

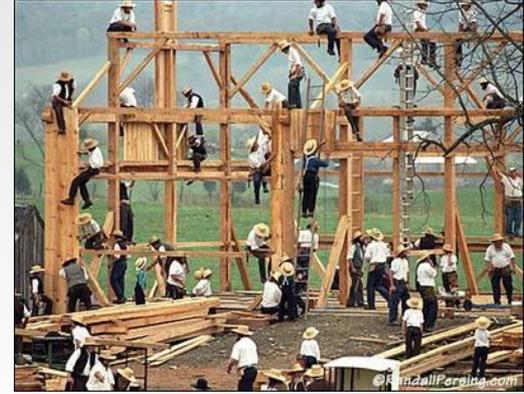
A Community Response to Syrian Refugees in Waterloo

Disruption Leading to
Innovation?

December 1, 2016

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Waterloo Region



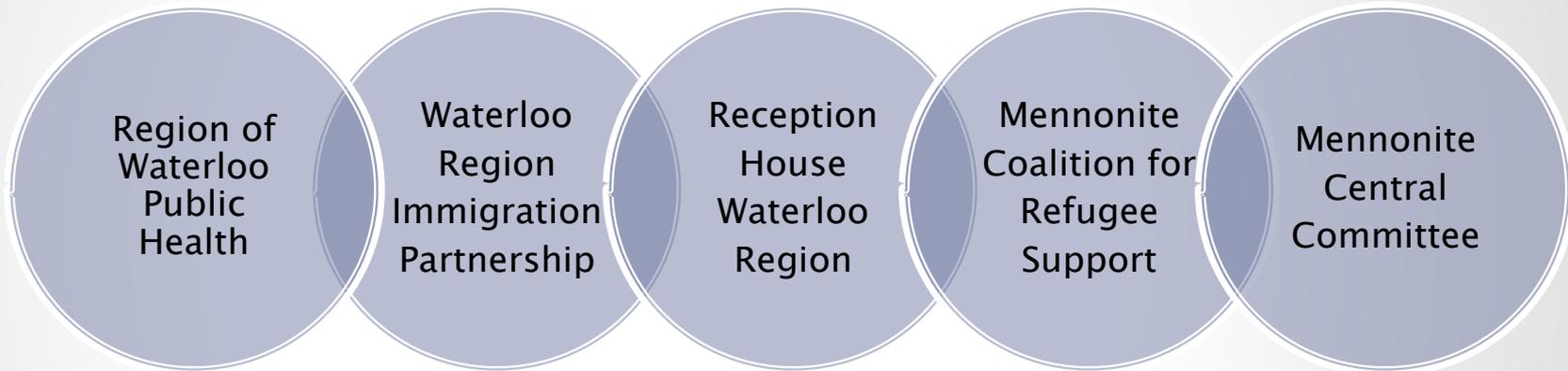
- ▶ 560,000 people in 3 cities and 4 townships
- ▶ “Innovation” and “barn-raising” community narratives
- ▶ 10 years of cross-sectoral settlement partnerships (WRIEN and LIP)
- ▶ 1,200 Syrian refugees in past year

COMMUNITECH



Research Partners

- ▶ Local Advisory Committee



- ▶ Targeted research call on Syrian refugees issued by:

Funded by:  Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :  Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada



Research Purpose

To collaboratively explore the disruptive impact of the recent Syrian refugee influx on the way local communities support newcomers.

