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ANALYSIS OF THE 1ST PROVINCIAL
SETTLEMENT & INTEGRATION
FORUM REPORT





**Written & Produced by the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies
May 2014, in Calgary Alberta with primary analysis completed by:
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Acknowledgements

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) would like to offer its sincere gratitude to the following stakeholders who provided support during the Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum:

To Alberta Human Services, for their generous financial support that enabled AAISA to host the Forum.

To the sector representatives who offered their time, expertise, and voice to the Forum. Their invaluable input lent a voice to the unification of settlement and integration services across all sectors in Alberta.

To Dr. Lloyd Wong and Caroline Sommerfield, for their efforts in completing the primary analysis of the Forum, reflected herein.

To the AAISA Board of Directors, for their oversight and governance that allows projects such as this to take form.

To the AAISA Staff members who worked tirelessly to create an influential event, whose impact will be built upon in years to come.

AAISA Provincial Manager and Chair

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PREAMBLE

Canada enjoys a robust and successful immigration system, which supports thousands of immigrants and refugees through resettlement and integration services across the country. Canada's Immigration success is internationally recognized and many other countries look at the Canadian immigration experience as a best practice. In the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's 2012 report, levels of success of settlement and integration in European countries, Canada, the United States, and Australia were compared. The report clearly identified Canada as a leading country in making immigration a success. However, the ultimate success of immigration is measured against the level of integration and civic participation of new immigrants and refugees in the host country.

Canada has vast cultural, linguistic, and religious diversities among newly arrived immigrants who are expected to adhere to Canadian norms and values. In order to facilitate integration of such a diverse population, a comprehensive collaboration with all community stakeholders, governments, and new immigrants is essential. Communities across the country, large or small, are encouraged to pay more attention towards creating conditions for success where newcomers can settle and become involved in all aspects of community life. Additionally, a focus on concentrated efforts in mobilizing communities to be involved with integration of newcomers is necessary for successful resettlement and integration.

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA), the provincial umbrella organization for settlement agencies, has identified successful integration of newcomers as one of the key factors in all program design and delivery by its member agencies. AAISA has also identified the initiation of a provincial-wide conversation on integration as a key strategic focal point for the next three years. The Settlement and Integration Forum held on April 17, 2013 attracted over 180 participants from different sectors across Alberta, including Private, Public, Non-Profit, Health, Education and Justice sectors, providing an opportunity for an inter-sector conversation regarding settlement and integration in Alberta. This is believed to be the first initiative of its kind in Canada. All AAISA members hope this initiative will be a starting point for further dialogue in the area of integration in Alberta. AAISA is pleased to provide expertise and leadership in this area.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants, facilitators, government officials, especially Premier Redford for attending the event and offering their contributions. Also, my appreciation goes to AAISA staff for organizing a wonderful event. I invite you to review the analysis of the 1st Provincial Settlement Integration Forum.

Sincerely,
Fariborz Birjandian, Chair of AAISA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) *1st Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum* (hereafter referred to as the Forum) was held on April 17, 2013 at the Telus Spark Science Centre, in Calgary, Alberta. The forum was attended by one hundred and eighty-six participants representing various stakeholders in Alberta's settlement and integration sector including the private, public, non-profit, health, education, and justice sectors.

The Forum brought together multiple stakeholders in order to facilitate an inter-sector conversation regarding settlement and integration services in the province. The data retrieved from the Forum will inform AAISA's research initiatives and policy discussions. Additionally, AAISA plans to share its findings with interested stakeholders working directly or indirectly within the settlement sector. This report summarizes the findings from the Sector Table Discussions, where each participant at the Forum had an opportunity to provide responses and views on three fundamental questions:

- What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
- What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
- What capacities need to be enhanced to address these challenges?

Further, this report summarizes the sector groups' presentation of findings and the cross-sector discussion panel which was moderated by Meyer Burstein, former Director General of Strategic Planning with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The panel explored commonalities, ideas for improving integration, and opportunities for cross sector collaboration.

Five significant recommendations were established in the 1st Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum. Moving forward beyond this conference requires concrete steps. There are numerous options to choose from, including implementing more conferences to better define important themes, the creation of working groups, and the development of research and management structures to inform, evaluate, and oversee the process. The five recommendations were as follows:

- The formation of a board or blue ribbon panel using a business model (i.e. Board of Directors) including prominent representatives (or champions) from each sector to oversee the process of working on each group of challenges, and the dissemination of information to all sectors. Government representation and participation in this board would be vital in order to facilitate processes and the flow of information.
- The implementation of four separate working groups assigned to address a specific theme from the Forum proceedings. Participants in the group would include significant representatives from interested sectors and provide vital input to achieve the action items observed in the Forum. Working groups would define and identify goals, collect information, and facilitate the dissemination of information in their specific sector. Research, funding allocation, program evaluation, and marketing are a few key areas that working groups will address between annual Forums.
- The development of strategic research projects to determine priorities and immediate needs of settlement and integration in relation to the various sectors. The implementation of strategic research will provide tools for evaluation, outcome measurement, monitoring of sectors, programs and services. Additionally, inter-sector collaboration in this research will assist in determining uptake of services, increased success in providing targeted services in rural areas, and adapting successful practices across sectors.
- In order to manage such a scaled endeavor, the development of a centralized database of all immigrant services and organizations is highly recommended. Evaluation and consistent assessment of database uptake will determine where duplications in services exist. This data will serve to streamline services and increase successful utilization of services and program funding.
- Finally, development of an annual Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum for reporting on progress, networking, identification of new challenges, and discussion of solutions. The annual Forum will be hosted in alternating rural and urban location, in order to recognize the diversity Alberta offers both geographically and demographically.

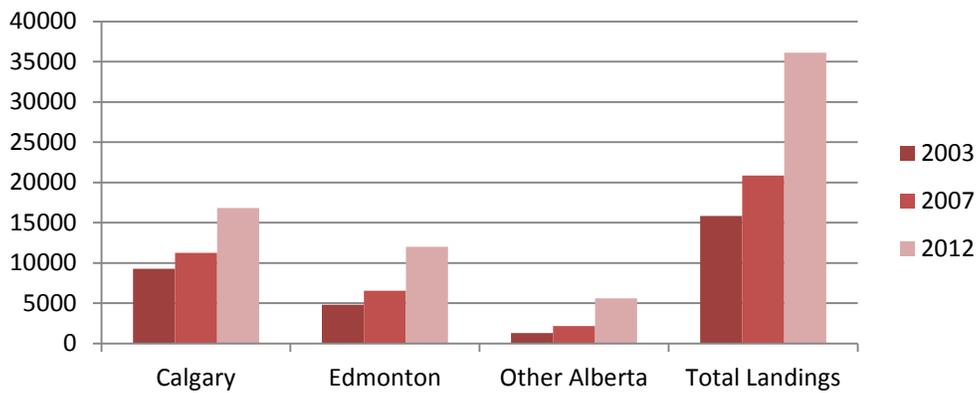
AAISA has accepted these recommendations and is exploring ways to further the important work undertaken at the Forum. Settlement and integration in Alberta is an ever-present need for a wide variety of stakeholders, as represented in the diverse

attendance of the Forum. Thusly, targeted work is necessitated to address the provincial and sectorial needs arising with increased newcomer landings. AAISA is dedicated to building the capacity of Alberta's settlement agencies and their counterparts for a fully integrated Alberta.

I. INTRODUCTION

Immigration and settlement pose significant changes for all Albertans as the need for workers continues to expand and evolve throughout the province. In 2012, Alberta welcomed more than 36,000 newcomers in economic and family class immigration. Nearly 20% of these arrivals landed outside of the primary metropolis of Calgary and Edmonton, placing a large influx of newcomer Canadians into rural Alberta. These numbers are steadily increasing and so are the needs for settlement services. Immigration, and subsequent successful integration, is imperative for the positive growth of the provincial workforce and economy. It is therefore the goal of all immigrant service providers to best enable newcomers to be successful in transitioning and integrating into the province. Informed practice is the most sustainable way to reach this goal, and inter-sector collaboration benefits all sectors in various yet meaningful ways.

Figure 1: Newcomer Arrivals to Alberta



Since 2003, newcomer landings have increased exponentially (see Figure 1). Furthermore, newcomers are working within multiple sectors throughout Alberta. For example, increased newcomer landings impact the health sector directly as culturally-competent care must become a required skill of staff. Consequently, inter-sector collaboration on the topic of settlement and integration is a provincial imperative recognized by the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA). A trend in the Forum revealed that there is a common understanding that collaboration is vital to settlement and integration success; however, participants are hesitant to recommend it as the be-all, end-all, or fix for successful settlement. This concern is explored in the findings of this report and can also be referenced in the appendices.

