Reimagining Funding and Service Delivery for Newcomers: Lessons from the Literature and Stakeholders

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN REPORT

Prepared for the *Community Based Service Delivery and Funding: Centering Newcomer Experience* Project

MAY 2023

SOCIAL PLANNING TORONTO

LIP LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP
TORONTO SOUTH

DEPARTMENT OF IMAGINARY AFFAIRS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that the land on which this work was carried out is the traditional and unceded territories of the Huron-Wendat, Anishinabek Nation, Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and Métis Nation, and is home to Indigenous people of many nations. This territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We hope to honour the spirit of the Dish With One Spoon agreement by working to build a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous communities in Toronto.

ABOUT SOCIAL PLANNING TORONTO

Social Planning Toronto challenges inequity in our city — through knowledge generation, debate, civic engagement, advocacy, and collaboration — to spark social and policy change.

To find this report and learn more about Social Planning Toronto, visit socialplanningtoronto.org

ABOUT TORONTO SOUTH LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

The Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP) is a strategic community initiative focused on promoting welcoming communities and improving the social and economic outcomes of newcomers through enhanced service delivery, collaboration, and the development of partnerships.

To learn more about TSLIP, visit torontolip.com

ABOUT DEPARTMENT OF IMAGINARY AFFAIRS

The Department of Imaginary Affairs (DIA) is a national nonprofit imagining equitable futures by seeking, centering, elevating and amplifying the voices, living experiences, stories, ideas and ideally decision-making practices of Newcomers, Immigrants, Refugees and Youth (especially those who self-identify as Black, Indigenous and People-of-colour) to co-design more empathetic programs, policies and services.

To learn more about DIA, visit dia.space

REIMAGINING FUNDING AND SERVICE DELIVERY FOR NEWCOMERS: LESSONS FROM THE LITERATURE AND STAKEHOLDERS

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)	The department of the Government of Canada with responsibility for matters dealing with immigration to Canada, refugees, and Canadian citizenship.
Person of colour (POC)	Used to describe any person who is not considered "white." With origins in the United States, this term is sometimes favoured for its ability to unite non-white individuals who have common experiences of racialization and social injustice. Throughout our project and in this report, we refer to POC-led organizations, a relatively new term within the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector.
Racialized	Used to describe an individual or group affected by racism or discrimination. More frequently used in Canada than POC, the term "racialized" is commonly used to refer to any person who is considered non-white.
Visible minority	Defined by the Employment Equity Act, refers to persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour (Statistics Canada, 2017, November 29). This term is used by Statistics Canada in the census, although they are currently reviewing this concept.
Im/migrant	Encompasses both immigrants and migrants, recognizing the differences in experiences each face.
Im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations	Refers to the broad spectrum of organizations that serve immigrants, migrants, and refugees, including traditional and non-traditional settlement services.
Settlement service/ organization	Refers to traditional settlement services that exclusively target newcomers and support with landing in Canada, settling in Canada, and leaving Canada. Examples of services include language classes, employment support, needs assessment and referrals, interpretation, help with filling out forms and applications, etc. Generally, these services are funded by IRCC.

TERM	DEFINITION
Non-traditional settlement service/organization	Fall outside of the scope of traditional settlement services and/or do not have a specific mandate to serve newcomers, although they will include newcomers. These services are provided by the broader community sector and receive a diverse array of funding. Examples include libraries, public schools, other community-based nonprofits, and shelters.
Ethno-specific organization	Refers to settlement organizations that target a specific ethnocultural group of im/migrants and refugees.
Grassroots group	Self-organized local-level efforts to encourage other members of the community to participate in activities (Longley, 2022, July 29). Generally, these groups are geographically-based and/or issue-specific and led by civilians. Less formal in structure, they are usually not registered charities or incorporated nonprofits.
Small/Large organization	Used throughout this report and in our research process to refer to an incorporated nonprofit organization based on their size, usually defined by their annual budget and staffing composition. Generally, small organizations have an operating budget of less than $500,000, whereas a large organization may have an operating budget of more than $3 million.
Service provider participant	Refers to a research participant who represents an organization or grassroots group with experience serving im/migrants and refugees. May include leadership, management, and/or frontline staff.
Newcomer participant	Used to describe a research participant with first-hand experience as a newcomer in Canada. This includes both individuals who were newcomers at the time of conducting the research, as well as those who have been in Canada longer (i.e., 7+ years).

"Even though [focus group] participants looked back at the time when they first arrived in Canada as **"difficult," "rough,"** and even **"horrible,"** their stories demonstrated their **strength, resilience,** and ability to **overcome difficult obstacles** and attain a **more positive outlook."**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SCAN PURPOSE AND COMPONENTS

The Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP) is a strategic community initiative focused on promoting welcoming communities and improving the social and economic outcomes of newcomers through enhanced service delivery, collaboration, and the development of partnerships. Members of the TSLIP identified entrenched inequities in how services are funded and delivered as an underlying cause of barriers to accessing services.

In response to this, TSLIP, in partnership with Social Planning Toronto and the Department of Imaginary Affairs, embarked on this project to explore a more horizontal approach to funding that is community driven. As an initial step in this process, this environmental scan explores the makeup and needs of newcomers in the Toronto South area, and how the current model of funding and service delivery impacts outcomes for newcomers, particularly those most marginalized, and for the organizations that support them.

The environmental scan includes three main components:

1. **A literature review** that captures the key challenges facing Ontario's im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector and lessons learned from alternative funding models and approaches — specifically, collaborative governance, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking.

2. **A socio-demographic profile** of the Toronto South LIP area to provide a snapshot of the newcomer and immigrant population in the catchment area.

3. **Focus groups with newcomers and service providers** to understand their first-hand experiences of gaps, challenges, and opportunities with the current funding and service coordination model.

KEY FINDINGS

The literature and primary data reviewed for the environmental scan point to several challenges with and opportunities to improve the current funding and service delivery model for the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector in the Toronto South area.

The stories shared by newcomers illustrated the **wide variety of experiences of newcomer settlement and integration**. In the face of financial struggles, mental health challenges, systemic employment barriers, and more, the strength,

resilience, and perseverance of newcomers is put to the test and the need for comprehensive, effective, and responsive programs and services is clear.

Access to adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding is a longstanding issue that affects the capacity of agencies to meet client needs and ensure equitable access to services for newcomers. Further, funding conditions and constraints impact the ability of organizations to fully support newcomers to meet their goals and achieve success in Canada. This has distinct impacts on racialized and marginalized communities, who experience multiple and intersecting barriers accessing employment, housing, and newcomer services. For instance, while newcomers called for an approach to service delivery that is customized and responsive, service providers were tied to the deliverables and outputs stipulated in funding agreements.

The literature and feedback from service providers both indicate that **eligibility requirements are a key barrier exacerbating inequitable access to services** by excluding non-permanent residents and newcomers with Canadian citizenship in need from accessing federally funded services. This hinders the opportunity for successful settlement and integration of newcomers, many of whom experience multiple forms of systemic discrimination and marginalization based on

race, gender, status, and other experiences that negatively impact their settlement and integration experiences.

A focus on **quantitative targets disadvantages organizations that work with high-risk and multiple-barriered and marginalized newcomers**, such as women-serving–women-led agencies, small organizations, ethno-specific and/or racialized-focused organizations, or other groups. An alternative, community-centred model could include program priorities that centre equity and accountability to newcomer communities, be informed by local expertise, and create opportunities for innovation and collaboration among service providers.

The primary and secondary research captured in this report suggests that the cumulative effect of this current system is one that leaves behind some groups of newcomers who have the greatest need and are already on the margins, including those with precarious immigration status, vulnerable citizens, racialized groups, and women. More so, many of the organizations that are well equipped and effective at meeting the needs of these marginalized newcomers may also themselves face barriers in the current system. Women-serving–women-led, ethno-specific or POC-led, and smaller organizations have all reported challenges with securing funding.

There is also a call to establish a more **robust, outcomes-focused evaluation and performance measurement framework**. A shift in evaluation to more meaningful outcome measures that can assess service quality, inform sector learning and development, centre newcomer experiences and recommendations, and identify service and policy implications would support the sector to improve services and, ultimately, help newcomers achieve better settlement outcomes.

While immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations have demonstrated commitment and creativity to make the most of the resources available to them and provide client-centred and high-quality services, the environmental scan suggests that changes to the way funding is designed and implemented could improve outcomes for racialized and other marginalized newcomers.

Recognizing the opportunity for improvement in the current funding and service delivery model, the environmental scan brings attention to ways to **prioritize community perspectives in the funding process and share decision-making authority**. The literature review takes stock of lessons learned from collaborative governance and participatory grantmaking, revealing different practices for involving community members themselves and community-based organizations in various aspects of funding, governing, and defining service delivery systems.

CONSIDERATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Considering the research and learnings identified in the environmental scan, there seems to be significant opportunity to reimagine the funding and service delivery model to:

- consider the experiences of newcomers and service providers in the development of service delivery models and funding decisions;
- improve equitable access to services for the most marginalized newcomers, including those who are racialized and have precarious status;
- increase funding access and build the capacity for organizations that face barriers to accessing traditional settlement funding;
- facilitate collaboration and reduce competition among im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations through their participation in the model;
- provide sufficient funding and establish funding criteria that support good jobs that can help build a stronger sector;
- utilize the leadership, networks, and relationships established through TSLIP to support this work; and
- document learnings from the process to support better funding and service coordination approaches for more equitable

service access across multiple systems and sectors.

The next phase of this project will co-design and **propose an innovative and community-centred funding and service coordination model** for the Toronto South area. This model, if implemented, would prioritize the voices of newcomers, as well as organizations that are smaller in size and led by people of colour, in funding decisions, therefore improving service access for those who face greater barriers. We hope this new model will offer ways to more effectively centre newcomers, reimagine relationships between and amongst funders and im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations, and strengthen the system so that it meets the needs of diverse newcomers, particularly those most marginalized.

"Welcome to Canada Sign, Toronto Pearson Int'l Airport," by Cohen.Canada, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

The Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP), led by The Neighbourhood Group (in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture and WoodGreen Community Services), is working together with the Department of Imaginary Affairs (DIA) and Social Planning Toronto (SPT) to develop an innovative, community-based funding and service delivery model to be considered as a possible alternative for the delivery of settlement services in the Toronto South area. Launched in 2021, this three-year initiative aims to create a model that, if implemented, would centre the voices of newcomers, as well as organizations that are smaller in size and led by people of colour, in funding decisions, therefore improving service access for those who face greater barriers.

This project, entitled *Community Based Service Delivery and Funding: Centering Newcomer Experience,* is one of 16 initiatives led by Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the federal ministry responsible for immigration and settlement matters, through its service delivery improvements (SDI) funding stream. While each project is unique and shaped by local priorities, collectively this work is intended to inform IRCC departmental decisions regarding settlement service delivery and funding systems, with the goal of better meeting the needs of newcomers across Canada.

Funded by IRCC, LIPs are local community collaborations that bring together a broad range of groups, including community agencies, ethnocultural organizations, faith-based groups, businesses, boards of trade, professional bodies, and all levels of government, in order to plan and improve service coordination to meet newcomer needs in local communities. Their role is to serve as a bridge between newcomer-serving organizations, other entities, and the broader community, identifying service and policy gaps and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to create a more welcoming community overall.

TSLIP's vision is to create a community in the Toronto South area where newcomers feel welcome, safe, supported, and empowered to achieve their dreams in Canada; where services and resources are available in the area to effectively support newcomers in achieving full social, cultural, economic, and political inclusion; and where newcomer contributions are acknowledged and valued, and Toronto South's neighbourhoods and communities are enhanced as a result of the equitable participation of all com-

munity members. If implemented, an innovative funding and service coordination model has the potential to advance this vision in meaningful and tangible ways.

PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

One key component of this project is the environmental scan. The goal of the scan is to explore how the current model of funding and service delivery is impacting outcomes for newcomers. This includes looking at the dynamics of collaboration, data sharing, and service delivery in the settlement sector in the Toronto South LIP catchment area, with a particular focus on the experiences of racialized and marginalized newcomer communities as well as small, POC-led organizations. The key insights that emerge from the environmental scan will be then used to inform a participatory co-design process to develop an alternative model for funding and service delivery that may better meet the needs of marginalized and racialized newcomers along with the organizations that serve them.

The environmental scan includes three main components:

1. **A literature review** that captures the key challenges facing Ontario's settlement sector and lessons learned on collaborative governance, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking.

2. **A socio-demographic profile** of the Toronto South LIP area to provide a snapshot of the newcomer and immigrant population in the catchment area.

3. **Focus groups with newcomers and service providers** to understand their first-hand experiences of gaps, challenges, and opportunities with the current funding and service delivery model.

As this phase of work winds down, DIA and TSLIP will begin hosting design labs with newcomers, service providers, and other stakeholders to build upon the lessons learned from the scan, and co-design, test out, improve, and finalize the proposed model.

SECTION 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

To produce a comprehensive environmental scan, this research project engaged the project advisory committee and gathered data from multiple sources. This section describes these components, how the data were analyzed, and the limitations of our research.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

We sought insight from the project advisory committee to guide the focus of our research and understand which newcomer communities to engage with. Five individuals from the Toronto South catchment area participated on our advisory committee and brought forward the perspectives of grassroots groups and POC-led organizations, as well as first-hand knowledge as newcomers. Project partners met with the committee on a monthly basis. The committee received project updates and provided input into the research process — especially as it pertained to newcomers. The priorities and insights that emerged from this scan have also informed the expansion of the advisory committee, leading to a greater diversity of organizational partners reflecting a wider range of im/migrant and refugee communities.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For the environmental scan, we conducted both primary and secondary research. We explored the existing literature, produced a socio-demographic profile of newcomers in the Toronto South area, and gathered feedback from both newcomers and service providers to understand the gaps and limitations of the current funding and service delivery model, and inform the development of a new model.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We explored existing literature to help frame our environmental scan and the development of a new funding and service delivery model. Both scholarly articles and grey literature were reviewed, covering two broad areas.

First, we reviewed the most recent literature to examine the key challenges currently affecting Ontario's settlement sector. This work highlights critical issues impacting immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations that influence their capacity to meet newcomer needs and achieve equitable service access.

Second, we explored community-led and participatory funding models and looked specifically at collaborative governance models, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking

approaches as documented in existing literature. These models, structures, and approaches were drawn from a diversity of program, service, and issue areas, and communities and countries. This work provides analysis and examples to inform the development of a potential funding and service coordination model for settlement services in the Toronto South area.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A socio-demographic profile of immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents living in the Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP) quadrant was produced using the 2016 Canadian Census of Population. Comparative data were included for the City of Toronto, including total population and immigrant, recent immigrant, and non-permanent resident populations. Data were also disaggregated by gender, where possible.

At the time of the development of the profile, the 2016 Census was the most recently available census. The profile provides an extensive statistical portrait of these populations and will be updated as needed using 2021 Census data when data are available.

Individual-level data include population size, period of immigration, gender, age, knowledge of of-

ficial and non-official languages, language spoken most often at home, mother tongue, citizenship status, immigration admission category and applicant type, place of birth, racialized status, highest level of education attained, major field of study, post-secondary location of study, labour force participation, employment and unemployment rates, work activity, class of worker, occupation, industry, after-tax individual income, low-income status, low-income status by age group, mobility status (i.e., movers and non-movers), and status pertaining to difficulty with activities of daily living.

Data were also presented for immigrant and recent immigrant households, including population size, household size and type, housing tenure, ownership housing with a mortgage, subsidized housing status, percentage of households spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs by housing tenure, housing that is not suitable (i.e., a measure of overcrowding), housing in need of major repair, after-tax household income, and income by household type.

A profile of Francophone immigrants and Francophone recent immigrants was also prepared, including population size, place of birth, immigration admission category and applicant type. Available data was limited for this profile.

In addition, census tract–level maps were produced, showing the spatial distribution of immi-

grants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area.

Census tract–level data used in maps were accessed through Statistics Canada's website. All other data were accessed through the Community Data Program (CDP). Social Planning Toronto is a member of the Toronto consortium of the CDP, led by the City of Toronto. Access to data through the CDP was instrumental in producing the socio-demographic profile.

The socio-demographic profile does double duty by supporting the environmental scan and providing a unique resource for communities, organizations, advocates, and policymakers to aid in their work, with the shared goal of creating more livable and equitable communities in the Toronto South area and across the city.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH NEWCOMERS

We believe that newcomers' tacit knowledge and lived experiences of settlement and settlement services should be the foundation upon which any alternative funding and service delivery model for the settlement sector is based. For this research, we sought to understand the needs of newcomers in Toronto, especially those in the Toronto South area and those who are racialized and under-served, and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We engaged newcomers through two rounds of focus groups, the first taking place in March 2022 and the second in June 2022. We chose focus groups in order to hear a large variety of newcomer experiences from a more diverse group of participants in a short period of time. Furthermore, we felt the focus group context would allow newcomers to generate a collective dialogue concerning newcomer experiences with immigration and settlement services. Throughout this process we engaged a total of 142 newcomer participants.

In March, we conducted three English-language focus groups, with 20 participants in each, reaching a total of 60 participants. To recruit participants, we advertised a call-out poster on the social media networks of our three partner organizations. We also relied on connecting to participants through existing networks, such as the contacts of nonprofit employees and community leaders, to assist with outreach. The advisory committee also helped us recruit participants by sharing information about our project within their networks. We held focus groups at different times of day to make sure we could reach a wide number of participants with a diversity of schedules. All three focus groups were held virtually using Zoom video-conferencing software. Participants were offered an honorarium of $75 for their time. Our target participants for this first round of focus groups were anyone born outside of Canada who could provide insight into the settlement

process. We wanted to understand newcomer perspectives and experiences of services, settlement or otherwise, to better understand newcomer needs, expectations, and perceived gaps around services they used. Our focus group questions included asking what makes a service effective or not, without specifically eliciting experiences of using settlement services (see Appendix B). Mentimeter, an online engagement tool, was used to facilitate these discussions.

Upon reflecting on the methodology, we felt the social nature of focus groups may have discouraged some participants from sharing certain personal or sensitive information, such as around experiences of discrimination or poor-quality services. Time constraints prevented us from engaging with participants in interviews, which may have helped elicit more in-depth, contextualized narratives from individual participants. As such, in our second round of focus groups in June 2022, we opted for much smaller group sizes and aimed to reach a wider diversity of participants. Based on feedback from the advisory committee, we targeted communities with low representation in our first round of focus groups. In addition, we wanted to hear more from participants who had not used settlement services, to better understand the perspectives of newcomers who were not being engaged by the sector. We conducted 12 additional focus groups, reaching a total of

81 newcomers, about half of whom did not have prior experience accessing settlement services.

Participants from the first round of focus groups helped us by recruiting individuals in their social networks for the June round. In addition, we consulted contacts in local nonprofit networks to help to recruit participants. Participants were offered an honorarium of $100 for their time. We held several language-specific focus groups, including Mandarin, Arabic, Bengali, Dari, Tamil, and Soninke, as well as one focus group for LGBTQ+ participants, along with several mixed-demographic focus groups in English. We recruited and trained community translators to translate between the facilitator and participants in non-English focus groups. Nine of the focus groups were held virtually on Zoom and three were held in-person at locations that were co-selected by our team and the participants.

As we were targeting newcomers who were unconnected to services in our June round of focus groups, our questions for these focus groups focused less on experiences with settlement or related services (Appendix B). Rather, we asked newcomers about the supports they had when they immigrated to Canada — for example, financial, emotional, and non-monetary supports. We aimed to understand how newcomers build their support systems as well as the kinds of support

they most needed. As such, participants did not delve into their experiences with settlement services, as they did in March, but spoke to the general challenges they faced and supports they had along the way.

Participants from both rounds of focus groups were asked to complete a demographic survey that asked a series of questions about their socio-demographic characteristics. The survey was voluntary, and support was provided to help overcome technical and language barriers as needed. The detailed results of the demographic survey are included in Appendix A.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH SETTLEMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS

To deepen our understanding of how the current funding and service delivery model shapes the operations of settlement service provider organizations, and their abilities to meet the needs of im/migrants and refugees and successfully support the achievement of positive outcomes for newcomers, we engaged service providers in focus groups from September to October of 2022.

Six focus groups were held in English and two were held in French. Participants represented the diversity of organizations within the sector, including large and multi-service organizations, medium-sized organizations, small and grass-

roots groups, as well as Francophone-serving and POC-led organizations. Participants worked in traditional settlement organizations, as well as organizations that work with newcomers but are not typically considered settlement organizations, such as arts-based groups and libraries. In total, 27 staff/service providers participated in the focus group discussions.

To recruit participants, our team, along with members of the Toronto South LIP Executive Committee, directly e-mailed the executive directors of im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations, explaining the project and soliciting their participation. As a result, many focus group participants were executive directors of their organization. In the case where an organization's ED was not available, directors or managers participated instead.

We asked how service providers obtained funding and from where, and how this funding supports newcomers' needs as well as the organization's needs to ensure high-quality services are provided. We asked participants about any connection between the current funding system and their ability to provide holistic and comprehensive services, addressing the range of social, economic, civic, and other settlement and integration needs. We also asked about their ability to reach racialized and under-served communities, and to collaborate and share information with other

organizations (see Appendix C for the full list of guiding questions).

DATA ANALYSIS

Primary data were collected through the focus groups with newcomers and focus groups with service providers. All virtual discussions were recorded. Recordings were roughly transcribed by either Zoom or Otter.ai software, and/or detailed notes were produced. A process of open coding was applied to each set of data separately. The qualitative data were first coded line-by-line to identify emerging concepts tied to the research questions using Taguette, an open-source text tagging tool. The codes were then grouped into relevant categories, and key findings and learnings were summarized for each category. To maintain the voices and perspectives of our participants in the research and final report, notable quotations were highlighted for each thematic category.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Several limitations were identified during the environmental scan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review gives attention to specific subsectors of the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector, including women-serving–women-led settlement organizations and ethno-specific

organizations. Unfortunately, we were unable to identify similar studies regarding racialized-led or people of colour–led im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations. There may be particular issues impacting these organizations that are not fully reflected in the literature review.

The literature review incorporated reports and articles that described the concepts of collaborative governance and delegated decision-making. However, we found few documented examples of how these structures and approaches have been applied in contexts relevant to our project and pertaining to government bodies delegating funding decision-making authority to other entities. We reference the federal government's *Reaching Home* program; however, there may be others that are not well documented or less well known.

There is a rich and instructive literature pertaining to participatory grantmaking, describing models and tools to help guide this work. However, there is limited formal evaluation of these models. One U.S. study of 148 large private and community foundations found that few formally evaluated their participatory grantmaking programs, and a majority were not interested in doing so (Husted, Finchum-Mason & Suárez, 2021). In some cases, the grantmakers felt formal evaluation did not lend itself to the iterative and relational process of participatory grantmaking; others thought the value of participatory grantmaking was evident

and did not require a formal evaluation. Others noted that quantifying outcomes may be difficult for participatory approaches and may lack relevance. As described in this report, Tamarack Institute reflected on their participatory grant-making experience, documenting learnings from the process that are incorporated in this report.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The socio-demographic profile was limited by available data. While the Community Data Program (CDP) includes extensive custom data tables using the 2016 Census, only a few basic statistics were available regarding Francophone immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area. Data were available for non-permanent residents, but not for specific groups such as international students, individuals in the Temporary Foreign Worker program, refugee claimants, and individuals with precarious immigration status.

Access to disaggregated race-based and other social data pertaining to immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area was also inadequate. The profile includes Census data on difficulties with activities in daily living. While this data is used to carry out the Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD), it is not a measure of disability. CSD data is not available for the Toronto South area.

The profile will be updated using 2021 Census data as needed and once the relevant data tables are available through the CDP. Data tables for the Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership area are not available through the Statistics Canada website, as the TSLIP area is a custom geography. The CDP purchases data tables from Statistics Canada using this custom geography. The relevant tables are expected to be released in batches throughout 2023.

The updated profile will include census tract–level maps. As census tracts are a standard geography, the team will be able to access this data through the Statistics Canada website.

TIMING

Due to administrative requirements, the timeline of each funding year, and when certain budget lines needed to be spent, the timing of the environmental scan activities was changed from the original plan. Both sets of focus groups with newcomers took place before the literature review, socio-demographic scan, service provider focus groups, and Performance Measurement Framework were completed. This meant that the outreach strategy and focus group questions could not be shaped by these other components of the environmental scan, which was not ideal.

FORMAT

We offered a choice between in-person and virtual discussions for our June focus groups with newcomers.

