

# Needs and Assets Pertaining to Newcomers in the Central Okanagan

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## Introduction

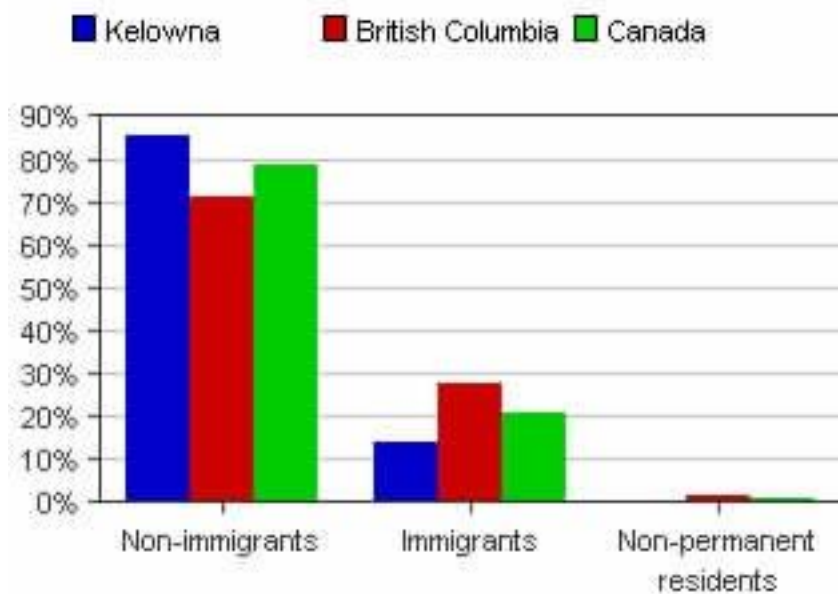
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The Central Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is presently formulating a Strategic Plan that will address specific needs and assets in the settlement and integration of immigrants in the region. The LIP Council hired a research consultant to conduct a comprehensive literature search of existing research undertaken in the Central Okanagan on key issues facing immigrants and newcomers. The consultant was then asked to conduct original community research on the needs and barriers faced by newcomers and immigrants in the Central Okanagan and identify assets and gaps specific to our communities (Kelowna, Lake Country, West Kelowna, and Peachland).

### Overview of the Central Okanagan Region

The Central Okanagan Regional District is made up of four municipalities: Kelowna, West Kelowna, Peachland, and Lake Country (Regional District of Central Okanagan 2014). As a geographically desirable area of Canada, the Central Okanagan Region has experienced a steady increase of immigrants and newcomers. Data drawn from the 2011 National Housing Survey (NHS) for Kelowna highlights that 13.9 per cent of the population of the Kelowna Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) are foreign-born and 0.6 per cent are non-permanent residents (Statistics Canada 2011). The 2011 NHS also indicates that 3,145 immigrants moved to Kelowna between 2006 and 2011 (Statistics Canada), which is 12.9 per cent of the total population of immigrants currently residing in Kelowna (Statistics Canada 2011).

In 2011, the three most common countries of origin for newcomers living in Kelowna were United Kingdom (23.7%), Germany (12.1%), and the United States (8.2%) (Statistics Canada 2011).



*Figure 1: Percentage of Canadian born, foreign born, and non-permanent residents in Kelowna (Canada 2011)*

By comparison, the top three countries of birth of immigrants living in British Columbia in 2011 were China (14.1%), India (12.0%), and the United Kingdom (11.0%). The 2011 NHS also estimates that 10,550 individuals (6.0 per cent of the total population) in Kelowna belong to a visible minority group. It has been determined, furthermore, that the three largest visible minority groups living in Kelowna are South Asian, Chinese, and Japanese (Statistics Canada 2011).

The 2011 NHS further indicates that 82.2 per cent of Kelowna’s immigrant population identify English and/or French as the language they use most frequently at home. The three most frequently reported non-official languages spoken at home by immigrants in Kelowna are German, Panjabi (Punjabi), and Spanish. The median age of immigrants in Kelowna in 2011 was 32.8 years, compared to 35.7 years for the immigrant population in British Columbia (Statistics Canada 2011).

### Literature Review

The literature review was intended to inform the next stage of research that would offer recommendations for the strategic planning process. A 28 page report was created that addressed issues such as employment, housing, language training, health services, education, needs assessments and referrals, justice systems, transit services, religious and ethno-specific supports, recreational services, social inclusion, cross-cultural sensitivity, childcare, advocacy,

and settlement and integration services. The literature review highlighted issues in each of the above areas and some examples of community assets, where literature was available. Effort was also made to integrate insights from other geographically relevant regions, such as other cities in British Columbia or other mid-sized cities in Canada.

### **Community Focus Group and Community Leader and Frontline Staff Surveys**

Original research was conducted for this portion of the project. 36 Community Leader Surveys were sent out between 1 October and 10 October 2014. Ten surveys were completed and returned: five from organizations, four from educational institutions, and one from grassroots organizations. Twelve organizations and groups were sent Frontline Staff Surveys. Six of these were larger organizations, who were asked to distribute surveys to anywhere from two to seven of their frontline staff. Seven Frontline Staff Surveys were completed and returned from four different organizations.

One Focus Group was arranged and carried out on Thursday 9 October 2014 at the Okanagan Regional Library in Kelowna. Eight individuals participated from varying backgrounds (one from Great Britain, one from the Philippines, two from Korea, one from Ecuador, one from Argentina, one Colombian, and one Australian). This group could also be broken down as being comprised of four men and four women. Their ages ranged from 30 to 54 years, while their time in Canada ranged from ten months to seven years.

## **Assets Related to Settlement and Integration**

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### **SOME ASSETS IN THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN REGION**

The following section has been compiled from the input gathered from Community Leader Surveys, Frontline Staff Surveys, and the Community Member Focus Group that were designed for this project. This list is by no means exhaustive and is not meant to replace the Community Mapping project. It is, instead, meant to offer a glimpse into some available assets that already exist in the Central Okanagan region, as identified by and based on the impressions of the program or service by Frontline Staff, Community Leaders, and Focus Group Participants.

