

**SUPPORTING DISPLACED
UKRAINIANS THROUGH
COMMUNITY
COLLABORATION:
MAINTAINING THE
MOMENTUM FOR FUTURE
HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES**



THE ISLAND OF MONTREAL IS KNOWN AS TIOHTIÀ:KE IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE KANIEN'KEHÁ:KA . THE KANIEN'KEHÁ:KA ARE RECOGNIZED AS THE CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS AND WATERS ON WHICH WE GATHER TODAY.

TIOHTIÀ:KE HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN A GATHERING PLACE FOR MANY OTHER FIRST NATIONS.

Provincial Response



"Ukrainian Wave: Addressing Influx and Rural Adaptation in Alberta"

Meg Cunningham

Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies

Regional Response



"Enhancing Local Humanitarian Responses through Regional Partnerships and Collaboration"

Amanda Morrison

DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society

Community Response



"Collective Caring: It Takes A Village for Humanitarian Efforts"

France Lamontagne & Saejin Chang

Kamloops-Cariboo Regional Immigrants Society,

operating as Kamloops Immigrant Services (KIS).

Ukrainian Wave

Addressing Rural Influx and
Adaptation in Alberta



Introduction



Abu Yandiev



Housing Lead (Ukraine)

Andrew Lam



**Business Development
and Admin Coordinator**



Alberta's Situation

- Alberta is the second-most popular province for Ukrainian immigrants
 - 41,000 registered with health services
- Some orgs have more than 1000 Ukrainians on their language assessment waitlists

 aaisa



Rural Settlement

- Ukrainians are dispersed across 203 communities in Alberta
- Rural communities may have few settlement services
- Ensuring services requires provincial-level coordination

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Provincial Coordination in Practice

1 Collaborative table

2 Ukrainian Mapping Project

3 Hosting program

4 Fund distribution



Provincial Coordination in Practice

1

Collaborative table

- Bi-weekly meetings for all rural communities in AB
- Pool resources and expertise, identify gaps and strategies



Provincial Coordination in Practice

2

Ukrainian Mapping Project

- Secondary migration challenges
- Collecting and visualizing distribution of new arrivals
- Postal codes, Tableau



Provincial Coordination in Practice

3 Hosting program

- Training designed by AAISA for rural host families with cultural sensitivity, settlement steps
- After training and security screening, SPOs perform matching and have program participants sign MOUs



Provincial Coordination in Practice

4 Fund distribution

- AAISA acted as fiscal agent to distribute funds to rural settlement projects



Lessons Learned

- Centralizing comms with flexibility for local needs
 - Ensure feedback from communities
 - Adapting to needs of Ukrainians e.g. Telegram
 - Mobilizing community groups
- Data collection
 - Track movement as soon as possible
 - Anonymity



ENHANCING LOCAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES THROUGH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION



Amanda Morrison
South Fraser & Cariboo North Refugee Readiness Teams



WelcomeBC

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

WHAT ARE THE REFUGEE READINESS TEAMS?

- In response to the humanitarian crises in Afghanistan and Ukraine, the Province of BC established the Refugee Readiness Fund which aims to bolster local services and assistance for those resettling as refugees in the province.
- In June 2022, the Provincial Refugee Resource Network (BCRRN) and six regional Refugee Readiness Teams (RRTs) were formed.
- The primary goal of the RRTs is to build community capacity, foster collaboration among stakeholders, share vital information and data, and provide critical temporary direct services for both government-sponsored and privately sponsored refugees and CUAET visa holders.

RRT MODEL

- **Collaborative:** RRT brings together a diverse array of stakeholders and partners from various sectors
- **Regional Autonomy & Responsiveness:** Each distinct region was given autonomy on which issue areas and activities would best support refugees in their communities
- **Non-duplicative & Emphasis on Indirect Services:** Builds upon other available IRCC and provincial supports
- **Supports for Cultural Organizations:** Funding and capacity building for cultural organizations working with refugees and Ukrainians



ISSUE AREAS: SOUTH FRASER RRT

01. INFORMATION, COLLABORATION, REFERRALS AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

02. HOUSING

03. FOOD JUSTICE

04. HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

05. EMPLOYMENT, LANGUAGE, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

What communities are included in the South Fraser RRT?

