

**WATERLOO REGION
LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL (LIPC)**

FINAL REPORT

(April 2010)

LIPC Lead Community Partners



LIPC Funder



**Citizenship and
Immigration Canada**

**Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada**

WATERLOO REGION LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

FINAL REPORT – APRIL 2010

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This report is the culmination of over one year of collaboration across many sectors within Waterloo Region. It began with the Immigrant Settlement Support Group (ISWG), a standing committee of the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN) asking other organizations to collaborate in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ontario Ministry Of Citizenship .

The purpose of this initiative was:

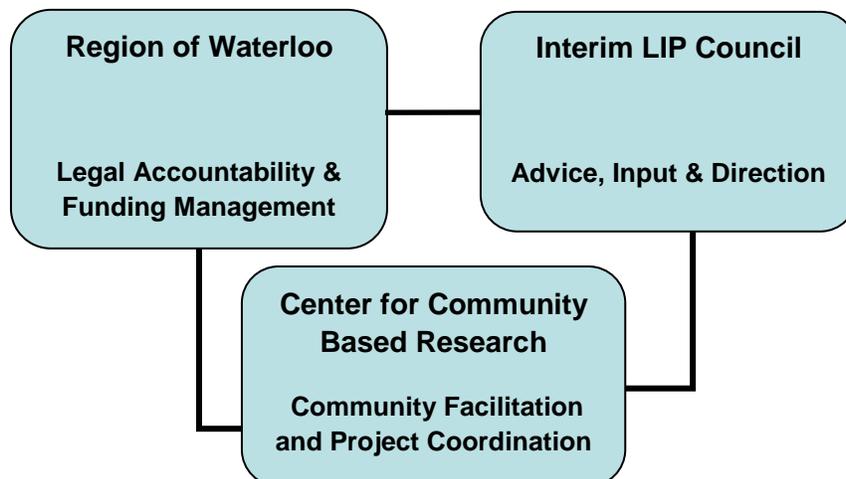
to enhance existing partnerships to establish a comprehensive Local Immigration Partnership and develop a collaborative strategy that includes solutions for successful settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.

The lead organizations on this Phase 1 proposal were:

Regional Municipality of Waterloo as the lead applicant with overall accountability for the LIP project and for any funds received.

Immigrant Support Working Group (ISWG) of the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN) consisting of all of the CIC and the provincial Ministry of Citizenship (MIC) funded settlement and immigrant service providers in the Region. Expanded, this group became the Interim Local Immigration Partnership Council (LIPC).

Centre for Community Based Research, an independent, non-profit organization, as the facilitator of all aspects of the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Phase 1 project.



After the LIP proposal was accepted for funding by CIC, over 200 people contributed to the project throughout the year (beginning officially in March 2009). The results reflected in this report could not have been achieved without their intensive contribution.

The purpose of this report is to share the results of the LIPC's work. Those results include a Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan for Phase 2 (please see Chapter 2 of this report) and a proposed structure that will continue the collaborative nature of the LIPC (please see Chapter 3 of this report).

BACKGROUND: WELCOMING NEWCOMERS – A COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Waterloo Region is a community that has always welcomed and benefited from immigration. Presently, 22.3% of Waterloo Region residents are immigrants or refugees from diverse regions of the world, with expected growth to 30% by 2031. Our region is one of the top seven communities in Canada for recent immigrants/refugees¹ on a per capita basis (2006 Census)

The challenges and barriers faced by our newest citizens are varied and complex including:

- understanding various Canadian systems (health, education, justice, social services, etc.);
- accessing needed services;
- finding employment in their field and getting their foreign credentials recognized;
- learning a new language;
- learning how to integrate with local cultures and how to adapt family or personal ways with a new environment;
- facing discrimination.

There have been initiatives throughout Waterloo Region over the past several years to develop strategies to address these challenges and systemic barriers faced by new immigrants. For example, the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN), currently in its fifth year of operation, has facilitated the creation of several programs to assist with immigrant employment. However, there is still much to be done in order to develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to settlement and integration for our community. It is planned that, through the LIP process, existing partnerships will be expanded to do that.

PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP (LIP)

The purpose of this initiative is to enhance existing partnerships to establish a comprehensive Local Immigration Partnership. Through the coordination and work of this partnership, a collaborative strategy that includes solutions for successful settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region has been developed.

¹ While the term “immigrant” is often used to describe all people coming to Canada from other countries, in this report we will refer to immigrants as those who come to Canada after being approved as permanent residents, having either passed Canada’s point system as an independent economic applicant or having been sponsored by close family members. Refugees may be government assisted or sponsored by other groups in Canada, or may be claimants who arrive here and apply for protection.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF PHASE 1

Establishing a Local Immigration Partnership Council and developing a comprehensive and strategic approach to settlement and integration will deliver significant benefits to Waterloo Region. The first phase had two goals:

1. To develop a comprehensive Local Immigration Partnership Council.

One primary goal of this initiative has been to develop a comprehensive Local Immigration Partnership Council. This would include:

- I. To develop a structure for the LIPC including terms of reference.
- II. To identify future roles and responsibilities of the LIPC.
- III. To determine the membership of the LIPC.

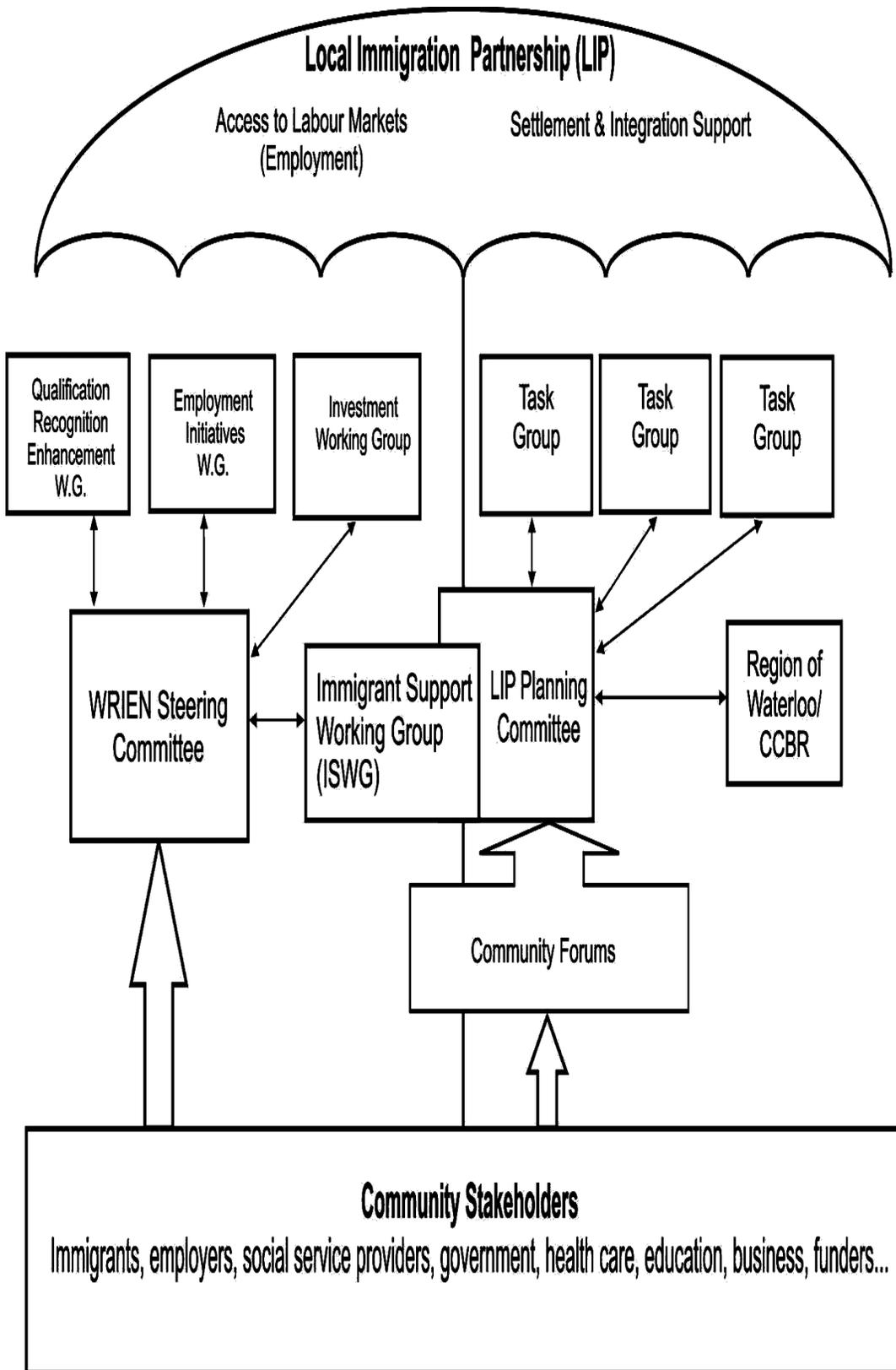
It was envisioned that the Partnership would be, and indeed for the most part was a dynamic collaboration of community stakeholders from many sectors, including the immigrant service provider community, business sector, youth, employment, community based organizations, health, governments and educational institutions.

2. To develop a comprehensive and collaborative settlement and integration strategy.

This strategy is part of planning for future growth in Waterloo Region, but it is also about creating a welcoming and sustainable community. It was envisioned that this strategy would address three objectives:

- A. Improve access to and coordination of effective, strategic and comprehensive services/programs that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration
- B. To improve access to the labour market for immigrants.
- C. To strengthen awareness and the capacity of Waterloo Region to integrate increasing numbers of immigrants and refugees.

Given that a local immigration partnership on labour market access already exists in the region (WRIEN - Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network), the emphasis of Phase One has been on objectives A and C under Goal #2 above. WRIEN is ENTERING THE 5TH year of its mandate and is in the process of identifying future directions for the network. The evaluation of future roles for WRIEN has been integrated with, and has provided input into, the Local Immigration Partnership planning, parallel to the development of the collaborative settlement and integration strategy (see diagram below, which represents the parallel planning process between WRIEN and LIPC). The outcome or product of this process has been a comprehensive immigration strategy that addresses immigrant settlement, employment and integration.



PHASE 1 PROCESS – ENSURING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Phase one activities of the LIP included expanding cross-sector community involvement in ongoing consultations with and feedback from a variety of community stakeholders. This involvement was undertaken through:

- Establishing an Interim LIP Council through expansion of the Immigrant Support Working Group of the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network, to guide the work of this planning phase;
- Holding two community strategy sessions to explore major thematic areas needing attention in order to become a more welcoming community for immigrants and refugees. Those themes determined the Task Group structure for Phase 1 of the LIP process;
- Involving all sectors in a variety of immigrant settlement and integration Task Groups to explore the issues and gaps and develop Strategic Directions and Action Strategies to be implemented in Phase 2;
- Ensuring key sector involvement through specific focus groups with immigrants, refugees and employers;
- Evaluating the one year development process and outcomes;
- Seeking local commitment to Phase Two and beyond through a broad based Community Forum where participants received a copy of the draft report and had an opportunity to respond to the overall direction and structure of the future LIP Council.

