

EVALUATION OF AAISA'S SECTOR SURVEY

PURPOSE, METHODOLOGY, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

MARCH 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION4**
 - 1.2 Purpose of Evaluation.....5
- 2. METHODOLOGY5**
 - 2.1 Evaluation Design5
 - 2.2 Data collection5
 - 2.3 Data Analysis.....7
- 3. RESULTS.....10**
 - 3.1 Advocacy and Funding leverage10
 - 3.2 Frontline Staff Perspectives11
 - 3.3 Comparative Insights11
 - 3.4 Requests for More Granular or Nuanced Data12
 - 3.5 Strategic Roadmap and Predictive Insights13
 - 3.6 Output Format Preferences.....13
 - 3.7 Format and Accessibility14
 - 3.8 Other themes that were notable but not as prominent.....15
- 4. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SECTOR SURVEY.....17**
- 5. CONCLUSION: SUGGESTIONS IN A BROADER CONTEXT19**
- REFERENCES21**
- APPENDICES22**

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

The content of this document is protected by Copyright © 2026 Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA). All Rights Reserved. No part of this document including, but not limited to, the text, graphics, images, logos may be modified, reproduced, transmitted, distributed, publicly displayed or utilized for any commercial purpose, in any form, by any means, in whole or in part, without AAISA's specific written permission. This Copyright Notice is an integral part of this document and shall not be removed or altered.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AAISA acknowledges that we are gathered on Treaty 6 territory – the traditional lands of diverse Indigenous Peoples, including the Nêhiyaw, Dene, Anishinaabe, Nakota Isga, and Niitsitapi peoples. We also acknowledge this as the Métis' homeland and the home of one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel.

We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples who have lived in and cared for these lands since time immemorial. We are grateful for the Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are with us today and those who have gone before us.

As we learn how to better support newcomers arriving to new lands, we must also recognize that our work in the immigration and settlement sector cannot be separated from the land on which we live and serve. The opportunities and systems that allow us to welcome newcomers exist within the context of colonization, broken treaties, and ongoing disruption of the ways of life of Indigenous Peoples on this land.

We recognize that we must do better to undo the harms of colonialism and white supremacy, and in doing so help us better serve the newcomer lives we touch. As a starting point, we seek opportunities to support Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, while listening to, respecting and centering diverse Indigenous voices, and using our power to make space, in relationship, for Indigenous resurgence.

This report was authored by Hessian Hanif & Andrew Lam, as part of the Policy & Communications team at AAISA. All questions regarding this report can be directed to ghanif@aaisa.ca.

ABSTRACT

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) supports sector coordination and capacity building across Alberta’s settlement and resettlement system, with a focus on strengthening organizational readiness to respond to equity, anti-racism, and reconciliation commitments. In collaboration with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), AAISA undertook a structured initiative to support IRCC-funded organizations in advancing Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion practices, Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) principles, and Truth and Reconciliation into newcomer-serving contexts. This evaluation examines how AAISA’s Sector Survey can better reflect sector realities, reduce reporting burden, and strengthen its use for planning, advocacy, and alignment with IRCC priorities. The research design was based on a review of past Sector Surveys (2018–2024), a preliminary interview, and researcher discussions that helped establish early themes and guide the structure of the focus group work. Qualitative material was collected through two facilitated focus groups with Senior Leadership (N=9). The thematic analysis combined a priori and emergent coding to capture long-standing sector concerns alongside newer patterns raised during discussions. During the analysis, an intensity-based linguistic assessment was used to stabilize interpretation across organizations of different sizes and communication styles, and a dual-coder process improved consistency in how intensity was applied. Together, the work points toward practical adjustments such as shorter instruments, cleaner branching, role-specific versions, co-designed question sets, and a set of longitudinal items. These suggestions will align the tool with how organizations work and ensure the survey delivers more clarity and purpose across the sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies' (AAISA) Sector Survey captures information from Settlement Serving Organizations (SPOs) in Alberta on organizational capacity, service delivery, and emerging needs across the settlement system. This information helps ensure that policies and programming supporting newcomer integration remain responsive to sector realities. Since 2018, the survey has tracked arrival trends, funding pressures, and organizational needs, contributing to policy and program development across Alberta's newcomer-serving landscape. As immigration pressures and service demands continue to shift, the sector requires a more intentional approach to monitoring and understanding these changes.

As part of AAISA's agreement with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), an evaluation was conducted in 2025–2026 to inform a participation and knowledge mobilization plan for future survey cycles in 2026 through 2028. The changing immigration context in Alberta highlights the need for a modernized tool that captures sector realities clearly and supports effective communication of those needs. This report presents AAISA's findings and recommendations to guide the next phase of the Sector Survey.

1.1 BACKGROUND ON THE SECTOR SURVEY

The Sector Survey was introduced in 2018 to capture organizational capacity, service delivery trends, and emerging needs across Alberta's settlement system. Initially designed as a baseline coordination tool, it gradually evolved into a more strategic instrument shaped by policy expectations and IRCC priorities.

The survey's design shifted in response to sector changes. Early versions relied heavily on open-text responses and broad multiple-choice items, which generated descriptive information but offered limited strategic value. During COVID-19 and the arrival of Afghan and Ukrainian newcomers, the survey adopted a modular format with ranking scales, dropdowns, and conditional logic to capture rapid operational shifts, though this increased length and repetition. By 2023–2024, the survey became more technical and aligned with IRCC service streams, increasing strategic utility but creating challenges for smaller organizations with limited capacity.

Across the years the survey was distributed, several issues consistently surfaced regardless of format: housing shortages, gaps in language instruction, staffing instability, growing mental health needs, regional capacity disparities, and coordination challenges. These recurring patterns have shaped how organizations communicate needs to funders and how the sector interprets shifts in service demand over time. Together, they highlight the need for a more focused, actionable, and purpose-aligned Sector Survey.

1.2 PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

Evaluating the Sector Survey now to improve its practical value is timely, given the recurring challenges identified across past survey cycles and the continued structural and usability issues limiting its effectiveness. SPOs frequently report survey fatigue and high cognitive load, especially among smaller agencies with limited administrative capacity. Similar challenges have been documented in other Canadian studies, which note confusion about whether comparable tools are meant for benchmarking, member feedback, or sector-level advocacy (Esses et al., 2013; Evaluation of the Settlement Program, 2017). A persistent gap between the data collected and what agencies can use meaningfully further reduces confidence in the survey and weakens senior leadership buy-in (Government of Canada, 2023; IRCC, 2024).