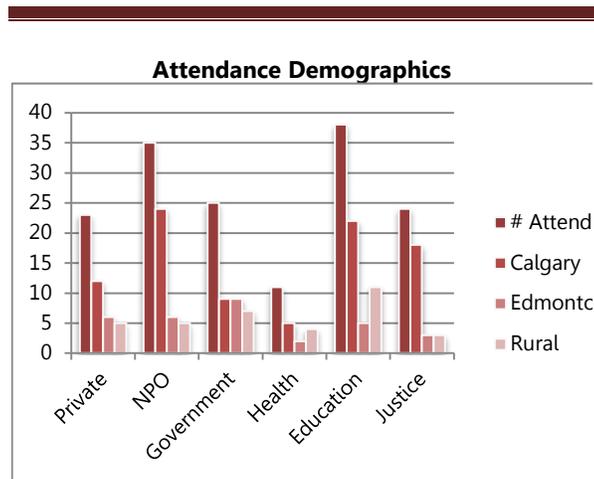
Despite the desire to have a delineated understanding of how collaboration looks in practice, inter-sector collaboration has been identified as a vital aspect of progressive and inclusive practice. To facilitate the discussion, AAISA established a forum for inter-sector collaboration that would result in practical application data to better inform the sectors of the settlement and integration needs across the province. The purpose of the effort is to bring together stakeholders in multiple sectors in order to facilitate an inter-sector conversation regarding settlement and services in the province. This effort resulted in the *1st Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum* (Forum) was held on Wednesday, April 17, 2013, at the Telus Spark Science Centre in Calgary, Alberta. The Forum was attended by one hundred and eighty six participants. These participants represented stakeholder from the six primary sectors in Alberta's settlement and integration system and included the Private, Public, Non-Profit, Health, Education, and Justice Sectors.

This Forum represents the beginning of a wider discussion that will occur throughout the province. Data generated by the forum, and collected throughout the day from all participants and sessions, have been analyzed to provide information on the key challenges facing sectors and stakeholders over the next three to five years. This data will serve to streamline services and increase successful utilization of services and program funding. Additionally, the Forum will inform AAISA research initiatives, policy discussion, and increase effective representation of stakeholder interests in the settlement sector.

II. METHODOLOGY

The Forum consisted of a full day of presentations, discussions, and panels designed to identify key immigration challenges facing the sectors who participated (see Appendix A). Participants were invited to attend the conference by AAISA and included private, public, non-profit, health, education, and justice sectors, as well as other stakeholders and agencies in Alberta's settlement and integration system from municipalities throughout Alberta¹. Significant amounts of qualitative data were generated that allow for future work on addressing challenges relating to immigration in the Province of Alberta.

While the Forum included several keynote speakers and panels in the morning sessions, including Premier Alison Redford, this report, as requested by AAISA, focuses on summarizing and analyzing the data collected during the afternoon sessions. The analysis and findings are based on three major sessions from the forum. The first of these three sessions is the Sector Table Discussions, where every participant at the Forum had a chance to provide their answers and views on three fundamental questions. Second, the Sector Groups Presentation of Findings presented three consensual priority answers to each of the three questions. Finally, there was a Cross-Sector Discussion panel, moderated by Meyer Burstein², to explore commonalities, ideas for improving integration, and possible collaboration.



Data collection was designed to be as comprehensive as possible in terms of capturing the thoughts and input of every participant in these three sessions. Data were collected using a number of methods, including hand written questionnaires (later transcribed), notes transcribed at the time of the proceedings by official note takers stationed at each discussion table and presentation, and analysis of a DVD taken of the proceedings.

Data from the Sector Table Discussions were collected in several forms. This session was run as a one-hour table discussion with participants divided into individual tables organized by the sector that they represented, and moderated by one assigned individual at each table.

Sector divisions consisted of:

- Private sector (two tables)
- Public sector (three tables)
- Non-Profit sector (three tables)
- Health sector (one table)
- Education sector (three tables)
- Justice sector (one table).

At the beginning of the session each participant was provided with a questionnaire where he/she was asked to write down his/her top three answers to the three key questions addressed by the conference (although they could, and many did, list more than three). After completing the forms, participants discussed the results of the individual questionnaires and came to a consensus on what they determined to be the top three answers to each question for the table as a group. These questions were:

- **What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?**
- **What adjustments do you feel need to be made?**
- **What capacities need to be enhanced to address these challenges?**

In addition to the questionnaires, each participant was provided with coded index cards where they could record additional concerns, comments, and information. Each table was also assigned an official note taker who made notes on the table

proceedings and discussions as they took place. All hand written questionnaires and index cards were later transcribed into computerized form and collated with the information recorded by the official note taker for analysis.

The Sector Groups Presentation of Findings was run as a series of five (5)-minute presentations by sector representatives who presented three (3) or more consensual answers that emerged from the Sector Table Discussions. Sectors with more than one table of participants combined final answers from each table into one final presentation. In the case of more than three (3) main answers, presenters chose the final answers included in the presentation. Data collection consisted of a combination of three sources. The first source was the summary questionnaires filled out by hand by each individual sector table, which present each table's consensus opinion on the top three answers. The second source was comprised of notes taken by a research team member during the presentations. Finally, a DVD recording was made of each presentation. Data collection for the Cross-Sector Discussion Panel consisted of detailed notes taken by a research team member. Additionally, a DVD recording captured the real-time panel discussion. Once all data was collected, they were transcribed and digitized, summarized, and collated to present the unique concerns and comments by participants (see Appendix B and Appendix C). Subsequently, these transcriptions were analyzed utilizing textual and discourse analysis to determine key findings, themes, and directions for further action to address the challenges as identified by the Forum participants.

*“Realize with immigration – you are not simply bringing in workers but you are also bringing in citizens. Everybody understands this – employers, settlement sector, government understands that. The trick is to create the right sorts of incentives and to understand how those incentives need to operate and how those relationships can be promoted if you want to move forward. From initial presentations (I was) struck by how many people talked the importance of getting a better handle on outcomes – what actually results, including our collaboration relationships. **This means knowledge partnerships.**”*

– Meyer Burstein, Senior Fellow & Director of Policy and Planning, P2P

III. FINDINGS

Commonalities Across Sectors

Analysis of the findings provided by the six sectors represented at the Forum allowed for the identification of seven common themes that need to be addressed in Alberta. These themes provide information regarding potential spheres of collaboration, as well as a number of supports needed by sectors and immigrants. It is significant to note that the findings comprised herein are representative of the opinions of the Forum participants and do not necessarily reflect the stance of the reporting body.

Theme 1 – Collaboration

Collaboration is a polarizing term that produces skepticism and concern over its practical application. Sector Table Discussions gave voice to these concerns. Nearly all sectors indicate that they would like to see more collaboration amongst

sectors. It was reported that inter-sector collaboration does not necessitate collaboration with every sector, and that collaboration should be selective and appropriate to the situation.

This will eliminate superfluous conversation

and/or effort time in resolving issues that may arise. The need for situation-specific collaboration entails a resource database that will comprise agencies working in the issue area. Data indicated that this is important to be efficient and foster partnerships that will augment the efficiency of their services.

Several sectors, specifically non-profit and public, indicated the need for sustainable internal collaboration before capacity can be built to increase external partnerships. Internal sustainability was reported to be an important factor in how successful sectors will be in collaborating with one another and offers a priority area for future work. Intra-sector collaboration is imperative for successful service delivery; however,

Collaboration involves knowing what resources are available for my patients in the community. From the health point of view – challenges involve the social determinants of health – poverty, transportation, food and security, childcare, unemployment, etc.

- Forum Participant

the competitive funding and project-specific nature of these sectors creates a natural laser-focus on sector-specific priorities.

All sectors agreed that there is a need for more inter-sectorial meetings offering opportunities to work out the benefits of collaboration and how to implement it successfully. Stakeholders need clearly defined objectives and outcomes for

Myth of Collaboration

“Collaboration is not costless. There is a myth that collaboration is better, but to get there takes time and energy. To get there involves giving something in turn. Something has to give to get a rich collaboration. (Sectors) are not very good at it because sometimes it is (an issue) of territory, funding, and market. (Need to identify) the sacrifices?”

Then we can get past collaboration as a general statement.”

- Forum Participant

collaboration, indicating a desire to minimize duplication of work. Additionally, all sectors agree that concrete goals, continued information sharing and networking, and a communal strategy for enacting collaboration are key issues to address. In general there was a call for increased networking, communication, and mentoring between sector representatives and newcomers. Stakeholders are vested in determining the shortcomings of potential partnerships and ensuring that collaboration for the sake of collaboration does not occur.

