

Minutes: Newcomer Services Collaboration Working Group

December 15, 2021 - 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm (Zoom)

Present: Jassi Ranauta (TSLIP - The Neighbourhood Group), Lauren McCauley (TSLIP – WoodGreen Community Services), Rahel Hailemichael (Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture), Amanda Choo (WoodGreen Community Services), Celine Chen (The Neighbourhood Group).

Minutes: Jassi Ranauta (TSLIP – The Neighbourhood Group)

I= Information Di=Discussion Dc=Decision A=Action

	Agenda Item
I	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Acknowledgement• Introduction/Check-In
DI	Discussion: Draft Workplan and Project Timelines <p>Attendees were given an overview of the final draft workplan (shared by email with all Working Group members prior to the meeting) developed based on input and discussion from the previous working group meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A proposal was shared for the development of two project sub-committees: one focused on Newcomer Rights and the other on Sector Transition. Each sub-committee to meet every 3-4 weeks (to be determined by each group) with bi-monthly (every 6-8 weeks) meetings of all Working Group members.• Newcomer Rights Sub-Committee:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Will develop a 2-part workshop on Newcomer Pathways to Housing for sector staff between February and May○ Will develop a workshop/training on Newcomer Labour Exploitation from April to August○ Timelines are subject to some change and adjustment as needed by each sub-committee• Sector Transition Sub-Committee:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Will develop capacity building trainings for sector staff based on a sector-wide needs assessment between January and April

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will develop an agreement between sector partners to share their recorded webinars/information sessions with each other so they can be used to support newcomers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suggestion shared to partner with Toronto Public Library, Toronto Public Health, City of Toronto Recreation Programs, IRCC, CRA, and creating email accounts ● Toronto Housing Help Centre shared as a possible resource and partner ● Outreach to sector partners working on housing and labour exploitation to begin ASAP in the new year ● Workplan was approved by Working Group members in attendance
DI	<p>Organizational Updates: Aghan Refugee Arrival – Member Initiatives and Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TSLIP, with partners, has created a website-based and printable resource listing available Dari and Pashto speaking services. Available on www.torontolip.com <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was suggested that this type of resource be replicated for Amharic and Tigrigna speaking newcomers ● National Settlement and Integration Council update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a hold up in logistics in getting Afghans with approved applications physically out of their current locations (many are in neighboring countries) due to lack of transport, trouble with local bureaucracy, etc. ○ So far, applications from 14,550 Afghans overseas, 9575 have been approved, and only 3500 arrived so far. IRCC estimates 7000 will have arrived by March 2022. It will take around 2 years to get the rest of the promised 40,000 over. ● CCVT has started to see an increase in Afghans accessing services, is working in collaboration with COSTI and Polycultural to assist with Afghan refugee arrival ● WoodGreen is running Afghan Settlement Hotline (ASH), weekday afternoons. So far, uptake has been lower than anticipated but calls have been received locally as well as from outside of Ontario and even internationally. ● WoodGreen LINC classes are currently online. Digital Literacy Worker supports those in need of tech/digital literacy support ● TNG LINC courses are also currently offered online, collaboration with teachers to support accessing online courses.
I	<p>Organizational Updates: Reopening</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TNG has plans to reopen/return to the office in January, but new developments with COVID-19 variants may postpone/change these plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Settlement services are currently available online as well as in-person by appointment if needed. • WoodGreen providing both online and in-person services. All group activities are still online. • CCVT: had plans to reopen classes on January 4, 2022, but these plans are tentatively on-hold due to COVID-19 variants
I	<p>Organizational Updates: Vaccine Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toronto Zoo is hosting a vaccine clinic for children • CCVT is partnering with the City of Toronto with ambassadors that are working to facilitate bookings for those with precarious status and language barriers, so far, the bookings are going well. Recent QR code announcement by the government lead to increase in calls to this initiative.
I	<p><u>Next Meeting</u></p> <p>€ Thursday January 20, 2022 @ 1pm-2pm</p>