

Newcomer Best Practices Review

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United Way of Greater Toronto

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2003, United Way of Greater Toronto undertook a year-long priority-setting process to re-examine the social, demographic and government policy and funding changes that had taken place since it adopted its original priorities, set out in *The Way Ahead, 1998*. The goal of the new process was to determine the most pressing social issues that require United Way's attention. Four priority areas were recommended to the Board of Trustees through this process, one of which was newcomers. Newcomer services was the only original priority area that had not made substantive gains. Newcomers continued to face barriers to economic integration and have high rates of poverty, both of which were taking a toll on family life. A recommendation was made to the Board of Trustees that the United Way enhance its impact in this area through increased financial investment over the next five years. This study is intended to provide evidence to inform decision-making around those financial investments.

Key informant interviews and a literature review were conducted to identify effective newcomer programs and services. Twenty-four programs are included in this report, of which 8 were rated as effective, 12 as promising, and 4 to be tracked because of ongoing evaluations. These programs were analyzed for effective or emerging practices for the design, implementation, evaluation and funding of newcomer programs and services.

From those programs reporting positive outcomes or promising practices, eleven primary lessons were learned:

Program Development

- Make programs as inclusive as possible: Pay attention to people with specific needs; integrate children into programming; involve parents in programs for children; include multiple cultures as appropriate.
- Adopt an asset-based approach to program development: Asset-based approaches recognize the everyday experience, wisdom, skills and capacity that all newcomers and newcomers communities possess. Fostering active citizen engagement, building a stronger civil society, and creating local economic opportunity are central to the asset-based approach.
- Use participatory models: To the greatest degree possible involve participants and volunteers in program planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Provide a safe environment: A safe environment in which everyone is treated as equal and members are invited to express their ideas and to share personal life experiences can have a significant effect on program outcomes.
- Ensure programs are of sufficient duration to achieve outcomes: Program duration should reflect desired program outcomes by being consistent with behaviour change and learning principles.
- Incorporate strategies to promote sustainability of programs and services: Sustainable programs are ones which, after an initial period of intervention, are able to run with minimal support and resources from the host organization. Sustainability depends upon the needs being served; programs designed to serve

urgent basic needs require greater funding and support than do programs for established newcomers.

- Include a direct support component: Integrate opportunities for obtaining social support either from peers or through individual counselling.

Program Implementation

- Use creative delivery formats: Formats may include drop-in programs, group classes, self-study programs, train-the-trainer programs, on-line programs, internships, placements, and job shadowing.
- Ensure facilitators are appropriate and well trained: Select people from the newcomer community and provide initial training and continuous support.
- Enable attendance: Recruit widely; arrange transportation; offer classes and programs at flexible times; and choose an appropriate setting.

Program Evaluation

- Evaluate programs to assess impact: Evaluate programs using multiple methods and strong designs. Share findings widely.
- Break down complex outcomes to enable the development of measurable indicators.
- Use new evaluation techniques to evaluate complex partnerships. Newcomer programs often have complex partnership elements that cannot be measured using traditional evaluation methods. Innovative evaluation techniques, such as horizontal evaluation, i.e. evaluation of the collaborative efforts of two or more organizations working together to achieve shared outcomes, should be explored.

These practices have important implications for the way newcomer programs and services are designed, implemented, evaluated and funded. In designing programs, the use of empowerment and capacity building models is paramount. Empowering and building the capacity of the target community will lead to enhanced sustainability. Funders and program staff need to invest in evaluation. Financial and human resources must be made available so that we can learn from each others' efforts through evaluation and through the dissemination of evaluation findings. Funders must invest in programs beyond initial short-term, innovative pilot projects. This means that the nature and focus of funding must reflect desired program outcomes.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This study reports on best practices for newcomer services in the areas of settlement and integration, employment support, and community engagement. The study was commissioned by United Way of Greater Toronto (UWGT) in November 2004 to inform future funding decisions for newcomer services. Specifically, the study objectives were to:

- Identify the most effective program components and models for initiatives that will help newcomers fulfill their potential and promise.
- Analyze and make recommendations on effective and promising newcomer practices that should be considered when focusing newcomer funding.

This report focuses on programs and services in three areas: settlement and integration; employment support; and community engagement. The definitions of these, and other terms used in this report are found in *Appendix 1 – Glossary of Key Terms*.

This report will be useful to anyone involved in designing, implementing, evaluating or funding programs and services for newcomers. The reader will gain an understanding of the effective and emerging practices found to help newcomers settle and integrate into their new environment.

1.2 Background

In April 2003, United Way of Greater Toronto undertook a year-long priority-setting process to re-examine the social, demographic and government policy and funding changes that had taken place over the previous five to seven years, since it had adopted its original priorities, set out in *The Way Ahead, 1998*. The goal of the new process was to determine the most pressing social issues that require United Way's attention. A Priority-Setting Steering Committee was established in June 2003 to oversee the process and to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The Committee met nine times between June 2003 and January 2004 to receive reports on the findings from various research investigations, to discuss their implications, and to develop recommendations about United Way priorities. The plan was designed to provide the Board of Trustees with a balanced and comprehensive picture of the social trends and issues facing Toronto today.

As a result of the process, four priorities were recommended to the Board of Trustees, one of which was services for newcomers. Newcomers were the only original priority group that did not make substantive gains. Newcomers continue to face barriers to economic integration and have high rates of poverty, both of which are taking a toll on family life in newcomer communities. A recommendation was made to the Board of

Trustees that United Way enhance its impact in this area through a range of interventions including increased financial investment over the next five years. This study is intended to provide evidence to inform decision-making around those financial investments.

1.3 Service Areas

United Way of Greater Toronto recognizes that a range of services and support programs of varying levels of intensity are necessary to meet the needs of newcomers as they settle and integrate into Canadian society. Programs, services and polices reviewed in this report are categorized into three broad areas as laid out in United Way's priority-setting process:

Service Area 1: Settlement services: are specialized services focusing primarily on the early stages after arrival when the need is greatest. Services include reception and orientation to Canada, settlement and orientation counselling, community contact, information and referral to services, and translation and interpretation.

Service Area 2: Employment supports: include interventions that help newcomers integrate into the labour market, and include programs such as orientation, job-search skills, job experience placement, employment counselling and placement, specific skills upgrading and certificate programs, mentorship programs, internships, basic skills training, programs for foreign trained professionals, and programs for employers.

Service Area 3: Community engagement: includes community development initiatives that help newcomer communities engage in the larger society by building community capacity, leadership and voice, particularly among at-risk and marginalized newcomers in low-income neighbourhoods.

1.4 Best Practices Approach

Best practices are defined as successful initiatives or model projects that make an outstanding, sustainable, and innovative contribution to an issue at hand.
(UNESCO, 2004).

Best practice models provide a much-needed link between research and programming. Best practice does not imply a static ideal, but a loop of continuous improvement in which programs are developed, implemented and evaluated, and the lessons learned from the evaluation are used to improve the program, and to develop future programs.

Best practices encourages a result-oriented approach to programs and services in the newcomer sector. In this approach, funders and program planners are continuously asking questions such as:

Am I making a difference?
How can I do it better?
What makes this program effective/not effective?
Am I achieving my outcomes?

The most reliable answers to these questions come from well-designed research studies, which provide empirical data with a minimum of bias. Best practice utilizes this research data to plan future courses of action.

In this study, our goal has been to find newcomer service programs that have proven efficacy so that funders and newcomer service agencies can learn from these programs for making funding decisions and for planning future programs. With this goal in mind, we have, wherever possible, emphasized programs with positive results in outcome evaluations, since such programs provide empirical evidence that they have achieved their objectives.