With virtual focus groups, we allowed for verbal participation (with camera on or off) and written participation through the chat and Mentimeter. Many participants kept their cameras off and didn't speak, making it difficult to assess their level of engagement. While we strived to create an open and flexible environment during virtual focus groups, some participants may have felt uncomfortable with the technology or speaking in front of others who they did not know well. This may have been particularly true during our March focus groups, which were larger in size.

With in-person focus groups, we attempted to offer locations that were accessible and comfortable for participants. The in-person sessions were smaller in size, which meant that we heard from fewer voices but also allowed more space for those who were present. The recording of in-person focus groups was also more difficult, resulting in less detailed transcripts/notes.

TRANSLATION

As mentioned, attention was given to ensuring our June focus groups with newcomers were inclusive for speakers of a variety of languages. This was achieved by conducting two focus groups in French and engaging community translators in other focus groups. The greatest insight was around how we engaged with community translators to support our focus groups. Moving forward, we need to add additional time and resources to our sessions to ensure that we can adequately engage and compensate for this extremely important role.

COLLECTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

We requested that each newcomer participant complete a demographic survey. The demographic survey was available in advance to everyone who registered for a focus group and was voluntary. For this reason, some individuals responded to the survey but did not attend the focus group. The opposite was also true — some individuals attended a focus group but did not complete a demographic survey. In our March round of focus groups, 77 demographic surveys were completed, while 60 participants attended focus groups. In our June round, 69 demographic surveys were completed, while 82 individuals attended focus groups. Since the demographic survey was anonymous to encourage more participants to complete it, it was not possible to reconcile these differences. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that demographic data for newcomer participants serve as an approximation of those who participated.

To track race-based demographic data, the demographic survey asked respondents whether they self-identified as a person of colour or visible minority. Through our one-on-one engagement, we learned that these Western/North American categorizations did not resonate with many participants. As well, the way participants responded may be tied to whether or not they have been able to connect any experiences of racialization — in a new environment — to this kind of question. Therefore, the data we received from this question may not accurately reflect whether a participant is from a racialized group. Notably, during our June round of focus groups, we added questions regarding respondents' ethnic origin and country of origin. While racialized background should not be conflated with ethnicity or country of origin, it can be helpful to look at them side by side. While only 31 survey respondents (45%) from our June round of focus groups self-identified as a person of colour or visible minority, results from the question on ethnicity suggest a much more diverse and racialized group of participants. As well, respondents identified 26 different countries of origin, most of which have residents who predominantly would be racialized in Canada. See Appendix A for the full breakdown of these questions.

RESEARCH SAMPLE

Keeping in mind the limitations of our demographic data, we also observed some potential limitations with our research sample.

In March 2022, we conducted three focus groups with 20 newcomers per session. The sessions were promoted on social media, and registrations quickly filled up. Therefore, we ended up with focus group participants who were mostly technologically savvy and professionals/highly educated. In addition, our March focus groups were conducted exclusively in English. While this strategy was revised during our June focus groups, these limitations affected our overall sample and ability to engage with newcomers who experience heightened or multiple marginalization.

We also noticed minimal participation from participants identifying as non-binary and low participation from those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer. While comparable Census or other data sets are not available for these groups, we know that non-binary and LGBTQ+ newcomers face multiple barriers to service access and may not seek support from traditional settlement services. It should be noted that individuals in newcomer communities may be hesitant to self-identify as non-binary or LGBTQ+ generally for cultural reasons, so it is possible they were among those interviewed.

SECTION 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides an overview of what is currently known, as documented in recent literature, in two areas pertinent for this environmental scan. In Part One, we look at the key challenges facing the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector in Ontario, including funding, priority-setting, and evaluation, staffing, and data and technical capacity. In Part Two, we shift our focus to explore alternative, community-based funding models, including collaborative governance, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking. These models, structures, and approaches are used to achieve more community-centred practices in funding and decision-making processes.

PART ONE: KEY CHALLENGES IN THE IM/MIGRANT- AND REFUGEE-SERVING SECTOR IN ONTARIO

In Part One, we describe key challenges affecting im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations in Ontario based on the most recent research on the sector. These challenges impact the capacity of the sector to meet newcomer needs and achieve equitable access to services. Issues identified are relevant to the sector across Ontario and within the Toronto South area.

Key challenges are presented in the following areas: 1) funding, priority-setting, and evaluation, 2) staffing, and 3) data and technical capacity.

FUNDING, PRIORITY-SETTING, AND EVALUATION

For immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations, access to adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding is a perennial issue that affects the capacity of agencies to meet client needs and ensure equitable access to services. Further, funding conditions and constraints impact the ability of organizations to support newcomers to meet their goals and achieve success in Canada.

As the largest funder of settlement services in Canada, IRCC has a tremendous impact on the sector and the lives of newcomers. Sector organizations have applauded various developments, including increases in IRCC funding for settlement services in some regions, implemented over the past several years and tied to growth in immigration levels; additional grant streams; IRCC's shift in 2019 to five-year contribution agreements with more flexible conditions; and its flexible support to agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic and as they moved to online service delivery in recent years (PeaceGeeks, 2021 in Ekmekcioglu, Black & Campana, 2022; Shields, 2019, May 1; Türegün, Bhuyan, Mandell & Shields, 2019).

In response to long-time sector calls for long-term, predictable, and sustainable funding, IRCC extended the term of contribution agreements with sector organizations in 2019 to up to five years (Government of Canada, 2019). This important change provided frontline organizations with more stable and secure funding, which supports long-term planning and sector development while reducing administrative burden (Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019; Shields, 2019, May 1; Türegün, Bhuyan, Mandell & Shields, 2019).

The introduction of grants during the 2022–2023 funding cycle has also been appreciated by the sector. For the first time, IRCC has administered grants for some projects under $1 million in annual value, giving recipients greater flexibility to move between budget lines and less burdensome reporting requirements (P. Wyrzykowski, personal communication, April 19, 2022). This has been particularly helpful to Local Immigration Partnerships, since many now receive their core funding in the form of a grant.

In 2020, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations had to quickly adapt to online service delivery, often without the necessary technical infrastructure in place. Sector organizations appreciated IRCC's flexible approach during that time of transition (PeaceGeeks, 2021 in Ekmekcioglu, Black & Campana, 2022).

These changes implemented over the past several years have improved the stability and capacity of the sector. Building on this progress, immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations have advocated for additional improvements to support sector capacity and better meet newcomer needs. Sector organizations, including women-serving–women-led agencies, have pointed out the adverse impact of competitive funding mechanisms that discourage sector co-operation, collaboration, and trust-building, and undermine sector capacity building and advancement on social equality goals (Abi, Major & Khemraj, 2021; Bushell & Shields, 2018; Ekmekcioglu, Black & Campana, 2022; Yousifshahi & Kanbour, 2022). Sector advances, such as the establishment of Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) starting in 2008, have over time helped to build trust and create mutually supportive and collaborative relationships among local settlement organizations. Further shifts in funding mechanisms to prioritize collaboration and reduce competition would contribute to better settlement outcomes for newcomers, including vulnerable populations facing considerable barriers.

Agencies have identified challenges with IRCC funding rules and mechanisms. IRCC supplemental funding must be spent quickly, with specific

requirements regarding how funds may be used; little lead time is provided for organizations to properly plan and hire and retain staff (Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019). These constraints present organizational challenges, contributing to difficulties staffing programs and precarious employment in the sector. Flexibility and advance notice would facilitate the smooth implementation of supplemental funds to better serve newcomers and support the sector.

Sector organizations have recommended other process and rule changes, such as the elimination of cash flow projection requirements, as they are redundant with existing organizational financial processes; changes to eligibility criteria for administrative expenses; and broadening of budget lines to allow for greater flexibility (Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019; Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance-Alliance canadienne du secteur de l'établissement des immigrants [CISSA-ACSEI] & Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants [OCASI], 2017). Sensible process and rule changes will reduce unnecessary administrative burden and increase the capacity of the sector to respond to urgent and emerging newcomer needs.

Insufficient funding for program expenses, such as child care and transportation costs and tech-

nical supports for participants, result in inequitable access to services, particularly for women, youth, seniors, and low-income newcomers, and disadvantage women-serving–women-led organizations that must find the funding elsewhere (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; ACS, 2021; Ekmekcioglu, Black & Campana, 2022). While honoraria for newcomers and partners are an eligible IRCC expense, restrictions around their use present a barrier to community development work and represent a lost opportunity for newcomer and partner engagement.

Sector organizations have advocated for targeted programs for vulnerable newcomers and the expansion of services in areas such as mental health and digital literacy (ACS, 2021; Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019). Sector experts have also called for the expansion of pre-arrival services to support access to employment and other services for more newcomer groups and to improve settlement outcomes (Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019; Shields, 2019, May 1).

The sector has long advocated for an expansion of IRCC eligibility criteria to allow organizations to serve all newcomers requiring support (ACS, 2022a; Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immi-

gration, 2019; Bushell & Shields, 2018; Ekmekcio-glu, Black & Campana, 2022; Türegün, Bhuyan, Mandell & Shields, 2019). Groups excluded from IRCC-funded services include non-permanent residents (e.g., international students, individuals in the Temporary Foreign Worker program, refugee claimants, and individuals with precarious immigration status) and newcomers who acquire Canadian citizenship.

Exclusionary eligibility policies undermine settlement outcomes, newcomer resilience, and progress on social inclusion goals. For example, many individuals who gain permanent residency through the Express Entry process were once international students or Temporary Foreign Workers; early access to services could facilitate better settlement experiences for this largely racialized newcomer group (Shields, 2019, May 1). While the federal government provides refugee claimants and international students with access to work permits, these newcomers are excluded from IRCC-funded employment services that could help them find a job and gain greater income security. These rules work against Canada's stated settlement goals.

In Ontario, the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) helps to fill this gap by providing funding to settlement agencies to serve all newcomers — including those not eligible to access IRCC-funded programs. However, demand remains high.

This issue is especially important to service providers and newcomer communities in the Toronto South area, with its large population of non-permanent residents. According to the 2016 Census, 31,505 non-permanent residents live in the Toronto South area (Statistics Canada, 2020a). Non-permanent residents comprise 4.4% of the Toronto South population — a population nearly as large as the recent immigrant population at 35,495 or 4.9% of the Toronto South population.

Settlement agencies have also identified the benefit of continued service access for newcomers who have acquired Canadian citizenship. The settlement process is complex. It is not a one-size-fits-all experience; settlement services should be adaptable to the needs of new Canadians to facilitate better settlement outcomes. While many organizations do their best to provide services to non-permanent residents and newcomers with Canadian citizenship, this work is supported through non-IRCC funding that is often inadequate, short-term, and insecure. An expansion of IRCC eligibility criteria to support these excluded groups would benefit newcomers and the broader community while allowing sector organizations to fulfill their inclusive and equity-focused missions.

In its *Envisioning the Future of the Immigrant-serving Sector* project, the Association for Canadian Studies and the Metropolis Institute have launched pilot projects to explore solutions to key issues

impacting the sector, including an initiative to "conduct an analysis of best practices in supporting clients who are not traditionally eligible for IRCC funded settlement services" (ACS, 2022b, p. 4). This work may help to identify a path forward toward a more responsive and inclusive settlement system in the interests of newcomers and the broader community.

Settlement organizations and other sector experts have identified the need to re-examine IRCC funding program goals and logic models and develop a robust settlement evaluation framework that looks beyond achievement of program targets to inform settlement work and other structural factors impacting settlement outcomes (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2017; Ekmekcioglu, Black & Campana, 2022; Türegün, Bhuyan, Mandell & Shields, 2019). Program outcomes with an over-reliance on meeting quantitative targets prioritize quantity over quality, fail to recognize the complex needs of high-risk and vulnerable newcomers who require more intensive supports, and may contribute to "skimming" practices, where organizations feel pressured to privilege newcomers with less complex needs over those who would require more intensive support and staff time. A focus on quantitative targets disadvantages organizations, such as women-serving–women-led settlement agencies or other groups that work with high-risk and marginalized newcomers. Program priorities

should centre equity and accountability to newcomer communities, be informed by local expertise, and create opportunities for innovation and risk-taking. Building on IRCC's current evaluation model, a robust framework would allow for the evaluation of not only settlement services, but also the role of public policy and other systemic issues in shaping the social and economic outcomes of newcomers.

Closely tied to program goals, evaluation and outcome measures are the topic of much discussion among settlement organizations and other sector experts. Recommendations include the development of a settlement evaluation framework that is informed by local, frontline experience, incorporates an intersectional gender-based analysis, focuses on service quality and sector learning and development, and recognizes that settlement outcomes are shaped by structural factors beyond settlement services (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; Broughton & Shields, 2020; CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2017; Türegün, Bhuyan, Mandell & Shields, 2019). Evaluation should inform not only settlement services but also other policies and structures that impact settlement outcomes.

In its in-depth study, *Improving Settlement Services across Canada*, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration recommended collaborative work among IRCC, settlement agencies, LIPs, all levels of government,

and other stakeholders to develop new metrics to measure settlement outcomes; noted that evaluation of some settlement outcomes requires long-term processes with implications for resources and data collection; and recognized the expertise of LIPs to define newcomer success locally (Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019). Working collaboratively with sector organizations and other key stakeholders, IRCC's Outcomes Analysis Unit could support this important work.

Settlement organizations and other sector experts have identified opportunities to better serve local newcomer needs by expanding the role of immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations in settlement program priority-setting, funding decision-making, and evaluation development and implementation (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; Bushell & Shields, 2018; Yousifshahi & Kanbour, 2022). Sector staff have local knowledge and expertise that should be put to use to better meet newcomer needs and support equitable access to services. Sector experts note that "newcomer resilience would directly result from more horizontal, reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships between the upper tiers of Canadian government responsible for coordinating and funding settlement services and the non-profit organizations tasked with their delivery" (Bushell & Shields, 2018, p. 4).

Small, ethno-specific, and women-serving–women-led settlement organizations are calling for a greater say in how settlement funding is allocated in order to address issues impacting the most marginalized newcomers (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; ACS, 2021). Women-serving–women-led settlement agencies have identified the need for an intersectional gender-based analysis (GBA+) to inform the development of settlement services, settlement funding decisions, and funding decision-making powers to address systemic inequities (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021).[1] Small, ethno-specific, and women-serving–women-led organizations with greater reach into marginalized newcomer populations are essential to this work; financial support is needed to facilitate their participation.

While IRCC is the largest funder of settlement services in Canada, immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations rely on a range of funding sources including provincial and municipal governments, United Ways, foundations, and revenues from fundraising and user fees. The COVID-19 pandemic presented multiple challenges to sector organizations, including financial ones, with the loss of revenues from fundraising and/or user fees in

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1. Since 2001, under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act IRCC has been required to report on GBA in its Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration. IRCC also has a GBA Plus Unit that supports the department in implementing GBA. (See https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/departmental-plan-2022-2023/gender-based-analysis-plus.html)

the first year of the health crisis (D'Souza, Ekra, Preston & Shields, 2022a).

Small, ethno-specific, and women-serving–women-led settlement organizations often work with the most marginalized newcomers in the community but lack core funding that would stabilize their organizations and allow them to best meet the needs of these vulnerable populations (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; ACS, 2021). Organizations that lack core funding face uncertainty about whether their programs may continue to be funded, may have to lay off staff when funding situations are uncertain, struggle to hire and retain workers due to limited and insecure funding, and often lack the capacity to compete for funds (Abji, Major & Khemraj, 2021; ACS, 2021; CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2017). These conditions disadvantage smaller agencies and impede access to services for vulnerable newcomers.

STAFFING

With federal government plans to welcome between 465,000 and 500,000 new permanent residents annually to Canada over the next three years (Government of Canada, 2022, November 1), it is imperative that investments and measures are in place to ensure a stable, well-functioning, and resilient immigrant- and refugee-serving sector. Much depends on the skilled, caring, and committed staff providing services and support

to newcomers every day. Unfortunately, recent research on sector working conditions reveals significant challenges in Ontario's immigrant- and refugee-serving sector.

Sector organizations have identified growing staffing shortages in the immigrant- and refugee-serving sector, mirroring the human resources crisis in the broader nonprofit sector (ACS, 2022a; ACS, 2021; CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2017; Ontario Nonprofit Network & Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, 2022). Compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing shortages have been driven by employee retirements, high staff turnover, and challenges in attracting and retaining staff due to a lack of competitive wages and associated benefits and pension plans, stressful working conditions, and precarious employment. While made worse by the pandemic, these issues are not new. A 2018 settlement sector national compensation survey identified challenges attracting and retaining staff and problems with unequal and inadequate wages and benefits across regions of Canada among IRCC-funded organizations (CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2018).

In recent years, sector staff have spoken out about employee overwork and burnout and experiences of precarious trauma and compassion fatigue, worsened by pandemic conditions (ACS, 2022a). In addition, many organizations had staff and clients who contracted COVID-19. Conducted

between November 26 and December 23, 2021, a survey of management staff of OCASI member agencies found over 40% of organizations had staff who contracted COVID-19, and nearly 40% had clients who did based on 48 responses — approximately one-quarter of OCASI's member agencies (D'Souza, Ekra, Preston & Shields, 2022a). According to a survey of frontline workers from OCASI member agencies, over 70% of staff reported physical health impacts and/or high stress levels as a top workplace concern; nearly half identified economic repercussions, loss of employment and salary reductions, and concerns about re-opening too soon as top worries; and over one-third identified appropriate resources and means to effectively service clients as a major concern (D'Souza, Ekra, Preston & Shields, 2022b). Regarding future COVID-19 and related concerns, the top responses were physical health impacts and/or overwhelming stress, economic repercussions, funding reductions, and being forced back to work, risking the wellbeing of their family. The pandemic has taken a toll on sector workers, intensifying already existing problems with working conditions.

The immigrant- and refugee-serving sector has had long-standing problems with precarious employment related to funding difficulties. Agencies note the positive impact of IRCC's move to five-year contribution agreements, which facilitates more stable, long-term employment in the sector.

To attract and retain staff, immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations are calling for funding levels that support stable, long-term employment with competitive wages accounting for the cost of living and access to benefits, mental health support, pensions, and professional development opportunities (ACS, 2022a; ACS, 2021; Yousifshahi & Kanbour, 2022).

The problem of precarious employment also results from the way settlement funding is allocated (P. Wyrzykowski, personal communication, December 5, 2022). For example, if an agency that primarily serves Farsi, Mandarin, and Ukrainian speakers receives funding for a full-time settlement worker, it is unlikely that one worker can be hired who speaks all three languages. Instead, staff may be hired for three part-time positions in order to serve all three linguistic groups. Improved and equitable wages and working conditions, a commitment to decent work, and responsive funding mechanisms are needed to build a resilient sector that in turn facilitates newcomer resilience.

Ontario's immigrant- and refugee-serving sector have put forward recommendations to IRCC to address compensation problems in the sector, such as developing wage scales for specific settlement positions, creating compensation output targets, setting minimum compensation requirements, and establishing a national funding mech-

anism to support compensation improvements within the sector (CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2018; CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2017). As the largest funder of settlement services, IRCC wields significant influence over this issue, particularly as it concerns smaller organizations. Without additional funding, agencies are reluctant to increase wages since it will mean employing fewer staff and, as a result, may decrease the number of newcomers they are able to serve, jeopardizing targets and undermining their ability to remain competitive (P. Wyrzykowski, personal communication, March 24, 2023). Addressing inadequate and inequitable wages and working conditions in the sector is critical for this largely female, racialized, and non-unionized workforce and the newcomers they serve (CISSA-ACSEI & OCASI, 2018).

DATA AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the technical capacity needs of immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations, which had to move quickly to online service delivery in response to the health emergency. Further, calls for an evaluation and outcome measurement framework and better metrics to inform settlement services focuses attention on the data needs of the sector.

While immigrant- and refugee-serving agencies in Ontario demonstrated a resilience in their

ability to move to online service delivery, the shift required organizational resources and presented challenges for some staff and some newcomers (ACS, 2021; D'Souza, Ekra, Preston & Shields, 2022a; D'Souza, Ekra, Preston & Shields, 2022b). As well, many agencies did not have the technical infrastructure in place prior to the pandemic. Adoption of online service provision presented additional challenges for small, under-resourced organizations and rural communities that lack high-speed internet (ACS, 2021; Dennier, 2022).

New developments in evaluation and outcomes measurement will have implications for data collection and resources to support this work. As sector organizations have noted, some settlement outcomes cannot be easily measured, or require longer timeframes to assess impact (Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2019; Broughton & Shields, 2020). As well, sector experts have called for a shift in evaluation to more meaningful outcome measures that can assess service quality, inform sector learning and development, centre newcomer experience and recommendations, and identify service and policy implications to achieve better settlement outcomes.

Identification of relevant data sources is a key component for the development of an evaluation framework and new metrics. Recent work to link settlement data from the Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment (iCARE) system with other datasets, such as Canada Revenue Agency data, will allow for the assessment of longer-term outcomes (e.g., see Community Data Program IMDB-iCARE tables, www.communityda-ta.ca).

Work is underway to advance the technological capacity of the sector to support newcomer success. In 2018, through its SDI program, IRCC funded PeaceGeeks Society to develop "a strategic vision and action plan for exploring how technology and innovation can best support settlement outcomes for supporting newcomers to Canada" (PeaceGeeks, 2019, p. 4). Through interviews, consultations, and a literature review, PeaceGeeks' *Settlement 2.0* and its continued work in *Settlement 3.0* examines current sector capacity pertaining to technology, innovation, and collaboration; identifies essentials for supporting

change in these areas; captures learnings from the transition to online service delivery through the pandemic; examines specific issues of settlement service providers in small, rural, and remote communities in various regions of Canada; and puts forward a series of recommendations to IRCC to support transformational change within the sector (PeaceGeeks, 2021; PeaceGeeks, 2020a; PeaceGeeks, 2019). To realize the vision, PeaceGeeks identify the need for "investments of resources, support, skills, different funding structures and relationships, trust, space, and time" (PeaceGeeks, 2020b). Discouraging a piecemeal approach, PeaceGeeks has stressed the need for significant, new, and ongoing investment to carry out this work.

Addressing sector issues highlighted in this section of the report will require a diversity of approaches, sector collaboration, and funder engagement. The creation of an innovative funding and service coordination model could assist in these efforts.

PART TWO: COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE, DELEGATED DECISION-MAKING, AND PARTICIPATORY GRANT-MAKING — LESSONS FROM THE LITERATURE

In Part Two, we explore collaborative governance models, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking approaches, identifying lessons from the literature. These models, structures, and approaches are drawn from a diversity of programs, issue areas, and communities where a more participatory or community-centred or -led approach is being used. This work will help shape and inform the development of the funding and service coordination model for this project.

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE AND DELEGATED DECISION-MAKING

Collaborative governance models bring together individuals to work collectively to develop solutions to complex social problems (Johnson, Willis & McGinnis, 2020). This work is intended to benefit individuals in and outside of the collaborative structure. Participants may include community members, nonprofit sector staff, business people, and government representatives. Collaborative governance models are seen as a preferred approach to solving complex problems by engaging stakeholders across communities and/or sectors with diverse views, knowledge, and experience — the assumption being that no one person has all of the answers to the problem. These bodies may be established to function on an ongoing basis or for a limited time on a particular project; they seek input from inside and outside of the group and usually employ consensus-based processes for decision-making.

Developing a Collaborative Governance Framework

Johnson, Willis and McGinnis (2020) created a comprehensive toolkit, describing a five-step process for the development of a collaborative governance framework. Table 1 summarizes this work.

Table 1: Five-Step Process for Developing a Collaborative Governance Framework

STEP	DESCRIPTION
1. Identify group purpose and nature of accountability	A strategic planning process can help groups define their purpose, values, mission, and vision; alternatively, a simple purpose statement may suffice. Accountability includes internal accountability among group members and external accountability to stakeholders such as funders and community members. Groups may be accountable for communicating actions, engaging others in developing or evaluating work, ensuring that agreements are met, meeting program requirements, and providing documentation on the outcome of work.
2. Determine entity type	Entity types vary by level of accountability and organizational structure. Coalitions, short-term committees, and task forces generally have lower accountability requirements with looser organizational structures, followed by standing committees and advisory groups with moderate requirements; nonprofit corporations and intergovernmental agencies and intergovernmental partnerships have the highest accountability and structure requirements.
3. Create a collaborative governance framework	The framework addresses ground rules, powers and duties, governing body design, decision-making process, member roles and responsibilities, and committee design. Ground rules refer to expected behaviours within the group to support collaboration. Powers and duties include who the group is accountable to and for what, and what the group is and is not empowered to do. The governing body may be a board or commission. The group must determine composition, roles and responsibilities, terms of office, and procedures for the governing body. The decision-making process identifies the number of members required for quorum, how consensus-based decision-making will be facilitated, and how decisions will be made if consensus is not reached (e.g., majority rule). Governance bodies often include a committee structure. Committees should develop a written framework that includes purpose statement, deliverables, size and quorum requirements, process for appointing people or groups to the committee, terms of office, operating policies, and deadlines.