1. Delta
2. Surrey
3. Langley
4. White Rock
5. Tsawwassen



FOOD JUSTICE

Food Justice Working Group

Events and Activities

Sustainable
Farming Field
Trips

Community
Kitchens

Health &
Wellness
Fair

Food
Hampers

Information Sharing/Advocacy

Infographics

Engage with
food
banks/food
providers

Advocacy to remove
barriers to accessing
healthy and culturally
appropriate food



Cultural Organization Supports

- The RRT recognized that a lot of work was being done by small grassroots organizations to support Ukrainians
- Immense support and donations from community organizations
- Providing financial supports to grassroots organizations supporting Ukrainians in Terrace, Smithers, and Prince George
- Builds capacity for small volunteer led organizations to expand on the work they are doing for Ukrainians





RRT SUCCESS

- Awareness raising of refugee/CUAET issues and available supports
- Increased ability to provide regional supports and information
- Supports for Cultural Organizations
- Improved referral pathways/cross-organization communication

RRT CHALLENGES

- Community capacity
- Inequity in community supports for different forcibly displaced communities
- Funding restrictions (ineligible refugee classes/activities)
- Challenges with collecting/dispersing timely and accurate data



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE RRT MODEL FOR FUTURE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES





1

The timely sharing of emerging information is imperative for both refugees and community organizations supporting them.

Engaging with, supporting, and collaborating with “non-traditional” partners



3

2

Collaborating with other settlement organizations and other community partners can reduce duplication of work

Coordinated dispersal of donations, key point person in the region, and coordinated referral pathways

4



It takes a village for Humanitarian Efforts

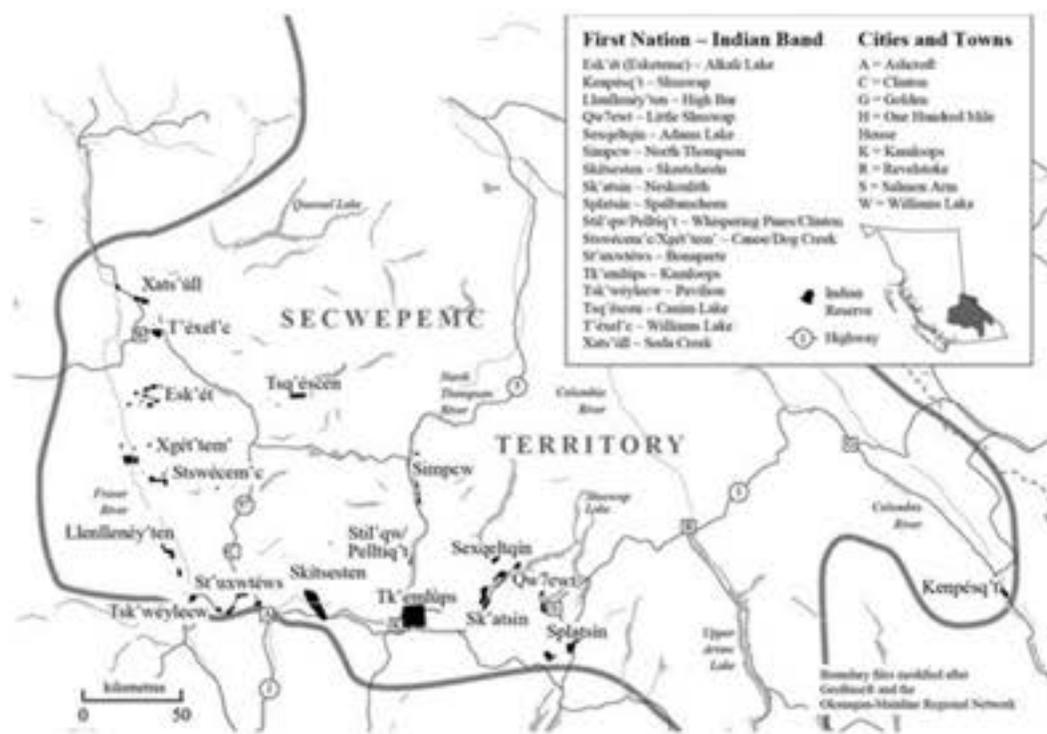
Community-level engagement with stakeholders in
Kamloops, British Columbia, during the War in Ukraine

Presenters:

Saejin Chang, Settlement Team Lead and
France Lamontagne, Executive Director

Land Acknowledgement

We are grateful to live and work in the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of the **Secwepemc Nation**.