For each practice profiled in this report, information is provided on its purpose, costs, time-frame, geographical scope, and key success factors. With this information, the reader should be able to obtain a clearer picture of the context in which the practice is a best practice, because successful practice in one social environment does not necessarily guarantee success when it is transferred to another. These practices and the components of which they are comprised are not definitive. Not all programs must have all components to be effective. Best practices depend upon the context and service area.

In this report we have attempted to identify transferable practices that funders and program planners can use in designing service programs, in evaluating funding proposals and in making funding decisions. Using this study to guide programming and funding decisions closes the loop between the research involved in the programs cited and future practice in the newcomer sector, and in this way, fosters best practice.

1.5 Report Structure

The report is divided into 7 sections, outlined below.

1.0 Introduction

This section outlines the purpose of the research including its primary objectives, and discusses the past work and new directions for newcomer funding which served as the impetus for the research. Also in this section is a description of the approach to best practices taken for the research, including a discussion of how best practices can help to inform both program design as well as funding-related decision-making for newcomer programs and services.

2.0 Methodology

This section outlines the process used to select programs for inclusion in the study and the rating scale used to categorize programs.

3.0 Results of Assessment and Categorization

This section presents the results of the program selection process, including an overview of the types of programs selected for inclusion.

4.0 Findings from Programs Reviewed

This section includes the findings from the programs reviewed. Cross-cutting themes and effective practices are discussed which are relevant to all three service areas.

5.0 Implications

This section interprets the findings from the programs reviewed. The reader will learn what the findings mean in terms of designing, implementing, evaluating and funding programs and services for newcomers in each of the three service areas.

6.0 Conclusion

This section highlights the key learnings from the research.

7.0 Compendium of Programs Reviewed

This section includes a 2-3 page description of each program included in the study, including information about: target group, scope, budget, key components, outcomes, and key success factors.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Overview

The following methods were used to collect programs and services for this review:

1. A search of Internet sites and research databases for Canadian and International evaluation studies and research reports related to settlement, employment and community engagement for newcomers (See *Appendix 2 – Search Strategy*). This search strategy resulted in an extremely large number of programs, policies and services in the newcomer sector. To focus our search, we selected for investigation, only those programs, policies or services which had an outcome evaluation component.
2. Key informant interviews with experts in the newcomer sector who identified exemplary Canadian and international programs and services related to newcomers (See *Appendix 3 – List of Key Informants*).

A standardized form was used to appraise the relevance of the materials collected. (See *Appendix 3 – Relevance Testing Form*). To be deemed relevant, materials had to meet three criteria: (1) concerned with initiatives offered in the Western world; (2) describe a program or service; (3) have a newcomer or immigrant focus. Certification programs for foreign trained professionals, lending programs for individuals, needs assessments and best practices opinion papers, were not included in the review. Youth-related newcomer initiatives were also not included in the study as newcomer youth programs were being covered under another United Way of Greater Toronto research study.

The next step was to assess and rate the quality of the interventions retrieved. Based on the assessment, interventions were categorized into one of the following: “Effective”, “Promising”, “To be Tracked” or, “Not Recommended” practices.¹ Section 2.2 explains the rating scheme.

¹ The assessment and classification scheme was adapted from one developed by Cameron et al., 1998 at the University of Waterloo, Canada.

2.2 Scale to Rate Program Effectiveness

	Rating	Explanation
EFFECTIVE	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An outcome or impact evaluation has been completed• The findings are positive• Program is both plausible and practical
PROMISING	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No outcome or impact evaluation planned but positive impact evidenced through on-going monitoring of quantitative outcomes• Program is both plausible and practical
TO BE TRACKED	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outcome, impact or another type of evaluation with good design is underway but not completed• Program is both plausible and practical
NOT RECOMMENDED	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program fails to meet any of the criteria outlined above

A worksheet was used to assess each program, service, or policy. Two consultants assessed the first 20% of interventions together to ensure consistency of rating. The remaining interventions were divided among the two consultants and assessed independently. Whenever there was uncertainty about the rating each member would consult the other to determine the rating together.

2.3 Limitations of the Review

In conducting this review of programs a number of limitations shaped the data collection. First, because the goal of this study has been to find newcomer services and programs that have proven efficacy, we tried to collect only those programs and services which have been formally evaluated, since such evaluations may provide empirical evidence about effectiveness. The review is limited, however, by the absence of evaluated newcomer programs and services. It was surprising that, given the thousands of newcomer programs and services existing worldwide, very few formal evaluations were undertaken.

Second, through the research it became apparent that, although some formal evaluations of newcomer programs and services do exist in Canada, most are not accessible. Many of these are the property of the funding body and could not be shared for this study. These evaluations may have provided important information for our Canadian context but are not included in this review.

Third, key informant selection was limited to those whom we were able to contact and who responded by identifying exemplary programs and services for the study. From the large pool of potential key informants working in the newcomer sector, we had to choose only a very small percentage who were available and interested in providing input into the identification of programs and services.

The reader should be cognizant of these limitations when reading and interpreting the information contained in this report and when considering the proposed implications.

3.0 RESULTS OF ASSESSMENT AND RATING

Twenty-four programs are included in this review. Of these 24 programs, quality assessment resulted in 8 programs rated as “effective”, 12 rated as “promising” and 4 rated as “to be tracked”. Detailed profiles of each of these programs are included in a compendium in section 7.0 of this report. An overview of programs is provided in the table below.

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES					
Program	Location/ Scope	Target Group	Components	Outcomes	Service Area
<i>Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)</i>	National (Canada)	Government assisted refugees	Orientation, housing, financial assistance, referral	Immediate settlement needs met	Settlement and Integration
<i>Women’s Sewing Group</i>	City-wide (Seattle, US)	Isolated immigrant and refugee women	Peer support	Well-being	Settlement and Integration
<i>Latina Women’s Group</i>	District in Seattle, US	Latina immigrant and refugee women	Peer support	Well-being, self-advocacy	Settlement and Integration
<i>Somali Child Development Program</i>	City-wide (Seattle, US)	Somali children (gr 1-12) and their parents	Tutoring, family support	School and community integration	Settlement and Integration
<i>Crossroads Café</i>	National (US)	Working immigrants	Self-study ESL program	Language improvement and retention	Settlement and Integration
<i>Profession to Profession</i>	City-wide (Toronto)	Newcomers with occupational skills	Mentorship	Employment	Employment Support
<i>Verein Project</i>	City-wide (Vienna, Austria)	Newcomers of diverse cultural background	Language and vocational training, follow-up support	Employment	Employment Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES (continued)					
Program	Location/ Scope	Target Group	Components	Outcomes	Service Area
<i>Central Valley Project</i>	District-wide (Central Valley, California, US)	Newcomers	Partnerships, training and leadership development for service providers, research, policy analysis, technical assistance for partner organizations, leadership development Grants program ESL/citizenship instruction	Citizenship, civic engagement, capacity	Community Engagement
PROMISING PRACTICES					
Program	Location/ Scope	Target Group	Components	Outcomes	Service Area
<i>Women in Crisis</i>	City-wide (London, UK)	Refugee women	Counselling and referral	Immediate settlement needs met	Settlement and Integration
<i>Homebound Citizenship Tutoring Program</i>	State-wide (Washington, US)	Low-income, disabled, elderly and home-bound immigrants and refugees	Home-based tutoring, information and referral	Civic participation	Settlement and Integration
<i>Seniors Holistic Health</i>	City-wide (Toronto)	Mandarin seniors	Peer support	Leadership, well-being	Settlement and Integration
<i>Bamboo Network Mentoring Program</i>	Province-wide (BC)	Newcomers (up to 3 yrs in Canada) with occupational skills	Mentorship	Employment or entry in training program.	Employment Support