The process and results of each of these activities is outlined in this report.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY SESSIONS - PROCESS AND RESULTS

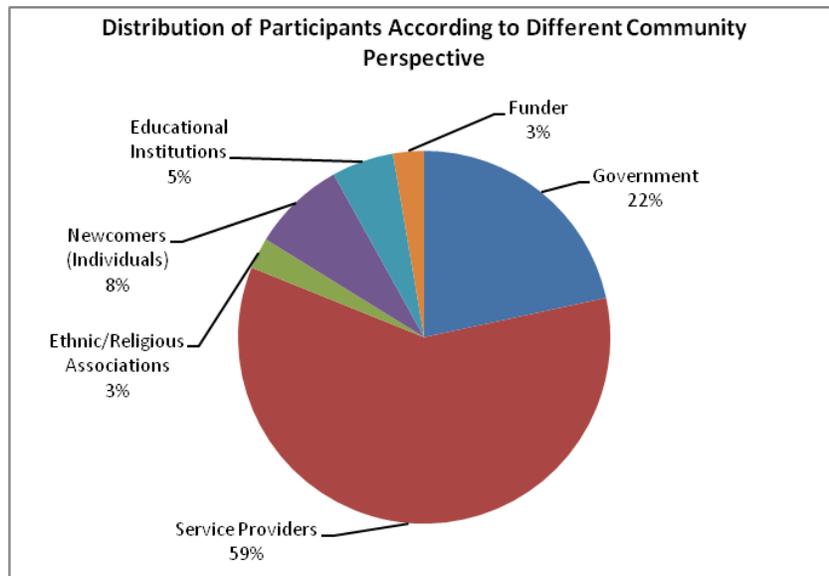
There were many ways for organizations and citizens to get involved in the identification of the issues and solutions related to coordinated immigrant and refugee settlement and integration throughout Phase 1. They included **community strategy sessions, thematic and structure task groups, focus groups** and a final **community forum**.

Process for Community Strategy Sessions

Two community strategy sessions were held (April 14 & May 14 2009) with the purpose of:

- Exploring issues, gaps and opportunities related to immigrant and refugee settlement and integration,
- Based on this exploration, identifying 4-5 theme areas that task groups would explore in more detail.

The first session, held in Waterloo, consisted of 44 participants from a variety of sectors as noted in the chart below:



After an introduction by Mike Murray, CAO for the Region of Waterloo, participants were asked to place themselves physically along one wall on a continuum from Very Much to Not at All in answer to the question: *To what extent are the needs of recent immigrants/refugees being met in our community?* Participants generally placed themselves from near the middle of the continuum toward the end Not at All, indicating in discussion that while progress had been made there was still a long way to go for this community to be satisfactorily meeting the settlement needs of recent immigrants and refugees. Participants noted particularly needs related to information, mental health, language and the unique needs of refugees.

In answer to the second question - *To what extent are immigrants/refugees integrated in all aspects of our community?* - participants moved much more toward the “Not at All” end of the continuum. Most agreed with one participant who said: *Basic needs are met; people are getting help to be economically involved but not socio-culturally and politically.*

Participants then spent time in small groups discussing the question: *how do we as a Region move toward the positive end of the continuums for both settlement and integration?*

Results of Community Strategy Sessions

The full results of the two Community Strategy Sessions, summarized below, can be found in the full report *LIPC Community Strategy Sessions Report* on the CCBR website at: <http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/Page/View/LIP.html>.

At the end of the first session, participants were asked to determine the top five priority issues that LIPC should focus on to work towards successful settlement and integration of immigrants/refugees. The five areas were identified as:

:

1. Gaps in settlement services (language, health, housing and education)
2. Comprehensive service provision
3. Civic participation and immigrant leadership
4. Public awareness and acceptance
5. LIPC structure (including relationship to WRIEN).

In the second Community Strategy Session, held in Cambridge on May 14, 2009, 34 people participated with sector distribution very similar to the distribution in the first session. Participants honed the names and definitions of the five theme areas and their respective Task Groups. Following extensive discussion on each area, participants were then encouraged to sign up for one or more Task Groups and to suggest other names or sector representation for each.

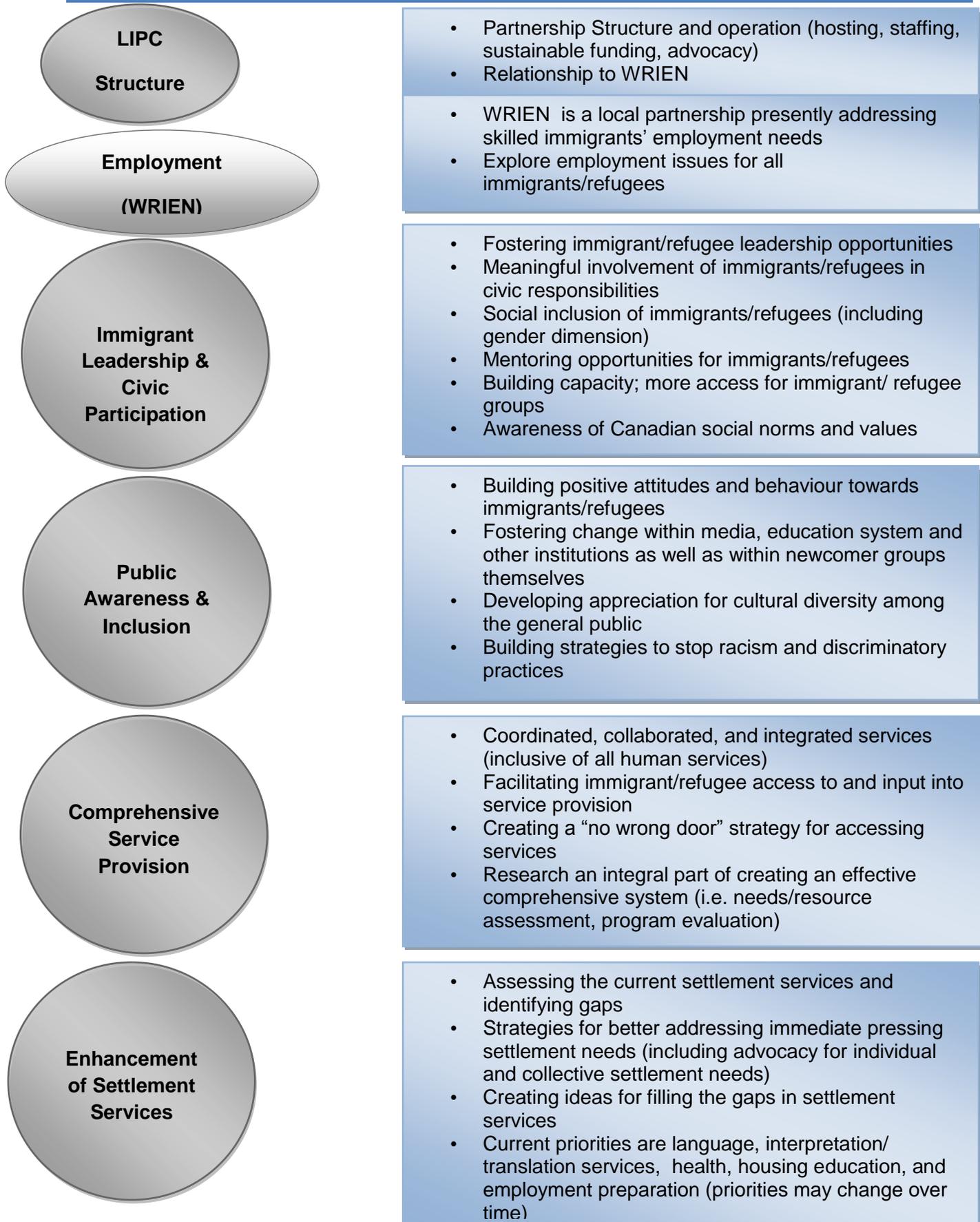
THEMATIC TASK GROUPS - PROCESS AND RESULTS

Process for Task Groups

Five thematic task groups were formed, with four based on the settlement and integration themes identified in the Community Strategy Sessions and one based on the need to determine the future structure of LIPC. At the request of WRIEN, a sixth Task Group was added to explore employment needs with the possibility of WRIEN expanding its role to address the employment needs of all immigrants, beyond those of the professionally trained. All Task Groups were open to anyone who wished to participate.

Each Task Group met three times (a total of 18 meetings each 1.5 to 2 hours), identifying needs and gaps within their respective thematic areas, setting priorities for action and developing Strategic Directions and Action Strategies around two or three of their top priorities. The Task Groups and their thematic descriptions are outlined on the next page.

TASK GROUPS AND THEIR DESCRIPTION



Results from Task Groups

The combined notes for the three meetings of each of the Task Groups can be found at: <http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/Page/View/LIP.html> under “Task Group Combined Reports”.

Each of the **five thematic Task Groups** developed strategic directions and action strategies based on two or three priority needs/gaps which they chose through a ranking process of all of the needs and gaps they had identified in their first meeting. While Task Group participants agreed that all of the identified needs/gaps are important to some degree, they felt that those identified as priorities should be the first ones that the LIPC should begin to work on in Phase 2. The LIPC should also review the notes from the related Task Group meetings for suggestions for addressing needs and gaps identified in the first meetings.

The charts in Chapter 2 of this Report entitled *Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan* outline the Strategic Directions and Action Strategies recommended by the five Task Groups. In Phase 2, the LIP Council will need to review the Strategic Directions and Action Strategies and then determine, in conjunction with their three Working Groups, which Strategies they will begin to address. At that point they will be able to develop specific timeframes for action on those they choose to address immediately and to flesh out specific objectives and performance measures (both of those are already embedded in many of the Action Strategies) and an evaluation plan.

The **sixth LIP Task Group** focused on the future **structure of the LIP Council**. In the first meeting, participants, representing multiple sectors of the community, agreed that whatever structure emerged:

- LIP must be based on a shared vision, goals and values;
- it must have commitment from all levels of government and the community to be able to sustain itself financially;
- it must be action oriented;
- it must have community-wide representation with stakeholders committed to collaboration, accountability and responsibility.

Participants then went on to define various elements of the structure. For the second meeting the facilitators presented alternative models which were based on the various element descriptions that came out of discussions in the first meeting. The models and those elements were extensively honed during the second and third meetings, with additional input from the WRIEN Steering Committee, which met with facilitators to respond to the models presented. The final draft model was endorsed by the Task Group and by the WRIEN Steering Committee. The model and its various elements were presented to the Community Forum held on March 24, 2010. A diagram of the model and a description of its various components can be found in Chapter 3 of this Report *Partnership Council Structure*.