This evaluation aims to make the Sector Survey more useful, accessible, and aligned with the realities of Alberta's settlement sector. By addressing structural design issues, clarifying purpose, and improving usability, the evaluation seeks to strengthen relevance across different organizational capacities while reducing burden.

Stakeholders can expect a redesigned survey framework that is more actionable for SPOs, clearer in its advocacy function, and better able to support planning, sector dialogue, and IRCC-oriented policy work. This includes exploring role-specific versions, improving alignment with organizational workflows, and creating a more coherent structure that links data collection to sector priorities and downstream use.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 EVALUATION DESIGN

The evaluation themes and overall design of the evaluation were informed by a background review of past Sector Surveys (2018–2024), a preliminary interview, and discussions with previous researchers. The study applied a qualitative thematic analysis, with qualitative material collected through two facilitated focus groups with senior leadership of organizations across AAISA's membership. The analytic process combined a priori expectations shaped by earlier survey feedback with emergent coding that captured new insights raised by participants. This maintained consistency across themes while still allowing the analysis to reflect the sector's current realities.

2.2 DATA COLLECTION

Focus groups with senior leadership from AAISA member organizations were selected as the primary data collection method because they allow participants to test, refine, and challenge each other's interpretations in real time. This made the format well suited to exploring shared sector-level tools and collective experiences. Holding two groups

supported thematic saturation and allowed patterns to be observed across different organizational contexts while keeping respondent burden low.

The focus groups were not drawn from a random or representative sample; instead, invitations were sent to all AAISA member organizations that complete and use the Sector Survey. This approach ensured that the full sector had the opportunity to participate and supported open discussion, allowing leaders to voice concerns, learn from one another, and reinforce the survey's purpose of representation and advocacy. Unlike other sampling methods, which may miss certain insights or exclude smaller service types, this sector-wide invitation fostered a complete view of how the survey is used in practice. Participation was voluntary, with senior leaders self-selecting into one of the two scheduled sessions. In total, nine representatives attended, each responsible for submitting the survey and applying its outputs for planning, reporting, and advocacy. The group reflected a range of organizational types, including two language-focused providers, one mental health agency, and six multiservice settlement organizations serving the full settlement continuum. Regionally, five organizations were from Calgary, and one each from Edmonton, Brooks, Lethbridge, and Grande Prairie. A de-identified organizational breakdown is provided in **Appendix D**. A further breakdown of the focus groups is provided below:

Focus Group 1 (December 18, 2025): 4 participants

Focus Group 2 (January 13, 2026): 5 participants

Each discussion was guided by the focus group guide (see Appendix A), which was built around three thematic areas shaped through review of past Sector Surveys, preliminary scoping, and input from previous researchers. The preliminary interview and those earlier discussions consistently pointed to recurring issues in survey design, clarity of purpose, completion burden, interpretation of outputs, and gaps in capturing frontline perspectives. These scoping activities directly informed the three thematic sections used in the sessions, which are further described below:

Section 1: Survey Design and Experience

Participants discussed how they interpret the Sector Survey's purpose, how they believe that purpose should evolve, and their experiences with design features such as clarity, relevance, distribution methods, and perceived gaps.

Section 2: Analysis, Use, and Presentation of Results

This section examined the practical value of the current reporting formats, the long-term trends agencies would like to track, preferred ways of accessing results, and how organizations hope to integrate findings into planning, advocacy, or operational decisions.

Section 3: Frontline Staff as a Source of Data

Participants reflected on the particular insight frontline staff bring, how their perspectives differ from executive viewpoints, and what adaptations might be needed to make data collection feasible for frontline roles, including length, format, response burden, and strategies that support participation.

These thematic areas guided the flow of discussion and ensured that the inquiry remained attentive to sector priorities, organizational realities, and the broader goal of reshaping the

Sector Survey so it can better serve agencies that operate with very different capacities and constraints.

2.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data were examined using a thematic analysis process that combined a priori and emergent coding. The priori structure, drawn from earlier survey cycles and organizational priorities, provided a stable starting point, while emergent coding captured details that fell outside the initial frame. This approach maintains consistency across survey cycles but still accommodates the nuance and variability present when respondents described their organizational realities.

After the thematic structure was established, each excerpt was assessed using a language-based intensity rating to balance interpretation across organizations. Some agencies speak in broad system-level terms while others focus on immediate operational detail, and these differences can distort interpretation if left unadjusted. In practice, excerpts were reviewed for relative emphasis using a simple intensity categorization, which helped organize how strongly participants emphasized issues while recognizing variation in communication style and level of detail. The decision to integrate an intensity layer drew on research demonstrating how linguistic framing shapes meaning before content is even evaluated (Flusberg et al., 2024). Related work in qualitative content analysis underscores that language is context-dependent and tied to identity, habits, and social environments rather than being a neutral record (Biggs et al., 2021).

A qualitative intensity scale, from Low (INT-L), Moderate (INT-M), to High (INT-H), was used to assess transcribed responses. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the analytic structure and the intensity scale descriptors used in this process. Indicators such as wording strength, emotional tone, repetition, and consequence framing were considered during rating to ensure coding reflected both the force and meaning of the statements. INT-H ratings were particularly important as they signaled the comments that carried the strongest weight. These ratings were used to support interpretation and organization of themes rather than replace the underlying thematic analysis. Taken together, the thematic analysis and intensity-based linguistic assessment offer a more consistent way of interpreting organizational needs. This helps reduce variation caused by communication style and contributes to greater reliability in the findings.