- **Industry Training Authority (ITA)**

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) "...works with employers, employees, industry, labour, training providers, and the government to issue credentials, manage apprenticeships, set program standards, and increase opportunities in the trades in BC." (ITA, 2014)

"I am an electrician by trade and, actually, prior to coming over, I had actually looked into what it would take to convert my qualifications, and I had heard about ITA before I came over, and asked my employers for the information that I needed when I was there. I worked for 7 years as an electrician in Australia. They said that sounds good and everything. It should be easily converted over." (Focus Group participant)

"The Industry Training Authority (ITA) are based in Vancouver and if they recognize that you've got the past experience, they give you the opportunity to write the exams where possible." (Focus Group participant)

- **Intercultural Society of the Central Okanagan (ISCO)**

"The strength of ISCO is that it is volunteer and community-driven. No one 'has' to be there. The mission of ISCO is to promote intercultural harmony and discourage racism. This vibrates with new as well as more established immigrants. ISCO provides a safe place to explore ethnicity and celebrate diversity while acknowledging our commonalities as citizens of Canada." (Community Leader Survey participant)

- **Kelowna Community Food Bank (KCFB)**

"Our Volunteer Program gives newcomers a safe/supportive way to engage socially in their new community or in many cases gain work experience and job search support." (Community Leader Survey participant)

- **Kelowna Community Resources (KCR)**

"KCR Immigrant Services provides customized settlement services in order to best meet the needs of individual participants. We offer a variety of services including one-to-one consultations and group workshops. Workshop topics represent the needs of the newcomers we serve, are adaptable depending on the audience, and are delivered in a specialized manner. Our KCR staff represents our community make up well. We are able to offer services in 25 different languages. We are the lead organization of the LIP Council who initiates many community activities surrounding awareness and education. KCR offers Diversity Awareness

Training within the community and is the Community Organizer for the Safe Harbour Program both which are aimed at helping our community to become more welcoming. KCR collaborates regularly with other community service providers in order to better serve the community and help become a bridge for participants receiving assistance from other SPOs. We provide a comprehensive translation and interpretation service which assists members of our community to link to other agencies more effectively. Lastly, KCR lives the concept of being welcoming by providing education and awareness training to all of its staff.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“Very client focused, services adapt to unique circumstances of the newcomer. No time limit, as long as newcomer needs assistance, we can assist them. We have a diverse team who is able to handle many different circumstances and situations. We all have different expertise.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“I call KCR, and they said, ‘Come this day,’ and she was all ears for me. ‘You know, you need to do this.’ I came with my husband, and with three of us, we filled out the papers, and she told me to submit the application, I have to have my passport translated. Things that elsewhere, they did not tell me. It's like \$400 an application, which is not cheap. But, at KCR, they did. They offered me the service of making my resume. They were wonderful. They sent all my papers. She took all the copies of my passport, and the lady translator wasn't there at the moment, she was in Vancouver, so she got all the copies and sent it this lady.” (Focus Group participant)

“I have noticed that at KCR, there is every people working there. You have Filipino, Chinese, Korean, maybe that's a good thing that we can have that access for all our co-nations, and I really salute the KCR team, they provide services to all of us.” (Focus Group participant)

### *Labour Market specialists*

This program was designed to support newcomers with job search, resume, and cover letter preparation, as well as interviewing. Local labour market, career transition information, individual assessments, as well as counselling and referrals to more employment assistance are offered through this program (Kelowna Community Resources 2014).

### *Serving those who are part of the Live-in Caregiver Program*

“Also, in Kelowna, too, we were almost all Filipino, and we gathered that group, and we had a living caregiver program almost three times a year. All the information, all the roles really feed all these newcomers, including me.” (Focus Group participant)

#### *Youth Programs*

“My daughter has been in the program since she was 9. They have all kinds of activities. They go to museum, to park, to gymnastics centre, theatre. There are all kinds of things they can have in Canada. Especially for newcomers, they don't know where they can bring their kids to.” (Focus Group participant)

#### *Host Program*

“The main thing I used at KCR was the Host program when I first came here. There was a couple who had moved here some years ago that they connected me, and if I had some questions about the environment here, I was able to ask from them. It was helpful, because there is somebody that I could talk to in-person. Otherwise I would go to a public place, but all by myself.” (Focus Group participant)

- **Kelowna Newcomers Society (KNC)**

“We are a community based organization that offers the following to our members:

- Enjoy fellowship and learn about Kelowna.
- Make new friends and have fun.
- Interesting speakers at monthly meetings.
- Monthly newsletter.
- Social and recreational activities.
- Planned special events.
- Opportunity to be involved in the community.
- Share common interests with others.

We help individual people connect with the community and find friendships.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

- **Okanagan Regional Library (ORL)**

“We help them access the computer resources that they need in order to complete paperwork. The gap is that we really don't offer programs to assist newcomers to the Okanagan at least at the Mission branch. I believe that the large branches do but the smaller and medium branches usually don't have the staff/time/resources to offer programs specifically geared to newcomers.



We used to offer a citizenship ceremony at Mission Branch but that was in partnership with the local citizenship and immigration office, which has since moved to Vancouver. We would love to be able to offer this service again however without the assistance of a local citizenship and immigration office this is just not feasible for us.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“The other thing when you don't have job is focusing on your studies, at that time English. So, the library was very good for me. For everything. For reading, for seeing videos, for get free access to internet, things like that.” (Focus Group participant)

“When I came to Kelowna 13 years ago, the problem that existed more than right now was services for young families. It was hard to address programs for the kids especially. So, I think going to the library was the one thing I could do for my kids at the time [...] Living in California, compared to here. I had nowhere to go. Having the library was very helpful to us.” (Focus Group participant)

“For six weeks, I was paying a mortgage back home, and we stayed in a motel here, so was paying rent here. The library was a good help, because we could use the Internet, and just it was an occupier. But, fortunately for us, both our children could start school and I guess we made friends that way through the school.” (Focus Group participant)

- **Okanagan College (OC)**

“Provides newcomers an opportunity to start getting involved in their community by taking courses without having to submit any admission requirements. Courses in the areas such as: Business, Computers & Technology, Employment & Professional Development, First Aid & Safety, Health, Language & Communication, and Leisure & Lifestyle. Provide newcomers with an opportunity to develop or update their skills by taking an Okanagan College certificate program to obtain a job, which most have minimal admission requirements.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

Table 1: Educational Certificate Programs offered by Okanagan College (OC):

Advanced GISHome Inspection	Medical Device Reprocessing
Audio Engineering & Music Production	Bookkeeping
Interior Decorating	Medical Office Assistant
Autism Spectrum	Computer Basics for Business
Introduction to Office Administration	Nursing Unit Assistant
AutoCAD Skills	Computer Proficiency for Business
Landscape Horticulture	Palliative Care
Bartending	Building Service Worker (Custodial)
Leadership Skills	Basic Accounting
Pharmacy Technician	Project Management
Dental Office Administrative Assistant	Aesthetics and Nail Technology
Production Inventory Management	Residential Building Drafting
Education Assistant	Teaching English as a Second Language
Floral Design	Viticulture / Wine Sale / Wine Assistant
Golf Course Maintenance	Green Building Design and Construction

- **Okanagan Education Centre (OEC)**

“Teaches [newcomers] how to market their skills including providing insight on cultural differences.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

- **Project Literacy Kelowna Society (PLKS)**

“Helping people build their English literacy skills is critical to their individual well-being and to community development. One needs adequate language skills to participate effectively in one’s community. For newcomers to Canada, adequate English skills are needed to avoid isolation, loneliness, and anxiety. Persons with adequate literacy skills are better able to communicate with their medical caregivers, learn about preventive health practices and recognize symptoms

so that they can be treated earlier. They are also better able to communicate with their children's teachers and to help their children with schoolwork.