ADDITIONAL FOCUS GROUPS

The Interim LIP Council expressed concerns around the number of immigrants and refugees participating in Task Groups. Although many service provider staff who are/were immigrants or refugees were participating, as well as other individual immigrants/refugees not affiliated with service agencies, it was felt that the work of the Task Groups could be enhanced through taking, wherever possible, their results to larger numbers of immigrants and refugees who were not

attached to service providers. To that end, once the Task Groups had determined the needs and gaps in their respective theme areas, focus groups were held with immigrants and refugees throughout Waterloo Region. Nine focus groups were held, with eight of them being presented with the results of one or more Task Groups' identification of gaps and needs in the areas they had focused on. One focus group with refugees only was asked a set of questions around their needs and experiences, which, it was felt, often differed from other immigrants. Where needed, interpreters were used to help facilitate discussion.

Similarly, although employers were represented in some of the Task Groups, members of the WRIEN Steering Committee felt that, particularly for the Employment Task Group, it would be good to hear from more employers. To that end, an employers' focus group was organized by WRIEN staff.

The results of these focus groups can be found in Chapter 7 of this Report entitled *Consultations*.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

Immigrant Fact Sheets

Additional research in the process of completing Phase 1 of the LIP process in Waterloo Region included a series of fact sheets published by the Region of Waterloo as developed by their Public Health Department and the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington and Dufferin. Those fact sheets describing the Waterloo Region's immigrant populations can be found in Chapter 4 of this Report *Immigrant Populations in Waterloo Region*.

Inventory of Settlement/Integration Services

In addition, LIP partnered with the Welcoming Communities Initiative, a five year CURA project, to engage researchers from the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University in developing an inventory of settlement and integration services in Waterloo Region. The report from that research can be found in Chapter 5 of this Report *Service Inventory*. This data should prove to be very useful as LIP moves into Phase 2, especially in conjunction with the Strategic Directions and Action Strategies outlined under *Enhancement of Settlement Services* and *Comprehensive Service Provision*.

English Language Training (ESL/ELT) Environmental Scan

A separate research piece was undertaken in the latter days of LIP Phase 1 by the Centre for Community Based Research. The purpose was to provide a comprehensive listing of existing ESL/ELT services and to identify gaps and barriers which hinder access for new Canadians to the English education which they require. This research is a need long identified by the WRIEN's ISWG and one confirmed through the identification of needs/gaps by the LIP Task Groups during PHASE 1. The results of this research are presented in Chapter 6 *ESL/ELT Scan*.

All of the above research should form an integral part of the planning process as the LIPC, in Phase 2, begins to finalize its implementation plans for the Settlement/Integration Strategy.

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

ENHANCEMENT OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
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	Work with the Region of Waterloo to break down barriers related to affordable housing and to be more accessible to newcomers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harness the energy of HHUG and make immigrant issues part of their agenda • 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] • LIPC member (s) to join HHUG • Housing staff (region) need to be part of the LIP process. • Meet with housing staff to make application process meet immigrant/refugee needs/concerns. Example: make explanation for affordable housing in different languages • Advocate for bus service to be expanded in affordable housing locations • Host a meeting of landlords to educate them and to involve them in immigrant issues and resources • Identify availability of neighbourhood associations in affordable housing areas
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.	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Educate the funders to ensure there is holistic approach to providing language services • Bring together all interested community stakeholders and funders, working together to develop a steering group to plan, implement and evaluate this pilot • Operate the pilot simultaneously in two distinctively different neighbourhoods (not downtown Kitchener) looking specifically at areas that presently offer no ESL. • Find ways for incentive funds to be made available • Educate the employers to understand the dividends of investing in such in-plan (workplace) services. • Educate ESL providers to design work-related language programming—tailor courses to meet the workplace audience • Encourage immigrant employees to participate without fear of reprisal or looking foolish. • Provide programs on ‘soft’ communication skills and techniques.

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>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.</p> <p>2. Advocate for professional standard of competence for interpreters working in the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Research existing models in other countries (i.e. Australia, Sweden) ➤ Educate service providers about the benefits of using trained interpreters. ➤ Bring together representatives of regulated professions about benefits of trained/potential legal risks of not using trained interpreters/access as human rights issue. ➤ Connect with Conestoga College and other training centers to access what is presently available ➤ Work with other communities to create standards ➤ Work with other accredited interpretation services (e.g., signing) to evaluate standards and accreditations

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>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase the opportunity for newcomers to communicate with each other (e.g., add chat function to newcomer portal) ➤ Bring together service providers across sectors to build awareness about what they are doing (community information fair) ➤ Review comprehensive needs and gaps in information and how the newcomer portal and others (e.g. community information centre) can fill those gaps. ➤ Develop a comprehensive communication list of all relevant service providers.
<p>Lack of coordination (little sharing or collaboration)</p>	<p>Design a process to identify barriers to collaboration and coordination, to develop accountable plans and concrete tools to enable collaboration and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Design a process to determine barriers to collaboration and coordination ➤ Develop plans to address identified barriers ➤ Develop a tool or process to bring all information together in an easily access format ➤ Develop a comprehensive inventory of services to enable collaboration and sharing

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE PROVISION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
	coordination, keeping in mind the diversity of end users.	
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.	Encourage all members of our community to embrace the strengths, benefits and leadership abilities that immigrants bring to Waterloo Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify (early) challenges that immigrants face and provide support and opportunities to address these challenges (e.g. spelling, ESL) ➤ Bring together community stakeholders/immigrants to develop a full-fledged public awareness campaign about the benefits and strengths that immigrants bring to the community ➤ 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. ➤ Advocate that municipalities sign on to the UNESCO's anti-racism and discrimination principles/protocol. ➤ Explore at best practices outside of Canada
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	Increase interaction between immigrant and mainstream communities by building upon and expanding successful programs already in place in Waterloo Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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 ➤ 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. ➤ Enable and promote community groups to deliver cultural/socially diverse activities that make explicit efforts to include immigrants ➤ Effectively promote existing activities ➤ Identify sectors of the community that are traditionally not involved in inter-cultural dialogue and encourage their participation and offer training
Lack of (financial) resources for individuals/families and lack of	1. Advocate to municipalities and school boards to provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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,

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND INCLUSION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
information about available opportunities to participate in recreational/cultural/sports activities; need more affordable cultural activities for everyone.	<p>equity access cards for all low income families and individuals</p> <p>2. Encourage private clubs/associations to promote more open/accessible policies</p>	<p>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)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with municipalities to encourage them to recognize private clubs/associations who have open door policies ➤ Target activities that have significant barriers to accessibility and help support specific equity measures that would increase participation of disadvantaged groups

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	Mobilize efforts to organize and advocate for civic leadership and participation in our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify existing leadership initiatives (targeting immigrants/refugees or targeting mainstream population, for instance Leadership Waterloo, VAC) ➤ Enhance existing initiatives to develop a structure that becomes an identifiable entity for immigrant civic participation and leadership ➤ Develop a plan and identify potential sources of funding for ongoing services ➤ 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
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>1. Engage immigrants through wide channels of access: a) educating volunteers and b) accessing immigrant leaders</p> <p>2. Educate and negotiate mainstream institutions and hold them accountable to value immigrants’ ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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 ➤ 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 ➤ Work with municipal funders to ensure that they hold funded organizations accountable for implementing immigrant recruitment strategies for boards and committees. ➤
Lack of awareness/understanding of norms/values of newcomers/long term Canadians: (what is expected of	Facilitate improved communications between immigrants and long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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).

IMMIGRANT LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
us collectively as Canadian residents)	Canadians by organizing educational and networking opportunities. [addressing norms, values]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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)

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)	Develop resources and a toolkit for legal issues regarding hiring (also post-hiring) immigrants including developing something like a ‘help-desk’.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review existing practices (e.g. WRIEN’s resources) ➤ Support small employers in particular - for instance legal support ➤ Encourage service providers to pre-screen candidates for appropriateness for the person to the position ➤ 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)
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>1. Develop a common access point for employers looking to hire new Canadians</p> <p>2. Develop a common training plan for service providers related to employers’ varying needs and expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explore models that are currently in place in other communities and with other client groups (e.g. disability groups) ➤ Develop protocols among agencies for approaching employers and sharing job leads ➤ Define a common access point and voice in the community (e.g. WRIEN’s work) ➤ Develop shared training and understanding of relationships-based job development among service providers ➤ Develop a sector based approach to employment and training
Lack of knowledge about available services by employers, immigrants, services providers and general public: (lack of effective implementation of communication/marketing strategies)	Develop a plan to review and evaluate current communication tools and systems which inform the various market groups about immigrant employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To develop a market specific research plan building on existing resources (e.g. WRIEN’s resources) ➤ To engage ethnic leaders through community meetings to develop networks to disseminate information ➤ To form market specific focus groups (general public needs to be treated differently than employers, immigrants and service providers (market specific

EMPLOYMENT		
NEED/GAP	STRATEGIC DIRECTION(S)	ACTION STRATEGIES
	programs and services available	communication strategies) ➤ To develop fund plans and implementation of the same (e.g. hiring communication consultants, etc)

CHAPTER 3

PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

As noted in Chapter 1, the following proposed Structure and its elements came out of a series of Task Group meetings as well as direct consultation with the WRIEN Steering Committee.

On March 24, 2010, a Community Forum was held where over 200 people participated in reviewing the proposed Partnership Structure (as well as the Settlement Strategy and Action Plan). Small group discussions and an exercise in which each individual participant indicated his/her support for the structure allowed participants to comment on all aspects of the structure found below.

COMMUNITY FORUM RESPONSE

Generally, Community Forum participants not only supported the structure and its various components, they also committed to participating at one level or another. There were, however, some concerns expressed, with a number of participants recognizing that more detail would have to be worked out by the new Council, especially related to roles, accountability and funding.

In addition, with almost all elements, where there was support there were also questions or expressions of concern. Examples are given below:

- while the majority of comments to having the Region as Host were positive (Region has broad community perspective; Region would give some stability and credibility to the Partnership Council; Region works well with the community, etc.), there were also some concerns expressed, including: would the decision-making processes of a government institution, including things like having to have all funding approved by Regional Council, hinder the Council from moving forward quickly into action; would the Region be willing to give in to the will of the Council even where they may wish to undertake something that would be counter to Region's policies.
- while many felt it is good to have an Executive Director, just as many said that more staff would be needed to implement the large agenda of the Council and to support the volunteers at all levels; concerns were expressed about who that position would be accountable to; and it would be crucial that the position be filled by the "right" person.
- many felt that the number of Council members was about right but many more felt it would have to be larger to accommodate all sectors; a number of participants felt the immigrant/refugee contingent should be larger than one-third; and others emphasised that the Council would need to have decision-makers from other organizations on the Council, that the Region and funders should be represented and there should be representation from all Regional communities.