Determine how local communities innovate to better support refugees

Determine how public policy can reinforce these innovations

System Change Lens

VISION

- motivations + values guiding refugee support

STRUCTURE

- players + programs + partnerships + resources in supporting refugees

PROCESS

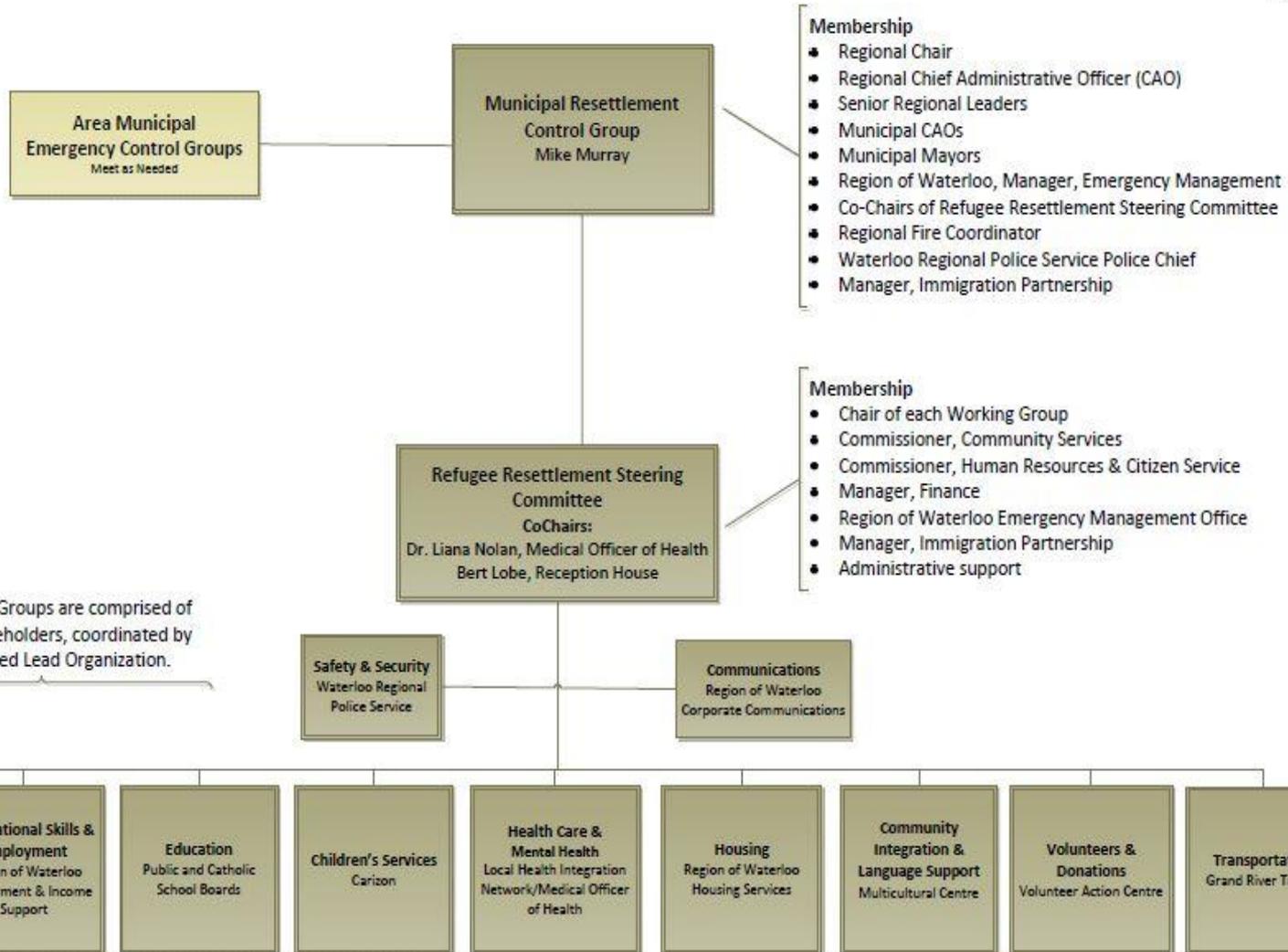
- practices to lead, plan, equip and evaluate refugee support

Research Methods



Waterloo Region Syrian Refugee Resettlement Preparedness Plan

12/7/2015



Drivers of Innovation

- ▶ Build on partnership groundwork already laid
- ▶ Be open to embrace disruption with common vision
- ▶ Have designated and recognized leadership
- ▶ Create an engaging and flexible structure
- ▶ Strip bureaucracy – be in service to each other
- ▶ Coordinate internal and external communication

Sustaining Innovation

- ❑ Shift focus from re-settlement agency to re-settlement community
- ❑ Evolve crisis structure into a normalized structure (e.g., engage new players to respond to Month 13)
- ❑ Ensure resources match demand
- ❑ Enable long-term planning and capacity building
- ❑ Transfer learnings beyond Syrian refugees to include all vulnerable people

Future Contact

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*“Specializing in **evaluation and applied research** that is useful for communities”*

Discussion

▶ Learning from the past

What do you see as having helped or hindered an effective local refugee response?

How similar or different was your community's "refugee response" story to what was presented by the panel?

▶ A vision for the future

What policy changes are needed to reinforce innovations in newcomer support?

What should be the "new normal" for local refugee support?