"From a collective perspective, a literate community is a dynamic community: one that exchanges ideas, engages in dialogue and is therefore more innovative and productive. The sharing of ideas, perspectives, and concerns also leads to greater levels of mutual understanding and caring, and ultimately stronger community spirit. Classroom-based ESL program are great. However, many adults benefit more from one-on-one tutoring, especially initially, as they overcome confidence issues." (Community Leader Survey participant)

"Individuals seeking assistance are assessed. The goals of the learner are key in the development of a program plan for the learner. The learner is matched with a volunteer who is provided with lesson materials to assist the learner in achieving his/her goal. Every effort is made to make the best possible tutor/ learner match. For example a tutor who is a retired nurse may be matched with a newcomer with a nursing background who seeks to improve English language competency and become accredited in Canada. One on one support allows for literacy support to be tailored to the needs of the individual: improving English to increase access to employment opportunity, fulfill permanent residency language requirements, pass a driver's test, participate in community life..." (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

- **Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)**

"Supporting families with school-aged children settle into school and the community." (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

- **University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBCO)**

"All of our programs are geared towards new and continuing international students, from CIC documentation, to healthcare, to settling in Kelowna." (Community Leader Survey participant)

Of the 7772 students enrolled at the University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBCO) campus in the Winter semester of 2014, 13 per cent are either permanent residents or student visa registrants (UBCO 2014). Of the 1032 newcomers:

- 31 per cent are from China,
- 6 per cent are from USA,
- 6 per cent are from South Korea,
- 5 per cent are from India; and
- 4 per cent are from UK (UBCO 2014)

65 per cent of the population of newcomers at UBCO hold student visas, while 35 per cent are permanent residents (UBCO 2014).

- **Grassroots Organizations**

“I would like to see more diversity, for ethnic minorities, so there is a way to nurture more grassroots organizations, to help different people. As a minority immigrant people in the Okanagan, I think these groups help me participate in a safe way, so that I can bridge into the broader mainstream society. We have our own ability to solve our own problems. We don't just want to get services. For those that speak English, and those who are outgoing in the community, they can do it together. But, in order to bring all the immigrant people, including the more isolated, in order to bring them to the community, we need to each have the subgroups of each culture strengthened, and then have them come together.” (Focus Group participant)

“I see a challenge with ethnically focused groups, because there is a possibility of self-isolation, but to have multicultural experiences, or to say let's play soccer or cricket from around the world. With people who want to commit, or integrate, to be part of the larger society. There is not a cohesive way of bringing them together. We need something more integral, a display of many cultures. There is an initial bridge that is being crossed, and once it is crossed, it would be great.” (Focus Group participant)

“How about creating a program that community groups could access that will help them with their organizational structure with the intent of empowerment – What are their goals? How can they support each other?” (Community Leader Survey participant)

*Okanagan Korean Cultural Knowledge (OKCK) Society*

“Currently, our main activity is participating in multicultural events where we share Korean culture, arts and heritage by setting up interactive and educational activity booths and doing Korean traditional and modern stage performance, which is all done through collaboration of volunteers. The volunteer program can be an opportunity for newcomers to develop and explore talents and passions and build confidence. Also, it gives a change to meet other Koreans and get connected and involved in the boarder community through this cultural specific group and to gain some practical information and insights about the local community.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

- **Informal Networks**

According to Carlos Teixeira's 2009 study on housing issues in the Central Okanagan Region, the 88.2 per cent of immigrant participants declared that they had to rely on informal networks of personal contacts for help in finding temporary accommodation and jobs. Half of the participants interviewed indicated that they initially lived with relatives or friends. Therefore, prior acquaintance with relatives or friends already established in Kelowna appears to be a key factor for new immigrants in their adjustment to a new environment.

"It took me maybe years to find these courses, because I met these people and they told me where to come." (Focus Group participant)

"They go to other people who came here before, to get information about things. I've heard also that there is trouble to find information, so I've heard that they sometimes go to church and even though they are not religious and they feel nervous about it, but still they feel they had to go, and once they get all the information they need, they leave (laughter). It's not very good for the community." (Focus Group participant)

"The only thing that we know was that there was a Cuban restaurant and so we say that probably people there speak Spanish. So, we went there and those guys said, "Ah, I know a Colombian, or some people from Central or South American. They can help you." So, that's the way, is try to find somebody from background, or who speak Spanish and I can say, "Oh, I need something," or, "I don't understand these documents." This was a very, very hard time. I think the first year here was very, very hard for me. That was the only way, because I can't speak." (Focus Group participant)

## **SOME EXAMPLES OF ASSETS IN OTHER REGIONS**

- **Immigrant Access Fund of the Calgary Foundation (Calgary)**

The Central Okanagan has a Community Futures Business Lending program that lends \$150,000 for up to 5 years (Community Futures 2014). The Women's Enterprise Centre in the Central Okanagan region also offers loans of up to \$150,000 for women enterprisers (Women's Enterprise Centre 2014). Although the programs are open to immigrants to apply, neither program is tailored specifically to newcomers.

The Calgary Foundation has created the Immigrant Access Fund with the specific objective of providing micro loans of up to \$5,000 for the accreditation, training and upgrading of internationally trained immigrants. These loans may be utilized to cover the assessment of credentials, examination and professional association fees. The loans can also be applied to improving language skills, coursework needed to upgrade or for getting recognition for previous education, licensing examination fees and study materials (Wayland and Hyman 2010)

- **S.U.C.C.E.S.S. (Richmond)**

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. tailors one of its settlement and integration support services to the specific needs of business immigrants and those newcomers who seek to become self-employed. Thomas Tam, in his exploration of the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. program, proposes that immigrants arriving in Canada with express interests in doing business, need in-language counselling, and training on how to start a new business in Canada. He advises more specifically that they can benefit from training in the Canadian banking system, and how the local business community functions (Tam 2011).

- **The Mentoring Partnership (TMP) (Toronto)**

TMP is an initiative of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), a collaboration of community organizations and corporate partners that brings together skilled immigrants and established professionals in occupation-specific mentoring relationships . Mentors share their knowledge and experience by giving 24 hours of their time over a four-month period to help each participant navigate the job searching process (Wayland and Hyman 2010).

- **Neighbourhood Houses (Vancouver)**

Neighbourhood houses have existed in major North American cities as far back as 100 years ago. Lauer states that:

“The effectiveness of an association for creating bonds that cross boundaries lies in the diversity of its membership. Associations that attract similar types of people will not help create these bonds. What are needed are voluntary associations that attract a diversity of people from all walks of life. Neighbourhood Houses in Vancouver are just such an association. They attract a diversity of participants through a variety of programs that provide opportunities for cross-boundary bridging.”(2011, p. 15)

More than 15 Neighbourhood Houses (NHs) operate in Metro Vancouver where they continue to gather members of diverse communities and serve their evolving needs. These houses are place-based, locally governed not-for-profit organizations based on humanistic and democratic values. Embracing a holistic view of human needs, Vancouver's NHs consist of flexible, multiple-service portfolios that integrate service delivery and community organizing (Sean R. Lauer 2011).

