Fall 2016 LIPs Learning event Meeting minutes and analysis

Calgary Local Immigration Partnership

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Contents

Introduction

The LIPs Learning Event was held from Tuesday, September 20, 2016 through Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at the Coast Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre in Calgary. The event involved 58 unique attendees, which included the participation of more than fourteen Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) from across Canada. The planning of the event commenced in June 2016 with the formation of a regional advisory committee. The advisory committee, along with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), assisted the Calgary Local Immigration Partnership in designing a collaborative and productive agenda.

This was a highly valuable opportunity for the Calgary Local Immigration Partnership and other LIPs in the Prairies and Northern Territories region to network, share practices, and develop new ideas for their communities. The number of municipalities involved speaks to the rare opportunity of convening cities on a regional scale. LIPs from other parts of Canada, such as Ontario, also attended this event. This provided valuable learning from more mature and established organizations.

Plenary sessions: analysis and minutes

Day one presentations: Sept. 20, 2016

The event commenced with formal opening remarks from Katie Black, Director of Calgary Neighbourhoods, of The City of Calgary, to welcome participants to the event and to Calgary. This was followed by further introduction to the event from John Biles, Assistant Director of Integration for Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, The Northwest Territories, who spoke on behalf of IRCC. This opening set the tone for the two-day event by emphasizing the importance of engaging the entire community, and on what improvements might be made going forward in our scope of work.

First plenary session: what is a LIP?
9 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. | Presenters: John Biles, Assistant Director, IRCC and Alicia Simms, Policy Analyst, IRCC

This session opened the two day event and introduced strategies and models for LIPs to utilize in long-term organizational structure and planning. Attending LIPs gained an understanding of IRCC expectations for the LIP settlement program, and where differences in the implementation program exist. A specific example is the logic model that was presented that shows the development timeline of LIPs, and what the overarching objectives are for each step. This plenary provided a combination of theoretical concepts that were used to design the LIP program, and examples of challenges and successes from dozens of LIPs across the country.

The question period that followed this session spurred the discussion around whether there is the ideal model for a LIP. The seventeen characteristics of welcoming communities were referenced as one possible preliminary framework. As LIPs across the country are in different stages of development, varying population sizes and structures, there is no one-size-fits-all framework. It was emphasized that each LIP will need to build on the existing building blocks in the community.

Another point that was discussed was that the priorities of the LIP will shift over time, as they work with populations maturing and different emerging issues. The size of the community will also dictate these priorities, as smaller municipalities will not have such a high number of agencies for service delivery.

- LIPs are collective impact initiatives to shift behaviors, so that newcomers are considered in any service in any policy change. These partnerships also work with private sector to make sure that employers are aware of newcomers and what barriers to participation exist.
- 68 LIPs across Canada, as of the end of 2015 (this is a fluid number).
- The LIP secretariat is to ensure that the LIP council is truly representative of the community, support the activities that are undertaken by the LIP.
- The LIP relies on the partnership from community members to steer work and the secretariat should really support this role.
- The key expected results are laid out in the logic model which walks through different stages.
- Once council is set-up and running, the impacts of the LIP that should be occurring are the better coordination of services, improved accessibility to settlement and mainstream services, and that mainstream organizations are adapting their programming.
- For many smaller communities the focus of the LIP will be on newcomer attraction and retention, usually to fill labour market needs.
- For LIPs that are based in the non-profit or settlement sector organization, it important to have the municipal government involved and to endorse the strategic plan of the LIP to help give weight to the work of the LIP and endorse specific objectives.
- LIPs are a formalization of service bridging long done by most settlement agencies. By adding structure and a full time staff member as a LIP Coordinator, it is expected that those connections will expand and grow.
- Key piece of a LIP is to go out and talk to newcomers that do not access settlement services to understand what the needs are and to maintain evidence driven decision making.
- Child and youth summer programming deliverable was an example of asset mapping – all of the communities have lots of youth programming, and not all of which reached out to newcomer youth.
- The work of the LIPs is to ensure the integration of newcomers into "mainstream" organizations rather than expanding scope of settlement agencies.
- LIPs are to figure out what that the representation looks like, want a combination of old and new organizations on the council rather than those that are the most established.
- 30% of newcomer population when surveyed on broad surveys would like to have accessed settlement services, the LIP can help to tap into this reservoir and determine why they are not being reached.
- Every year, LIPs fill out a survey that is done at the end of the fiscal year for IRCC in order to record their outcomes.
- LIPs maintain continuous communication between the LIP coordinator and council membership, often facilitated through website to send updates to council and to the community at large, utilize social media to promote activities of the LIP and to share newcomer stories.
- It is important to restructure the LIP membership as you go and at different stages of program implementation.
- Can conduct a visioning exercise of knowing what the priorities of the LIP will be.
- Implementing different activities and other groups support those functions as the LIP implements those activities, so it is a flexible engagement process.
- Strategic plans – as the work of the LIP evolves, as the LIP established its priorities, important to refer back to the strategic plan.
- It can be easy to be pulled in different priorities and different directions depending on who is at the table so it is important to have that strategic plan in place.
- Data provided by LIPs should be broadly share with the community.

Second plenary session: child and youth summer programming advisory panel

9:15 a.m. - 10 a.m. | Presenters: Carol Brouwers, Coordinator, Regina Regional Immigration Partnership (RRLIP), Abdikheir Ahmed, Coordinator, Local Immigration Partnership Winnipeg (LIPW), Jaspreet Sandhu, Team Lead, The City of Calgary, and Amanda Koyama, Manager, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)

Owing to the emergence of operation Syrian Refugees, LIPs in resettlement communities were asked to take the lead in engaging their community on the possibilities available to engage refugee children and youth over the summer months to further their integration and to ensure that their parents could continue their language training. This was a novel approach across PNT LIPs. The panel was designed to share what was learned and engage the broader network on whether this process could be utilized in other areas in the future. Each of the three municipalities presented promising practices and the challenges experienced with this deliverable. This provided insight on how to structure future advisory committees on programming base projects, particularly for those involving children and youth.

LIP Coordinators gained insight on program implementation from the viewpoints of the LIP, and a non-profit settlement agency. This was the first time that this deliverable was presented in a formal presentation format to other LIPs, and a comparison of all three participating LIPs could be conducted. This was likely most useful for those LIPs that were tasked with this deliverable and those with similar projects with refugee child and youth programming. The information shared was very valuable and the presenters provided balanced assessments of what worked and what would need to be improved. For many newer LIPS it might be advisable to have some common plenaries to allow time for further discussion.

Minutes from second plenary session

First presentation: Carol Brouwers, RRLIP (Regina)

- Regina received 93 Syrian families with over 140 youth.
- Advisory committee for this program was comprised of IRCC, municipal and provincial levels of government and direct service providers.
- The recruitment strategy began with partnership council and their referrals, sent invitations to traditional and non-traditional service providers to develop a report outline of current inventory and program synopsis.
- Identified key partners – service organizations, newcomer youth groups, school divisions, ethnocultural communities, faith groups, and youth agency umbrella organization.
- Designed a fillable PDF that was sent to organizations to quickly collect and compile information.
- Developed report to outline current inventory and associated costs for new programming for IRCC.
- Pulled together committee in March, held committee meeting early April, and provided report by May – very quick turnaround for this deliverable.
- There was a lot of interest from organizations to participate, but the short timeline was too constraining and organizations could not pull together resources in time.
- This short timeline was reiterated many times in the follow-up community engagement.
- Requires a protocol from IRCC for follow-up on projects for clear communications.
- Early Jan. would be preferable to do this again as it takes time to adapt or develop new programs.
- Had a very dedicated advisory committee that was well networked in the community.
- Timeline for this deliverable was too compressed, but the model used as a whole by RRLIP was very successful.
- Utilized the University of Regina to host new beginning summer program, which worked well because they have access to recreational and social activities.