- again, many agreed with WRIEN being part of the Council and leading the employment related pillar (able to build on its good work and its strengths); however, others had concerns that WRIEN would need to commit to serving the non-professional immigrant, has not in the past taken into account refugee needs, would reflect the “status quo”, would dominate the Partnership Council because it already is funded.

While the comments from the discussion groups appeared to suggest that either the proposed Partnership Council Structure was simple, straightforward and workable or that it was too large, could become bureaucratic and would depend too heavily on having the “right” people in all positions, the evidence from the individual exercise suggested strong support for the proposal with the majority of “stickers” tending toward the “Very Much” end of the continuum of moving the community forward. In addition, the majority of participants expressed interest in participating at some level with the new Partnership Council.

In addition, there were some suggestions made that the Partnership Council may deem to be important, some of which could be added to the Terms of Reference:

- it is vital to support and coach those immigrant/refugee participants in Working Groups and Council who are not familiar with this type of structure;
- ongoing review and evaluation are crucial to success;
- the Council needs to be prepared to lobby provincial and federal governments for change, not just focus locally;
- a workplan/business plan needs to be developed to negotiate with funders;
- periodically hold separate forums for different sectors;
- comprehensive service provision initiatives need to involve funders of those services as well as deliverers;
- mandate of Council should include: “and strengthening awareness and capacity of Waterloo Region to integrate increasing numbers of immigrants and refugees” in order to emphasize a two-way approach and responsibility of the whole community to make change;
- relationship building within the council is crucial – need to create a common culture with a common purpose;
- council meetings should be open to the public.

Finally, in the Evaluations completed by participants at the Community Forum, 87% supported the suggested name, “Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership” although some did not like the resulting acronym WRIP.

PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL STRUCTURE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mandate

The mandate of the LIPC is to help facilitate successful settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees to Waterloo Region.

Values and Principles

Flexible and responsive, inclusive, consensus, consultation, collaboration, purpose driven, best practices, respect, non judgmental, transparency, preparation, community driven, results focused, action oriented.

Host

- Ask the Regional Municipality of Waterloo to host for up to 5 years (with an option of an independent organization in the future).
- Region hosting would be contingent on funding resources being available.
- Pre-determined dollars need to be committed prior to moving forward.
- Host roles: Office space, staff supervision, back office support, administrative logistics.

Council Roles:

- Set strategic priorities (based on phase one LIP process) and monitor action-plan implementation
- Seek input from community-at-large and educate community about immigrant issues
- Seek out and strategically allocate resources
- Provide advice or direction on key initiatives (in collaboration with work groups)
- Hire and oversee Executive Director (need to clarify with role of host)
- Mobilize and distribute resources and investments for Council special projects
- Identify and conduct region-wide advocacy
- Strike ad hoc task groups as needed
- Pursue government relationships including advocacy together with other LIPs (need to clarify restraints of host)
- Share information back to community

Council Composition:

- Approximately 15 members initially determined by interim LIPC (in consultation with host), thereafter Council seeks its own replacements from community nominations. Criteria: diverse community sectors, region-wide representation, at least 1/3 immigrants (connected to respective community).
- Elect chair and vice-chair by membership for a fixed 2 year term.

Executive Director

Roles:

- Support Council and work groups in implementing action-plan
- Ensure communication and information flow across Council/work groups
- Liaise with core funder(s) and seek project funding
- Contract outside consultants as needed (e.g., evaluation)
- Hire and supervise administrative and project staff

Work Groups (services, employment, inclusive community)²

Roles:

- Carry out activities related to Council strategic priorities within their domain
- Implement special projects of Council in keeping with Council strategic priorities

² Please note that on the following structure diagram the bullets under the three Work Groups are those strategic directions (abbreviated and in some cases combined) from the charts in Chapter 2 of this report that apply to each Work Group. Under “Settling” are the Strategic Directions from the “Enhancement of Settlement Services” and the “Comprehensive Service Provision” charts. Under “Working” are the Strategic Directions from the “Employment” chart. Under “Belonging” are the Strategic Directions from the “Public Awareness and Inclusion” and “Immigrant Leadership and Civic Participation” charts.

- Present periodic progress reports to Council
- Strengthen cross-sector partnerships and inter-work group collaboration
- Identify and conduct region-wide advocacy
- Seek input from community-at-large and educate community about immigrant issues
- Provide input to Council regarding priorities and issues

Composition:

- Members designated by Council for a 2 year renewable terms (same criteria as Council) based on community nominations of people committed to work group priorities. Strive for at least 1/3 immigrants (connected to respective community).
- Chairs appointed by and sit on Council.

Funders

- Multiple funders for core operations and special projects.
- Pooled community funds for new emerging initiatives.
- Pre-determined dollars need to be committed prior to moving forward.

Community:

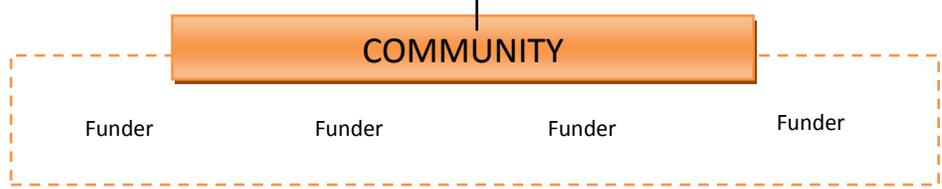
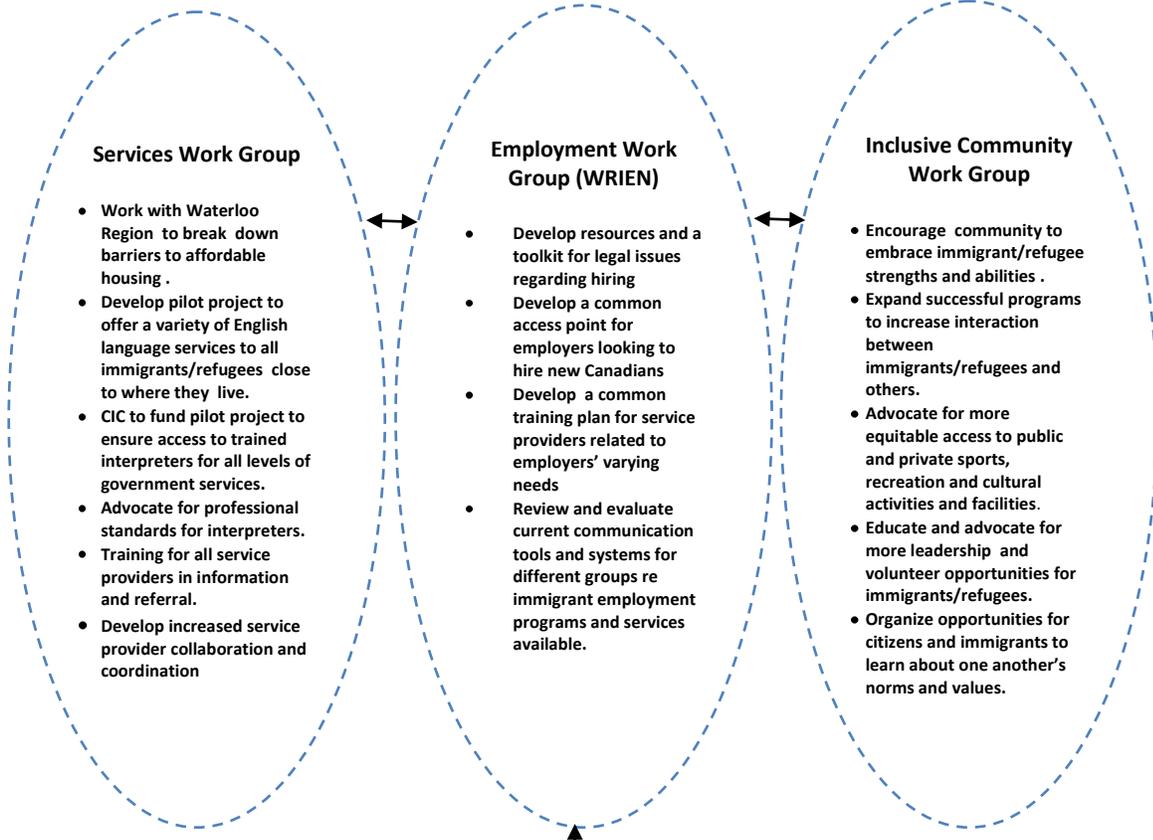
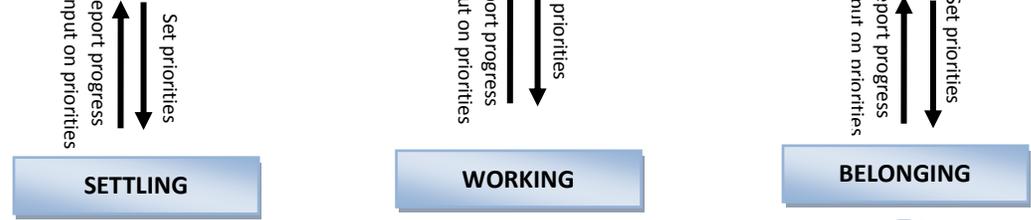
- Nominations for Council members
- Active involvement in work groups (nominated to and appointed by Council)
- Receive information about and provide input to Council strategic directions

Evaluation/Research:

- Measure effectiveness of outcomes and processes.

PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL STRUCTURE

Regional Municipality of Waterloo



Share information

Nominations & Input

Share information

Nominations & Input

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Active involvement →

← Active involvement

CHAPTER 7

CONSULTATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Interim LIP Council expressed concerns around the number of immigrants and refugees participating in Task Groups. Although many service provider staff who are/were immigrants or refugees were participating, as well as other individual immigrants/refugees not affiliated with service agencies, it was felt that the work of the Task Groups could be enhanced through taking, wherever possible, their results to larger numbers of immigrants and refugees who were not attached to service providers. To that end, once the Task Groups had determined the needs and gaps in their respective theme areas, focus groups were held with immigrants and refugees throughout Waterloo Region. Nine focus groups were held, with eight of them being presented with the results of at least one of the Task Groups' identification of gaps and needs. One focus group with refugees only was asked a set of questions around their needs and experiences, which, it was felt, often differed from other immigrants. Where needed, interpreters were used to help facilitate discussion.

Similarly, although employers were represented in some of the Task Groups, members of the WRIEN Steering Committee felt that, particularly for the Employment Task Group, it would be good to hear from more employers. To that end, an employers' focus group was organized by WRIEN staff.

RESULTS FROM IMMIGRANT FOCUS GROUPS

Eighty-five immigrants/refugees, coming to Canada from thirty-five different countries, participated in the nine focus groups. The focus groups with immigrants and refugees generally confirmed the Task Groups' identified needs/gaps. Some examples are listed below.

Not all of the identified needs and gaps could be discussed in the focus groups because of limits of time and, in some cases, understanding of/experience with the issues or willingness to discuss (for example, there was very little discussion around prevention services or mental health needs). In almost all cases, however, some participants identified each of the identified gaps or needs as being important to them, confirming that the Task Group participants were indeed on the right track.