PROMISING PRACTICES (continued)					
Program	Location/Scope	Target Group	Components	Outcomes	Service Area
<i>Canadian Employment Skills</i>	City-wide (Calgary)	Newcomers with occupational skills	Classroom training, job experience, individual support	Employment.	Employment Support
<i>Women's Neighbourhood Cooperation</i>	City-wide (Netherlands)	Single mothers	Vocational training for self-employment, peer support	Self-employment skills	Employment Support
<i>Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women</i>	City-wide (Toronto)	Unemployed women	Seminars, peer support, work placements, case management, employment counselling	Ability to conduct self-directed job search	Employment Support
<i>Ethno-Cultural Seniors</i>	City-wide (Rexdale, Ontario)	Isolated seniors	Train-the-trainer, mentorship	Civic engagement, skill development, participation	Community Engagement
<i>Non-Profit Business Training</i>	City-wide (Louisville, US)	Emerging refugee and immigrant communities	Classes, technical assistance	Established organizations	Community Engagement
<i>One Voice One Vote</i>	State-wide (Massachusetts, US)	Leaders among immigrant organizations	Leadership training, community organizing, political lobbying	Leadership, community mobilization, policy change	Community Engagement
<i>Peer Leadership Training</i>	City-wide (Toronto)	Women	Peer support, train-the-trainer	Community leaders, capacity	Community Engagement
<i>New Americans Vote</i>	State-wide (Illinois, US)	Diverse immigrant communities	Leadership training, community organizing, advocacy	Leadership, voting	Community Engagement

PRACTICES TO BE TRACKED					
<i>Program</i>	<i>Location/ Scope</i>	<i>Target Group</i>	<i>Components</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
<i>Program Without Walls</i>	National (Neighbourhoods and homes, Canada)	Low-income, isolated, pregnant women and families with children 0-6 yrs.	Education and training, peer and family support, home visiting	Decreased stress and isolation, participation, resource and service access	Settlement and Integration
<i>Lifeskills Support Program</i>	Province-wide (Ontario)	Government assisted refugees	Lifeskills counselling, home visiting	Acquired lifeskills	Settlement and Integration
<i>Community Engagement Project</i>	City-wide (Hamilton)	Resettlement assistance program clients + other immigrants	Peer support, leadership training, community organizing	Decreased isolation	Settlement and Integration
<i>TRIEC Employer Promising Practices Project</i>	Toronto (web-based)	Employer	Tool Kit, awareness campaign	Employer awareness	Employment Support

4.0 FINDINGS FROM PROGRAMS REVIEWED

4.1 Introduction

In this section, we explore the components of best practice that emerged from the analysis of the program profiles contained in section 7.0. Findings are drawn from both the effective and promising practices. Many of the components that emerged are commonly found in program planning literature in newcomer and other fields. Each component is introduced with a definition that has been drawn either from the programs reviewed, or from program planning literature. Strategies that were used for the components in the different programs are then described in detail. For ease of reference, we have ordered the themes in three categories that follow the process of program planning - development, implementation, and evaluation.

It should also be noted that there is a continuum in the settlement process from acclimatization for new arrivals to full community engagement for longer term immigrants (Canadian Council of Refugees, 1998). As newcomers become more acclimatized, integrated and engaged, different program strategies are appropriate. In our discussion of program components, we explore the general characteristics and themes along the settlement continuum.

4.2 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT – Cross-Cutting Themes and Effective Practices

Make Programs as Inclusive as Possible

Inclusiveness means that services and programs should be accepting, welcoming, accommodating, and respecting but also valuing and utilizing differences and diversity as integral and beneficial components of a group or organization. Inclusiveness should be the single unifying principle at the core of all newcomer services and programs. Strategies to foster inclusiveness among newcomer programs and services include:

Paying Attention to People with Specific Needs. Women, disabled, elderly, mentally ill, refugees, survivors of torture - these are all subgroups of newcomers each of whom may have their own unique special needs which, if not understood and accepted, could potentially result in social stigma, depression and isolation. Developers of programs and services for newcomers, as well as newcomers themselves, must be cognizant of the needs and issues faced by these subgroups and make every effort to integrate them into programming.

One of the best examples of inclusiveness can be found within a small, community-based peer support program – the Women’s Sewing Group in Seattle, Washington. This drop-in, peer support group attended by multicultural women and children, hired a special needs worker to co-facilitate the group in order to make it welcoming to mothers of

disabled children. The group became able to serve parents of children with special needs and provides compensation for respite care for these families. Because parents of children with special needs share the same space with others, improved attitudes toward special needs children result as people get to know each other and come to understand each other's children and parenting challenges.

Integrating Children into Programming: Integrating children into programs for newcomer women goes beyond just the simple provision of childcare. It is very appropriate in many cultures for children to be a part of daily activity and social pleasure; integrating children into newcomer programming accommodates and respects cultural norms and values. In addition, newcomer parents and children often have similar needs for language acquisition and social acculturation but the children learn faster. In newcomer communities parents often fall behind their children which undermines their authority as parents. By integrating children into programming, the parents' rate of learning is accelerated because they are learning from both the program and from their children, allowing them to maintain their parenting role.

Crossroads Café, a US-based self-study, video ESL program, provides an excellent example of the benefits of integrating children into newcomer programming. Because of a lack of childcare - a common problem among many newcomer women - some adults utilizing the program video allowed children to watch the program videos at home with them. It was found that rather than being a disturbance, parents benefited from having older children help them with their learning. Parents could spend time with their children as they themselves learned English, were able to obtain help from family members, and became more motivated to study at home. In addition, many of the topics in the video series lent themselves to family discussion, such as gang involvement and single parenthood.

Involve parents in programs for children: Being inclusive also means that programs for children should welcome involvement from parents, in the children's learning, in decision-making about how they learn, and by providing opportunities for parents to engage in learning themselves. The one child-centred program included in this review, the Somali Child Development Program in Seattle, Washington, provides us with several strategies and highlights a number of important considerations when attempting to engage parents in child-centred programs. Based on an after-school tutoring model, the program actively involves children and parents in the design and development of program activities. It also includes a parental component which involves teaching parents how to use school-based resources (counsellors, health care) and provides other information to help parents transition successfully to their new community. The program is run after-school, in the evenings, and on Saturdays to allow full participation of working parents. Volunteers from the Somali community run the program and are actively involved in outreach to parents. Parents are continually encouraged and supported to participate in the program and to communicate with teachers and schools as part of their child's learning. Rather than viewing parental involvement as an annoyance or intrusion in a child-centred program, parents are welcomed into the program and provided with opportunities to become engaged and to participate.

One culture or multicultural: Being inclusive means valuing and utilizing differences and diversity as integral and beneficial components of a group or organization. For all the hundreds of newcomer programs that are multicultural, there are an equal number that focus only on one or a few cultural groups. There has been and still remains much debate on the issue of cultural inclusiveness (or exclusiveness) in newcomer programming, from individuals to groups to organizations. From the programs reviewed in this study, it is difficult to draw any conclusions. What can be offered, however, are issues for consideration.