Figure 1

Intensity codes used to distinguish quotes

Intensity code	Definition	Note	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Example Quote(s)
INT-L	Neutral, descriptive, or informational manner, with minimal emphasis, affect, or stated consequence.	Low intensity expressions indicate awareness or baseline engagement, but the issue is not framed as a priority or pressure point.	<input type="checkbox"/> Plain descriptive language; absence of absolutes or force. <input type="checkbox"/> Short or matter-of-fact responses <input type="checkbox"/> No emotional or moral language, or descriptors <input type="checkbox"/> No indication of urgency, risk, or impact <input type="checkbox"/> Theme appears only when directly prompted	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluative or value-laden language <input type="checkbox"/> Statements describing consequences or operational impact <input type="checkbox"/> Repeated or unsolicited emphasis	“We use the dashboard/ sector survey/ data occasionally for reference.” “The format is generally fine.”
INT-M	Meaningful or useful, with some elaboration or relevance; w/o strong emotional or urgency framing	Genuine engagement and perceived value, suggesting areas for refinement rather than urgent redesign.	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear evaluative language (useful, helpful, important) <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete examples or practical implications - applied or planning related examples <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate elaboration when prompted. <input type="checkbox"/> Operational relevance w/o risk framing. I.e. positive framing	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong affective or moral language <input type="checkbox"/> Statements framed as urgent, critical, or high-stakes <input type="checkbox"/> Repeated emphasis across multiple questions	“The data is helpful for advocacy conversations with funders.” “It does take time, but it is manageable if planned for.”
INT-H	Strong emotional, moral, or urgency framing, often accompanied by repetition, unsolicited elaboration, or explicit statements of consequence or risk.	Signal priority concerns, leverage points, or trust risks where action or communication is most needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong affect or frustration <input type="checkbox"/> Moral language or fairness framing <input type="checkbox"/> Statements of impact, risk, or harm <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition across multiple questions <input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneous elaboration or storytelling <input type="checkbox"/> Temporal depth (“for years,” “consistently,” “ongoing issue”)	<input type="checkbox"/> Brief strong statements without elaboration <input type="checkbox"/> One-off comments lacking context or emphasis	“We completed the survey and nothing happened. That really undermines trust in the process.” “This is a critical gap that affects frontline staff and ultimately client outcomes.”

Note. This is the description of every intensity label and includes exclusion criteria.

Figure 2

High Intensity (INT-H) further explained

Elaboration on INT-H	
Dimension	
Linguistic strength	Absolutes (“always,” “never,” “critical”)
	Modal force (“must,” “cannot”)
	Amplifiers (“deeply,” “extremely”)
Emotional Valence	Explicit affect (“frustrating,” “concerning”)
	Moral language (“unacceptable,” “unfair”)
	Somatic language (“exhausting,” “draining”)
Narrative Investment	Long responses
	Storytelling or lived examples
	Unprompted elaboration
Repetition and Emphasis	Returning to the same issue across questions
	Strengthening or correcting earlier statements
Consequence Framing	Operational impact (“this affects how we operate”)
	Risk or stakes (“this undermines trust,” “puts clients at risk”)
	Temporal persistence (“this has been an issue for years”)

Note. This chart further explains the criteria and dimensions included in high intensity labels (INT-H). Includes explanation for Linguistic Strength, Emotional Valence, Narrative Investment, Repetition/Emphasis and Consequence Framing.

Furthermore, a second evaluator independently recoded the intensity assessments without access to the initial ratings. Differences in classification were identified and reviewed collaboratively, with reference to the intensity descriptors, to refine shared interpretation and reduce coder drift. This reconciliation process strengthened consistency in how intensity assessments were applied across excerpts and improved the overall reliability of the data.

Many of the procedures used in this evaluation were designed to support quality control and reduce limitations in qualitative work. A consistent focus group guide, parallel facilitation, comparison of themes across groups, and linguistic analysis all aimed to standardize interpretation. Sharing questions in advance also encouraged individual reflection before discussion. While some variation in how participants interpret and express their views is unavoidable, these measures were intended to minimize its impact and strengthen confidence in the findings. It is also important to note that, although the Sector Survey is distributed to fifty-five AAISA member organizations, only nine

participated in the focus groups; however, these nine represented many of the sector's most established and widely recognized service providers, offering meaningful insight despite the smaller number.

3. RESULTS

This results section outlines the main themes that emerged from participant feedback. Each theme follows the same structure: the first paragraph presents the most prominent and high-intensity reflections (INT-H), and subsequent paragraphs that follow add relevant perspectives and depth. This approach keeps the key points clear while still capturing the broader range of insight shared across interviews. The section closes with several additional themes that did not require full write-ups but were still important to include because of their relevance.

3.1 ADVOCACY AND FUNDING LEVERAGE

This theme revolved around how strongly participants relied on the survey for both funding and advocacy work. A substantial number of respondents emphasized that it is difficult to justify funding requests without something concrete to reference, and that sector-level data gives them firmer ground when applying for grants. One individual noted that a locally rooted, Alberta-focused survey lets organizations draw directly from shared findings rather than relying only on their own experience, adding that “our insights are valid, and you can find them there” when writing proposals or responding to calls for proposals. Others described the survey as a form of leverage, especially when funding signals feel vague or unstable. That uncertainty often leads organizations to hesitate on applications unless they have evidence solid enough to support their case. Some participants also pointed to the value of raw data, noting that it would let them tailor their evidence more precisely for grant work. One interviewee suggested that offering grant-relevant data might even boost completion rates because it aligns closely with the work organizations are already doing.

The remaining comments turned toward advocacy, both sector-wide and within individual organizations. Participants tended to describe advocacy as speaking for people who cannot always be in the room themselves, and they appreciated that shared provincial data helps unify those messages. It reduces the chances of contradictory information reaching government stakeholders. Many also valued having the survey operate through an umbrella organization rather than a direct pipeline to funders, since that structure carries a different kind of credibility and helps align the sector around common messages. Several noted that umbrella-backed data remains useful well beyond IRCC, especially when approaching non-IRCC funders who may be less familiar with system-level gaps, workload pressures, staffing shortages, and the capacity limits that current funding envelopes fail to capture. Across the board, participants described the survey as a practical tool that

supports their ability to justify funding requests, communicate sector needs, and coordinate advocacy efforts across Alberta.

3.2 FRONTLINE STAFF PERSPECTIVES

This theme focused on how frontline perspectives shape the sector’s understanding of day-to-day realities. A substantial number of participants emphasized the emotional labour carried by frontline staff, the kind that often remains invisible to leadership even as it accumulates. Many spoke about the shifting emotional landscape of clients over time, which frontline workers observe directly. Participants also noted how workload pressures and emotional demands influence motivation and affect the quality of work. Frontline staff were described as holding practical solutions because they experience targets, daily strain, and client needs firsthand.

One participant illustrated this distinction clearly. Executives may understand that a literacy learner stays in programming longer, but they do not experience the classroom impact of teaching the same individual for multiple years while onboarding new clients. They described this as “a real pain point for our frontline staff” and stressed the importance of creating space for instructors to articulate what that experience feels like. Another participant emphasized the differences in organizational rhythms: executives think in multi-year timelines and system-level implications, while frontline staff focus on preparing classes, advancing learners, and managing immediate realities. Participants also highlighted the variation across frontline roles, noting that each carries different responsibilities and pressures. This supported calls for role-specific tools or more deliberately scoped survey instruments that reflect these distinct contexts.

