning. The first arrivals were in Toronto, and IRCC is now directing mass arrivals to a hub in Calgary and other cities as required. There is great value in partnerships and teamwork. Public support has to be harnessed to meet specific newcomer needs. We realize the importance of pre-arrival orientation.

The PNT knows how to do settlement, and there has been good work done across the region. IRCC has identified major areas for increased and continued focus.

New structures in IRCC support the Afghan Resettlement. There is a National Afghan Steering Committee; a settlement and integration engagement team, and an Afghanistan Task Team. The Afghanistan Settlement Branch was created with Corinne Price as DG,

There are many ways for Canadian citizens and organizations to get involved. The key needs of the Afghan newcomers are many but priorities are information and orientation, employment, housing, and language training.

There will be many arrivals in the coming months. IRCC wants to hear the views of service providers on collaborative efforts.

The moderator facilitated a question-and-answer session.

**The importance of iCARE.** Jeslyn Thibedeau and Justin Cavacchiut explained how iCARE data is placed into the larger settlement program within context. All documents are available.

The presentation highlighted the Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report (a link is given). The presenters explained the program and its role in measuring and reporting on the settlement program. They explained the need for data and information for Treasury Board and others. The program totals approximately \$800M annually. There are many databases that provide the whole immigration story along with the iCARE program.

From this Report, thematic findings were derived and include the following.

- The starting point for newcomers is often different.
- There are indicators so that SPOs can tailor services to specific clients based on demographics.
- There are key differences in service usage by immigration category.

- The first year and years of service are crucial.
- Support services (interpretation, child care, transportation, etc.) are important for success.
- Gender is a significant factor.

Future plans include establishing attribution (context) and understanding the program's value. ICare is important.

The question-and-answer session was facilitated by the moderator.

**Welcoming Francophone Communities.** Presenters represented Francophone communities in [Saskatchewan](#), [Yellowknife, NT](#), [Nunavut](#), [Alberta](#), and [Manitoba](#).

The presentation was in French, and there were some problems with the closed caption translations and following audio translation. The writer was not able to access French materials from the software. As a result, these overviews are brief.

Yellowknife is carrying out a pilot project with an advisory committee of five members from the community and three Francophone organizations. A community plan was drawn up based on community needs. They meet these needs through activities and resources. All activities are carried out in partnership with Francophone organizations. They have established SWIS connections in schools, with the Francophone culture centre, and with the economic development council. They have hosted cultural and orientation events, and they offer community connection activities so that newcomers know the community's history and culture.

Nunavut has two official languages but only 4 percent of the population of 35 000 are Francophone, mainly located in Iqaluit. Their project was to provide a welcoming French-speaking community. They provide equitable access to reception and settlement services including a reception at the airport.

There is an annual conference with organizations from the [NorthWest Territories](#), [Nunavut](#), and the [Yukon](#) to raise awareness of the Francophone immigration process.

In Moose Jaw and Gravelbourg [Saskatchewan](#), have a Francophone pilot project, led by IRCC, in 14 Francophone communities. The purpose of the initiative is to provide a welcoming community to Francophone newcomers. They have developed a bilingual guide with videos on Facebook.

CANAF, Centre d'Accueil des Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones, Calgary, is a reception centre for Francophone newcomers. They offer employability services and offer services and events throughout [Alberta](#). They are just starting their activities including welcoming services at the airport, employment services, youth services, and community connections. They provide training for teaching staff in the French school system.

Questions were answered after these presentations.

### **Cluster Conversations.**

The clusters are Case Management, SWIS, Employment and Mentorship, Informal language training (under Community Connections), Newcomers with disabilities, gender-based violence, and LGBTQ+.

The case management cluster is the most established of the clusters. It is well organized and structured and could best handle the sudden arrival of the Afghans. It has a standardized NAARS, currently adapted for each province/territory. It will be revised but provides for the collection of standardized information required by IRCC. There are four tiers of case management identified, and they have moved into the last, triage stage development at this time. They have adopted definitions and a common indicator tool is being piloted.

The Settlement Outcomes Highlight Report recommends the early use of the NAARS to facilitate timely access to needed settlement services. It also reports that IRCC-funded SPOs were the top source of information for the clients. In 2020, the report says less than a quarter of newcomers received a NAARS. It is assumed that those statistics have improved greatly with the arrival of the Afghans.

The SWIS and SWIS Youth Cluster are organized but not fully functional at this time. They have determined the different levels: SWIS, Enhanced SWIS, and travailleurs d'établissement dans les écoles (TEE). The Settlement evaluation of SWIS has just been completed and recommendations will be reviewed and will allow for this cluster to move forward.

At the 2021 February Summit, SWIS medium- and long-term plans were outlined by the cluster. At the Fall 2021 Summit, neither the SWIS research presentation nor the conversation groups mentioned that core criteria had been addressed. School boards certainly did not appear to be partners during the pandemic as SWIS workers were not allowed in schools and few had a school contact inside the school during this time. The SWIS workers had to find ways to contact students; and said that they had moved to more of a one-on-one mentorship role. The Settlement Outcomes Highlight Report indicates that the needs of Youth, ages 16 – 20, are great. They face many barriers to settlement and integration.

This cluster will move forward in the upcoming year s the Afghan arrivals has many young persons.

Employment and Mentorship Cluster. This cluster was formed in 2019 and states that IRCC is one of many stakeholders who seek to improve newcomers' labour market outcomes. Collaboration with partners is a "must."

The medium-term plans from the February 2021 Summit indicated that referral systems and training were priorities. However during COVID, there was little/no referrals or training completed. There was a discussion of special needs employment training for the disabled and for the LGBTQ+ community in their respective cluster groups.