KIS is Small Centre in the Thompson- Nicola Region, BC

- Population 114,150
- One of the fastest-growing cities in Canada
- Known as the Tournament Capital of Canada Sports and outdoors activities
- Indigenous Heritage- Secwepmec Nation
- Domestic Airport¹
- 8,500 residents have Ukrainian roots



Kamloops Immigrant Services -In context



43 years
assisting
Newcomers in
Kamloops



No existing
Local
Immigration
Partnership
(LIP)



No
Resettlement
structure in
place



Help over
1,450 new
clients
annually



Welcomed
264
Ukrainians
over the last
19 months



Supporting Displaced Ukrainians Through Community Collaboration



What, together, we've accomplished



What we learned



Promising practices
Keeping Momentum



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IMMIGRANT SERVICES
TOGETHER WE'RE BETTER

Stands with
Ukraine!

Kamloops Immigrant Services and community partners are actively finding ways to support incoming Ukrainians



Find out how you can help

[https://immigrantservices.ca/donate-for-displaced-ukrainians/!](https://immigrantservices.ca/donate-for-displaced-ukrainians/)



KIS convened a hybrid meeting with Community Stakeholders on March 31, 2022.

-
- BC Interior Health Authorities
 - School District
 - City of Kamloops Staff and Council
 - Mayors from nearby municipality
 - MLA's and MP
 - Service Canada and Service BC
 - Food Policy Council
 - Local community services and Local charities
 - Faith Communities, including two Ukrainian Churches
 - Local Ukrainian Community Lead
 - Refugees and Friends Together (RAFT)
 - Thompson Rivers University -TRU World

Significant outcomes following the meeting.

- KIS was identified as the HUB for the Community
- Various community groups and individuals became partners.
- A Community Fund was created and was managed by KIS in trust.
- Over \$84,700.00 raised.
- A program was created to access the funds. \$57,000.00 dispersed to date.





Key accomplishments

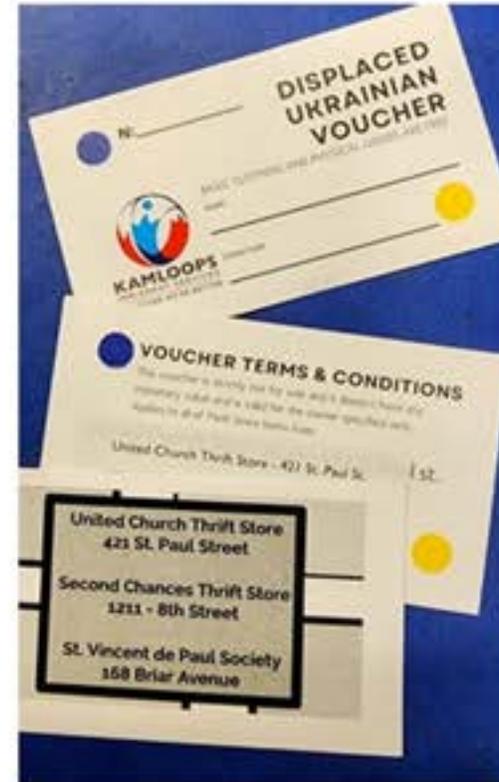
1. Group Initiatives

- Kamloops United Church and KIS hosted 15 monthly community dinners
- Mentorship and Friendship program offered by Refugees and Friends Together (RAFT).
- The Local Quilters Association donated 100 quilts.
- Sports and recreation organizations opened up free spots for children and youth to join their program and attend summer camps.
- The Salvation Army created a food hamper program.