The remaining comments focused on how these role differences appear in survey responses and the trends each group notices. Interviewees pointed out that the same question can produce different assessments of “critical needs” depending on whether the respondent is an instructor, coordinator, or manager, and that being able to filter responses by role would strengthen alignment across organizational levels. Participants also highlighted the need for more granular information on client progression, resource levels, and staffing patterns, noting that the absence of such detail can lead to frustration or misconceptions. Several suggested including information on instructor counts, full-time positions, and staff tenure to clarify workforce dynamics. Others noted that involving frontline workers in survey design increases both relevance and buy-in, especially when the tool reflects their day-to-day experiences. Overall, frontline perspectives were described as central to understanding immediate sector conditions and ensuring they are accurately represented in sector-wide data.

3.3 COMPARATIVE INSIGHTS

This theme settled around how organizations lean on comparative insights to place themselves within the wider settlement landscape. A substantial number of participants

described how comparison sharpens their reading of sector conditions, especially when interpreting who is being served, where, and what that looks like across regions. Several comments pointed directly to planning and proposal work. One participant explained that seeing “the populations served across the sector and the percentage of those populations” becomes especially useful when preparing RFPs, as it clarifies whether a given population exists in a region, whether it is being captured accurately, and which organizations are already carrying that work.

Participants also spoke about how comparative insights connect frontline experiences with provincial-level views, creating a bridge between immediate realities and broader system patterns. There was notable interest in how comparison encourages knowledge sharing, especially among smaller centers that may not have broad networks. One interviewee put it plainly: when another organization is having success with training, professional development, or external supports, that information allows agencies to share resources or make referrals in ways that strengthen overall capacity.

Overall, participants described comparative insights as tools that help organizations benchmark, assess their own needs, interpret performance with more accuracy, and build a clearer understanding of sector conditions rather than relying solely on individual experience.

3.4 REQUESTS FOR MORE GRANULAR OR NUANCED DATA

Participants were clear about wanting data that is more specific, more layered, and delivered in ways that match how they work. Many emphasized that when reporting categories are too broad, smaller or specialized groups become invisible. Disability-related work was mentioned as one example. An interviewee noted that when only “one percent” of organizations formally report serving newcomers with disabilities, the figure becomes unusable in wider reporting, even though many organizations support these clients in quieter, less formalized ways. Because of this, more precise demographic information was described as essential, and some participants suggested supplemental or parallel surveys to capture details that do not fit inside the current structure.

Secondary migration surfaced as another significant gap. Participants described it as a major source of client movement that is not tracked, even though it reshapes service needs. One person explained that individuals arriving from other provinces due to financial strain, housing shortages, or unemployment are often “not in a good place,” yet none of that movement appears in federal reporting. Others highlighted the need to capture service intensity, noting its connection to workload pressure and burnout. Participants also expressed interest in reporting that reflects how policy or funding shifts influence their services, along with documentation of how organizations respond to burnout so that practical strategies can be shared.

The remaining comments focused on access and structure. Participants asked for raw data so they could run their own analyses, and some recommended organizing reporting by center type or by specific demographic groups. Information on funding sources and how

they are structured was also identified as missing. A few participants suggested aligning reporting language with IRCC terminology to make outputs easier to interpret. Across these inputs, the message remained consistent: organizations want role-specific and population-specific information that moves beyond broad trends and provides a clearer picture of what is happening on the ground. Without this level of detail, important differences are lost and decision-making becomes more difficult.

3.5 STRATEGIC ROADMAP AND PREDICTIVE INSIGHTS

Participants emphasized the need for clearer strategic direction and forward-looking insights across the sector. Many stressed that an umbrella organization should help agencies understand emerging trends and where the sector is heading, especially during strained periods when prioritization becomes challenging. Several interviewees noted that guidance on which services are most essential would help organizations adjust and direct resources more effectively when pressures rise. There was also interest in AAISA-led longitudinal forecasting that could support planning and discussions with funders, along with the view that survey data should inform program planning, policy development, and long-term strategic thinking. High-intensity responses highlighted that service demand often exceeds funded capacity and that sector-level surveying could clarify where needs are increasing over time. Participants also expressed the need for predictive insights within language training. As one individual noted, having clarity on wait lists “year over year” across rural and urban contexts would help manage client expectations and influence decisions about relocation, since frontline staff often advise clients on whether a move will improve access to services. Others pointed to bottlenecks across CLB levels and described these as actionable system insights that could strengthen strategic accountability and align sector conditions with broader policy commitments.

The remaining comments centered on how longitudinal data could strengthen the sector’s ability to plan, compare trends, and refine services. Participants noted that tracking the complexity of client needs and the pressure on referral pathways would provide a clearer picture of how the system operates over time. Some respondents wanted clearer guidance on approaching conversations with funders, especially when shifts in policy or funding envelopes create uncertainty. Others suggested that survey findings could help organizations interpret changes in demand and identify patterns that inform future service delivery. Overall, participants conveyed the need for a roadmap that supports long-term planning, predictive insight, and a more coordinated approach to addressing system-level challenges, underscoring that strategic data can guide the sector in understanding where it is heading.

3.6 OUTPUT FORMAT PREFERENCES

Participants emphasized the need for clearer, more accessible, and more layered reporting formats. Many noted that the sector benefits when results are shared broadly because this supports transparency, strengthens collective understanding, and reinforces a sense of sector-wide impact. Several high-intensity reflections pointed to a preference for town

halls or live discussions, explaining that these sessions help contextualize findings, support clarification, and build shared understanding. There was also strong interest in tiered outputs that include infographics, concise summaries, full technical reports, and town halls, as this range makes the information usable for different audiences. One participant described how difficult it can be to work through a long report, noting that not everyone has time for a “twenty-six-page document,” and that infographics and short public-facing summaries help make findings more accessible. Participants further stressed that frontline staff have different learning styles and require formats that are not text-heavy to avoid information bottlenecks where executives are the only ones accessing or interpreting findings. Small, shareable outputs were described as a way to prevent information from “dying with executives” and to support internal dissemination, with the expectation that outputs would also assist communication across management and frontline teams and connect to downstream uses such as funding applications.

The remaining comments centered on matching outputs to audience needs. Participants expressed interest in post-release discussion forums where staff could confirm interpretations and ask questions after reviewing the materials. Some interviewees suggested that methodology sections be streamlined, and that visuals and key findings carry more weight to reduce cognitive load and improve usability. Others noted that identifying gaps and service coverage through the outputs supports sector sensemaking without creating pressure for immediate decision-making. Taken together, participants emphasized that survey outputs should be practical, accessible, and layered; meeting the needs of those who require quick takeaways, those who rely on deeper detail, and those who use the materials for planning, internal communication, and funding-related work.