Collaboration was recognized as an important factor in successfully engaging newcomers, specifically regarding the benefits of involving newcomers more deeply in various sectors to encourage civic

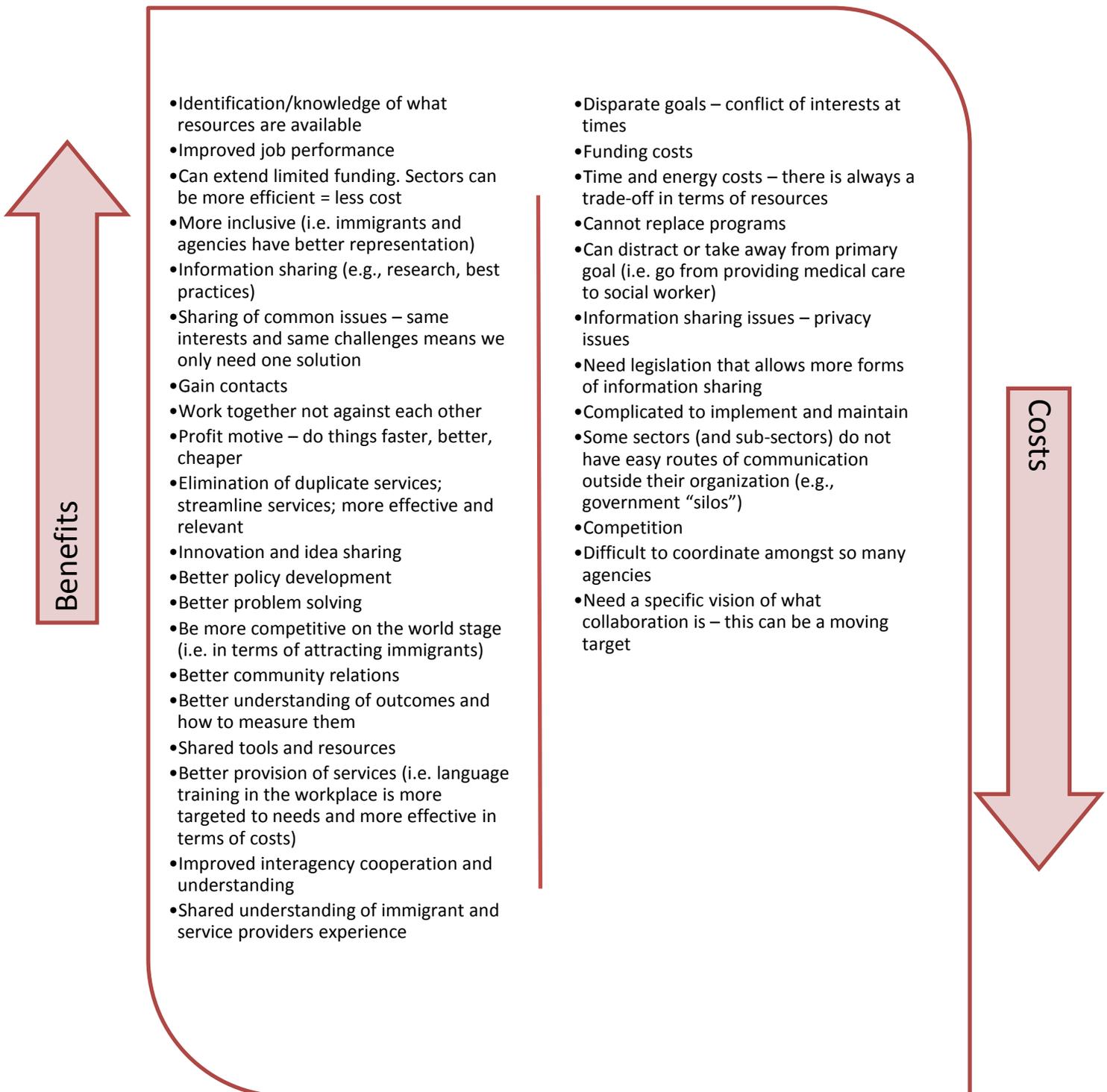
participation. A few primary actions recommended by all sectors include attaining immigrant feedback, increasing recruitment and pre-arrival skill assessment, and engaging with ethno-cultural groups in the provision of services and information. These actions necessitate multi-sector understanding of immigration and settlement needs, which opens opportunities for settlement agencies to work with non-typical partners. Employers and settlement service agencies recognized an untapped resource in the other, and it is hopeful that a partnership will form to increase successful job placement for newcomers. There was significant emphasis placed on the provision of services and ensuring they are effective and streamlined. Effective

collaboration has the potential to reduce duplication of services and streamline funding opportunities for gaps in service.

Costs to collaboration were discussed at each sector table (see Figure 3). Each sector works under specific directives and are mandated by resource capacity. It is important to consider that collaboration requires time, funds, and effort from participating sectors and agencies. Data indicated a common understanding that something must be sacrificed in order to maintain collaboration, requiring an assessment of capacity. Additionally, there will be undue strain on some sectors over others, as observed by the nature of their work. Each sector offers a myriad of services and, while they are related, there may be undue burden placed on sectors actively providing services in various areas of health or social services.

Adaptability is needed to address the issue of the dynamic nature of sector work. Collaboration requires a regular assessment of functionality, results, and revision based upon environmental changes. Finally, conflicts of interest and restrictions need to be addressed before agreeing on a collaborative process. Public and justice sectors have specific regulations to consider when participating in settlement and integration programs. Similarly, health and social services are regulated as human service agencies. Any proposed collaboration will need to consider these perceived costs before implementation.

Figure 3: Benefits-Costs Analysis of Collaboration



Theme 2 – Education

It was unanimously reported by all sectors that gaps in education presented significant barriers to the successful integration of newcomers into Albertan society. The educational gaps brought forward can be broken down into the broader headings of language training, professional development, diversity training, pre-arrival training, awareness of available community services and accessible education.

There were three primary areas for potential reform in the Education Sector:

A. Fair and equitable access to educational opportunities for immigrants/newcomers

B. Better collaboration amongst providers. Building partnerships amongst providers, and connections amongst licensing bodies and agencies.

C. Diverse providers of education (ranging from K-12 to universities). Also literacy, and the speed at which immigration policy changes.

providers/teachers have adequate cross-cultural training, competencies, and resources.

The education system faces challenges related to a lack of coordination among service providers, which makes the system difficult for newcomers to navigate. Services must be realigned to avoid duplicity and fill the gaps. A collaborative multi-sector approach to serving newcomers is needed. Competing bodies (e.g. licensing bodies) complicate matters further, requiring sustainable collaborative approaches in rural areas. Government at all levels needs to enhance support in rural communities

to ensure educational and employment success. However, it is imperative that both newcomers and government agencies have a realistic expectation regarding employment. Inter-sector networks must be equipped with knowledge about services and support throughout Alberta that can be easily accessed by newcomers.

Funding of the education system needs to be increased, but funding must be adapted to be better allocated. The education system needs to embrace and support creative solutions, including evening programs in schools (i.e. cultural and/or language training for families), and new forms of distance learning. Technology, while useful as a means of expanding education, cannot become the main means of education delivery. Personal engagement and reduced reliance on technology is the primary solution to addressing literacy for newcomers.

A current priority for the education sector is attaining funding to enhance ESL programs, particularly higher level ESL programs. The overwhelming need for accessible, affordable and readily available ESL education remains one of the major hindrances to successful settlement. Lack of English language proficiency was reported to cause a trickle-down effect in regards to subsequent barriers encountered by newcomers. More specifically, the demand for higher level, sector specific, ESL classes—tailored to specialized, professional vocabulary—were discussed as being required for the successful workplace integration of newcomer employees.

The labour market education system is not keeping up with the fast-paced policy changes to immigration in Alberta¹. This necessitates a more responsive and innovative approach to addressing the dynamic needs of the settlement and integration landscape. New means of training, as through the use of technology, is an excellent response to the training need; however, technology cannot replace face-to-face education. In an effort to be innovative, the education sector has to look at the multiple barriers faced by immigrants. These include material needs such as housing, cost of living and employment, as well as social needs and barriers including isolation, language learning, community integration, and appropriate employment transitioning. It is only by understanding and knowledge of these

¹ See AAISA's Labour Market Agreements Research Bulletin for more information http://aaisa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/LMA_Bulletin.pdf

elements that the education sector can promote an effective stream of services and supports to meet these barriers and overcome them.

Increased training for staff regarding cultural competency and learning styles of newcomer children will increase the success of students in the classroom and school system. This understanding has to include a comprehensive understanding of the competency levels of children and youth. Levels of literacy need to be increased at all levels. This approach must encourage parents and guardians to be more involved in the education system, so as to increase understating and effectiveness of the system.

Education is needed in understanding how to navigate all systems throughout Canada. It is important to educate newcomers about the laws and cultural norms of Canada. This education will aid in empowering newcomers and encouraging them to attain full civic participation. Education programs as well as civil service programs can serve to empower newcomers. Data indicated the benefit of socializing policing at an early age, perhaps through the cadets programs, and teach newcomers the social engagement of the Justice sector. Police also need more education and training so that they can be more culturally aware and connect better with the community. This education stream will foster understanding, trust, and mutual benefit for both newcomers and the justice providers in their communities.

Strengthening the soft skill sets of newcomer Albertans was observed as an additional barrier to settlement. In order to counter this obstacle, it was expressed that service providers must work closely with government representatives and employers to ensure for more rigorous and consistent Canadian cultural competency training. Extensive knowledge regarding Canadian culture—i.e. weather, workplace culture, law, and cultural norms—is required to combat the initial culture shock and alienation that newcomers experience, immediately following arrival. In addition, the deployment of pre-arrival, cultural competency training initiatives was suggested as a means to facilitate a more seamless transition for newcomers into Canadian life.