As was expected, the majority of programs included in this review attempted to provide programs and services in the newcomer's language in order to increase comfort levels, preserve culture, and facilitate learning. ESL learning in these programs is almost always a separate activity or course of study. One program which sought to integrate language learning within the social milieu of the participants offers an alternate perspective. The multicultural Women's Sewing Group, a unique model of women from different cultures participating together in a peer support group, found that women readily shared information about their cultures, clothing and food, and welcomed the possibility of learning about others in the group. Because of the numerous languages in the group, conversations were primarily conducted in English, allowing women to practice their English skills in a safe and relaxed environment. Upon evaluation, many women reported that they particularly enjoyed the multicultural aspect of the group because it provided numerous opportunities for learning.

Another multicultural program, the Verein Project in Austria, trained newcomers from 28 countries in employment-related skills. Upon evaluation, participants reported that they felt very positive about the program, feeling like they were a part of a family. Those who had experienced racism in their new country said that being in the program was the first time they were treated as equals by program staff and by other members of the group.

What both of these programs illustrate is that people designing newcomer programs and services should consider the benefits and difficulties of multicultural vs. ethno-specific programming before choosing one or the other. Of course, these decisions are as much based on funding as they are on good practice. As the above mentioned programs have demonstrated, however, what sometimes is perceived as a hindrance may prove to be surprisingly beneficial.

Adopt an Asset-Based Approach

An asset-based approach to program development is an innovative alternative to conventional needs-based approaches. Asset-based approaches recognize the everyday experience, wisdom, skills and capacity that exist in all communities. Fostering active citizen engagement, building a stronger civil society and creating local economic opportunity are central to the asset-based approach.

Several of the effective programs included in this review, as well as some of the promising practices, help to illustrate the operationalization of an asset-based approach to program development. Employment support programs such as the Verein Project in Austria, the City of Toronto Mentorship Program, and the Women's Neighbourhood Co-operative in the Netherlands, aimed to build upon newcomer's former experience, skills and abilities, by assisting them with credentialing, obtaining relevant work experience, and strengthening existing capacities. Other programs, like the Women's Sewing Group, a peer support group centered around women's sewing projects, helped to increase confidence and reduce social isolation by working with and respecting the pre-existing sewing skills of women. Programs that are asset-based recognize and respect the pre-existing skills and abilities of its members.

The Central Valley Project in California exemplified the asset-based approach. While other programs recognized the value of an asset-based approach in building on the skills and experiences newcomers bring with them, the Central Valley Project was the only project that explicitly identified and measured the "social capital" that newcomers bring with them and applied this capital to civic engagement and capacity building initiatives. Social capital includes family, kinship, village and ethnic networks that provide mutual assistance to help individuals and families manage their lives in a cash-poor economy. Social capital also includes civic skills (e.g. knowing how to interact with teachers, knowing how to circulate a petition, knowing what can and can't be done in a demonstration), which can be redeployed in the new cultural context. The evaluators of this project felt that one of the accomplishments of the project was to help newcomers adapt their civic skills and develop new skills for the California context.

Use Participatory Models

The theme of participation speaks to the role participants play as decision-makers in the program. Participation extends on a continuum from programs in which agency staff make most decisions, to programs in which participants initiate, design, run and evaluate programs. All programs included in this review fell somewhere along this continuum:

Agency-directed ⇔ Volunteer/ Participant-directed

Programs benefit from involving community volunteers and participants in decision-making and program planning. Some of the program benefits include an increase in cultural appropriateness, relevance to participants, and sustainability. Programs that are volunteer/participant-directed also benefit from a broader skill base since participants' skills are utilized. These programs are capable of improving more rapidly because the participant feedback loop is direct and not interpreted through staff.

Of course, it is often not practical or appropriate to involve people in planning programs that are designed to meet basic needs. Programs for newly arrived immigrants and refugees, and for people in crisis, fall into this category. Also, some programs require a great deal of skill or knowledge which volunteers or participants do not have. In this

case, a greater amount of agency direction is needed. Pre-employment skills training programs fall into this category because of the extensive knowledge required to match newcomers' skills and experience with employment opportunities in the host country.

Strategies to move decision-making control from administrators and program staff to community volunteers and participants include:

Involve participants and volunteers in program planning: The ideal is to have program participants involved in program planning as much as possible within the constraints of the needs and skills of the participants and the goals of the program. Participants can be involved in needs assessment, design, implementation, and evaluation.

One excellent example of a participatory model is the Seniors Holistic Health Program hosted by Hong Fook Mental Health Association in Toronto. The program is a self-run drop-in program which is largely planned and run by the seniors themselves, with minimal support of one staff member (4-7 hours/week). Most of the programming decisions are made by the seniors utilizing the skills and knowledge of the members of the group in planning activities such as tai chi, painting, line dancing, calligraphy and gardening. The Hong Fook Mental Health Association which manages the program, envisioned from the outset a program which is built on a philosophy of empowerment and capacity building. In the words of one staff member: *“don't assume you can run a seniors group; people have resources and know what is appropriate for them”*.

Recruit, Train and Reward Volunteers: In order to be involved in program planning, participants need to develop both program planning and program-specific skills. The Rexdale Women's Centre's Ethno-Cultural Seniors program engages community leaders to train others in the community to plan city-wide forums, activities and coalitions. Hong Fook's Peer Leadership Training Program recruits people from the community to participate in a training course on health promotion, and then encourages them to share this knowledge in the community by delivering health promotion activities for 10-20 hours. Upon completion women attend a graduation ceremony and receive a certificate that they have finished the training.

Encourage networking: Networking opportunities were found to be especially beneficial for newcomers who were seeking employment. Provision of networking opportunities in the Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women and in the City of Toronto's Mentorship Program, allowed newcomers to meet with prospective employers and to make decisions about the types of work that interested them. In many of the programs reviewed, such as the Bamboo Network Host Mentorship Program, employers participated at the outset to provide host opportunities to newcomers. Encouraging participation through networking, partnerships and outreach helped to strengthen relationships between newcomers and prospective employers. Indeed, such participation appears to have led to the success of many employment programs included in this review.

The importance of participation at all stages of programming is highlighted by the experience of the Central Valley Project in California. The evaluation found that staff

were sometimes too directive in choosing activities, then inviting people to get involved, rather than equipping people to plan their own activities. For example, simply asking newcomers to sign a petition did not provide newcomers with experience in analyzing an issue and choosing a course of action. Rather than inviting people to take part in planned activities, the evaluators felt that newcomers should take part in analytic thinking and linking thought, action, and self-expression in order to participate effectively in civic life.

Provide a Safe Environment

Creating a safe environment can have a positive effect on group discussion. A safe environment can be created by developing a group where everyone is treated as equal, and members are invited to express their ideas and to share personal life experiences. The staff member or volunteer facilitates the actions of the group, rather than acting as a leader who directs the group.

An important component of the Verein pre-employment project in Austria was the creation of a supportive group of newcomers who could trust one another, feel safe, and share challenges. The supportive group was developed through group-building exercises such as sharing personal stories, assisting each other with problems, and providing encouragement and support as members went out to job interviews and employment placements. Upon evaluation, participants reported that they felt like they were a part of a family.

A unique aspect of the Women's Sewing Group in Seattle, Washington, was the inclusion of parents of children with specific needs. The approach of the facilitators was to allow the women to naturally get to know each other and each other's children. As people in the group got to know one another and to come to understand each other's parenting challenges, attitudes towards children with specific needs and their families became more positive.