3.7 FORMAT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Participants focused on the practical realities of how the survey is delivered and how staff move through it. Many expressed a clear preference for multiple-choice or sliding-scale formats because these reduce cognitive load and allow respondents to complete the survey efficiently. There was also interest in having the questions available in advance, outside the survey interface, so staff can prepare their responses beforehand. Participants recognized the trade-off between usability and the need for consistent data collection. Another reflection emphasized the importance of a centralized distribution structure, where executives can easily pass a frontline-specific version of the survey to the appropriate staff without confusion or loss of access.

The remaining reflections were generally positive about the existing approach. One participant described the survey as “very quick to fill out,” noting that it aligns well with their day-to-day program knowledge and challenges. Others acknowledged that multiple-choice formats inevitably compress some detail, though major structural changes were not expected. A few participants suggested that seeing aggregated response options alongside the questions would help them interpret sector-level patterns, while recognizing that this may not always be feasible. Across these comments, the preference was

consistent: a format that stays simple, accessible, and aligned with organizational workflows, while still giving staff opportunities to prepare in advance and distribute the survey effectively. In this sense, the theme returned to its central point that usability and accessibility shape both the quality of responses and the overall experience of contributing to sector data.

3.8 OTHER THEMES THAT WERE NOTABLE BUT NOT AS PROMINENT

Feedback Loops And Transparency

This theme captured concerns about how AAISA communicates the purpose, use, and downstream impact of the data collected through the survey. Participants described how the absence of clear follow-up can erode trust over time, shaping both participation and the sense of whether their contributions carry any real weight. Several high-intensity reflections added that uneven or unclear follow-through affects how AAISA's credibility is read across the sector and influences whether organizations feel any shared ownership of the data. Respondents also raised uncertainty about the intended audience for the findings and whether the survey is positioned as an advocacy tool, an informational resource, or some combination of the two. Participants noted that clarity improves response quality, particularly for qualitative input, because staff understand what depth of reflection is needed. While the overall tone remained constructive, they emphasized that transparent communication and consistent feedback loops support stronger engagement and more confident sector participation.

Outdated Or Irrelevant Questions / Skewed Data

This theme refers to concerns that certain survey questions no longer reflect current sector realities or that the survey structure unintentionally skews the picture of the sector. Participants noted that when large Edmonton-based organizations make up a substantial share of responses, the resulting dataset can tilt the picture of sector conditions and create a reading that does not match the distribution of needs across Alberta. Several respondents pointed out that outdated or poorly aligned questions add to survey fatigue and weaken the accuracy of what is reported. Others stressed the importance of ensuring that sub-regions and smaller centers are represented in proportion to their actual presence in the system. Taken together, these reflections point to a need for ongoing refinement, so the survey reflects how the sector truly operates rather than reproducing existing imbalances.

Representation And Inclusivity

This theme reflects how respondents understand the importance of representing diverse voices, experiences, and types of sector expertise within the survey tool. Several participants noted that when non-specialists are asked to comment on specialized areas, accuracy suffers and the perceived fairness of the survey decreases, with high-intensity reflections emphasizing an "epistemic mismatch" between roles and questions. Others raised concerns that broad categories can flatten the reality of diverse services and contribute to misrepresentation. At the same time, open-text fields were valued because

they add nuance without requiring a full redesign. Together, these insights point to the need for a structure that captures a wider range of perspectives without diluting expertise or losing the specificities of different service contexts.

Survey Focus And Relevance

This theme addresses concerns about whether the survey is targeted enough and whether the questions remain relevant across different services and roles. Participants noted that mixed-service surveys can feel diluted, and that service-specific formats would improve speed, delegation, and data quality, with high-intensity reflections emphasizing the operational consequences when relevance drops. Respondents also highlighted the importance of prioritizing critical data gaps and avoiding duplication of information AAISA already holds. Others described how scanning through non-applicable questions wastes time and suggested more effective branching to protect response quality. While most participants preferred brevity and closed-ended formats, they framed this preference around efficiency and usability rather than urgency. Overall, the theme points to the need for precise targeting, so the survey remains relevant, efficient, and useful across different parts of the sector.

Survey Burden Or Length Concerns

This theme focuses on reflections about the overall cognitive load and perceived effort associated with the survey. Participants described survey fatigue across multiple AAISA touchpoints. They framed these concerns as system-level coordination challenges rather than emotional strain or harm. Respondents also discussed the tension between thoughtful responses and the desire to complete the survey quickly, pointing to the need for design choices that respect people's time while still capturing meaningful information. Overall, the theme reflects an interest in survey optimization and efficient design rather than distress or operational risk.

Survey Timelines

This theme describes reflections on when the survey should be distributed to maximize engagement and depth. Respondents generally felt the current frequency is balanced and supports trend visibility without increasing burden. They noted that seasonal capacity varies significantly, with summer being particularly challenging due to vacations, onboarding cycles, and smaller staffing pools. Several also mentioned that surveys clustering after summer creates cognitive overload for small centers, especially where executive roles are concentrated. While no perfect timing was identified, fiscal year markers and predictable cycles were seen as workable. Overall, timeline discussions were framed as operational planning questions rather than emotional or high-pressure issues.

Incentives And Motivators

This theme relates to what might increase completion rates and support ongoing participation. Respondents framed incentives as part of the broader value proposition of membership, describing how tiered access to insights could encourage organizations to participate more consistently. Others mentioned that small tangible incentives - such as gift cards - can materially increase frontline response rates in a realistic and pragmatic way.

Some participants noted that incentives support behavior change but do not solve broader engagement challenges on their own. Overall, the theme reflected practical suggestions rather than urgency, focusing on motivation, participation, and strengthening the perceived usefulness of the survey.

4. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SECTOR SURVEY

The following points summarize the practical suggestions that emerged directly from the results. Each suggestion is straightforward, easy to apply, and listed below to support clear communication and future planning.

Frontline-Specific Survey

Frontline staff was described as having pressures that sit far below the level of executive planning. Classroom fatigue, shifting client moods, and the slow stretch of long-term teaching stay invisible in a single instrument. A dedicated survey would let that knowledge breathe and prevent it from being flattened into leadership-level narratives.

Shorter Completion Time

Respondents made it clear that long surveys lost their attention. Keeping the instrument short helps protect accuracy during periods when small centers are juggling everything at once.

Improved Branching

Several people found themselves scanning past blocks of questions they knew had nothing to do with their programs. Cleaner branching would solve that drag and keep respondents inside the material that actually fits their role.

Expanded Categories For Specialized Work

Some groups simply fell out of view. Disability-related services were the clearest example, where broad categories erased the real volume of work happening quietly across agencies. More granularity fixes this issue.