Minutes from second plenary session continued

Second presentation: Abdikheir Ahmed, LIPW (Winnipeg)

- Received about 800 Syrian refugees from November 2015 to June 2016 – 60% were children and youth under the age of 17.
- Role of the LIP was to design a ten week program with current and potential service providers.
- Was a bit of a stretch for the LIP, so asked the province to fund an 8-month position to support this strategy and to start a survey of youth service providers.
- Looked at school programs, youth service provider organizations, and ethnocultural and faith organizations.
- Have neighbourhood immigrant service workers (NISWs) that are unique to Winnipeg.
- NISWs are in every neighbourhood to connect families and their youth to different mainstream and immigrant youth programs.
- Created a role for NISWs in this project, and then created a cultural competency training program.
- School divisions, youth service providers, NISWs, ethnocultural and faith groups were already running programming without funding.
- Learned that Syrian families almost all have an iPhone and use Whatsapp mobile application to communicate.
- Ethnocultural and faith groups have relationships with privately sponsored refugees, which is how this population was reached.
- Three key groups – Kurdish Association, Manitoba Islamic Association, and Islamic Social Service Association were programs that were already running.
- For example, Kurdish Association ran a program with Winnipeg Police Services – youth can come to trust police early on and can divert attention from trusting a gang member.
- Held soccer events and a field trip each week to introduce youth to different programs in the city.
- Those who were involved directly spoke Arabic.
- Worked with Syrians who had settled in Winnipeg early on – were able to connect with communities and parents really appreciated this.

Third presentation: Amanda Koyama, CCIS and Jaspreet Sandhu, City of Calgary

- Amanda Koyama spoke on the agency perspective of this deliverable – CCIS holds the contract to assist for this context.
- Received more than 400 children and youth under the age of 17, so had to mobilize very quickly in January to engage.
- Calgary Neighbourhoods also quickly mobilized by sending staff to engage and running regular programming between February and March using existing IRCC funding.
- This work paralleled the work required for the summer programming – looked at what programs had existing spots and where more seats could be added.
- Calgary Neighbourhoods worked with CCIS to leverage existing partnership and sent staff to provide program expertise – CCIS also had existing relationships with these families.
- Designed a very unique and intentional program using relationships with civic partners.
- Unlike other summer programs, staff had to be consistent to build the curriculum based programs and work with the same youth throughout the summer.
- Calgary itself provided a lot of support as the city had over 3,000 willing volunteers when Syrian refugees began arriving in 2015.
- Before the end of March, The City of Calgary began engaging for summer programming, using every existing program that interested children and youth.
- We also leveraged the relationship with the Islamic Association which has their own bussing system.
- Ran a full-time program with 60 children aged 6-18, segmented into age groups, with field trips once or twice a week with city partners.

- Children were able to build peer groups, and learn skills that they can utilize in school.
- Success of the program is highly due to the existing partnership between CCIS and the City of Calgary.
- Transportation was also a very key component for this program.
- Calgary is a large city so it is difficult to introduce new programming later on as resources are not available.
- Would not have been able to accomplish this without existing partnership between organizations.
- One challenge was obtaining consistent staff with a very short hiring timeline.
- Ten weeks was not the most accurate timeline in regards to the Alberta school curriculum – numbers dropped off towards the end, as parents also wanted to get kids ready to go back to school in the Fall.
- For future programs, need cultural competency skill-set for staff, so Syrian children can be integrated in existing programs.
- Had a program evaluator to find more details about the program – compiled findings, gaps and learning that can be used going forward.
- Goal is to keep building on the momentum of the relationship and to go beyond Syrian youth.

Third plenary session: labour market programs and newcomer populations presentation

11a.m. - 11:15 a.m. | Presenters: Nicole Jelley, Executive Director, Talent Pool Society and Director of Catalyst Solutions Group Corporation, Chris Thomas, Board Member and Secretary of Talent Pool Society and Director of The Classic Business Consulting Group)

This plenary highlighted the role of The Talent Pool Society in creating change in the business community. The argument was made that all existing pools of talent should be equally participating in the Alberta Workforce. This presentation served as a preface for the break-out group discussion: "Convening advisory committees: labour markets and the newcomer population".

The session included the operational model that the Talent Pool Society uses. This was especially important for a number of LIPs from municipalities of smaller size that did not contain a similar organization. As this was a general explanation, this plenary may not have provided sufficient direction for the following break-out group discussions. A substitute method to provide background information and guide conversations could be a trained facilitator for each group with specific topic knowledge.

Minutes from the third plenary session

- The business community needs to better understand the foreign talent that already exists.
- There is a need for a central focus point for information to be collected and disseminated.
- Social media is a crucial component in mobilizing the business community, as it increases communication across various members in Alberta and provides feedback to community partners and immigrant serving agencies.
- The Talent Pool environmental scan focusing on underrepresented groups (e.g., foreign talent) is now in its third revision.
- Will be taking Human Resources on the road by sharing a program for capacity building with the not-for-profit sector in multiple cities across Southern Alberta.
- Ensuring employers are engaged and on board is important.
- Expanding to other sectors through research (e.g. bio-talent has five subsectors; this is not a well-known fact).
- Fourth industrial revolution is occurring – there is a shift in demand and skill sets are changing.

Minutes from the third plenary session continued

- Employment outcomes are about finding a place of employment where an individual's knowledge and skill set is transferable to increase productivity in the local economy.
- Currently, there are 180,000 employment vacancies across Canada, which has dramatic implications on national productivity and the ability to innovate – how do we open that dialogue?

Fourth plenary session: mental health and newcomer populations case presentation

11:15a.m. – 11:30a.m. | Presenters: Lisa Androulakis, Project Manager, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and Angela Lai, Manager, Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association (CCECA)

This presentation provided an overview of the mission and objectives of the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association in their work with newcomer populations. This served as a preface for the break-out group discussion: "Convening advisory committees: Mental health and the newcomer population". This topic received mixed feedback from event participants as a number or participants indicated that it was not as applicable to their LIP as others. It may have been too early in the development stage for some attending LIPs to see their role as an organization in this issue.

Minutes from the fourth plenary session

- The Social Determinants of Health (e.g., language and cultural barriers, low-income status, poor health) can impact successful integration.
- Research on the impact of mental health Peer Support Groups revealed improvement of multiple quality of life indicators.
- Social support networks play a large role for newcomers in regards to mental health.
- The Centre-based Peer Support Group is a community hub that focuses on community engagement and on building strong, supportive connections to decrease experiences of isolation and exclusion from society.
- The Chinese Community Helper Project is one method of increasing positive social ties and knowledge of CMHA services for Chinese older adults.
- This project includes one-on-one support for individuals experiencing isolation, financial strain or poor physical/mental health.
- Project also involves assistance for this population to achieve goals related to social engagement and improved well-being in this population.
- Hope is to catalyze change in the Chinese community that will resonate throughout the greater community.

Fifth plenary session: the role and importance of Réseaux en Immigration Francophone (RIFs)

1:15 p.m. - 2:10 p.m. | Presenter: Ida Kamariza, Project Coordinator, Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta (ACFA) / Réseau en immigration francophone de l'Alberta (Alberta RIF) | French with English Translation

This goal of this plenary was to bridge attending LIPs and RIFs, and to provide a foundation on RIF history and operational structure. The presentation provided a background of the recent history of Francophone immigration in Canada, and an overview of the RIF program. RIFs are similar to LIPs from a theoretical structural perspective; however the differences in geographic area under their respective jurisdictions present unique challenges to each. In addition, it is important for these organizations to work together on issues and service delivery for this particular cohort of newcomers. This is to prevent duplication of work and ensure that there is adequate knowledge of available resources. The learning event presented a unique bridging opportunity for the Alberta RIF (on behalf of the RIF network) and the LIPs to share promising practices in both formal and informal settings.

Communication was a topic that was reiterated in this presentation, demonstrating the importance of RIFs and LIPs to share their work with each other. RIFs and LIPs also operate in different but overlapping networks that can be utilized by both types of organizations. Lastly, by providing delivery of the presentation in French to a primarily English-speaking audience demonstrated a method of linguistic inclusion.

During the question period of this session, the topic of whether LIP and RIF coordinators should sit on each other's respective councils was discussed. For the RIF coordinator to sit on LIP councils this would be very strenuous. It is encouraged by IRCC that where the LIPs and RIFs are co-located that the RIF coordinator sit on the LIP council. Where this is not possible, instead actively engage at least one of the Francophone members. Another topic that was discussed was whether or not LIPs should be the central point for all immigrants and include a component of Francophone integration. This would not be possible as RIFs were initiated by and for Francophone communities, as the population not have access to the same number of services that the English-speaking population does.

This population is one of the most economically sensitive cohorts of newcomers and should be encompassed in overall LIP strategies. A recommendation for LIP settlement programs is to ensure that the planning for this specific population is not solely reliant on Francophone serving agencies. At the conclusion of this session, other opportunities for integration between LIPs RIFs were also brainstormed such as the addition of a regional call between these two groups with French translation.

