



A GRASSROOTS EFFORT

CO-CONSTRUCTING POLICY
MASTERY AMONG RURAL RENEWAL
STREAM DESIGNATED
COMMUNITIES IN ALBERTA



Montour,
Wakenhiióhstha.
Behind the
Church. 2023, Honoré
Mercier Bridge.

OBJECTIVES



Rural Renewal Stream



Rural Stakeholders



The Rural Renewal Summit



Recommendations



Discussion

READING THE ROOM

- What type of organization are you in?
- What is the size of your service delivery area?
- What province are you from?
- Assumptions
 - Honouring spirit and intention
 - Developmental feedback focus
 - Foundational respect

ABOUT US

WHAT IS AAISA?

ABOUT AAISA

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) is a non-profit umbrella organization representing agencies that provide resettlement, settlement, and integration services to newcomers in the province of Alberta.

MISSION

Facilitate collaboration and leadership within the settlement serving sector

VISION

An inclusive, welcoming, and engaged society



AAISA AT A GLANCE

AAISA is a regionally and nationally recognized leader in the settlement and integration sector. As an umbrella organization, **AAISA represents over 53 agencies** that work with newcomers across the Province's settlement and integration sector.

AAISA provides the settlement and integration sector support with...



Professional
Development



Sector Advocacy



Sector Engagement &
Collaboration



Research & Policy
Development



WHO WE ARE



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Research Lead



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IRCC COMMUNITY MAPPING (ALBERTA)

TIER LEVEL	COMMUNITY SIZE AND DETAILS
Tier 1: Smaller Communities	Pop. up to 10,000 and/or 20+ landings and/or unique clients in iCARE for 2019/20
Tier 2: Small Cities	Pop. 10,000 - 35,000 and/or 50+ landings and/or unique clients in iCARE for 2019/20
Tier 3: Medium-Sized Cities	Pop. 35,000-150,000 and/or 200+ landings and/or unique clients in iCARE for 2019/20
Tier 4: Major Urban Centres	Pop. Over 150,000 and/or 1,000+ landings and/or unique clients in iCARE for 2019/20

URBAN, SMALL CENTRE, RURAL

Small centres: (>10,000 people)

- May have a dedicated settlement agency (which could be an AAISA member)
- Almost every town in Alberta other than Calgary/Edmonton (Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Lloydminster...)

Rural communities (<10,000 or <15,000 people):

- Typically no dedicated settlement agency. Social services delivered through FCSS, CALP, libraries, etc.
- Where settlement agency does exist, it may be a “spoke” of a larger “hub” (affects financial flexibility, etc.)
- About 60-75 towns this size in Alberta with >10% newcomers

SMALL CENTRE ENGAGEMENT

AAISA works with small centre service providers to...

Build understanding
through lens reflective of small centres

Identify recommendations for improvements
and actions for key stakeholders

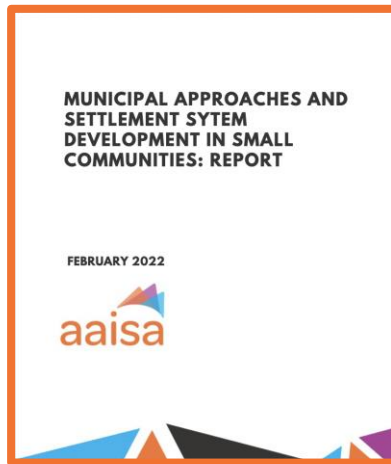
Enhance mutual/reciprocal communication
between sector and core funders

Develop tools, resources,
and projects enhancing
operations and service delivery

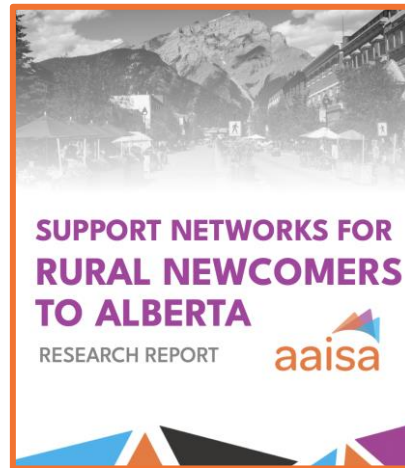
Support knowledge mobilization and foster
collaboration

