



York South-Weston Local Immigration Partnership

AN ACTION PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of a team effort by the consulting team of Joan Roberts (Joan Roberts Consulting) Charlotte Young (Envision Synergy) and Ben Poynton (Herne Company). Each of us played various roles in the process of making the consultations and planning events happen within a tight budget and even tighter time frame.

We could not have done it without the close cooperation and amazing contribution of the YSW LIP Council and its workgroups. Without the community engagement workgroup we would not have been able to recruit over 100 newcomers to our first town hall. All the workgroups provided input into the research questions and recruited participants for focus groups and interviews. It was a great example of what a collaborative effort can do.

THE PROJECT:

The York South–Weston Local Immigration Partnership (YSWLIP) is comprised of 24 settlement, employment, language training and social service organizations serving immigrants in the York South-Weston community. Faith and labour representatives also contribute to the partnership.

The project’s objectives:

- To strengthen local awareness and capacity to successfully integrate immigrants
- To improve access to and coordination of immigrant integration services
- To improve labour market outcomes for immigrants

In May of 2010 the YSWLIP received funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to consult with service providers, employers and newcomers in the local catchment area in order to identify possibilities for collective and systemic improvements to the delivery system.

INTRODUCTION:

This document provides an action plan built upon the vision, goals and strategies identified in the document York South-Weston Local Immigration Partnership: Strategic Plan for an Integrated service Delivery System. Both documents are meant to be read together along with the report from the Consultations.

The strategic direction for York South-Weston Local Immigration Partnership (YSW LIP) is based upon the findings of the research conducted. The over arching aim of this plan is to attempt to inculcate a more integrated service model in order to provide better services to newcomers. This has been broken down into separate “steps” which cover areas which are intrinsically linked to stages where newcomers interact with the service model.

These steps are then linked to strategies to fulfill them. These strategies are themselves broken down further into smaller tasks which when complete will help to achieve these individual steps. There is therefore a clear link between these smaller tasks and the action plan as a whole which they serve to achieve. Success indicators are identified for each action.

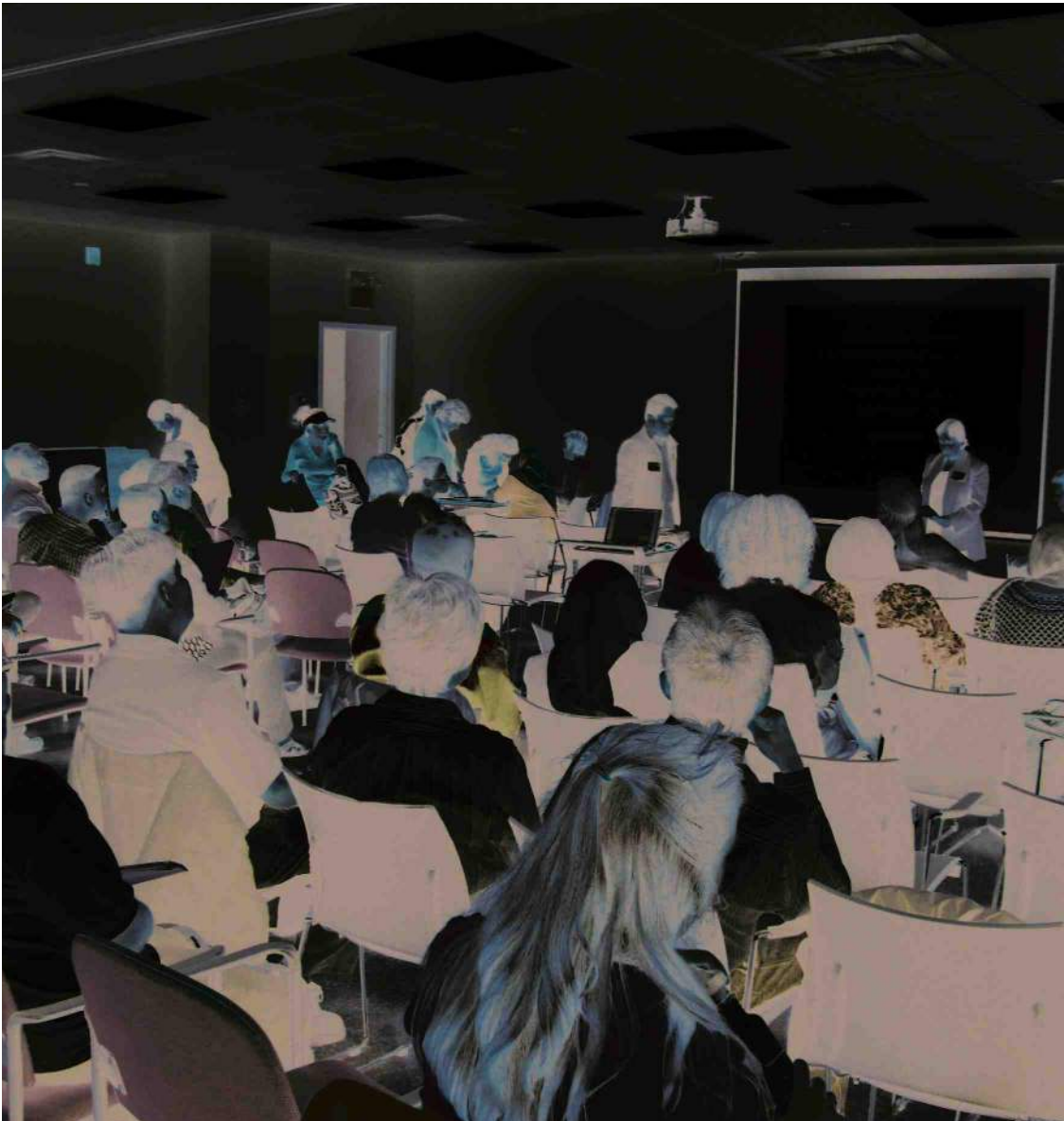
The strategic plan is outlined on the next page and the action plan follows.