Minutes from the fifth plenary session

This session was presented in French with English translation available via personal headsets for each attendee as needed. The following minutes are a transcribed and abridged version of the English translation:

- Speaking today on behalf of Canadian Francophone communities, not just those in Alberta.
- A pan-Canadian tour was organized to decide and see how we could foster and forge relationships with Anglophone, English speaking, or Aboriginal Indigenous communities – that was made up of representatives throughout the country.
- Canadian immigrants are integrated into an English speaking settings – this has created an imbalance in terms of the Francophone and English speaking populations.
- When this dialogue tour was taking place, Francophone immigrants made up 4.4 % of Canadian population.
- Priority is to maintain the 4.4% of Francophone immigrants and help those living in a minority setting
- Now Francophone immigrants make up only 1.8% of the Canadian population, which is far from the 4.4 % which we sought to maintain ten years ago.
- We want to make sure that our community is diversified and inclusive.

Minutes from the fifth plenary session continued

- This is a very important issue not just for the community at large, but also for the government at the time. The immigration minister at the time, Monte Solberg, said: "[The] history of our country, as well as our roots, reveal to us that it is our obligation to preserve what we built." – that is, linguistic duality
- Communities addressed federal ministry responsible for immigration and it was agreed to develop a strategic framework to foster immigration of Francophones living in a minority setting.
- Strategic plan was implemented in 2006 by the steering committee that was co-chaired by IRCC and held representatives from the Francophone community.
- More than 55 people on this steering committee, so it was a very onerous operation and we were not able to meet some of the objectives.
- When this strategic plan was set-up, there were 7 goals, which included increasing the number of Francophone immigrants in the network, increasing the capacity of the community to receive and welcome newcomers, fostering economic integration of Francophone newcomers, and ensuring that Francophones living outside Toronto and other major urban areas are served.
- RIFs are a multi-sectoral partnership within Francophone communities living in a minority setting and are providers of indirect services.
- There are three RIFs in Ontario due to high population of French speaking and allophone immigrants.
- The problem of demographic development is particularly acute in Francophone communities living in a minority setting, particularly in Atlantic Canada where demographic growth is at peril for all communities.
- We are located across different regions that do not all work along the same lines and each network has to adapt itself to the reality prevailing in the province.
- Utilizing models of community development that have been established by and for Francophone and Acadian communities, tailored to the realities of each province and territory.
- The communities wanted to develop the RIF initiative for themselves because they believe that an immigrant who speaks French and arrives to Canada should be able to be served in French within Francophone environments.
- The federal dept. does heavily encourage and support our work to establish a logic model accordingly for operations and to understand the expectation on the part of IRCC for the RIFs and LIPs.
- Hoping for more support from provinces and municipalities, as Francophone immigrants cannot be solely dependent on the federal government for integration support.
- RIFs are there to raise awareness amongst the various levels of governments so that cities, provinces, communities will understand what RIFs can do and what Francophone newcomers can do.
- The RIF's implementation strategy is based on the RIF Coordinator and the promotion of existing services, and is meant to encourage client access and identify newcomer needs – just as a LIP does.
- There is overlap with the LIPs – so it is of utmost importance to remain in constant collaboration.
- For each region, we are in the midst of constituting local committees devoted to immigration issues and they collaborate directly with LIPs.
- Met with 5 LIPs in Alberta and have asked them to share their model of collaboration and they were able to tell us about successes and challenges.
- Capacity as Coordinator for Alberta does not allow for a direct role within all municipalities and localities, but through ongoing consultations with LIP Coordinators there is opportunity to support local communities in becoming more engaged and to understand what is happening in LIPs.
- One of the primary challenges is that there is a lack of understanding of what RIF is on the part of various partners, even though they support us.
- People are slowly starting to understand what the needs are and how the RIFs can support them.
- There is some confusion about the role of the RIF Coordinator and the role of partnerships – working to strike a balance so that the burden is not all on the Coordinator (similar to the LIP model).
- Experiencing financial strain as well due to many communities relying on a budget that has not changed in 25 years – we simply do not have necessary funds for implementation.
- Maintaining momentum and enthusiasm is also challenging when funds are not available.

Minutes from the fifth plenary session continued

- Alignment and coordination of services – some have a tendency to protect their own mandate which has a weakening effect on partnerships and can lead to eventual erosion of partnerships when there is insufficient service structure or funding in place.
- Funders and decision makers may also have marked funds to Anglophone organizations that are not always in a position to adequately serve Francophone communities. E.g., in Calgary there are some 52% of Francophones who settle in Alberta and unfortunately, young people in Francophone schools do not have access to certain programs.
- As LIPs, you are working in permanent collaboration with partners serving a certain segment of the population in English, but there's also a segment that speaks French. As long as there are Francophone resources available, would it not be possible for you to help encourage those English speaking partners to support French speaking newcomers?
- How do we evaluate and assess the impact and successes of partnerships? What should be the level of efficient and effective collaboration between the RIFs and LIPs?
- Francophone immigrants are members of their Francophone communities but they are also members of the municipalities that encompass their minority communities, so what should the contribution of LIPs be towards the success of the Francophone immigration?

Sixth plenary session: LIP Inclusionary practices for the Francophone community

2:10 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. | Presenter: Irmi Hutfless, Project Manager , Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQLIP)

The objective of this plenary was to provide event participants with knowledge on how to incorporate the Francophone community in local immigration partnerships. This presentation highlighted the challenges of working with a population that was dispersed throughout the community, and was not aware of the number of language-specific services that were available. This presentation provided examples of how to access an under-served population and foster community partnerships.

The preceding information presented from the Alberta RIF allowed LIP coordinators to leverage knowledge from both internal and external resources. These two sessions also provided an opportunity to discuss how LIPs and RIFs can work together on addressing the needs of the Francophone population. A key point was that very specific and targeted efforts have to be made in order to incorporate the Francophone newcomer community.

This example was also dictated by the settlement pattern in the municipality as they were highly dispersed and a large portion moved as a result of secondary migration from Quebec. This caused challenges in terms of both data collection and service delivery. This provided LIP coordinators with information on engaging a cohort of newcomers that may be difficult to reach due to differences in official languages. This learning could be applied to other groups with a common language or a highly dispersed settlement pattern.

Minutes from the sixth plenary session

- Scarborough has a growing francophone population, with a lot of newcomers that are settling outside of Quebec.
- This population of newcomers does not follow the same settlement pattern of the newcomer community, as they are very dispersed throughout the area.
- Francophones were an underserved population and were often unaware of the services for them.
- Lack of awareness of service providers impacts effective referrals
- Strengthen the connection between the Anglophone and francophone agencies, to increase referrals between organizations.
- Increasing number of organizations became involved through action groups and sub-committees

- Started this in 2012 with a strategic planning process, reached out to francophone service providers, and invited them to present at LIP council meeting and action groups about their services and needs.
- Than established a working group to specifically better support the needs of francophone newcomers.
- Worked with local university student group to research under-served newcomer groups and what needs and services were available.
- This research is now being used by the city and organizations to inform planning.
- Continuing to work on educating organizations on the needs of Francophone newcomers.
- Data is very important – to learn where francophone newcomers are settling due to their dispersed settlement pattern and secondary migration from Quebec.
- Worked with the City of Toronto and francophone school boards, to better manage the data and look at how the provincial ministry and IRCC could help out.
- Facilitated participation on community events, spaces, and increasing presence of Francophone organizations at community events.
- Annual community celebration fair that invites Francophone members to set-up tables, establishes a common and recurring place for these members to get together and network as well.
- Francophone newcomer subcommittee works to increase outreach and service planning – getting information to clients is a big challenge.
- Knowledge of this underserved newcomer group has been used by agencies and the local government to help create awareness about issues.
- Example of a project that launched from this initiative was a community health centre program for francophone newcomers specifically addressing health needs.
- Very, very diverse population, the top countries where people immigrate from are Lebanon, Haiti, France and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Data is very difficult to obtain for us on this population, impacts how well we can do service planning.
- Resources are also strained, as the RIF in the area covers a very large area and cannot send staff to inform the very specific planning topics.
- Where there is an instance of Francophone work needed, rely on local partners that exist.
- French speaking staff person for the LIP has helped a lot and has made a big difference in be able to provide a welcoming environment.
- Very important to make sure that Francophone organizations are in the LIP otherwise it is difficult to create real progress and establish solid relationships.