There were some cases where focus group participants felt one need/gap was more important than the priorities identified by the Task Groups. For example, under Enhanced Settlement Services, one of two focus groups who explored that area very strongly identified the lack of family physicians as a priority – not identified as one of the top five priorities by the Task Group. On the other hand, in another focus group that also explored the same needs/gaps for enhanced settlement services, that need was not rated highly by most participants.³ Each Task Group list of gaps/needs was used at two focus groups, and very often what one focus group identified as important was not identified by the other focus group. A sample of the results from two of the focus groups which explored the gaps/needs related to the Enhancement of Settlement Services is included as Appendix A in this chapter. Please note that:

- The wording of the list of needs/gaps was changed to more plain language before they were taken to the focus groups;

³ It is likely that the Task Group had not made that particular need/gap a priority because it is a community-wide need and one over which a local immigration partnership council may have little influence.

- The needs/gaps in bold printing were the priorities identified by the Task Group (they were not in bold when given to the focus group participants);
- The bulleted points were comments made by focus group participants;
- The numbers in the right hand column reflect the request to participants to identify the three most important needs/gaps for them.
- Between the two focus groups, almost all of the gaps/needs were identified by at least one participant as being important to them.

Similar results from focus groups with immigrants where the gaps/needs discussed were related to *Comprehensive Service Provision, Public Awareness and Inclusion, and Immigrant Leadership and Civic Participation* can be found on the Centre for Community Based Research website at: <http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/resources/LIPC%20reports/FOCUS%20GROUPS%20summary%20report.pdf>

RESULTS FROM REFUGEE FOCUS GROUP

The full results of the focus group with refugees are attached as Appendix B.

As noted above, the ten refugees who participated were asked a series of open-ended questions about their experiences and suggestions for improved settlement and integration in Waterloo Region. As might be expected, many of their concerns were similar to other immigrants as documented in the needs and gaps identified by the LIP Task Groups. However, some were unique to them. Some of these unique concerns included:

- Some service agencies not understanding of the differences between what is available for refugee claimants, sponsored refugees and other immigrants and the lack of access to many services by refugee claimants;
- The fear of telling their stories over and over again every time they went to a new mainstream service agency because a new interpreter would be used who the refugee did not know could be trusted.
- Not knowing what questions to ask when seeking help, if you are not sponsored and not connected to others who had experience (*If you don't ask agencies/government, they wouldn't tell you. So you needed to ask right kind of questions to get information from agencies and when you first arrive in the country, you might not know what to ask.*)
- The influence of U.S. media's negative reporting about refugees on the Canadian public.
- The lack of financial resources for refugee claimants and their families as they are not allowed to work and must pay for many services that other immigrants/refugees receive free.

RESULTS FROM EMPLOYERS FOCUS GROUP

Seven employers representing a variety of businesses, large and small, participated and were asked to respond to a series of questions about what hinders employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees. Their responses were shared with the Employment Task Group in their last meeting, as those responses related to the needs/gaps which the Task Group had previously identified.

The table in Appendix C shows those comments (preceded by an *) where there was a relationship between the focus group discussion and the Employment Task Group identified gap/need. Needs/gaps in bold were the top six priorities the Task Group identified for further action. Subsequently, three of those (A, D, E) were developed into Strategic Directions and Action Strategies by the Task Group.

Some of the major concerns of the employers' focus group included:

- The need for service providers to understand that different employers have different needs based on the type of work involved, the culture of their organization, the size of the workplace, etc. They felt that service providers often did not understand their needs.
- Immigrants and refugees need to be coached on how to present their “soft skills” and their understanding of Canadian values and norms, especially as those relate to the workplace.
- There is often a disconnect between employer experience and that of the immigrant or refugee. Sometimes that leads to a perception of discrimination but really it is a fear by the employer of doing the wrong thing in relating to the newcomer.
- One comment from one participant was very telling. Despite all of the media attention to the fact that Canada is going to need ever increasing numbers of workers from outside Canada, many employers are not yet “feeling the pinch”. In some sectors, of course, they are very much feeling the pinch and seeking trained employees from outside of Canada because they do not recognize that there may be immigrants and refugees in the community who could meet their needs.

CONCLUSION

The focus group results summarized above demonstrate the importance of having representation from immigrants, refugees and employers in all aspects of future Partnership Council processes. The Structure for the Council outlined in Chapter 3 of this report takes that into consideration. This need to include all sectors in the structure and in future discussions around priorities and action plans for the Council was further emphasised during the Community Forum by many of the over 200 participants.

Appendix A

Enhancement of Settlement Services

Combination Of Two Immigrant Focus Group Responses To Identified Needs/Gaps

	Needs/Gaps ¹	Most Important ²
	HEALTH SERVICES	
A	<p>Need for medical staff to be more sensitive to cultural and language differences or to have trained interpreters especially for women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I was in the hospital for the first time (in Toronto), they provided me with interpreter and I did not face any problem.³ • In cases of foreign trained doctors, it's not only English but the accent is also very thick and difficult to understand. • When I came here, I was pregnant and was facing a lot of challenges. It would have been good if I had some interpretation support. The doctor (gynecologist) used the word 'induction' or 'inducement' and I didn't know what that meant. • It is very important for medical staff to be culturally sensitive. I am from the US and don't have any problem with the language. However, the medical staff assumes that I understand and know everything about the medical system here. I faced a lot of problems initially because I could ask only a number of questions, as opposed to asking many (which is the case in the US). 	2
B	Refugees especially and the parents of children with mental health problems can not get services.	2
C	Very few prevention services for immigrants and refugees.	
D	<p>OHIP wait period and service providers do not know how prescription drugs are covered and what they cost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The health system is very good but waiting period is way too long (e.g. to get doctors' or specialist's appointment, OHIP). A friend of mine had to wait for 3 months for a surgery). • It would be good to explain about OHIP and what does it cover (and what it doesn't). • For people with disability (on OSWD), the coverage issue is much more complicated 	5
E	<p>Immigrants and refugees often cannot get a family doctor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is problem for internal migrants also (e.g. lack of family doctors). This is a bigger issue; it is a systemic issue. There is a lack of research to determine if this is more problematic for newcomers than others. There might be an element of discrimination. • The health system is good, but we do not have enough doctors. • I have a doctor now after waiting for four years. 	12

	Needs/Gaps ¹	Most Important ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •When I came here, I was pregnant and was without any family doctor for 4 months. •I am here for quite long (for the last 3-4 years) and I don't have any family doctor. However, it is not a big issue. When there is any problem/need, I go to emergency or visit a walk-in clinic. •When we go to emergency (over the weekend) we wait for quite long (in one case for 20 hours). This is especially a big problem when you are pregnant. 	
	HOUSING SERVICES	
F	<p>Affordable housing very difficult to get, especially for immigrants and refugees with large families and for single people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •I had to wait for 2-1/2 years to get affordable/subsidized housing (I am single). I kept going to the government office but nobody helped me. There was a long waiting list. I lived with my brother or other relatives to offset the cost. •I waited for 4 years to get subsidized housing. •I waited for 2 years (2 people said) to get a subsidized housing. During that time, I was paying rent by saving money from my child benefits. 	4
G	Emergency accommodation not family friendly and not accessible because of lack of transportation.	
H	<p>Cost of housing, including first and last month's rent, and the difficulty of immigrants and refugees to get co-signers or references make it very hard for them to get rental housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Organizations cannot bring co-signers as we land here. •I heard a lot about this from friends. •The first and last month rent is really a big burden. 	6
I	<p>Newcomers do not know their rights and responsibilities regarding housing, at a time when housing discrimination may be increasing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •They (landlords) did give us an apartment since we had funds (but not a job). Superintendent of the building was very harsh, we found a Mexican person/friend who helped us by co-signing the lease. •It happens if you don't know language (they say if there is a fire or other emergencies, how can we communicate). •Most of the people did not know about tenancy rights while renting houses •I approached YMCA and they helped me out as well as my friends but YMCA never explained my rights. •A lot of discrimination against black people. •I heard a lot about this, from friends that even if the apartment is available, the landlords (superintendent) won't rent that out to us (black immigrants) •When I came here first as a refugee, I was in a shelter for 2 months and whenever I go to look for an apartment they would not give the apartment even if it's available (as I had inquired them before going there). It is really an act of discrimination. 	6

	Needs/Gaps¹	Most Important²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There is discrimination against black people not only by the landlords but also by the residents as well. 	
	EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE SERVICES	
J	<p>Newcomer families may have difficulty understanding the school system because: some teachers and administrators do not understand the needs of immigrants and refugees; there are not interpreters for parent-teacher meetings; children put in ESL classes in school may be treated badly by other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •They (settlement organizations) provide wrong information •I didn't know which school should I send my kids to? They don't provide you with clear information •My experience was very good; we get support from Catholic District Board. There is a difference in services of public board and Catholic •For the first 3 years I had problem understanding/communicating with teachers. I could not communicate and tell them about my son's progress/problems. I couldn't attend parent-teacher meetings. There were no interpreters available to support me. •The community centre's outreach coordinator identified another problem. In September, when kids start going to school, a lot papers are sent by the school administration. Families usually don't understand all of them and they come to us to explain what those papers are about. 	8
K	<p>Immigrants and refugees face many barriers in trying to get good ESL training - waiting lists including waiting lists for child care, no transportation, no ESL programs near where they live, not enough testing and assessment of language skills, slow pace of learning, cost in some cases, no language training related to the workplace..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •My son got an ESL teacher and it was a good experience. There is a problem of differential treatment (he feels excluded). •ESL instructors should be more patient (not too fast) from moving level 1 to level 2. •They put me on waiting list for ESL class for 6 months and the ESL school I go to is located in Waterloo which is quite far from here. I have to change two buses to get there because child care is available only in that centre. •If I get citizenship, I won't be able to avail that child care. •Even if you want to continue to improve (language and skills) there is no child care available. •Why can't they have some courses in French which is my 2nd language? •I want to volunteer to get experience but there is no child care available. I want to feel part of the community and wanted to volunteer at non profit organizations but there is no child care available. [include this in Public Awareness and Inclusion Task Group] •The ESL classes were good but there are not enough centres offering this service especially with the close of public school classes. •There are ESL students staying in the same level for one year. There is not enough workplace language training. 	3
L	<p>Interpretation services difficult to get for many services (legal, justice, medical, etc.) because there are no interpreters for some languages or the interpreters that are available are not satisfactory or there are no funds to pay interpreters</p>	

	Needs/Gaps ¹	Most Important ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response from the community centre’s outreach coordinator. We face challenges finding interpreters at the community centre, especially volunteer interpreters. Many programs do not cover for interpretation and volunteer interpreters are very stretched. • Teachers are being prejudiced against black students. My son often used to tell this when he was young. For instance, my son and another of his black friend were not allowed to chew gum while others were allowed to do so. • Teachers should be taught about cultural food. I would prepare Indian curry for my son but he would bring back his lunch, probably other students would ridicule/laugh at him. One day I went to his school and talked to the teacher. She listened to me attentively and then took the initiative to explain it to other students. After that, my son’s classmates started liking that food and would never make fun of him. 	2
	EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION SERVICES ⁴	
M	Career services may mislead immigrants and refugees to think they will get them work, when all they really do is give them advice about how to get work.	
N	<p>Volunteer placements are often unavailable to match with newcomer training or experience; volunteering is not possible when newcomer needs income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a lot of problems with child care issues facing women who are looking for work or want to improve their skills. I can’t do anything; if I want to study my son would come and steal my papers. If I had child care services, I could have accomplished a lot of things. 	3
O	Employment services are not coordinated, and there is no guide for immigrants and refugees on which employment service they should choose.	
P	Barriers to accessing employment including: “9” on non-permanent SIN #; 3-6 months before refugee claimants can begin work; limited funding for good programs to help refugees get employment; no cultural sensitivity, or actual discrimination by employers.	
Q	Many immigrants and refugees find it difficult to spend the time to look for or keep jobs when they are spending time and energy trying to deal with broken sponsorships, immigration issues, difficult systems (example, schools), level 3 language requirement for employment training, etc.	3

Notes:

¹ The Needs/Gaps were identified by the Task Group. Those in bold were considered priorities by the Task Group.

