

## ABOUT THE REGINA REGION LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP (RRLIP)

---

The RRLIP is a community initiative that...



- **Convenes** a multi-sector **Partnership Council**, diverse **Immigrant Advisory Table** and **Working Groups** to support the community's settlement and integration priorities
- **Strengthens** the local capacity to integrate newcomers
- **Increases** knowledge about newcomer needs, strengths and local strategies for support
- **Promotes** welcoming attitudes and increases the full participation of newcomers in the community

**Vision:** Regina welcomes newcomers, values and celebrates diversity and supports the integration of all residents.

**Mission:** The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP) and its member organizations will educate, collaborate and partner for the benefit of newcomers in Regina.

For more information about the project visit [www.rrlip.ca](http://www.rrlip.ca)

## PURPOSE OF PROGRESS REPORT

---

This report provides an opportunity to share updates about the progress of the Local Immigration Partnership's work in the community and its impact on strengthening the community's capacity to welcome, settle and integrate newcomers.

## LOCAL PRIORITIES

---

The RRLIPs annual activities are guided by identified local priorities. Newcomers, newcomer-serving agencies and other local supports contribute to the identification of emerging and longer-term priorities. During the period of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, **the RRLIP** and **its community partners** focused on Mental Health, Canadian Daily Living and Employment.

## MENTAL HEALTH PRIORITY (\*ACTIVITIES, OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES)

---

**Gathered insights from the Immigrant Advisory Table and various cultural community leaders on the topic of newcomer mental health and best approach for impact.**

- Language around the topic of newcomer mental health modified (e.g. 'mental health' forum title changed to 'emotional wellness' forum).
- Forum event format adapted to suit anticipated comfort level of newcomer participants.

**Developed, in collaboration with local service providers, an 'Emotional Wellness' brochure highlighting local and on-line supports.**

- Local agency considers possible translation in top languages.
- Resource shared with forum participants and with broader community through inclusion on the project website, in a blogpost, Facebook page, etc.
- Requests from local service agencies for access to additional client copies.

**Coordinated an Emotional Wellness Forum involving newcomers, service providers and other interested individuals, during which newcomer mental health was highlighted, local supports showcased, service gaps and proposed solutions discussed.**

- Newcomers learn about and connect to local service providers and their support services.
- Service providers learn about service gaps and barriers for newcomers accessing services.
- Newcomers and service providers discuss how mental health is viewed cross-culturally and identify together, local solutions.
- Forum participants request on-going focus on newcomer emotional wellness topic.
- Local agencies request forum report to strengthen support for funding applications.

*After the Forum...*

*"We contacted all walk-in counselling services, general counselling services, and other similar services to see if they provide translation services, child care, and/or transportation and updated our records of these services accordingly."*

*~Service Provider*



*"It helped me be aware of the views held about mental health in other cultures and how to respond appropriately to the needs of newcomers."*

*~Forum Attendee*

The **Emotional Wellness Forum Report**, highlighting all discussions, proposed solutions and forum evaluation results, can be found [here](#).

## **CANADIAN DAILY LIVING PRIORITY (\*ACTIVITIES, OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES)**

**Developed, in collaboration with the Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (comprised of local housing stakeholders and other support agencies), a Housing Adaptation Checklist for use with newcomers.**

- Local agencies show interest in resource and discuss translation capacity into top languages.

**Coordinated a visit from RentSmart staff during a CHAC meeting.**

- CHAC members agree on the value of the RentSmart education model for the community and province.
- CHAC members examine financial and partnering options to bring the RentSmart education model to Saskatchewan.

## Extended invitation for CHAC membership to other pertinent stakeholder groups.

- Membership broadened and committee capacity strengthened.
  - New member commits to the financial costs of adapting RentSmart to the Saskatchewan market.
  - New member commits to the legal adaptation requirements for the RentSmart Model.
- Educator training begins; adaptation process time consuming but proceeding as planned.