The February 2021 longer-term plans talked about credential recognition and pathways to credentialing. There was much discussion in various conversation groups in this Fall Summit about the concept of micro-credentialling and its benefits. With the barriers to credential recognition, micro-credentialling may be a worthwhile endeavour. There is evidence that postsecondary programs are starting to address this gap. The current shortage of workers and high unemployment rates may provide opportunities for the recognition or at least partial recognition of newcomers' credentials and skills.

The Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report states that the lack of recognition of credentials results in immigrants working in lower-paying occupations for longer periods of time.

The challenge remains of how to get newcomers to work or back to work safely.

Community Connections (Informal Language Training). The cluster was established in 2019 and a callout to the region has been issued. However, there is no real response and progress to date. Those who attended the cluster conversation in Fall 2021 indicated that since COVID, attendance has been very poor and many programs have not been offered. There is a shortage of volunteers for two reasons. Long-serving volunteers are getting fatigued with the great numbers needing informal language training. Also, volunteers are concerned about the vaccine status of newcomers. This concept needs to be dispersed if the evidence from the vaccine update presentation at this Summit is accurate. Canadians, including newcomers, are well vaccinated and are not as a population vaccine-hesitant.

Participants in this conversation group asked for more funding to support informal language training. Women, in particular, are accessing the services several years after arrival.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Cluster. This cluster does not appear to be organized. There are differences in the programs as evidenced from the discussions of the group. This cluster can be directly linked to NAARS at which time resources can be distributed and possible issues may be identified.

The Calgary SPO in this group seems to have a well-established program and may be a model that others could follow.

At the February 2021 Summit medium-term plans were identified: training to staff to identify client characteristics, training on Canadian family roles, and training for Francophones. The Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report found that the uptake of language training is the greatest in the first year of arrival. If GBV information and training were integrated into language training, the GBV may be addressed initially. The report also indicates that there is a shortage of child care facilities which has an impact on women to attend training and gain employment.

Newcomers with Disabilities. It was unclear if this cluster is formed. The groups discussed resources that are available in the region, particularly in Winnipeg. How can this cluster communicate the existing needs of those with disabilities? The goal is to develop partnerships.

At the February 2021 Summit, the medium-term plan was to share information and network and to share key resources. The groups shared more resources at this Fall Summit as some of the participants were different from those in February. The longer-term plan called for the development of outcomes and an interim health response. The group did not comment on these plans.

LGBTQ+ Cluster. This cluster was led by IRCC. It has not been established as a cluster and IRCC representatives are looking for SPOs to participate. It is unclear if a callout has gone out to the regions. The medium-term plans focussed on a lack of awareness of support for LGBTQ+ newcomers. The long-term plan was to develop a vision.

Currently, **Manitoba**, MANSO, had the most activity and interest in this conversation. It was the case in February as well, but with a different participant. Saskatchewan has some interest. The group

wondered who gets funding to support these newcomers. Calgary and Edmonton indicated that they are getting some funding when they attended the February Summit.

There was no session on language training during this Summit. There was a literacy conversation group. Fariborz Birjandian, in the first session of the Summit, recommended to IRCC that the national settlement council begin to talk about broader settlement issues such as LINC availability and others. The Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report suggested that newcomers attend classes and obtain the most benefit from support services within the first year of arrival. Many of the sessions at this Summit discussed language training, formal or informal, as being key to employment and integration.

In the last few months, the PNT has done a remarkable job of meeting the needs of newcomers during a pandemic and during a unprecedented surge of refugees. The forethought and organizational structures put in place by IRCC and the regions has been tremendous. With the collaboration and partnerships developed, newcomers will settle and integrate well. The PNT region works well and is developing critical strategies to meet the needs of the Region.

## Recommendations

The themes of the Summit and the information provided in presentations and conversation sessions lead to the following recommendations. All readers of this report are encouraged to read and review the information provided at the Summit. There are many suggestions and resources that can be utilized.

**Recommendation. It is recommended that Provincial participation and collaboration be part of each Summit.**

IRCC, umbrella organizations and the service providers cannot work alone to integrate newcomers. They depend on each other and their partners. At the February 2021 Summit, provincial government administrators and managers provided valuable information on their policies, programs, and future plans particularly on issues of health, education, employment, and others. Partners can also learn of the direction of their immigration associates. This was most beneficial and ongoing collaboration is important.

**Recommendation. Clusters. The case management model of development has worked well and the cluster is still refining processes and documents. The SWIS and Employment/Mentoring clusters could follow a similar model. However, it is recommended that the Gender-based Violence (GBV) cluster, the Newcomers with Disabilities cluster, and the LGBTQ+ cluster focus more on an integration model whereby policy, resources and pathways are developed and then integrated into the larger clusters such as case management, language training, employment and mentoring.**

It has been difficult for some clusters to get started but there are pockets of activity in most regions. IRCC should not lead the direction of the GBV, disabilities, and LGBTQ+ clusters; co-leads are essential. Umbrella organizations may assist with the progress of these three clusters. The SPOs who are working with clients have the experience and knowledge to meet the needs of their clients. Newcomers would become aware of the support structures and seek assistance when they feel safe and secure. This could occur any time in their settlement process.

**Recommendation. Standards--but flexible standards. It is recommended that each program areas develop a set of overarching standards. This would be similar to those developed for NAARS.**

However as was cautioned throughout this Summit, “the starting line is different for each newcomer.” Several presentations and conversations described programming but adapted to their region or zone. This is important to allow flexibility while still meeting the outcomes of the program. The Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report mentions that they plan to take into account attribution (context) in their further data collection and research. This is most important.