² Needs/Gaps deemed most important by Focus Group participants.

³ Indented and bulleted lines are comments made about the needs/gaps that were discussed by Focus Group participants.

⁴ This section was not discussed at all in the first group.

Appendix B – Refugee Focus Group Results

(10 Participants)

What are the most important needs that you have (or had) on arrival in this community as a refugee that are not (were not) met?

- Lack of financial resources to meet basic needs; I just had an air mattress and was facing some health problems. There were no furniture and no information available where to get furniture at reasonable price
- There was no health assistance/information; lack of family doctor
- There was not a website (information hub) to provide all the information that we needed.
- For people who had family, there were no information available about schooling (e.g. transfer of credit, when to enrol, etc)
- There was lack of information (in our language, including interpretation services)
- People coming from certain religious/geographic backgrounds face more problems (e.g. Muslims). Christians could get assistance from Churches but no such help was available for Muslims
- We had to repeat our stories to each social agency through interpreters. Each agency would have its own interpreter and we had to tell our stories to all these individuals/interpreters again and again. Our privacy was compromised. Usually these interpreters were from our own communities so there was this stigma attached (being a refugee). The agencies would say that the interpreters were professionals, but still they could harm us (e.g. subtle negative feelings)
- Language is the biggest problem in accessing services/information

How did you receive information about those services/programs?

- Mostly we got information from our friends or people belonging to our ethnic communities. Sometimes these information could be wrong.
- If you don't ask agencies/government, they wouldn't tell you. So you needed to ask right kind of questions to get information from agencies and when you first arrive in the country, you might not know what to ask. So you have to know what to ask
- We didn't know that you could ask for extra money for winter clothing; if you don't know they won't tell you
- YMCA, MCRS were really helpful in providing these services/info. Now if somebody ask me, I refer him/her to MCRS. They are quite organized and can direct you in the right direction

What additional supports would be of value to you as you attempt to settle and integrate into this community?

- ESL didn't help me to improve my (conversational) English. There is a need to have more conversational sessions/classes. They could match you with some Canadian born speaker to improve conversational English. There should be some kind of mentoring with Canadian born speakers outside of ESL classes
- At conversation circles (e.g. English Café), child care can be a problem. They could hold their classes when children are at schools (for adults) and also after school hours (for children)
- There is a lot of help available but it needs improvement; it's about connecting the need with needy.
- There should be mentoring beyond ESL (to make the whole settlement experience more comfortable).

- Agencies should be aware of differential needs because refugees can't access all the services because of their status. Government assisted and refugee claimants (seekers) have different needs (and can't access all the services). There should be a better training for agency staff to understand these differences.
- If you are not a resident, you have to pay a lot to access services (e.g. schooling). We have to wait 1-2 years before we get residency.
- Information (about jobs) is available as if you are a Canadian citizen. There is some help available but it serves mostly the residents or approved refugees and not refugee claimants
- Housing is another problem, especially for those who have families with them. Sometimes mother has to go to one place and the father to another (in case of emergency shelter/housing)
- In schools, they don't recognize our previous credits/education. I did my grade 9 in my home country but they didn't recognize and I had to do it again.
- Coordination of services can be a problem because of competition among agencies for funding. We should have some larger body to provide all these services. There is a lack of capacity and resources in smaller organizations
- A lot of services (e.g. host family program) are not available to refugee claimants. Refugee claimants are afraid of connecting with people from their own community (host families).

Do you see any evidence of discrimination against immigrants/refugees in this community?

- I came from California (another from Texas) and I faced discrimination there but not so much in this community
- There is racial profiling by the police (unnecessary questioning)
- For Muslims, they are subject o random inspections (at the airports) more often than others
- Employers do discriminate on the basis of your names. Once I changed my name and I got call from the employer for an interview
- It is hard for us to find housing in the beginning. They want us to have a co-signer. They don't accept social assistance cheques. When we arrive here, we usually don't have a co-signer.

What do you think the general public needs to learn about refugees in this community?

- The fact that he/she doesn't speak good English doesn't mean that he/she is not educated or capable
- You can't make assumptions about people without knowing them
- Refugees make a lot of contribution to build this country/community
- This country is built by immigrants, these new people are also immigrants and will contribute to build this country
- Involve media to spread the message, especially TV
- Educate old comers about different cultures and religions of newcomers so they don't find anything strange
- Educate people in schools about cultural diversity
- Refugees should also demonstrate that they are contributing to the community
- Canadians are getting influenced by US media (racial jokes)
- There is a fear that immigrants/newcomers will take job of Canadians; so there is some kind of rejection by the mainstream community.
- Rights of refugees are the same; promote human rights agenda

- Promote participation of people from diverse cultures at government leadership positions. This will convey the message to the wider community and will have role models for refugees. The equity law should be implemented in an effective way
- Educate people about the contribution that refugees make. They are considered as greedy, taking government money, etc. But this is not the case. Refugee claimants cannot work for the first 6-8 months and they do a lot of volunteer work. We calculated yesterday that on average a refugee claimant works 4,600 hours a year. Even if we paid them the minimum wage, it would be more than \$ 40,000 a year. We should educate people about that

Appendix C - Employer Focus Group Results

* Employer Focus Group Identified Needs/Gaps related to Employment Task Group Identified Needs/Gaps

	Gaps/Needs
A	<p>Lack of support to employers (esp. small businesses) to hire immigrants: (information needs 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 need to support immigrants in the workplace – a gap in WRIEN’s work)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Employers would like to receive candidates’ summary info from a pre-screening process to be more prepared to interview them. * Employers would like to receive clear candidate references related to a particular position. * Training needed for HR professionals on how to deal with new Canadians
B	<p>Language barriers: (there has been erosion of ESL resources at grass roots level; language benchmarks seen as artificial barrier; literacy, education and skill levels are often inadequate for workplace)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Immigrants need to improve their English language level and their communication skills * Lack of understanding of Canadian culture and norms
C	<p>Increased immigrant unemployment/poverty: (increasing numbers of immigrants living in poverty; lack of strategies around lower skilled jobs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Employers are not feeling the pain yet in terms of need for foreign trained workers
D	<p>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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Service providers need more depth of knowledge with integration of approach to coaching and referrals - having one guideline to be followed by all service provider agencies.
E	<p>Lack of knowledge about available services by employers, immigrants, services providers and general public: (lack of effective implementation of communication/marketing strategies)</p>
F	<p>Service providers’ lack of understanding of employers’ needs: (gap between how employers actually hire and how service providers perceive the hiring process; may be confusing messages given to immigrants about employer expectations; even a gap between service providers and employers in how they perceive the issue(s))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Service providers don’t understand employer needs – big disconnect between what they think employer needs are and the reality * Employers look on resumes for evidence of team work and leadership skills in addition to a positive attitude. * Coaching is needed for newcomers re soft skills and expectations * Newcomers do not see the need for upgrading to Canadian Standards.

G	<p>Lack of advocacy: (critical mass of immigrants/refugees unorganized, unable to advocate their issues for themselves; no one appears to be advocating for realistic funding to match employment needs of immigrants/refugees; disconnect between various immigration policies and huge gap in implementation of existing policies – often under provincial and federal jurisdiction and beyond local communities’ control)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Immigration Point System does not necessarily match employer needs at the time. * Governmental regulations – challenges that employers face and are out of their control. * There need to be more success stories shared with employers and general public
H	<p>Discrimination in hiring: (downturn in economy has put greater pressure on immigrants and refugees in terms of opportunities for employment; government not looking at fair hiring and wage policies; policies and laws can be barrier to hiring new Canadians – e.g., professional association requirements; large employers, including government should be leaders)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Accreditation requirements by professional associations hinders opportunities for newcomers. * Employers are afraid of being seen to be discriminating so are reluctant to take the risk to hire or even interview foreign trained workers. * Discrimination is not intentional – it comes from fear of doing the wrong thing and human need to take path of least resistance. * Disconnect between employers’ personal experience and Immigrant experience * Immigrants will apply to employers where they see themselves reflected in workplace at all levels.
I	<p>Service providers’ lack of understanding of users’ needs (inadequate explanation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Service providers and school guidance counsellors are not realistic about employer needs and expectations. * Service providers and school counsellors need to guide newcomers on their need to reinvent themselves – take their experience and broaden it to Canadian context.
J	<p>Lack of support by the service providers: (lack of support for immigrants who get hired without going through service providers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Should be more appropriate mentorship programs for newcomers.
K	<p>Lack of foreign credentials recognition and/or acceptance (by employers, employees, general public)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lack of recognition of immigrant skill sets – the skill sets need to be certified * Immigrants don’t know how to make their skill sets transferable to the Canadian workplace. * Immigrants need support to help them sell themselves here. * Immigrants need to be open to pursue a certification that Canadian employers recognize to be employed in their field of expertise * Immigrants have to prove that they are able to perform the role.

CHAPTER 8

EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

Throughout The LIP process, evaluations of each major activity were undertaken by CCBR. The results of those evaluations are summarized below. The full evaluation reports are accessible on the CCBR website at: <http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/Page/View/LIP.html>.

Evaluation results are presented below in chronological order of the LIP activities and cover:

- Community Strategy Sessions
- Task Group Meetings
- LIP Council activities
- Community Forum

The focus groups with immigrants, refugees, and employers were not formally evaluated due to time constraints. However, verbal feedback was quite positive in all cases.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY SESSIONS EVALUATION

While only the second of the two Community Strategy Sessions was evaluated, most respondents had also participated in the first session. Most of the respondents (93 %, much and very much) reported that the session met their expectations and most of the respondents (96%, much and very much) noted that the session helped in moving the agenda of LIPC forward.