Ensure Duration is Sufficient to Achieve Desired Outcomes

Ensuring that the program period is of sufficient duration and intensity to bring about the desired change and skill development is important. Program duration should reflect desired program outcomes by being consistent with behaviour change and learning principles. A program that hopes to move newcomers from being unemployed to acquiring gainful employment in a field of their interest, could hardly be effective if it provided training and guidance for only a few short weeks. Decisions about program duration become increasingly difficult as program outcomes become less well defined. A program such as the Women in Crisis project in the UK, for example, aims to meet newcomers' emergency settlement needs (food, shelter, mental health support) ultimately leading to increased independence. Just how long this takes will inevitably vary depending on the individual's own circumstances and past experiences, making program duration difficult to prescribe.

Several of the effective programs included in this review, as well as some of the promising practices, help to provide some guidance about program duration. Programs geared toward meeting the very immediate settlement needs of newcomers (e.g. Canada's Resettlement Assistance Program, COSTI's Lifeskills Support Program, and the UK Women in Crisis Project) provide support to newcomers for a period ranging from 14 days to 12 weeks. Longer-term settlement issues understandably require more time. Programs like Canada Employment Skills and the Verein Project in Austria, both employment support programs with the ultimate goal of gainful employment, run for 18 and 22 weeks respectively. Other programs, whose outcomes stretch to the far end of the settlement continuum toward integration and reciprocity (e.g. Hong Fook's Peer Leadership Training, Massachusetts Leadership Training, Rexdale's Ethno-Cultural Seniors Capacity Building Program), are ongoing.

When making decisions about program funding, funders need to consider, realistically, what duration is needed to achieve program outcomes. Without proper attention to the relationship between duration and outcomes, funding for programs may become inadequate to realize the true potential of programs, especially those which aim to impact the farthest end of the settlement and integration continuum. Too often the focus (i.e. innovation) and nature (short-term projects) of funding challenges an organization's ability to deliver sound programs. Funding must support attainment of all program outcomes.

Utilize Strategies Which Promote Sustainability of Programs and Services

Funding instability in the newcomer sector in Ontario, along with changes in government support of small, ethno-specific community agencies, and an ongoing trend in short-term project grants, has led to emphasis on the need for greater sustainability of programs. In an ideal sense, sustainable programs are ones which, after an initial period of intervention, are able to run with minimal support and resources from the host organization. Sustainability is a product of good program design. Of course, a program's sustainability depends upon the needs being served. Programs designed to serve urgent basic needs for newly arrived refugees or for people in crisis require greater funding and staff support than do programs for established immigrants and refugees.

All programs reviewed in this study required a substantial front-end investment for program planning and implementation. After this initial investment, the ongoing investment required to sustain the programs appears to fall into one of three categories: (1) those that continue to require substantial investment; (2) those that require moderate investment, some of the functions being taken over by volunteers and possibly by participants; and, (3) those that require minimal investment, most of the functions being taken over by the community members. A number of strategies help to promote the sustainability of programs:

Funding strategy: Oftentimes the focus and nature of funding challenges an organization's ability to build capacity among themselves, among those who run the programs, and among community members. By funding only new and innovative

projects, and by providing only short-term funding, programs which have demonstrated effectiveness but which need funds to “iron out the kinks” spend valuable time re-casting themselves to appear new and innovative to secure additional funding.

The Verein Project in Austria is a perfect example of how the focus and nature of funding hinders, rather than supports, program sustainability. The Verein Project, an employment support initiative for unemployed immigrants and refugees in Austria, reported very positive evaluation results early on in the program. In the years before the program ran, participants averaged 17.3% employment, which worked out to an average of 63 days/year. By the end of the 18 week program, participants averaged 71% employment or 258 days/year. These results were sustained in the follow-up study two years later. Despite this positive impact, project funding ran out and the program developers had to re-invent the program several times to appeal to funding agencies which favour new, pilot projects. To promote sustainability of programs, funding must allow initiatives to try and test their approaches, to build on what they already know, and to resolve problems with each new try, so that the end product is a workable and effective program model.

Sustainable Components: Programs which are designed with sustainability in mind are far likelier to be around years down the road than are programs which consider sustainability only as an afterthought. A number of programs included in this review contain components which help to promote sustainability including: drawing from the existing resources of people in the community (Community Engagement Project); using a train-the-trainer model to develop community leaders and thus creating a multiplier effect (Rexdale Ethnocultural Seniors Project and Hong Fook Peer Leadership Training Project); and, using participatory methods to allow newcomers to make decisions, and to develop leadership and participatory capacity (Seniors Holistic Health Program). In all of these programs, program staff have attempted to gradually remove themselves from the program and give increasing decision making and ownership to the newcomers. Participants are given tokens and provided with childcare if needed which helps to sustain their participation. Such programs have the potential to be sustained with minimal support or continued infusion of funds.

Include Direct Support Component

Newcomers have been found to depend on informal social support networks and at times are able to articulate explicit links between a lack of social support and their health, particularly mental health. When newcomers feel well-supported they can focus on their work, study, family and other life goals.

Opportunities for obtaining social support should be integrated into programs and services for newcomers, regardless of whether the program focus is on settlement, employment or community engagement. Direct support to individuals can be provided in two ways:

Informal peer support. Peer support is provided by people who are or have been in similar situations or who have faced similar conditions. Peer support can be provided

through a variety of channels (self-help groups, informal drop-in groups, and mentors) and by a number of people (case managers, outreach workers, mentors, crisis workers, professional facilitators).

The contribution of peer support to the settlement and integration of newcomers is evidenced in all but two of the effective programs included in this review. Integration of peer support, for example, is exemplified in the Community Engagement Project, run by the Settlement and Integration Services Organization of Hamilton. The project eases settlement and enhances integration of newcomers through peer-led reception committees and welcome circles for newcomers entering into a new community. Organizations developing programs for newcomers should attempt to include some form of peer support in their design, whether embedded in the fabric of the program (e.g. social drop-in groups) or offered through peer service providers.

Formal Individual Support. Individual support, tailored for a newcomer's situation and personality, involves the provision of support by an individual case manager, counsellor or mentor, on a case-by-case basis. Regarded as an emerging best practice, formal individual support was found to be a component of one effective practice and three promising programs included in this review, and of course, was the key component of all mentoring programs. Individual support can be woven into the fabric of a program using a case management approach, such as the Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women, or can be offered after clients have completed group activities, as in the Verein Project and the Canada Employment Skills project, as a means to facilitate application of learning and to manage stress. Post program support should be available weekly for a period of at least 2 months, and preferably up to 6 months if resources are available. For people in crisis situations, support should be available at all times throughout the crisis period. For mentorship programs, mentoring may be as little as 1-2 hours every month (Bamboo Network) and as long as 22 weeks (Canada Employment Skills).

4.3 PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION – Cross-cutting Themes and Effective Practices

Be Creative When Deciding on the Delivery Format

Delivering high-quality programs and services requires innovation in program delivery and consideration of the learner's style, constraints, and learning goals. Effective strategies to deliver high-quality programs and services to newcomers include a wide range of innovative and alternative formats as the sector is challenged to provide greater services for more newcomers with declining funds. The programs reviewed in this study illustrate a variety of formats for program delivery that have been found to be efficient and effective.

Drop-in programs, like the Women's Sewing Program and the Seniors Holistic Health Group, have proven to be an excellent format for program delivery for those who are transient and would otherwise be excluded from scheduled programming, for people who

work shift work and evenings and cannot commit to a regularly scheduled class, for people who are weary of “formalized” programs, and for people who are otherwise isolated for a host of reasons.