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

Canada



YSW LIP MEMBERS

YSW LIP COUNCIL MEMBER ORGANIZATION	MEETING REPRESENTATIVE (AS OF DEC -10)
Social Planning Toronto	Yasmin Haq-Khan <i>Co-chair</i>
YES: Youth Employment Services	Jayne Simpson <i>Co-chair</i>
Access Alliance Multi-cultural Health and Community Services	Julie Mehrad
Broad African Resource Centre	Peter Ozemoyah
City of Toronto	Melody Brown
Community Action Resource Centre	Marion Newrick
COSTI	Ed Kothiringer
For Youth Initiative	Lynn Liao
Islamic Social Services & Resources Association	Shazia Bashir
Learning Enrichment Foundation	Pamela Richardson
Midaynta	Mohamed Tabit
Northwood Neighbourhood Services	Azaria Wolday
North York Community House	Noemi Garcia
Ontario Multi-faith Council	Imam Abdul Hai Patel
Oromo Canadian Community Association	Aberra Makonnen
Toronto District School Board	Bobby Nikmard
Toronto Employment & Social Services	Mary Catherine Hudakoc
Toronto Public Health	Dulce Gaspar
Toronto Public Library	Ewa Piatkowski
Unison Health and Community Services (formerly York Community Services)	Kam Lau
Vietnamese Women’s Association	Kim Phong Nguyen
York Hispanic Centre	Carmen Miloslavich
York West Active Living Centre	Suzette Teixeira

Vision for the Service Delivery System Serving Newcomers in York South-Weston;

- Thriving newcomers
- Services to meet needs
- Fast easy settlement

Goals: FOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM

1. Confirm the level of agency commitment to an integrated service delivery system
2. Determine the most appropriate service delivery system, based on the commitment
3. Develop a governance framework to build the capacity and sustainability to implement the service delivery plan

1st step OUTREACH

Goal: Enable newcomers to make informed choices about services

2nd step INTAKE

Goal: Ensure client eligibility is clearly defined in a short and easy process on a drop in basis within the same business day.

3rd step ASSESSMENT

Goal: Create a comprehensive common assessment to more effectively assess client needs and build stronger relationships between clients and the system.

4th step REFERRAL

Goal: Ensure a co-ordinated referral process that connects newcomer to the services they need within a reasonable time frame

5th step SERVICE DELIVERY

Goal: Ensure newcomers receive beneficial, relevant and culturally appropriate services in a timely and professional manner through a co-ordinated approach.