Participants also noted that the session provided them an opportunity to openly discuss and understand the LIPC process:

I found today's session to be better organized and more productive. The outcome was excellent—congratulations. (Session Participant)

A chance to better understand the LIPC process; an opportunity for input. (Session Participant)

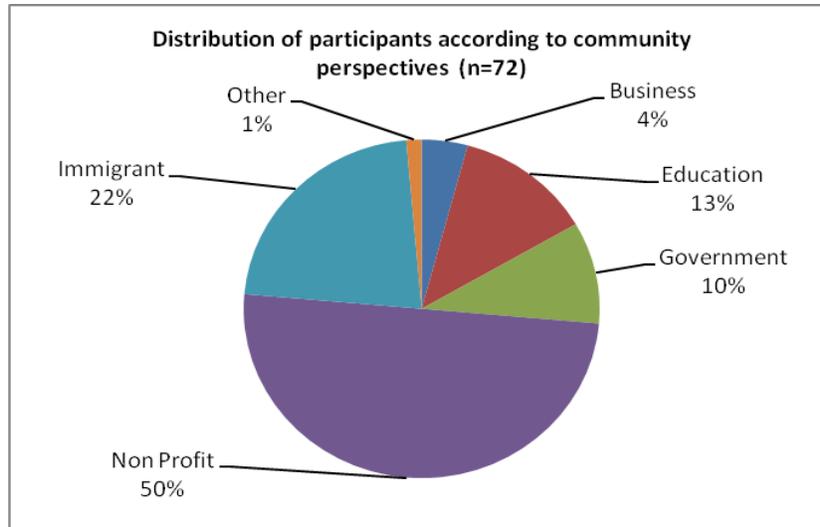
Discussion, open input, acceptance of input with collaborative approach. (Session Participant)

The evaluation questions can be found as an appendix on the CCBR website, as noted in the introduction above, under *Community Strategy Sessions: Full Report*. Participants in each session are also listed in a separate appendix there.

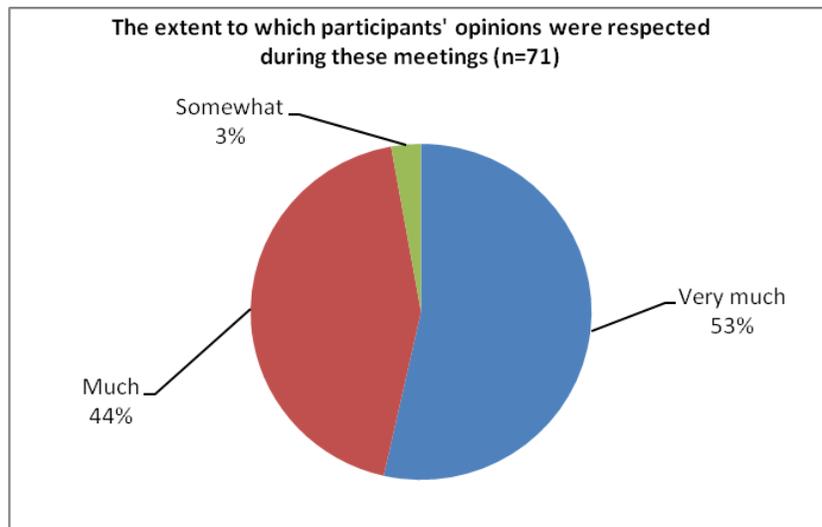
TASK GROUP MEETINGS EVALUATION

There were six thematic task groups, with five of them based on a variety of immigrant/refugee settlement and integration issues (please see Chapter 2 of this report) and the sixth exploring options for the future LIPC structure (please see Chapter 3 of this report). There were three rounds of task group meetings and in the final round more than 70 participants⁴ in these task groups completed the evaluation form.

Task group members represented different perspectives of the community, including immigrants, government, education, business and individuals belonging to the non profit sector.



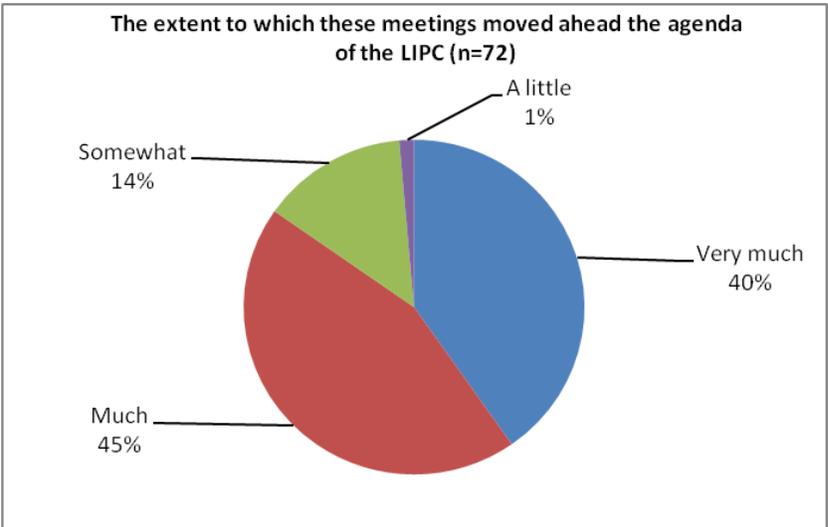
Evaluation results are summarized below. The evaluation questions can be found as an appendix under *Task Groups and Council Meetings Evaluation Report* on the CCBR website, as noted in the introduction above,



Nearly all of the Task Group respondents (97%) indicated that their opinions were respected during task group meetings (Very much and much). Even during these meetings, many participants noted that decisions in these meetings were made in a very democratic manner and opinions of all participants were respected.

⁴ It should be noted here that some individuals participated in more than one task group and completed the evaluation forms in each of those meetings (i.e. more than once).

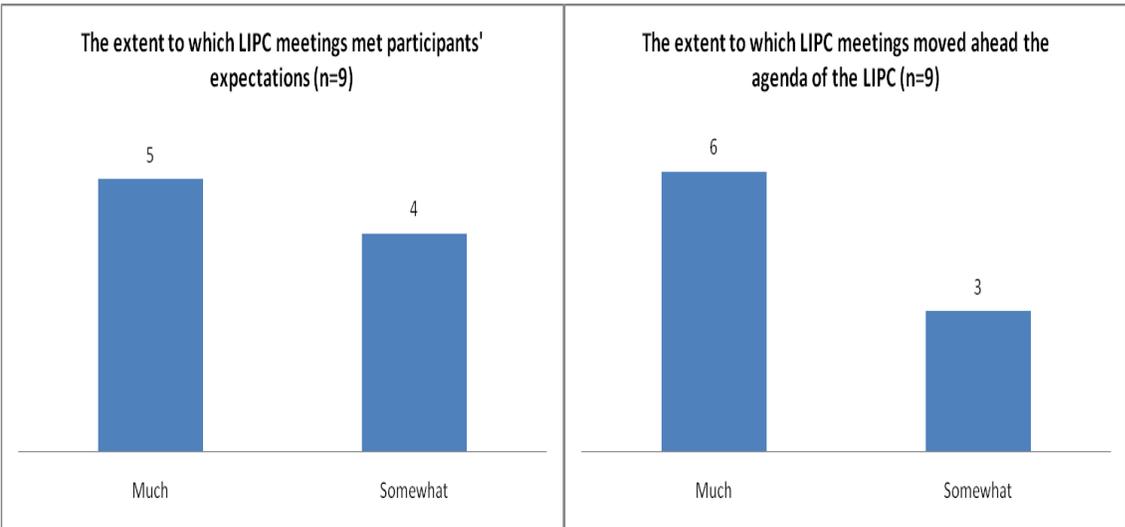
Most of the respondents (85%) found these meetings helpful in moving ahead the agenda of the LIPC (very much and much).

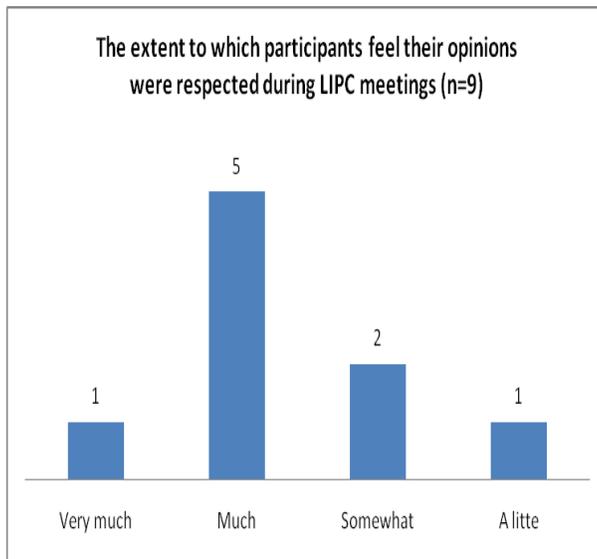


Respondents indicated that task group meetings provided an opportunity for them to share ideas with diverse stakeholders and that the process was useful in identifying gaps/needs and strategic directions.

**LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL (INTERIM) MEETINGS
EVALUATION**

The Interim LIPC is composed of diverse community stakeholders and is responsible for phase one of this project. The Council met seven times during the project and the evaluation was completed by nine members of the Council after the fifth meeting. The evaluation results are summarized below. The evaluation questions can be found as an appendix under *Task Groups and Council Meetings Evaluation Report* on the CCBR website, as noted in the introduction to this chapter.