Seventh plenary session: LIP strategic planning panel presentation

3 p.m. - 4 p.m. | Presenters: Meagan Stewart, Coordinator, Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP), Irmi Hutfless, Project Coordinator, TEQLIP and Augustine Ebinu, Coordinator, Grande Prairie Local Immigration Partnership (GPLIP)

The objective of this session was to provide participants with background and promising practices on strategic planning from established LIPs. The selected panelists were from LIPs that differed in terms of municipal population size and years in operation. This provided LIP coordinators with multiple perspectives on strategic planning and highlighted how implementation would vary based on the size of the community. The promising practices that were emphasized were public engagement methods and prioritizing issues. Each presentation also contained the external resources that may be required for a LIP to establish their respective strategic plans such as hiring an external consultant.

The question period following the presentation asked for additional promising practices. One recommendation that arose in discussion was to consult more established LIPs before starting the planning process. Another was to hold a town hall at the beginning of the planning process to get all the ideas and partners in one place. A third practice was to be clearer about any measurement that was to be conducted in the plan, so that all actors were working towards the same outcomes.

Seventh plenary session continued

The second topic that was discussed in the question period was large communities and maintaining inclusion of community partners. This was approached by a number of ways such as were allowing for multiple and recurring opportunities to get involved in the process, to have reasoning as to why someone was not included i.e. topic specificity, and to maintain positive messaging. Another suggestion was for LIP coordinators to be aware that if you are operating in a large municipality there are going to be smaller organizations that will be difficult to engage, due to their staffing capacity. This can be mitigated by continuing outreach and by dedicating more effort to those with more limited resources.

Minutes from the seventh plenary session

First panelist: Meagan Stewart, Bow Valley Immigration Partnership and Strategic Planning

- In a smaller community, did not have to spend as much time building trust between stakeholders, delivered a strategy within a year, started with results based accountability (RBA).
- Asked what was meant by the term welcoming community exactly, how to quantify a welcoming community, and what measures in a welcoming community were the most important.
- Next phase looked at how these measures were conducted, prioritize and consult with LIP Council and Immigrant Advisory Table.
- Presented this scorecard to the advisory table and then set three years to work on these priorities in working groups with selection of 6 priority areas.
- Discussed each priority briefly and designed an outline of a strategic plan. Only issue was that was no member chose to sit at housing table and housing affordability is a key issue.
- Advised to hire a coordinator when conducting a consultation at this scale to free-up the coordinator.
- Have 6 priorities, 17 goals and 40 strategies, this high number is very hard to work with.
- With transition to the implementation phase of these individual strategies, now we are looking to re-engage these working groups.
- Really glad to have committed to concrete deliverables in the first year, even if they shifted. It is very important to have direction and make sure all are working on the same goals.

Second panelist: Irmi Hutfless, Lessons Learning from Building a Community Involved Strategic Plan from Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership

- LIPs were first started in 2008 - in 2009 they were not very well known, and the major challenge was to create that buy-in and inform the community what the LIP was about and what is was meant to do.
- Wanted to make sure that it was community owned, with newcomers, immigrants and service providers to really able to see themselves in the plan itself.
- Used appreciative inquiry as a framework. This approach focuses on getting people involved and envisioning a positive future, emphasizing strengths of the community rather than gaps.
- This all fed into the strategic plan that was designed through a very elaborate engagement process and worked with community ambassadors who were engaged through an honorarium basis – 70 community gatherings.
- Started with formal partnership council to set framework and decision making.
- Key opportunities to have in-depth conversations about what newcomers identify as needs.
- Partnership council met quite often: it was a large time commitment.
- Pulled out major themes and then formed strategic planning groups which met regularly. They reported back to the council for advising.
- Each group designed implementation plans and strategies.
- Held another community summit to make sure they were on the right track – final strategic plan done in 2011.

- In 2012, had to amalgamate neighbourhood LIPs and create new strategic plan, and were concerned about losing momentum from members if the new LIP conducted another big planning engagement.
- Merged and condensed the strategies of the four LIPs and pulled out priorities and identified areas that had not previously been covered.
- Added action groups to work on implementation including emerging issues i.e. Syrian refugees.
- Broad based community engagement build a group of committed members that are still involved in the process and contributing to the next strategic plan.
- Recommend for LIPs to spend more time on developing a shared vision to focus the group.
- Meaningful community involvement is very important; but is also very resource intensive.
- Have different levels of representatives from an organization – middle, senior management, frontline staff as everyone can move the plan in different directions especially as frontline staff will not be as worried about competition from other agencies.
- It is important to know the capacity of your community and what you can realistically accomplish.

Third panelist: Augustine Ebinu, Grande Prairie Local Immigration Partnership and Strategic Planning

- Begin with understanding the contribution agreement fully, what the LIP is supposed to do and where it is supposed to go before anything else.
- Started with a SWOT analysis consisting of who should be involved, which agencies etc. and assess your community for strengths.
- Leveraged personal assets (of the LIP coordinator) such as language skills and strong network to establish relationships before starting the strategic plan.
- Important to communicate that the LIP is there to enhance their organization as people may perceive the LIP as a threat, and taking away their role in the community.
- Approached temples, churches, mosques, cultural organizations, etc.
- Reached out to established LIPs such as BVIP for advice on how to make the plan.
- Used official City of Grande Prairie letterhead for recruitment which helped add weight to the ask.
- Have conducted a community needs assessment for gap identification and will continue to do these.
- Some of the people were resistant to joining, as they had not heard of the LIP before.
- For the community engagement component would have been better to use media to recruit the city as a whole as it is a small community and it is important to make sure everyone is included.

End of day one parking lot questions

Moderated by John Biles (IRCC)

This parking lot session focused on whether LIPs are able to play a role in funding for community capacity building. IRCC explained why LIPs are not able to take on this role due, and where other opportunities for funding may lie. Another new sub topic that was introduced in this portion of the event was in regards to if LIPs and RIFs can hold seats at each other's partnership councils. This conversation stemmed from earlier discussions in the day on Francophone inclusion.

Question one addressed to John Biles (IRCC): Can IRCC flow funding through the LIPs for local capacity building?

Answer to question one: No, IRCC cannot flow funding through LIPs for local capacity building. This is because LIPs and RIFs are not in competition for service provider organizations and settlement umbrella organizations that already exist. LIPs can identify capacity building, and suggest who might be the best positioned to continue work. This is where diversified funding can play a role instead.

Question two addressed to John Biles (IRCC): Can LIPs advocate for federal policy change with IRCC funding?

Answer to question two: No, LIPs cannot advocate for federal policy change with IRCC funding. LIP contribution agreements explicitly state the prohibition of this kind of activity being funded by IRCC contribution funds. This is to keep funding for direct services and indirect services separate.

Question three addressed to Ida Karamiza (ACFA): Do LIPs have a role to sit on RIF council/committees?

Answer for question three: LIPs do not have a role to sit on RIF's councils or committees for multiple reasons. The difficulty in adding a seat for LIPs on RIP councils stems from the language barrier that would apply for both LIP and RIF councils. Another barrier is the constraint of the RIF Coordinator to sit on LIP councils for multiple municipalities. Recommend brainstorming alternate ways to integrate the RIF and LIPs such as in the form of a deliverable that would outline what LIPs could offer the RIF and vice versa.

Day two: Sept. 21 2016

Eighth plenary session: performance measures panel

9 a.m. - 10 a.m. | Presenters: Meagan Stewart, Coordinator, BVIP and Aamna Ashraf, Director, Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG) | Moderator: John Biles, IRCC

The objective of this plenary was to provide event participants with examples of newcomer population measurement and tracking tools, and to deepen the discussion on what elements of a LIP ensure its success. This second day of the event shifted the focus to the importance of data and how it is necessary for different functions of the LIP using combined knowledge from two different sized LIPs and IRCC. The presentations from this session set the tone for the second day of the learning event which was primarily focused on LIP data needs and uses.

The two methods were very different both in terms of development processes and format. The Bow Valley Scorecard worked well as a quick reference guide to show what the current characteristics of the population are, and to identify where gaps in data exist. This scorecard was also developed using the welcoming communities framework as a means to measure integration. The Peel Newcomer Strategy Group Collective Impact report used the community to collaboratively develop indicators and to show annually how the LIP has succeeded with its members.