STEP	DESCRIPTION
4. Create governance documents	Governance documents may include motions, orders and resolutions, memorandum of understanding or memorandum of agreement, intergovernmental agreement, and bylaws. The use of these documents depends on the level of accountability and structure of each group.
5. Adapt the framework as the group evolves	The framework should be reviewed after the start-up phase or after a few years in operation and adapted to reflect the evolution of the group.

The table is based on the work of Johnson, J., Willis, W. & McGinnis, C. in *Building a Collaborative Governance Framework: A five step process*, published by National Policy Consensus Center in 2020.

In the following subsection we look at an example of collaborative governance and delegated decision-making with a federally initiated project.

Reaching Home, Canada's Homelessness Strategy: A Community-based Approach to Funding and Service Coordination

Governments are empowered to make decisions about the allocation of public funds to deliver public services. In Canada, most of these funding decisions are carried out by government departments. One notable exception is the federal government's *Reaching Home* program. *Reaching Home* is part of the federal government's efforts to meet its goal of reducing chronic homelessness by 50% by fiscal year 2027–28 (Government of Canada, 2022, June 30). Under *Reaching Home,*

the federal government[2] employs a unique community-based approach by delegating funding decision-making powers to local bodies referred to as "Community Entities" in selected geographic areas identified as "Designated Communities," as well as Indigenous and rural and remote communities (Government of Canada, 2022, August 12). At present, *Reaching Home* provides direct funding to communities through four funding streams: 1) 64 communities outside of the territories receive funding through the *Designated Communities* funding stream; 2) 30 communities in urban centres outside of the territories receive funding through the *Indigenous Homelessness*

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2. The *Reaching Home* program was first administered by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), a federal department. In Fall 2021, responsibility for the program was transferred to another federal department, Infrastructure Canada. However, ESDC maintains certain responsibilities, such as monitoring funding agreements.

funding stream; 3) the three territorial capitals receive funding through the *Territorial Homelessness* funding stream; and 4) the *Rural and Remote Homelessness* funding stream provides funding to projects in non-Designated Communities outside of the *Territorial Homelessness* and *Designated Communities* funding stream (Government of Canada, 2022, August 12).

A Community Entity is "...normally an incorporated organization such as a municipal government or an established not-for-profit organization that enters into a funding agreement with ESDC [Employment and Social Development Canada]. The Community Entity brings together community stakeholders to form a Community Advisory Board and works with the Board to develop a community plan. It then undertakes the responsibility for the implementation of the community plan, to solicit project proposals, approve projects, contract and monitor all agreements with third-party service providers, report on its activities and disbursements, collect and share data and information, and report on the results. The Community Advisory Board is typically composed of officials from all levels of government, community stakeholders, and the private and voluntary sectors. The Board plays a key role in encouraging partnerships, coordinating community efforts related to homelessness, integrating the efforts with those of the province or territories, and recommending projects for approval by the Commu-

nity Entity" (Government of Canada, 2022, August 12). As such, the *Reaching Home* program provides a working example of the use of collaborative governance models to carry out federally funded, place-based work.

The Systems Planning Collective (SPC), a collaboration between A Way Home Canada, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, and Turner Strategies, developed a four-part resource to support systems planning and capacity building in the homeless services sector with a goal of preventing homelessness and supporting long-term exits from homelessness (Systems Planning Collective, 2019a). Funded by the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy, this work is an important resource for Delegated Communities, non-Delegated Communities in rural and remote areas, and all communities engaged in related processes (Harris & Turner, 2019).

SPC's *Module 4, Guide to Governance Models* describes the mechanics of establishing a strong systems-planning organization and governance structure, identifying pros and cons of each Community Entity type, assessing governance structures to meet the needs of different groups, and providing examples from communities across Canada (Harris & Turner, 2019; Systems Planning Collective, 2019b). The work of systems-planning organizations in the homeless services sector includes developing and implementing a local plan
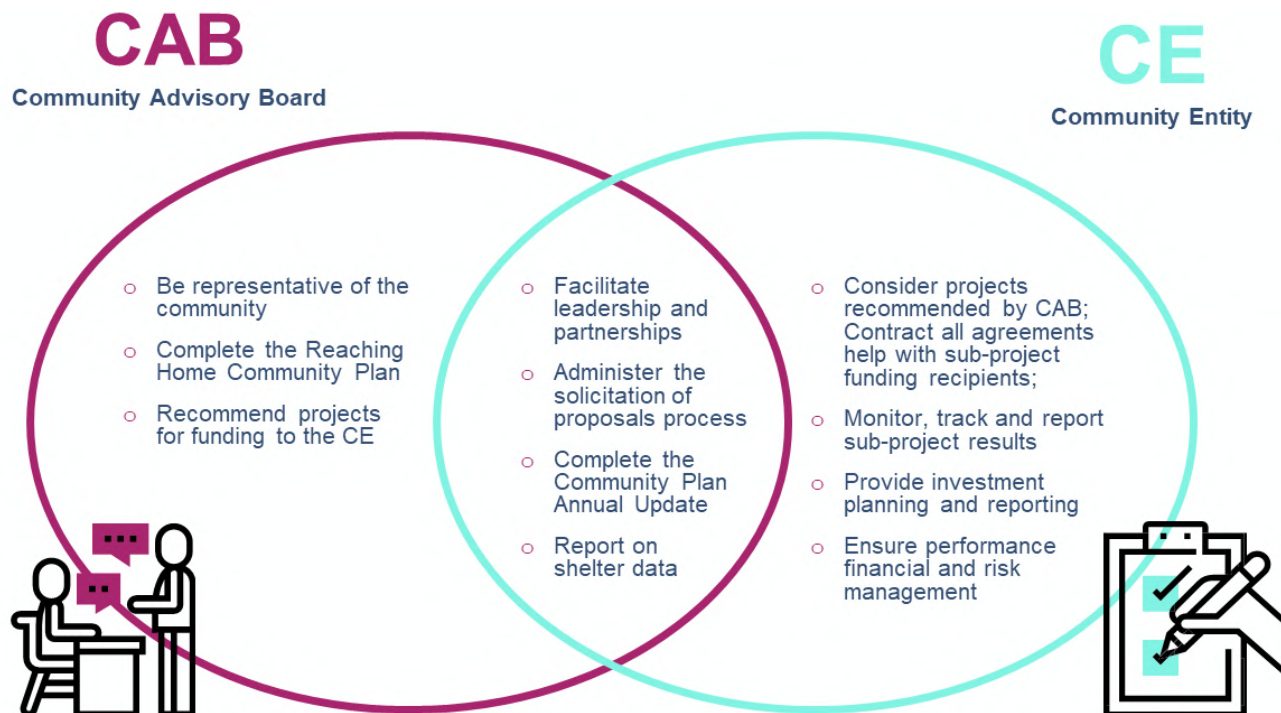
to eliminate homelessness, allocating funding to support this work, collecting and interpreting data, and monitoring and evaluating plan outcomes, supported through data collection (Harris & Turner, 2019).

Systems-planning organizations include three key structures: Community Advisory Board, Community Entity, and Board of Directors. Under *Reaching Home*, Community Advisory Boards comprise a diverse group of stakeholders, including homeless serving system representatives, public and private funders, agency staff from the Community Entity and other community partners, people with lived experience of homelessness, government staff, and the business sector (Systems Planning Collective, 2019b). Conflict of interest can be a challenge within Community Advisory Boards. Strong governance policy and facilitation is required to address arising issues. The Community Entity serves as the lead organization with its Board of Directors responsible to the funder.

Figure 1 shows the individual and shared roles of Community Advisory Boards and Community Entities from the homeless services sector.

Figure 1: Roles of Community Advisory Boards and Community Entities from the Homeless Services Sector

CAB
Community Advisory Board

CE
Community Entity

- Be representative of the community
- Complete the Reaching Home Community Plan
- Recommend projects for funding to the CE

- Facilitate leadership and partnerships
- Administer the solicitation of proposals process
- Complete the Community Plan Annual Update
- Report on shelter data

- Consider projects recommended by CAB; Contract all agreements help with sub-project funding recipients;
- Monitor, track and report sub-project results
- Provide investment planning and reporting
- Ensure performance financial and risk management

Source: Systems Planning Collective's *Module 4: Governance Models in Systems Planning* slide deck, 2019, p 10. https://www.homelesshub.ca/SPC/module-4-guide-governance-models

Table 2: Governance Options for Community Entities in Systems Planning from the Homeless Services Sector

GOVERNANCE OPTIONS	STRENGTHS	RISKS
Department in Existing Organization	Dedicated staffing, organizational infrastructure (e.g., HR, legal, office space, and admin), legitimacy with the broader community	Ongoing confusion regarding the role of the Community Advisory Board in governance within the organizational structure, may not have Indigenous support within non-Indigenous organizations, limits on fundraising activities, and may look like nothing new is happening
Stand Alone Organization	Renewal of commitment, fresh start in community, clear role for nonprofit Board of Directors, flexible and nimble operations, and fundraising options	High risk of losing built-in staff/admin supports, high cost of setup, optics of using funds for new organization rather than programs, and competition in sector for limited funds
Municipality as Community Entity	Strong administrative capacity, not a service provider (so neutral), greater access to inter-departmental policy conversations connected to homelessness (e.g., planning, and social assistance delivery)	Overly bureaucratic, may struggle to respond quickly to new challenges, subject to political change in priorities, can lack the ability to serve as a champion or visionary for community, and difficult to innovate

The table summarizes slides from the Systems Planning Collective's *Module 4: Governance Models in Systems Planning* slide deck, 2019. https://www.homelesshub.ca/SPC/module-4-guide-governance-models

Table 2 summarizes the governance options for Community Entities identified by the Systems Planning Collective.

Under *Reaching Home*, Community Entities are mostly led by municipal governments, United Way foundations, and Indigenous organizations, with a few other nonprofit organizations taking on the role. Indigenous organizations and other nonprofit agencies often serve on Community Advisory Boards (see https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/communities-communautes/find-trouver-eng.html).

The Systems Planning Collective (2019b) advises that all Community Entities:

- "Clarify differences between a Board of Directors vs. Advisory Committee
- Develop clear policies and procedures immediately, including conflict of interest
- Create a clear point of accountability on

reconciliation for implementation

- Review and renew membership of CAB [Community Advisory Board] to represent broader stakeholder groups
- Clearly articulate future role vis a vis other committees work in homelessness
- Develop clear communications on decision-making to ensure transparency in funding decisions" (slides 18–19).

See the Systems Planning Collective's module and slide deck for more information.

Impact and evaluation are important considerations for any funding and service coordination model. In November 2022, the Auditor General of Canada released a report on the federal government's efforts to achieve its goal of reducing chronic homelessness, raising strong concerns about the lack of evaluation of these efforts (Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2022). Regarding the *Reaching Home* program, Designated Communities developed community plans, carried out work to prevent and reduce homelessness, and collected and submitted data pertaining to these programs. However, the Auditor General noted that federal departments had not completed the analysis of the evaluation data to assess the impact of the program. Further, the Auditor General identified problems with data gaps and the need for robust data collection to allow for the evaluation of federal actions to meet its target.

Following the release of the Auditor General's report, Infrastructure Canada released some data on the impact of the *Reaching Home* program, showing the program had supported over 62,000 people who were at risk of homelessness to maintain their housing and assisted nearly 32,000 unhoused people to access housing across the country (Lee, 2022, December 18). However, a complete evaluation has not been made public at this time.

The *Reaching Home* model provides an important example to inform the development of a new funding and service coordination model for newcomer services in the Toronto South area. Problems with lack of evaluation, data gaps, and limitations of data collection are also instructive for the development of new models.

PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING APPROACHES

The growing field of participatory grantmaking (PGM) within the philanthropic sector offers important processes, practices, and examples to inform the alternative funding and service coordination model. In this section, we explore PGM models, frameworks, and tools and identify lessons learned from the field. The terms grantmaker and non-grantmaker are commonly used in the philanthropic sector. **Grantmakers** refers to the organizations that make grants and provide funding, such as foundations, corporations, or

government agencies. **Non-grantmakers** refers to stakeholders outside of the grantmaking organization, such as sector or subject matter experts, people with lived/living experience, or practitioners.

PGM represents both a process and ethos in the field of philanthropy (Gibson, 2018). It is a process that engages community members who are the focus of and most affected by grantmaking in the actual grantmaking process. Many different models have been employed, with various stakeholder groups, structures, processes, and levels of public participation (e.g., Brown-Booker, 2022, Winter; Gibson, 2018; Gibson, 2017; Kilmurray, 2015). PGM is also about values. Practitioners adopt PGM as a means to democratize philanthropy; to share, shift, and cede power; and to exercise values of equity and inclusion, through clear communication, transparency, and trust-building (Gibson, 2018; Hauger, 2022).

While transparency is central to this process, practitioners also recognize the need for privacy and confidentiality in some circumstances, such as when engaging individuals who may face danger or adverse treatment if their identities were known. Some examples cited included global PGM with the trans community and processes engaging sex workers (Evans, 2015).

The goals of PGM are both process- and outcome-oriented (Gibson, 2018; Hauger, 2022). The process builds community agency, power, and leadership while supporting better funding outcomes for communities and funders. Similar to the *Reaching Home* approach described above, PGM uses collaborative governance models and can involve delegated funding decision-making powers. PGM practitioners believe collective decisions involving residents who will be most impacted by grantmaking produce the best results, with opportunities for long-lasting social change. While the process can be more costly and labour-intensive than traditional grantmaking, advocates suggest it is time and money well invested in the community.

PGM Draft Framework

Figure 2 shows Gibson's (2017) draft framework for PGM from her work with the Ford Foundation. The framework includes four components:

- Informing (or telling/receiving) involves one-way communication from grantmakers to non-grantmakers, such as grantmakers conveying information to non-grantmakers through websites and correspondence.
- Consulting (or input/asking) is still largely one-way communication but reverses direction, moving from non-grantmakers

Figure 2: Gibson's Participatory Grantmaking Draft Framework

INFORMING	**CONSULTING**	**INVOLVING**	**DECIDING**
Grantmakers tell	Grantmakers receive	Two-way communication that leads to grantmaker decisions	Two-way communication that leads to joint decision-making
Non-grantmakers receive	Non-grantmakers tell		

		Pre-Grant	Granting Process	Post-Grant

Source: Gibson, C. (2017). *Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come?* The Ford Foundation, p. 6.
https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/3598/has-the-time-come-for-participatory-grant-making.pdf

to grantmakers. Non-grantmakers can provide input but there is no assurance that it will influence the final decisions of grantmakers.

- Involving (or discussing/influencing) involves two-way communication where grantmakers and non-grantmakers may be heard and understood, share perspectives, and have nuanced discussions. Small groups are usually engaged and the outcome may or may not have a strong influence on directions.

- Deciding (or partnering/collaborating) involves two-way communication that can occur at the pre-grant, granting process, and/or post-grant stage. Partnering and collaboration contribute to decisions and directions. A well-facilitated, inclusive, or representative process is important to ensure outcomes are fair, represent the priorities of the larger population, and do not privilege special interests.

The author notes that all components have value and serve a purpose for philanthropic organizations, depending on specific contexts.

Gibson (2017) describes opportunities for participation within the grant decision-making process and associated pros and cons. We summarize her analysis in Table 3.

Table 3: Opportunities for Participation and Pros and Cons of Participation in Decision-Making

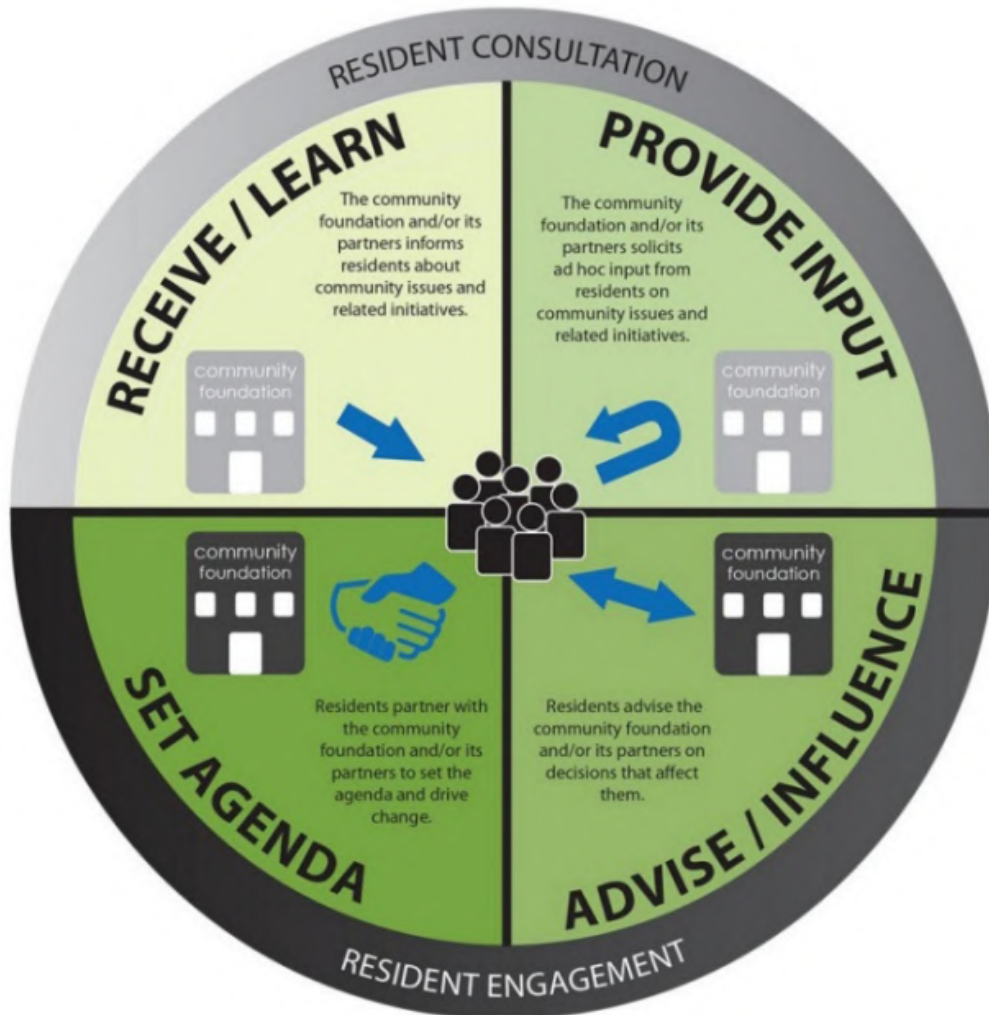| STAGE	OPPORTUNITIES	PROS	CONS
Pre-grant	Grantmakers and non-grantmakers can collaborate to identify priorities, develop the grant application process, collect data and carry out research, and define roles for grantmaking	Positions non-grantmakers as equal partners in the process, process can generate new ideas and understanding and help ensure the right questions are asked, grantmakers can learn from people with lived experience and frontline organizations, and process can create enthusiasm about the grant	Process takes time, foundation staff hired for specific expertise may be unwilling to engage, will harm relationships and undermine process if non-grantmakers' contributions are not taken seriously, and foundation policies may prevent or present barriers to participatory processes
Grant Processing	Grantmakers and non-grantmakers can collaborate on reviewing and/or making changes to the process, making funding decisions, conducting a peer review process, and determining non-grant resources for applicants/recipients	Empowers non-grantmakers; addresses power imbalances in the grantmaking process; contributes to better decisions through diverse participation, knowledge, and expertise; grantmakers share responsibility for difficult decisions; and promotes transparency in the process	Process takes time; can be intimidating for non-grantmakers and discourage open participation; conflicts of interest arise if non-grantmakers want to apply for funding; non-grantmakers may bring inappropriate assumptions or unfeasible expectations to process; and participation doesn't eliminate possible bias in process, such as favouring popular organizations
Post-grant	Grantmakers and non-grantmakers can collaborate on reviewing grantee evaluations, reports, and activities, and help make data and work products open and available to the public	Grantmakers and non-grantmakers can learn from grantee experience, non-grantmakers can communicate learnings to peers, other grantmakers can learn about funded projects and learnings to inform their own process, and future applicants can study past grant decisions to understand funder priorities and patterns of investment	Grantees may be uncomfortable with non-grantmakers reviewing their evaluations and reports re confidentiality concerns; non-grantmakers may feel participation in post-grant phase only is not a substantive role; and transparent data systems require time, infrastructure, and investment

The table is based on the work of Gibson, C. in *Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come?* published by the Ford Foundation in 2017, p. 35-37

Tools for Conceptualizing Participation

Gibson (2017) also profiles three tools for conceptualizing public participation, outlined in Figures 3, 4, and 5. These resources may help inform our thinking regarding various stakeholder roles and levels of participation in the funding and service coordination model for the Toronto South area.

Figure 3 shows the Resident Engagement Spectrum developed by CFLeads, a U.S. national network of community foundations, to inform participatory approaches to philanthropy (Gibson, 2017). Resident participation in grantmaking moves from resident consultation including receiving information, learning about issues, and providing input, to resident engagement in setting the agenda and advising and influencing decisions.
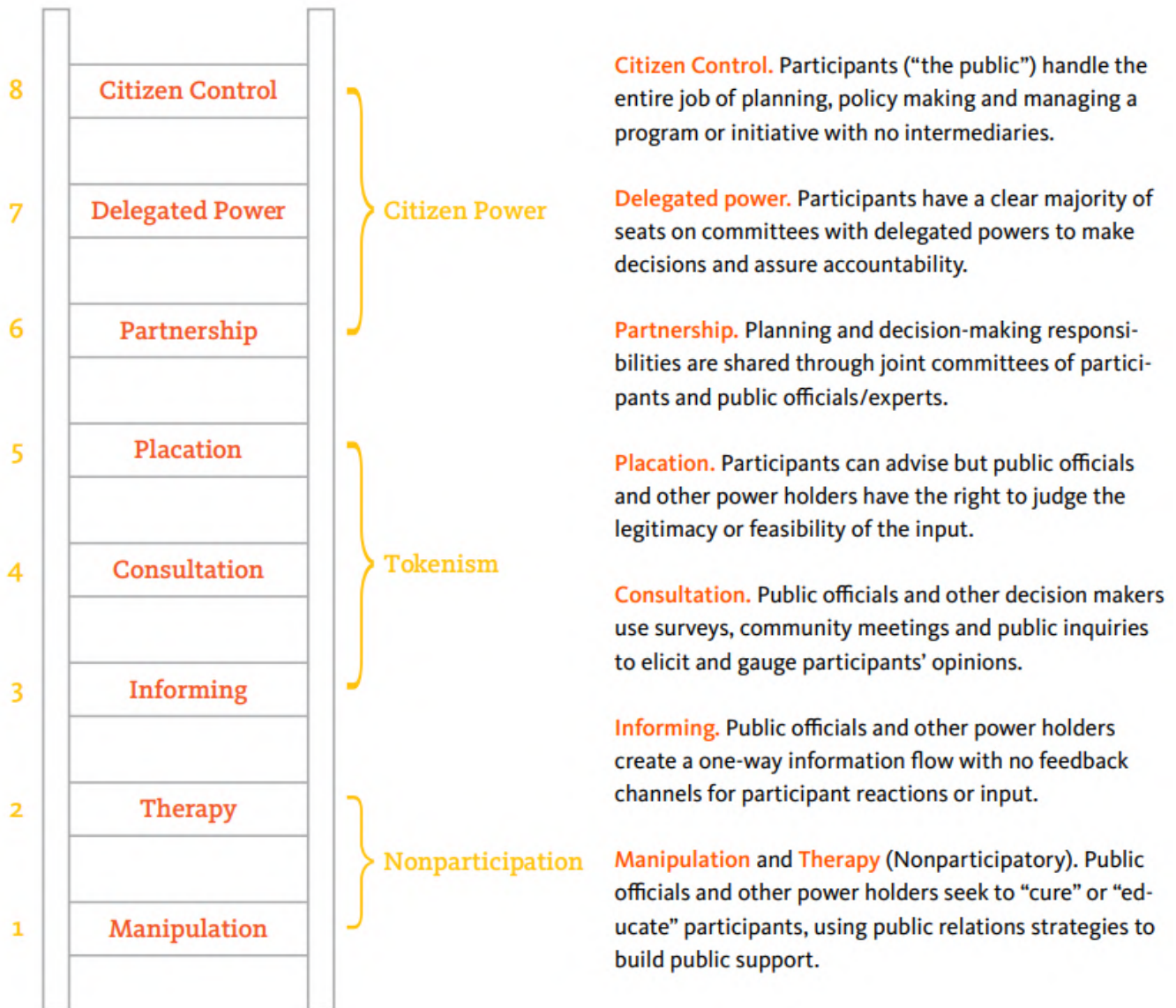
Figure 3: CFLeads Resident Engagement Spectrum

Source: Gibson, C. (2017). *Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come?* The Ford Foundation, p. 14.
https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/3598/has-the-time-come-for-participatory-grant-making.pdf

Figure 4 shows the Ladder of Citizen Participation developed by Arnstein from her work with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Develop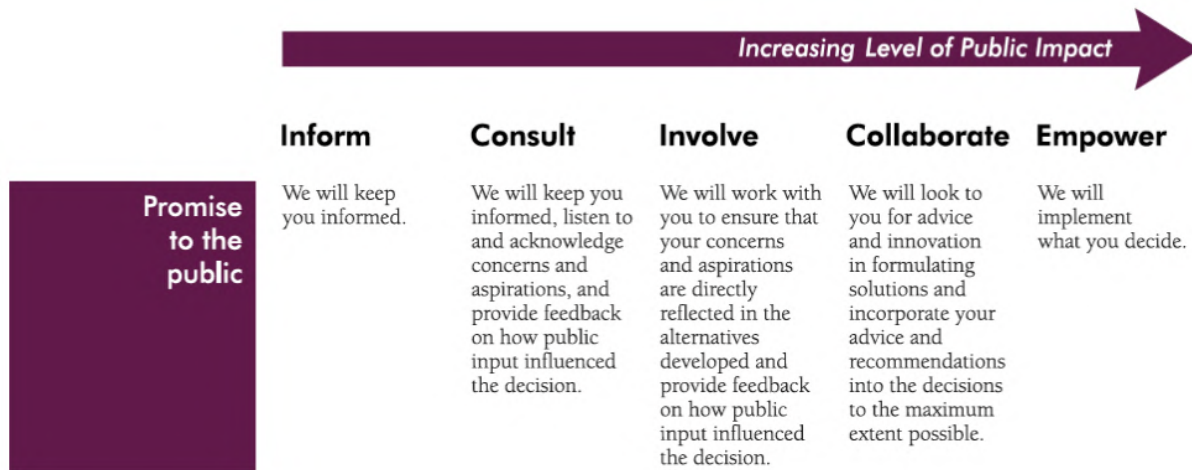ment in the 1960s (Gibson, 2017). Her conception of citizen participation moves from nonparticipation and tokenism to examples of citizen power, including citizen control, delegated power, and partnership.