Finally, it was expressed that all sectors should make public their various successes with newcomer communities. Championing best practices, creative initiatives and breakthrough projects that promote diversity, education and integration, comprise

necessary work for cross sector learning experiences to take place. It is important to understand what has worked, and attempt to transplant best practices into Albertan communities.

Theme 3 – Funding

Resources in settlement and integration are regulated by federal, provincial, municipal, and private funders. While resources may seem limited when attempting to gain traction on new projects, streamlining service provision and inter-sector collaboration has the potential for increased operational success. All sectors are interested in attaining increased funding in order to enhance services such as language and job training. Most sectors indicate that current funding must be evaluated and reallocated as needed. The Forum offered a platform for reflection on how services can be streamlined, evaluated, and made to be sustainable. As there are finite resources at the public level, it is vital to develop creative and innovative funding streams.

Capacity Building

Overall we need better evaluations of organizations, programs and policies, and we need to build the capacities of exiting organizations that are doing good work and producing the best results.

- Forum Participant

Funding is a major concern discussed by all sectors during the discussion sessions. All sectors reported the need for increased funding for newcomer needs, but many respondents recognized that this is not always feasible. Table discussions on funding by most sectors suggested there is a need for a re-evaluation of current funding. This re-evaluation would include an analysis of allocation with the goal of identifying duplicate services, merging these services into streamlined provisions, and proceeding with a re-distribution of funds to areas of critical import.

Provincial and federal funding need to be brought into alignment with each other, and program funding needs to be better aligned with the realities of immigrant needs. For instance, there is a need for increased emphasis on training and

education. Training includes language skills and cultural competency skills, while education includes not just education directed to workers or language, but also issues surrounding integration and immigration in Canada for both newcomers and residents. Closer work with both Canadian official languages is necessary to recognize and work around Francophone language barriers.

Evaluation, outcome and performance measurement, and effective reporting are challenges. Sector service providers need to improve and implement better outcome measurement standard and tools, while improving reporting, in order to make better policy and funding decisions. As part of this process, providers need to determine the most efficient method of attaining demographic data and how to analyze the data. There is a current requirement to determine what services are effective, what is offered, how it is offered, and how these services should be best accessed. Demographic data reflecting service uptake and geographic service delivery would increase service provision success and reduce duplication.

As part of this challenge, evaluation and improved access to information on settlement services must be increased. Public sector administrative capacities need to be supported in order to reflect government changes, immigration changes, and to provide effective administrative services to meet the dynamic needs of the settlement and integration sector. It is understood that services must be tailored to fit each individual community. Results based budgeting would ensure funded programs and services are effective, efficient, and relevant.

As referred to in Theme 1, collaborative endeavors increase the opportunity for sustainability and diversified funding. Service assessment and inter-sector collaboration has the potential to restructure service provision and eliminate duplication. It is recommended that sectors come together to determine what services can be most effectively managed in each sector. This will serve to increase sector capacity, reduce duplication in services, and relieve funding streams to fund programs and services that have been put aside in the past. With such an increase in newcomer landings in Alberta, it is time for all sectors to self-reflect on the most efficient way to deliver services.

Theme 4 - Research

The majority of sectors represented at the forum felt strongly about the need for collaborative, higher level research. It was voiced that more thorough and comprehensive research is needed to inform effective and efficient service delivery for newcomers, province wide. More advanced research is compulsory to comprehend what changes need to be made. This research will require more sophisticated data collection and analysis, as well as more highly developed knowledge partnerships in order to enhance the results. There is a need for creative solutions and to think differently. As part of this, focus needs to be shifted to outcomes and numbers. The types of research suggested included:

- The development of program evaluation tools and subsequent, rigorous implementation of said tools.
- Qualitative analysis of the newcomer experience, used to better inform service needs.
- Intervention research to inform how to best address barriers present in the newcomer experience.
- Research on service access (i.e. why immigrants are not using services, as participants reported 50% of immigrants to Alberta do not use services.)
- Cost/benefit analysis on collaboration between sectors.

Program evaluation was a common theme discussed among the participants. It was unanimously agreed upon that there is a pressing need for data on outcomes and success to better address sector and immigrant needs. Additionally, the significant under-utilization of newcomer services must be researched and met with adequate response². It has been suggested that service providers must make more meaningful connections with smaller ethno-cultural communities to investigate this matter further. The specific issues encountered through serving newcomers in each sector must also be analyzed to determine further commonalities. Finally, as collaborative research is quite costly, research should be conducted to inform the net gain of certain cross-sector partnerships.

² See the 2012 Alberta Human Services report *Alberta Settlement Outcomes Survey*
<http://work.alberta.ca/documents/alberta-outcomes-settlement-survey-results.pdf>

Theme 5 – Innovation

Service delivery has increased in scope, pace, and resource utilization in the last 14 years. Due to the dynamic nature of the work, it is necessary to re-evaluate the operating standards that are outdated and not addressing the ever-changing settlement and integration landscape. Sectors reported a desire to collaborate on seeking new and innovative problem solving techniques, including evidence-based practice and traditional anecdotal data.

Innovative Thinking

“Innovation is an important capacity to build. Innovation will help the sector to deal with challenges, especially funding challenges and education challenges. Innovation should include a decision as what constitutes our “vision”, and from there we should develop tools and templates that can help in articulating resources needs, which will allow us to change how we work by creating a more integrated sector.”

- Forum Participant

Reporting standards mandate increased analytical data, including numbers of individuals served, programs offered, demographics, staffing capacity, and governance reports. The paperwork can take time but the data reported will help sectors establish a base-line for innovative thinking. In particular, many sectors recognized the need for delivery of a higher level English as Second Language (ESL) training for both practitioners and newcomers. Language acquisition is a service that acts as a primary building block for successful integration. The current ESL programs need to be evaluated and revised to ensure that participants are graduating with language skills for both employment and civic participation.

Innovative service delivery models need to be revised for the current rural landing pattern for newcomers. Particular import was placed on establishing “one-stop shops” for newcomers, where multiple services spanning sectors were offered in one place. This method is in line with providing a resource booklet upon arrival at the airport, with a multi-sector explanation of services offered and locations. Offering newcomers an easy transition into support services is an effective and innovative way to engage them as soon as they have landed. Partnerships with ethno-cultural

groups and sector service providers in rural areas could potentially increase service uptake and successful integration models. Innovation in service delivery, language training, and employment readiness programs is required to facilitate a successful transition for all new Canadians.

Theme 6 - Immigration policy

The urgent need to review and revise immigration policy and policy making methods was resoundingly reported. A number of stakeholders stated their concerns regarding a disconnect between policy writers and ground-level staff working with the consequences of policy implementation. Effective communication between various levels of government was also noted as a serious barrier to the effective implementation of policy. The need to align federal, provincial and municipal immigration policy is of great importance. The visible and apparent jurisdictional divisions among all levels of government, in regards to immigration policy, are necessary to ensure for the effective use of tax dollars.

Evaluation of current policy and selection criteria, including those for language benchmarks, refugee selection, and provincial nominee categories, would benefit from inter-sector understanding of settlement and integration policy. Municipalities and employers mutually reported the need to be involved in policy formulation and decision making. There is need for more connectivity between provincial and federal policy and those working on the ground. Consistent and effective communication between all parties would only make for more informed policy and subsequently, better working and living conditions for newcomers. Municipalities need to be acknowledged for their role, and to be allowed to contribute meaningfully to policy and engaging newcomer groups. There is a need for clarification of the roles of municipal governments in supporting and facilitating successful settlement, integration, and inclusion.

Community involvement is a pre-requisite of understanding municipal level policies and structures related to the newcomer advantage and experience. Sectors reported the need to increase community relations and knowledge on newcomer opportunities locally and nationally. Specifically, community involvement will increase both employer and service presence in areas occupied by newcomers and their families. It is recommended that sector stakeholders be at the table when

community initiatives are being discussed, so as to add their relevant knowledge and expertise to the decision making process.

Further, it was discussed that policy needs to be revisited in terms of the types of newcomers accepted to Canada. Specifically, the equity of current policy must be addressed in several areas. Examples included equitability surrounding provincial nominee quotas and the complex issue of temporary foreign workers. Provincial nominee quotas need to be adjusted to appropriately address labour shortages. Regarding temporary foreign workers, policy surrounding easier access to eligibility for permanent resident status must be attended to. Another significant area of need reported was the issue of foreign credential recognition. Considerable collaborative efforts between professional accrediting bodies and all levels of government must be undertaken to meet the serious perceived mismanagement of skilled newcomer labour.

Finally, there was a resounding request for federal and provincial governments to provide clarification on current immigration policy and develop concrete guidelines that are written in clear and digestible language. Essentially, there is need for the consistent creation and dissemination of policy summary, made available to all immigration stakeholders. The periodic review and revision of all immigration policy must also be implemented across the board.