The recommendations from IRCC further elaborated expectations for LIPs. These consisted of LIPs being able to demonstrate that change has been made through their operations. This is also needed in order for external community members and organizations to continue to support LIPs, and to eventually lead to diversified funding sources. Another key point that was presented by IRCC was the importance of LIPs convening on the same data asks as a way to resolve challenges. Lastly, if LIPs are able to collect and compare metrics with other municipalities, this can potentially provide more information in advance if a specific strategy or project will succeed.

Minutes from the eight plenary session

First panelist: Meagan Stewart, BVIP Integration Scorecard Presentation

- The Bow Valley Immigration Partnership Scorecard uses the method of Results Based Accountability (RBA); RBA is summarized as in order to an action quickly, first articulate what you want to do, figure out where you are, and then figure out a plan of how to get there.
- LIPs need to be accountable to the total population in your community as this is the ultimate result.
- We used the seventeen characteristics of a welcoming community as a reference, and did our best to translate these characteristics into measures and added a few specific to the locale.
- Resulted in too many indicators, things were very confusing at the start and decided to prioritize indicators that were the most important and remove imprecise indicators.
- Found that some quantitative data sources did not tell the whole story i.e. police data shows crimes committed by immigrants but does not collect information on immigrants as victims.
- These were also different indicators than other cities so could not run cross-comparisons.
- The scorecard is great quick reference guide for the LIP council and Immigrant Advisory Group to overview status of integration, and is an inexpensive way to conduct a needs assessment of non-priority areas.
- Better to speak together as LIPs about what we want to track in our communities, brainstorm new measures and design a final list of indicators. Can hire consultants to help do this.
- Pilot a shared, but customized scorecard with some indicators specific to certain communities.

Minutes from the eight plenary session continued

Second panelist: Aamna Ashraf, PNSG and Collective Impact

- Collective impact has worked very well for PNSG to measure work with involving community partners. This method really involves buy-in from all stakeholders.
- This project was funded by IRCC and the regional government. The current LIP council also has other external funders.
- Built a very robust plan with the community and then applied a hybrid of collective impact and RBA.
- This involved the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors working on a common agenda for solving a complex social problem.
- Required a shift from the social sectors current paradigm of "isolated impact", that is that no single organization can create large-scale, lasting social change alone.
- Established the same goal to measure the same things. This led to organizations actively coordinating their actions and sharing lessons learned.
- Really important to frame the questions precisely, as the capacity of the LIP is limited, but have incredible breadth, so need to have the community members champion the work. Can embed questions on existing survey methods as a way to effectively utilize resources.
- Hired a collective impact coach from Innoweave for this project to design collective impact model.
- Took existing community plan and held sessions with community members to select indicators.
- Made very time specific working groups as we knew that we could not involve everyone with this large population and number of indicators.
- Asked members to select which indicators they felt that they could contribute data to support. This established ownership of the indicator by the community.
- PNSG now produces an annual collective impact report and work as experts in the community.
- This has enhanced their existing relationships with partners, including mainstream partners and demonstrated why it is important for them to continue to be at the table.
- This project has strengthened data initiatives and research, by trying to do what others are not able to do and championing the newcomer voice.
- Especially with such a high number of newcomers, what collective impact has allowed is for PNSG to be invited to the table when conversations on poverty policy, housing etc. are discussed.
- The logic model from IRCC has been embedded in work to see where we fall on our deliverables.
- Report helps to publicize the work of the LIP and can be used to emphasize certain pieces.
- Looking at the next strategic plan for PNSG, want to embed the collective impact results and to be more nimble in order to be able to respond to emerging needs.

Ninth plenary session: Immigration Research West online data portal demonstration

10 a.m. - 11 a.m. | Presenter: Jason Disano, Director, Social Sciences Research Laboratories, University of Saskatchewan

The objective of this presentation was to provide an interactive demonstration of the Immigration Research West (IRW) online mapping tool. The online portal contains a wide range of immigration and settlement data for all of western Canada. It is a product of collaboration between the University of Manitoba, the University of Saskatchewan and IRCC. This portal is one of the spatial tools that LIPs have access to as means to identify needs and gaps in newcomer population settlement.

This was the first of three examples of mapping applications used by the settlement sector. The tool is in its first phase and contains opportunities for LIPs and other organizations to provide feedback on how they can use it, and what can be added. This was the first of three sessions in the learning event to focus on mapping tools and how they be used to analyze settlement patterns.

Minutes from the ninth plenary session

- The IRW Online Data Portal can be accessed online.
- The purpose of the initiative was to provide user friendly, easily accessible data on settlement data for western provinces.
- Data is organized into eight categories informed by IRCC immigration reports and Stats Canada data from 2002-2014. The data is at community scale.
- Potential uses for the tool include orientation to immigration patterns, presentations, proposals, and various downloadable reports.
- There are numerous ways to interact with the data as the tool can produce 2500+ online maps.
- Only beginning to scratch the surface of what is doable through this particular system. Phase II is likely to include data on all of Canadian provinces and territories, but Canada-wide data is available now for Syrian refugee data.
- Other future directions of the project are to be informed by user feedback such as adding information on naturalized Canadian citizens.
- It is requested that recommendations or feedback from LIPs (e.g., including data on naturalized Canadian citizens) are communicated to the research team and to IRCC.
- For more information, there is an online help menu to guide you to tutorials, manuals, and question forums.
- Usage of the tool is tracked by the research team to see what is effective.
- Additional levels of geography can also be added. Additions to the tool are funding dependent.

Tenth plenary session: the Resettlement Dashboard

11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. | Presenter: John Biles, IRCC

This session introduced the resettlement dashboard platform that has been produced by IRCC. The dashboard that was used as an example was the Alberta September 2016 resettlement dashboard that summarized population and settlement needs. This tool is expected to be implemented in LIPs to use in their respective communities to share population metrics. The presentation gave further insight into the role that LIPs could potentially hold in terms of sharing information between primary collection sources and members of the community.

The settlement dashboard showed that the data requirements were a combination of technical and graphic representations in order to be able to serve as a reference for larger asset mapping projects. This data-focused tool could become a standardized method implemented in LIPs. This example reaffirmed the importance of discussing common deliverables as LIPs together, to ensure that all organizations have the same information and are able to share expected challenges.

Minutes from the tenth plenary session

- Developed as a sole data source to release to the community with common knowledge on settlement such as language, housing etc. and then coordinate with organizations on collection information.
- Apply this to the refugee population as a whole, the Resettlement Dashboard.
- Ideally people want to know as much about refugees before they arrive, but population flow is uneven and unpredictable, people will move after landing etc.
- Combine data on government assisted refugees and information from settlement agreement holders
- Hope to implement a broader settlement dashboard; however for newcomers this is much more challenging as immigrants receive a visa and then have a year to land in the country and can go anywhere in the country.
- LIPs to combine this data in the form of a dashboard that is made up of community level data on newcomer population metrics.

- Focus on which populations are of greatest interest for the LIP to track, and what is realistic to quantify.
- With too large of a data ask, it will take to long to release data and privacy concerns will restrict what can be made available.
- Family size is another key consideration for housing, important for civic infrastructure planning such as water, electricity, sewage etc.
- Large percentage of the Syrian refugee population is in the lower age quartile, so the impacts on institutions will not occur in one year, more so in 15-20 years.
- Include heat maps of settlement, average nights spent in accommodation depending on family size, distribution of population versus school systems, etc.
- Will be important for municipal planners, social services, libraries, recruiting employers, etc. to have access to this kind of spatial data.
- This tool can assist with general population information to eliminate misconceptions of the population and to show differences between government assisted refugees and privately sponsored refugees.
- Dashboard to be updated regularly to mediate inaccuracies and help to identify gaps.
- Key piece for LIPs is to understand why there are discrepancies in agencies reporting to IRCC and actual iCARE data in regards to the number of clients seen.
- Add large scale qualitative data (narrative) to add texture to the survey.

Eleventh plenary session: promising practices case study presentation
2:15 p.m. - 2:35 p.m. | Presenter: Aamna Ashraf, Director, PNSG

This plenary centered on sharing a promising practice from the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, the Newcomer Profile Tool. This was a demonstration of the use of data and mapping to identify community assets, gaps and settlement patterns in the region. The objective of this session was to highlight the importance of data and how a public facing application can be used to inform policy and decision making. This highlighted the ability of the LIP to act as a central location for primary data and research in the community, which can result in a product and can be used by many other organizations to further their work.