Figure 4: Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation

Citizen Control. Participants ("the public") handle the entire job of planning, policy making and managing a program or initiative with no intermediaries.

Delegated power. Participants have a clear majority of seats on committees with delegated powers to make decisions and assure accountability.

Partnership. Planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared through joint committees of participants and public officials/experts.

Placation. Participants can advise but public officials and other power holders have the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the input.

Consultation. Public officials and other decision makers use surveys, community meetings and public inquiries to elicit and gauge participants' opinions.

Informing. Public officials and other power holders create a one-way information flow with no feedback channels for participant reactions or input.

Manipulation and **Therapy** (Nonparticipatory). Public officials and other power holders seek to "cure" or "educate" participants, using public relations strategies to build public support.

Source: Gibson, C. (2017). *Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come?* The Ford Foundation, p. 28. https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/3598/has-the-time-come-for-participatory-grant-making.pdf

Figure 5: The International Association for Public Participation (IAP$_2$)'s Spectrum of Public Participation

Source: Gibson, C. (2017). *Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come?* The Ford Foundation, p. 29.
https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/3598/has-the-time-come-for-participatory-grant-making.pdf

Finally, Figure 5 shows the International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation, a five-stage model with increasing levels of public participation and impact (Gibson, 2017). The Spectrum moves from informing and consulting to involving and collaborating, and finally to empowering, where the public decides and grantmakers implement the public vision.

Participatory Grantmaking Models

In *Participatory Philanthropy*, Evans (2015) describes several models of participation in PGM. Drawing on the most relevant models for our purposes, we summarize Evans' analysis on representative participation and collectives for PGM in Table 4. These models suggest ways to operationalize resident and community participation in funding decision-making processes.

Table 4: Select Models of Practice for PGM by Evans (2015)

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
Representative Participation	Representation can include individuals with lived/living experience, sector experts, and practitioners. It can take many forms, including one or more individuals involved in the grant decision-making process, or the board can consist entirely of subject matter experts. **Three Rivers Foundation uses a representative board that consists of individuals with living experience (Teens for Change).** Fifteen decision-makers are on the allocation committee, facilitated by two trained peers and supported by foundation staff.	The advantages include bringing on-the-ground experience to the decision-making process, resulting in more strategic decisions, and the potential for less competition and greater collaboration among subject matter experts. Requires capacity building and effective facilitation to support participants. Without this, representative participation can be disempowering and tokenistic.
Rolling Collective	All grant recipients participate in the process of both giving and receiving funding. Participants become members of the grants allocation committee either during or after their time as a grantee. **Model pioneered by Fundo Centroamerican de Mujeres in 2003, used by Thankyou Charitable Trust in New Zealand**	Challenges around managing conflicts of interest; must ensure funds not monopolized by a subset of community sector; requires strong facilitation, communications, and policies, and time to build relationships between funder and community
Closed Collective	Closed collectives are most appropriate when funds are intended for a particular community of interest/sector in a particular geographic area, when the scope has very clear boundaries of which organizations are included and excluded. Participating organizations meet to discuss trends, opportunities, and gaps and collectively decide the best use of the funds. All participating organizations receive a portion of the funding. Through consensus, participating organizations decide how to allocate the remainder. Organizations within the same sector work together and build relationships. Process highlights gaps and duplications of service. Focuses funding on end user rather than the needs of particular organizations. **Twigger Trust in Christchurch uses the closed collective model.**	Strong, impartial facilitation is key, financial incentive to participate, all qualifying organizations have opportunity to participate and must be in the room to receive funding, accountability is primarily to each other/the sector. Organizations enter the collective through an application process and exit if they no longer work in the areas identified by the funding criteria. The group reviews the funding criteria periodically to ensure it remains relevant.

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
Open Collective	Allows all interested parties including grant applicants to participate in decision-making. High degree of transparency and community accountability. **Wikimedia Foundation and FRIDA Young Feminist Fund are global funds that use open collectives.** These examples are instructive for understanding how these collectives can be organized. Wikimedia: Proposals are workshopped on public wikis, collaborative websites that allow users to edit and add content, and improved by volunteer editors. Decisions about who gets funded and how much is made publicly through wikis, in co-operation with volunteer committee members, Board members and staff, and with input from the larger community. FRIDA: An advisory body screens applications for eligibility, then activists who apply for grants decide together who will receive funding. Applications are reviewed with clear criteria. Applicants vote for applications in their region and language but are unable to vote for themselves. Voting results are tallied with due diligence by fund staff/advisors.	Wikimedia has the largest peer review participation of its kind; uses sophisticated and transparent practice on a large scale. FRIDA's process fuels emerging leadership, responds to on-the-ground realities of most-impacted communities, has transparency of process and outcome, and opportunity to learn diverse strategies for organizing from others. Challenges with the amount of work involved in reviewing applications.

The table is based on the work of Evans, L. in *Participatory Philanthropy. A report for the Winston Churchill Fellowship*, 2015. https://search.issuelab.org/resources/33090/33090.pdf

A shared gifting circle is an example of a collective used in PGM (Buhles, 2021, May 12; Buhles, 2017, August 22; Harden, Bain & Heim, 2021). In shared gifting circles, the funder raises the funding and turns over decision-making to participants. The participants use a consensus-based approach to decide how funds will be used. For example, in 2020, three Kanyen'kehà:ka (Mohawk) culture and language immersion schools participated in a shared gifting circle (Buhles, 2021, May 12). The schools have a shared interest in revitalizing Haudenosaunee or Rotinonhsón:ni (Iroquois) and Kanyen'kehà:ka culture. Participants used a consensus approach to allocate $100,000 in grant funding to support urgent needs and ongoing collaboration among school partners with an aim of providing pedagogical and curriculum courses in other schools.

Shared giving was recognized as an approach embedded in Indigenous cultures that supports learning, connection, and relationship. Funds were raised by the Douglas Cardinal Foundation for Indigenous Waldorf Education and the financial services organization, RSF Social Finance. The shared gifting circle is an approach that RSF Social Finance has worked with for over a decade (see https://rsfsocialfinance.org/give/donor-advised-funds/shared-gifting-give/). The funders hoped it would be a method that would "honor Indigenous wisdom and create resources that go beyond financial" (Buhles, 2021, May 12).

Building Equitable Economies for Immigrants and Refugees in the Peel Region

The Tamarack Institute and WES Mariam Assefa Fund have partnered on an innovative PGM initiative aimed at removing economic barriers for immigrants and refugees in Peel Region (Tamarack Institute, n.d.). WES Mariam Assefa Fund made the decision to engage a third-party organization, Tamarack Institute, to allow the funder to step back from the process and ensure that it would not inadvertently exert influence on the funding decisions. The Tamarack Institute brings extensive knowledge and experience to the work, including strong facilitation and community capacity building expertise, which are critical to the PGM process.

A People's Panel was assembled through an open application process (Chollangi, 2021, December 7). Six newcomers and six representatives from newcomer-serving organizations in Peel Region were selected to participate on the People's Panel, reflecting a diversity of knowledge and expertise. Tamarack recognized the importance of ensuring diversity on the panel to best address complex issues, consistent with the ideas underlying collaborative governance and PGM.

WES Mariam Assefa Fund set a single requirement that the funding opportunity focus on immigrants

and refugees (Chollangi, 2021, December 7). The People's Panel co-created the funding opportunity, set funding criteria, assessed grant applications, and made funding decisions through a consensus approach and transparent process. Skilled and impartial facilitators played a critical role in this work. The process supported trust- and relationship-building among panel participants. Recognizing power imbalances within the panel, Tamarack notes that dynamic dialogue was used to create a space where participants could share diverse experience and viewpoints and where lived experience was valued and respected.

Through the *Building Equitable Economies for Immigrants and Refugees* fund, the People's Panel allocated a total of $600,000 to support six innovative projects in the Peel Region (Chollangi, 2022, August 3; Tamarack Institute, n.d.). Funded projects included work with non-permanent residents, such as international students, who are excluded from IRCC-funded programs (Chollangi, 2022, March 24). An international student also participated on the panel. The project valued and recognized the important contributions of newcomers across the full diversity of the population.

This project also provided flexibility and support to facilitate funding opportunities for small organizations and grassroots groups that experience barriers to accessing traditional funding (Chollangi, 2022, June 27). Small and grassroots groups

often provide services to the most marginalized members of the community. By funding these organizations through the PGM process, the funder is able to extend their impact to the most disenfranchised immigrants and refugees.

The process shifted power from the funder to newcomers and newcomer-serving organizations, utilized the diversity of the panel to produce better decisions, and helped build agency, power, and leadership among panel participants. Reflecting on traditional grantmaking, one panel participant remarked, "I think it has some kind of colonial perspective that actually funders know better than communities" (Chollangi, 2021, December 7). Instead, the PGM process placed communities at the centre of the grantmaking process, empowering people with lived experience, facilitating movement building, and generating well informed solutions to challenging problems.

Tamarck Institute documented this PGM initiative, described the impact of the process, and identified lessons learned, as summarized above, to support similar PGM approaches. This initiative, with its focus on im/migrants and refugees, is especially relevant to our work in the development of an alternative, community-centred funding and service coordination model for marginalized newcomers, for consideration in the Toronto South area.

SECTION 4: SOCIO-DEMO-GRAPHIC PROFILE OF TORONTO SOUTH
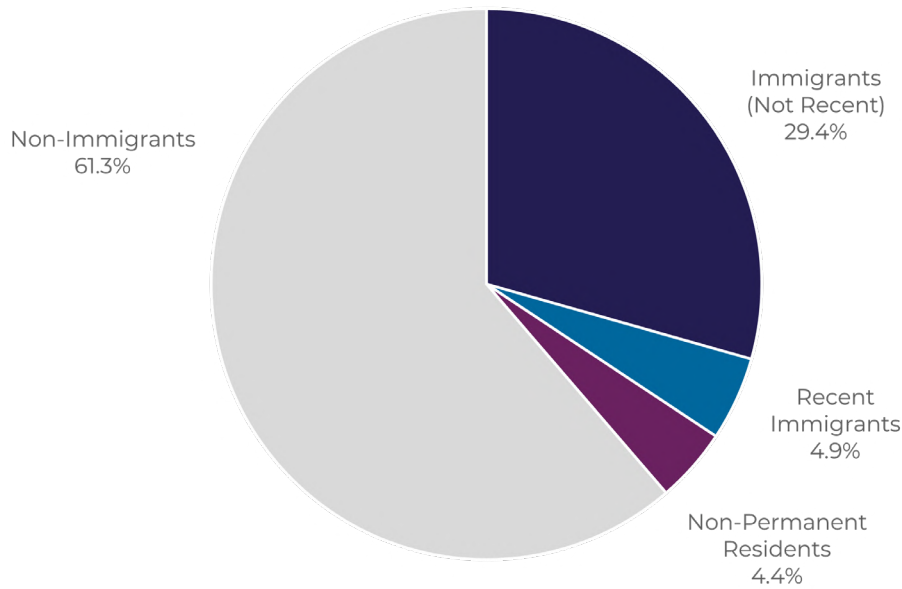
THE NEWCOMER AND IMMIGRANT POPULATION

The Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP) is a community collaboration bringing together stakeholders located in the south quadrant of the city of Toronto. Its boundary is Lake Ontario to the south and Victoria Park Avenue to the east; the western and northern boundaries run along a mix of streets and waterways including Humber River and Runnymede Road to the west, and Bloor Street, streets between St. Clair Avenue and Eglinton Avenue, and the Don River to the north (Figure 6).

For the *Community Based Service Delivery and Funding: Centering Newcomer Experience* project, Social Planning Toronto also produced a detailed socio-demographic profile of immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area. The profile uses data from the 2016 Canadian Census of Population. At the time of the publication of this report, the full dataset from the 2021 Census was not yet available. We expect to update some of these data before the end of the project, as needed. In this section, we highlight key findings; the full analysis will be available in our forthcoming companion document entitled *Immigrants, Recent Immigrants, and Non-Permanent Residents in the Toronto South Area: A Socio-Demographic Profile*.

Figure 6: TSLIP Quadrant Boundary within the City of Toronto

Figure 7: Population Size for Total Population, Immigrants, Recent Immigrants, and Non-Permanent Residents

Source: Statistics Canada (2020). *2016 Census of population, catalogue no. E02937_Toronto SCP Part 1*. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

The Toronto South area is home to many immigrants and non-permanent residents. Based on the 2016 Census, the Toronto South area has a population of 720,380 people including 247,180 immigrants[3], representing 34.3% of Toronto South's population; 35,495 recent immigrants[4] live in the Toronto South area, comprising 14.4% of the immigrant population and 4.9% of the total population in the area. A total of 31,505 non-permanent residents[5] live in the Toronto South area, representing 4.4% of the total population in the area.
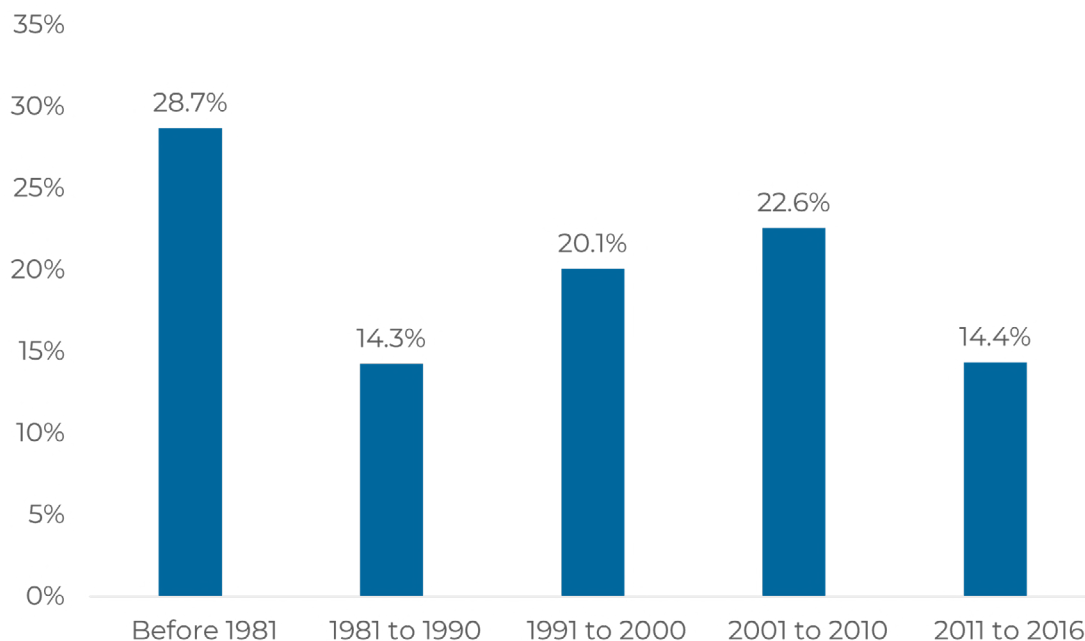
In the Toronto South area, 47.1% of immigrants are male and 52.9% are female (Statistics Canada, 2020b). Recent immigrants are evenly split by gender (Statistics Canada, 2020c); 50.7% of non-permanent residents are male and 49.3% are female (Statistics Canada, 2020d).

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3. Statistics Canada defines immigrant as: "a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this group." (Statistics Canada, 2017, November 29).

4. A recent immigrant "refers to a person who obtained a landed immigrant or permanent resident status up to five years prior to a given census year. In the 2016 Census, this period is January 1, 2011, to May 10, 2016." (Statistics Canada, 2017, November 29). Recent immigrants are included in the immigrant population.

5. Non-permanent residents include "persons from another country who have a work or study permit or who are refugee claimants, and their family members sharing the same permit and living in Canada with them." (Statistics Canada, 2017, November 29). Non-permanent residents are not included in the immigrant population.

Figure 8: Percentage of the Immigrant Population by Period of Immigration, Toronto South Area, 2016

Source: Statistics Canada (2020). *2016 Census of population, catalogue no. E02937_Toronto SCP Part 1*. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

Figure 8 shows a breakdown of the immigrant population in the Toronto South area by period of immigration. Almost two-thirds (63%) of the immigrant population in the area came to Canada before 2001. Therefore, it is not surprising that the average and median age for immigrants is older than for recent immigrants. The average age is 49.2 years for immigrants, 33.3 years for recent immigrants, and 29 years for non-permanent residents in the area. The median age is 48.4 years for immigrants, 32.5 years for recent immigrants, and 28 years for non-permanent residents.

Among the total immigrant population in the Toronto South area, 59.5% are racialized[6], while 40.5% are non-racialized. The largest racialized groups for immigrants and recent immigrants in the Toronto South area are the Chinese, South Asian, and Black populations (Statistics Canada, 2020b; Statistics Canada, 2020c; Statistics Canada, 2020d).

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6. Statistics Canada uses the term visible minority rather than racialized. Visible minority "refers to whether a person belongs to a visible minority group as defined by the Employment Equity Act and, if so, the visible minority group to which the person belongs. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.' " (Statistics Canada, 2017, November 29). Racialized is preferred because it acknowledges the social process of racialization and the barriers that result from the historical and racial prejudice in our society.

More than nine out of ten immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents can have a conversation in English. Nine out of ten immigrants and recent immigrants and 7.5% of non-permanent residents can converse in French (Statistics Canada, 2020b; Statistics Canada, 2020c; Statistics Canada, 2020d). The top five non-official languages that immigrants in the Toronto South area can have a conversation in are Cantonese (8.7%), Mandarin (8.6%), Spanish (7.6%), Portuguese (7.5%), and Tagalog (5.0%) (Statistics Canada, 2020b).

Poverty[7] is a significant challenge for immigrants and newcomers in the Toronto South area: 23.9% of immigrants, 33.3% of recent immigrants, and more strikingly, 47% of non-permanent residents experience poverty (Statistics Canada, 2020e; Statistics Canada, 2020f; Statistics Canada, 2020g).

Im/migrants and refugees in the Toronto South area have diverse experiences and characteristics. Understanding these demographics is important to ensuring these groups are adequately represented in our engagements and that our process and the new potential model speaks to the linguistic, cultural, and other needs of these groups.

SECTION 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section summarizes data gathered from 15 focus groups reaching 142 newcomers and eight focus groups reaching 27 service providers working with im/migrants and refugees. We begin by reviewing the needs of newcomers in Toronto and how this relates to service access and delivery, including the barriers newcomers come up against. We then look at the gaps and challenges with the current funding model, bringing in both newcomer and service provider perspectives. Finally, we end with ideas and feedback from service providers on an alternative model.

PROFILE OF NEWCOMER PARTICIPANTS

Through two rounds of focus groups with newcomers, in March and June 2022, we were able to reach im/migrants and refugees with a wide range of experiences. Participants reflected a diversity of socio-demographic groups as described below.

Summary of newcomer demographics across all focus groups[8]:

- *Prior use of settlement services:* 56% of participants had used settlement services, 38% had not, and 6% were not sure.
- *Time in Canada:* 25% of participants had

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7. As measured by the Low-income measure, after-tax (LIM-AT) — a threshold calculated at 50 percent of the national household median income and adjusted for household size.

8. See Appendix A for a full breakdown of the demographic characteristics of newcomer participants.

been in Canada for less than 1 year, 20% had been in Canada between 1–3 years, 27% between 3–7 years, 8% between 7–10 years, and 20% had been in Canada for 10+ years.

- *Legal status:* 47% of participants were permanent residents, 28% were citizens, 16% were refugees, and 7% were on a student or work visa.

- *Age:* 45% were aged 18–34, 49% were 35–64, and 6% were 65 years and older.

- *Location of residence:* 86% of participants lived in the city of Toronto; approximately 37% of participants lived within the Toronto South LIP quadrant.

- *Education:* 47% of participants had a university/college degree or equivalent, 32% had a postgraduate degree, 14% had a high school degree or equivalent, and 8% had less than a high school education.

- *Racialized background:* 55% of participants self-identified as a person of colour or visible minority group.[9]

- *Gender:* 66% of participants identified as female, and 33% identified as male.

- *Disability:* 15% of participants identified as a person with a disability.

- *Language:* The majority of survey respondents indicated that English was their preferred spoken and written language. In addition, 27 more languages were identified as preferred and/or home languages.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS IN TORONTO

During the focus groups with im/migrants and refugees who largely resided within Toronto, we asked about their needs and expectations for settling in Canada, as well as what makes a good or bad service. We aimed to bring forth recent data from local newcomers, especially those who are racialized, on how they build their support systems as well as the kinds of support they most needed.

The following section presents a variety of needs that emerged during the focus groups, including social, emotional, mental health, employment, financial, and basic needs. As well, we present participants' feedback on what makes an effective newcomer service. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of needs and that the needs of newcomers are expansive. However, this section serves to provide some context for which services are accessed and received, and points to some strengths and areas for improvement to consider in the development of a new funding and service delivery model.

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9. See Research Limitations for a discussion on why this may under-estimate the proportion of racialized participants.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS AND SUPPORTS

Many focus group participants shared with us their feelings of loneliness, depression, and social isolation upon arriving in Canada. New to the country, these participants described how their social networks were small, except for any family members that immigrated with them or were here when they arrived. Being separated from family members in their home country, such as spouses or children, exacerbated feelings of isolation and had significant impacts on their mental health.