**Recommendation. It is recommended that IRCC, provincial governments, and umbrella organizations attempt to accelerate the process of credential recognition for newcomers. A dedicated group of individuals could press forward with this work.**

This has been a long-standing issue for newcomers. The micro-credentialling concept may be an opening to start some conversations to pursue a pathway to credentialling for those trained in other countries. Some postsecondary and skill training have started a process. Mentorship opportunities may be advantageous (paid or unpaid) and even better if they are recognized. This is a time of high unemployment, and it may be the right time to push forward with the recognition of foreign credentials so that newcomers can continue in their occupations.

**Recommendation. It is essential that partnerships with schools and school divisions be part of the SWIS delivery. Umbrella organizations as well as service providers can help to build those partnerships not only at the local level but at the provincial level and with the professional organizations.**

It became evident that during the pandemic, that essential SWIS – school partnerships are not occurring. Relationships with students are essential at all times. There were good examples of working partnerships during this Summit. The school research project presentation at this Summit has made similar recommendations. The Settlement Outcomes Highlight Report indicates that teen youth face barriers to settlement and integration. Contact with students is important.

**Recommendation. Language training and Employment. Accelerate the speed at which newcomers can access language training (formal and informal) especially during the first year of newcomer arrival.**

From information provided at this Summit, most newcomers have obtained employment during their first year of arrival. Language allows them to continue with training, further their education, to move into higher-paid jobs, and start the credentialling process. The Settlement Outcomes Highlight Report indicates that language training uptake was the highest in the first year after landing. Full-time language training increases the likelihood of progression.

**Recommendation. It is recommended that the delivery mode of the next Summit be a hybrid of both virtual attendance and face-to-face attendance.**

During COVID it has been essential to offer the Summits virtually. This has been of benefit to many participants. Those in remote locations and the North were able to attend and participate. The virtual component must allow for the participation of those off-site and all sessions must be documented and recorded. However, many have indicated that an in-person format is preferable for networking and collaborative purposes.