### *Why a Housing Adaptation Checklist?*

The checklist was developed to support the enhancement of newcomer knowledge and skills pertaining to Canadian housing. The content of this checklist reflects the locally identified needs and challenges experienced by newcomers in Regina. Although intended for staff and/or volunteers working with newcomer clients, CHAC table members hope other client groups benefit from the resource as well. The Checklist can be found [here](#).

## EMPLOYMENT PRIORITY (\*ACTIVITIES, OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES)

### **Convened a working group to coordinate a week-long event – *Newcomer Employment Week/ Semaine pour L'Emploi des Nouveaux Arrivants 2018.***

- Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise (ACF), Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan (CECS), Regina Immigrant Women Centre, Regina Open Door Society, Catholic Family Services, City of Regina, Regina Public Library, Réseaux en immigration francophone (RIF-SK), Regina Work Prep, and Labour Market Services collaborate to plan and deliver the event. Nineteen activities run throughout the week including:
  - Event Launch (with media present)
  - Workshops (Job Fair Preparation; Workplace Safety for Newcomers; Job Search Dangers; How to Approach Cultural Differences in the Canadian Workplace)
  - Open Houses
  - Information Sessions (Steps to Starting a Business; Saskjobs.ca Transition to National Job Bank; Employment Standards in Saskatchewan; Saskatchewan Labour Laws)
  - Career Fair for Newcomers (which included presentations on Starting Your Own Business; Regina Trades and Skills Centre; Coping with the Stress of Job Search; False Job Offers; and Becoming a Financial Advisor)
  - Panel (on Job Search Dangers)
- RIF-SK ensures event promotion is translated into both official languages.



A sampling of NEW/SENA 2018 activities



### NEW/SENA 2018 Goals:

- \***Increase awareness** of newcomer employment opportunities & challenges
- \***Connect newcomers** with employment opportunities and existing employment support programs
- \***Connect employers** with the newcomer workforce and existing support programs
- \* **Reach those** who aren't already engaged

### Post-NEW/SENA Community Partner Survey:

89% agreed or strongly agreed - Partnering on NEW/SENA has added value to your work with newcomers.

100% agreed or strongly agreed - The development of NEW/SENA has created value for the community.

89% agreed or strongly agreed - Members of the NEW/SENA planning committee added value to each other's work.

88% agreed or strongly agreed - NEW/SENA 2018 achieved its goal of *increasing awareness of newcomer employment opportunities and challenges.*

89% agreed or strongly agreed - NEW/SENA 2018 achieved its goal of *connecting newcomers with employment support programs and employment opportunities.*

88% agreed or strongly agreed - NEW/SENA 2018 achieved its goal of *connecting employers with the newcomer workforce and other support programs.*

71% agreed or strongly agreed - NEW/SENA 2018 achieved its goal of *engaging those who are not currently hiring and working with newcomers.*

100% reported being either likely or very likely to participate in NEW/SENA 2019.

**In collaboration with newcomer-serving agencies and other support services, partnered with Tourism Saskatchewan (mentorship support component) and ComIT to coordinate the promotion of, and referrals to, their training and educational opportunities.**

- Newcomer-serving agencies, Labour Market Services and other supports coordinate to refer clients to training and educational opportunities.

**About the training and educational opportunities:**

- ComIT is a non-profit project aimed specifically at young people interested in or have past skills/training in the Information Technology field (not currently employed or underemployed). Its **Certificate Program** aims to teach newcomer clients (and others) programming, soft skills and professional development capabilities to face the labor market. ComITs work targets the requirements of the local labor market, providing the necessary tools for course graduates to obtain employment in the field. Its recent pilot project in Saskatoon was successful in terms of 17 out of the 24 graduates became employed in the IT field, as a result of the training and connections made during the course. **As of fiscal year-end, the Certificate Program was not yet complete.**
- Tourism Saskatchewan's **Ready to Work (Pilot Project)** focused solely on newcomer clients ages 18 to 30. The program offered classroom training that provided participants with the skills, knowledge, and experience required for long-term, stable employment in the tourism and hospitality sector. An important component of the program was 20 hours of after-program support and mentoring, offered by Tourism Saskatchewan. The RRLIP collaborated with service agencies to coordinate the promotion of the pilot project and referral of 15 **eligible** participants to the 12 - week training program, which began in September.



**ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH (\*ACTIVITIES, OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES)**

**In addition to locally identified community priorities, the RRLIP also focused on organizational strength.**

- Hosted a second annual Community Forum (highlighted above).
- Collaborated with a broad range of stakeholders to strengthen the community's capacity to welcome, settle and integrate newcomers (e.g. newcomer-serving agencies, government ministries, health authority, protective services, municipal government, libraries, federal agencies, educational institutions, etc.).
- Hosted a Funders Forum whereby newcomer-serving agencies and others interested in supporting newcomers, connected with funders to hear about funding opportunities to support program, service and resource development. In addition, the funders and fund seekers brainstormed perceived gaps in service and discussed potential solutions. The Forum report can be found [here](#).
- Received in-kind and grant support (meeting hospitality and facility space for meetings, event planning meetings, pilot project, etc.).
- Conducted annual evaluation with primary stakeholders (RRLIP-convened table members).

**[Partner survey results available here.](#)**

“The RRLIP works very diligently on supporting organizations to make deeper connection with the newcomer population, they help build strategies to enhance programming and find ways to help navigate inter-agency connections to further support newcomers.”

~Stakeholder Comment

## EMERGING PRIORITIES

---

Although locally identified priorities are reflected in a Community Action Plan, each Local Immigration Partnership (including the RRLIP) must remain responsive to emerging priorities in its community or region. During this fiscal year, the RRLIP responded to immediate community needs. Examples included:

- ❖ RRLIP staff moderated a **Hot Topics Event** at the Regina Public Library. The event provided the public an opportunity to learn about current refugee and immigrant integration strategies in Saskatchewan and Canada and how they might evolve in the future. Participants also heard from those who have lived through the refugee experience and have found a new sense of home in Canada.
- ❖ RRLIP staff coordinated a visit from Regina Fire and Protective Services (RFPS) to the RRLIPs Private Sponsorship Group Network. RFPS staff provided information and answered many questions from the private sponsors. In the collaborative meeting, many new ideas were generated to **enhance the support of newcomers in receiving fire safety information**. The ideas were implemented through quick follow-up and collaboration with community partners. For example, Computers for Schools is now downloading locally-produced fire safety videos to all refurbished computers given to newcomer families. In addition, Regina Open Door Society, in collaboration with the RFPS, provided professional development fire safety training for their settlement staff.
- ❖ The RRLIP, in collaboration with Regina Open Door Society, assisted in the coordination of **Private Sponsorship of Refugees Training Sessions** that took place September 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> in Regina. The RRLIP promoted the opportunity to the local network, as well as broader community contacts. There were approximately 60 total attendees of the sessions, which included network members, newcomers, Regina Open Door staff and interested community members.
- ❖ RRLIP staff attended the **Canada Housing Benefit Solutions Lab** in November to ensure the newcomer perspective and challenges with housing were included as a key consideration, as the CHB will provide affordability support to households and individuals in greatest need. As well, the **Housing Adaptation Checklist** (developed in coordination with the Canadian Housing Advisory Committee) was mentioned and then shared with Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, who forwarded it to all participants.
- ❖ As a follow-up to community inquiries regarding low/no cost facility space, RRLIP staff toured the **Buddhist Centre of Regina** (facility on 1401 Robinson Street). The purpose of the Centre is to provide a community gathering place, particularly for different cultures and small groups that have limited funds. In order to inform community of this low-cost facility space, the Centre was highlighted in a project blogpost and quarterly newsletter.
- ❖ In partnership with the **Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP)**, Newcomer Welcome Centre (NWC) and Regina Open Door Society (RODS), the RRLIP coordinated 5 separate training sessions provided by RSTP's Provincial Trainer. RRLIP was responsible for the promotion and coordination of 4 of the sessions which were available to local sponsoring community members and covered the following topics: *How to Become a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH)*; *How to Complete Sponsorship Applications Properly/Avoid Common Mistakes*; *Post-Arrival Commitments for Sponsors (Including Recent Changes to the Program)*. NWC coordinated and promoted the 5<sup>th</sup> opportunity: *How SPOs Can Support Private Sponsors*, which was relevant and available to RODS/NWC staff only. Approximately 65 people attended the 4 sessions available to the public, confirming that there is significant interest among community, particularly in the *How to Become a SAH session (25 attendees)*. As a result of this ongoing partnership with RSTP, the Regina sponsoring community's capacity to sponsor and support Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) has increased.
- ❖ In response to a request by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) representatives, RRLIP arranged a meeting with local community groups working with newcomers to discuss:
  1. **Information sessions and educational material** they can provide for those new to Canada (regarding the