> **"I didn't know anyone here, I didn't talk to anybody. I just went to school and then came back home. I think I suffered a lot at that time. I heard people celebrating in my apartment with their family and friends and I was craving that, I was crying a lot during those days."**
> **— newcomer participant**

> **"I became depressed because I was unable to see my children all this time. I reached the point where I thought about committing suicide."**
> **— newcomer participant**

At the same time, the emotional and psychological distress caused by the unfair treatment of newcomers, specifically within the labour market, was shared by newcomer participants. Participants felt like their strengths and abilities were not recognized and they were unable to realize their full potential despite their deep motivation. For newcomer participants, lack of effective employment supports, lack of recognition of foreign education and training, and labour market discrimination, as further described below, was especially difficult when so many had obtained graduate degrees, left their careers, and left family for Canada. Participants felt undervalued and having to build their career from scratch, which in turn also took a toll on their mental health and wellbeing.

> **"When I came here as an immigrant, the system doesn't recognize my work, my strength, my experience, nothing. I had to start from scratch. And that is the pain of all other immigrants who are, you know, landing in Canada. That is not the only pain the government [has], I think they don't have any proper tools to define what stage you are [at in your profession]."**
> **— newcomer participant**

❝Something that [was already] said that completely resonated with me is the whole idea of limiting your potential. And kind of putting you, trapping you in a box. You come here and…you're coming to build. I'm sure that a lot of newcomers have this same worldview, like we're not here to sit around and do nothing. We're here to build something. We're here to have a future. And so when you find someone that's kind of closing the door in front of you and…it can really, really put you in a box.”
— newcomer participant

While a lot of participants did not have any emotional support when they arrived in Canada, if a newcomer already had family members or friends in the country, this was a major pillar of emotional support for them. Participants discussed a highly supportive atmosphere in neighbourhoods with a high immigrant population, where people were keen to help each other navigate the settlement process. Friends, faith-based communities, and connections from volunteering or accessing support at nonprofit organizations were other key sources of emotional support.

❝The Filipino community supported me a lot and also a few friends I made through different volunteer organizations supported me.”
— newcomer participant

❝I wish I had more emotional support like feeling like I belong in a community, having more friends, etc.”
— newcomer participant

Reflecting on how their support network has evolved over time, many participants positively noted that this network has grown substantially. Whereas initially, newcomers' support networks were primarily based on their immediate family, they developed a community of friends that they could rely on for support.

❝I think the support networks that I have found myself in are committed to see[ing] me reach a very successful end, let alone the church network and the [non-profit agency]. And even my counselor at the shelter still looks out for me up to now.”
— newcomer participant

Key to developing this support network was involvement in some type of community outside the home. Participants reported connections to nonprofit organizations or starting jobs as signif-

icant to meeting new people and making friends. Over time, participants reported improvements in their communication skills and comfort with socializing with others in Canada.

Several participants described feeling more self-reliant and independent than when they first came to the country, as they pieced together the knowledge and skills that they needed to navigate Canadian society over the years. Even though participants looked back at the time when they first arrived in Canada as "difficult," "rough," and even "horrible," their stories demonstrated their strength, resilience, and ability to overcome difficult obstacles and attain a more positive outlook.

EMPLOYMENT, FINANCES, AND BASIC NEEDS AND SUPPORTS

Finding suitable employment was the most commonly reported settlement and integration challenge newcomers experienced. Participants reported feeling disadvantaged in the job-seeking process as they did not have Canadian work experience or references to be as competitive as other applicants.

> **Getting a job is also very difficult because they always ask for Canadian experience. How can I get Canadian experience if I'm new to the country?"**
> **— newcomer participant**

Participants felt misled because the need for Canadian education and experience, a concept unique to this country, was not made clear to them before they came to Canada. As noted previously, this also had significant impacts on their mental health and wellbeing. The persistent devaluation of foreign credentials and experience is an example of systemic discrimination whereby professional newcomers' prior learning and work experience is treated with suspicion and as inferior (Guo, 2009). At the same time, the value given to racialized im/migrants' knowledge and skills is influenced by race and racism (Guo, 2015).

Since participants' experiences and credentials were not recognized and/or devalued in Canada, many felt they needed to go through re-certification to be competitive for jobs they were already qualified for. For some participants, they switched to entirely different careers.

> **I feel very frustrated because I was a qualified person in my country and I had a decent career back home. But when I came to Canada, I discovered that my certificates had no value. The support is very weak."**
> **— newcomer participant**

"My husband works at Toronto General Hospital and his contract will end soon. He tried to get a licence so that he can open his own clinic, but unfortunately, he is unable to get a licence even though he had done all the necessary tests and passed them. Many people of other ethnicities were able to get the same licence much easier and faster."
— newcomer participant

Many of the newcomers we spoke to reported using settlement services for employment support. Participants tended to have a high level of education and wished to continue their previous careers in Canada. Indeed, our demographic survey revealed that 78% of participants across both rounds of focus groups reported having a university/college degree or higher. However, a high number of the focus group participants felt they found little help in the settlement sector in advancing their careers. A significant number of complaints were shared about the inability of settlement services to help those with a high level of English language skills, education, and experience through career-related hurdles. The help they often needed was tied to structural barriers, and less about updating their resumes, generic tips on interviewing, and identifying their career goals. As a participant described it, "many of these programs, they revolve around...fix[ing]

your resume or prepar[ing] you for the interview. This is not the issue with the Canadian employer...The issue with the Canadian employer is... systematic discrimination." In fact, in some ways newcomers saw service providers as perpetuating their deskilling as they encouraged newcomers to consider employment opportunities that they were over-qualified for.

"[Service providers] literally give us a message that you have to survive at this stage of your new arrival to Canada, like the survivors things. So they keep telling us and they keep feeding us in this kind [of way] until, unfortunately, we believe somehow that these kinds of jobs are just only for us...And when we are coming here to Canada, we think like it's a new future for us, right? A nice, new opportunity. So they limit our potential and our thinking, which is very dangerous. And it affects a lot of newcomers..."
— newcomer participant

These barriers were shared among participants from our March and June rounds of focus groups. However, participants from our June round, which included a more diverse set of voices and slightly more participants with lower education levels, also talked about the importance of English lan-

guage instruction and work permits in securing employment.

> **Before I got a job, I went to Link/ ESL for free English class to learn English. Very helpful for my new life in Canada."**
> **— newcomer participant**

> **I applied for a work permit soon after I arrived in Canada. I got approved but I'm still waiting to receive a work permit. I can't even look for a job until I get the papers. And I do not have a SIN."**
> **— newcomer participant**

Racialized women from our June round of focus groups also highlighted gender-based differences in securing employment, suggesting that there are more limited opportunities for women.

> **Unfortunately since we are here we do not receive any employment support, only some organisation who are interested in registering and taking information, but it does not lead to employment. It's easier for men as they can work in construction, but we as women can not."**
> **— newcomer participant**

Newcomer participants also recognized the importance of professional networking in securing employment, affirming that qualifications alone aren't enough. Networking and receiving referrals are heavily shaped by one's social capital and, as such, is another structural barrier that newcomers must overcome within the labour market.

Finding suitable employment is all the more urgent when facing financial difficulties, as several participants experienced.

Upon arriving in Canada, many newcomers experienced financial challenges. The high and rising cost of living in Toronto, including costs for housing, transportation, winter clothing, among other things, were expensive, and if they received financial aid from the government it was often insufficient. Easing the financial difficulties of newcomers and ensuring their basic needs are met increases their capacity to engage with settlement services, whether it be virtual or in-person.

> **For us, these are just some things that if you're not able to meet, clients are frankly not going to be able to engage in other support services that we're providing. I can say, Okay, I want to provide counseling to you. But if the client is hungry, really the level of engagement is not the same."**
> **— service provider participant**

However, several focus group participants reported receiving no financial support when they immigrated. Rather, they relied on savings from their home country, and borrowing from friends and family, until they could make money themselves. For some newcomer participants who did receive financial support from the government, they were deeply concerned that the support would end after one year. Others reported that the amount provided was insufficient.

> **I am worried as it's almost one year that I am here, what will happen when my support will end. I am trying to learn English and find a job. However, I could not find any."**
> **— newcomer participant**

At the same time, some newcomers reported exclusion from Canada's financial systems. Those who required a larger amount of money sometimes found it difficult to get a loan. Participants, especially those new to Canada and without Canadian citizenship, recounted experiences of discrimination, although this area may be improving.

> **In my time around eight years ago, it's a little bit difficult because [the banking system] were not that much friendly working with the immigrants. Especially with the asylum seekers, they were discriminated [against]... They don't give them a loan regarding their SIN numbers. Because the residents get loan because they're not going to run away from the country, right? But on the other hand...let's say somebody's seeking asylum in Canada, trying to purchase a vehicle and then start a new job would be a little bit difficult. But now I can see banks working together with asylum seeker immigrants."**
> **— newcomer participant**

As a key part of the settlement process, it is not surprising that several newcomer participants discussed access to housing. While some received help from community agencies or friends in finding housing, others, including those who were racialized, raised concerns about housing affordability and shared stories of overcrowding.

> **I heard that lots of people got housing support. I have been living in two bedrooms with five kids. My children suffer a lot because the rooms are very small and the house has no balcony."**
> **— newcomer participant**

For newcomer participants who accessed a shelter, this connection played an instrumental role in furthering their access to services and supports. Specifically, several newcomers, including refugee claimants and asylum seekers, described their counsellor as playing an instrumental role in providing emotional support, connecting them with additional services and information, and helping to meet their material needs.

> **If you ask me, I'm privileged. I'm getting what I did expect...the support is so wonderful."**
> **— newcomer participant**

Participants received diverse kinds of non-monetary support from various sources. Some were housed temporarily by friends and family, some accessed social housing and temporary shelters, some relied on food banks, and others were supported by nonprofit organizations and the Ontario Works Program in their job search.

BIASES AND EXPERIENCES OF SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

In addition to the systemic discrimination in labour and financial structures described above, newcomer participants pointed out bias and discrimination within the services they accessed. While settlement workers are often im/migrants themselves and have first-hand experience of the settlement process, some participants felt that these im/migrants have their own biases. For instance, settlement workers sometimes favour individuals who share their own religion, language, or cultural background. Settlement workers may withhold opportunities or knowledge from groups they feel prejudice against.

At the same time, newcomers and im/migrants also face racial discrimination and racism within the broader society — the unfair treatment of im/migrants and refugees by the Canadian-born and White/European population on the basis of their racialized identity.

Several participants also called out the preferential treatment of certain groups of refugees and newcomers. Newcomers themselves felt that newcomers from arbitrarily chosen countries, especially refugees, were given higher levels of support and assistance from the government and were fast-tracked through the immigration process, which were things they would have wanted

for themselves. This was also raised by service providers, who highlighted unequal treatment between Syrian, Ukrainian, Afghan, and African newcomers, and noted the additional support and expedited process afforded to Syrian refugees and Ukrainian temporary residents.[10] Specifically, the immigration system for refugee claimants was suggested to be unfair and prioritizing certain groups based on political circumstances.

Service providers, in particular those representing POC-led organizations and non-traditional settlement organizations, however, acknowledged racism and structural inequities. They recognized this as something that should be considered in the allocation of resources and design and delivery of services.

> **❝We need to keep recognizing that we are living in that system when there is a lot of racism, and there is internal racism. And when we provide the services to newcomers, that's something that also we need to be aware [of]…"**
> **— service provider participant**

Feedback we received from newcomer participants also noted the significance of language in naming and addressing discrimination. Participants highlighted that access to language is necessary to identify, connect, and express unfair treatment. When language barriers do exist, it's all the more important that im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations have a strong understanding of communities' diverse needs and can support newcomers in knowing their rights.

> **❝[A large number of immigrants] have lack of voice due to their lack of language. It is proven, even whatever we know, we can't express to find a job or if I am rejected or finding a house, you know, we can't give our voice [if] we don't know our right to practice."**
> **— newcomer participant**

HOW NEWCOMERS DESCRIBE GOOD-QUALITY SERVICES

In the focus groups we conducted with newcomers, participants emphasized the importance of positive interactions with settlement staff in good quality settlement services. They recalled instances of working with staff who treated them with kindness, patience, as well as eagerness to help them with their problems. Newcomers appreciated service providers who were kind, empathetic, friendly, fun, and had good communication skills.

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10. While research participants grouped recent newcomers from Ukraine with refugees, it is important to distinguish between these groups. The most recent wave of people arriving from Ukraine are not entering through the refugee system but rather as temporary residents. This means that they do not have access to permanent residency in the same way that refugees do.

❝[The staff] have really been... very committed. I was privileged to have gone through a class by [nonprofit agency]...I can probably say that, to me, he's like a mentor. Every now and then he will check on me. He still sends me job applications and suggests that your research skills can be used here. Apply for this."

— newcomer participant

Newcomer participants talked about the weaknesses of a "one-size-fits-all" approach to service delivery, which does not adequately consider the client's specific context and all their diverse goals and needs. Participants also disapproved of inflexible program timings in the settlement sector. Often burdened with other responsibilities, participants found rigid service schedules difficult to adhere to.

Another key aspect of an effective program was said to be cultural sensitivity and cultural competency. Participants emphasized that services must be inclusive and understand the diverse needs of the multicultural immigrant population. Beyond culture, participants highlighted that programs should be welcoming and safe spaces for people with different and diverse identities.

❝When the government or when an organization is planning a service or a program, it should be you know, have this focus on cultural diversity, and also embrace you know, people's values, people's culture, and also the differences that will bring on board as well."

— newcomer participant

Newcomer participants shared positive experiences with programs that have a clear target audience and well-defined goal. For example, participants emphasized employment programs that are based on labour market requirements and hosted by reputable organizations, such as Toronto Metropolitan University. In particular, participants emphasized that an effective employment program is "adding value and capitalizing on what experiences we already have, not just [starting] from scratch."

Participants also raised accountability. Newcomers expected access to accurate information and wanted opportunities to provide feedback.

GAPS IN THE CURRENT SERVICE DELIVERY AND FUNDING MODEL

It is clear from the literature that the current funding model, including sources, types, and conditions of funding, affects quality, eligibility, and type of services offered. Drawing on responses from service providers and newcomers, this section explores how the current funding model impacts the ability to provide well-rounded services and meet the needs of newcomers, including racialized and under-served populations. We examine gaps in the current funding and service delivery model, including funded programs and services from IRCC and others, and how that affects both newcomer outcomes and settlement services.

UNDER-SERVED COMMUNITIES

Service provider participants talked about the significant impact that IRCC eligibility criteria have on addressing the needs of a diverse range of new im/migrants and refugees.

In particular, many participants highlighted that IRCC's strict eligibility criteria creates a significant gap across the entire settlement sector in which asylum seekers and refugee claimants, international students, temporary visitors, and other newcomers with precarious status are either not served or under-served.

Service provider participants representing POC-led organizations and non-traditional settlement organizations also discussed the heightened vulnerabilities that refugee claimants experience, and the significant need for support that exists. They emphasized that all refugees are coming to Canada because they are fleeing their country and that refugee claimants should have the same rights as convention refugees.

> **"One of the things that we see a lot is on the refugee claimants is people not just racialized coming from racialized countries, but also from a very poor situation."**
> **— service provider participant**

Further, service providers described this gap in the system, in which service access is tied to immigration status, as also being a matter of racial inequity.

> **"I think from the beginning...the Canadian immigration policy has been very selective and discriminatory. And that's what we see now. Okay. And most of the refugees that come are also racialized groups. And those are the people that are being excluded from getting services. So it has an impact on the service that we deliver."**
> **— service provider participant**

Service provider participants talked about the need to access multiple sources of funding in order to serve all the newcomers that come to their doors. Some organizations have secured funding from the Province's Newcomer Settlement Program, the municipal government, foundations, and other places to serve all types of newcomers. However, these funding pots are much smaller than IRCC funding and they tend to be short-term, project-based funding.

Project-based funding — either offered by IRCC through one-time, short-term opportunities or through other funders that may or may not focus exclusively on newcomers — comes with a number of limitations. For example, service provider participants talked about the challenges of focusing on specific communities that are a priority in their local catchment area, but may not be a priority with IRCC or other funders. It may be challenging to make the case for funding, particularly if there is limited or outdated demographic data at the local level, as patterns of migration shift in real time.

"I wanted to work with Afghan refugees, for example, but I really wanted to serve them. I had contacts, they were there in hotels, etc. But since they didn't speak the language, we couldn't afford to pay an interpreter to serve them. It was a shame because he could have at least enrolled in the language classes. But communication was not possible. Because we would have to pay for an interpreter and the budget does not allow it because it is very rigid. There is no flexibility. And suddenly, it was not possible."
— service provider participant

In a similar vein, the focus on quantitative outputs also restricts organizations' ability to do community development work and/or to respond to rapid changes in community needs. Participants noted that they need to anticipate quantitative outputs over several years and that limits flexibility to respond or incorporate input to evolving services.

Black Francophone im/migrants are one population that experiences disproportionate challenges and barriers to settlement, as detailed by a participant from a settlement agency representing this community. Black Francophones face exclusion from the Francophone community as well as racism on a systemic level. These needs are not

specifically addressed by any government funding that settlement organizations receive or can apply for. Yet focus group participants repeatedly affirmed that an effective settlement service should be targeted for this particular client community, as well as for a number of others.

Service provider participants discussed the benefit of having smaller organizations that aim to serve a specific community (i.e., women experiencing abuse, LGBTQ+ refugees, etc.). Newcomer focus group participants also noted that a key aspect of an effective settlement service was cultural competency and specificity; i.e., understanding and meeting the needs of newcomers in their particular cultural context. However, a number of years ago, government funding moved away from funding ethno-specific organizations towards prioritizing multi-service agencies that serve all communities. As discussed in the literature review, small, ethno- and/or population-specific organizations lack core, stable funding. One participant recounted how their ethno-specific organization tried to adapt to this new funding paradigm by providing services geared towards the general population. Unfortunately, their small organization could not compete with larger organizations in this domain, who have the resources to offer a variety of language-specific settlement counsellors.

DIFFICULTIES IN PROVIDING HOLISTIC AND NEEDS-BASED SERVICES

As noted previously, newcomer participants talked about the weaknesses of a universal approach to service delivery, which does not adequately consider the client's unique circumstances and all their diverse goals and needs. Instead, newcomer participants called for responsiveness and "a human approach when dealing with the services instead of going by a model or by a set formula."

Sentiments shared by service provider participants aligned with this, with many noting that providing well-rounded services to newcomers is critical. Current funding systems do not necessarily allow for this, and so organizations must seek multiple sources of funding in order to ensure they are meeting the needs of their diverse clients. Funding their programs "creatively" from a "panoply of funding sources" allows organizations to navigate potential funding restrictions from any one source.

The ability to provide services to clients based on their needs is also a matter of service eligibility, which may shift and vary within a single family. For example, a service provider participant spoke to the challenges eligibility criteria can pose to working with families whose members may have different immigration statuses, and therefore different levels of eligibility for programs, which can also change over time.

❝In order to do well rounded, holistic services, we actually do combine funding from different levels of government and the United Way to provide holistic services for a family. And sometimes the family falls in and out of IRCC eligibility...At different points, they were IRCC eligible and other times they were temporary workers or students, they got married, they had children, they became citizens at some point in the process. And so they were in and out of IRCC eligibility over a 10-year period, but accessing different services at different times."
— service provider participant

Accessing multiple sources of funding can pose challenges, as outlined above around project-based funding, and also requires greater time, resources, and administrative burden, and it impacts the organization's ability to provide full-time, secure jobs if smaller pots of funds are coming from multiple sources with different priorities and timelines.

Even though relationships with clients are vital to good settlement work, the current funding model doesn't allow for relationship building because of the focus on targets and client numbers — it's mostly "as quick as possible, as efficient as possi-

ble, and as cheap as possible," as described by a service provider. The current funding system can limit service providers from developing meaningful relationships with clients and ensuring clients' needs are fully met. With many key staff positions being temporary contracts, it is difficult to maintain community relationships and offer settlement services with a level of consistency.

Overall, participants described government funding as not being very flexible, noting that outcomes must be defined at the outset and then reported on, leaving little room to respond to emerging needs. Generally, funding from foundations tends to have a bit more flexibility. As noted in Alternative Funding and Service Delivery Models, participants called for more core or sustained and flexible funding in response to these challenges: funding that can be based on community needs and priorities, as identified by the organization, rather than funder priorities set nationally or across multiple communities.

Participants from small, grassroots, and POC-led organizations believed that frontline staff are best suited to identify said community needs and priorities as they have the closest relationships to their clients. However, they felt that on-the-ground staff and organizations had a diminished voice in the funding decision-making process. This sentiment was also supported by the literature and identified as a valuable approach for better

serving the most marginalized newcomers. Another barrier to providing holistic and/or needs-based services is the requirement imposed by funders that effectively motivate staff to prioritize quantitative targets such as numbers of new and repeat clients served. As one participant described, the evaluation criteria focuses more on quantity of service rather than quality or outcomes, effectively looking at the number of served clients with no guidelines for "quality" of service. As a result, organizations experience a lot of pressure to meet their targets and a lot of work is focused on this task rather than providing satisfactory services to clients to best meet their needs and support them to achieve their short-, medium-, and long-term settlement and integration goals. The effects of this on quality of service was certainly noticeable to newcomer participants who described programs as wanting to "check boxes."

❝So it makes it challenging to provide this well rounded service just because well rounded means, you know, you're looking at all aspects of this person's needs, and the funder's only funding one."
— service provider participant

❝[With] a lot of programs, it's like they want to check the boxes... It's not about the actual needs of the clients or the differences in their abilities or their opportunities. So there's like a blanket program that's offered to everyone. And I mean, when people have really different needs and you don't take them into consideration the program is bound to be not effective."
— newcomer participant

A service provider from a large, multi-service organization with many staff and targets noted that their organization chose not to share targets with frontline staff. This allows staff to focus on providing quality services and meet the needs of clients, rather than meeting quantitative deliverables. This may only be possible because of their size — the organization has enough resources to balance out the work and still achieve targets. For smaller organizations, with less than one full-time or just a few staff, this approach may not work.

OUTREACH AND PROMOTION TO REACH NEW CLIENTS

Service providers emphasized the importance of adequately funding promotion and advertising. This type of communication is necessary to inform potential clients about their settlement

services and resources, and how to obtain them. It is especially important when it comes to reaching vulnerable and under-served populations, which require extra effort in this area.

On reduced budgets, settlement organizations rely on word-of-mouth, and limited social media campaigns and online publicity to advertise their services and to reach new or more marginalized newcomers. Participants talked about the fact that the most marginalized and vulnerable populations may lack adequate technological literacy or access to computers and the internet itself. As a result, these low-cost outreach options used by settlement agencies to promote their services are wholly insufficient for reaching racialized, under-served, and otherwise marginalized communities.

Despite the efforts of settlement organizations to reach newcomers when they first arrive in Canada, newcomer participants frequently noted that when they first immigrated, they simply had no idea about the existence of settlement services and other resources that, in retrospect, might have been useful to them. Participants described how the information they needed to piece together their lives and navigate Canadian society was unavailable. This was a particular challenge for asylum seekers.

❝I was like, now, where do I start from? I need the right people to tell that I'm seeking refuge. How can I start? And you know, asking people around and no one understood what I was really talking about. Because you don't know exactly what you're looking for."
— newcomer participant

They would have liked information related to job and educational training, career advice, applying for permanent residency and citizenship, and housing subsidies. A number of participants talked about finding out after years in Canada (to their surprise) that these services existed, long after they most needed them.

❝No idea where I could get help for finding a job or where to go to get settlement services. Even no idea about the location of community centres and what services they could provide. Anyway, no information at all."
— newcomer participant

> **First of all, you have to [put in] extra effort in terms of reaching those [who are] hard to reach, and we don't have a good envelope for promotion...Over the years there was a change in terms of how promotion is funded. At one point they said, no settlement agency will get funding for promotion, it should be information centres... So you know, like we have something, but it's not much, and we need more."**
>
> **— service provider participant**

When newcomers did become aware of available settlement services, it was often through word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and colleagues. In almost every instance in which participants described discovering a service that would be useful for them, whether it be English classes, accessing affordable housing, or job training, they had heard of it from someone in their social network. One notable exception to this was among newcomers who had accessed a shelter. The shelter seemed to play a critical role in facilitating their access to a wide variety of other services.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

As detailed in the literature review, funding allocations also have an impact on human resources and the ability of organizations to meet staffing needs and provide stable employment. Participants affirmed that the amount of funding allocated to salaries must keep up with inflation, cost of living, and allow organizations to overcome recruitment challenges. The latter was especially important to Francophone organizations that must recruit fluent French workers who have knowledge of working with newcomers from French-speaking countries, and therefore they have access to a smaller pool of qualified candidates.