Theme 7 - Services

A repeated theme throughout the sector table discussions was the provision of services. While services vary widely between sectors, there were basic commonalities identified by participants. Unanimously, sectors agree that a review of services should be undertaken to determine client uptake, service deliverables, and gaps in services. A review would serve to increase sustainable practice in the settlement and integration sector and collaborative initiatives. Service review would provide funders and stakeholders with the ability:

- To eliminate duplication of services.
- To improve accessibility of services.
- To find gaps where services are needed but not currently provided (e.g., in rural areas).

- To make services more efficient by developing “one-stop” services where applicable.
- To allow for reallocation of budgets to be more efficient.

Service delivery can be improved by developing new systems for dissemination of information to service providers, newcomers, and sector professionals offering client-facing services. Respondents also indicate that services could be improved by bridging programs with inter-sector agencies and increasing the presence of mentoring programs. Expanding the services offered to newcomers offers a dynamic arrangement of supports and fosters a multi-sector relationship with the newcomer. This includes ensuring that there is a balance of skills and experience to expectations in Canada, appropriate training for employers in cultural-competency, and cross-education between newcomers and service providers.

Sustainable service provision includes more outreach and education around what services are available, as well as providing more bridging programs in rural areas. It is recommended that sector representatives make a proactive approach in providing information and services, which includes providing comprehensive pre-arrival supports and services. Service provider capacity needs to increase according to the influx of newcomers, particularly as newcomers frequently arrive with families in need of diverse services. This also requires an increase for social integration capacity.

Further, service development in translation and interpretation is needed for newcomers who have yet to achieve sufficient English skills. Settlement and integration would benefit from a standardization of interpretation services in all sectors. This development could be implemented with the current use of technology and expanded as applicable, such as ESL training online for newcomers who require a mobile option. There is an urgent need to establish a baseline of services in rural Alberta, and this includes knowing who is utilizing the services and how they can become more accessible.

Commonalities

The issues identified in the findings are not common to all sectors, but many are shared. Figure 4 identifies the issues that were shared amongst two or more sectors as presented in the Sector Groups Presentation of Findings.

The five issues listed in this table make up the most common themes of concern among the participants. Issues of cooperation/collaboration, research, and education/training were the highest in commonality as they are identified being important by five of the six sectors, followed by the issue of culture that was identified as important by four of the six sectors, and the issue of language that was identified as important by three of the six sectors.

Figure 4: Sector versus Necessary Services

	Justice	Health	Private	Government	Non-Profit	Education
Language	X		X			X
Culture	X	X	X			X
Education/Training	X	X	X		X	X
Research		X	X	X	X	X
Cooperation/Collaboration	X		X	X	X	X

Not all of the issues that were identified as being important in the table discussions were included in the presentations, likely due to the limitations of a short presentation time combined with multiple table input for some sectors. It is important to examine some of the differences between presentations and table discussions.

Language was universally identified as being a vital issue by all sectors in the table discussion session, but was not included in three of the sector presentations. In the health sector the majority of the participants commented that official language competency can act as a barrier to health services, and proposed solutions such as

translators and/or a dedicated phone line that could be called when translation is needed in doctor's offices.

The public sector also identified language barriers as being of concern in the table discussions, suggesting that better ESL opportunities are needed, and that Francophone concerns regarding language barriers and the perceived lack of availability of French services in Alberta need to be addressed. The non-profit sector also saw language barriers as being problematic, and identified language challenges such as lack of funding for language learning and lack of access as their significant concerns.

Funding is perceived to be an undisputed concern for all participants. All sectors would prefer to see funding for newcomer needs increased, but there is a common understanding that this is not always feasible. Table discussions on funding suggested a need for an evaluation of current funding. This evaluation would include an analysis of funding allocation with the goal of identifying duplicate services that can be updated, and planning a re-distribution of funds to areas of critical need. Several sectors strongly supported the need for more creative funding, including alternative resources, so as to maximize results.

Research, in various forms, is an issue that was determined to be very important by the public, non-profit, education, and health sectors in the table discussion session, but was minimally discussed in the presentations by the non-profit and health sector. These sectors called for quantitative data collection, with additional qualitative research to facilitate knowledge transfer in a variety of areas. Table discussions determined research should include data collection for the purposes of increased comprehension of current issues and challenges in order:



The public sector did not identify education/training as an issue in the presentation, but it is reflected in the table discussion session data that the public sector representatives participating consider education and training as an important issue. Respondents identified the need to increase education and training in the areas of immigrant language skills and cultural competence skills. Further, there was consensus on educating the public on issues central to integration and settlement in Canada for both newcomers and residents.

Cross Sector Discussion Panel

The Cross-Sector Discussion Panel identified some potential areas of commonalities. During the Panel, there were no concrete proposals for improving integration and establishing collaboration. However, the panelist sector representatives and Meyer Burstein did provide some very important notions and “take-aways” that improve general understanding of collaboration (see Appendix C for more detail).

A recurring insight about collaboration is that collaboration is recognized as being an important and desirable goal to work towards. Table discussions focused on the benefits to collaboration, such as shared knowledge, resources, ideas, improved efficiency, services and relationships. The panel discussion also emphasized that collaboration is challenging, is not desirable in all instances, and can sometimes cause significant problems. Instead of simply championing collaboration, the panel discussion data supported that collaboration for the sake of collaboration is not what is needed. Rather, there is a need for a balanced approach to collaboration, which anticipates the cost-benefit analysis.

The panel discussion data conveyed that collaboration is complicated and requires careful consideration as it poses unique challenges. These challenges include the potential to infringe on established sector issues, increased direct and indirect costs to participants. Respondents reported that collaboration is not always necessary, but that when done appropriately can enhance problem-solving immigration challenges.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

The *1st Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum* provided significant information to better enable newcomers to Alberta to be successful in transitioning and integrating into the province. It identified many major challenges facing private, public, non-profit, health, education, and justice sectors, as well as the other stakeholders and agencies in Alberta's settlement and integration system. The Forum data proffered practical direction for further exploration. Challenges identified at this forum include the need for improvements in collaboration (both between and within sectors), funding, education, language, culture, research, policy, and services. The forum also provided insight regarding how various sectors perceive settlement and integration needs.

Settlement and integration professionals in Alberta have a responsibility to respond to the above-mentioned challenges. The work related to addressing these challenges in Alberta is complicated by a number of issues:

Firstly is the issue of commitment. Forum participants varied in terms of their expressed interest and commitment to the process of addressing the challenges identified. For some sectors, funding and staff will be problematic, and this will limit their participation.

Secondly, sectors varied in terms of their expressed needs and did not share the same goals. For instance, the Education and Health Sectors indicated less interest in working with other sectors. Additionally, these sectors face significant budget and staff shortages making it difficult for these sectors to commit to an overall inter-sector agenda.

Thirdly is the issue of collaboration. Collaboration was the most significant theme from the Forum proceedings. Primarily, the need for collaboration among sectors was reported to be a vital means for addressing a multitude of immigration challenges. While a majority of respondents indicated that collaboration is an essential tool in addressing challenges relating to immigration, collaboration itself forms one of the most significant tests confronting these sectors in the future. Collaboration, as described at the Forum, means different things to different sectors.

It ranges from the creation of discourse, to the sharing of resources and information, or ultimately forming new partnerships and working together in the form of amalgamated services.

The term collaboration will necessarily need to be defined for each sector and each need. The challenge regarding collaboration for participants following the Forum will be to commonly define in real terms what forms collaboration will take, how it will be managed, how it will be paid for in terms of time and funds, and how it will be implemented once it is defined.

Recommendations

As a concluding summary, the objective of this report is to provide stakeholders with a rationale for the Forum, a detailed methodological description of how data was collected, findings based on a rigorous analysis of the data using textual and discourse analysis, and finally a conclusion that entails identifying future Forum themes and some specific recommendations. As the findings suggest there is evidence justifying moving this collaborative initiative forward toward more concrete endeavors of collaboration.

Moving forward from the Forum necessitates concrete steps. There are many recommendations to work from, including implementing more conferences to better define important themes, the creation of working groups, and the development of research and management structures to inform, evaluate, and oversee the process. In terms of future forums, these conference proceedings reveal four major, but not necessarily mutually exclusive, directions for future forums. These include forums on Collaboration, Research, Services Evaluation and Funding (see Appendix E: Future Forum Themes). There are five recommendations from the Forum data. These recommendations are summarized below in point form.

- The formation of a board or blue ribbon panel using a business model (i.e. Board of Directors) including prominent representatives (or champions) from each sector to oversee the process of working on each group of challenges, and the dissemination of information to all sectors. Government representation and

participation in this board would be vital in order to facilitate processes and the flow of information.