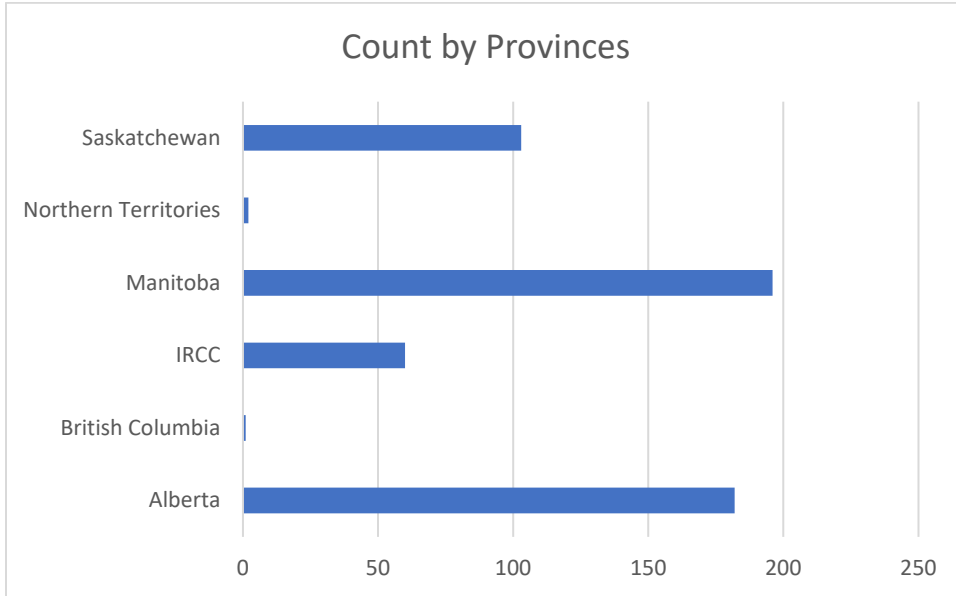


## Prioritized IRCC and Sector Suggested Work Plan, January 2022.

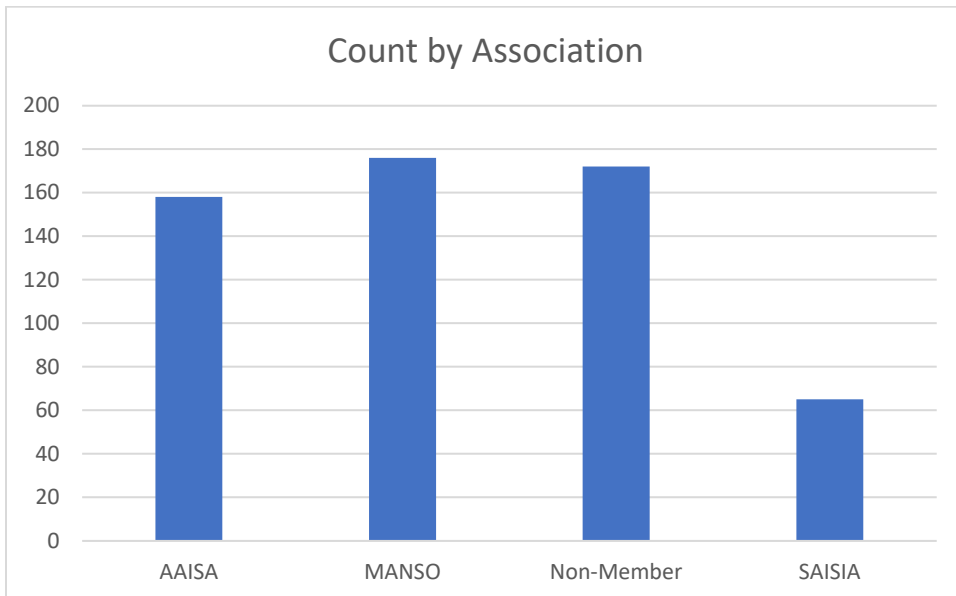
Prior to 2020	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	New funding 5-year agreement				All pilots completed	
		PNT Summit (2)	PNT Summit	PNT Summit		
		Assemble and focus technologies in preparation for surge of immigrants and refugees.				
		401 000 immigrants (12 500 GARs) + 20 000 Afghan GARs↑	401 000+ immigrants 12 500 GARs + 20 000 Afghan GARs ↑	401 000+ immigrants 12 500 GARs + ?	401 000+ immigrants 12 500 GARs + ?	
	Settlement Working Group (SWG) working with provinces and territories.					
	Develop francophone pathway . Target 4.4% francophones outside of Quebec.					
	Accelerate language and literacy training for newcomer access in the first year of arrival.					
	Increase digital literacy and technology utilization for program planning and delivery.					
2017→Implement Urban Systems Approach . Cluster: case management (NAARS, RAP); adapt for rural systems.						
	Cluster: SWIS. Started. Implement evaluation recommendations; develop strategy; develop partnerships with school divisions; pilot.					
2019 Cluster: Employment and Mentoring. Refine cluster administration. Work with provinces. Standardize program format to adapt to provincial needs. Address issues: credentialling and micro-credentialling, work culture, anti-racism, and others to be integrated.						
	SWG review of service gaps to temporary workers, postsecondary institutions, and employers.					
	Collaborate with PNT provincial partners regarding support activities, training, and capacity enhancement,					
2017 Cluster: Informal Language training. Not prioritized until 2021. Develop strategy, pilot.						
2018 SWG review of newcomer mental health						
		Cluster: Gender-based Violence. Refine and define.				
		Cluster: LGBTQ+. Refine and define.				
		Cluster: Newcomers with Disabilities. Refine and define.				
		Innovate and develop partnerships to deal with incoming newcomers.				
		More flexible programming to better meet clients' needs.				
Innovate and Collaborate						

## Appendix A: Registrations

This list is general as some registration details were unknown. The “unknown” association by region means that category was not completed on the registration form.



British Columbia (BC) is not part of the PNT Region, but BC experts work with the PNT. Some presenters were from BC.



Non-member registrants included IRCC (the largest group), LIPs, and others who did not identify their association.

## Registration by Association, Province, and Organization

Regionally Association	Province	Organization	#
AAISA	Alberta	AAISA	9
AAISA	Alberta	Action for Healthy Communication	6
AAISA	Alberta	Alberta International Medical Graduate Association	1
AAISA	Alberta	ASSIST Community Service Centre	3
AAISA	Alberta	ASSOCIATION FRANCOPHONE DE BROOKS, AFB	1
AAISA	Alberta	Bow Valley College	2
AAISA	Alberta	Bredin Centre for Career Advancement	2
AAISA	Alberta	C.A.R.E.	1
AAISA	Alberta	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	2
AAISA	Alberta	Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	4
AAISA	Alberta	CANAF	9
AAISA	Alberta	Catholic Social Services	11
AAISA	Alberta	Calgary Catholic Immigrant Society (CCIS)	5
AAISA	Alberta	Central Alberta Refugee Effort	3
AAISA	Alberta	Changing Together.A Centre for Immigrant Women	1
AAISA	Alberta	CSS- LARCC	1
AAISA	Alberta	ECSD LINC	1
AAISA	Alberta	Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA)	23
AAISA	Alberta	Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers	2
AAISA	Alberta	Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council	2
AAISA	Alberta	EMCN	4
AAISA	Alberta	EmployAbilities	1
AAISA	Alberta	ERIEC	2
AAISA	Alberta	Family Dynamics	1
AAISA	Alberta	Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle Association	1
AAISA	Alberta	FRAP	1
AAISA	Alberta	Grande Prairie Centre for Newcomers	1
AAISA	Alberta	Grande Prairie Council for Lifelong Learning	1
AAISA	Alberta	HIV Edmonton	1
AAISA	Alberta	Keyano College	2
AAISA	Alberta	Making Changes Employment Association of Alberta	1
AAISA	Alberta	Maple Leaf Academy	2
AAISA	Alberta	Multicultural Family Resource Society	1
AAISA	Alberta	Municipality of Jasper	1
AAISA	Alberta	NorQuest College	4
AAISA	Alberta	REACH Edmonton	1
AAISA	Alberta	Saamis Immigration Service Association	7
AAISA	Alberta	SCWCA	4