PRESENT WORK WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES

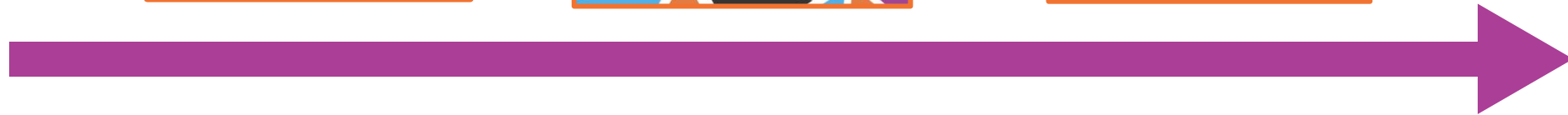
2021 - 2022



2022 - 2023



2023



RURAL SUPPORT NETWORK PROJECT

- **Background:**

- Several prior AAISA reports in 2021-22
- SILP grant funded March 2022- February 2024

- **Project goals**

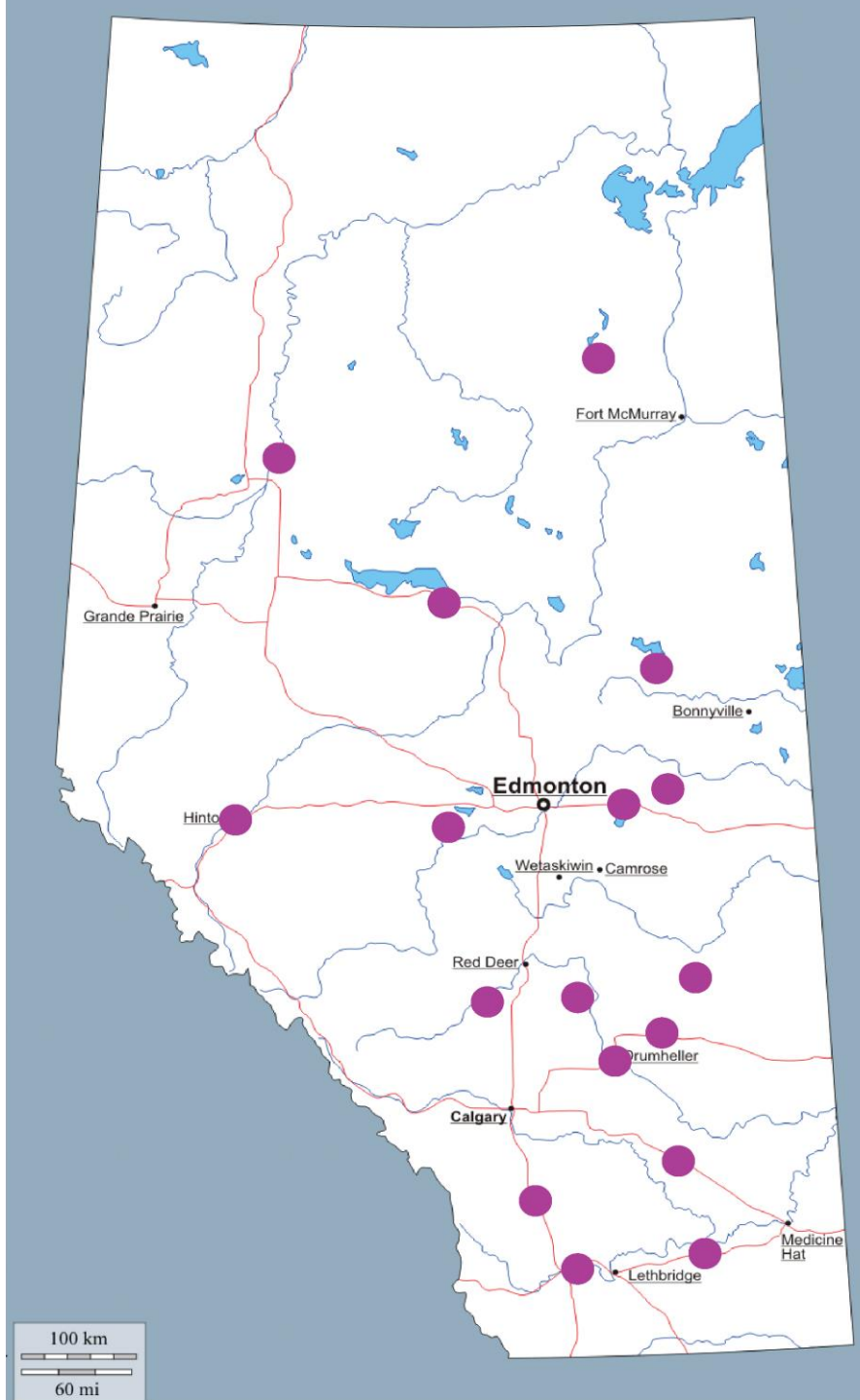
- Connect rural municipalities
 - Intra-municipal collaboration
 - Inter-municipal connectivity
- Create tools and PD courses tailored to participant feedback and needs

PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

- Claresholm
- Brooks
- Barrhead
- Drayton Valley
- Drumheller
- Fort Macleod
- Hanna
- Hinton
- Lac La Biche
- Oyen
- Peace River
- Paintearth
- Slave Lake
- Taber
- Trochu
- Two Hills
- Vegreville
- Wainwright
- Wood Buffalo

Diverse participants:

- Economic Development Officers
- Public Libraries
- Family and Community Social Services (FCSS) Managers
- Community Adult Learning Programs



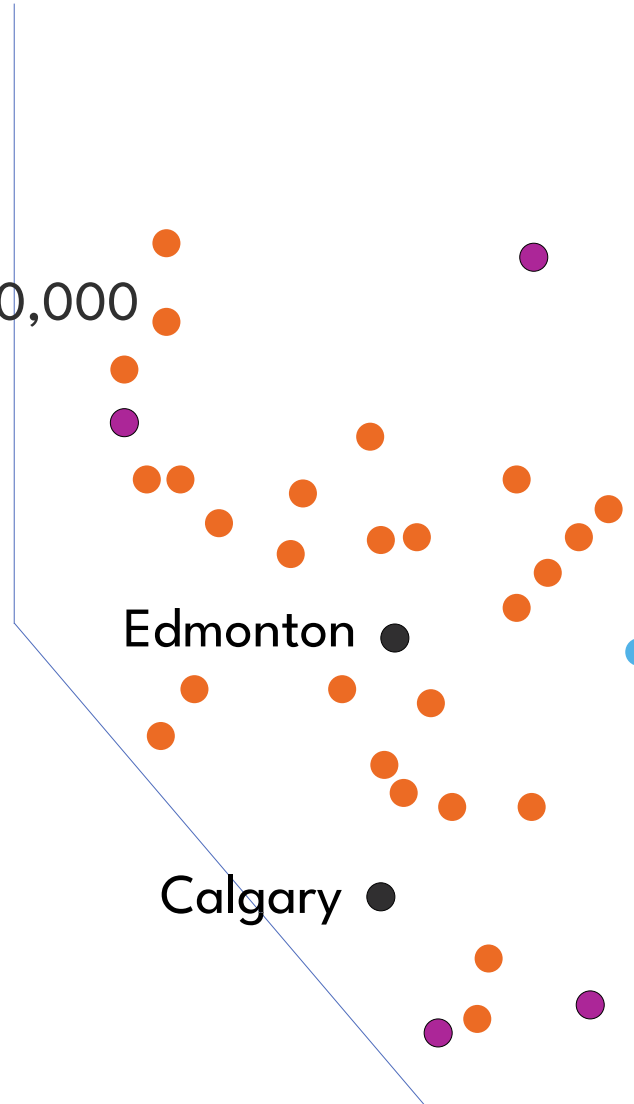
RURAL RENEWAL STREAM & SUMMIT

AN OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

- Provincial Nominee Program
- Similar to Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP), but is already running open enrollment for rural communities whereas RNIP is currently closed
- Instituted in February 2022
 - Along with Rural Entrepreneur stream
- ~600 newcomers “notionally expected” to receive PR in AB through this stream this year