Capture Secondary Migration And Service Intensity

A number of respondents pointed to steady flows of clients arriving from other provinces/cities with housing strain or financial instability. These movements reshape demand but don't appear anywhere in the current structure. Adding these items helps trace pressures that matter to frontline planning.

Raw Data Access Or Flexible Data Packages

Organizations want the ability to run their own comparisons, especially for grant proposals. A rigid report structure limits what they can extract. Providing more flexible data access directly supports how agencies already use the survey.

Workforce And Burnout-Related Items

Staffing shortages, burnout, and the emotional wear that accumulates over time surfaced regularly. A few grounded questions would let the sector track those patterns.

Advance Distribution Of Questions

Respondents wanted time to gather numbers or check with colleagues before entering the survey. Sharing the question list in advance supports that preparation without affecting response quality.

Simple, Fast Question Formats

Multiple-choice items, few sliding scales, and minimal text boxes kept showing up as preferences. These formats let people move steadily without losing clarity.

Clear Direction On Who Should Respond

A point of frustration was being asked about program areas outside one's expertise. Labeling sections more clearly would solve that mismatch.

Alignment With Ircc Terminology

Different vocabulary for the same concepts creates small but irritating interpretation gaps. Aligning phrasing where reasonable would help agencies translate and utilize findings.

Strengthened Regional And Center-Type Comparisons

Organizations rely on comparison to understand who they serve and where they sit in the wider landscape. More explicit regional and center-type breakdowns would fill that gap.

Layered Output Formats

Participants asked for formats that move easily through organizations: a short summary for quick distribution, an infographic for frontline teams, a full technical report for depth, discussion forums, and a town hall to bring results into shared conversation. This avoids a pattern where only executives see the information.

Stronger Communication Loops

Several respondents admitted they weren't sure what the survey was for or how their data was used. Clearer follow-through restores trust and reinforces why participation matters.

Adjusted Timelines

Summer workloads, staff turnover, and onboarding cycles make certain windows difficult. A deeper look at delivery timing would reduce the strain felt most acutely by small centers.

Frontline Incentives When Appropriate

Small incentives can shift participation patterns, especially for staff balancing emotional and cognitive loads. They don't solve deeper engagement issues, but they definitely increase completion rates.

Simpler Internal Distribution

Some executives described knowing their team the best, making them the best suited to distribute specific surveys within their team if needed.

Streamlined Methodology And Clearer Visuals

Many wanted quicker access to the actual findings without lengthy methodological explanations. More space for visuals and a lighter methods section would make the reports easier to use.

Co-Design With The Sector

This evaluation showed the value of shaping the instrument with the people who complete it. That process should continue, especially if a frontline-specific version is introduced. Frontline staff know what matters in their work and what questions are irrelevant.

Longitudinal Tracking Through A Core Set Of Stable Questions

Certain items need to stay the same year after year to show movement. A small set of essential questions, chosen with IRCC and sector partners, would build a clearer picture of what is shifting and what trends remain consistent.

5. CONCLUSION: SUGGESTIONS IN A BROADER CONTEXT

At its core, this evaluation revisited the purpose of the Sector Survey and examined how effectively it supports shared understanding across the sector and provides dependable evidence for planning and advocacy. A review of past survey cycles and related national and Alberta studies of similar sector tools points to recurring challenges with clarity of purpose, cognitive burden, and uneven follow-through (e.g., IRCC 2024; Esses et al., 2013; AAPOR 2022; Sanders & Stappers, 2008; Hartman et al., 2010; Lydén et al., 2023). These reflections show that similar patterns and solutions have emerged elsewhere, providing useful context for interpreting the findings here.

Focus group results identified several core issues that the current survey does not fully address. Participants pointed to misalignment between survey questions and day-to-day realities, uneven representation across organizational contexts, and a level of cognitive load that affects both response quality and completion rates. They also emphasized the need for stronger longitudinal tracking, noting that inconsistent indicators limit the survey's ability to show change over time, support benchmarking across years, or compare conditions across organizations. Similarly, the current structure offers limited capacity for predictive insights, making it difficult for agencies to anticipate shifts in demand within an evolving service landscape. These issues reflect structural misalignment rather than lack of willingness to participate.

The recommendations emerging from this evaluation focus on practical adjustments that respond directly to these gaps. Participants emphasized clearer purpose, simpler design,

and more precise targeting through shorter modules, improved branching, and instruments tailored to specific service roles. They also highlighted the importance of stronger feedback loops and outputs accessible across organizational levels. Upcoming AAISA initiatives may help support some of these improvements. For example, AAISA's developing Knowledge Hub, which is expected to include a range of dashboards, including one focused on the Sector Survey, may provide a more accessible way for organizations to review patterns and interpret results, with its utility likely to grow as the platform evolves.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the Sector Survey retains strategic value; however, adjustments are required for it to better reflect sector realities. The proposed changes would reduce cognitive burden, improve interpretability, and strengthen the survey's ability to function as a practical tool for decision-making, planning, and public policy work across the sector.

REFERENCES

- AAPOR. (2022). *Best Practices for Survey Research*. American Association for Public Opinion Research. <https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Survey-Best-Practices.pdf>
- Biggs, R., de Vos, A., Preiser, R., Clements, H., Maciejewski, K., & Schluter, M. (2021). *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods for Social-Ecological Systems* (1st ed., pp. 270–280). Routledge.
- Esses, V. M., Burstein, M., Ravanera, Z., Hallman, S., & Medianu, S. (2013). *Alberta Settlement Outcomes Survey* (pp. 1–52). Government of Alberta.
- Evaluation of the Settlement Program* (pp. 1–74). (2017). Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.
- Flusberg, S. J., Holmes, K. J., Thibodeau, P. H., Nabi, R. L., & Matlock, T. (2024). The Psychology of Framing: How Everyday Language Shapes the Way We Think, Feel, and Act. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 25(3), 105–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15291006241246966>
- Government of Alberta. (2015). *Alberta's occupational demand and supply outlook*. <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/1da5b1b0-c061-430c-a9e5-65f79226bd2c/resource/1f6039ad-c1e4-4ee2-8ae5-c23bf1ec9ac3/download/2016-albertas-occupational-demand-and-supply-outlook-2015-2025.pdf>
- Government of Canada. (2023, November 1). *2023 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration*. [www.canada.ca. https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/annual-report-parliament-immigration-2023.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/annual-report-parliament-immigration-2023.html)
- Hartman, A., Jain, A. N., Ramanathan, J., Antonis Ramfos, Van, Zirpins, C., Tai, S., Yannis Charalabidis, Pasic, A., Johannessen, T., & T. Grønsund. (2010). Participatory Design of Public Sector Services. *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 219–233. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-15172-9_21
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. (2013). *Sense of belonging: literature review - Canada.ca*. [Canada.ca. https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/reports-statistics/research/sense-belonging-literature-review.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/reports-statistics/research/sense-belonging-literature-review.html)
- IRCC. (2024). *Newcomer Outcomes Survey Results (2022-2023)*. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada .
- Neisary, S. (2026). Digital equity in Canada: A mixed-methods study of access, use, and empowerment among immigrants, youth, and newcomer ELL youth. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2025.2601866>
- Romero, D., Kwan, A., & Chavkin, W. (2013). Application of Empirical Research Findings in Public Health Advocacy: Focus on Maternal, Child, and Reproductive Health. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(4), 633–644. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12033>
- Sanders, E. B.-N., & Stappers, P. J. (2008). Co-creation and the new landscapes of design. *CoDesign*, 4(1), 5–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710880701875068>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Dates: December 17th, 2025 and January 13th, 2026

