

## CHAPTER 2

### SETTLEMENT/INTEGRATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

#### INTRODUCTION

As noted in Chapter 1, the charts on the following pages were arrived at through a process that started with two community strategy sessions where Task Groups were formed to explore specific needs and gaps related to overall immigrant/refugee settlement, employment and integration. Those Task Groups then identified needs, set priorities from among those needs and then developed Strategic Directions and Action Strategies for each priority.

Focus groups with immigrants/refugees and employers were then held and the results from those generally confirmed the priorities identified by the Task Groups (see Chapter 7, *Consultations* for a summary discussion of those focus groups).

On March 24, 2010, a Community Forum was held where over 200 people participated in reviewing the Strategic Directions and Action Strategies (as well as the proposed structure). Through small group discussions and an exercise in which each individual participants could indicate his/her support for the plan, participants were able to comment on aspects of the Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan and/or on the individual Strategic Directions and Action Strategies found in the charts below.

#### COMMUNITY FORUM RESPONSE

Generally, Community Forum participants supported the Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan. While there were suggestions for greater emphasis on one or more of the Strategic Directions and some individual suggestions for additional Action Strategies, there was no emerging consensus from either the notes taken in small group discussions or through the individual continuum exercise on major changes to specific strategic directions or action strategies in the Plan.

There were, however, some general comments or suggestions made by a number of participants that are worth noting:

- The Strategic Directions will need to be prioritized because it would be impossible for the new LIPC to undertake all of the priority Strategic Directions at once. Some participants also noted that many of the action strategies are not specific enough and require much more detail if they are going to be successfully implemented. (Please note that the Next Steps in the LIPC Draft Report had acknowledged that the new LIPC would have to decide which priorities to action first and would then need to develop more detailed action strategies for those chosen.);
- Many participants urged that implementation of the Action Plan needs to be done as quickly as possible with a few suggesting that not a lot of time should be spent on more research as the community is fully aware of the needs. Others suggested that the Council take on only a few projects to get started and demonstrate that successful change is possible;

- Funding is crucial to the success of implementing the Action Plan. Some forum participants noted also that there should be multiple funding sources, not just one, with a few suggesting that the private sector should be willing to support LIPC as well and a few others suggesting that the structure should be flexible enough that volunteers could carry on the work without funding if necessary;
- A few people suggested that some of the action strategies could be undertaken by other existing organizations rather than the LIPC taking on all of them – with discussion at one table suggesting that at least some mainstream organizations already are quite aware of the needs but do not understand how to respond to them or need help to change their system to respond;
- Related to the previous point, a number of participants emphasized that the LIPC should play a “convenor” role and should partner with other community groups, organizations and institutions in carrying out its work;
- Some participants wanted more attention paid to:
  - the needs of refugees and refugee claimants
  - training and education
  - advocating for systems change (with some wondering if change is even possible without developing new systems) at all levels, with emphasis on “silos” and “political jurisdictions”
  - greater emphasis on meeting needs of access to health services
  - improved information on websites directed to immigrants/refugees
  - how to address cultural discrimination within existing organizations, including the private sector
  - coordination toward seamless service delivery of settlement services
  - youth, mental health, and low income groups
  - engagement through volunteer opportunities
  - use of the media to bring about change
  - the needs of immigrant and refugee artists.

Finally, it appears that a number of people felt that WRIEN’s involvement in LIPC meant that employment needs of professionals would be the focus around employment. LIPC needs to be clear in future that the employment priority strategies are meant to cover all levels of employment, not just those of the highly trained.

The new LIPC needs to review this list of suggestions and incorporate them into more detailed action strategies as they implement their Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan.