- < 15,000
- 15,000 - 60,000
- > 60,000



-
- 27 communities (67 locations)
 - Population distribution among SC and rural visible in map to left

SPIRIT & INTENTION

- **Power to the people** – allowing rural municipalities to shape their futures
- **Pathway to PR** for temporary residents working in rural communities
- **Fills labour gaps** by attracting people who want PR to rural communities
- **Regional decentralization**, similar to RNIP

RURAL RENEWAL SUMMIT

Suggestion from a LIP staff member in AAISA's Ukrainian Rural Coordination meeting



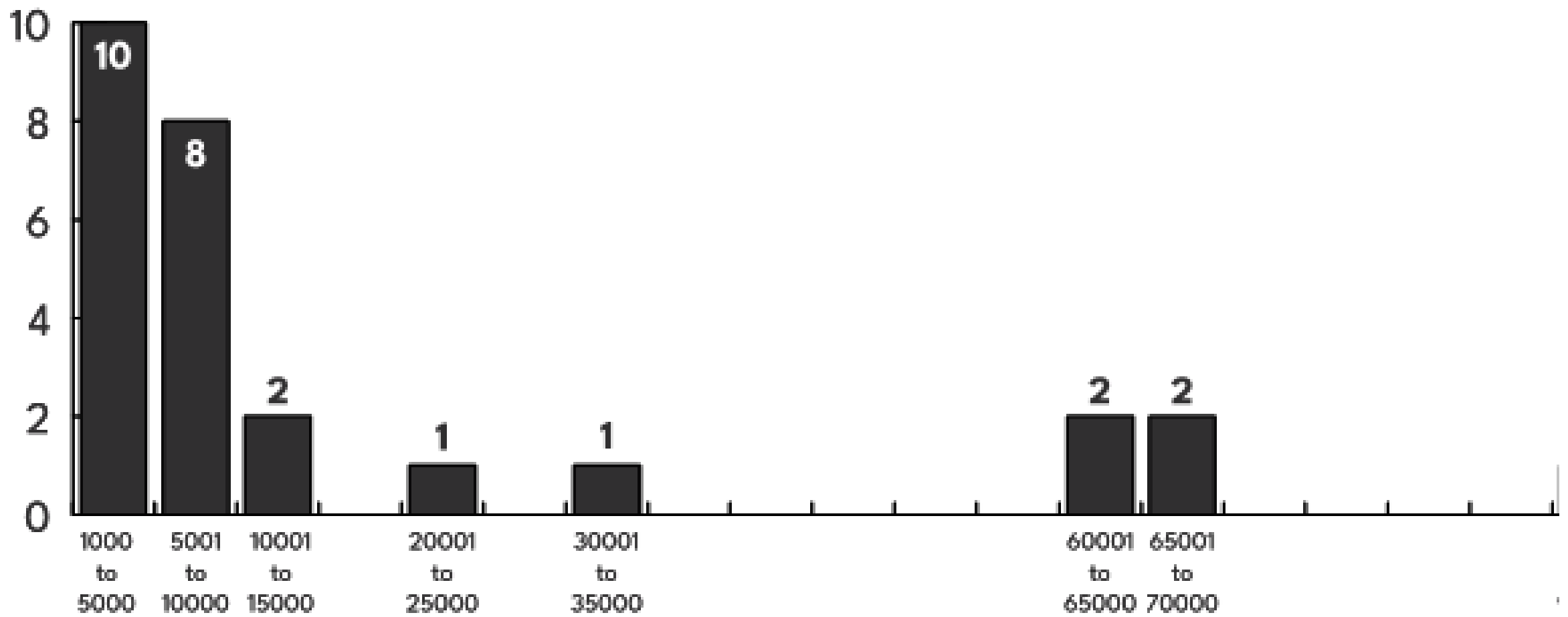
Hosted online in July 2023



~50 attendees –high participation rate



Vision: With their increased autonomy in procedure, municipalities could theoretically converge on a **more** equitable, personal, and community-oriented approach to immigration. Can we encourage them in that direction?