- The implementation of four separate working groups assigned to address a specific theme from the Forum proceedings. Participants in the group would include significant representatives from interested sectors and provide vital input to achieve the action items observed in the Forum. Working groups would define and identify goals, collect information, and facilitate the dissemination of information in their specific sector. Research, funding allocation, program evaluation, and marketing are a few key areas that working groups will address between annual Forums.
- The development of strategic research projects to determine priorities and immediate needs of settlement and integration in relation to the various sectors. The implementation of strategic research will provide tools for evaluation, outcome measurement, monitoring of sectors, programs and services. Additionally, inter-sector collaboration in this research will assist in determining uptake of services, increased success in providing targeted services in rural areas, and adapting successful practices across sectors.
- In order to manage such a scaled endeavor, the development of a centralized database of all immigrant services and organizations is highly recommended. Evaluation and consistent assessment of database uptake will determine where duplications in services exist. This data will serve to streamline services and increase successful utilization of services and program funding.
- Finally, development of an annual Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum for reporting on progress, networking, identification of new challenges, and discussion of solutions. The annual Forum will be hosted in alternating rural and urban location, in order to recognize the diversity Alberta offers both geographically and demographically.

AAISA has accepted these recommendations for action and has proposed a follow-up initiative called the Alberta Integration Council (AIC). The AIC will be composed of a core group of five members of the AAISA Board of Directors and senior management. Additionally, there will be 7-10 prominent, high level representatives from the six identified sectors. These representatives will be identified based on their level of influence within their given sector in order to have the most efficient and

active representation. The advisory panel will have a total of 12-15 members including the core group.

As observed in the anecdotal information from the Forum, Alberta has not established a cohesive and inclusive settlement and integration model that actively involves representatives from the six sectors. The AIC would address this gap by including high-level sector representatives guiding the development of research, working groups, forums, and a dynamic database of settlement and integration resources that can be easily utilized by all sectors. The AIC is an opportunity for AAISA to lead the effort in integrating the SI sector to better represent the diverse needs of newcomers.

Upon approval from the AAISA Board of Directors, AAISA will pursue funding for the AIC project and begin addressing the above recommendations for action. AAISA anticipates hosting the second Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum in 2015.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – FORUM AGENDA

APPENDIX B – TABLE SECTOR FINDINGS

Summary of Answers to Key Questions

- 1. PRIVATE SECTOR**
- 2. GOVERNMENT SECTOR**
- 3. NON-PROFIT SECTOR**
- 4. HEALTH SECTOR**
- 5. EDUCATION SECTOR**
- 6. JUSTICE SECTOR**

APPENDIX C: CROSS-SECTOR DISCUSSION PANEL SUMMARY

APPENDIX D: BENEFITS-COSTS ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATION

APPENDIX E: FUTURE FORUM THEMES

APPENDIX A – FORUM AGENDA

Provincial Settlement & Integration Forum Draft Agenda

Date:	April 17 2013	Time:	8:15 – 4:00	Location:	Spark Centre, Calgary
Time	Topic				
8:15 – 8:45	Registration and full buffet breakfast				
8:45 -9:15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Welcoming address and Opening remarks: AAISA Chair – Fariborz Birjandian (organizational history), demographics b. Special Guest – Premier Alison Redford 				
9:15 – 10:15	Setting the context – in the last 10 years <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The changing policy and practice environment: implications for the settlement sector - Meyer Burstein 2. Research –AHS – Alice Wong 				
10:15 – 10:30	Break				
10:30-11:30	Panel Session - Panelists’ perspective of what is happening in their communities and sector <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there unique challenges facing Alberta in terms of attracting, retaining and integrating newcomers? 2. What is your organization doing to create conditions for success in regards to integration? 3. What would success look like? 				
11:30 - 12:30	Luncheon				
12:30- 1:30	Sector Groups answer the following questions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years? 2. What adjustments need to be made? 3. What capacities need to be enhanced to address these challenges? 				
1:30 – 2:30	Sector Groups Present findings – Private, Government, Non-Profit, education, health, justice				
2:30 – 2:45	Break				
2:45-3:45	Cross sector discussion to explore commonalities, ideas for improving integration and possible collaboration. 6 panelists – private, government, Non-Profit sector, Education, Health, Justice				
4:00	Closing remarks (AAISA Chair – Fariborz Birjandian)				

APPENDIX B – TABLE SECTOR FINDINGS

Summary of Answers to Key Questions

The data for this pivotal session of the Forum came from a session entitled *Sector Table Discussion*. This session was run as a one-hour table discussion between 12:30 and 1:30 pm with participants divided into individual tables organized by the sector that they represented, and moderated by one assigned individual at each table. Sector divisions consisted of: 1. Private sector (two tables), 2. Public sector (three tables), 3. Non-Profit sector (three tables), 4. Health sector (one table), 5. Education sector (three tables), and 6. Justice sector (one table). During the table discussion period each participant was asked to write down his/her answers to the three key questions addressed by the conference. These questions were:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
- 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address these challenges?

Participants then came to a consensus as to what the table's final answers to the three questions would be for each table, and those answers were then presented in the next session of the conference to the participants as a whole. Sectors with more than one table had to combine their final answers for this presentation. This process was documented by an official note taker at each table, and the notes from each participant, as well as the official note taker, were combined to form the basis of the findings for this portion of the report.

1. PRIVATE SECTOR

The Private sector consisted of two tables, including participants from Calgary AB, Edmonton AB, Red Deer AB, Brooks AB, Okotoks AB, Vermillion AB, Airdrie AB, and Mississauga ON. The industries represented at the two tables included research, immigrant services, foreign consulates, chamber of commerce (small municipalities), energy sector, economic development, consulting firms, immigrant associations, and ecology. The two tables differed somewhat in terms of their final answers. Even so, based on the individual notes it was clear that there are common concerns between the two private sector groups, especially concerning challenges. The answers for "adjustments needing to be made" reiterate the challenges identified by this sector, indicating that they are of great concern to the participants. These final answers constitute the common concerns between the two tables.

Private Sector Final Answers:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
 - A. Labour shortages and training – the availability of matched workers is an issue. We need more workers, and in particular workers who are suitable for the "Canadian way", with skills appropriate to the job.
 - B. Language is an ongoing and serious issue. Immigrant English proficiency needs to be improved in order to respond to job needs. Immigrants need to develop better job specific language skills, going beyond Basic English proficiency. Conversely, employers need to be

- more fluent in others languages, particularly in regards to speaking French.
- C. Skills recognition is an issue: We need better means of accomplishing and putting in place certifications, skills recognition, professional expectations, availability of training, and transferability of skills.
 - D. Cultural issues. Immigrants and employers often hold different values and attitudes towards work and domestic situations, race issues, safety issues.
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
- A. Temporary Foreign Worker program needs to be adjusted. We need more opportunity for permanent residence under AINP.
 - B. We need to undertake the promotion of living and working in rural Alberta, as well as in alternate industries. We need more trades education, and to streamline the education currently available. We need more national attention to the labour situation.
 - C. We need more communications overall, including collaboration between immigrant services and employers, and we need more cross-sector collaboration.
- 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address the challenges?
- A. We need increased collaboration between the Non-Profit and Private sectors. We should have sharing of tools and resources, and develop a joint understanding of needs.
 - B. We need to offer pre-arrival support for employees regarding careers, etc. We also need additional soft-skills training for both immigrants and employers.
 - C. We need to improve and increase language training, as well as increase the use of technology [such as] home study for language overall, and specialized ESL.

2. Public SECTOR

The Public sector consisted of three tables, including participants from Calgary AB, Edmonton AB, Medicine Hat AB, Okotoks AB, Brooks AB, Banff AB, Nisku AB, and Vancouver BC. Organizations represented included the Alberta municipalities of Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Okotoks, Calgary, Banff, and Brooks, as well as immigration services, and human services. The three tables differed somewhat in terms of their final answers, due to representation of multiple levels of government. Even so, based on the individual notes it was clear that there are common concerns amongst the three government sector groups. These final answers constitute the common concerns amongst the three tables.

Public Final Answers 1:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
 - A. Funding.
 - B. The changing faces of immigration and shifts in services.
 - i. Policy changes – what will be our future selection criteria? We are seeing a shift from social to economic integration.
 - ii. Lack of involvement of municipal government in policy decisions.

- C. Service provision/delivery/measuring outcomes.
 - i. What level of services will be offered by the various levels of government and how will immigrants access them? Centralized assessments?
 - ii. Meeting labour challenges pre-arrival.
 - iii. Outcome measures.
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
 - A. Need for a more flexible, creative, and sustainable system which best utilizes resources.
 - B. More emphasis on pre-arrival services and programs.
 - C. Provision of greater opportunities for true collaboration and fuller dialogue amongst all levels of government.
 - 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address the challenges?
 - A. Evaluation and measuring of outcomes.
 - B. Education improvements.
 - C. Involvement and more focus on municipalities and local communities.

3. NON-PROFIT SECTOR

The Non-Profit sector consisted of three tables, including participants from Calgary AB, Edmonton AB, Banff AB, Medicine Hat AB, Athabasca AB, Sherwood Park AB, and Yellowknife NWT. Organizations represented included organizations from community services, education, immigration services, volunteer services, faith (and inter-faith) organizations, settlement support, outreach, and language services. The three tables differed somewhat in terms of their final answers. Even so, based on the individual notes it was clear that there are common concerns amongst the three Non-Profit sector groups. These final answers constitute the common concerns amongst the three tables.