Group classes, such as those used to train people in employment related skills, are abundant in the newcomer sector. For obvious reasons, group learning formats are a popular means to efficiently deliver information to a large group of people with just one facilitator. This review also found, however, that smaller group learning was an effective way to create a safe and supportive learning environment for newcomers, and one which can naturally foster peer support. In one program reviewed, the participants actually described the group as a “kind of family”. In some instances, those participating in individually-focused programs, such as the City of Toronto’s mentoring program and British Columbia’s Bamboo Mentorship program, newcomers expressed a desire to learn technical skills and information through group-delivered workshops.

Self-study programs, such as the Crossroads Café video series, enable learning opportunities for people whose work and family duties preclude them from attending day, evening or weekend classes. People complete the program at their own pace, at a time that is convenient for them, and with the help of telephone-based tutors if needed. The Crossroads Café model has been successfully implemented in workplaces as well as an alternative means to teach ESL to workers while on the job site.

Train-the-trainer programs have been used widely throughout the social service sector as a means of multiplying the impact that any one person can make toward an issue or problem. People who are new to training others or who have recently developed leadership capabilities benefit from training to understand how to design and deliver initiatives in the community.

Two Ontario-based programs reviewed in this study, the Hong Fook Peer Leadership Training for women and the Rexdale Ethno-Cultural Seniors Program, capitalized on the train-the-trainer model to multiply the impact of its programs and to build capacity among members of the newcomer communities they served. The Ethno-Cultural Seniors Program in Rexdale, Ontario is particularly noteworthy for its utilization of an innovative and expansive model of three-tiered leadership development to promote leadership, community capacity building, and civic engagement skills in seniors. The three levels of leadership include: 1st line leadership to establish 2-3 leaders within a district-wide action group; 2nd line leadership including members from socio-recreational groups within various cultural communities that participate on the district-wide action group; and 3rd line leadership, including ethno-specific group members and community members from local neighbourhoods. The training provided to these leaders follows a train-the-trainer model where the first level of leadership is involved in the training of the second level, and those two levels involved in the training of the third level.

On-line programs: With the rapid rise of the Internet and personal computer use, just about everything can be accessed on-line. Training programs, casual chat, peer support

groups, research studies – there is nothing conceivable that cannot be accessed, provided that is, that people are comfortable using, and have access to a computer.

While websites listing newcomer services and programs are a popular way of communicating program-related information to clients, numbering well into the thousands, on-line interactive programming has not taken off rapidly in the newcomer sector, as it has in other areas of the social service sector, for obvious reasons. Language, computer skills, personal computer access, all preclude its widespread use by individuals as a format to *deliver* programs and services.

Only two programs reviewed in this study attempted to utilize on-line technology to deliver programs, with varying results. The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, a political advocacy group which provides training to leaders of immigrant community organizations to organize around political issues, uses web-based training and education modules to teach member agencies how to develop skills to better serve their constituencies. The program has not been formally evaluated and so the effectiveness of the web-based modules in promoting skill development is unknown.

The City of Toronto's Profession-to-Profession Mentoring project, which links City professionals with job-ready newcomers, offers interaction with mentors either through regular face-to-face meetings or via on-line technology. Although the on-line program resulted in 67% of clients being gainfully employed by the end of the six month mentoring program, evaluation also found that on-line communication alone was perceived to pose a barrier to the development of a trusting relationship between the mentor and the client, and that both mentors and clients felt that on-line support could not replace in-person or telephone interaction.

Internships, Placements and Job Shadowing: Many recent immigrants to Toronto are highly skilled and well-educated but are likely to be found working in low-skilled, poor paying jobs. To adjust to life in a new country, they often have no choice but to take positions that fall far below their qualifications and expectations (City of Toronto, 2004). This trend is a direct outcome of individual and structural barriers including: language, financial, cultural, lack of Canadian work experience, and a lack of information about professional and trades practices in Canada.

A number of community-based employment support programs have been created in Canada and worldwide to address employment-related barriers for internationally-trained professionals, for women, and for newcomers in general. The most effective programs are those which include a component that allows clients to gain local work experience, whether it be through internships, job shadowing, or mentorships. The message clearly is that hands-on work experience is an essential format for helping newcomers prepare for employment. Such placements can range from weeks to months, the duration being apparently less critical than the opportunity.

Ensure Facilitators are Appropriate and Well-Trained

When deciding what type of facilitator (or program-delivery person) is appropriate to deliver a program, run a group, become a mentor, or provide support, it is best to first decide on the *role* of the facilitator in the program. Are they there to offer information and referral, to serve as a source of peer support, to encourage client participation, or to perform a combination of these tasks? Only when these questions are answered can the decision about *who* should facilitate, be made.

Aware of the interrelated challenges newcomers face, many agencies provide a variety of services so newcomers can have many needs met at one place. This approach has significant implications for the choice and training of facilitator or service deliverer. Oftentimes these individuals are expected to provide information and referral, emotional support, and advocacy, on top of their primary function which may be to provide ESL instruction, job search training, or a myriad of other functions.

Training: Whatever their role, training is necessary for all facilitators or program deliverers. Training may be more or less extensive depending on the role. For example, personnel delivering crisis intervention in the British Women in Crisis project, a program serving the emergency settlement and mental health needs of refugee women, undergo an intensive 6-day training program plus receive monthly training on an ongoing basis, whereas professionals involved in the City of Toronto's mentoring program required only a half day of orientation to their roles and responsibilities. Training should be delivered whenever new programs or new program activities are to be implemented. Further, one-time up-front training is usually not enough to sustain program personnel's knowledge, skills and comfort level indefinitely; support by project staff to personnel involved in implementing program activities is essential for effective implementation. Supports may be as simple as regularly scheduled telephone consultation, site visits, and provision of program materials, to more complex involvement including the linking of program personnel with community resources.

Select Staff and Volunteers from Ethno-Cultural Communities: While it is true that many committed, dedicated people can be trained to deliver programs and services to newcomers, it is best if facilitators and program personnel are drawn from the community of immigrants being served. People from the community, who have strong connections to their community, can best understand the unique challenges and issues newcomers face, can serve as an inspirational role model to newcomers and can benefit the community as a whole by engaging friends and relatives to participate in programs or to volunteer their services.

Only one program reviewed, the Latina Women's Group, reported difficulty with having program personnel from the participant community. In this peer support program, facilitators are paraprofessional community members who have received training and mentoring from the host organization. Upon evaluation, facilitators reported that boundary issues sometimes arose for them since some of them are friends with the participants outside of the group. Recognizing their value as community members, they proposed the establishment of mentoring opportunities to learn about ways to establish

boundaries with the group participants, both inside and outside of the group, rather than be replaced by facilitators from outside the community.

Following completion of this “placement”, volunteers attend a graduation ceremony at which time they receive a certificate of achievement.

Enable Attendance

A program can only be successful if people know about it and are able to attend. Careful attention must be paid to the barriers and facilitators to attendance, many of which are unique to newcomer populations.

Recruit Widely: Newcomers often do not know about programs or services. There are essentially two methods of recruiting participants, either through immigrant-serving organizations (leaflet to organizations that work with the target population) or directly to participants (via media advertising in community newspapers, and also by getting media coverage of the program and its activities to raise the program profile, and by word-of-mouth). One of the most effective means of recruitment, found among many of the programs reviewed, was via existing social networks. In the Homebound Citizenship Tutoring program, for example, one very important finding reported by the program manager was that recruiting participants was most easily done by attending community celebrations, free meal programs, and spreading the word at citizenship classes, rather than “wasting time making phone calls in a formal way during 9-5 business hours”.

Arrange Transportation: Lack of transportation was a barrier (due to cost, knowledge of public transportation and access for elderly and disabled participants) noted by most of the programs reviewed in this study. When designing programs, a budget line should be included for transportation for participants, whether it be used for tokens, drivers, vans, or gasoline.