AAISA	Alberta	Settlement Services in the Bow Valley	2
AAISA	Alberta	TDCALA	1
AAISA	Alberta	The Immigrant Education Society (TIES)	2
AAISA	Alberta	YMCA of Northern Alberta	2
AAISA	Alberta	Unknown	1
AAISA	Alberta	Unknown	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Action for Healthy Communities	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Bredin Center for Career Advancement	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Brooks Community Adult Learning Council	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Education	1
Non-Member	Alberta	EMCN	2
Non-Member	Alberta	Equilibrium School	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Government of Alberta	3
Non-Member	Alberta	Lethbridge College	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Municipality of Jasper	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Red Deer Local Immigration Partnership	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Settlement Services in the Bow Valley	1
Non-Member	Alberta	Women In Need Society	1
Non-Member	Alberta	YMCA of Northern Alberta	1
AAISA	Alberta	Action for Healthy Communities	1
AAISA	Alberta	Catholic Social Services	3
AAISA	Alberta	EMCN-Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers	1
AAISA	Alberta	La Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle-FRAP	9
AAISA	Alberta	Settlement Services in the Bow Valley	2
AAISA	Alberta	YMCA	7
Non-Member	British Columbia	University of Victoria	1
Non-Member	IRCC	Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)	59
AAISA	IRCC	IRCC	1
MANSO	IRCC	A & O Support Services for Older Adults	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	IRCC	1
MANSO	Manitoba	A & O: Support Services for Older Adults	1
MANSO	Manitoba	African Communities of Manitoba Inc.	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Assiniboine Community College	2
MANSO	Manitoba	Aurora Family Therapy Centre	2
MANSO	Manitoba	Bilal Community and Family Centre	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Cartwright-Roblin Community Development	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Eastman Immigrant Services	1

MANSO	Manitoba	Eastman Region Immigration Partnership	3
MANSO	Manitoba	EDGE Skills Centre, INC and ESL	3
MANSO	Manitoba	EESE	1
MANSO	Manitoba	English Online	5
MANSO	Manitoba	Enhanced English Skills for Employment	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Family Dynamics	19
MANSO	Manitoba	Food Matters Manitoba	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Immigrant Centre Manitoba	10
MANSO	Manitoba	Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba, Inc.	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Immigration Partnership Winnipeg	3
MANSO	Manitoba	IRCOM	2
MANSO	Manitoba	Jewish Child & Family Service	5
MANSO	Manitoba	LRSD	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Manitoba Assn of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)	5
MANSO	Manitoba	Manitoba Institute of Trades & Technology	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Manitoba Start	2
MANSO	Manitoba	MIIC-Welcome Place	2
MANSO	Manitoba	MITT	3
MANSO	Manitoba	Mosaic Newcomer family resource Network	5
MANSO	Manitoba	Mount Carmel Clinic	2
MANSO	Manitoba	N.E.E.D.S. Inc	3
MANSO	Manitoba	Neepawa & Area Immigrant Settlement Services	3
MANSO	Manitoba	New Journey Housing	1
MANSO	Manitoba	North End Women's Centre	2
MANSO	Manitoba	North West Regional Immigrant Services	2
MANSO	Manitoba	Opportunities for Employment (OFE)	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Pembina Valley Local Immigration Partnership	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Pluri-elles (Manitoba) Inc.	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Portage Learning & Literacy Centre	4
MANSO	Manitoba	Red River College	9
MANSO	Manitoba	Regional Connections	5
MANSO	Manitoba	RETIS Adult EAL	1
MANSO	Manitoba	River East Transcona Immigrant Services	1
6	Manitoba	SEED Winnipeg	6
MANSO	Manitoba	Seven Oaks Immigration Services	2
MANSO	Manitoba	Success Skills Centre	2
MANSO	Manitoba	The Pas Immigrant Services	1
MANSO	Manitoba	The Salvation Army, LEEP	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Thompson Settlement Services	1

MANSO	Manitoba	Université de Saint-Boniface	3
MANSO	Manitoba	WELARC	7
MANSO	Manitoba	West Central Women's Resource Centre	2
MANSO	Manitoba	Westman Immigrant Services	10
MANSO	Manitoba	Winnipeg School Division	2
MANSO	Manitoba	WIS	2
MANSO	Manitoba	WSD Adult EAL Program	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network	1
MANSO	Manitoba	YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg	2
Unknown	Manitoba	Immigrant Centre Manitoba	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	Addictions Foundation of Manitoba	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration	2
Non-Member	Manitoba	Government of Manitoba	2
Non-Member	Manitoba	Immigrant Centre Manitoba	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	Newcomer Education Coalition	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	Pluri-elles	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	SEED Winipeg Inc.	3
Non-Member	Manitoba	University of Manitoba	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	WESTMAN IMMIGRANT SERVICES	5
MANSO	Manitoba	Aurora Family Therapy Centre	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Enhanced English Skills for Employment and English Online	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Manitoba Institute of Trades & Technology	1
MANSO	Manitoba	Manitoba Possible	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	Immigrant and Refugee Organization of Manitoba	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	MB Institute of Trades & Technology (MITT)	1
Non-Member	Manitoba	COALITION OF MANITOBA CULTURAL COMMUNITIES FOR FAMILIES INC.	1
Non-Member	Unknown	Portage Community Revitalization Corporation	2
Non-Member	Northern Territories	Carrefour Nunavut	2
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	International Women of Saskatoon	12
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Local Immigration Partnership Saskatoon	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Moose Jaw Multicultural Council	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Regina Open Door Society (RODS)	4
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan intercultural association	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Polytechnic	2
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS)	23
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre	9
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise	1

SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Battlefords Immigration Resource Ctr Inc.	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Carlton Trail College	2
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	CFS Regina	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	City of Saskatoon	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Cumberland College	2
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	GLOBAL GATHERING PLACE	2
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre	2
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Moose Jaw Multicultural Council	2
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	North West College	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Northeast Newcomer Services	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Prairie Skies Integration Network	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Regina Open Door Society	5
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Rif-SK	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	SAISIA	5
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Intercultural Association	3
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon Industry Education Council	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Service d'accueil et d'inclusion Francophone - SK	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Southeast Advocates For Employment	3
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Southeast College	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre	1
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	The Humboldt Regional Newcomer Cent	3
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	Ukrainian Canadian Congress of Saskatchewan	6
SAISIA	Saskatchewan	YWCA	2
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon Public Schools	1
	Saskatchewan	WFC initiative of Moose Jaw/Gravelbourg // CFA de Moose Jaw/Gravelbourg	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	YWCA Prince Albert	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	CANAF	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	East Central Newcomer Welcome Centre Inc.	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	English Online Inc.	2
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Enhanced English Skills for Employment	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	ERIEC	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	Eupraxia Training	1
Non-Member	Saskatchewan	University of Regina	1
Non-Member	Unknown	Family Dynamics	3
Non-Member	Unknown	Flexibility Learning Systems	1
AAISA	Unknown	Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle (FRAP)	1
Non-Member	Unknown	IFSSA	1
Non-Member	Unknown	Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network	1
Non-Member	Unknown	Newcomer Information Centre	1
Non-Member	Unknown	North West Regional Immigrant Services	1
Non-Member	Unknown	Regional Connections	1

Non-Member	Unknown	RRLIP	3
Non-Member	Unknown	Rural Development Network	1
Non-Member	Unknown	Sprint It!	2
	Unknown	Centre for Newcomers	1
	Unknown	Eastglen High School	1
	Unknown	Enhanced English Skills for Employment and English Online	2
	Unknown	Islamic Family & Social Services Association	1
	Unknown	La fédération franco-ténoise	1
	Unknown	NEEDS	1
	Unknown	Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) Inc.	1
	Unknown	PeaceGeeks	1
	Unknown	Prairie Skies Integration Network	1
	Unknown	Regional Connections Immigrant Services	1
	Unknown	Settlement and Integration Policy (SIP)	1
<b>Total registrants</b>			<b>569</b>



# Appendix B: Summit Agenda/Program

Wednesday, November 17, 2021 - Provincial			Wednesday, November 24, 2021 - Regional/Cluster			Wednesday, December 1, 2021		
Mountain Time	Central Time	time	Mountain Time	Central Time	time	Mountain Time	Central Time	time
9:30 - 9:50 AM	10:30 - 10:50 AM	20	9:30 - 9:50 AM	10:30 - 10:50 AM	15	9:30 - 9:50 AM	10:30 - 10:50 AM	15
<b>Hosted by MANSO</b> <b>Opening Remarks</b>			<b>Hosted by AAISA</b> <b>Opening Remarks</b>			<b>Hosted by SAISIA - IRCC content led</b> <b>Opening Remarks</b>		
9:50 - 10:50 AM	10:50 - 11:50 PM	60	9:50 - 10:50 AM	10:50 - 11:50 PM	60	9:50 - 10:50 AM	10:50 - 11:50 PM	60
<b>Session 1:</b> <b>Keynote - Afghan Arrivals Update</b> Fariborz Birjandian, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)			<b>Session 5:</b> <b>Keynote Case Management (David Este, University of Calgary)</b>			<b>Session 8:</b> <b>Keynote: Keynote: The IRCC Afghanistan (Re)Settlement Initiative: The Early Response, the Present, and Planning for the Future</b> Corrine Prince and John Biles, IRCC		
10:50 - 11:05 AM	11:50 - 12:05 PM	15	10:50 - 11:05 AM	11:50 - 12:05 PM	15	10:50 - 11:05 AM	11:50 - 12:05 PM	15
<b>Networking &amp; Stretch Break</b>			<b>Networking &amp; Stretch Break</b>			<b>Networking &amp; Stretch Break</b>		
11:05 - 11:50 AM	12:05 - 12:50 PM	45	11:05 - 11:50 AM	12:05 - 12:50 PM	45	11:05 - 11:50 AM	12:05 - 12:50 PM	45
<b>Session 2:</b> <b>Exploring the Future of Technology in the Settlement Sector</b> Alysha Baratta, PeaceGeeks			<b>Session 6:</b> <b>Vaccine uptake and vaccine hesitancy among immigrants in Fall 2021: An update from Canada and the USA</b> Lori Wilkinson & Jack Jedwab			<b>Session 9: The importance of ICARE // L'importance de IEDEC</b> Jeslyn Thibedeau & Justin Cavacciuti, IRCC		
11:50 - 12:20 PM	12:50 - 1:20 PM	30	11:50 AM - 12:50 PM	12:50 PM - 1:50 PM	60	11:50 - 12:20 PM	12:50 - 1:20 PM	10
<b>Networking &amp; Lunch Break</b>			<b>Open Forum Conversations:</b> <b>Language</b> Teresa Burke <b>Employment</b> Déborah Chevalier <b>SWIS Youth</b> Maryam Karimi <b>RAP</b> Seid Oumer Ahmed			<b>Networking &amp; Lunch Break</b>		
12:20 PM - 1:20 PM	1:20 - 2:20 PM	60	12:50 - 1:20 PM	1:50 - 2:20 PM	30	12:20 PM - 1:20 PM	1:20 PM - 2:20 PM	60
<b>Session 3:</b> <b>Indigenous EAL Language Curriculum and Resources</b> Moderator: Teresa Burke <b>Panel Discussion:</b> Dina Demburg, Karen Loeb and Adrienne Breyfogle <b>Breakout Discussions:</b> <b>Facilitators:</b> Jess Hamm - SK Sarosh Rizvi- AB Teresa Burke- MB			<b>Networking &amp; Lunch Break</b>			<b>Session 12: Welcoming Francophone Communities</b> Cécile Fagot Chantal Morin Erwan Oger Salwa Meddri		
1:20 - 1:30 PM	2:20 - 2:30 PM	10	1:20 - 2:05 PM	2:20 - 3:05 PM	45	1:20 PM - 1:30 PM	2:20 PM - 2:30 PM	10
<b>Networking &amp; Stretch Break</b>			<b>Session 7:</b> <b>Urban Systems Approach</b> Ijeoma Nwamuo, Executive Director, International Women of Saskatoon (IWS) Dayna Hinkel, at Manitoba Start Jana Mckee, Program Director, Seven Oaks Immigration Services (SOIS) José Chinchilla Settlement Coordinator, Seven Oaks Immigrant Services (SOIS)			<b>Networking &amp; Stretch Break</b>		
1:30 - 3:00 PM	2:30 - 4:00 PM	45	2:05 - 3:05 PM	3:05 - 4:05 PM	60	1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	
<b>Session 4:</b> <b>Schooling &amp; the Pandemic</b> Moderator: Maryam <b>Research Presentation</b> Amanda Gebhard, Fritz Pino and Willow Samara Allen <b>Panel Discussion</b> Christine Bileau, Rene Mateso, Janine Hart, Ngena Ali-Ebenga <b>Provincial Breakout Conversations</b> <b>Breakout Facilitators:</b> Oliver Kamau – AB, Ricardo Morales – SK and Don Walmsley - MB			<b>Open Forum Conversations 3:</b> <b>NAARS</b> Roselyn Advincola <b>Post secondary</b> Sturary Shwartz from Red River College <b>Literacy</b> Daniel Green <b>Community connections (volunteering)</b> Icasiana de Gala <b>Community Connections (youth)</b> Oliver Kamau			<b>Cluster Conversations</b> SWIS/TEE Case Management Employment and Mentorship Services Community Connections: Informal Language Training Newcomers with Disabilities Gender based Violence LGBTQ+		
3:00 - 3:15 PM	4:00 - 4:15 PM	15	3:05 - 3:20 PM	4:05 - 4:20 PM	15	2:30 PM - 3:15 PM	3:30 PM - 4:15 PM	
<b>Closing Remarks</b>			<b>Closing Remarks</b>			<b>Supporting your teams mental health</b> Karl McCluskey <b>Lost Prizes Coordinator/Contract Faculty Faculty of Education, Aurora Family Therapy Centre</b>		
						3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	4:15 PM - 4:30 PM	
						<b>Conference Closing Remarks</b>		