The process of how this tool was generated was highly useful because the presenter explained the necessary relationships that had to been in place to ensure success. The tool is continually being adapted in order to best serve the community and to respond to emerging issues such as refugee resettlement. One of the key points in regards to this process for event participants was that the tool did not start out as a mapping application, but stemmed from a discussion on coordinating service. Another key point was that by having a common dataset and a point of reference, it is easier to conduct asset mapping and gap identification as information is coming from the same source.

The LIP coordinator explained how financial and in-kind community resources can be leveraged to collaboratively fund initiatives. This was highlighted by the tool used by members and organizations for funding asks, and therefore adding value beyond research and population needs. It was emphasized that this was a project led by the LIP but, was a combination of data and financial sources from the community. This further iterated the importance of relationship building for LIP success.

Minutes from the eleventh plenary session

- Resulted from a consultation that determined what was needed was small geographies for systems analysis and is now considered a best practice by PNSG.
- Brought together 211, the Immigration Portal and the Peel Data Centre (regional government department that purchases data from StatsCAN).
- Embedded newcomer information in these service delivery areas (SDAs) and created custom geographies for the entire region.
- PNSG coordinated with many agencies to determine what the data purchase would look like.

Minutes from the eleventh plenary session continued

- Hired a summer student to do the coding which was the most expensive part of the project. The Peel Data Centre is willing to share this coding with other LIPs.
- Became a strong tool to use for community members to use for funding requests.
- Refugee gap analysis was later embedded in the tool and can now look at specific refugee services.
- Created a data tracking tool to see what services are being provided and how referrals are being made. This gives insight to how the community is operating as whole on this issue.
- Facilitated a meeting between all agencies and partners involved in refugee settlement which helped to build relationships with and within the community and help with data ask.
- Another best practice that was also used in refugee resettlement was a myth and facts sheet

Demonstration of the Newcomer Tool

- Tool made through partnership with Peel Data Centre.
- Each service delivery area (SDA) is coded to allow for comparing populations with the total population in the region, and with other geographies in the Peel Region.
- Example: labour force participating rate with education, to determine where underemployment exists in the community and in potentially what professions for the newcomer population.
- Example: Language is another category that has a strong need for data as 15% of newcomer population in Brampton does not speak English or French. This information can be used by police or fire stations on how to communicate to residents in their jurisdictions.
- A major challenge in the Peel region is pushback from municipalities and regional council that newcomer settlement is federal issue and so this tool can be used to show who actually lives in communities. This can then be used to communicate to municipal and regional governments that they have to adapt to serve their changing population.
- PNSG has connected with the Peel leadership centre to train leaders in this tool and use the LIP as an incubator for ideas that are then passed on to the community for utilization.
- Refugee services piece was embedded as well further on and acted as a tool in the response to Syrian settlement.

Twelfth plenary session: Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRS), Settlement Agreement Holders (SAHs) and LIPs

2:35 p.m. - 3:25 p.m. | Presenters: Dana Krushel, Migration and Resettlement Coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee of Canada Saskatchewan and Alexandra Kotyk, Senior Policy Analyst, IRCC

The objective of this session was to provide participants with an understanding of the private refugee sponsorship process and what role local immigration partnerships can hold to support settlement and integration. The significant influx of refugees settled in the past year in the Prairies and Northern Territories region is coinciding with the set-up and development of relatively new LIPs. This provided participants with background on engaging stakeholders in the private sponsorship community, and the importance of doing so for the settlement sector as a whole.

As this population is also privately settled, data related to their settlement will be more challenging to obtain; but they will likely need access to the same resources. There may also require different methods of outreach or communication in comparison to government assisted refugees when carrying out certain LIP contract agreement deliverables. The importance of LIPs in engaging with the private refugee community from the perspective of a Settlement Agreement Holder and from IRCC was emphasized in this plenary. Involvement is encouraged to ensure that this cohort of newcomers has full and complete access to all settlement related supports.

The question period connected the topic of the implementation of the resettlement dashboard and how distributing commonly requested population metrics can help to align needs and efforts. LIPs are expected to be able to serve as the central contact for stakeholders working with government assisted and privately sponsored refugees.

Minutes from the twelfth plenary session

Dana Krushel, MCC Saskatchewan

- The Mennonite Central Committee is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) that connects people who are interested in private sponsorship with resources.
- Canada is the only country with a private sponsorship program for refugees which started in 1978.
- A large portion of private sponsors are family linked applications.
- Another type is BVORs (Blended Visa Office-Referred), which are a joint funded sponsorship between the community and the federal government for 6-months funding by each, and JAS (joint assisted sponsors) for high needs cases that require 24 months of support for settlement.
- The SAH's role is to train and assist sponsoring groups, and to match refugee families with sponsor groups and maintain contact with refugees throughout the process.
- Private sponsor groups will want to sit at the LIP table and be part of the picture. It is important to remember that the majority of people are volunteers and communication will be much harder.
- The needs assessment conducted by sponsorship groups is also a very organic process, and they usually do not conduct a formal one.
- Private sponsorship would bring a very unique perspective to the LIP table; provide first-hand experience of settlement, and what are the pros and cons of the settlement system in place are.

Alexandra Kotyk, IRCC

- Working on ensuring that all LIPs have the same understanding of the private sponsorship process as they are good starting reference points for the private sponsorship community.
- Financial support that is provided to refugees is based on need and is similar to government sponsored refugees.
- Refugees cannot re-pay or pre-pay their sponsor and it is illegal to send money to the sponsor.
- Sponsorship is meant to lead to self-sufficiency, but some sponsors treat it like adoption.
- Undertaking – this is the document that every sponsor groups signs, what they are responsible for
- Inland Processing Guide 3, part three written by IRCC is a specific policy document that has information on exactly what people are supposed to give and can be used as a tool to make sure that everyone is on the same page.
- The LIPs role is to be aware of who is in the community, what tools and supports are available and can be the communication infrastructure.
- Sponsorship groups can really feel that they are responsible for the refugee family and this can create tension with the settlement workers, where LIPs may have a place to act as a mediator.
- Some sponsorship groups have the misperception that privately sponsored refugees cannot access settlement services. This is not true, they are just not able to access reception centres.
- BVOR cases have been a major challenge because they usually do not have established family in Canada, and can move around easily for better housing and jobs so are difficult to track.
- LIPs encouraged connecting with first sponsor groups, and showing connections of the LIP and the benefits and resources available in the community.

Breakout sessions: minutes

First break-out session: convening advisory committees on mental health

Day One: 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Facilitators: John Biles (IRCC), Donna Wall (IRCC), Jessica Pauletig (City of Calgary), James Russell (Government of Alberta)

The objective of this session was to establish a foundation for convening advisory committees on the topic of mental health and the newcomer population with a preface plenary session presentation. The major themes that were discussed included defining the role of local immigration partnerships in mental health issues, and what are the common issues and barriers that the newcomer population faces in the realm of mental health.

There were differences in how LIPs approached this topic. Some LIPs did not initially flag mental health as an issue, or are not at the stage of the development yet to address this issue as a LIP. A number of existing organizations and systems were listed as a means to start a response plan including connecting with groups that newcomers already interact with such as ethnocultural and faith organizations, embedding mental health in other programs and pairing this issue with other tools i.e. Distress Centre help line.

Minutes from the first break-out session

Common mental health barriers experienced by newcomers

- It's a challenge to know why someone isn't trying to access services; could be the lack of awareness, unsure of who does mental health training, unsure of what the issues are.
- Some people are informed, but not sure if the services are being accessed.
- Resettlement often gets the groups that have the most people struggling with mental health issues.
- Cultural impression of going for help and other cultural norms.
- Confidentiality and how comfortable the individuals are speaking about it.
- Social isolation is one of the key issues.
- Joining a seniors group is viewed as more acceptable than joining a mental health group.
- Tendency to view every group as more vulnerable than newcomer men and so we don't have as many programs for newcomer men.
- Need for interpreters or translators, comfort of being able to talk about mental health in their mother tongue.
- Engaging health system within communities especially rural areas to work on this issue.
- Who should be addressing barriers to mental health? Private sector, NGO's, Federal government, Provincial government, etc.

Role of LIPs in overcoming mental health barriers

- There is a need to bring players together (i.e., health system with communities); mental health collaborative – looking for community leaders to be the bridge between the health system and communities.
- Council should be clear on who is taking on what role and jurisdictions.
- City takes lead role with LIP, and Provincial government lead mental health: how do we blend without saying "that's the federal government's role vs. that is the city's role, it is critical to approach all levels
- Advisory Committee is valuable and needs support.
- Research to figure out what information we already have, and then have someone to disseminate the data and the community needs access to this information.
- Some organizations have not wanted to share data because the community on the whole doesn't even have a plan or data.
- Ethno-cultural council is working with other groups in settlement community so could use that infrastructure for programming.