6th step MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Goal: Understand the strengths and pitfalls of the service delivery system in order to respond and improve the integrated service delivery system to ensure a better experience for the client.

Last step CLIENT EXIT

Strategies: FOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM

- Develop a communications and engagement strategy for the service delivery model
- Develop a governance strategy using a capacity approach

1st step OUTREACH

- Set up an interagency staff exchange program
- Provide newcomers with a visual directory of YS-W service providers
 - Coordinate hiring of a common outreach worker for YS-W

2nd step INTAKE

Have all agencies participate in a discussion of best practices for intake.

3rd step ASSESSMENT

One lead agency to design the common assessment form with input from others

4th step REFERRAL

- Establish service standards approved by all agencies-compiled in to a referral protocol
- Hold an information fair for front line workers or offer other form of dissemination

5th step SERVICE DELIVERY

- Enhance information sharing for better service co-ordination & effective service delivery
- Advocate collectively to increase funding and address eligibility

6th step MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Develop an evaluation strategy/protocol to track and monitor client satisfaction
- Cluster services to share evaluation forms

Last step CLIENT EXIT



The **OVAl** indicates both the starting point and the ending point of the process steps.



The **BOX** represents an individual step or activity in the process.

ACTION PLAN

Step: Whole System Strategy: Develop a communication and engagement strategy for the integrated service delivery model

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Identify all potential players	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 1	Ongoing LIP funding	Service delivery system players identified
Create a work group with T of R	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 1	Cooperation of YSW agencies	Work group established with T of R
Develop communications and engagement strategy document	YSW LIP Partnership Council/ workgroup with input from potential players	Month 1-3	Consulting expertise	Strategy developed
Enable potential players to access to documents through surveys, meetings, web, etc.	Coordination team = YSW LIP Co-chairs and Consultant	Month 4	Ongoing funding	Strategy implemented
Enable dialogue and negotiations with member agencies and potential members	Coordination team = YSW LIP Co-chairs and Consultant	Month 4-7	Agency Resistance to integration	Negotiations underway and completed

Step: Whole System Strategy: Develop a governance strategy using a capacity building approach

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Form or create a task force or hire a consultant	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 1	Ongoing LIP funding	Work group or consultant established
Develop a strategy for a YSW LIP governance framework	Task force or consultant	Month 1-2	Consulting expertise	Strategy developed
Implement the plan	Task force or consultant Policy adoption by YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 3-4	Consulting expertise	Policy framework in place including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative Charter and Agreement• Lead agency• Membership• Communications policies• Training in governance and policy making• Policy manual

Step: Outreach Strategy: Set up interagency staff exchange (Alternative: Hire a common outreach worker for YSW LIP)

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Identify potential interested agencies and target communities	YSW LIP Partnership Council	1 month	Agency commitment to participate	Partners identified
Identify \$ /Develop proposal	YSW LIP Partnership Council	2-4 months	Funding for project coordination	Funding received
Recruit staff participants	YSW LIP Partnership Council	6 months	Project coordination Participant mentoring	Program underway # of agency staff participating
(Alternative) Hire common outreach worker	YSW LIP Partnership Council	3-6 months	Salary \$	Outreach worker hired

Step: Outreach Strategy: Visual Directory of YSW Service Providers

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Develop a project steering committee	YSW LIP Partnership Council	1 month	Participating agency commitment cooperation	Steering committee and terms of reference developed and underway
Develop map with service providers	YSW LIP Partnership Council	1st month	Funding to cover cost to design and produce materials	Visual graphics completed
Develop brochures, flyers, posters in all the languages	YSW LIP Partnership Council	2nd month	Ongoing leadership by project committee	Communication pieces designed and printed
Distribute and advertise in appropriate media (dissemination strategy developed and implemented)	YSW LIP Partnership Council	4-5th month	Ongoing funding	Dissemination strategy implemented
Produce appropriate materials (e.g., T-shirts, water bottles, etc.	YSW LIP Partnership Council	6th month	Ongoing funding	Newcomers carrying products and arriving at agencies

