

# London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership Settlement Sub-council Thursday, April 8, 2010

Present: Amani Radhaa, Eugene Tremblay, Marel Fielding, Mustafa Zahid, Jill Tansley, Maria del Pilar Silva, Sunduz Shubar, Brian Rhoden, Rifat Hussain, Mohamed Al-Adeimi and Nina Hamou.

Regrets: Fadela Ahmed, Nancy Santos, Mayssa Elsayegh, Lily Johnson, Tharcisse Ntakibirora, Mersija Nuric, Ramona Lucan

## SUMMARY

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Mohamed thanked the group for their attendance and commitment.

### **Updates**

Mohamed briefed the group on the Central Council Meeting. At the meeting he provided a summary of the priorities and progress of this sub-council so far. Following discussion it was overlapping advocacy issues were mentioned such as space and childcare.

Nina shared the invitation for the Wednesday, May 26 Community Strategy meeting during which, the draft strategic plan will be presented. Individuals are reminded to RSVP.

The report by the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) was circulated via email. It included a chapter related to housing. The group decided that it would refer to the recommendations made in the document to avoid duplication.

### **Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes were reviewed. Maria accepted and Mohamed seconded the move.

### **Priorities**

The following strategies were discussed:

#### **1. Connecting newcomers to services:**

- Ensure immediate access to information upon arrival and maintaining an ongoing welcoming process
  - Create and set up a joint reception centre which is coordinated by all settlement agencies in London.
  - Create a binder with all information related to services in a culturally and linguistically relevant way which includes brochures in different languages that explain settlement agencies and services they provided in schools, places of worship, health services etc.
  - Providing additional training services to immigrant students and their families by building on SWIS and LSP programs to assist families and students connect to services.
- Strengthen communication between service providers and immigrants
  - Enhance and strengthen referrals between agencies through greater collaboration and opportunities for communication.

- Include immigrants in planning stages in the delivery of services by holding focus groups and ensuring representation on planning committees.
- Advocate for increased number of brochures in different languages that explain settlement agencies and services they provided in schools, places of worship, health services etc.
- Promote and coordinate the use of the Immigration Portal and other existing tools within our community.
- Ensure there are programs that reflect and understand the diverse and unique needs of various classes of immigrants. (GARS/PRs, Economic class, students, temporary workers, refugees, landed immigrants)
  - Targeting economic class immigrants by promoting London abroad through the use and promotion of the Immigration Portal.
  - Provide support for students and temporary workers who may wish to stay in Canada.
  - Create opportunities for agency to connect with ethno-specific communities.
- Increase the delivery of settlement services at the neighbourhood level to establish long-term support and consistent ethno- cultural referrals.
  - Creation of a volunteer management position within settlement organization which will ensure volunteers are trained to provide basic settlement services and ongoing support and follow-up to immigrants when eligibility criteria restricts continued service. Volunteers will be recruited from host-community and can be immigrants themselves.
  - Build and expand on existing programs such as the Women of the World Program to train community leaders to provide information on settlement services.

## 2. Navigating Systems

### a. Bureaucratic Systems

- Advocate and create opportunities for interpreters to be involved training and knowledge on settlement information.

### b. Managing Finances

- Create ongoing interactive workshops which creatively educate immigrants how to manage all aspects of finances including banking, credit, transition from government sponsorship, taxes, and bill payments

## 3. Family Challenges

- Increase referral and support for families who separate upon arrival or separate geographically
  - Direct to free and informal counselling services that take into account pre-migratory experiences.
- Intergenerational conflict between children and parents and the transition from collectivist to individualistic societies
- Build on programs which assist the settlement of specific segments of the family, youth and seniors
  - Adopt a unique wrap-around model for each
- Increase supports and resources for existing parenting programs to support newcomer needs.
  - Increased collaboration with CAS and Settlement through outreach to school aged children and their parents.
  - Training of community leaders of ethno cultural communities to provide referrals and support for parenting and child care issues.
- Increase supports for the role of men in families and in the community
  - Promote and enhance existing programs which providing fathers and or husbands with the tools and information on their roles and responsibility in the community.

#### **4. Housing**

- Enhance supports for education on landlord and tenants rights and responsibilities
  - Build on workshops that proactively teach individuals their rights and responsibilities and how to respond in tenant/landlord conflicts.
  - Information-sharing that facilitates newcomers' access to shelters (WCI).
- Enhance and create affordable and suitable housing
  - Creation of housing sensitive to the needs of newcomers (WCI) while ensuring that newcomers are kept out of silos.
  - Advocating for city planning that seeks to address newcomers' housing needs.

#### **Next Steps**

Rationale and timelines will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next meeting  
Thursday, April 8, 2010  
Kinsmen Recreation Centre, Room 2a  
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