Duration: 90 minutes

Section 1: Survey Design & Experience

This section helps us understand your overall experience with the survey. Your insights guide us in creating a process that feels meaningful and ensure each question feels clear, relevant, and valuable to you.

Q1. In your words, describe what the purpose or goal of the Sector Survey is?

Q2. What do you believe the purpose of the sector survey should be?

Q3. What do you like about the current sector survey?

**Consider components such as how the survey is delivered, the format it uses, and the overall approach to distribution. Reflecting on the clarity, relevance, and structure of the questions included in the survey.*

Q4. What do you not like about the current Sector Survey and how can it be improved?

Q5. Are there gaps are not being addressed by the Sector Survey?

Section 2: Analysis, Use and Presentation

Your feedback is an invaluable source of information for understanding Alberta's newcomer sector. This section explores how we can ensure your information is useful and easily accessible for you.

Q1. What trends would you like to track or understand across multiple years?

Q2. How should AAISA continue to publish a report on the Sector Survey and present the results (e.g., short report + infographic, townhall)?

Q3. What are some ways that you would like AAISA to use the information captured in addition to our regular professional development, policy and evaluation or engagement activities?

Q4. What are some ways that you would like to access or use the data for your own organizational uses?

Section 3: Frontline Staff as a Source of Data

We are considering expanding the sector survey to capture their vast experience and knowledge. We want to understand how information from frontline staff can be gathered, shared, and structured in a way that feels useful for both your organization and its leadership.

Q1. How is the perspective of the frontline staff different than executive leadership?

Q2. What areas can executive directors address in the survey context which frontline staff cannot?

Q3. What areas can frontline staff address in the survey context which executive directors cannot?

Q4. What approach would you recommend for effectively collecting data from frontline staff within your organization?

**Consider prompts such as:*

- *Given their workload, what survey format or method would be most workable for frontline staff?*
- *What strategies could help us achieve strong response rates?*
- *What survey length feels realistic while still gathering meaningful information?*

APPENDIX B – SECTOR SURVEY EVOLUTION OVERVIEW

Year	Stated Purpose	Survey Format	Major Themes	Client Categories Included	Type of Survey	Key Changes	Strengths	Weaknesses
2018	Understand sector capacity & improve AAISA's umbrella role	Mix of closed/open-ended Qs, detailed analysis	Service types, barriers, AAISA satisfaction, sector needs	PRs, GARs, PSRs, Canadian Citizens, Refugees	Mixed: feedback + exploratory research	Baseline survey, qualitative focus	Strong qualitative insight; baseline for future surveys	Findings under-leveraged; qualitative insights not tied to action
2019	Assess organizational demographics, waitlists, AAISA engagement	Structured, closed-ended Qs, includes open comment options	Org profiles, waitlists, partnerships, AAISA feedback	PRs, TFWs, Claimants, Citizens, Undocumented	Feedback + benchmarking	Intro of staffing, language delivery, waitlists	Expanded service/staffing data; good member engagement tracking	Lengthy; some question duplication; hard to synthesize (34 questions with too many subitems)
2020	Understand context/priorities of the sector in 2020	Structured Qs, includes rankings and comments	Services, waitlists, tech needs, policy priorities	PRs, Claimants, TFWs, Citizens, Undocumented	Feedback + sector scan	Emphasis on tech capacity, material use rating	Standardized structure: tech + training needs highlighted	Too focused on counts; limited strategic insight or outcomes
2021	Capture demographic, service, and COVID-19 impact data	Detailed, multi-section, semi-standardized	COVID impact, service trends, engagement & training	PRs, Claimants, TFWs, Citizens, Undocumented	Feedback + needs assessment	COVID response analysis; deeper client detail	COVID-relevant insights; balanced service/demographic data	COVID lens may limit future relevance; some redundancy
2022	Identify system-level trends and priorities; support policy advocacy	Structured with rankings, multiple choice, open comments	Client needs, org priorities, Afghan/Ukrainian response	PRs, Claimants, TFWs, Citizens, Undocumented	Research-informed feedback + policy framing	First to use cross-sector + crisis-specific trends	Policy-aligned; covered Afghan/Ukrainian trends; solid rankings	Dense format (too much selections etc.) cognitively demanding; overlap in Qs
2023	Clarify sector demographics and CFP 2024 input	Structured, CFP feedback integrated, rankings	Funding models, eligibility gaps, policy asks to IRCC	PRs, Claimants, TFWs, Citizens, Undocumented	Sector feedback + advocacy data for IRCC	Aligns sector feedback to CFP; high policy use	Highly relevant to IRCC CFP; integrates funding/policy feedback	Complex framing; more suited to EDs;
2024	Deep dive into 5 key services + AI use in the sector	Very targeted Qs on select services, short/long answer	Language, employment, health, childcare, housing, AI	PRs, Claimants, TFWs, Citizens, Undocumented	Exploratory research + thematic feedback	Focuses deeply on 5 service themes + AI insight	Focused deep dive on 5 themes; explores AI use; strong design maturity	Heavy narrative load (aka high cognitive burden); excluded some service areas; high data ask