Step: Intake Strategy: Agencies discuss best practices for intake

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Hold a meeting to determine needs	YSW LIP Partnership Council	5 weeks	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Feedback from clients and agencies
Hold follow up meeting with EDs to further look at needs	YSW LIP Partnership Council	8th week	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Referral numbers
Create proposal to get funding for universal intake	YSW LIP Partnership Council	10th week	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Proposal developed
Decide about final way to do intake	YSW LIP Partnership Council	12th week	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Plan underway

Step: Intake Strategy: Explore the value of a web-based database for intake *(An alternative: Print and offer hard copies of intake form that client takes to another agency)*

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Investigate feasibility of and ways to protect clients’ confidentiality of this strategy	YSW LIP Partnership Council	6 -12 months	Consultant Feasibility study	Feasibility study complete

Step: Assessment Strategy: 1 agency designs a common assessment form and other agencies offer feedback

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Find volunteer agency to lead process	YSW LIP Partnership Council/Lead Agency	Month 1	LIP funding Lead agency selected Cooperation of other agencies	Lead agency selected
Create form	YSW LIP Partnership Council/Lead Agency	Month 2	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Form created
Obtain feedback	YSW LIP Partnership Council/Lead Agency	Month 3	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Feedback received
Refine based on feedback	YSW LIP Partnership Council/Lead Agency	Month 4 and 5	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Revisions made
Pilot test	YSW LIP Partnership Council/Lead Agency	Month 6	LIP funding Cooperation of agencies	Pilot test completed Changes implemented

Step: Referral Strategy: Establish service standards for a referral protocol approved by all agencies

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Working committee to create standards	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 1	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies Needs buy-in	Committee underway
Create survey to identify current referral process of agencies (strengths and weaknesses)	YSW LIP Partnership Council/ Working group	Month 2	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies	Survey drafted
Administer survey	YSW LIP Partnership Council/ Consultant	Month 3	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies	Survey returned from agency participants

Step: Referral *Continued*

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU'LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Survey Analysis	Consultant	Month 4	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies	Report received from consultant
Draft referral protocol; review	YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 5	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies	Protocol developed
Pilot test implementation	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 6-8	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies	Pilot test completed
System wide implementation	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 9-12	LIP funding Cooperation of other agencies	Better referral process-simple and concise More successful referrals-fewer clients falling through the cracks Stronger relationship between service providers and clients
6 month review Evaluation of implementation	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 16-18	LIP funding for evaluation	Evaluation completed

Step: Referral Strategy: Information fair for front line workers or offer other form of information dissemination

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU'LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Identify working group (Can be same as above)	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Begin after implementation of referral protocol Month 1	LIP funding for year 2 Cooperation of agencies	Working group established
Find resources to implement the fair Committee would plan the fair	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 2-4	LIP funding for year 2 Cooperation of agencies	Budget and plan developed
YSWLIP consulting staff to maintain the database and plan the fair	YSW LIP PC/ working group	Month 4-6	LIP funding for year 2 Cooperation of agencies	Database up and running
Implement the fair	YSW LIP PC/ Working group Consulting staff	Month 6 or 7	LIP funding for year 2 Cooperation of agencies	Front line staff are more knowledgeable about where to refer, fewer failed referrals -stronger relationships between clients and staff

Step: Service Delivery Strategy: Enhance information sharing for better service coordination and effective service delivery

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Secure \$\$ for admin support and space for meetings	YSW LIP PC	Month 1-3	LIP funding for year 2	Funding secured
Identify potential participants	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 3	Cooperation of agencies Need database of YSW agencies in place	Participants identified and selected
Implement regular forum/ network for program managers	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 4	Agency staff time to participate	1st meeting held
Select first meeting convener/chair person	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 4 1st meeting	Willing leadership	Chairperson selected
Develop Tore for network	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Ongoing	Ongoing funding and commitment Ongoing coordination support	T of R developed

Step: Service Delivery Strategy: Advocate collectively to increase funding to delivery system and address client eligibility issues

