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## TORONTO SOUTH LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

*Monday, June 18, 2018*  
*Centre for Social Innovation - Annex*

#### **In attendance:**

##### ***Executive Committee Members***

Bill Sinclair, St. Stephen's Community House  
Debbie Hill-Corrigan, Sojourn House  
Lisa Randall, Culturelink  
Mulugeta Abai, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture  
Peter Clutterbuck, Social Planning Toronto

##### ***Project Team***

Paulina Wyrzykowski, St. Stephen's Community House (meeting facilitator)  
Sandra Guerra, WoodGreen Community Services  
Giovanni Rico, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture  
Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider, Social Planning Toronto  
Mariam Azimi, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture  
Nadine Nasir, St. Stephen's Community House (minutes)

#### **Regrets:**

Axelle Janczur, Access Alliance  
Cassandra Wong, Parkdale Community Information Centre  
Randall Freeborn, WoodGreen Community Services

#### **Agenda:**

- Welcome & Introductions
- Visioning Update
- National Settlement Council Meeting Update
- Refugee Claimants in Toronto
- Capacity Building Project (MCI Grant) Update
- Heritage Canada Call for Proposals
- Upcoming Council Meetings
- Succession Planning
- File Transfer Update

#### **Welcome and Introductions:**

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Paulina introduced the following two new TSLIP employees, who are working on the Capacity Building Project (MCI Grant):

- Nadine Nasir, Adult Educator (*St. Stephen's Community House*)
- Mariam Azimi, Project Coordinator (*Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture*).

## **Visioning Update**

Paulina Wyrzykowski provided the current draft of the National LIP Council's visioning document. Paulina explained that nothing was eliminated in the vision, but there were additions (please refer to powerpoint for additional information).

## **National Settlement Council Meeting Update**

This year, for the first time, LIPs were invited to attend the National Settlement Council + meeting in Ottawa on June 14 and 15<sup>th</sup> 2018. Paulina was one of the Ontario LIP representatives. The focus of the National Settlement Council meeting was on the IRCC call for proposals for 2019-2020. Service providing organizations can expect the following from the upcoming call for proposals:

- IRCC is shifting to a "whole of society" approach.
- IRCC expects service providing organizations to engage employers, and treat them as additional clients.
- The areas of focus will be: mental health, women, refugees, youth, LGBTQ2 newcomers, and francophone newcomers.
- The criteria will include: client-centered approaches and services, and outcomes-driven data collection.

There were questions about how to measure integration, and how to get from outputs to outcomes. TSLIP Executive members agreed that when measuring outcomes, it is important to look at the society as a whole. For example, is the community less racist? Have more newcomers been hired?

IRCC is also moving towards more of a "case management" approach. The focus will hopefully be less on numbers, as there has been recognition that more vulnerable newcomers should be given more time.

During the discussion about the National Settlement Council meeting, the Executive raised the question of who our clients are, especially given that we do not provide direct services to newcomers. The agreement was that LIP clients are the whole community. For example, LIPs work on trying to curb racism in our communities, get people to work more inclusively, etc. LIPs also strive to be responsive to needs.

There was discussion about the need to avoid duplication, and ensure that we are not taking on the role that OCASI plays in the sector. LIPs cannot be members of OCASI, but OCASI has indicated that they represent the interests of LIPs. At the National Settlement Council meeting,

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OCASI shared their view that LIPs need to have more flexibility to include advocacy as part of their work, and they need more consistent funding to know whether or not they are a permanent structure. OCASI's criticisms of the LIPs were that: 1) they are not always focused on a "whole of society" approach and insufficiently engage community members who are not in the settlement sector, and 2) LIPs cannot demonstrate outcomes.

At the National Settlement Council meeting, there was some discussion about the services and programming that LIPs can engage in based on funding. Specifically, IRCC-funded programs and services can serve Permanent Residents and Convention Refugees, but not refugee claimants and people without status. However, some LIP members serve refugee claimants and people without status.

IRCC discussed the new risk assessment model that they are considering adopting, in which IRCC's level of oversight of an organization that they fund will vary depending on where the organization falls in their risk assessment. If the organization is lower risk, then IRCC will take a fairly "hands off" approach, while organizations that fall in the higher risk category will be managed more closely. The Executive discussed the need for IRCC to be transparent in this process, and explain what makes an organization fall into the low or high risk categories.

## Refugee Claimants in Toronto

COSTI has been in communication with the LIPs about coordinating a response to provide services to the refugee claimants in Toronto. COSTI has asked to be in communication with one point person for each LIP. In the South, Giovanni Rico is the point person. TSLIP sent out a questionnaire asking organizations if they have the capacity to provide support to refugee claimants in Toronto. 39 agencies replied indicating that they can provide some support. COSTI is specifically looking for support in three areas: child care spaces, access to summer programs, and secondary health care.

The Executive Committee discussed the need to get the "right people" at the table to have a coordinated and effective response. OCASI was named as an organization that has a list of all agencies and the services that they provide, however there has been limited discussion about this issue at OCASI.