Pay Attention to Timing: Many employed newcomers, especially those in survival jobs, take advantage of overtime, hold down two jobs, and are often subject to changing or rotating work schedules that make attendance at regularly or weekday scheduled programs difficult. Newcomer women who are at home caring for young children run an added risk of becoming socially isolated and depressed. Classes and programs to support the settlement and integration of newcomers often occur during the weekday, presenting difficulties because they interfere with parenting and family duties; fatigue of the attendees after a long day’s work also makes learning problematic (Center for Impact Research, 2002). Social and learning opportunities for adult newcomers need to be organized so that they enable attendance by those who are employed or are primary caregivers of children. Holding programs on weekday evenings or Saturday mornings, like the Women’s Sewing Group, Latina Women’s Group, and the Somali Child Development Project is a good practice to enable attendance.

Choose an Appropriate Setting: Programs reviewed in this study took place in homes, community centres, and agency offices. Choice of setting should be determined, at least

in part, by where the participants are on the settlement continuum. Immediate settlement needs of newly arrived immigrants and refugees are often best met in their homes or settlement houses. The Lifeskills Support program run by COSTI in Ontario, for example, teaches basic skills for living in a modern home (operating appliances, safety etc.) strictly through home visitation. For people who are homebound, providing services in the home is critical for inclusiveness and to reduce isolation. Programs should be located so that they are easily accessed by the target population. Taking advantage of free spaces in the community (e.g. community centres, libraries, schools) is a good place to start as people may already know about these spaces or may frequent them for other reasons.

4.4 PROGRAM EVALUATION – Cross-cutting Themes and Effective Practices

Evaluation is becoming a priority in the newcomer services field. Although it was difficult to find programs with formal evaluations, it appears that evaluation is increasingly being recognized as an integral part of programming. In many European countries, higher level planning of formal evaluation has become a priority in the newcomer sector. The British Home Office, for example, has hired consultants to develop evaluation frameworks for newcomer service agencies. The European Council on Refugees and Exiles has developed a series of good practice guides for eastern and western Europe and for different newcomer service areas. The guides do, however, note that they are unable to base their findings on sound empirical research as this research has not been done for most programs. Evaluation is also becoming a priority in the U.S. newcomer sector. Many U.S. programs have been included in this review because evaluations have been done and are accessible. Where evaluations have been done in Canada, funders may not allow agencies to share the findings, placing a serious limitation for learning from Canadian newcomer programs.

Several challenges face organizations that are evaluating programs in the newcomer service field, not least of which are the practical challenges of evaluating such complex outcomes as leadership development, civic engagement and capacity building. Newcomer initiatives which are participatory, inclusive, sustainable and multi-component add additional complexity to evaluation work. Some interesting strategies to evaluate programs in this field include:

Evaluate using *multiple methods* to generate information from a variety of perspectives that allow the researcher to objectively assess outcomes. Evaluations of newcomer initiatives should draw on a variety of social science disciplines and should consider a broad range of information-gathering procedures.

Define and *break down complex outcomes* like civic participation to be able to develop indicators of success but also to understand the complex outcomes to capture how they play out among a multi-ethnic population and ethnic communities. The operational definitions of complex outcomes should be defined in a culturally-appropriate way, which sometimes looks different than what mainstream thinking would allow.

Evaluation should *involve stakeholders* in appropriate ways. Those with an interest can include: community agencies and community members, policy-makers and advocates, and, local immigrant-serving agencies. It is especially important that members of the community whose settlement and integration is being addressed be involved in evaluation.

Evaluation of the Central Valley Partnership project in California offers an excellent example of an evaluation design which employed two of the three aforementioned strategies. The evaluation utilized multiple methods to collect information including surveys, interviews with staff and participants, document review, and classroom observation to examine simultaneously both the dynamics of the project functioning and the impact of the initiative on newcomers. Complex outcomes, such as civic participation, were broken down into specific and measurable indicators including but not limited to parents' involvement in their children's education, volunteer involvement in community improvement, and participation in community dialogue sessions. To evaluate the organizational dynamics of the partnership, the evaluation employed horizontal evaluation techniques² to conduct empirical research on the partnership's accomplishments (i.e. partner satisfaction, leadership, vision, internal operations) while at the same time examining issues related to its future potential and possible directions for further evolution.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From those programs reporting positive outcomes or promising practices, 11 lessons can be learned:

- Make programs as inclusive as possible
- Adopt an asset-based approach
- Use participatory models
- Provide a safe environment
- Ensure programs are of sufficient duration to achieve outcomes
- Incorporate strategies to promote sustainability
- Include a direct support component
- Use creative delivery formats
- Use appropriate and trained facilitators
- Enable attendance
- Evaluate programs to assess impact

In the following section we discuss the implications of these findings for designing and funding newcomer programs and services.

² Horizontal Evaluation refers to the evaluation of horizontal programs or initiatives that represent the collaborative efforts of two or more organizations working together to achieve shared outcomes.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

This study reports on effective practices for newcomer services in the areas of settlement, employment and community engagement. Twenty-four programs were included in the review, eight of which reported positive outcomes in a well-designed study and twelve of which were not formally evaluated but contained promising practices. Four programs were currently being evaluated and are “to be tracked”. These practices have important implications for the way newcomer programs and services are designed, implemented, evaluated and funded.

Designing Programs

Support participatory and asset-based models. Wherever possible, recruit agency staff and program volunteers from target communities including former service recipients and include them in the program planning process. This strategy not only builds the capacity of the target community, it also increases sustainability and ensures appropriateness for the target group.

Ensure that the definition of sustainability varies with the goals of the program and the needs of the target group. Sustainability often means that the program will be able to run with minimal or reduced resources in the future. There are, however, valuable programs which will require continued support by funders and agencies, but whose outcomes make the ongoing cost a good investment.

Evaluate outcomes using strong designs so that you can assess the impact properly. Proper evaluation means the use of good evaluation designs, including solid measurement tools and understanding of multiple methodologies.

Providing Funding

Invest in programs. Funding needs must be well thought out by the agency and the funders at the outset of a program. The investment and duration of funding required must be clearly understood depending on the outcomes desired. In some instances, short term project funding may be appropriate, in other instances, it is necessary to commit funding beyond short-term, innovations and pilot projects. Funding should be provided so that the duration of funding “matches” the outcomes desired.

Disseminate findings widely and share knowledge. Evaluation reports often rest with funders and are not available for other agencies and researchers to learn from. Disseminating widely means making lessons learned available to *all* who could benefit, using multiple dissemination channels.

Evaluating Funding Submissions

Use best practices to evaluate funding submissions. Develop a guide to assess submissions using best practices. Train reviewers to understand what these practices mean and how to apply them when evaluating submissions.

Invest in evaluation. Support evaluation by equipping grantees with education and evaluation frameworks. Undertake research into indicators of complex outcomes typically found in the newcomer sector.

Newcomer Service Areas:

Settlement and Integration – Relevant Themes and Effective Practices. Newcomers must find somewhere to live and a job, familiarize themselves with a different society and culture, make a new network of friends and acquaintances and often learn a new language. In the process, they may experience success – but also alienation, loneliness, frustration, xenophobia and racism (Canadian Council for Refugees, 1998, p.3). In the initial settlement stage, especially for refugees who did not plan to come, newcomers are highly dependent on service agencies to assist them with finding housing, work, and obtaining necessary documents.

At this initial stage, the most effective practices are those which ensure that programs are of sufficient duration to assist adequately with settlement needs. Depending on the individual newcomer's situation, and history, the duration of need will vary.