- **Vancouver Mayor's working group (Vancouver)**

In 2005, the City of Vancouver, under the Mayor's office, established an important think-tank group called the Mayor's Working Group on Immigration (MWGI). The MWGI's mandate is primarily to recommend key policy and program directions for the Mayor and Council consider with regards to local immigration issues, and to set the context for the City of Vancouver and community partners to have a voice in federal and provincial policies related to immigrants and refugees. Membership in the MWGI is based on sectorial representation and expertise in various aspects of immigration (Wong 2011).

*Table 2: Barriers to Settlement and Integration*

No.	Barrier	Literature Review	Community Focus Group	Community Leader and Frontline Staff Survey
1	Language (including ESL training, and translation services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexible, centrally coordinated ESL services lacking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ESL courses               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexible timing</li> <li>- Spaces available</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Translation Services               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Confidentiality</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Affordability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Affordability of assessment programs prohibitive</li> <li>- ESL               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Timing</li> <li>- Spaces available</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2	Access to information, support and mainstream services  (including settlement and integration services, education, childcare, youth programs, recreational services, health services, religious and ethnographic supports)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Underdeveloped transit services</li> <li>- Housing costs (especially around rental market),</li> <li>- Affordability is a major issue, and few organizations assist with issues like housing affordability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Timing limitations</li> <li>- Public transit is an issue</li> <li>- Services are quite centralized in Kelowna</li> <li>- Online access is limited to services in larger centres</li> <li>- CIC Kelowna office closure</li> <li>- Lack of confidential healthcare translation services</li> <li>- Lack of online presence for organizations in rural areas</li> <li>- Lack of affordable childcare services</li> <li>- Few programs for families, children and youth</li> <li>- Limitations against non-permanent residents</li> <li>- Need for more diverse options in service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordination is lacking between organizations to address program timing</li> <li>- Distance and transportation issues lead to isolation</li> <li>- CIC Kelowna office closing</li> <li>- Lacking private transportation is a barrier to accessing mainstream programs</li> <li>- Billing for health services</li> <li>- Residency requirements restrict program access</li> <li>- Marketing of programs/services needed</li> <li>- Limited to no funding for international students and families, naturalized citizens, and temporary foreign workers</li> <li>- Program funding lacking</li> <li>- Need for systematic advocacy</li> <li>- Need for more targeted programming</li> <li>- Need for service hub</li> </ul>
3	Employment and Skills Development (including credential recognition, transferring skills)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for safe, equitable, welcoming work environments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little direction upon arrival in Canada</li> <li>- Companies did not help with transition, nor with credential recognition (left to individual)</li> <li>- Very little in terms of diversity training</li> <li>- Discriminatory experiences due to lack of cultural competency training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Credential recognition not streamlined</li> <li>- Lack of diversity training for companies</li> </ul>



# Barriers to Settlement and Integration

## 1. LANGUAGE

### a. Affordability

**Rationale:**

- Language proficiency testing prices have consistently been identified as prohibitive.

Examples:  
“Language proficiency testing options are limited and are costly (IELTS, CELPIP)” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)  
  
“Language proficiency testing options are limited and are costly. Could capacity for Canadian Language Benchmark assessment be expanded here in the central Okanagan?” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

**Recommendation:**

- This is a subject that can be added to an advocacy agenda around government policy for newcomers.

### b. Translation Services

**Rationale:**

- Finding confidential, professional translation services at an inexpensive price is a major challenge for newcomers.
- Obtaining translated certified copies of documents is costly and prohibitive, because only certified copies from Canada are accepted.

Examples:

“So, people here are also worried about how to find someone who knows their language. And I know that there is a translation service here, but for two hours, if they want translation, they charge a lot, and so even if they go once, they may not return.” (Focus Group participant)

“There are also families that they didn't feel comfortable to have a translation service because this is a small city, and everyone knows each other. So, if there is a translation service, even by phone...” (Focus Group participant)

“In Kelowna, we know everyone. So, we are all recognizable, so if you can translate, you will know very confidential issues, for example at school, with your children, if they get in trouble, they will know.” (Focus Group participant)

“Finding accurate translating was very difficult. Also certified copies was very expensive. It's pricey. Also, a lot of documentation for authorization have to be translated by Canadian translators. They will not accept translations from other countries.” (Focus Group participant)

**Recommendations:**

- Create a confidential, professional translation service for newcomers that is affordable.
- Advocate for loosening of restrictions around obtaining certified translated documents to encompass certified translations obtained in other countries, as long as they meet Canadian standards.

**c. English as a Second Language (ESL) Training**

**Rationale:**

- ESL training is limited by scheduling issues.
- There are limited spaces for low-cost ESL training and there are long waiting lists for those who wish to take an ESL course.
- According to community members, ESL training beyond standard courses is difficult and expensive to pursue in the Central Okanagan region.

Examples:

“There is still a need for language, and settlement services to be offered at flexible times, and to include more support services such as child minding.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“Yes, I agree with that. The space is quite limited, the spots are very limited. There are two or three times the number of people who want to take it than there is space.” (Focus Group participant)

“After ESL course, some people may want to keep studying English, but it is difficult in Kelowna. I don't want to send my kid to after-school program, just because I want to take a course. So, I looked online to find a course, but, they are all in Vancouver. You can't take here. Academic courses are more difficult to find here.” (Focus Group participant)

Centralized coordination of language learning opportunities has been identified as a need, since language training is offered through diverse agencies, and immigrants are often unsure about how to navigate the system of language programs available. Coordination of language learning programs can also assist immigrants in overcoming barriers to accessing programs, such as adapting to work schedules, and childcare arrangements (Bahbahani 2008). (from Literature Review)

***Recommendations:***

- Centralized coordination will serve as a great asset in ensuring that ESL courses take place at varying times to ensure flexibility for newcomers who face schedule restrictions.
- Advocacy has been successful in making ESL training affordable for landed immigrants. This advocacy now needs to extend to increase the number of spaces available for low-cost ESL training, to decrease long waiting lists. Advocacy could also extend to offering low-cost ESL training to International Students, their families, and Temporary Foreign Workers.
- Further investigation can be undertaken to look at the viability of offering more advanced ESL courses in the Central Okanagan.

## 2. ACCESS TO INFORMATION, SUPPORT AND MAINSTREAM SERVICES

### a. Time Limitations

#### *Rationale:*

- Newcomers have difficulty attending programs, and services due to restraints around their time. One reason identified is because of the challenge of being in a mode of survival during early settlement.
- Programs are not being offered with enough variation in scheduling to meet different schedules.

#### Examples:

“But, they had only at night time, from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., and with family it is difficult that time. So, I came to Kelowna.” (Focus Group participant)

“It would be very nice to be able to stay open more on evenings and weekend for those who work or study full time, however, we’d need more funding to do that.” (Community Leader Survey)

“More active involvement from a broader spectrum of members. Often new immigrants are in ‘survival mode’ and do not have time for extra-curricular activities and events.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

#### *Recommendation:*

- Create a centralized coordination mechanism for improving the effectiveness of the delivery of programs and services for newcomers. Numerous obstacles, including issues around scheduling, could be overcome with better coordination.