- Francophone community has no initiative like this and would like a committee to help with this.
- These services need to meet the needs of a diverse population.
- Have programs focus on larger issues and incorporate mental health, rather than asking directly to speak about mental health.

Table 1. Feedback from LIPs on mental health and responses.

Organization	Feedback on mental health issues and responses
Bow Valley LIP	• Did not originally flag mental health as an issue and they are now seeing it pop up • When they see an issue now, they call a meeting and send call out to appropriate organizations
Winnipeg LIP	• How to involve those who don't attend these meetings and adjust to meet their needs? • Doesn't have much in place to assist with mental health issues • Provincial government has spearheaded some initiatives to help address this problem, but the province hasn't done the best job of including all ethno-cultural or faith groups in the dialogue • 5 tables on 5 topics: #1 – Information needs of refugees, #2 – Cultural competency training for service providers, #3 – Information needs of service providers, #4 – Mental health triage, #5 – Delivery of psychosocial/mental health support services, including peer support
Calgary LIP	• Wants to engage churches in local communities, local places of worship to become a hub • Spiritual health is important to mental health, may be a good on-ramp for newcomers trying to access services • Many newcomers already access their local church/mosque/temple/other more frequently than other services anyway • Call 211 for referrals • City of Calgary partnering with 88 groups regarding addiction issues – often follows mental health • City of Calgary has access to a bit of a base regarding issues like social isolation
Jasper (New LIP)	• Hosted peer support training; very transient community • Need to be connected to support system and referrals • helped in Jasper with outreach workers; two-way street • Jasper built a new system of accessibility and a new way of doing business
Regina LIP	• Has been coordinating but the LIP has not been involved, as well it has been with the Syrian initiative, this is a new topic for the LIP

Second break-out session: convening advisory panels on labour market barriers

Day One: 12 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Facilitators: John Biles (IRCC), Donna Wall (IRCC), Jessica Pauletig (City of Calgary) and Shannyn Rus (Brooks Immigration Partnership)

The objective of this break-out session was to establish a foundation on the topic of convening advisory committees on labour markets for the newcomer population. Break-out groups discussed what are the common barriers in the labour market and how can the LIP play a role in overcoming these barriers. The discussions highlighted that there are similar issues between different LIPs, but the same model or same tool may not be able to be applied across communities.

Minutes from the second break-out session

Role of LIP in Overcoming Labour Market Barriers
- Have this conversation individually as LIPs with the large service provider organizations.
- LIPs need to know who the funders that can help with this topic are.
- LIPs can advocate awareness and education.
- Build relationship between employers and agencies, starting with small employers that may be easier to get on board and non-traditional sectors.
- Connect with entrepreneurship supporting agencies and apprenticeship agencies.
- Another key partner is the city's economic development department.
- Vocabulary needs to be changed with the example such as industry associations not to call certain positions "survivor jobs".
- Identify outcomes with evidence to support initiatives, and direction
- Can LIPs come together collectively and locally organize materials? Should this be done across Alberta? Then Canada wide?
- LIPs Welcome Events to include agencies, not only businesses as business will not be as supportive in a recession climate.

Continuing the conversation beyond this break-out session
- Need more data education and skill information of the newcomer population.
- Each city has its own specific needs so hard to have this conversation as collective.
- Education on sector needs to be at the table (e.g., nursing, ground level work, etc.) for this discussion.
- It would be great to see another partnership (e.g., Chinese Cultural and Mental Health with employers)
- The Talent Pool – social media and what it can do to work this issue.

Third Breakout Session: The Resettlement Dashboard and LIPs
Day Two: 11:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. | Facilitators: John Biles (IRCC), Donna Wall (IRCC), and Jessica Pauletig (City of Calgary)

The preface presentation for this session was the first time many event attendees had seen the resettlement dashboard. Participants were asked to discuss in the following break-out session how to incorporate and collect information for community level settlement dashboards as LIPs. This concluded with discussion on the importance of sharing information between LIPs. This is particularly necessary for LIPs that have similar geographic characteristics as some methods and tools would be able to be shared.

Minutes from the third break-out session

Existing practices that have potential to feed data into the Settlement Dashboard
- Types of data being collected are: primary and secondary data collection, current level of relationship of newcomers with Indigenous persons, issues with housing.
- Lack of coordination on key services such as language which makes it difficult to collect data.
- A question regarding health/health care on an intake form would be helpful; could use existing infrastructure or systems to implement this.
- There are concerns with privacy (e.g., Syrian refugee population).
- Jasper LIP has 20 years of data, they already have who is accessing services.
- Data will not be able to completely answer questions on newcomer issues – i.e. Why can't newcomers get jobs? Is it because there is a high unemployment rate? What other factors are involved?
- Use school boards to collect information on drop-out rates.

How could LIPs best utilize the Settlement Dashboard?

- LIPs would really like iCARE (Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment) data and have frequently asked for this data.
- Having the dashboard would help answer some of the questions that are frequently asked.
- Standardized community evaluations which would also get some consistency across municipalities.
- Sometimes the census is not helpful or is out-dated.
- How can we track secondary migration and could this be included on the dashboard?
- Labour market indicators - gaining metric information from municipalities to understand employment and certification barriers (need to define what it means to be an "immigrant", etc.).
- Will the dashboard eventually be embedded somewhere public? How will it be accessed?

Who is best positioned to help us get this data in the community?

- Certification bodies could give data on the amount of people with foreign credentials asking to be certified, countries, etc.
- Professional associations, chambers of commerce, local business leaders (standardized surveys) which could be linked through partnership councils.
- Provincial licensing/child minding centres with updated information on child care needs/waitlists.
- Catholic/public school boards to collect related information.

Fourth Breakout Session: Reporting Standardized Deliverables

Day Two: 1:15 p.m. - 2 p.m. | Facilitators: John Biles (IRCC), Donna Wall (IRCC), Jessica Pauletig (City of Calgary), and Irfan Chaudhry (City of Edmonton)

The objective of this session was to discuss and brainstorm a framework or method of reporting standardized deliverables to IRCC. This resulting discussion took the course of multiple directions. These subtopics of discussion included the topic of what are community needs and how do they dictate standardized deliverables, and what are the requirements to assist with reporting.

Minutes from the fourth break-out session

Comparing commonalities and differences between contract agreements

- Regional differences between LIPs as issues will differ across regions and may be specific to that geographic area.
- LIPs need to come up with standardized deliverables that speak to the indirect service nature of LIPs – e.g., create a terms of service.
- All LIPs will evaluate and investigate and come up with commonalities in existing conditions that can be used to create standardized deliverables.
- IRCC says all LIPs are going into research phase for the next funding cycle and that there are common deliverables amongst all.
- LIPs should be divided into two types – big cities vs. rural/small centres and should have standardized deliverables for these 2 major types of files.
- LIPs are supposed to be serving all immigrants - incorporating immigrants that may not be eligible as IRCC clients for programs that may be beneficial for those other immigrant needs.
- The method to reach ineligible immigrant clientele and respond to these other immigrant needs could be standardized deliverables.
- Having consistent deliverables is key and valuable.

Current and future LIP deliverables

- Welcoming events could raise awareness and access point to employers, build collective community understanding, families of newcomers get exposed to the community, learn from other communities (e.g., about culture).
- Mapping of newcomer populations - e.g., focus on employment, labour markets etc.
- Website - challenge with websites: branding issues, communication policies varying between LIPs and municipalities, needs to be seen as a partnership aside from municipal/corporate branding or logo.
- Mapping – some LIPs specific deliverables to Syrian refugees.
- Gap identification and needs assessment (with education departments regarding adult learning)
- BVIP – is additionally developing workplace inclusion charter (9 month-1 year pilot).
- Welcoming and inclusive project, diversity project (Jasper).
- Refugee silhouettes, council work, immigrant advisory board, governance, are deliverables that are on most contract agreements.

Data needs

- Lots of LIPs try to measure and survey indicators amongst their partnering organizations.
- Identifying common indicators will allow LIPs to make common tasks.
- Can we create or find some sort of indicator banks or tap into some of the existing databases? Can we report on the same indicators? Do we measure these same?
- What are reasonable options for gathering this information? What is our level of coordination?
- How can we use what is already being measured? How can we gather the information that exists?