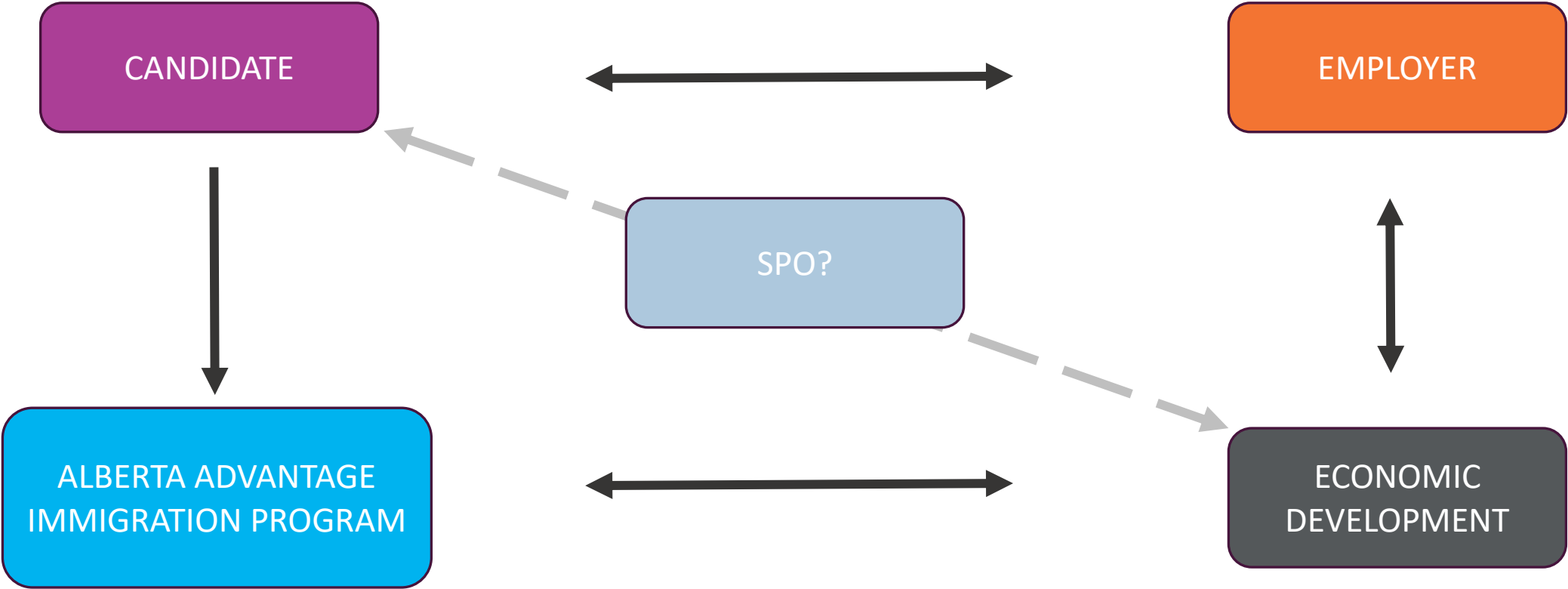


WHO ATTENDED?