The current situation in Toronto was described by Debbie Hill-Corrigan (who is also the chair of the Toronto Shelter Network) and Giovanni Rico as follows:

- Refugee claimants are being housed in 2 college dorms. The Red Cross is providing basic services/crisis support including heat, electricity, and food.
- Claimants at college dorms do not have access to settlement services in the dorms.
- Claimants need to leave the college dorms by mid-August. Currently there is no plan about where they will go.
- The City of Toronto may create semi-permanent tent-like structures in Scarborough, Etobicoke, and two downtown with the capacity of approximately 100 people each to "replace" the college dorms.
- Proposals have been sent to the *City of Toronto* by members of the Coalition of Service Providers for Refugee Claimants in Southern Ontario. *Sojourn house* has proposed to

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open a reception centre which includes a shelter, with Red Cross as its partner organization, but has not yet heard from the City about if they will be given a building for this purpose.

The question arose of how the *Municipality of Peel* has been responding to the increase of refugee claimants. The *Municipality of Peel* has been sending claimants to Toronto because of “sanctuary city”, as in Peel they have to ask for IDs.

The Executive Committee discussed the role of LIPs as the coordinating body, to bring everyone together for half of a day to discuss capacity and action. It would be helpful to have someone provide services to the claimants in the dorms a couple of days a week.

The Executive agreed that LIPs would take on service coordination (for example, give COSTI the names of 5 organizations that are willing to provide support, and the services that they offer). This includes forming “teams” of organizations that have the capacity to respond, especially near the college dorms. TSLIP will also post practical information about these refugee claimants on their website to inform the public about the current situation. The information posted will include answers to questions such as: who are these claimants? What are they fleeing? Is this a crisis? What does this mean for Toronto? The website will also include “tools” that may be helpful for people. For example, what should a child care centre know about these refugee claimants? Any tools to help in their learning will be posted.

Concerns were raised about the terminology that is being used to describe the arrival of claimants in Toronto. Giovanni Rico explained that it is not an “influx” but rather an upward trend; the numbers are going back up to where they were before refugee reforms in 2012. Giovanni indicated that numbers have been increasing for 2 years now, but there are currently more driving factors. The Executive Committee discussed that this is not a “refugee influx” or a “housing crisis”, but rather a “resource crisis”, since the funds that used to assist refugee claimants prior to 2012 have since been diverted elsewhere. This should be a key message for organizations and the public.

In terms of next steps, TSLIP is organizing a meeting of people that have indicated that their organizations can provide services. TSLIP will create an action plan that could be used as a model for other LIPs. Paulina will look for the action plan that was used in the Syrian refugee response as a starting point, to see whether or not that plan is useful in this context. TSLIP will also post information about the refugee claimants arrival on the TSLIP website.

## **Capacity Building Project (MCI Grant) Update**

Nadine Nasir provided an update about the first of twelve workshops that has been conducted as part of the inter-LIP capacity building project, and provided information about the upcoming workshop for leaders of organizations about developing and implementing mental health practices. The Executive Committee suggested providing examples of sound practices to workshop participants to help them mitigate some of the systemic issues affecting the mental health of staff and clients in this sector (for example, in the next call for proposals, state the maximum number of cases that can be taken, and ensure the target is not too high).

## **Heritage Canada Call for Proposals**

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Heritage Canada has sent out a Call for Proposals for small-term “event-type” funding for projects related to youth, women and indigenous communities. Paulina has the Heritage Canada official’s business card, so ask Paulina for this person’s contact information if you are interested.

## **Upcoming Council Meetings**

The Executive Committee agreed that the September council meeting will be focused on the upcoming IRCC Call for Proposals. Possibly in a “speed dating” format, with small tables set up to discuss the specific subject-matter that IRCC will be funding: youth, women, LGBTQ2 newcomers, refugees, mental health, francophone newcomers. This will help people find collaboration opportunities, and will give them time form the necessary partnerships.

The December council meeting will highlight succession planning. Specifically, the TSLIP Executive will report back about our experience with succession planning and we will provide recommendations to the rest of Council.

The topic of the February council meeting will be decided at a later date. For now, the idea is to discuss the MCI capacity building project, including lessons learned and next steps. This could also be a good time to discuss what is happening in the province.

## **Succession Planning**

The Executive will create a concrete plan for nominations. Paulina will work on this in August, but it is a project of the whole Executive. The Executive will report our findings and experience back to the Council at the December council meeting, along with our recommendations.

## **File Transfer Update**

Since TSLIP is on four different networks, files cannot be shared. Sandra Guerra is working on a project to connect everyone on a cloud so that files can be shared. As part of this work, Sandra Guerra needs to know what historical information needs to be archived. The Executive Committee agreed that the fate of pre-amalgamation documents should be determined by each organization. Bill Sinclair (*St. Stephen’s Community House*) and Mulugeta Abai (*Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture*) indicated that pre-amalgamation documents do not need to be transferred. Since Social Planning Toronto documents are more recent, those will be kept. The Executive also agreed that only final drafts of documents should be saved and transferred onto the cloud.

**Next Executive Council Meeting:** September 5, 2018

**Next Council Meeting:** September 6, 2018

**Meeting adjourned**