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Determine level of advocacy that’s acceptable to CIC	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 1	Staff time for Lip members Dialogue with CIC, OCASI and InterLIP	Advocacy level identified
Develop advocacy strategy (objectives, key messages, audiences)	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Month 2-3	Consulting expertise CIC resistance to advocacy	Strategy developed
Share information on funding not just settlement \$\$	YSW LIP Partnership Council	Ongoing	Staff time for LIP members Resources for Environmental scan	Advocacy on the agenda for LIP meetings

Step: Monitoring, Evaluation, Exit Strategy: Cluster services to share evaluation forms

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Determine clusters of willing participants	YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 1-2	LIP funding Staff time for LIP members	Clusters identified
Establish workgroup with T of R	YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 3	LIP funding Staff time for LIP members	Workgroup established. T of R developed
Determine types of services to be evaluated	YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 3-5	LIP funding Staff time for LIP members	Target services identified
Review evaluation forms	YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 4	LIP funding Staff time for LIP members	Evaluation forms reviewed-revisions recommended
Implement pilot project	YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 5	LIP funding Staff time for LIP members	Pilot project underway leading to full implementation

Step: Monitoring, Evaluation, Exit Strategy: Develop an evaluation strategy/protocol to track and monitor client satisfaction

TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH STRATEGY	WHO WILL CHAMPION THIS TASK	GENERAL TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE THE TASK	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BARRIERS TO OVERCOME; SUPPORTS YOU HAVE)	HOW YOU’LL KNOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL/ PRODUCT PRODUCED
Create a work group to determine how to implement evaluation	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 1	Ongoing LIP funding Staff time	Workgroup established. T of R developed
Develop evaluation strategy with service measures	YSW LIP PC/ Working group	Month 2-3	Staff time Consulting expertise	Strategy developed
Create forms or template based on feedback	Working group	Month 5-6	Staff time Consulting expertise	Forms developed
Implement the evaluation strategy	Agencies /YSW LIP PC/Working group	Month 7-8	Staff training Materials	Strategy implemented

Employer Cultural Awareness Project Action Plan

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:	TARGET AUDIENCE	CONTENT APPROACH
<p>To develop an action plan in YSW to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Encourage the development of more inclusive and welcoming workplace environments for newcomers2. Foster greater appreciation of ethnic diversity and its benefits in the workplace3. Promote local community based services to employers4. Build a ongoing community/ table of employers in YSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers who have employees that are diverse at present• Employer s who plan to diversify their work force• Small (1-20) or medium sized business (21-49) that hire unskilled semi skilled labour• A mix of employers - private-non-profit-government if possible (at least at the beginning stages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasize benefits for hiring newcomers and the strengths they bring including job readiness training• Start with a strength based approach-empathize the positive financial benefits• Explore assumptions• Need to Pilot Test our products

Strategies to achieve our objectives

EVENTS:	ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION	TOOLKIT-EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employer Breakfast,• ½ day workshops (2 hours),• Community Fair (NPO and ethno-specific organizations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Web page on YSW LIP website• LIP website resource page could have a page for employers• Online based training• Webinars• elearning modules• you tube videos• local app for employers/visual identity project-promoting NPOs and local services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sample Employer handbook: policies and procedures• How to be an inclusive workplace assessment• These three resources could be part of the toolkit• Employer resource guide done by City of Brampton• Newcomers a resource for your business done by York Simcoe’s Training and Adjustment Board• You’re hired now what!• Key facts about large ethnic communities in YSW<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Mapso Religionso Languageso Food issueso Holidays• Team building exercises designed to help workplaces build understanding of each other cultures• YSW NPO resource guide on website

Family Law Awareness Project Action Plan

PROJECT OBJECTIVES	TARGET AUDIENCE	STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To educate YSW service providers as to the rights and resources available for youth involved in family conflict/issues• To provide tools and best practice to help YSW service providers deal with newcomer youth clients that are involved in family issues	The group agreed to focus on youth (16-29). Our focus is education, training the workers that serve youth. We will start with youth, 16 and over and see where we end up.	<p>PHASE 1 -DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify, refine selection criteria and select members of project workgroup• Collect existing educational material and information• Develop consensus of best practice for service providers in YSW• Develop materials re tools and best practice <p>PHASE 2-DESSIMINATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a Train the Trainer workshop for YSW service providers• Disseminate materials in workshops and on website• YSW service providers and ethno-specific providers then to undertake workshops to their communities-possibly in partnership

Policy Recommendations

METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS:

All policy issues and recommendations were collated from all the research including focus groups and town halls.