Continuing the conversation beyond the break-out session

- IRCC needs to let the LIPs know what the common deliverables are going to be.
- Basecamp as a method to continue this conversation as well as could be a possible place to post the deliverables.
- We need a technical data expert to help us figure out how to track things and help us figure out what is even possible to track.
- Want experts to come and help establish some of our indicators and help share best practices.
- Conversations on reporting needs to continue to better manage funding, speak with local officers.

Recommendations for future learning events and survey results

An online survey was sent to all those who participated in the event including the livestream. Other feedback was also provided informally verbally and through email for the event. Overall, this event received positive feedback. The key recurring recommendation from event feedback is to increase the amount of time for break-out sessions and discussions, and reduce the number of plenary sessions. A total of 24 participants completed the online survey. Out of the 24 participants that were surveyed, 22 were in-person attendees and two people live-streamed the sessions.

Plenary sessions

A number of external presenters were contracted for presentations selected from outside the Prairies and Northern Territories region (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and The Northwest Territories). 62.5% of participants said that is was highly useful and 25% of respondents said that is was useful, to have these external presenters. A significant portion of event resources were allocated to commission external presenters and translation services. The table below summarizes the value of the sessions, with the question of how much information was gained of the select sessions.

Table 2. Amount of information gained from select external presentations from percentage (number) of survey respondent.

Presentation	Amount of information gained as percentage of survey participants			
	High	Average	Little	N/A
PSRs and LIPS	12.5%	41.7%	12.5%	16.7%
Immigration Research West	50.0%	25.0%	12.5%	8.3%
Performance Measures Panel	58.3%	25.0%	12.5%	4.2%
LIP Inclusionary Practices for the Francophone Community	41.7%	29.2%	16.7%	4.2%

The presentation from the Alberta RIF was surveyed in order to determine how valuable it was, as this session was highly resource intensive. The majority of participants, 60% indicated that they found this presentation either highly valuable or valuable. Participants were also asked to rank their sessions by which ones were the most useful for their learning. Sessions were ranked by day individually. For the first day, the strategic planning panel was indicated as the most useful for both the first and second rank as noted in the table below.

Table 3. Day one plenary session ranked by most useful for learning.

Day one plenary sessions	Choice (rank within choice)				
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
What is a LIP?	6 (2)	6 (2)	2 (3)	5 (2)	4 (3)
Child and youth summer programming panel	1 (4)	2 (5)	6 (2)	4 (3)	8 (1)
Strategic planning panel	11 (1)	7 (1)	2 (3)	1 (4)	1 (5)
The Role and importance of RIFs	5 (3)	4 (3)	7 (1)	6 (1)	2 (4)
LIP Inclusionary practices for the Francophone community	1 (4)	3 (4)	6 (2)	6 (1)	7 (2)

Table 4. Day two plenary sessions ranked by most useful for learning.

Day two plenary sessions	Choice (rank within choice)			
	First	**Second**	**Third**	**Fourth**
Immigration Research West: Online data portal demonstration	1 (4)	8 (1)	8 (1)	4 (2)
Newcomer Profile Tool demonstration	5 (2)	8 (1)	8 (1)	2 (4)
Performance measures panel	13 (1)	2 (3)	2 (3)	3 (3)
Private Sponsored Refugees and Settlement Agreement Holders	3 (3)	4 (2)	4 (2)	12 (1)

The results from tables three and four above indicate that panel presentations from other LIPs may have been the most useful presentations for the majority of learning event participants. This format provided comparison of LIP approaches to similar deliverables based on resources and community characteristics.

Parking lot questions

During the two day sessions a flip-chart was set-up outside the plenary room to serve as a "parking lot" for related questions. Only a few questions were generated during the entirety of the event using this method. From the survey, the following reasons were stated by participants for choosing not to use the parking lot flip-chart:

- Questions were answered in the sessions
- No additional questions were generated
- Participant was able to connect with the presenter(s) directly after the session
- Participant had to leave immediately following the formal presentations

Survey participants responded that there was sufficient time to ask questions. A recommendation for future learning events may be to have dedicated time per topic for participants to discuss learning and how it applied to their individual practice.

Break-out sessions

There was a mix of feed back in regards to format and style of the break-out session. This was likely because there were different expectations from participants in terms of what these sessions were meant to accomplish. The two types of expectations were either in-depth exploration of a topic, or an overview to share resources and to serve as a conversation starter. Recommendations for break-out sessions for future learning events based on the feedback from the survey are to:

- Set goals for each break-out session rather than questions
- Allow time for groups to report back and share learnings within the session
- Further integration between the break-out and plenary sessions

Survey respondents were divided on whether to increase or maintain the same amount of time allocated for break-out sessions. The mental health presentation was found to be very helpful for starting discussion by 31.8% of survey respondents, and the labour markets presentation was found to be at 27.3% for this same rating. For future learning events it is recommended that these foundation presentations may be necessary for some attending LIP coordinators but not all. It may be better to instead provide background reading, or concurrent sessions instead.

Table 5. Comparison of break-out sessions throughout the two day event.

Which break-out session did you find was the most useful to your organization?	Percentage of survey respondents
Convening Advisory Committees: Labour Markets and Labour Market Programs	13.6%
LIPs and Standardized Deliverables	31.8%
Convening Advisory Committees: Mental Health	36.4%
LIPs and the Settlement Dashboard	9.1%
N/A	9.1%

Table 6. Preference for preface discussion presentations for break-out sessions.

Preface discussion presentations for break-out sessions		
Rating	Canadian Mental Health Association and Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association presentation	Talent Pool Society presentation
Very helpful in starting discussion	31.8%	27.3%
Somewhat helpful in starting discussion	40.9%	40.9%
Not helpful in starting discussion/not need to start discussion	13.6%	9.1%
Not applicable/did not attend	9.1%	13.6%

Livestreaming participants

All livestreaming survey participants indicated that they found the opportunity to view the event online highly valuable. One respondent also indicated that although they attended in-person, they would have found the event very valuable as a livestream participant if they had been unable to travel. Suggestions that were provided to improve the livestreaming experience for future learning events were for presenters to send slides in advance, and to add conversational interaction with in-person attendees. The software that was used for the livestreaming component was Adobe Connect which has a chat function that could be integrated to increase livestream participant engagement.

Translation services

All survey participants indicated that their translation needs were met at this event. With the exception of the presentation from the Réseau en immigration francophone de l'Alberta (Alberta RIF), all presentations session were held in English. French translation slides were made available for the "What is a LIP?" plenary session. Following the event, fifty four percent of survey participants indicated that they would like an English translation of the Réseau en immigration francophone de l'Alberta presentation slides.

Networking opportunities

Out of all survey attendees, more than 90 per cent indicated that the learning event was an important opportunity for networking with other LIPs and organizations. The reasons that were listed in support of the formal and informal networking components were:

- Opportunities to exchange ideas, build relationships and avoid extraneous or duplicate work
- Sharing of knowledge between established LIPs and new LIPs
- Opportunities to meet people from a range of places across Canada and interact in person

The first day of the event featured an informal evening networking event that was held on-site following the conclusion of the learning sessions. This event had an attendance of approximately twenty attendees and had an open format as the first day of the learning event was tightly scheduled. This event received positive feedback from the survey with participants voicing that it was a "great opportunity to carry-on discussions from the day", and that is valuable to have time to discuss with other organizations in an unstructured environment. Participants did not further elaborate why they chose not to attend the evening networking session. Fewer than 20 per cent of survey participants indicated that there were insufficient opportunities to network in-person at the two-day event.

There was only one session throughout the two day event that solely involved a discussion of all the LIP coordinators and IRCC. This component is recommended to be integrated further in future learning events, to have more opportunities for face-to-face discussions as a group to LIP coordinators in the PNT region.

Continuing the conversation beyond sessions

Survey participants were asked to select one or more methods to be used to continue the conversation and share resources from the learning event. These were the top three choices:

- Future face-to-face events (66.7% of responses)
- Email sharing (58.3% of responses)
- Conference on one-on-one calls (54.2% of responses)

Topics for future events

The following topics were identified to be discussed at future learning events:

- Methods for responding to challenges in engaging municipal government
- The roles of various stakeholders in the LIP (private, public, institutional)
- Evaluation and implementation phases of the LIP strategic plan
- Immigrant Advisory Tables deliverable
- Asset mapping and identifying key community contacts
- How can LIPs participate in tool design and development
- LIP research needs