APPENDIX C – THEME CODEBOOK FOR EVALUATION

	Theme Code	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Analytical Note	Definition
#e87331	Comparative insights	Mentions of comparing results across organisations or regions. References to benchmarking or sector-wide positioning.	General comments about sector trends without explicit comparison.	Keywords: compare, benchmark, ranking, sector-wide comparison, where we sit, relative position. Context often linked to strategic planning or organisational improvement.	Comments that emphasise the value of the survey for comparing organisations within the sector, identifying relative positioning, or benchmarking performance.
#92d050	Advocacy and funding leverage	Mentions of using survey data for grant applications or proposals. References to advocacy with IRCC or other funders.	General comments about survey purpose without linking to advocacy or funding.	Keywords: advocacy, grants, funding, leverage, influence, policy, proposals. Often tied to funding cycles or strategic lobbying.	Comments that highlight the survey's role in supporting advocacy efforts, influencing policy, or securing funding opportunities.
#00b0f0	Format and accessibility	Mentions of wanting questions upfront or outside the survey format. Comments on clarity and usability of survey design.	Complaints about survey length (covered under Survey Burden).	Keywords: format, layout, upfront questions, clarity, easy to use, accessible. Context often linked to preparation and reducing confusion.	Comments on the structure, layout, or ease of accessing survey questions.
#e49edd	Survey burden or length concerns	Mentions of survey being too big, requiring prep, or taking too long.	Comments about frequency or timing (covered under Survey Timelines).	Keywords: burden, heavy, time-consuming, overwhelming, prep work, complex. Often expressed as barriers to participation.	Comments expressing concern about the effort, time, or complexity involved in completing the survey.
#4d93d9	Survey timelines	Mentions of frequency being appropriate or too intensive. Suggestions for optimal timing (e.g., aligning with funding cycles).	Complaints about survey length or complexity.	Keywords: frequency, timing, annual, cadence, scheduling. Context often linked to operational capacity and planning cycles.	Comments about how often the survey should be conducted and the timing of its distribution.
#f1a983	Incentives and motivators	Mentions of perks, extra data, or motivators to encourage participation.	General comments about engagement without specific mention of incentives.	Context: Often tied to strategies for improving response rates. Keywords: incentives, motivators, perks, rewards, extra data, recognition. Often linked to improving response rates.	Suggestions or comments about providing incentives or additional benefits for completing the survey.
#b5e6a2	Feedback loops and transparency	Mentions of wanting results shared back or updates after survey completion. References to visible impact or actions taken based on survey findings.	General comments about survey purpose without follow-up or transparency.	Keywords: follow-up, transparency, impact, feedback, response. Often linked to trust-building and accountability.	Comments expressing a desire for follow-up, visible impact, and clarity on how survey data is used.
#94cdf8	Outdated or irrelevant questions/skewed data	Mentions of questions being outdated or not reflecting current services. Comments about irrelevance of specific data points (e.g., staff background, age specifics). Suggestions for updating or revising questions to better align with sector needs.	Complaints about confusing wording. Issues related to timing or alignment.	Indicates content relevance issues, suggesting a need for updates to reflect evolving sector realities. Coding tip: Look for language about "outdated," "irrelevant," "needs updating," or suggestions for alternative formats (e.g., age ranges, new service categories).	Agencies identify certain questions as outdated or irrelevant to current sector practices, reducing the perceived usefulness of the data collected.
#f2ceef	Requests for more granular or nuanced data	Mentions of wanting deeper insights into housing types, turnover reasons, or settlement speed. Suggestions for adding questions that capture nuanced or historically overlooked trends. Language indicating gaps in existing data or desire for more specificity.	General usability or clarity issues.	Coding tip: Look for language like "would be valuable," "hasn't been looked at," "not a lot of data," "needs more attention," or requests for specific details beyond current dashboard scope.	Agencies express interest in collecting more detailed, specific, or niche data points that go beyond the current dashboard scope. These requests often focus on understudied areas such as housing fit, turnover causes, and settlement timelines.

#a6c9ec	Strategic roadmap and predictive insights	Mentions of predictive modelling, strategic guidance, or future trend analysis. Suggestions for AAISA to provide sector-wide planning tools or roadmaps.	General comments about trends without forecasting or strategic planning.	Keywords: roadmap, predictive modelling, trends, future planning, forecasting. Often linked to advocacy and resource allocation.	Comments highlighting the need for AAISA to use longitudinal data for forecasting trends and guiding sector planning.
#fe00e00	Representation and inclusivity	Mentions of gaps in data for specific populations (e.g., newcomers with disabilities) or regions (e.g., rural areas). References to skewed representation or lack of diversity in responses.	General comments about survey burden or timing without equity context.	Keywords: representation, gaps, inclusivity, underserved groups, rural, minority. Often linked to fairness and completeness of sector analysis.	Comments expressing concern about missing voices or underrepresented groups in survey data.
#7030a0	Frontline staff perspectives	Mentions of emotional labour, direct client work, or trends observed by frontline staff. Suggestions for including frontline staff in survey processes.	General comments about leadership perspectives without reference to frontline roles.	Keywords: frontline, emotional labour, direct client work, staff insights. Often linked to practical service delivery challenges.	Comments recognising the unique insights frontline staff provide about client needs and operational realities.
#00b050	Survey focus and relevance	Mentions of focused surveys for particular service areas (e.g., language-only surveys). Suggestions for short completion times or role-specific questions.	General complaints about survey burden without reference to focus or relevance.	Keywords: focused, concise, relevant, targeted questions, short survey. Often linked to usability and engagement.	Comments calling for surveys to be targeted and concise for specific groups or roles.
#fc000	Output format preferences	Mentions of wanting interactive dashboards, visual summaries, or downloadable reports. Suggestions for improving data presentation (e.g., charts, graphs, comparative views). Comments about current format being hard to navigate or less useful.	Complaints about confusing questions. Requests for additional data points.	Indicates desire for improved usability and visualization, suggesting that format impacts engagement. Coding tip: Look for language about "interactive," "visual," "downloadable," "easy to navigate," or "better presentation."	Agencies express preferences for how data should be presented or accessed, including suggestions for more interactive, visual, or user-friendly formats.

APPENDIX D – ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICE TYPES

Organizaiton Name	Region	Service type
<i>December 18th Focus Group</i>		
Columbia College	Calgary, Alberta	Language
Centre for Newcomers	Calgary, Alberta	Settlement
EmployAbilities	Edmonton, Alberta	Settlement
Making Changes Association	Calgary, Alberta	Settlement
<i>January 13th Focus Group</i>		
Grande Prairie Council for Lifelong Learning	Grand Prairie	Language
Columbia Immigrant Centre for Foundational Skills Training	Calgary, Alberta	Settlement
Lethbridge Family Services	Lethbridge, Alberta	Settlement
The SPEC Association	Brooks Alberta	Settlement
Trellis	Calgary, Alberta	Mental Health