> **When we hired a candidate, it was really in terms of salaries and in view of inflation and the rapidly increasing cost of living and competition too. With that, we will have workers since it is not always easy to recruit, even less and less in French. Funding does not really allow power. We can put more money on the table, so to speak, to attract candidates and then keep them."**
>
> **— service provider participant**

In other instances when an organization requires staff who are fluent in specific languages, it can result in several part-time and temporary employment contracts. For example, a participant from a large organization described IRCC funding as "bits and pieces," which has resulted in contracts of one to three hours per week for language-spe-

cific workers. Even though the organization may receive funding for a full-time settlement worker, they must divide the funding to hire multiple staff who can each speak one of the several languages of the communities they serve.

As demonstrated in both of these stories, the ability of organizations to serve non-English speaking populations is highly dependent on their staff capacity.

As organizations transition from entirely virtual service delivery during the pandemic, some service provider participants noted that there is not enough funding for the staff needed to sustain both in-person and virtual programming. Many organizations are grappling with challenges related to hybrid models, noting that virtual and in-person services have different advantages and meet different needs.

Participants indicated that the amount provided from IRCC and other funders for administration is insufficient and restrictive. To illustrate this, a participant shared how their organization would like to share administrative responsibilities and back-house infrastructure with another IRCC-funded organization to make a more efficient model and leverage existing resources. However, this is not something that is supported through the current funding model.

At the same time, another participant indicated that the administrative cap included in most funding allocations is an example of the approach that funders take towards nonprofits — to ensure that overhead remains low and that funding isn't "wasted." However, in reality, nonprofits are very efficient with their funding. In fact, this participant shared that they often try to reallocate admin funding to cover the costs of much-needed but unfunded programs. Overall, participants wanted greater flexibility to determine how to spend the administrative portion of funding.

CHALLENGES FOR ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CURRENT FUNDING AND SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

This section looks at the challenges organizations face in the context of funding and service delivery. We look at the barriers to inter-organization collaboration, the challenges with reporting on program outcomes, and the different experiences in securing funding. We also draw attention to the systemic challenges impacting im/migrants and refugees and the agencies that work with them, including policy and social issues.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN SETTLEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

We asked service providers to reflect on their capacity to collaborate with other im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations. Overall, participants found inter-organization collaboration to be challenging and outlined the various barriers to doing so, including a sense of competition, high output targets, and a lack of funding for collaborative endeavors.

Participants from small, grassroots, ethno-specific, and POC-led organizations repeatedly emphasized the difficulty of inter-organization collabo-

"Chinese Canadian Children Celebrating Canada Day in 1999," by Kalleung, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0

ration, primarily due to the competitiveness of obtaining limited funding. Organizations working to serve similar communities' or clients' needs often have to compete for the same resources, and are thus effectively discouraged from sharing information, as their first priority is to secure funding for their own organization to serve their clients. Smaller organizations with a mandate to serve a specific community or need may face all the more difficulty collaborating as the funding available for their niche population may be highly limited. For example, a participant from an organization working with Black Francophone newcomers discussed how similar organizations compete in the same funding category and thus are demotivated to collaborate with each other.

> **The current funding model puts nonprofits as competitors, we're all fighting for the same piece of pie."**
> **— service provider participant**

Collaboration is also effectively discouraged, in part, by the focus on quantitative outputs imposed by funders — which often includes high targets. As discussed in the previous section and in the literature review, staff in settlement organizations are under great pressure to meet the target numbers, such as new clients served. Several participants reported that to ensure ongoing funding, meeting targets takes precedence over

any potential collaboration, to the ultimate detriment of the clients themselves. Participants noted that some organizations may hesitate to refer clients elsewhere as they feel like the client may not come back to their organization and ultimately they will not get credit for their work or meet their numbers. This may have a negative effect on the quality of services offered to newcomers as organizations may try to take on client issues that they are not specialized in, in order to keep the client and meet their targets, even if the client's needs may best be served at another organization. POC-led organizations also saw the barriers to collaboration as hindering the development of best/promising practices to better meet the needs of racialized newcomers since organizations are not learning from each other.

> **To have a system that sets organizations up to compete against each other for clients, it's not helpful. It is not in the interest of the newcomer. It's the wrong focus. I totally understand the need for accountability and for output/outcome reporting but there needs to be a shift in the underlying principles around it."**
> **— service provider participant**

Service provider participants also talked about how the tracking of outputs for IRCC also hinders collaboration as only one organization can receive

credit for work that was done in partnership for a specific client. One client can however be reported in iCARE as being served by multiple organizations as long as the organizations belong to different categories of service. This means that organizations providing similar services are not able to take credit for serving the same client and are thus discouraged from collaborating — or at least, collaboration becomes complex and requires challenging negotiations around who takes credit for the work. However, this applies more to smaller organizations rather than larger organizations as larger organizations tend to offer multiple services. Thus, they can refer clients to other organizations more freely, as the client can be reported in iCARE as accessing different services in the referring and referred organization. To counter hesitations to refer clients, participants suggested that the referring organization should get some recognition for referring clients beyond what they currently do.

❝It's easier for agencies with different specialties to collaborate with each other because, like you said, under the iCARE, one client can be repeatedly reported across different agencies while they receive different types of categories of services.”
— service provider participant

❝I think the people in this room, we understand and believe in collaboration and partnership and delivering programs. I think the messaging from IRCC can sometimes lead frontline workers to be protective of their cases, not wanting to share clients because of who gets credit, or who enters the data, or who gets the stats, which I think creates an unfortunate barrier to [working collaboratively]…”
— service provider participant

Since the focus on outputs does not provide much flexibility, collaborative initiatives, including partnerships, coalitions, and networks, cannot be effectively resourced and tend to fall on management staff, in addition to many other duties. However, funders also want to see that settlement agencies are collaborating with partners, in reality making it a requirement of the organization. Participants highlighted the significant pressure on managers to build, support, measure, and report on partnerships, on top of their other obligations around overseeing staff, service delivery, and operations of the organization. Therefore, collaboration needs to be better resourced for it to be most effective across the organization, from service delivery and the frontline, to management.

Currently, the funding model inadvertently encourages organizations to work in silos. Several participants stated that any successful collaborations between settlement organizations were done due to their own initiative and in spite of the considerable barriers posed by the funding and service delivery system. However, some participants noted that there are more and more grants asking for a collaborative approach between several partner organizations. One participant also recounted receiving IRCC funding for specialized services in which both internal and external referrals went towards staff target numbers and this was viewed as a successful approach for encouraging collaboration. In this example the referring organization was offering a bridge training program and referred clients to another organization that offered employment supports and mentoring pathways for skilled immigrants.

In addition, service provider participants held a positive perception of the role of LIPs in facilitating connections and collaborations between organizations. LIPs were also seen as playing an important role in facilitating dialogue between the sector and government stakeholders on issues of common interest.

CHALLENGES WITH REPORTING ON PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Many service provider participants held leadership positions and therefore had knowledge of the reporting process and requirements stipulated by funders. As summarized below, participants spoke to the effort required for reporting and gaps in what is measured, and pointed out the impacts on clients and services.

Large and multi-service organizations, with multiple sources of funding, described serious challenges with reporting. It was characterized as a hugely complicated and time-consuming process. Participants, particularly those from large organizations, also described the challenges and difficulties with using the iCARE program, noting that the process is extremely cumbersome when you have a high volume of clients to report on and limited staff capacity for reporting. Participants discussed how each funder administers their funding as if they are the sole funder, which further complicates the reporting process.

Participants also raised concerns with the purpose and impact of data collected through iCARE. Participants felt that what is reported through iCARE is more focused on what IRCC wants to hear and wants to know, rather than what is of interest or benefit to the service provider and the

clients they serve. Participants mentioned that they can't actually analyze any of the iCARE data for themselves to see what can be improved or how they can better plan their programs or serve clients. Participants agreed that the reporting system with IRCC and iCARE discourages referrals, even if they are effective referrals, as discussed in the section on collaboration.

Given that current reporting requirements are heavily focused on outputs and immediate outcomes, several focus group participants mentioned the need to measure quality of service and longer-term outcomes. This sentiment was also identified in the literature review. The focus on immediate outcomes can have a number of negative repercussions. For example, one participant shared that little attention is given to following up on clients and monitoring progress to understand the longer-term outcomes of the program and its effectiveness. Generally, more attention should be given to needs assessment and evaluation.

The current reporting structures, particularly what is required for IRCC funding, also create an additional obstacle to providing holistic services because it does not recognize the intersectional experiences of clients. More so, when holistic services are provided it is covered by multiple sources of funding and therefore requires that a client is counted in different ways, essentially dividing up a client into separate parts. This practice goes

against the fundamentals of holistic, client-centred service provision and makes it challenging for organizations to measure their own impact.

"One of the challenges in a way that when to do a holistic approach…it's not when we receive the funding, it's when we need to do the report. That's the challenge that we have…at my organization, because we try, we do it in a holistic approach, how you can divide… the client in the different reports that we have from different sources, because the client could be a refugee, but at the same time, a victim of violence, but at the same time could be the war traffic person. And we receive funding from these three elements. That's how, how we can divide it. And I think that's one of the challenges as I see [it]."
— service provider participant

SECURING FUNDING: THE DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES OF SMALL AND LARGE ORGANIZATIONS

Some service provider participants from grassroots groups and small organizations discussed the different experiences they face in securing funding compared to large organizations, although this was not something we specifically probed for.

According to small organizations, large organizations have advantages over smaller agencies in the funding process. When applying for funding, large and well-established organizations are in more favourable positions because they can prove their credibility and organizational capacity. Large organizations can demonstrate that they are capable of managing larger amounts of funding based on their current and past experience and existing infrastructure. In this way, small organizations are at a fundamental disadvantage.

Service provider participants from small and grassroots groups noted that often community-led and grassroots groups who are serving newcomers and building up the community receive very limited funding and support. They shared that small organizations do a significant amount of work that frequently goes un/underpaid.

Participants observed that small and grassroots groups are treated much differently when it comes to funding and described delays in the disbursement of funds as a serious problem. Participants from small organizations felt that they are sometimes not a priority and the delays they experience would not happen to large organizations. In fact, one participant reported having to use their personal funds to cover costs to run a program and make purchases because the funding was so late. The same participant noted that their group is currently waiting on three sources of funding that they should have already received. When funding doesn't come through on time, it is very challenging to plan and design programs, and also creates a sense of disappointment in the community.

As previously noted, a service provider representing a Francophone organization also spoke about the specific challenges that Francophone organizations face in securing funding, noting that Francophone groups must compete with each other for the same funding envelope. Black- and POC-led Francophone organizations, which often have less capacity, are at a disadvantage within this competitive process.

Focus group participants representing large organizations were asked about the ways in which they can — and already do — support small organizations and grassroots groups. Focus group participants valued the unique work of grassroots groups, which are usually place-based, issue-specific, or youth-focused.

Since grassroots and residents groups are usually unable to meet funders' criteria to receive ongoing funding, large organizations can, and often do, act as trustees and/or mentors. Some large organizations prioritize working with non-incorporated or non-charitable groups with trusteeships, since without the trusteeships these groups would be ineligible for a vast array of funding. At the same

time, it is important to note that funders can ask for a lot of details and requirements around trusteeships and this requires work, diligence, and support from the trusteeing agency.

Large organizations have also supported small and grassroots groups through letters of support for their funding applications.

Support for small/grassroots groups can also be seen in the sharing of policies, protocols, and procedures that have been developed by large organizations. This saves the small groups from having to start from scratch when developing their own policies. Large agencies also mentioned how they can invite small organizations to join in their staff training opportunities.

Service provider participants also pointed out the rise in micro grants during the pandemic, and highlighted the different ways that small amounts of money are getting to grassroots groups that had previously not been on funders' radars. United Way Greater Toronto, Toronto Community Foundation, City of Toronto, and Woodgreen were named as examples of organizations offering micro grant funding. It was noted that capacity building is sometimes a helpful component to complement micro grants.

> "The good entities who are serving newcomers and building the community, especially community[-led], grassroot organizations, any other form of group, they are developing the community each and every day. And the funding and support [for these groups] are very low. Very limited."
> — service provider participant

SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES

During the focus groups, service providers raised some policy, structural, and systemic issues that impact settlement services and the realities of newcomers. While these challenges may be beyond the scope of this project, they are important to keep in mind as we look towards new models, and developing solutions and improved settlement pathways.

For example, a participant working in pre-arrival services maintained that greater transition time between pre-arrival and post-arrival services is needed, especially for those supporting the recognition of foreign credentials. Further, the same participant noted that the assessment process for foreign credentials is incredibly cumbersome and takes a very long time, much longer than Internationally Educated Professionals often realize before coming to Canada.

Participants understood that the decisions made by the government regarding immigration, asylum, and related services can be political, which in turn affects the immigration process, eligibility, distribution of funding among settlement services, and so on. Specifically, the immigration system for refugee claimants was suggested to be unfair and prioritizing certain groups based on political circumstances. For example, participants highlighted unequal treatment between Syrian, Afghan, and African refugees, and noted the additional support and expedited process afforded to individuals arriving from Syria and Ukraine.

❝All of the support that I see us giving to other folks who use our services are supports that I would have liked to have when I first came to Canada. Especially now, seeing people from Syria and Ukraine get all the support they need when they first come here are definitely supports I wish were available to us when we came here."
— newcomer participant

Service providers, particularly those representing POC-led organizations and non-traditional settlement organizations, talked about the lack of government funding and support for refugee claimants and how this is politically driven. Service providers also argued that the lack of supports to

help refugee claimants prepare for their hearing is an access-to-justice issue. Service providers noted that these gaps exist despite national and international policies that uphold the rights of refugees, such as the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They stressed that "the federal government has an enduring role to anybody that's here seeking refugee status," whether they are here as Convention refugees or otherwise.

Participants emphasized that it is not only the settlement sector that influences newcomers' experiences of settling in Canada. The experience and process is also impacted by chronic underfunding of affordable housing and homelessness services, health and mental health services, food security programs, and so on. The need to adequately fund and expand access to a broad spectrum of social and community services will support newcomers and im/migrants in their settlement process, especially those who experience multiple and intersecting challenges.

The use of the term "settlement services" was also questioned during our research. A participant from a POC-led organization pointed out that this term has negative connotations and roots in colonialism. Instead, they suggested "newcomer services" would be a better, more inclusive alternative.

Participants recognized that structural barriers and systemic discrimination, including racism, xenophobia, and sexism, are embedded in our institutions and society. This in turn impacts who can access services, which services receive funding, the quality of services provided, and more. While service providers recognized the influence they can have over this — for example, by encouraging everyone who is eligible, including newcomers, to vote — they admitted that they are not fully exercising this power. This is, at least in part, due to lack of dedicated funding and fear that it may jeopardize their current funding. Participants made reference to the reluctance amongst many organizations, including IRCC-funded agencies, to engage in any activities that may be perceived as political or advocating against the government. In addition to CRA rules, all IRCC funding agreements include a Lobbying and Advocacy clause that limits when, how, and if organizations can advocate against federal policies or programs.

A participant from a non-traditional settlement agency, which does not receive IRCC funding, observed: "I think one of the problems that the settlement services have with IRCC is that they won't fund the slightest bit of advocacy work." The participant went on to explain that their organization will often take on lobbying, advocacy, and organizing on issues important to the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector that settlement agencies can't take on themselves.

Overall, the federal government's direction has been for settlement agencies to focus on direct service rather than addressing the root causes. As a participant put it, "CRA [Canada Revenue Agency] once made it clear that preventing poverty is not charitable work. Alleviating poverty is charitable work, and that's the mindset that you're dealing with any government."

❝ If we want to see change in how… the dollars are rationed, how the funding is rationed, we have to be in positions that make those decisions, or at least influence those decisions."
— service provider participant

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING AND SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

Service provider participants were asked to share any promising practices in community-centred and/or community-governed and participatory grantmaking and service delivery models. Although feedback on this topic was minimal — participants had less to share on this topic and not all of the focus groups covered this question due to time constraints — the comments and ideas are summarized below. These data contribute to our understanding of the current level of knowledge within the sector of alternative, community-centred funding and service delivery models.

Service provider participants highlighted the various ways in which collaboration can be encouraged — and competition discouraged — through the granting process. For example, funders can specifically require grant applicants to collaborate, either through multiple co-applicants or through the outlined activities.

Group funding, including service collaboratives, was raised as especially relevant to the settlement sector and worth further exploration. It was suggested that IRCC could consider pilot funding for a service collaborative in a particular geographic or ethno-racial community. This model, which would proactively support collaboration, could be built on existing funding allocations, with a small top up to cover the initial costs of setting up the collaborative structure and processes. One participant shared an example of how this model was explored within the early years sector about 15 years ago. The process was described as combining a geographical lens and a collaborative approach. The organization(s) in each geographical riding was/were allocated an estimated $500,000–$1,000,000. In some geographies there was only one organization operating but in other ridings, complex consortiums were formed and organizations engaged in a participatory deci

sion-making process to determine who would be the lead and how the money would be spent.[11]

Throughout the conversations with settlement service providers — traditional and non-traditional alike — support for core funding emerged. Overall, settlement service providers would like to see more flexible, core funding, particularly from IRCC. A move toward this type of funding model was seen as deeply tied to being able to provide responsive and client-centred services, as confirmed by our service provider participants as well as existing literature.

> **"A better model is to look more at operating style grants, which basically says they look at your organization, they look at what you're serving, and they say, Okay, we'll provide you this, you know, amount of money to go ahead and do the kinds of things that you say that your community needs, we've gotten a few or I've seen a few of those grants. And I think those are really the way to go."**
> **— service provider participant**

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11. We have reached out to sector partners about this funding model and will explore it further through key informant interviews. While we have found little documentation about this sector-led funding model, it seems to have resembled a closed collective focused on supporting local needs through Ontario early years programming.

To support this shift, one participant suggested that IRCC consider a two-stage process for selecting service providers and allocating funding with the intention of making the process less competitive. Through an open RFP process, settlement organizations could apply for accreditation to deliver services that would be based on service quality measures. The participant suggested that following the selection of organizations, funding or units of services be distributed in a more collaborative way, thereby limiting competition and the tendency of organizations to undercut and to overstate the number of clients served.

SECTION 6: KEY FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

The insights gathered through the literature and directly from newcomers and service providers clearly demonstrate that there is room for improving the current funding and service delivery model to better meet the full and diverse range of needs of im/migrants and refugees. With an emphasis on high quantitative targets, strict eligibility requirements, and predetermined priorities that may not match local and evolving needs, the current model limits how responsive im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations can be.

For instance, finding suitable employment is a common and serious challenge among newcomers on their settlement and integration journey. The employment challenges shared by newcomer participants, many of whom were racialized, is reflective of the racism embedded in the Canadian labour market as documented in research. For example, a 2019 study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives found that racialized immigrants have worse labour market outcomes than non-racialized immigrants. More so, this gap is persistent, affecting the second and third generations — and beyond (Block, Galabuzi & Tranjan, 2019). Many settlement services, however, offer generic employment supports like interviewing tips and support with cover letter writing. In the

face of funding constraints, service providers have little room to adopt their programs to meet the unique and unequal challenges faced by racialized newcomers.

It is also important to consider why experiences of racism and racial discrimination were rarely named as such, despite our efforts to reach racialized newcomers and ask about their experiences of exclusion. Im/migrants may understand race, racialization, and racism in ways that are different from the dominant narrative in Canada. For example, we heard that many newcomers did not identify with the terms "person of colour" or "racialized" person. In addition, connecting one's individual experiences to racism or discrimination often requires an analysis of power, institutions, and systems, and can be a complicated process, particularly in environments that are new or in contexts where bias and unfair treatment based on race, status, or other experiences are more subtle. At the same time, participants may have been hesitant to share these types of stories as we did not specifically probe for them; these experiences may have felt too personal or unrelated to the topics at hand.

The research further illustrates the necessity of sufficient and flexible resources for organizations to ensure a strong workforce and administrative systems that can maintain high-quality service standards, and effective reporting, data, and

collaboration capabilities. The funding model has clear implications for organizational capacity, and the ability of im/migrant- and refugee-serving agencies to effectively deliver on their mandates and address community needs.

While priorities for funding are often set at federal and provincial levels to help match resources to socio-demographic data and critical newcomer needs, organizations at the local level are better equipped to identify gaps and evolving needs, and address them. If organizations have sufficient resources and operate in flexible environments, they can nimbly meet needs, collaborate and coordinate with others, and share data on shifts in newcomer needs in ways that can then be fed into decision-making and priority-setting at a system-wide level.

The current funding system seems to favour larger, multi-service, multi-ethnic organizations. Meanwhile, the research revealed the important role that organizations that target specific populations — such as women and specific ethnocultural communities — play in reaching and providing culturally and linguistically relevant services to under-served and hard-to-reach groups. Furthermore, Cabral (2000) argues that ethno-specific agencies are also more likely to "be cognisant of the immigrant experience and needs arising from dislocation, disempowerment, racism and particular value systems which may not be met

by the dominant culturally specific services" (p. 12 as cited in Bushell & Shields, 2018). Despite these valuable contributions, ethno-specific organizations and those led by people of colour are often smaller in size and capacity, and for this reason report being disadvantaged in the funding process. Their size and capacity, part of which makes them effective, also makes them less competitive compared to larger, multi-service organizations.

At the same time, members of the Toronto South LIP identified entrenched inequalities in the ways services are funded and organized as a primary cause of inequitable service access for racialized and other under-served newcomer populations. This was supported by the data gathered through this environmental scan, which pointed to lack of capacity to serve newcomers who have more precarious immigration statuses, including undocumented individuals, international students, refugee claimants, and temporary foreign workers, despite a significant need. In particular, we heard from service providers that this is an issue of socio-economic inequity tied to race and class that calls for collaboration, and policy and systems change advocacy, from the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector.

Although the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector has long called for an expansion of IRCC eligibility criteria to allow organizations to serve all newcomers requiring support, their capacity

to advocate, on this and other pressing system issues, is quite limited. Local Immigration Partnerships, along with umbrella organizations, bring together relevant stakeholders and facilitate dialogue between the sector and government. Meanwhile, individual organizations that work most closely with newcomer communities play a valuable role in bringing forward issues around gaps and inequities, to inform important systems change work. However, many lack capacity, and virtually no organizations have dedicated funding for community engagement and systems change work. The ability to take on this type of work is essential to addressing the root causes of the social and racial injustices faced by newcomers.

The Toronto South LIP catchment includes many im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations that offer both traditional and non-traditional settlement services, spanning from arts-based programming to language instruction, from shelter support to access to justice, and more. However, in the landscape of this vast array of newcomer-serving organizations and services, there have been challenges around coordinating and ensuring that services for all newcomers are offered through a holistic lens. While newcomers called for comprehensive programming that considers their unique circumstances, the organizations and groups that are funded through various levels of government and other funders, through both settlement and many other program fund-

ing streams, understandably continue to struggle with delivering a seamless continuum of services that includes full wrap-around supports. More so, evaluation of outcome measures that capture service quality and longer-term results of settlement services is needed to understand and improve programming.

Recognizing the clear need for improvement in the current funding and service delivery model, through our literature review as well as insights from focus group participants, we have learned that other models exist that are more responsive to community needs. Specifically, the literature review explored a number of models that centre community needs by engaging community members themselves and community-based organizations in various aspects of funding, governance, and defining service delivery systems. While this field of community-centred and participatory grantmaking seems to still be emerging, and there are examples that have been implemented that are not well documented, we have gained some new insights and see some very promising possibilities. Exploring these community-centred alternative models appears to be an important next step.

The literature and our other research findings clearly point to interest and evidence to support a different kind of funding and service delivery model that centres and engages newcomers and

the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector more fully. The next phase of this project will explore this and co-design the foundation for an alternative model of funding and service delivery that incorporates the perspectives, needs, and realities of racialized and other marginalized newcomer communities and the organizations that serve them. We hope this new model will offer ways to more effectively centre newcomers, reimagine relationships between and amongst funders and im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations, and strengthen the system so that it meets the needs of diverse newcomers, particularly those most marginalized.

TOWARD AN INNOVATIVE AND COMMUNITY-CENTRED FUNDING AND SERVICE COORDINATION MODEL FOR THE TORONTO SOUTH AREA

In this section, we consider the potential benefits of a new, alternative model, and we identify what elements could be further explored in the next phase of the project — the co-design phase — with a goal of creating a community-centred model that will increase equitable access to services for newcomers in the Toronto South area.