# Appendix C: Event Feedback and Summary from Daily Participants

The information collected by Spark Event Collective, and summarized by the writer of this report are as follows.

There were 96 evaluations completed online by the 579 registrants of the Summit. Some of these registrants were presenters. Of the 96 responses, most (about 75 percent or more) completed the survey after day 1, November 17, 2021. A few were completed after day 2, but the remainder of the responders were mainly after day 3, December 1, 2021.

What's your affiliation?	
<b>AAISA</b>	20%
<b>MANSO</b>	33%
<b>SAISIA</b>	17%
<b>IRCC</b>	10%
<b>Provincial Government</b>	2%
<b>Other</b>	18%
<b>Total responses</b>	100%

Those who chose “other” included those from PNT SPOs, Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), or those not identifying as being members of the umbrella organizations.

The participants were asked to rank the overall quality of each of the given aspects of the PNT Summit.

The rank of overall quality of each of the following aspects of the PNT Summit							
	Poor %	Below Average %	Average %	Above Average %	Excellent %	N/A %	Weighted Average
<b>Ease of online registration</b>	0	1	9	24	64	1	4.52
<b>Responsiveness to inquiries before the event</b>	0	0	5	21	27	47	4.42
<b>Ease of access to the online conference platform</b>	0	3	9	29	56	0	4.36
<b>The overall quality of panel speakers</b>	0	0	6	31	61	2	4.57
<b>The overall quality of session speakers</b>	0	0	7	31	60	2	4.54
<b>The overall quality of PNT Summit</b>	0	1	7	31	61	0	4.51

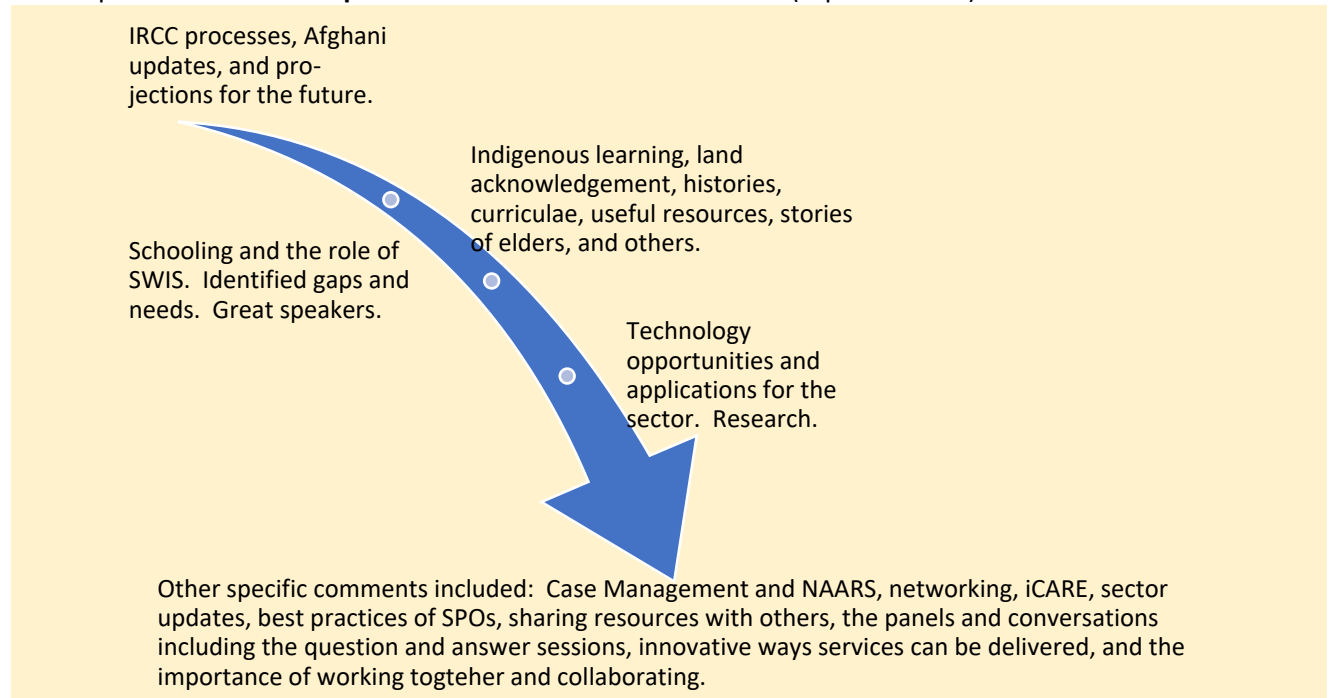
Many found the experience rich and worked well. Other respondents suggested that they had some technical issues around the French to English translation although resolved toward the end; the platform was unpredictable; no recordings of the chats and group sessions; and some general technical issues may have been due to connection issues. Some had to join via Zoom.

