



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AAISA Publishes Research Report on Refugee Resettlement

Organizations now have access to accurate local data to improve services for refugees

Calgary, Alberta, Canada – October 18, 2016: The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) has announced the publication of a new research report, which reveals how immigrant-serving agencies can improve the refugee resettlement experience in Alberta.

Following one of the largest resettlements of refugees in Canadian history, the report's findings are timely. Since November 2015, Canada resettled 25,000 Syrian refugees across the country, 3,792 of which were welcomed to Alberta, representing a 66 per cent increase from previous years. Another wave of Syrian refugees is set to arrive in the province this fall. Alberta offers a variety of programs and services, a total of 1,484 which were catalogued by the study, that serve the basic needs of refugees, such as language and employment. The report, entitled "***Improving Refugee Resettlement in Alberta***," finds the existing capacity of the province's immigration sector is strong.

"Alberta has a world-class system to support refugees. Our settlement sector has decades of experience settling and integrating refugees with grace and care, including under pressure like we have seen with the Syrian influx. Refugees in this province are transforming their experiences of persecution to life stories of triumph and hope," says Milton Ortega, AAISA's Provincial Manager.

Report Findings

The outlook on the sector's ability to meet the current and future needs of refugees in Alberta is positive. Strengths included the quality of staff, collaboration and relationship building, communication and information sharing in rural areas, as well as adaptability.

Refugees resettling in Canada face distinct integration challenges from other immigrants. There are a number of critical areas where stakeholders involved in refugee resettlement in Alberta can improve to better meet the needs of refugees. The sector can better align programs and services with client needs, and standardize and coordinate programs and services to promote similar refugee experiences settling across Alberta. Going forward, it should also build upon communication and information sharing among different stakeholders and community partnerships.



A free copy of the *Improving Refugee Resettlement in Alberta* needs assessment report can be downloaded at <http://aaisa.ca/research-library/>.

About AAISA

Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) is a regionally and nationally recognized leader, representative, a hub, and an amplifier of the settlement and integration sector in Alberta. As an umbrella organization, AAISA's mandate is to build sectorial capacity by providing member agencies that serve newcomers access to relevant and meaningful professional development opportunities, to act as a liaison with stakeholders, and provide a centre for knowledge, expertise, and leadership. AAISA is not a settlement agency ourselves and therefore does not provide settlement services directly to newcomers. For more information, visit AAISA's website at www.aaisa.ca.

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