Building upon the research we uncovered, there seems to be tremendous opportunity to reimagine the funding and service delivery model to:

- enable settlement and other im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations to respond to emerging and urgent local needs and support under-served newcomer populations.

- improve equitable access to services for the most marginalized newcomers, including those who would be excluded from settlement programs due to program eligibility restrictions.

- ensure that settlement services address the needs of newcomer populations through an asset-based framework that builds off of their existing strengths and capacities.

- increase funding access and build the capacity for organizations that face barriers to accessing traditional settlement funding and, in turn, increase equitable access to services for the marginalized newcomers that these organizations serve; this may include small, grassroots, women-serving–women-led, and POC-led settlement agencies.

- facilitate relationships, peer learning, and collaboration and reduce competition among im/migrant- and refugee-serving organizations through their participation in the model, thus leading to improved outcomes for newcomers.

- value and support the empowerment of marginalized newcomers and settlement

service providers, fostering leadership, improved connection, and social capital — so those most impacted by inequitable systems play a critical role in changing them.

- support more impactful funding decisions through a model that fosters and appreciates diverse and equitable participation from clients, service providers, and other stakeholders.

- provide sufficient funding and establish funding criteria to support good jobs that can help build a stronger sector and ecosystem of organizations working with im/migrant and refugee populations.

- develop and implement data and evaluation strategies as part of the implementation of the model that enable greater data sharing, quicker cycles of learning, and feedback loops, leading to better decisions across the broader system to meet current and local newcomer needs.

- utilize the leadership, networks, and relationships established through TSLIP to support this work.

- document learnings from the process to support better funding and service coordination approaches for more equitable service access across multiple systems and sectors.

Building upon Part Two of the literature review, where we explored collaborative governance, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking, we have identified the following key components and critical questions for further exploration and consideration in the co-design of the model:

Purpose and Approach

- What is the purpose of the model? What outcomes do we want to achieve?

- How will newcomers, organizations, and other stakeholders be involved in defining the purpose and priority outcomes?

- What is the role of data and research in identifying priorities?

- What are the guiding principles that will underpin and lead the co-design and implementation of the model?

Structures and Roles

- Who is involved in the model, and what is their role?

- Who is missing that should be involved in this work?

- What is the role of newcomers in the model?

- What committees or structures are needed to fulfill the purpose?

- Will the model use rolling, open, or closed collectives, or shared gifting circles?

- Will the model adopt new/unique structures such as Community Entities and Community Advisory Boards?

- Is there one or more lead organization(s) with the capacity to serve in a Community Entity–type role?

- What steps need to be taken and documents developed to establish a collaborative governance framework?

- How will the structure and roles ensure that newcomers are at the centre of the work?

- What supports will newcomers receive to facilitate their participation (e.g., honorarium)?

- Are there barriers to participation for other participants? How can those barriers be addressed?

- How will the model facilitate the participation of small, grassroots, women-serving–women-led, and POC-led organizations?

- What is the role of the funder in the model?

- Who will provide strong and impartial facilitation to support collaboration and trust-building?

- What type and level of participation will newcomers, sector organizations, and other stakeholders play?

- Does everyone involved understand the roles and structures within the model and their role in the work?

- Is there any role confusion between the model and existing groups, such as TSLIP, that needs to be clarified?

- What are the conditions that would have to be in place for the model to be able to be implemented?

Governance and Accountability

- Who will be held responsible for the overall outcomes of this new model and approach? How will governance and accountability be assigned and clarified across various structures, roles, and stakeholder groups?

- How will the model ensure accountability to newcomers, particularly those with the greatest barriers to service access?

- How will internal accountability be ensured among participants?

- How will conflicts of interest be identified and addressed?

- Are there privacy or security concerns to be addressed?

- Who is responsible to the funder, and how will accountability be ensured?

- How will the work advance broader social justice goals such as reconciliation, anti-racism, and gender equity?

Processes

- What processes will be used to carry out this work?

- What processes will facilitate an inclusive and equitable environment for participation?
- What processes will encourage co-operation and reduce competition?
- What processes will support transparency while also ensuring that privacy and confidentiality are maintained where appropriate?
- How will the group make decisions? Are there circumstances where a consensus must be achieved?
- What processes will help to address power imbalances within the group?
- What processes will be used to resolve conflict?
- How will capacity building needs be identified and supported?
- How will outreach be conducted to ensure diverse participation and representation of newcomers facing the greatest barriers to service access?

Data and Evaluation

- How will the model be evaluated?
- What does success look like? Who decides?
- How will equitable access to services be assessed?
- What data will be collected or are available to support this work?

- Who will collect and analyze the data and conduct evaluation?
- Who owns the data?
- Who will the data be shared with?
- How can the data be used to support the purpose of the work?
- How will confidentiality and privacy issues be addressed?

Resources

- What assets and resources are available to support this work?
- Are the resources sufficient to carry out the work appropriately?
- Are funds sufficient to support good jobs related to this work?

Guided by these initial questions, and drawing on the lessons learned from collaborative governance practices, delegated decision-making, and participatory grantmaking approaches, the project team will engage with newcomers, sector organizations, and other stakeholders to advance model development, testing and refinement.

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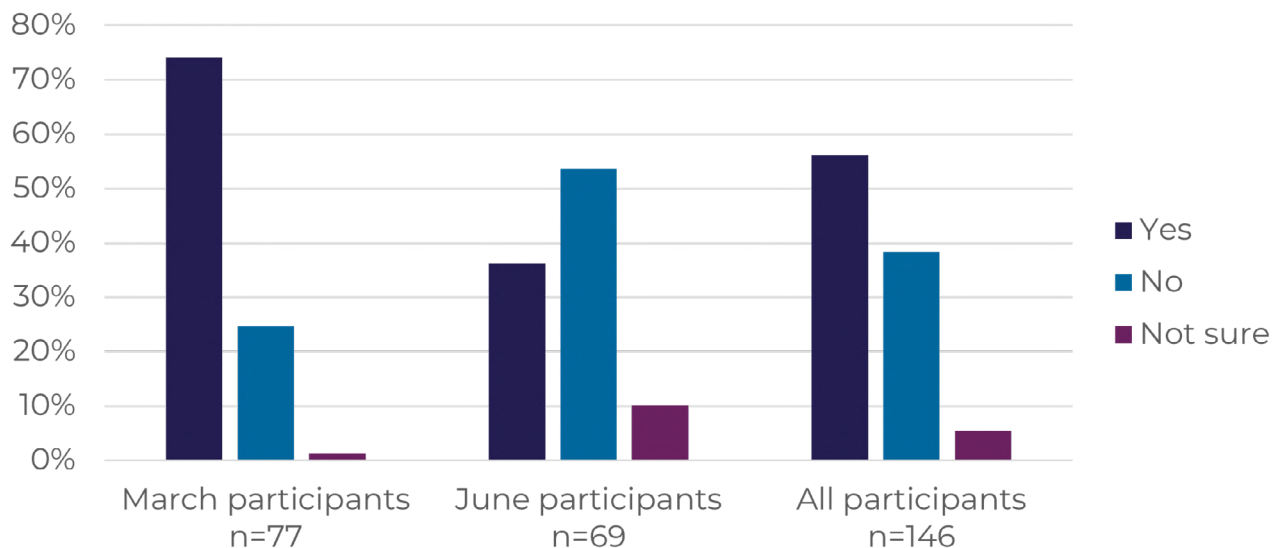
APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NEWCOMER PARTICIPANTS

Throughout the environmental scan a total of 142 individuals participated in focus groups with newcomers. In March 2022, we engaged 60 newcomer participants and received 77 demographic surveys. In June 2022, we engaged 82 newcomer participants and received 69 demographic surveys. This section summarizes the results of the 146 demographic surveys that we received. To demonstrate the shifts in the two rounds of focus groups, the data are presented for March participants, June participants, and for all participants across both rounds of focus groups. Four new questions were added to the demographic survey when it was distributed in June and therefore results for these questions are only listed for June participants.

PRIOR USE OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES

In our March round of focus groups we targeted newcomers who had previous experience with settlement services. However, in June we looked to hear from newcomers who had not used settlement services. For both rounds of focus groups we asked participants whether they had used settlement services before (Figure A1).

Figure A1: Prior Use of Settlement Services

AGE, GENDER, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Across both rounds of focus groups, we heard from a similar number of adults aged 18–34 and adults aged 35–64. However, less than 10% of participants were 65 years and older (Figure A2). The majority of participants were female (65.8% across all focus groups) and 32.9% were male (Figure A3).

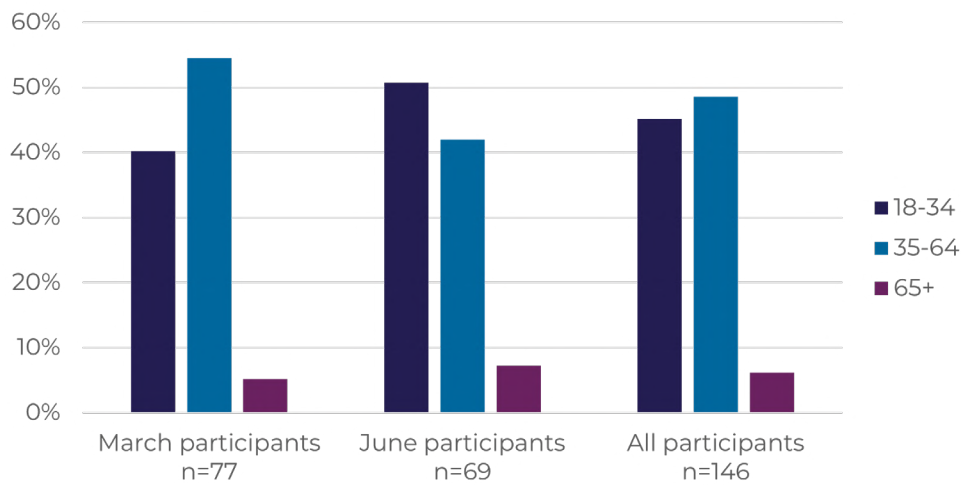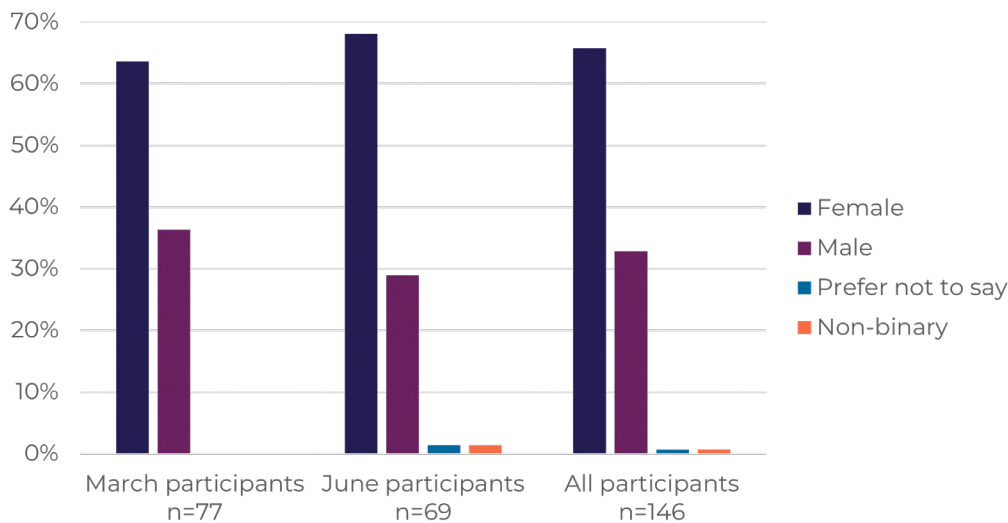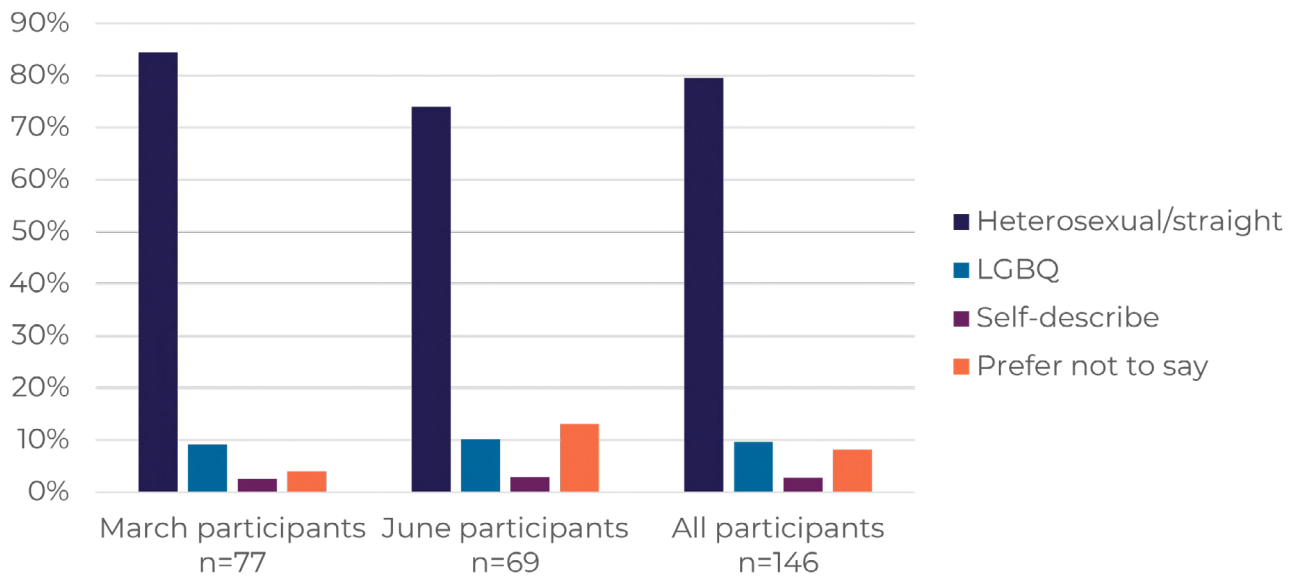**Figure A2: Percent of Participants by Age Group**

Figure A3: Percent of Participants by Gender

When asked about their sexual orientation, the majority of respondents identified as straight/heterosexual. In addition, 10% of all participants identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer (LGBTQ), 3% preferred to self-describe, and 8% preferred not to answer the question (Figure A4).

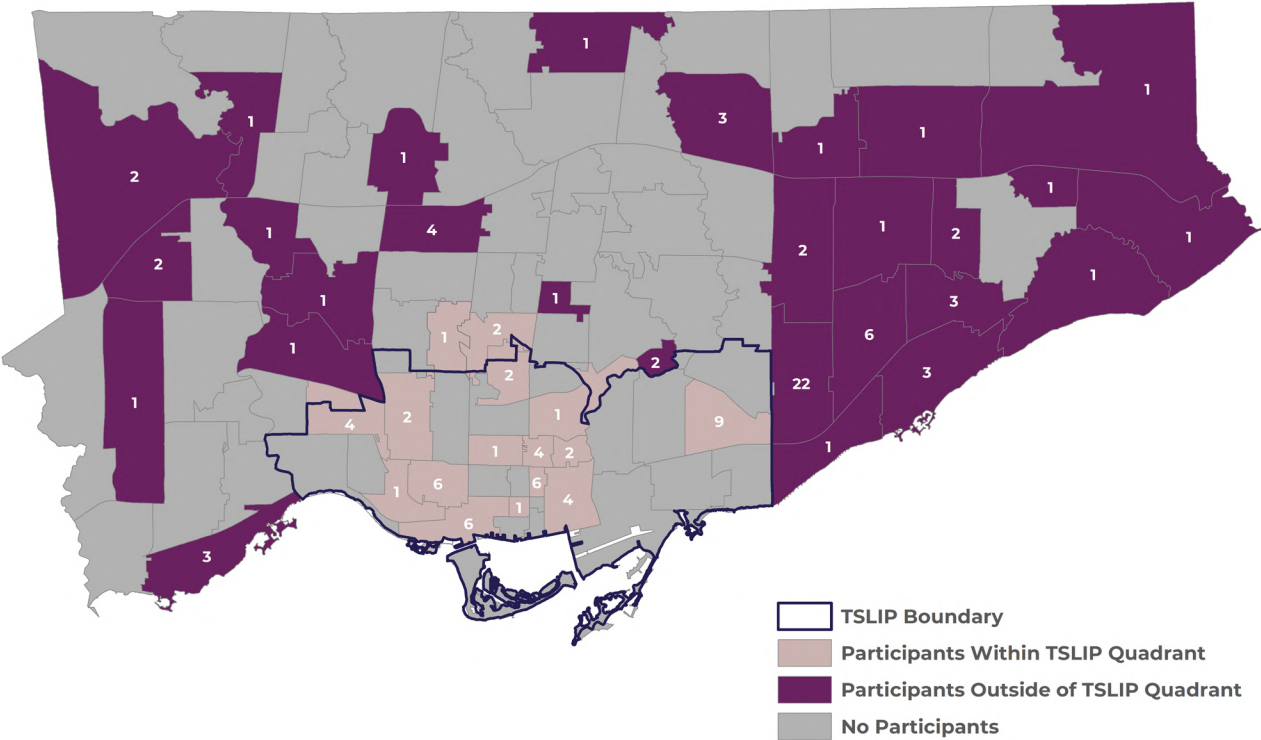**Figure A4: Percent of Participants by Sexual Orientation**

Legend:
- Heterosexual/straight
- LGBQ
- Self-describe
- Prefer not to say

Categories: March participants n=77, June participants n=69, All participants n=146

LOCATION OF RESIDENCE

Survey respondents were asked to provide the first three characters of their postal code (the Forward Sortation Area). To this question, 141 survey respondents provided a valid response. Of these respondents, 121 lived in the city of Toronto.

While the FSA boundaries do not perfectly align with the Toronto South LIP quadrant boundaries, we can see from the map below that 52 participants lived in an FSA that falls partially or entirely within the TSLIP quadrant. Thirty participants lived in an FSA that borders the TSLIP quadrant, and many others live nearby, suggesting they may travel to the Toronto South area to access services.

Figure A5: Number of Participants by Forward Sortation Area, City of Toronto (n=121)

Legend:
- TSLIP Boundary
- Participants Within TSLIP Quadrant
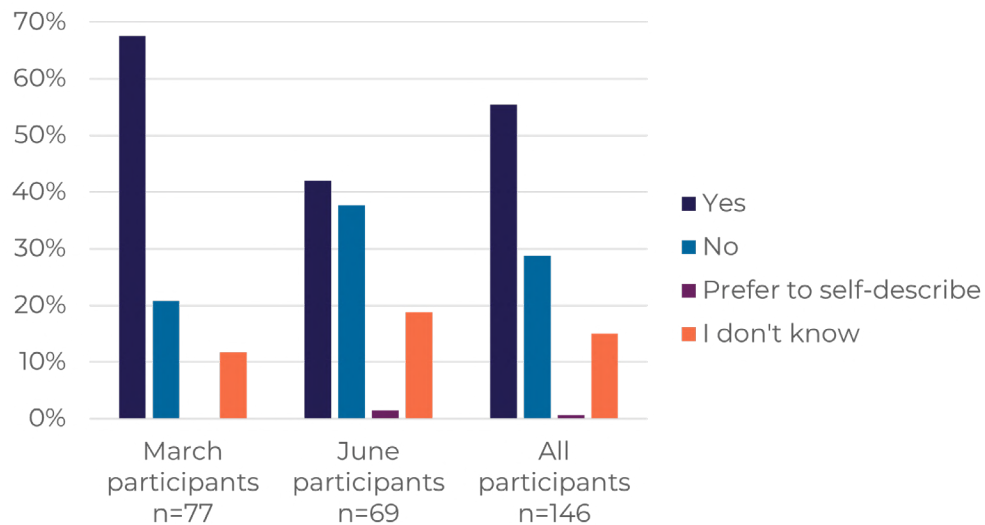- Participants Outside of TSLIP Quadrant
- No Participants

RACIALIZED BACKGROUND, ETHNICITY AND LENGTH OF TIME IN CANADA

Survey respondents were asked the question, *do you self-identify with the label visible minority or person of colour?* Figure A6 shows that a greater percentage of March participants identified as racialized (68%) when compared to June participants (42%).

Figure A6: Percent of Participants by Self-Identification as a Visible Minority or Person of Colour

In our June round of focus groups, we also asked survey respondents the question, *what is your ethnic origin?* (n=69). Participants identified with a diversity of ethnic backgrounds.

Table A1: Ethnicity of Participants who Participated in a Focus Group in June 2023 (n=69)

ETHNIC ORIGIN	COUNT
Black	24
South Asian	18
Arab	11
Chinese	5
Latin American	3
Southeast Asian	2
Sudanese	1
African	1
West Asian	1
Middle Eastern	1
Filipino	1

LENGTH OF TIME IN CANADA AND LEGAL STATUS

Figure A7 shows the distribution of participants by length of time in Canada. The June round of focus groups saw a higher proportion of newcomers that had been in Canada for less than one year (35% compared to 16%).

Survey respondents were asked to share their legal status in Canada. Most individuals were permanent residents, followed by Canadian citizens (Figure A8).

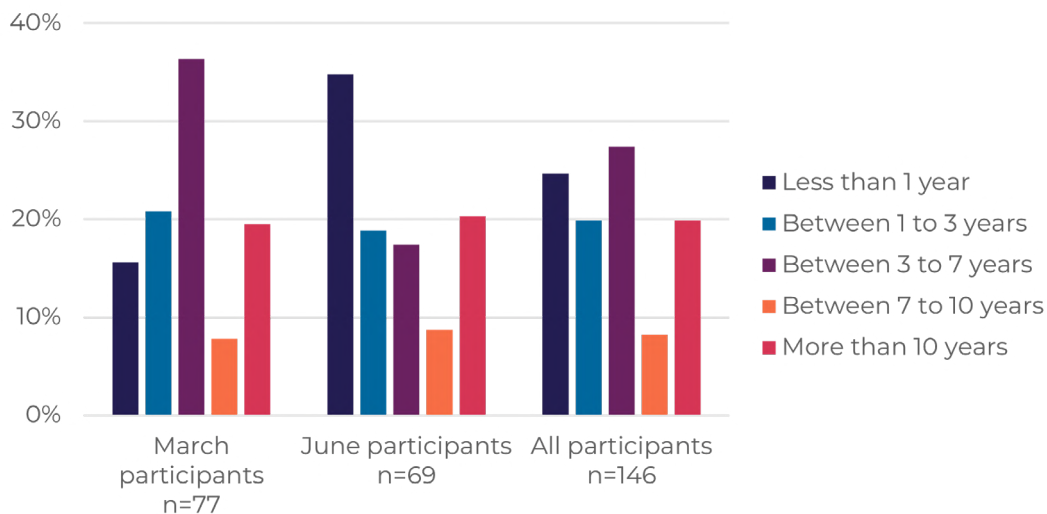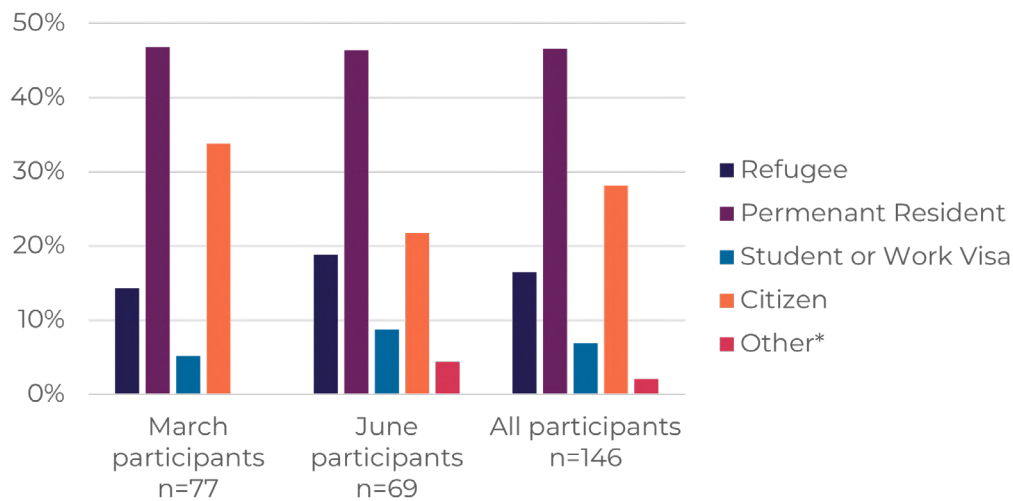**Figure A7: Percent of Participants by Length of Time in Canada**

Figure A8: Participants by Legal Status in Canada

*Other included refugee claimants and under process for permanent residency.