### b. Distance, Transportation Issues Isolation

#### *Rationale:*

- Community research indicates that newcomers seek services in rural areas, but are restricted by access. Online access is very limited outside of centralized organizations.
- In-person access is restricted due to limited hours of operation, as well as transportation challenges.
- The Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) office shut-down two years ago in Kelowna and that was highlighted on a number of occasions in the research as a key barrier to access to information, support, and mainstream services.

- Limitations in public transportation services were deemed a barrier to settlement and integration.

Examples:

“More rural areas could be better served in order to help decrease feelings of isolation and to address issues with lack of transportation.” (Community Leader Survey Participant)

“More direct access to CIC representatives, the fact that CIC office closed in Kelowna 2+ years ago was a major blow to our ability to understand and address CIC issues.” (Community Leader Survey Participant)

“The trouble with transportation in North America is that transportation is not very good. It is very individualistic. Public transportation is very difficult and not frequent.” (Focus Group Participant)

“The fact that many KCR new immigrants do not have vehicles is a barrier to their ability to participate, unless they live in the area of our meetings. Our activities take place all over Kelowna.” (Community Leader Survey Participant)

***Recommendations:***

- Larger organizations that already have an online presence can highlight programs and services offered by organizations in outlying communities in the Central Okanagan region.
- Organizations in smaller centres can also be introduced to the idea that an online presence for their programs and services would be highly beneficial given distance limitations faced by rurally-located newcomers. Social media could be introduced as an inexpensive means to reach out to the community.
- Advocate for the reopening of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) office in Kelowna.

**c. Health Care Needs**

***Rationale:***

- Bureaucratic challenges have been identified as creating challenges for international students seeking health services.

- Newcomers do not seek medical treatment because they do not have confidential translation services at hospitals and clinics.

Examples:

“Interior Health billing staff could be more courteous, and understanding with the fact that international health plans are not always the easiest and the fastest for processing.” (Community Leader Survey Participant)

“There be some telephone service that could do translation services. This is something that is very needed, because my friend who came from Winnipeg, she talked about how the hospitals, they can ask for a professional translator. We should have it here.” (Focus Group Participant)

“For many, language is a big issue, and translation, when it comes to doctors. Because, they feel the most sensitive about their confidentiality. If their English is not enough, which is for most of them, then they try to ask their friends, but they are all busy, so I don't think many people have help, and are struggling to receive good health care.” (Focus Group Participant)

***Recommendations:***

- Liaise between International Students and Government Health authorities in order to assist with issues around health care delivery and funding.
- Develop confidential translation services for those who require assistance with understanding English-speaking medical professionals.

**d. Residency Requirements**

***Rationale:***

- Residency requirements set at an organizational policy level are a barrier for newcomers who need to access programs and services

Examples:

“Residency requirement of many services (food bank, 3 months, Kelowna Gospel Mission Dentist, 3 months, subsidized housing, 1 year).” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“With respect to Nutrition Improvement – the food bank could lower the eligibility requirements from three (3) months proof of residency to two (2)” (Community Leader Survey participant)

***Recommendation:***

- Work with various organizations to help them change policies around residency requirements for accessing programs and services.

**e. Affordability**

***Rationale:***

- Affordability issues revolve around access to housing, education, transportation, childcare, and healthcare.

Examples:

Secondary research indicates that both newcomers and key informants in a 2009 study carried out by Carlos Teixeira agreed that the high cost of living in Kelowna is the number one issue facing newcomers settling in Kelowna. Teixeira further suggests that, due to the high average gross rent paid by renters in Kelowna (\$878), compared to average gross rent paid at a provincial level (\$750), newcomers may choose to settle somewhere more affordable (Teixeira 2009). The newcomers in Teixeira’s study, although strongly reliant on informal networks, voiced an opinion about the limited number of organizations in Kelowna that provide housing services. (From Literature Review)

“The same gaps in services which applies to other Canadians who are unsuccessful in maintaining employment – lack of affordable housing, inadequate resources for continued education including ESL, lack of employment opportunities that match with people’s expectations, lack of affordable daycare. I think any resources that improve any one of these issues that also supports cultural diversity would be a welcome addition.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

***Recommendation:***

- Affordability issues can be part of an advocacy strategy and revolve around access to housing, education, transportation, childcare, and healthcare.

## f. Communication about programs available

### *Rationale:*

- All three groups surveyed identify that there was not enough use of communication means such as marketing and social media.

### Examples:

“Communication. How to let people know the services are there, and how to make them easily accessible in a format which is welcoming.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“We need to seriously consider a more structural, systematic, and strategic marketing plan in order to let more newcomers be aware of what support they can benefit from our services reality. This plan includes how to use mass media, internet social media as well as improve our own website layout and contents.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“The situation with the immigration service in Vernon, if you want to know something, you have to go there. There is no other way that you can get to them. But, here in Kelowna, KCR posts something on Facebook, so it's a way that you can get to know what course is available, what to do. But, over there, you have to go there! But, what if you don't go in two weeks, and if something happens, you don't know!” (Focus Group participant)

### *Recommendations:*

- Social media and contributing to online community mapping are two very simple ways of reaching out to newcomers, particularly those in isolated areas.
- Because of the universal access to the Internet that is provided by the Okanagan Regional Library, consideration can be given to translating online posts to different languages.

## g. Childcare Needs

### *Rationale:*

- Survey, and Focus Group research indicates that lack of affordable childcare services remain a barrier to accessing mainstream services.

### Examples:

“Now that I am here, I can say that, because everybody, all the women, we have kids, and we can't afford a babysitter, so we have to stay home.” (Focus Group participant)

“There is a lack of affordable child care available.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)



**Recommendation:**

- Further research may need to be undertaken to assess possibilities for addressing childcare needs, particularly in a practical, and cost-effective manner. For instance, some organizations have been known to conduct babysitter-training programs within their facilities, thus creating their own pool of volunteer resources for fulfilling childcare needs for individuals requiring this assistance. The LIP Council may wish to encourage the piloting of various ideas, such as sharing parenting duties among circles of parents, who can then take turns in attending programs and services.

**h. Services for Families, Children, and Youth**

**Rationale:**

- Community research shows that there is a perceived lack of programs and services for families, children, and youth.

**Examples:**

“When I came to Kelowna 13 years ago, the problem that existed more than right now was services for young families. It was hard to address programs for the kids especially.” (Focus Group participant)

**Recommendation:**

- Create more programs targeted at children, youth, and families. A needs assessment specific to this area may need to be carried-out to fine-tune program delivery.

**i. Support for International Students, and their families, Naturalized Canadian Citizens, and Temporary Foreign Workers**

**Rationale:**

- International Students, Naturalized Canadian Citizens, and Temporary Foreign Workers face even greater barriers to accessing programs and services due to their immigration status. Funding restrictions are the main reason for these barriers.