Non-Profit Sector Final Answers:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
 - A. Funding cuts.
 - B. Access to information – there are issues with finding services and support for immigrants. There are additional issues consisting of excessive complexity of the system, lack of support for temporary foreign workers, both of which are exacerbated by a high level of demand for these services.
 - C. Development of meaningful collaboration and partnerships amongst stakeholders and amongst Non-Profit/private sectors.
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
 - A. Funding increase (specifically for development, marketing, research, and analysis).
 - B. Develop formal systems of collaboration by re-evaluating policy changes and incorporating partnerships amongst all stakeholders.
 - C. More involvement of mainstream society and municipalities, as well as alignment of federal and regional priorities.

- 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address the challenges?
 - A. More mentoring, training, and advocacy for the Non-Profit sector and for immigrants.
 - B. Meaningful and balance outcome-based collaboration amongst all stakeholders in which social versus economic interests should be balanced – engage the private sector.
 - C. Improvements to Non-Profit organizations – be more strategic, better at business and marketing.

4. HEALTH SECTOR

The Health Sector consisted of one discussion table, including participants from Calgary AB, Brooks AB, Red Deer AB, and Edmonton AB. Organizations represented included immigrant associations, family care clinics, health services, and social work.

Health Sector Final Answers:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
 - A. Access to primary health care for immigrants, especially refugee class.
 - a. Culturally and linguistically appropriate.
 - B. Factors that affect health besides primary medical care – finances, allied health care such as dental care.
 - C. Access to the social determinants of health care.
 - D. Health literacy – issues around immigration and culture – making sure immigrants and health care professionals are educated as to needs.
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
 - A. Coordinated provincial and federal health care policies as some current policies do disadvantage immigrants.
 - B. Increased diversity and cultural awareness within the health professions.
 - C. Better health care professional education.
- 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address the challenges?
 - A. Better cultural knowledge and training on all sides.
 - B. Enhanced research into the complex health issues that face immigrants.
 - C. New methodologies of accessing and providing health care.

Funding must be increased to health care services, and for the promotion of systemic change to streamline and improve efficiency. Family health clinics are a good avenue to explore as part of this process. We also need to improve community capacity to provide support services to newcomers through schools, community leagues, recreation facilities etc. We need to enhance drug coverage, health promotion, and health prevention education. Overall, putting more money into homecare services benefits the system as it works to reduce the burden on hospitals and emergency rooms.

5. EDUCATION SECTOR

The education sector consisted of four tables, including participants from Calgary, AB, Edmonton AB, Brooks AB, Fort McMurray AB, Red Deer AB, and Lethbridge AB. The areas of the education sector that were represented included a wide range of colleges and universities, advanced education, immigrant services, regional schools, boards of education, and library services. The four tables differed somewhat in terms of their final answers. Even so, based on the individual notes it was clear that there are common concerns amongst the four education sector groups. These final answers constitute the common concerns amongst the four tables.

Education Sector Final Answers:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
 - A. Fair and equitable access to educational opportunities for immigrants/newcomers – better coordination of same.
 - B. Better collaboration amongst providers. Building partnerships amongst providers, and connections amongst licensing bodies and agencies.
 - C. Diverse providers of education (ranging from K-12 to universities). Also literacy and the speed at which immigration policy changes.
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
 - A. Collaboration and dialogue (avoid competition and listen to immigrants re what they need/want), adjusting curriculum to meet needs.
 - B. Flexible use of funding to address the needs of clients – better recognition of those needs as well – and more flexible school system. Responding to needs for higher levels of education in language.
 - C. Technology – how do we incorporate it and use it?
- 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address the challenges?
 - A. Increase professional development (agency and front-line workers) with more emphasis on soft skills and utilization of immigrant voices and assistance.
 - B. Improve capacity to provide higher level language training (workplace needs in particular).
 - C. Multi-sector collaboration and sharing of resources, revise funding criteria.

6. JUSTICE SECTOR

The justice sector consisted of one discussion table, including participants from Calgary AB, Edmonton AB, Lethbridge AB, Brooks AB, and Cochrane AB. Organizations included police services, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, legal services, and immigrant services.

Justice Sector Final Answers:

- 1) What will be the key immigration challenges facing your sector in the next three to five years?
 - A. The education of new immigrants in terms of the law and cultural norms of Canada.

- B. Education of the staff of the justice system and police services regarding cultural differences and sensitivity.
 - C. Recruitment that reflects and represents the citizens it serves, and is able to cope with language and cultural differences.
- 2) What adjustments do you feel need to be made?
- A. Interagency responses require a new model that includes more than just police and courts; it must represent a forgotten demography.
 - B. Integration of responses with other agencies and sectors (i.e. combine police services with Social Workers). Move to an interagency response model as appropriate.
 - C. Work within budget cuts to be more efficient at providing services.
- 3) What capacities need to be enhanced to address the challenges?
- A. Social media development/communication needs to be expanded.
 - B. Relationship building with the community, other agencies, and other sectors.
 - C. Telling the story – communications need to be improved.

APPENDIX C: CROSS-SECTOR DISCUSSION PANEL SUMMARY

Explore commonalities, ideas for improving integration and possible collaboration.

This session was run as a conversation framed by some key questions by the moderator, Meyer Burstein, Senior Fellow & Director of Policy and Planning, Pathways to Prosperity Partnership.

The sector representatives (from left to right at table) included the following organizations/agencies:

Private Sector – Alberta Economic Development Authority
Government – Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Non-Profit – Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Education – Faculty of Education – University of Alberta
Justice – Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Health – Calgary Refugee Health Program

The following summarizes, and in some cases, paraphrases this cross-sector discussion panel. The methodology for this summary came from viewing the DVD of this session and the notes made by Caroline Sommerfeld during the actual panel.

Meyer – Do you agree with the premise of this conference that collaboration is absolutely essential to adjust to the changes we are seeing? Or are we overselling this?

Justice Sector

Yes, it is very important between different sectors

We need to find new efficiencies to find the best results

We need to reduce crime in the future – the old way of doing things and just investigating crime does not work anymore – as person reports back to the community

All aspects of the justice system must change – not just new Canadians – we now have victim services in all offices – reaching out to social services.

For police it is important to reduce/prevent crime, but the old way of investigation isn't enough. We need to help change behaviors. Integration is very important. Reaching out to new/different services to find the root of crime and change things.

Collaboration allows you to do your job.

Meyer – collaboration covers a very broad range of activities – but the kind of collaboration you were talking about in your presentation – collaboration that allows you to do your job and to do your job in different settings – this raises the bar.

Education

Collaboration is really important – sharing information is always valuable – but it is not a replacement for programs.

We can work together better!

Sometimes community involvement is code for let the community do it. Don't dump back onto community.

Must be clear as to what collaboration means!

It isn't costless! It takes time/energy and you have to give something up.

We all have to be involved. Collaboration is crucial but we have to be all very clear on what collaboration means also.

Non-Profit

Build on this – motherhood concept – believer in collaboration – get good results. Collaboration is not costless. Myth that collaboration is better, but to get there it takes time and energy. To get there it takes give something else. Something has to give to get a rich collaboration. Not very good at it because sometimes it is turf, funding, market. What are the sacrifices?
Get past collaboration as a general statement.

Meyer – sometimes the problem with collaboration is that you are not sure what you are going to get because you are going into unknown territory. Challenging yourself with something new.

Non-Profit

Commonalities end at some point.

Health

Collaboration involves knowing what resources are available for my patients in the community

From the health point of view – challenges involves the social determinants of health – poverty, transportation, food and security, childcare, unemployment, etc.

Being able to access services that cost!

Lot of work we do ends up not as medicine but social work

Food/security/childcare/employment – all are social problems that are brought into health issues. So collaboration is key for the health sector, even just information sharing. Other organizations might have solved issues, so if health care knows who/how it helps.

Collaboration – key for health to sector – need more information sharing what is available.

Justice

Important to develop relationships – cultivate them.

Private Sector

Collaboration is essential. Nothing happens in isolation – gone is the perceived luxury that we can do our own thing.

At any given time these same issues – labour attraction and other concerns often arise. Other countries want the same people, so what can we do to compete as it were?

We are chasing the same labour skills throughout the world – we need collaboration. The thing about today is the idea of collaboration and cooperation, working together, since there are common issues we can share.

Public

Collaboration is something we can all buy into. Right contacts, effort to reach out, getting the right people together. Spirit of working together.

Meyer - Hard to be against collaboration. I take the point that collaboration is not free but we have to enter into and commit to it. Since you are all attracted to collaboration what sorts of impediments do you experience?

Justice

Privacy of clients is a big issue and challenge – it is a right and protected by legislation – sharing of information on individuals.

We must work with privacy legislation so information can be shared. Much cannot! Police for instance cannot just share information. Knowing what CAN be shared, how to do it legally, and relationships are important in this.

Vision/personality/commitment is important.

Public

Challenges of working with diff levels of government. – Federal-Provincial – takes an effort for administration. What are the needs in each level of government? Outcomes? Models take a lot of work. Gets complicated.