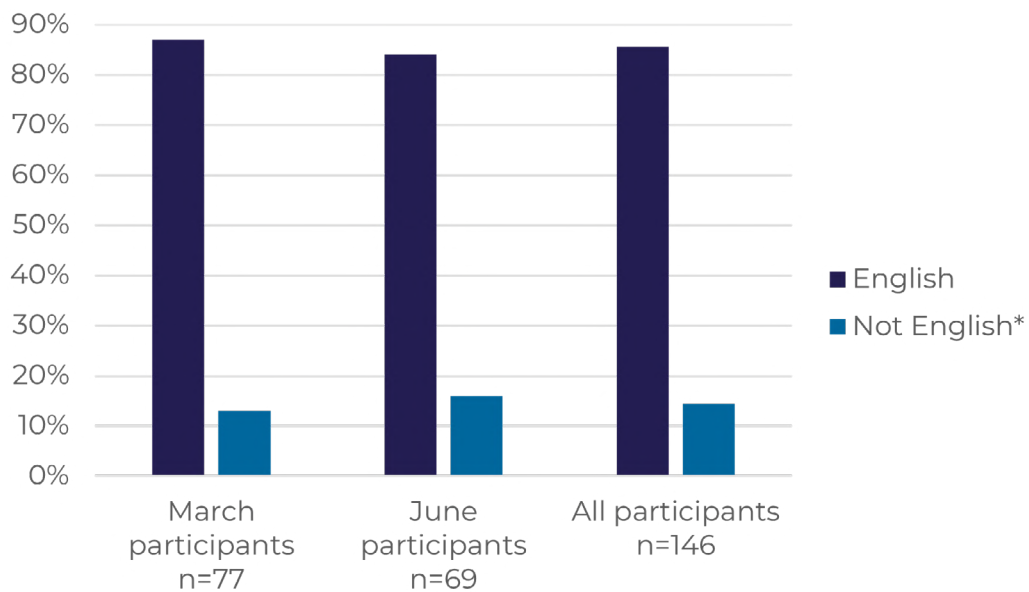# COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
(JUNE ONLY)

In June, we asked survey respondents the question, *what is your country of origin?* Sixty-nine survey respondents identified 26 different countries:

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Burundi
- China
- Ecuador
- Ethiopia
- Gambia
- India
- Iran
- Israel
- Jamaica

- Kenya
- Libya
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Palestine
- Philippines
- Somalia
- South Korea
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
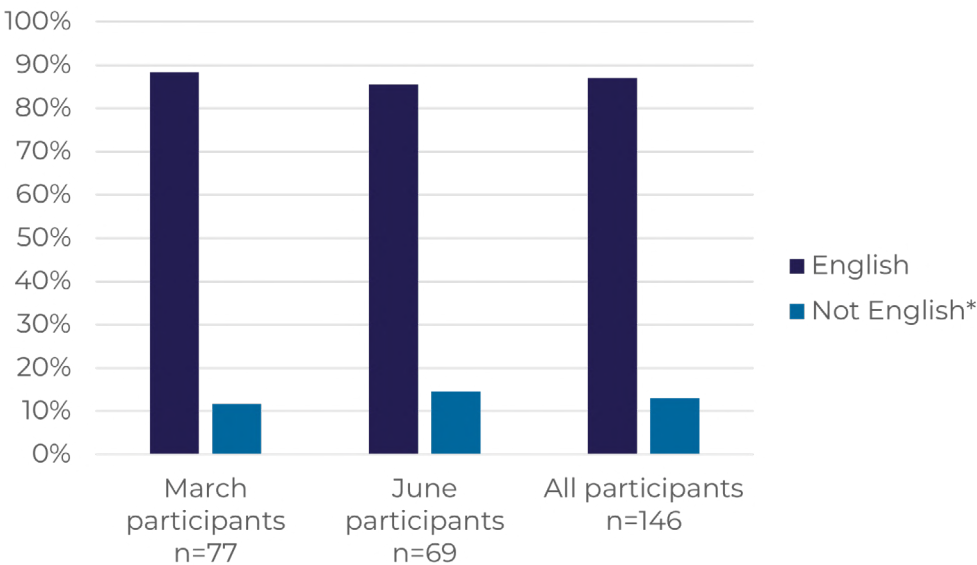- Syria
- Uganda
- Yemen

LANGUAGE

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their preferred language of written communication and spoken communication separately. Figure A9 and Figure A10 show the majority of participants across both rounds of focus groups prefer writing and speaking in English.

Figure A9: Percent of Participants by Preferred Written Language

*Languages included Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Mandarin, Persian, and Tamil.

Figure A10: Percent of Participants by Preferred Spoken Language

*Languages included Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Mandarin, Persian, and Tamil.

In June, we also asked survey respondents, *what is your home language?* Among the 69 survey respondents, 27 languages were identified:

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Cantonese
- Chinese
- Dari
- English
- Filipino
- French
- Hebrew
- Kirundi
- Korean
- Luganda
- Luo
- Mandarin
- Persian
- Portuguese (Brazilian)
- Punjabi
- Runyankole
- Setswana
- Sonike
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Tamil
- Tigrigna
- Urdu
- Yoruba

In June, we also asked survey respondents, *what language do you communicate in the most?* Respondents could include more than one language in their response. Among the 69 respondents, 21 individuals included English in their response. Seventeen additional languages were identified:

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Cantonese
- Dari
- English
- Filipino
- French
- Hindi
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Persian
- Soninke
- Spanish
- Tamil
- Tigrigna
- Urdu

FAMILY COMPOSITION

Survey respondents were asked about their relationship status (Figure A11). Most respondents were married/in a relationship.

Survey respondents were also asked *do you have any dependants?* and could select all applicable answer options (Figure A12).

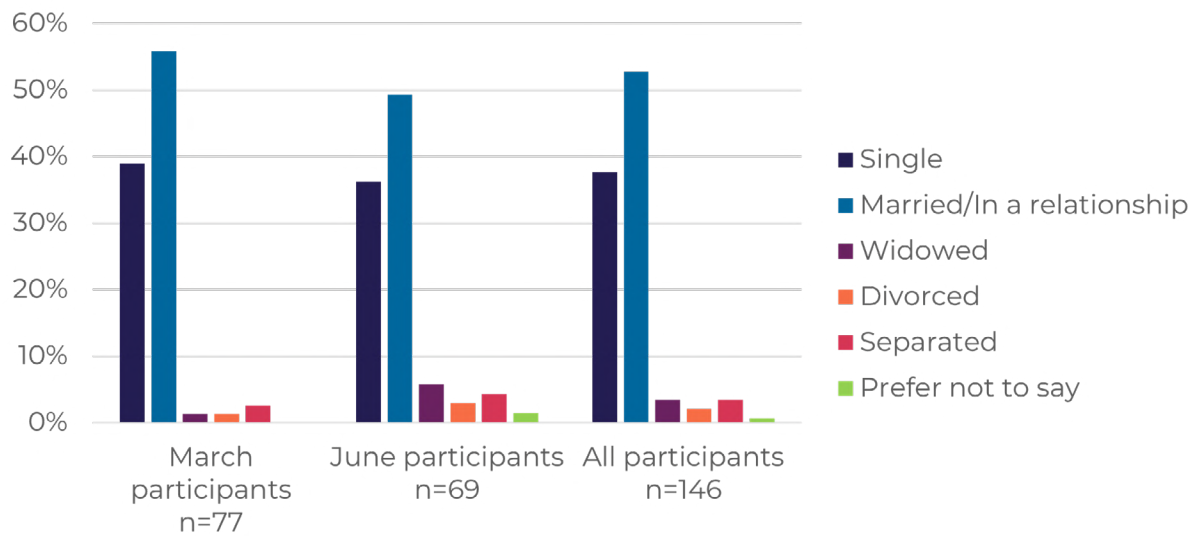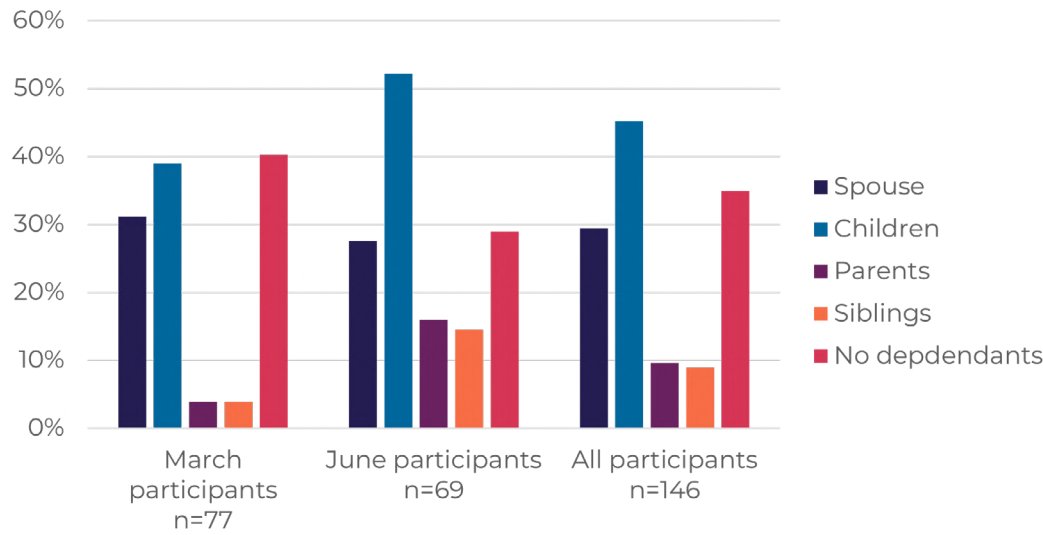### Figure A11: Percent of Participants by Relationship Status

Figure A12: Dependents of Participants

RELIGION

Figure A13 shows the religion of participants. Across both rounds of focus groups, Muslim was the most common religion identified, followed by Christian.

DISABILITY STATUS

Participants were asked whether they identify as someone with a disability. Nineteen percent of March participants and 10% of June participants answered yes.

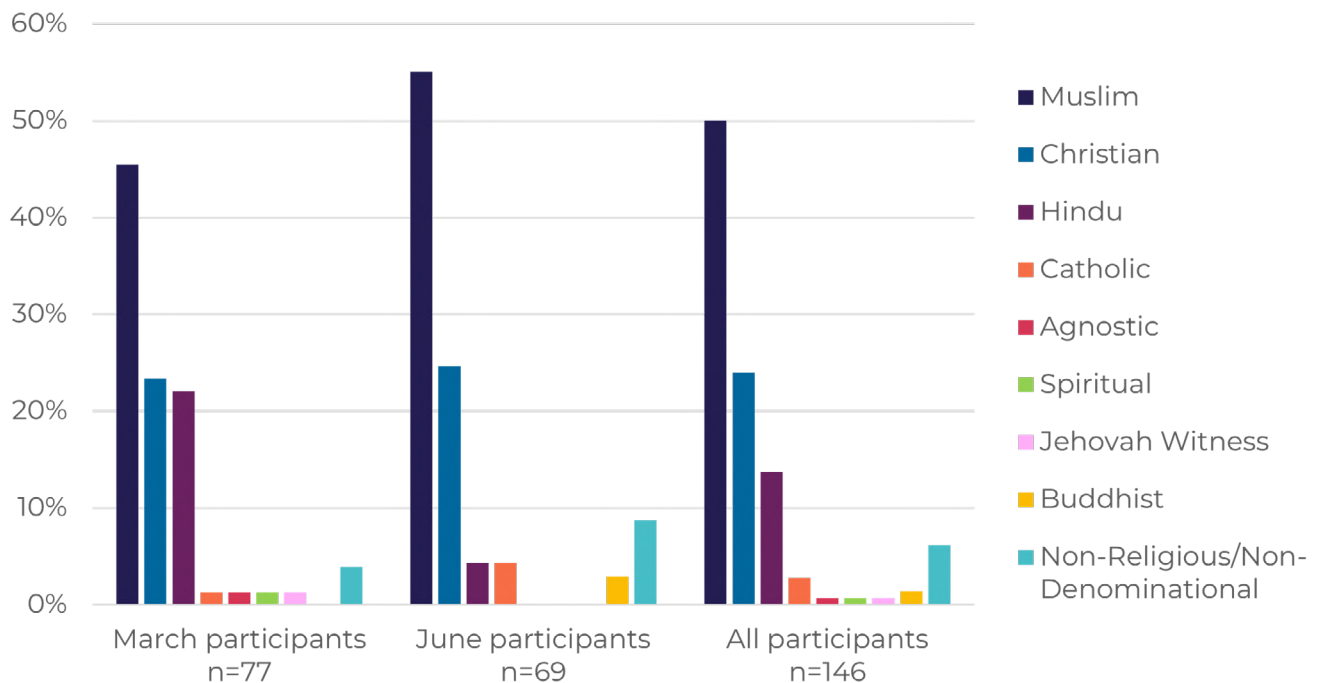**Figure A13: Percent of Participants by Religion**
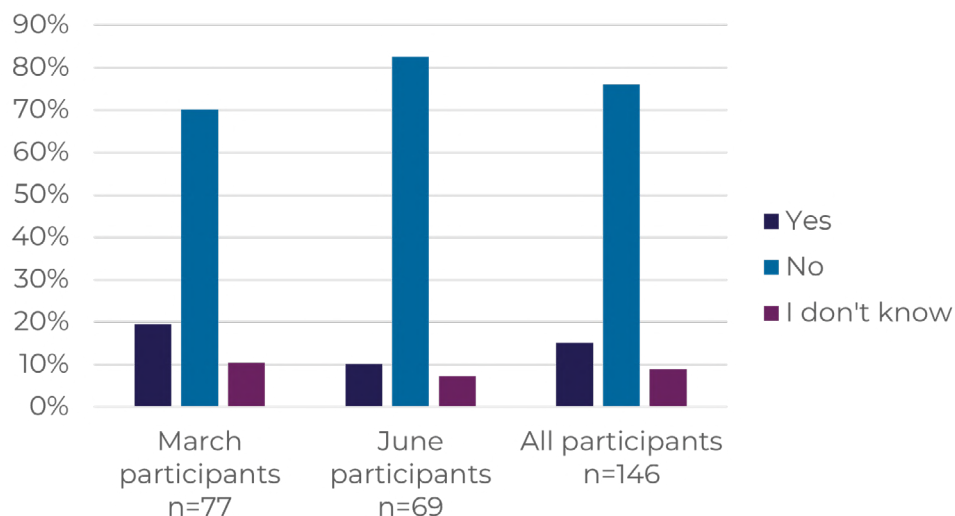

Legend:
- Muslim
- Christian
- Hindu
- Catholic
- Agnostic
- Spiritual
- Jehovah Witness
- Buddhist
- Non-Religious/Non-Denominational

Figure A14: Percent of Participants by Disability Status

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- I don't know

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

We also asked respondents about their highest level of education. The responses received to this question shifted slightly from the March to June rounds of focus groups (Figure A15). In March, approximately 87% of participants had some post-secondary education. However, in our June round of focus group, this percentage went down slightly to 68%.

The employment status of survey respondents also slightly shifted between the March and June rounds of focus groups (Figure A16). While the March round of focus groups engaged slightly more individuals who were employed full-time, we also had a slightly higher percentage of individuals unemployed or looking for work. The June round of focus groups engaged slightly more stay-at-home caregivers, part-time workers, and individuals unable to work and retired.

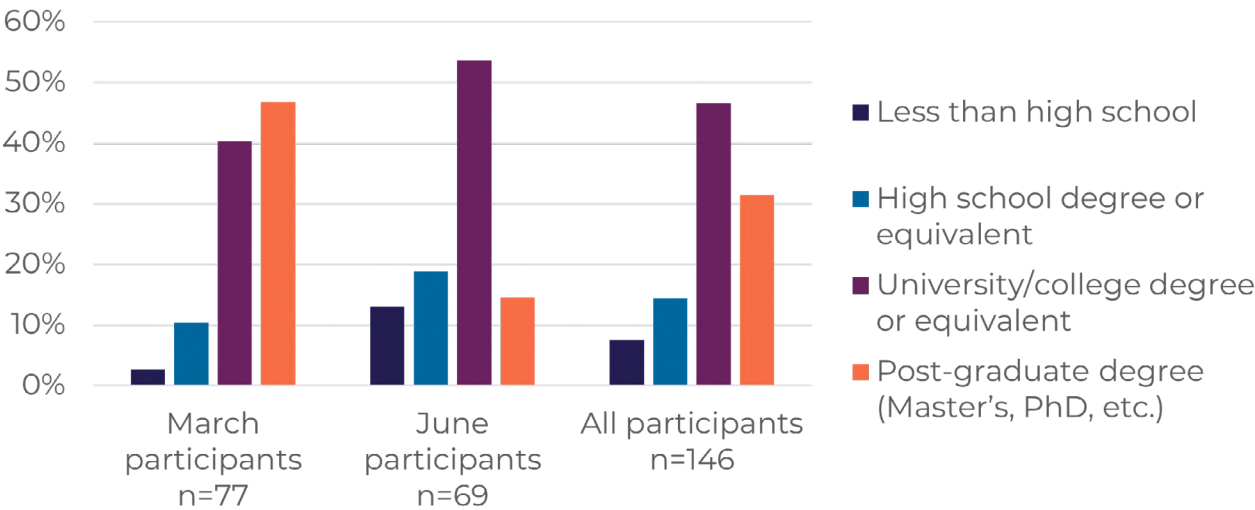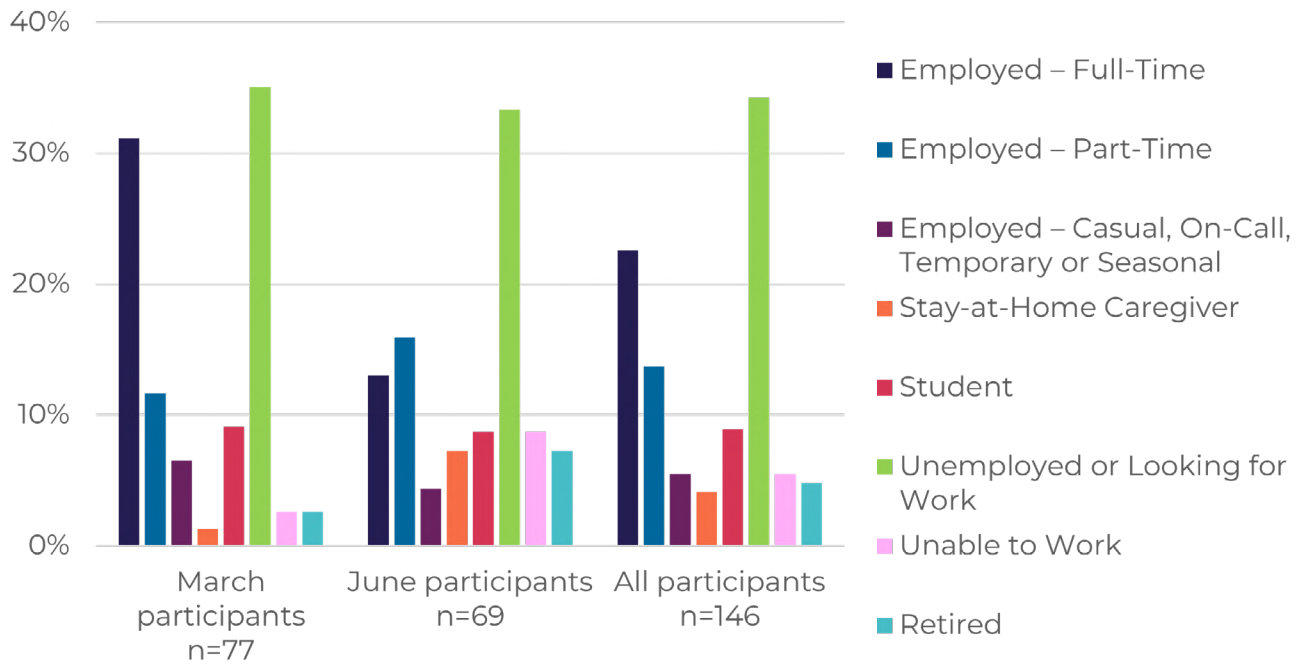**Figure A15: Percent of Participants by Highest Level of Education**

Legend:
- Less than high school
- High school degree or equivalent
- University/college degree or equivalent
- Post-graduate degree (Master's, PhD, etc.)

Figure A16: Percent of Participants by Employment Status

Legend:
- Employed – Full-Time
- Employed – Part-Time
- Employed – Casual, On-Call, Temporary or Seasonal
- Stay-at-Home Caregiver
- Student
- Unemployed or Looking for Work
- Unable to Work
- Retired

APPENDIX B: GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR NEWCOMER FOCUS GROUPS

Each focus group began with an overview of the project. The following questions were then used as guides for the March and June focus groups with newcomers, respectively.

MARCH 2022 QUESTIONS

During the March round of focus groups a variety of open- and closed-ended questions were asked. The online engagement tool Mentimeter was used to allow participants to share their responses online. They were also provided with opportunities to share verbally and in the chat. Questions 1–3 served as warm-up questions. Questions 4 and 5 were the focus of the conversation, and the remaining questions were administered through Mentimeter polls with the option to elaborate verbally.

1. What is your favourite hot beverage?
2. Rate your level of agreement with the following: I am from a place….
   - that gets very hot
   - that I think of as quiet
   - that feels safe to me
   - that is completely different than Canada
3. Today I am feeling…
4. **What makes a "good" service or program?**
5. **What makes a "bad" service or program?**
6. Rate your level of agreement with the following: To me, a newcomer is someone who…
   - is born outside of Canada
   - has been in Canda for less than 7 years
   - speaks English with an accent
   - speaks at least one other language
7. Would you like if the service or program is delivered by someone who….
   - looks like me
   - knows my language
   - knows my culture
   - knows my religion
   - speaks English very well
8. Would you like if…
   - childcare is provided
   - location is close to public transit
   - free parking nearby
   - low wait time between learning about a service/program and starting
   - honorarium is provided for participation

9. Preferred time of service or program
   - During the week, after 5pm
   - On the weekends
   - During the week, between 9am–5pm
10. Preferred language of service or program
    - English
    - Home/Mother language
    - French
11. Preferred method of delivery of service or program
    - in-person
    - hybrid
    - virtual/online
12. Preferred way of learning about a service or program
    - From a settlement worker
    - From a friend
    - Agency/org newsletter
    - Agency/org Instagram
    - Agency/org Twitter
    - Agency/org Facebook

JUNE 2022 QUESTIONS

The following questions were used for the June round of focus group. Participants were able to respond verbally and, for virtual focus groups, could also provide comments in the chat.

1. Where were you born?
2. When did you come to Canada?
3. What language do you speak mostly at home?
4. Can you tell me about any **emotional** supports you may have had when you first arrived in Canada? *Those may have included friends, family, community, or anything else.*
5. Can you tell me about any **financial** supports you may have had when you first arrived in Canada? *Those may have included banking, savings, loans, job opportunities, job training, existing certifications, Employment Ontario or Ontario Works, and so on.*
6. Can you tell me about any **non-monetary** supports you may have had when you first arrived in Canada? *Those may have included housing, food, vehicles, technology equipment, and so on.*
7. How would you describe the support networks you have now?
8. Have any of those support networks changed since you first arrived?
9. Have you ever seen/heard of someone else getting support you wish you had but felt you couldn't for any reason?

APPENDIX C: GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR SERVICE PROVIDER FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups with service providers began with a brief overview of the project, followed by a semi-structured discussion guided by the following questions.

1. We are interested in hearing about your experiences as it may relate to funding you receive — both for "traditional settlement" as well as other funding you receive that helps you to work with immigrants, refugees, and newcomers. Which sources do you rely on for funding for serving newcomers, immigrants, and refugees?

2. How has the current funding and service delivery model impacted your ability to a) offer well-rounded services and b) meet the needs and expectations of newcomers [prompt around impacts on operations/admin if needed]?

3. How has the current funding and service delivery model impacted your ability to meet the needs of racialized and hard-to-reach populations?

4. a) How does the current funding model affect your ability to collaborate, communicate, and share data and information about newcomer needs? b) Specifically, what are the barriers?

5. a) Do you know of any organizations, receiving government funding or otherwise, that you think are effectively meeting the needs of racialized newcomers? b) What makes them effective?

6. Do you know of any promising practices in community-centred and/or community-governed and participatory grantmaking and service delivery models?