**SETTLEMENT/INTEGRATION STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

<b>ENHANCEMENT OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES</b>		
<b>NEED/GAP</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)</b>	<b>ACTION STRATEGIES</b>
<p>Housing Services: Poor coordination of affordable housing generally in the community, long waiting lists for subsidized housing, lack of housing especially for singles and large families, lack of proper assessment of needs, lack of references, lack of short-term housing for people who just arrived, emergency housing not in shelter, and one year tenancy agreements all make affordable housing less accessible</p>	<p><b>Work with the Region of Waterloo to break down barriers related to affordable housing and to be more accessible to newcomers.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harness the energy of HHUG and make immigrant issues part of their agenda</li> <li>• Advocate for change in policy re: qualifications for emergency housing and assessment for affordable housing; develop an application for individuals or groups to be considered emergency housing or transitional housing[expanding the definition of homelessness]</li> <li>• LIPC member (s) to join HHUG</li> <li>• Housing staff (region) need to be part of the LIP process.</li> <li>• Meet with housing staff to make application process meet immigrant/refugee needs/concerns. Example: make explanation for affordable housing in different languages</li> <li>• Advocate for bus service to be expanded in affordable housing locations</li> <li>• Host a meeting of landlords to educate them and to involve them in immigrant issues and resources</li> <li>• Identify availability of neighbourhood associations in affordable housing areas</li> </ul>
<p>Education and Language Services: Waiting lists including waiting lists for child care, lack of transportation and diverse locations, lack of testing and assessment of language skills, slow pace of learning, lack of ESL for employed immigrants, cost in some cases, lack of access to employment related language training all create problems of access and success in adult ESL training.</p>	<p><b>Develop a pilot project to offer a variety of English language services to all immigrants or status persons at locations close to where immigrants reside.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify that child care services are an essential component that needs to be included at localized ESL centers—look at ways to partner with formal child care providers to pilot on-site child care</li> <li>• Educate the funders to ensure there is holistic approach to providing language services</li> <li>• Bring together all interested community stakeholders and funders, working together to develop a steering group to plan, implement and evaluate this pilot</li> <li>• Operate the pilot simultaneously in two distinctively different neighbourhoods (not downtown Kitchener) looking specifically at areas that presently offer no ESL.</li> <li>• Find ways for incentive funds to be made available</li> <li>• Educate the employers to understand the dividends of investing in such in-plan (workplace) services.</li> <li>• Educate ESL providers to design work-related language programming—tailor courses to meet the workplace audience</li> <li>• Encourage immigrant employees to participate without fear of reprisal or looking foolish.</li> <li>• Provide programs on ‘soft’ communication skills and techniques.</li> </ul>

ENHANCEMENT OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
<p>Interpretation Services:                      Interpretation services difficult to access for many services (legal, justice, medical, etc.) because of lack of interpreters for some languages and lack of funds to pay interpreters, interpreters lack of specific professional terminology, cost (to service provider or to individual newcomer) and inappropriateness of interpreters from local pool (re privacy, conflict of interest, etc.) all mitigate against timely, culturally sensitive interpretation. There is also lack of standards for interpreters.</p>	<p><b>1. Approach Canada immigration to fund pilot project in Waterloo Region to ensure access to trained interpreters for individuals accessing Federal, Provincial, Regional or municipal services.</b></p> <p><b>2. Advocate for professional standard of competence for interpreters working in the region.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Research existing models in other countries (i.e. Australia, Sweden)</li> <li>➤ Educate service providers about the benefits of using trained interpreters.</li> <li>➤ Bring together representatives of regulated professions about benefits of trained/potential legal risks of not using trained interpreters/access as human rights issue.</li> <li>➤ Connect with Conestoga College and other training centers to access what is presently available</li> <li>➤ Work with other communities to create standards</li> <li>➤ Work with other accredited interpretation services (e.g., signing) to evaluate standards and accreditations</li> </ul>

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE PROVISION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
<p>Lack of information and flaws in disseminating and delivery of information about available services (jargon; limited innovation; dependency on written methods)</p>	<p><b>Increase service providers' awareness of newcomers' experiences and the full range of information that is available in the community—training and education to service providers in information and referral.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase the opportunity for newcomers to communicate with each other (e.g., add chat function to newcomer portal)</li> <li>➤ Bring together service providers across sectors to build awareness about what they are doing (community information fair)</li> <li>➤ Review comprehensive needs and gaps in information and how the newcomer portal and others (e.g. community information centre) can fill those gaps.</li> <li>➤ Develop a comprehensive communication list of all relevant service providers.</li> </ul>
<p>Lack of coordination (little sharing or collaboration)</p>	<p><b>Design a process to identify barriers to collaboration and coordination, to develop accountable plans and</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Design a process to determine barriers to collaboration and coordination</li> <li>➤ Develop plans to address identified barriers</li> <li>➤ Develop a tool or process to bring all information together in an easily access format</li> <li>➤ Develop a comprehensive inventory of services to enable collaboration and</li> </ul>