Examples:

“There is limited to no funding to provide settlement services to International Students and their families, Naturalized Canadian Citizens, and Temporary Foreign Workers.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“When I had trouble with my hands after an accident this year, I cannot work for 2 months. But, EI never helped. When I told them that I cannot work Live-in Caregiver or cleaner, they told me that I was not eligible to get help unless I am a resident.”(Focus Group participant)

“Because I am just a contract worker, there is a limit, because i am not a resident, I cannot take some education, or some skill that you wish. That's really limit.” (Focus Group participant)

“We try really hard to be inclusive, but I believe that we need to be able to serve certain groups that are in need. For example the Temporary farm workers.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

***Recommendations:***

- Promoting the need for programs and services to extend to this group can be part of advocacy agenda.
- Additional research would help identify more specific gaps for this group.

**j. Program Funding**

***Rationale:***

- Throughout the research, there has been an underlying call for increased and sustainable funding for programs and services that are effective, mainly to remove barriers to access, such as childcare, transportation, timing limitations, and available spaces.

Examples:

“Capacity – having stable, adequate funding for effective program delivery, expanded hours, outreach and staffing.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“ There is always a need for advocacy on a local, provincial, and national basis. We would like to continue to support the community by performing this role. [...] we support community research as we feel it is very important to have more local research to support the services being provided in our community, to better understand needs. It is this community research that will help our community to identify gaps, and then look at funding opportunities so that we may fill those gaps.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

**Recommendation:**

- This, and other research findings, can be utilized to advocate for further funding for a wider array of organizations and perhaps in the creation of a hub to house organizations that serves newcomers.

**k. Lack of Diversity of Services**

**Rationale:**

- Community members do not think that there are options in terms of programs and services.
- Programs and services do not target specific groups.
- Programs, and services are spread throughout the region. In cities like Kelowna, there is no central space or hub where diverse organizations can be housed under one roof.

**Examples:**

“Because it's easy to have different options, but when you have only one and also the focus is jobs, it's a little bit difficult, but when you go to different organizations, probably you get more information also.” (Focus Group participant)

“It's always good to have more than one agency. Everyone's needs are different and each agency has a different culture and passion.” (Focus Group participant)

“Always there is a possibility to improve; so to make a special program for different target groups of newcomers-if funding is available. We can tailor the program for targeted groups as well.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“The new idea of a HUB in the Rutland area (housed in the Pearson Road School) may be a welcome addition. Its goal is to bring services together under one roof!” (Community Leader Survey participant)

**Recommendations:**

- One way to counter the trend of the centralization of goods and services may be through the encouragement of the growth of more grass-roots cultural groups and organizations. Collaboration with these groups will not only offer greater insight for larger organizations into the diversity of services that are needed, but these groups may grow to become service providers themselves.

- Efforts can be made to target programs and services towards specific groups, according to identified needs at a community level.
- Through collaborative efforts between organizations, the idea of a hub where diverse organizations can be housed under one roof can be attainable. A hub location for accessing various organizations would provide newcomers with greater accessibility. The desire for greater diversity of organizations, as well as the need for greater collaboration and coordination may effectively be met through the creation of a hub location. The LIP Council may wish to organize a working group that looks at this possibility specifically.

### 3. EMPLOYMENT, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

#### a. Credential Recognition

##### *Rationale:*

- Credential recognition is not streamlined, and gaps in services are not being addressed.
- There is not enough funding, nor is there sufficient communication of information around credential recognition to newcomers.

##### Examples:

“Recognition of foreign credentials could be streamlined.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“I think there should be someone who can help them understand their existing education, and experience, and how they can best apply it in Canada. I see this is a large gap, where well educated immigrants are working in low paying jobs because they do not understand the process (or it is expensive for them to undertake).” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“Access to information, and additional funding for the Foreign Credential Service within the employment sector would help.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“My license did not transfer well from [my home]. It was hard especially when I came to BC, because I had to take my L and N again when I came here from [my home] and then Alberta. I needed a class 5 license for my work, and so that was limiting.” (Focus Group participant)

### **Recommendations:**

- Funding and communication of information needs to be increased in this area in order to extend assistance to more newcomers who might not be aware of the steps involved in accreditation or credential recognition.
- Credential Recognition needs to be streamlined. Among other benefits, streamlining will allow for the identification of gaps in service.

### **b. Help with Direction Upon Arrival**

#### **Rationale:**

- There is no immediate linking of newcomers to settlement, integration, credential recognition, and accreditation services.

#### **Examples:**

“If four years ago somebody from immigration would have guide me, and say, 'With your level of English, you can do this, this this, and if you get better, you can go there, and you can go to college.’” (Focus Group participant)

“Yeah, I think that you need something, it just needs to be some place that you can go to get help. In my experience elsewhere, even if you are an illegal immigrant, and you are discovered, the police officer would give you a card, and would tell you to go to this centre. From there, it would start the process. I guess that's what is needed here.” (Focus Group participant)

### **Recommendations:**

- Find ways to reach newcomers as quickly as possible after arrival, perhaps at airports.
- The forming of a Hub location for newcomers to access services upon arrival.
- A collaborative media campaign advertising programs, and services may also be advantageous.
- Growing the online presence of organizations that serve newcomers is also helpful.

### **c. Companies assisting with transition**

#### **Rationale:**

- From the community research undertaken, participants identified that companies did not assist them with settlement, and integration into the Central Okanagan region.

Examples:

“But, I was never really directed towards it in any way. And I've been with the same company since I've been here. Just under 6.5 years. But, they didn't really help or ask if I had settled in. They just wanted you there at 7:30 in the morning, and ready to go to work. So, that was it.” (Focus Group participant)

The growing body of literature that looks at employment for newcomers demonstrates that creating a safe, equitable, and welcoming work environment for newcomers is key to fostering a welcoming community (Bahbahani 2008, from Literature Review)

***Recommendations:***

- Provide companies that recruit foreign workers with information and training on settlement, and integration, so that they can pass it along to new staff.

***d. Diversity Training for Employers***

***Rationale:***

- There is limited cultural competence among staff of programs that do not frequently work with newcomers.
- Community research indicates that newcomers face work-related discrimination.

Examples:

“Education and cultural training programs for public institution employees in working with newcomers and the challenges that they may face and how to address them in a positive way without hauling their own opinions on immigration or policies being expressed to the newcomers.” (Community Leader Survey participant)

“Limited cultural competence in staff of programs that don't frequently work with newcomers.” (Frontline Staff Survey participant)

“I tried to apply to a new job, through phone. She called me and said, ‘I received your resume.’ When she asked me to talk, she said, ‘I cannot hire you because your accent.’”

“But, it's better that she was honest, at least. Because that happens, and they don't tell me.”

“Yeah, good for me that I know that I have my accent (laughter)!” (Two Focus Group participants)

**Recommendation:**

- Provide cultural competency training services for employers, and staff.