Comes with a lot of effort to collaboration. Level of need, takes a lot of work, modes of operation, mandates. Gets complicated.

Protecting the turf/territory can be an issue. “These are my clients” – what are you doing talking to my clients – focus on what the overall goals are, is important to help with territorial issues. Want people to be successful in Canada – maybe less territorial who our clients are.

Private Sector

We have rules – but no one wants to collaborate for collaboration sake. Why do it for the sake of doing it?

We need clear defined outcomes and objectives for collaboration

In absence of clear outcomes – what we need to know the downside of not collaboration and upside of collaboration – what we need to do is show the benefits – profit motive – this is the key. How can collaboration make the goal better, faster, etc.? If we cannot show benefits then we should not collaborate.

Show downsides to non-collaboration to motivate. Find pathways/benefits that make sense.

Non-Profit

Default position should be that collaboration is better – but may be situations when going alone is better – not a problem.

Note that it isn't always beneficial. Alberta is competitive and must take this into account.

Competitive world – for funding for labour markets – not enough to go around – competition is the biggest detriment to collaboration.

Justice

Need a common vision and objective for collaboration to work

Impediments – need people who can figure out how to get there rather than just saying “no” you cannot do that.

People who will look for how to achieve it, who can see the vision and can navigate the rules and find alternatives.

Health

Pitfalls of collaboration – conflict of interest area barrier at times– goals do not gel – get conflict

We need to negotiate conflict when goals don't match.
Issues cross jurisdictions so working with others can be necessary.

Meyer –summarizes:

Problems in the area of immigration – issues cross jurisdictions – example for integration – find that you have to work with others.

In the talk this morning I mentioned that settlement agencies create tailored solutions – they know an awful lot about combining programs, however in government you know a lot about your own programs and less of other programs – at provincial level – know a lot less about this.

Settlement agencies find creative ways to find solutions.

There are problems that governments have in terms of their mandate and accountability rules that interfere with their ability to collaborate even if they know it is a good idea-worth thinking through.

Justice

Problems that the government has that interfere with collaborating. We work in silos and often don't know what else is going on outside across jurisdictions.

Meyer - Likes Robert's point about needing an endpoint – needs to have an objective, attach cost to it. Think of an example in private sector where work with other org. or settlement org and where collaboration has met those criteria.

Private

Collaboration happens when a problem gets too bad. Where agencies realize that it is not going to work, for example, Slave Lake, or Brooks.

Some more specific example in private oil/energy – environmental.

Industry – where enemies/competitors come together to collaborate.

Questions from the audience follow this:

1st question: Collaboration, protection, conflict of interest – what jurisdictions can collaborate? Sometimes the government says there are jurisdictions and one cannot cross the boundaries – what do you do?

Participant

In answer to a question about jurisdiction – mentions “federal/provincial working groups” as examples of cooperation – when laws by created by working groups then they are not in conflict.

Participant

Immigration is a shared jurisdiction Fed/Prove and there are working groups – work with what you got – re-organization – downsizing.

There is a surprising amount of cooperation between provincial and federal levels. Many working groups across the country.

Participant

Now we deal with cut-backs of the services by Non-Profits.

Participant

You can only do so much with what you have, and you must have realistic expectations. It is not just about getting people here, it is about what happens later. Not enough resources – so what do we do about this?

There are limitations and jurisdictional limitations can be used conveniently sometimes – despite jurisdiction there can be some “work-arounds”. For instance Feds funding education indirectly.

***2nd question** – With the shift to economic class, provincial and federal government listen to the private sector, so how much responsibility does the private sector leave in addressing the needs of immigrants given they want particular skills. What is the private sector’s responsibility?*

Participant

Employers have a much stronger say on who gets in so there needs to be more responsibility for supports needed by workers from the employer. Federal/Provincial government needs to monitor to be sure private sector is actually doing what they say they are doing. In terms of collaborations there needs to be more from government to work with private sector. Collaboration is everyone’s responsibility.

Participant

Private sector needs to share responsibility – need to supply the supports – while regulations are in place – need more monitoring to ensure that the private sector fulfills their responsibility.

Meyer – bring collaboration back into discussion

Participant

Governments need to collaborate with private sector to ensure their responsibility

Participant

– replies with private sector hat – critique

Last comment by Meyer

Meyer – need to think carefully about where our shared interests lie. Realize with immigration – you are not simply bringing in workers but you are also bringing in citizens. Everybody understands this – employers, settlement sector, government understands that. The trick is to create the right sorts of incentives and to understand how those incentives need to operate and how those relationships can be promoted if you want to move forward. From initial presentations struck by how many people talked the importance of getting a better handle on outcomes – what actually results, including our collaboration relationships. This means knowledge partnerships. Why not? Same interest then same challenges. Ex. Language challenges people talked about. Collaboration – may be a way to find a way to subsidize translations services or interpretations services or others. Work for all institutions for everyone. Shared interest in fed/prov programs more flexible so people can combine in different ways. Shared interest in how to transfer expertise to small communities who are struggling and encountering new problems.

APPENDIX D: TABLE 2 - Benefits-Costs Analysis of Collaboration

Table 2

Benefits-Costs Analysis of Collaboration

<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Costs</i>
Can extend limited funding. Sectors can be more efficient = less cost	Need a specific vision of what collaboration is – this can be a moving target
Identification/knowledge of what resources are available	Disparate goals – conflict of interests at times
Improved job performance	Funding costs
More inclusive (i.e. immigrants and agencies have better representation)	Time and energy costs – there is always a trade-off in terms of resources
Information sharing (e.g., research, best practices)	Cannot replace programs
Sharing of common issues – same interests and same challenges means we only need one solution	Can distract or take away from primary goal (i.e. go from providing medical care to social worker)
Gain contacts	Information sharing issues – privacy issues
Work together not against each other	Need legislation that allows more forms of information sharing
Profit motive – do things faster, better, cheaper	Complicated to implement and maintain
Elimination of duplicate services; streamline services; more effective and relevant	Some sectors (and sub-sectors) do not have easy routes of communication outside their organization (e.g., government “silos”)
Innovation and idea sharing	Competition
Better policy development	Difficult to coordinate amongst so many agencies
Better problem solving	
Be more competitive on the world stage (i.e. in terms of attracting immigrants)	
Better community relations	
Better understanding of outcomes and how to measure them	
Shared tools and resources	
Better provision of services (i.e. language training in the workplace is more targeted to needs and more effective in terms of costs)	
Improved interagency cooperation and understanding	
Shared understanding of immigrant and service providers experience	

APPENDIX E: FUTURE FORUM THEMES

Future Forum – Theme 1: Collaboration

- Define a common vision and objective for collaboration:
 - What are the specific goals for collaboration?
 - What types of collaboration will be most useful?
 - What specific benefits are desired?
 - Information sharing
 - Partnerships
 - Combination of services
 - What system will collaboration follow?
 - Is there a need for multiple forms of collaboration?
 - Who will participate in each form of collaboration?
 - How will the community and various sectors be involved?
- What resources will be needed for collaboration:
 - Funding
 - Personnel
 - Information sharing
 - Evaluation tools

Future Forum – Theme 2: Research

- What types of research are needed? Must determine priorities and actual needs:
 - Quantitative vs. qualitative.
 - To identify and understand the issues faced by each sector.
 - Understanding the immigrant experience
 - Tool development – evaluation, outcome measurement, monitoring of sectors, programs and services.
 - Which services?
 - Which sectors?
 - Which programs?
 - Service access
 - Problem solving
 - Cost/benefit analysis on collaboration – which forms are most effective?
- Who will have responsibility for conducting research?
- How will research results be shared?
- How will research be funded?

Future Forum – Theme 3: Services Evaluation

- What services and resources are available – what is offered by each sector?
- Determine what services are duplicated and what services are missing.
- Develop a strategy for reducing duplication of services:
 - Who will continue to provide services?
 - How will services be amalgamated (i.e. ESL services)?
 - How will services be centralized (e.g., in “one-stop shops”)
 - What partnerships will be needed?
 - How will missing services be added?
 - How will funding be adjusted?
 - How will the public etc be informed of changes in services?
 - Who will monitor and maintain services?
 - How will policy be involved?

Future Forum – Theme 4: Funding

- Review of funding needs sector by sector.
- Determine where funding needs to be reallocated – what specifically should be addressed in reallocating funding.
- Strategize on new sources of funding:
 - Where will new funding be sought?
 - Who is responsible to find funding?How will new funding be allocated – determine priorities.

ENDNOTES

¹ However, it should be noted that not all sectors were fully represented at this conference. For example, the Justice sector did not include sufficient representation from the court/legal system, smaller municipalities, or ethno-cultural groups. Also, the Government sector did not include adequate representation from Calgary, one of the largest municipalities in Alberta. Calgary is a major centre for immigrant settlement and therefore needed more representation in the discussion of challenges. The private sector too could be better represented in terms of business and industry, since attendees did not form a comprehensive selection of the business and industry in Alberta.

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