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE PROVISION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
	<b>concrete tools to enable collaboration and coordination, keeping in mind the diversity of end users.</b>	sharing
Discrimination in engagement especially in hiring (most organizations do not even recognize discrimination in their policies)	To be developed by LIPC (see combined notes from this Task Group)	To be developed by LIPC

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND INCLUSION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
Systemic Imbalances and Discrimination: few immigrants/refugees in leadership positions in government at all levels, in business, in education, in non-profit sector; discrimination in all sectors—housing, employment, government, education, etc.; people do not want to name or talk about racism, do not know what to do about it; UNESCO 12 principles not signed on by governments.	<b>Encourage all members of our community to embrace the strengths, benefits and leadership abilities that immigrants bring to Waterloo Region.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identify (early) challenges that immigrants face and provide support and opportunities to address these challenges (e.g. spelling, ESL)</li> <li>➤ Bring together community stakeholders/immigrants to develop a full-fledged public awareness campaign about the benefits and strengths that immigrants bring to the community</li> <li>➤ Partner with regional school boards, [Catholic and Public, and other partners] to ensure immigrant children are welcomed/included and encouraged to reach their full potential.</li> <li>➤ Advocate that municipalities sign on to the UNESCO’s anti-racism and discrimination principles/protocol.</li> <li>➤ Explore at best practices outside of Canada</li> </ul>
Lack of Interaction between Immigrant and Mainstream Communities: few opportunities for interaction, sharing through cultural media or face to face dialogue except regarding food and dance; intercultural and culturally relevant events needed more often; no cultural calendars regarding cultural and religious events	<b>Increase interaction between immigrant and mainstream communities by building upon and expanding successful programs already in place in Waterloo Region.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Complete and maintain an inventory of programs (socio-cultural, political, civic, educational, environmental, etc) that promote socio-cultural harmony in Waterloo Region and identify how to expand successful ones across the region</li> <li>➤ Use artistic events to promote thought-provoking and informative understanding of inter-cultural and immigrant experiences (e.g. MT Space Theatre, Multicultural Film Festival) and expand these to community centers, places of employment and educational facilities.</li> <li>➤ Enable and promote community groups to deliver cultural/socially diverse activities that make explicit efforts to include immigrants</li> <li>➤ Effectively promote existing activities</li> <li>➤ Identify sectors of the community that are traditionally not involved in inter-cultural dialogue and encourage their participation and offer training</li> </ul>

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND INCLUSION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
Lack of (financial) resources for individuals/families and lack of information about available opportunities to participate in recreational/cultural/sports activities; need more affordable cultural activities for everyone.	<p><b>1. Advocate to municipalities and school boards to provide equity access cards for all low income families and individuals</b></p> <p><b>2. Encourage private clubs/associations to promote more open/accessible policies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Build an advocacy plan around the need for Boards of education to take on a more aggressive education campaign to promote equity in all facilities (such as sports, recreational, cultural and extra-curricular activities) and role modeling (i.e. hold conferences/mass meetings in schools to talk about inclusiveness in sports/activities to promote more participation from cross-cultural and economic groups)</li> <li>➤ Work with municipalities to encourage them to recognize private clubs/associations who have open door policies</li> <li>➤ Target activities that have significant barriers to accessibility and help support specific equity measures that would increase participation of disadvantaged groups</li> </ul>