importance of filing, benefits they can apply for, how to avoid scams, etc.)

2. **The CVITP (Community Volunteer Income Tax Program)**, for which they are currently recruiting organizations to partner with. This volunteer program has resulted in approximately \$144M back in the hands of residents during the 2017 benefit year alone, so there is huge benefit in providing this to clients. Five organizations were present for the meeting and there appeared to be interest among the groups to explore partnership opportunities with CRA.

- ❖ The RRLIP received an invitation to attend a **consultation on inclusive excellence and engaged leadership**. The Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation is an independent and non-partisan charity established in 2001 as a living memorial to the former prime minister. By granting doctoral scholarships, awarding fellowships, appointing mentors, and **holding public events**, the Foundation encourages critical reflection and action in four areas: human rights and dignity, responsible citizenship, Canada and the world, and people and their natural environment.

## RRLIP ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY

---

**The RRLIP supports other community initiatives through involvement in working groups and committees:**

- Vital Signs Community Advisory Council
- Early Years Family Centre Working Group
- Nutrition for Newcomers Working Group
- Food Regina Working Group
- Al Ritchie Interagency Group
- Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Working Group
- Saskatchewan Private Sponsorship Group Network
- Regina Human Services Committee
- Local Immigration Partnership Related Working Groups (e.g. data group, evaluation framework group, Basecamp which is an on-line platform utilized by LIPs across the country)

**The RRLIP participates in and supports community events related to newcomer settlement and integration:**

- World Refugee Day
  - Community Connection Events
  - Volunteer Events (e.g. INVOLVE)
  - Community Fairs (e.g. RODS Community Fair for Newcomers)
  - Cultural Celebrations
  - Town Halls and Panels
  - Pride Parade
- And many others...

**The RRLIP initiates its own research, when needed, related to the community's local priorities. The project also supports pertinent community level research and other initiatives. Letters of support were provided to:**

- Dunlop Art Gallery (Artist in Communities Project)
- Pictogram Symbols (2 Yr. Pilot Project)
- We Speak Google Translate Project
- ARRIVE Volunteer Group



- In-TAC (live, on-line workshops)
- Saskatchewan Polytech's Nursing Program study - Exploring the Effects of Maintaining and Creating Social Connections on Refugees and Immigrants in Saskatchewan's Mental Health and Wellbeing

### The RRLIP informs and connects with the community through varying methods of communication:

- Website [www.rrip.ca](http://www.rrip.ca) (on average, over 2000 unique visitors per month)
- Blog posts (once - twice weekly) <http://rrip.ca/blogs>
- Newsletters <http://rrip.ca/pages/project-newsletters>
- FaceBook Page <https://www.facebook.com/RRLIP/>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

First and foremost, thank you to the newcomer community for your resilience and determination, and your sincere desire to contribute to your new community.

Thank you to all RRLIP community partners (Partnership Council, Immigrant Advisory Table, Canadian Housing Advisory Committee, Newcomer Employment Week Working Group, Private Sponsorship Group Network and **many others**) for your efforts in strengthening the warmth of our welcome and our ability to settle and integrate newcomers.

Thank you to newcomer-serving agencies and other supports, for all the work that you do every day.

Thank you to the community of Regina, for through this work we recognize community members to be warm and welcoming, and genuinely wanting to assist others.

Finally, thank you to the RRLIPs project partners and funders, for without your support, this work would not have been possible.