*Table 3: List of Recommendations Based on Research*

1. LANGUAGE	
<i>a. Affordability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a subject that can be added to an advocacy agenda around government policy for newcomers.</li> </ul>
<i>b. Translation Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a confidential, professional translation service for newcomers that is affordable.</li> <li>• Advocate for loosening of restrictions obtaining certified translated documents to encompass certified translations obtained in other countries, as long as they meet Canadian standards.</li> </ul>
<i>c. English as a Second Language (ESL) Training</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralized coordination will serve as a great asset in ensuring that ESL courses take place at varying times to ensure flexibility for newcomers who face schedule restrictions.</li> <li>• Advocacy has been successful in making ESL training affordable for landed immigrants. This advocacy now needs to extend to increase the number of spaces available for low-cost ESL training, to decrease long waiting lists. Advocacy could also extend to offering low-cost ESL training to International Students, their families, and Temporary Foreign Workers.</li> <li>• Further investigation can be undertaken to look at the viability of offering more advanced ESL courses in the Central Okanagan.</li> </ul>
2. ACCESS TO INFORMATION, SUPPORT AND MAINSTREAM SERVICES	
<i>a. Time Limitations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a centralized coordination mechanism for improving the effectiveness of the delivery of programs and services for newcomers. Numerous obstacles, including issues around scheduling, could be overcome with better coordination.</li> </ul>
<i>b. Distance, Transportation Issues and Isolation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger organizations that already have an online presence can highlight programs and services offered by organizations in outlying communities in the Central Okanagan region.</li> <li>• Organizations in smaller centres can also be introduced to the idea that an online presence for their programs, and services would be highly beneficial given distance limitations faced by rurally-located newcomers. Social media could be introduced as an inexpensive means to reach out to the community.</li> <li>• Advocate for the reopening of the Citizenship, and Immigration Canada (CIC) office in Kelowna.</li> </ul>
<i>c. Health Care Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise between International Students, and Government Health authorities, in order to assist with issues around health care delivery and funding.</li> <li>• Develop confidential translation services for those who require assistance with</li> </ul>

	understanding English-speaking medical professionals.
<i>d. Residency Requirements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with various organizations to help them change policies around residency requirements for accessing programs and services.</li> </ul>
<i>e. Affordability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability issues can be part of an advocacy strategy, and revolve around access to housing, education, transportation, childcare, and healthcare.</li> </ul>
<i>f. Communication about programs available</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media, as well as contributing to online community mapping are two very simple ways of reaching out to newcomers, particularly those in isolated areas.</li> <li>• Because of the universal access to the Internet that is provided by the Okanagan Regional Library, consideration can be given to translating online posts to different languages.</li> </ul>
<i>g. Childcare Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further research may need to be undertaken to assess possibilities for addressing childcare needs, particularly in a practical and cost-effective manner. For instance, some organizations have been known to conduct babysitter-training programs within their facilities, thus creating their own pool of volunteer resources for fulfilling childcare needs for individuals requiring this assistance. The LIP Council may wish to encourage the piloting of various ideas, such as sharing parenting duties among circles of parents, who can then take turns in attending programs and services.</li> </ul>
<i>h. Services for Families, Children and Youth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more programs targeted at children, youth, and families. A needs assessment specific to this area may need to be carried-out to fine-tune program delivery.</li> </ul>
<i>i. Support for Int. Students and families, Naturalized Canadians, and Temporary Foreign Workers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the need for programs and services to extend to this group can be part of advocacy agenda.</li> <li>• Additional research would help identify more specific gaps for this group.</li> </ul>
<i>j. Program Funding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This and other research findings can be utilized to advocate for further funding for a wider array of organizations and perhaps in the creation of a hub to house organizations that serve immigrants.</li> </ul>
<i>k. Lacking Diversity of Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One way to counter the trend of the centralization of goods and services may be through the encouragement of the growth of more grass-roots cultural groups and organizations. Collaboration with these groups will not only offer greater insight for larger organizations into the diversity of services that are needed, but these groups may grow to become service providers themselves.</li> <li>• Efforts could be made to target programs and services towards specific groups, according to identified needs at a community level.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through collaborative efforts between organizations, the idea of a hub where diverse organizations can be housed under one roof can be attainable. A hub location for accessing various organizations would provide immigrants with greater accessibility. The desire for greater diversity of organizations, as well as the need for greater collaboration, and coordination may effectively be met through the creation of a hub location. The LIP Council may wish to organize a working group that looks at this possibility specifically.</li> </ul>
<b>3. EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<i>a. Credential Recognition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding and communication of information needs to be increased in this area, in order to extend assistance to more Immigrants who might not be aware of the steps involved in accreditation or credential recognition.</li> <li>• Credential Recognition needs to be streamlined. Among other benefits, streamlining will allow for the identification of gaps in service.</li> </ul>
<i>b. Help with Direction Upon Arrival</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find ways to reach immigrants arriving in Canada as quickly as possible, perhaps even at points of entry into the region (such as airports).</li> <li>• The forming of a Hub location will assist in clarifying for immigrants how to access services upon arrival.</li> <li>• A collaborative media campaign advertising programs, and services may also be advantageous.</li> <li>• Growing the online presence of organizations that serve immigrants is also helpful.</li> </ul>
<i>d. Companies assisting with transition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide companies that recruit foreign workers with information and training on settlement and integration, so that they can pass it along to new staff.</li> </ul>
<i>e. Diversity Training for Employers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide cultural competency training services for employers and staff.</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

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The Central Okanagan region contains a wealth of potential resources that have emerged as a result of the initiative, enterprise, and hard work of countless Community Leaders, Frontline Staff, and community members. This community scan was undertaken to examine the assets already in place, as well as to identify barriers and gaps that might be overcome through the efforts of the Central Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Council.

The space created by this research enabled Community Leaders to clearly articulate the imperative they feel for systematic and collaborative approaches to advocate for the needs of immigrants. The research highlighted the necessity for centralizing the coordination of services in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery. Community Leaders indicated that there is a need for further research in understanding specific barriers to accessing settlement and integration services. They expressed the need for sustainable funding to foster grassroots organizations. The Leaders who participated in the survey identified the need to create more spaces for affordable ESL, childcare services, and professional translation services. The idea of creating a hub where various settlement and integration organizations can be housed under one roof was also brought forward.

Frontline Staff members identified the need for more targeted programs, such as language training for skilled workers engaged in different trades. They echoed the necessity for more spaces and flexibility around ESL training and for more affordable childcare for parents seeking to access programs and services. Frontline Staff have equally been fervent in their appeal for greater coordination around the delivery of programs and services.

The Community Member Focus Group participants addressed numerous gaps, from the need for flexibility around the delivery of programs, to the need for affordable professional translation services. They spoke of the importance of having coordinated and efficient assistance with settlement, and integration, as well as the need for streamlined assistance with accreditation. The necessity to diversify the organizations that provide programs and services to immigrants was also iterated in numerous instances. Participants identified the need for more programs for entire families, including programs targeting children and youth who are new to the region. Affordable childcare was a major concern, especially for those who cannot access programs,

and services otherwise. Participants spoke about their personal experiences in relying heavily on informal networks to assist with their settlement and integration into the region and the time and effort it took to find formal channels to assist them. In addressing assets, Focus Group participants spoke about the emergence of grassroots cultural groups that are reaching out to those who are marginalized in their communities. Participants spoke of the need to support, and foster these organizations, while at the same time promoting intercultural activities that would promote integration.