IMMIGRANT LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
Lack of information and flaws in disseminating information: We/They concept—we take for granted that understanding is within our context; information and marketing not conducive to immigrant/refugee understanding; lack of coaching and mentoring programs	<p><b>Mobilize efforts to organize and advocate for civic leadership and participation in our community</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identify existing leadership initiatives (targeting immigrants/refugees or targeting mainstream population, for instance Leadership Waterloo, VAC)</li> <li>➤ Enhance existing initiatives to develop a structure that becomes an identifiable entity for immigrant civic participation and leadership</li> <li>➤ Develop a plan and identify potential sources of funding for ongoing services</li> <li>➤ Work in organized (strategic) collaboration with service providers (source of newcomer client) and for-profit and not-for-profit organizations in the community to effectively disseminate information regarding opportunities for civic leadership and participation</li> </ul>
Lack of newcomer representation: newcomers not represented, engaged or in leadership positions in politics, school boards, municipal councils, institutional and government offices, neighbourhood associations	<p><b>1. Engage immigrants through wide channels of access: a) educating volunteers and b) accessing immigrant leaders</b></p> <p><b>2. Educate and negotiate mainstream institutions and hold them accountable to value immigrants' ideas</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Have a resource person to : a) consult immigrant agencies and immigrant volunteer groups and talk to leaders there; b) coach immigrants on Canadian boards (e.g. language, protocols); c) coach mainstream organizations; d) provide leadership workshops to both groups</li> <li>➤ Negotiate, educate and engage mainstream groups and their nominating committees around filling spots on boards with qualified immigrants and around the possibility of keeping vacant spots open for immigrants</li> <li>➤ Work with municipal funders to ensure that they hold funded organizations accountable for implementing immigrant recruitment strategies for boards and committees.</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>

IMMIGRANT LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
Lack of awareness/understanding of norms/values of newcomers/long term Canadians: (what is expected of us collectively as Canadian residents)	<b>Facilitate improved communications between immigrants and long term Canadians by organizing educational and networking opportunities. [addressing norms, values]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Create a shared understanding of how volunteerism contributes to civic participation by supporting and expanding volunteer and leadership training courses for immigrants (e.g. Volunteer Readiness and Step Up to Leadership).</li> <li>➤ Create a network of a cross-cultural organizations/groups/individuals that will come together for the purpose of educating the community at large on issues of cultural diversity, etc (e.g., LIPC could facilitate/train the trainers to be culturally sensitive and responsible)</li> </ul>

EMPLOYMENT		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
Lack of support to employers (esp. small businesses) to hire immigrants: (information need to be tailor made for different employers with differing needs; resources are needed for employers (legal help, risk assessment, understanding status issues) who do hire immigrants and resources are also needed to support immigrants in the workplace—a gap in WRIEN’s work)	<b>Develop resources and a toolkit for legal issues regarding hiring (also post-hiring) immigrants including developing something like a ‘help-desk’.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review existing practices (e.g. WRIEN’s resources)</li> <li>➤ Support small employers in particular - for instance legal support</li> <li>➤ Encourage service providers to pre-screen candidates for appropriateness for the person to the position</li> <li>➤ Develop “Promising directions/practices” checklist (e.g. remove ‘what university did you go to?’ from the application) (e.g. ensure immigrants/refuges understand the need to develop references that are accessible and assist them to do that)</li> </ul>
Lack of coordination and integration of services/programs: no one-window operation; employers and immigrants do not know where they fit in the menu of service providers; fragmented approaches to employers by service providers, barriers to communication amongst service providers and funders	<p><b>1. Develop a common access point for employers looking to hire new Canadians</b></p> <p><b>2. Develop a common training plan for service providers related to employers’ varying needs and expectations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explore models that are currently in place in other communities and with other client groups (e.g. disability groups)</li> <li>➤ Develop protocols among agencies for approaching employers and sharing job leads</li> <li>➤ Define a common access point and voice in the community (e.g. WRIEN’s work)</li> <li>➤ Develop shared training and understanding of relationships-based job development among service providers</li> <li>➤ Develop a sector based approach to employment and training</li> </ul>
Lack of knowledge about available services by employers, immigrants,	<b>Develop a plan to review and evaluate current</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To develop a market specific research plan building on existing resources (e.g. WRIEN’s resources)</li> </ul>

EMPLOYMENT		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
services providers and general public: (lack of effective implementation of communication/marketing strategies)	<b>communication tools and systems which inform the various market groups about immigrant employment programs and services available</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To engage ethnic leaders through community meetings to develop networks to disseminate information</li> <li>➤ To form market specific focus groups (general public needs to be treated differently than employers, immigrants and service providers (market specific communication strategies)</li> <li>➤ To develop fund plans and implementation of the same (e.g. hiring communication consultants, etc)</li> </ul>