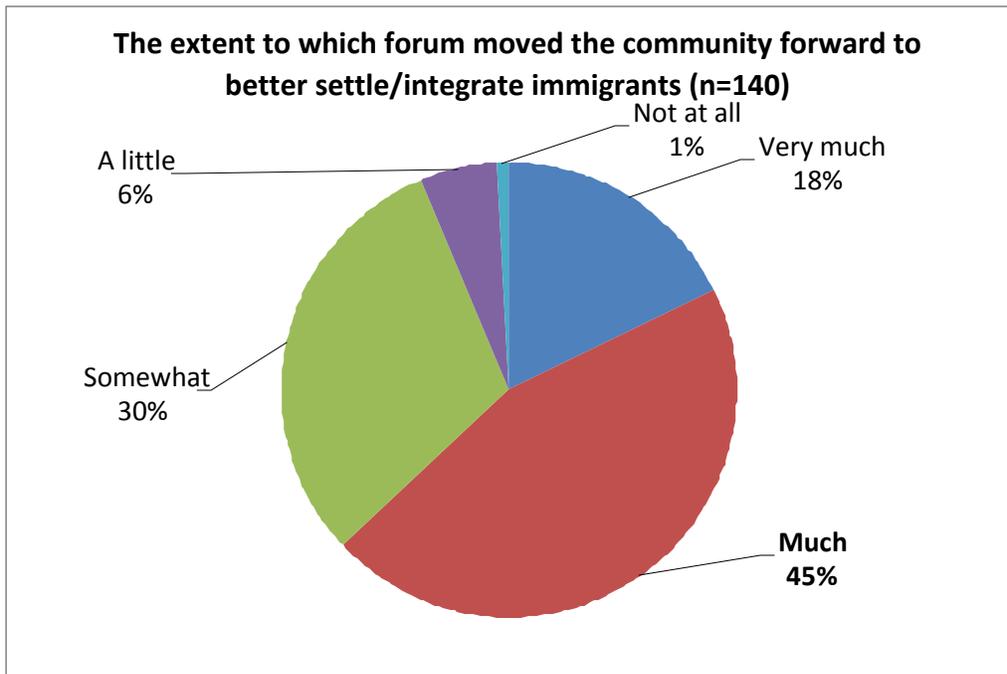
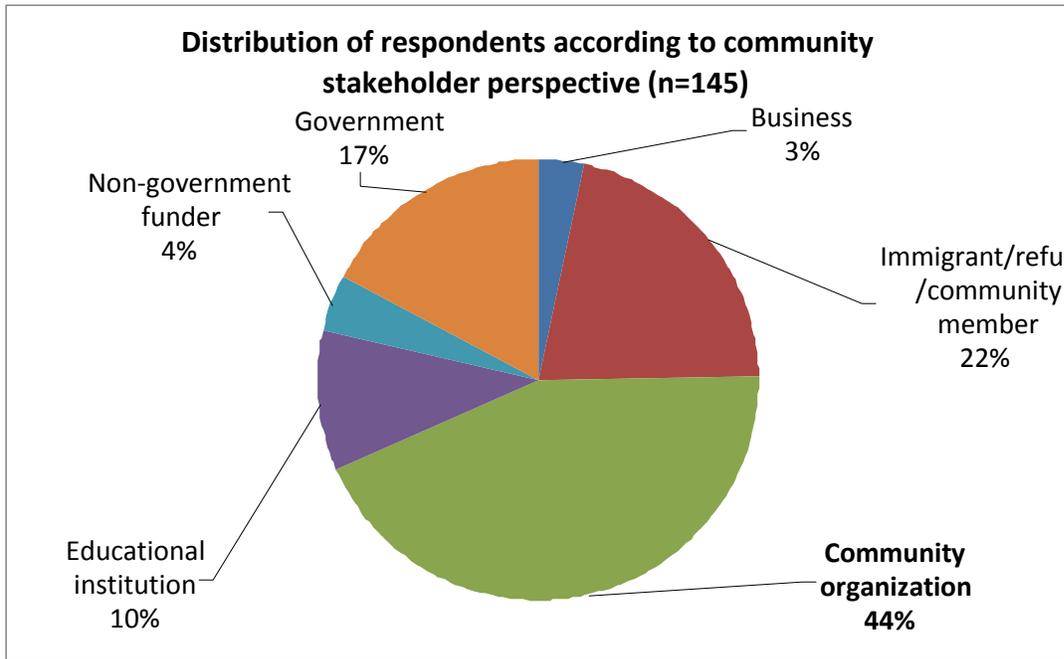


LIPC meetings met expectations of a majority of the respondents (five out of nine). Most of the respondents (6) noted that LIPC meetings were helpful in moving ahead the LIP agenda and the same number of respondents indicated that their opinions were respected during LIPC meetings (very much and much). However, there were a few respondents (3) who felt that their opinions were not respected during LIPC meetings to the degree they could have been (somewhat and a little).

COMMUNITY FORUM EVALUATION

Over 200 people participated in a LIP Community Forum on March 24, 2010. The primary purpose of the forum was to present the work of the Task Groups – the Strategic Action Plan and the proposed Partnership Council structure. Results of the forum are detailed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report. More details about the evaluation can be found in the full evaluation report on the CCBR website at : <http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/Page/View/LIP.html>.

Evaluation forms were completed by 145 forum participants. The first chart below shows the distribution of those participants by sector. The second chart shows that 63% of respondents felt that the forum was quite successful in moving the community forward (much and very much) in its attempt to better settle and integrate immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region. A further 30% felt it did that somewhat. Only 1% felt that it that was probably the representative of the local LHIN.



Further quantitative evaluation data and qualitative comments to two open-ended questions about the success of the forum can be seen on the CCBR website as noted above.

Another indicator of the success of the forum is the large number of people who indicated how they would like to be involved in the future LIP process. Ninety-six participants indicated how

they would like to be involved in the future - everything from being a member of the Council or a specific work group to “however I can help”. Another sixteen gave their contact information without indicating specifically how they might be involved.

NAMING THE NEW COUNCIL

One question on the evaluation form asked participants : *Would you support the Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership: Settling, Working, Belonging as a name for LIPC?* Out of 140 respondents, 86% did support the name with 14% not in agreement.

Those who did not support the name gave alternative suggestions and reasons for their suggestions. Some of their concerns were shared by some of the 86% who supported the name – such as its acronym (WRIP) and its length. It should be noted that *Settling, Working, Belonging* was not intended to be part of the actual name but as a tag line.

Q-6 If no, what other suggestions do you have for the LIPC name?

- Immigrant Partnership of WR
- Build on WRIEN, changing ‘E’ to engagement---or something more inclusive than employment
- WRIP sounds little scary, no? Something that reflects the continuous settling/working/belonging would be nice
- I like the name, but would add Council to the name as follows: Waterloo Partnership Council: Settling, Working & Belonging
- Name is too long; Waterloo Region Immigrant House or Home
- Remove the ‘settling, working and belonging’ it’s too long
- I like the name but don’t forget the brand in ‘WRIEN’ that has been
- It is too long, no suggestion though
- Waterloo Region Immigrant/Newcomer Partnership; Immigration inclusive (refugee, newcomers)
- Waterloo Region Newcomer Working Group
- Newcomer is more inclusive; Concerns expressed at our table that ‘sponsored refugees’ fall between the support and mechanism
- WRIP; Waterloo Region Supporting Immigrants: Settling, Working
- Only the first part; leave the last part as it is long line
- Too long—ask one of the Ad firms to come up with a memorable name
- This would work as a name with a logo; it is too long otherwise
- WRIP, SWB (settling, working and belonging); WIP;
- Does the Council need a new name? LIPC is good
- Name is too long; I would keep that as your tagline; I would keep LIPC as the name
- Newcomers Waterloo
- Something shorter
- The acronym spells WRIP

The new Partnership Council may want to take some of those concerns into account when finalizing their name.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

ACKNOWLEDGENTS

The Local Immigration Partnership process in Waterloo Region proved to be a very dynamic process in which over 250 people played important roles. Many of them maintained their faith in the LIP process despite their having participated over decades in many other attempts to address the needs and gaps that hinder immigrants and refugees from becoming full participants in all aspects of our community.

The Interim LIP Council played a crucial role in supporting the process by sharing their insights, giving feedback and generally guiding the process over more than one year. A list of the members of the Interim Council follow:

List of Waterloo Region Local Immigration Partnership Committee Members

Organization	Representative	Alternate
Conestoga College	Laura Stoutenburg	Andrea Leis
Greater KW Chamber of Commerce	Art Sinclair	Joan Fisk
The Working Centre	Dave Thomas	Stephanie Mancini
Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support	Eunice Valenzuela	
Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre and CCORIC	Fauzia Mazhar	
Waterloo Public Library	Gloria Van Eek-Meijers	
Cambridge YMCA	Javed Chaudhry	
Lutherwood	Leda Gonzalez	Louise Surnoskie
Social Planning Council Cambridge & North Dumfries	Linda Terry	
Region of Waterloo	David Dirks	Lorie Fioze
KW Multicultural Centre	Lucia Harrison	
KW Reception Centre	Mira Malidzanovic	Lynne Griffiths
KW YMCA	Maria Alvarez	Almira Hodzic
House of Friendship	Michael Hackbusch	
Focus for Ethnic Women	Olga George-Cosh	
City of Kitchener	Shelley Adams	
Kitchener Public Library	Sonia Lewis	
Cambridge Public Library	Betty Wilson	
WRIEN	Nora Whittington	

All of the participants in the Community Strategy Sessions and especially in the Task Groups contributed many hours to the development of the Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan and the Partnership Council Structure. Lists of participants in each of these groups can be found in the summary reports on the CCBR website at:

<http://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/Page/View/LIP.html>.

The immigrants, refugees and employers who participated in the focus groups helped immensely in bringing a reality check to the needs and gaps and subsequent Strategic Directions and Action Strategies developed by the Task Groups. For reasons of confidentiality we have not tracked their names.

We also acknowledge the very helpful contribution by members of the WRIEN Steering Committee who met periodically with LIPC representatives in open and frank discussions about the LIP progress and the crucial relationship between WRIEN & LIPC. A number of them also participated in Task Groups, particularly those related to employment and LIP structure.

The representatives of the three lead partners contributed endless hours to ensuring that the LIP process was inclusive and transparent and achieved the deliverables promised in our contract with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Those lead partners were: the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, with Mike Murray and Lorie Fioze as the lead representatives. Peter McFadden and Nora Whittington represented the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN); Lucia Harrison, chair of WRIEN’s Immigrant Support Working Group (ISWG) represented an expanded ISWG as the Interim Local Immigration Partnership Council. Facilitation of the process was led by the Centre for Community Based Research, represented by Yasir Dildar, Peggy Hastings-Weston, Rich Janzen and Theron Kramer.

Finally, a word of thanks to Gideon Prins from Citizenship & Immigration Canada who worked on our behalf to ensure our needs were met by his department. He participated in the Interim LIPC meetings and, when needed, the Planning Group meetings with representatives of the lead partners.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps in moving into Phase 2 of the LIP process will begin immediately following the Community Forum in order not to lose the momentum built up over the past year. A work plan will need to be developed and a suggested format for that follows. While next steps have been identified, many other aspects of the work plan have yet to be determined.

The suggested work plan assumes that the Interim LIP Council will continue to function until a new Council is in place.

Operational funding for the new Partnership Council will be imperative for the success of full implementation of the Settlement/Integration Strategy and Action Plan and for development of a fully functioning structure.

NEXT STEP	ACTIONING RESPONSIBILITY	OVERSITE RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Review and submit Phase 1 Final Report to CIC	Interim LIPC	Region	April 15/10
Revise Final Report for community distribution			
Develop process for identifying and	Interim LIPC		April 12

NEXT STEP	ACTIONING RESPONSIBILITY	OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
soliciting membership for new Partnership Council			
Appoint new Partnership Council members	Interim LIPC		
Work with the Region of Waterloo regarding "hosting" of LIPC		Partnership Council	
Continue to work with WRIEN about the integration of LIPC and WRIEN		Partnership Council	
Develop a work plan and budget for the new Strategy and new Council			
Secure funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and other funders			
Populate the working groups of "Settling," "Working" and "Belonging"		Partnership Council	
Prioritize strategies and actions			
Develop a plan to sustain the LIPC			
Develop an evaluation plan for the work of the LIPC			