1. Participants look forward to an in-person Summit when it is safe.

Do you feel your professional skills have improved from the sessions at this Summit?		
Yes	No	Additional Comments
83%	10%	4%

The respondents suggested that there should be sessions for new, less experienced persons and sessions for more experienced persons. They felt more knowledgeable about the Afghani situation, newcomers in schools, and issues around Indigenous peoples.

The respondents' **favourite part of the event** is shown as follows (top to bottom).



Regarding the format of the Summit, the respondents mentioned the benefits of having the Summit spread out over three weeks. This helped with managing their workloads and virtual fatigue.

**What are the elements that you would improve?**

Would you recommend this Summit to your colleagues and friends?	
Yes	No
98%	2%

The respondents agreed that the Summit was educational and informational (latest settlement information and trends).

*Excellent resources.*

For those not familiar with the scope of the settlement sector, it raised awareness of the programs, challenges, benefits, and solutions to potentially resolve problems. In response to several of the survey questions, the benefits of learning about our First Nation’s history and culture were great. Many were not aware of the role of SWIS and their challenges to meet the needs of newcomer students.

***It is important for someone who lives in Canada to know the experience of a refugee.***

Do you see the value of a joint Summit in the future? How often would be appropriate?				
Annually	Biennially (2 years)	Every 4 years	None of these	Other
76%	15%	0	1%	5%

The other suggestions were to offer a regional Summit every two years and alternate with a local or provincial conference and a suggestion to have a Summit semi-annually. A respondent new to the sector found persons to whom s/he could defer for more advice on a topic.

Would you like to provide your feedback on individual sessions?	
Yes	No
20%	80%

Of the 20 percent that did provide feedback, the following is a summary. The survey respondents were asked to respond on a 5-point scale of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Results are recorded as a weighted average.

Caution is taken, however, in that only 13 of 579 registered individuals (not just 20% of the survey respondents) provided feedback on individual sessions and thus the following **would not be considered reliable information**.

Would you provide feedback on individual sessions? We would appreciate your feedback on speakers and presentation outcomes. The scale used was 1 poor and 5 Excellent						
Session	The material was well organized	Ideas were useful	Helped me develop and learn	Pace was comfortable	Overall, the content was valuable	
Afghan Arrivals Update	4	4.36	4.21	4.07	4.29	Weighted average
Future of Technology in Settlement	4.15	4.00	3.92	4.08	4.15	
Indigenous EAL Language Curriculum & Resources	4.15	4.17	4.15	4.08	4.38	
Schooling and the Pandemic	4.42	4.33	4.25	4.33	4.42	

**Please provide any other suggestions, feedback, or comments that would help us improve our event in future years.**

More than half of the respondents thanked the funders and organizers of this event.

- Very useful, informative, well-organized, and interactive. I like it.
- Good learning and collaboration opportunity.
- Thanks. Well done. Great event. C’est inspirant et encourageant.
- Helpful to hear the different speakers on every topic.

Others liked the three-day format over three weeks for two reasons: to deal with/keep up with their work and because it is challenging to be online for three days.

Three respondents wanted to keep the Summit virtual and two suggested an in-person Summit is preferable. The virtual format did not seem to bother others as they commented on their experiences of working collaboratively and networking during the Summit.

There seemed to be some technical issues at this Summit. Issues suggested:

- One did not attend a session because it was in French with no English translation.
- A couple of respondents mentioned technical issues during sessions – but no specific issues.
- Another suggested adding one or two sessions just for IRCC personnel to attend to understand what is going on in the region (best practices, updates, etc.).

*There is a bit of a gap to bridge the conference so it is effective for all attendees.*

The statement could reflect two audiences: first-time attendees and those who have attended several summits in the past.

General suggestions were as follows.

- Invite more Francophone agencies to present and inform participants.
- The area of employment of skilled immigrants was not dealt with.
- Funding for those over 30 is lacking.
- Send the agenda, log-in information, reminders, technical requirements, virtual format materials, and other information well before the Summit.
- Clarify the time zone of the Summit.