Recommendations and policy issues were themed into the following categories with supporting recommendations left below: YSW LIP partnership council members prioritized their highest priority policy recommendations. A sub-committee of the council developed the wording of the recommendations found below.

The YSW LIP Recommends:

MORE HELP FOR NEWCOMER PROFESSIONALS

Employment issues continue to pose the biggest challenge as professionals reported a widespread lack of acceptance of non-Canadian work, academic experience and professional credentials. There is no settlement for newcomers without appropriate employment.

Governments need to continue to pay for the expenses of credential assessment. In order to ensure that newcomers are made aware of this service **that local service providers**

are clear of the boundaries, on who is paying for what and that better coordination is undertaken to ensure that newcomers do not fall through the cracks in the system.

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration needs to **inform newcomers prior to their arrival in Canada of the credentialing process, expected costs, time frames for completion and projected employment availability upon arrival to Canada.**

Professional regulatory bodies and membership associations must increase opportunities for foreign trained professionals to upgrade to Ontario standards for professionals through internships, mentorships and job shadowing opportunities.

And that the federal government funds and delivers a national program that supports the integration of professionals into their profession. The program could incorporate incentives (training for credentials) for foreign trained professionals to work in high needs area of the country.

A REVIEW OF THE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

Many of the problems faced by foreign trained professionals can be traced to assumptions made while qualifying in the points system for CIC. It is clear the point system earned by immigrants under the current immigration system no longer serves the interest of the newcomer or the receiving community when newcomers fail to obtain employment in their chosen professions. **The point system must be reviewed and revised regularly to ensure immigrant selection criteria are aligned with employment opportunities.**

CHANGES TO PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Newcomers with differing immigration and citizenship status often find themselves ineligible for settlement services. Children of newcomers can be ineligible for OSAP funding. Children of undocumented newcomers are not allowed into some schools.

Newcomers are prevented from accessing any systems and process from healthcare, jobs and services such as obtaining a bank account. You can be new to Canada and Ontario but not eligible for programs and funding.

In order to improve eligibility and access to the service system, **we recommend that the local NPO sector gets information out about “Don’t ask. Don’t tell” policies adopted by local school boards.**

The up to seven years the government currently takes to process refugees claimants is too long and needs to be reduced dramatically.

Service delivery systems serving newcomers should prioritize serving newcomers on the basis of the need for settlement as opposed to immigration and citizenship status. For instance language training should be based on proficiency/ competency, not immigration status.

RESOLVE IMMIGRATION PROCESS ISSUES:

Respondents reported lengthy waits and problem with the sponsorship process time for family reunification. Sponsors have to commit to 10 years of sponsorship when sponsoring a family member. Much of the newcomer’s time is spent on waiting lists and then the process of sponsorship gets extended. This is unfair to sponsors. **We ask that CIC review the length of sponsorship commitments.** This issue also speaks to not enough capacity within CIC to process requests. **CIC also needs to eliminate the systemic preferences currently in place in overseas CIC offices. Immigrant selection criteria needs to be transparent and increased departmental resources are needed.**

INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR TO MEET THE NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS

Many participants reported that they felt that there was little service continuity between when they arrived in Canada and when they began to settle. Issues arise later in the settlement process when newcomers seek employment and housing. **The capacity of the NPO system needs additional resources** in order to assist with issues arising from discrimination, and to helping integrate newcomers into local communities. **Ethno-specific organizations deserve better settlement funding to help new comers more effectively and to ensure choice in service delivery.** Newcomers consistently reported preferring and needing to receive services in their own language and in a manner sensitive to their culture.

In addition, **adequate and affordable housing and child care support is critical to enable newcomers to support themselves.** Both systems have retrenched in the previous decade instead of expanding to meet the need. Increased availability of good quality social housing and day care to newcomers is needed.

Local employers told the YSW LIP that they could use cultural sensitivity training to help understand the newest arrivals. This training is something that could be easily provided if CIC funded the delivery system to do so.