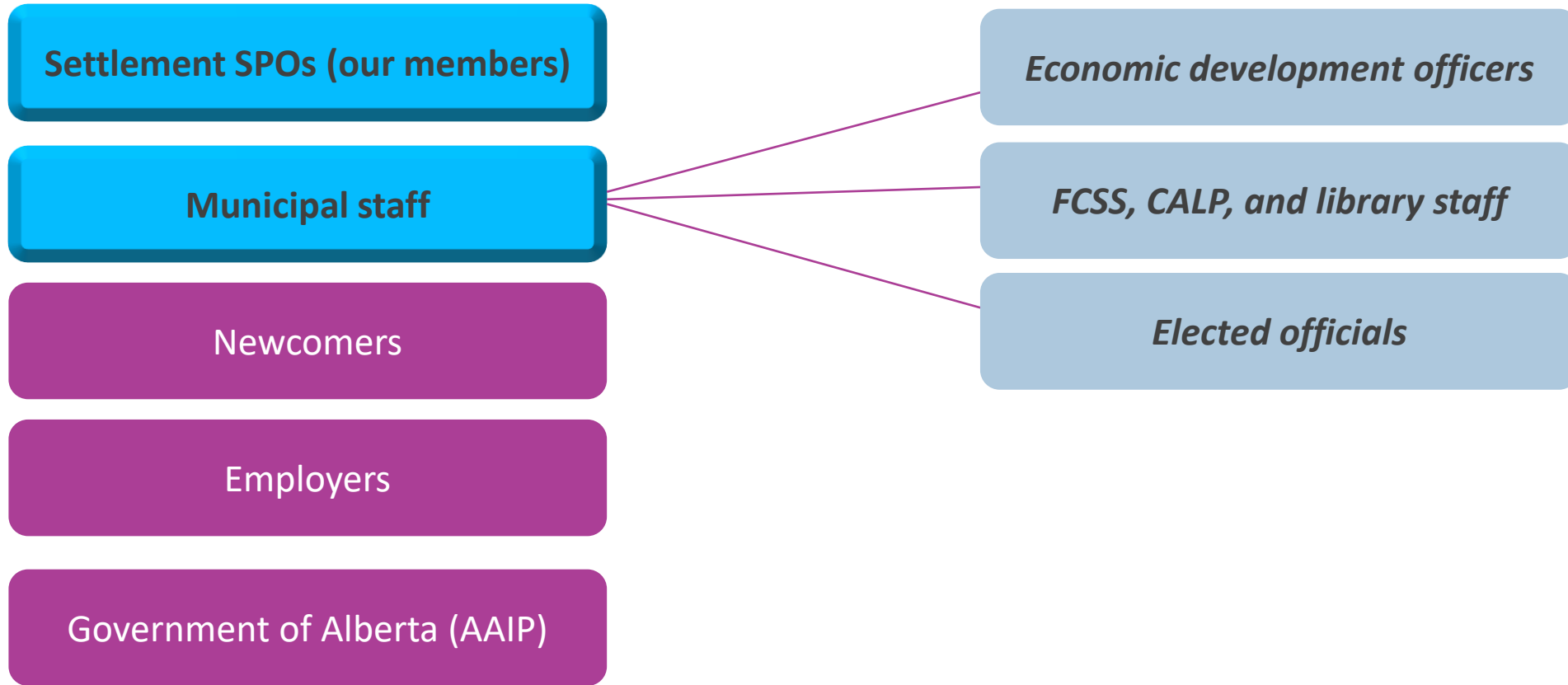
ANALYSIS & OBSERVATIONS

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

PROCESS



STAKEHOLDERS



OUTCOMES SO FAR

Opportunities

Internal collaboration

Support for local workers

Employers taking community lens

Challenges

Exploitation of newcomers

Retention of newcomers

High administrative work loads

MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

- Cooperation between federal and provincial on immigration already problematic. What happens when we bring in **29+** new governments?
 - Who funds services? Who handles crises?
- Municipality can be more flexible and personal, but has fewer resources

LESSONS LEARNED

- AAISA approached the conversation as merely an opportunity to bring together municipalities and allow them to share viewpoints, but without care, this type of conversation can turn into opportunity for municipalities to reinforce each others' unconsciously racist/biased ideas
- Wider scope in terms of potential stakeholders – FCSS, other ministries, rural development provincial associations?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are your experiences with municipal governments as settlement and immigration actors?
- Have you had any successes in policy advocacy at the provincial level? What did you learn?
- Do non-profits and other community stakeholders have a role to play in resolving multilevel governance conflicts? How can we be more collaborative?

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU

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AAISA

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