Key accomplishments

2. Generous contributions

- Telus provided \$100 SIM cards, \$10,000 for dental and optical needs, and travel subsidies to Edmonton for passport renewal.
- “100 Women Who Care” gave \$10,000.00 for grocery gift cards.
- 3 Thrift Stores accepted goods from donors for Newcomer Ukrainians to shop for free by presenting a voucher.
- SoccerQuest organized a Sports Equipment Drop off, including bicycles.
- United Way donated feminine products.



Key accomplishments

3. Financial burdens alleviated

- The City of Kamloops extended the KamPass and Recreation program (subsidized transit, pool, gym, etc.)
- The Local University (TRU) reduced tuition fees for Ukrainian students from International to Domestic fees.
- Ask Wellness Social Services helped with the housing rent subsidy program with \$450/month for six months.
- Local Member of Parliament (MP) was an important ally for document issues.
- Through the Community Fund, KIS gave each Ukrainian \$200 upon arrival.



**Housing Outreach
& Crisis Funding**

Key accomplishments



KIS as the HUB – Immediate Actions

- Created a Response Team.
- Created a Housing and Volunteer Coordinator position
- Created a Homestay program.
- Opened a fundraising bank account.
- Created a community committee to approve funding requests.
- Created a dedicated webpage.
- Promote efforts on social and traditional media.



Key accomplishments



KIS as the HUB – Adapting to Needs

- Rallied volunteers to help with transportation, interpretation, and events.
- Hosted training sessions for volunteers/mentors.
- Attended weekly provincial meetings with our umbrella organization AMSSA, IRCC, the Province, and the National Secretariat.
- Ran a full-time drop-in summer camps.





Impact

- 70 adults and young adults have secured full-time employment.
- 34 adults and seniors are enrolled in LINC English classes.
- 15 families initially hosted through the Homestay program have now found long-term housing.
- We have established strong local partnerships.



Facts

- 21 Ukrainians who arrived during this period have returned to Ukraine;
- 116 migrated to other cities and provinces. Mainly Edmonton, Alberta, Vancouver, Kelowna, and Nova Scotia, and plan to apply for their Permanent Residency.
- 49% of Displaced Ukrainians are settling in Kamloops.



Lessons learned

- Some initiatives at the National and Provincial level (Airbnb, United Way portal for volunteers and homestay, fundraising, etc.) did not always ripple down to our small urban centre.
- The residents of Kamloops were eager to help right from the beginning and are very generous.
- The community Stakeholders looked at ways to contribute directly and to become a partner to KIS.
- It allowed our agency to lead and orchestrate community efforts at that level for the first time.
- Our slogan, "Together we're Better," meant even more.
- Our community is ready for a Local Immigration Partnership.

Building on the momentum



Regular communication and updates with stakeholders.

Nurture partnerships that were established during the crisis. This involves ongoing collaboration, mutual support, and identifying new opportunities for working together.

Empower community agencies assisting displaced individuals and families by sharing with them grants, training, or capacity-building initiatives.

Collaborative problem-solving by regularly coming together and discussing solutions for various challenges.

Develop a comprehensive framework for measuring the long-term impact of our welcoming community initiatives. This would also be done under a LIP.

Building on the momentum



Expand the work of the KIS employment team in building connections with local businesses and organizations.

Continue to raise awareness about the challenges displaced individuals face and the positive contributions they can make to the community.

Continue to work with local, regional, and national authorities to advocate for policies that support the integration of displaced individuals.

Share and celebrate the success stories of displaced individuals who have successfully integrated into the community.

Develop a long-term plan to ensure that the momentum we've built is not only maintained but **continuously improved**. This plan would also be best developed under a LIP.



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Thank you for your time and attention

Q & A



DISCUSSION Q'S

1

Were there some innovative ways that community partners in your city/town collaborated to support Ukrainians or other refugees?

2

Is there a way that your Local Immigration Partnership or other convening table could support a humanitarian response in the future?

3

How can lessons learnt from the Ukrainian humanitarian response influence future humanitarian response (Community, Sector, Policy, and Government level)