The groups consistently identified affordability and funding needs as a barrier to accessing services. Research to identify specific needs and solutions, as well as advocacy for sustainable funding were identified as a means of overcoming this obstacle. Communication via the Internet, particularly through social media, was unequivocally identified as an effective way of reaching a wider network of immigrants.

The Central Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Council stands in a tremendous position, one where the strength that comes from collaboration and openness to learn will hopefully pave a path of helping organizations to become more adept at creating a welcoming environment for immigrants to its region. Those who participated in this research, Community Leaders, Frontline Staff, and immigrants alike, expressed through this research the hope that the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Council will be able to translate the above insights garnered from this research into practical strategies and tangible results that will impact the lives of thousands.

“I should say this, in Canada, it's very special. The sense that we have here, it's very good. Because, elsewhere, we don't have the advantages we have here. Canadians accept us the way we are. At first, it is not that simple, because of language, but once you learn English, you see how much the Canadians are accepting us. And welcoming us. Here, Canada opened the door. I just wanted to say thank you and I am so grateful.” (Focus Group participant)

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## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY WORKERS

**Project Title:** Looking at the Needs and Barriers Faced by Newcomers to the Central Okanagan Region

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**Overview:**

We are conducting original community research on the needs and barriers faced by newcomers and immigrants in the Central Okanagan region, in order to identify assets and gaps specific to our communities (Kelowna, Lake Country, West Kelowna, and Peachland). The research will include this survey, as well as a survey conducted with leaders in education and employment, as well as a focus group conducted at the community level.

**Methods:**

We ask for your participation in a survey where we will ask you three questions for the purpose of gathering your experiences with delivering settlement and integration programs and services in the Central Okanagan region. We anticipate that the survey will take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete. Please be advised that you do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with, and that you may change your answers or withdraw from the research at any time. Withdrawal from this study will not affect your employment in any way. If you choose to withdraw from the study, any information you may have provided to us will be destroyed.

All survey data will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to your name and statements. Your responses will be shared anonymously and specific responses will not be identifiable in any public reports.

All completed surveys will be stored in the office of the researcher overseeing the project in a secured cabinet. All materials will, once the report has been generated on the research, be transferred to, and stored at Kelowna Community Resources, and destroyed no later than three years after the end of this project.

If you have any question or concerns regarding the procedures of the study as they are outlined here, please contact Taban Leggett by telephone at 250-667-8591 or by email at [surveycentralokanaganregion@gmail.com](mailto:surveycentralokanaganregion@gmail.com).

### QUESTIONS

***Introduction***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Program or Service you deliver that involves newcomers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Survey Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time in this position: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are the strengths of the work that you are doing for newcomers?

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2. What can be improved in relation to the work you are doing for newcomers?

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3. What are some gaps in programs and services that you can see?

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## APPENDIX B

### SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

**Project Title:** Looking at the Needs and Barriers Faced by Newcomers to the Central Okanagan Region

**Research Consultant:**

Taban U. Leggett, BA, MSc  
[surveycentralokanaganregion@gmail.com](mailto:surveycentralokanaganregion@gmail.com)

**Overview:**

We are conducting original community research on the needs and barriers faced by newcomers and immigrants in the Central Okanagan region, in order to identify assets and gaps specific to our communities (Kelowna, Lake Country, West Kelowna, and Peachland). The research will include this survey, as well as a survey conducted with community workers, as well a focus group conducted at the community level.

**Methods:**

We ask for your participation in a survey where we will ask you three questions for the purpose of gathering your experiences with delivering settlement and integration programs and services in the Central Okanagan region. We anticipate that the survey will take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete. Please be advised that you do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with and that you may change your answers or withdraw from the research at any time. Withdrawal from this study will not impact whether you remain employed in your current role. If you choose to withdraw from the study, any information you may have provided to us will be destroyed.

All survey data will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to your name and statements. Your responses will be shared anonymously and specific responses will not be identifiable in any public reports.

All completed surveys will be stored in the office of the researcher overseeing the project in a secured cabinet. All materials will, once the report has been generated on the research, be transferred to, and stored at Kelowna Community Resources, and destroyed no later than three years after the end of this project.

If you have any question or concerns regarding the procedures of the study as they are outlined here, please contact Taban Leggett by telephone at 250-667-8591 or by email at [surveycentralokanaganregion@gmail.com](mailto:surveycentralokanaganregion@gmail.com).

#### INTRODUCTION

<b>NAME</b>	
<b>POSITION</b>	
<b>EMPLOYER</b>	
<b>PROGRAM OR SERVICE YOU DELIVER THAT INVOLVES NEWCOMERS:</b>	

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**SURVEY**

<b>DATE OF SURVEY</b>	
1. What are the strengths of the work that you are doing for newcomers?	
2. What can be improved in relation to the work you are doing for newcomers?	
3. What are some gaps that you perceive in programs and services designed for newcomers?	



## APPENDIX C

### FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

*(‘Community members’ refers to those newcomers who may or may not be accessing settlement and integration services)*

**Date of Focus Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Duration of Focus Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Focus Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Focus Group Facilitator:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Consent Form Review**

I would like to review the focus group consent form with you, so that it is clear why this focus group is taking place and how the researcher will keep the information you share anonymous and confidential. By anonymous, we mean that what you share will not be linked to you. By confidential, we mean that recordings and transcripts will be kept private by the research consultant.

*(Facilitator will read the consent form aloud to the participants, and ask them if they have any questions. If you can not answer their questions, please take note of them. Finally, please ensure that a form is signed by each participant before continuing with the focus group).*

#### **Introduction**

I would like to start by asking all of you to introduce yourselves. Please share your name, and anything else you would like to share.

### **Effectiveness of Settlement and Integration Programs in Helping Newcomers Settle in the Central Okanagan Region**

#### **Introduction**

We would like to understand what kinds of settlement and integration programs you have accessed and whether you have found them to be effective overall. We would also like to know what specific aspects of the programs you have accessed have been most helpful, and what you would like to see changed. If you have not used any programs or services, we would like to find out why.

4. Have you used any settlement programs or services since you arrived in the Central Okanagan Region?

a) *If so, which programs?*

b) When did you used these programs?

5. If you have not accessed any programs or services, why not?

6. Please talk about the ways that the programs and services you have accessed have been helpful to you.

*(Please use the following probe if the participants are having trouble understanding the question)*

- Can you think of some examples of how \_\_\_\_\_ helped you to settle in this region?

7. Please share what you would improve in the programs and services you participated in.

*(Please use the following probe if the participants are having trouble understanding the question)*

- Did the staff understand your needs?

8. Were there any barriers that you faced in accessing the programs and services?

*(Please use the following probe if the participants are having trouble understanding the question)*

- Was transportation, limited space, childcare, language an issue in accessing the program?

9. Are there any programs or services that you wish could exist for you and other newcomers?

10. What would make the community more welcoming for you?

8. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?

**Thank you for your time. *(Depending on the situation in which the focus group took place, participants may be offered reimbursement for their expenses. If this is the case, please ensure that participants sign the receipt provided, indicating that they have received the reimbursement)***