In order to meet some of the challenges that newcomers often face such as alienation, loneliness, frustration, xenophobia and racism, programs should pay attention to the following practices: be as inclusive as possible, provide a safe environment, include a direct support component, use appropriate and trained facilitators and enable attendance.

Employment Supports – Relevant Themes and Effective Practices. Many recent immigrants to Toronto are highly skilled and educated but are very likely to be found working in low-skilled, poor paying jobs. To adjust to life in a new country, they often have no choice but to resort to these positions that fall far below their qualifications and expectations (City of Toronto, 2004). This trend of professional immigrants working in low-waged, unskilled positions is a direct outcome of individual and structural barriers including: language, finance, culture, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and skills, employers' requirements of Canadian experience, and a lack of information about professional and trades practices in Canada.

A number of community-based employment support programs have been created in Canada and worldwide in response to a desire to address the employment barriers faced by newcomers. Lessons from these employment support programs included in this review suggest that some practices are critical to emphasize when designing and implementing newcomer employment programs:

First, such programs must adopt an asset-based approach that recognizes the experience, wisdom, skills and capacity of its participants.

Second, creative delivery formats which allow newcomers to gain on-the-job work experience, whether it be through internships, job shadowing, on-line or face-to-face mentoring, are preferred. The message gained from this review of programs is that hands-on experience is essential to consolidate skills and confidence, afford the newcomer some Canadian work experience, and also to increase awareness among employers of newcomer abilities. The duration of the work experience may range from a period of weeks to months, but should be long enough to allow for adequate development of skills and confidence. Host organizations whose members are aware of the challenges newcomers face when seeking employment may provide excellent opportunities to provide a safe environment for newcomers to begin entry into the workforce.

Third, participatory models which encourage networking opportunities to allow newcomers to meet with prospective employers is a very important practice. In many of the programs reviewed, employers were involved from the outset to provide host opportunities to newcomers. Organizations engage in intensive partnership and outreach efforts to potential employers to make these relationships strong and active. Indeed, such partnerships appear to have led to the success of many of the programs included in this review including those which relied on partners for access to mentors and those which saw newcomers become gainfully employed by the host agency after their placement had ended.

Finally, mentorship is an effective strategy for providing much needed role modeling, guidance and support to newcomers. However, unless mentors are appropriately matched to the mentee and are trained to fulfill their mentoring role, the mentor-mentee relationship cannot be effective.

Community Engagement – Relevant Themes and Effective Practices

Community engagement includes community development initiatives that help newcomer communities engage in the larger society by building community capacity, leadership and voice, particularly among at-risk and marginalized newcomers in low-income neighbourhoods.

Newcomer communities are often disempowered because they lack the civic skills and capacity to analyze and react to policies and political decisions that affect their lives. The goal of community engagement initiatives is to help newcomers and their communities develop the skills to become active citizens. The three practices that are particularly relevant to this service area are: adopt an asset-based approach, use participatory models, ensure programs are of sufficient duration to achieve outcomes. The asset-based approach identifies the skills and experiences that newcomers have and helps them to adapt those skills and develop new skills so they can play a role in shaping their community. The use of participatory models allows newcomers to play a role in planning

programs and services. This provides them with an opportunity to develop program planning, analysis, and critical thinking skills that empower them and their communities. This review demonstrated, however, that the development of community engagement skills is not a short-term investment. Programs that promote community engagement must be of sufficient duration to allow the organizations and individuals involved to develop the necessary capacity.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study, commissioned in November 2004 to inform funding decisions for newcomer services, has reported on effective and promising practices and programs across the entire settlement continuum, from meeting immediate settlement needs, to longer-term integration, and ultimately, to community capacity building and reciprocity.

The review identified 24 effective and emerging practices which are instructive for the way newcomer programs and services are designed, implemented, evaluated and funded. One finding is that when designing programs, the use of participatory and asset-based models is paramount. Building the capacity of the target community will lead to enhanced sustainability in the long run. A second finding is that funders and program staff need to invest in evaluation. Evaluation resources must be committed so that we can learn from each other's efforts. A third finding is that the nature and focus of funding must reflect desired program outcomes. When evaluating funding submissions, the best practices contained in this report can be used to assess the quality of funding proposals. Training reviewers to understand what these practices mean and how to apply them will go a long way toward funding quality proposals.

Through this research we identified several other evaluations currently underway which should lead to important results in the next months or years. The results of these studies will further inform this review and should be tracked.

Finally, in reviewing the evaluation findings from eight programs rated as effective, we have learned much about how to best design and deliver newcomer programs and services. We cannot ignore, however, the many unpublished programs and services not included in this review which may well contain a wealth of information and lessons to further our understanding. Formal evaluations – those which are well designed - are critical to further our understanding of effectiveness of newcomer programs and services. Financial resources and support to disseminate evaluation results are imperative if we are to learn from the efforts of our colleagues.

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Programs Demonstrating Effective Practices

Program name: *Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)*

Target Group: Government Assisted Refugees who have just arrived in Canada

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: National (Canada)

Number Served: Currently 7,300 (2250 destined to Ontario)

Program Duration: Average is 15 days

Program Description: The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada accepts a pre-determined number of refugees to Canada and provides immediate settlement services and financial assistance through monthly income support. The refugees are selected overseas³, met at the airport, escorted through customs and immigration, and transported to their destination community. There they are housed temporarily in a reception house or hotel which is operated by service-providing organizations under contract to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Service-providing organizations provide assistance in finding permanent accommodation, orientation to life in Canada, introduction to their new community, links to government programs and community services, and reviewing the rights and obligations of financial assistance.

Program Components:

- Orientation to life in Canada and introduction to their community
- Housing (temporary)
- Financial assistance (via monthly income support)
- Referral to programs and services.

Evaluation: An evaluation of the Resettlement Assistance Program was undertaken in 2001 to investigate how well the program was working and to generate ideas for improving its operation. Five sources of information were used to evaluate the program: document review, key informant interviews, review of administrative data, on-site visits, and a survey of clients.

³ The selection of refugees eligible for the Resettlement Assistance Program is complex. The program is restricted to government-assisted refugees selected overseas. Applicants may be referred to visa posts by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees or other reputable agencies or may apply without referral. In selecting refugees, visa officers consider mainly need for protection and ability to resettle in Canada (determined by knowledge of French or English, age, education and work skills). Other considerations include family configuration, adaptability, motivation and resourcefulness.

Outcomes of Interest: The evaluation was not intended to measure impacts because the Resettlement Assistance Program is not long or intensive enough to expect it alone to have an extensive impact on settlement. Rather, the outcomes of interest included: client satisfaction, perceptions of helpfulness, immediate settlement effects (e.g. applied for SIN, opened bank account).

Findings:

- The profile of refugees during the evaluation period showed that out of 459 clients destined for Ontario, only 28% of these clients had no formal high school; the remainder had a high school diploma or higher level education (19% had university degrees).
- Overall, Resettlement Assistance Program clients reported being satisfied with most aspects of the program. Almost two-thirds of the clients believed that the program helped them a lot to settle in Canada. Financial assistance, followed by help at the airport and then orientation, were mentioned as the most helpful aspects.
- With regard to immediate settlement impact, all clients had applied for a SIN, had opened a bank account, and were comfortable using public transportation. Ninety-three percent experienced no trouble accessing health care.
- All clients remained on financial assistance 3-5 months after arriving in Canada; only 9% were working in paid jobs for very low wages. Only 2% were in job training but 15% were upgrading their education.
- Most clients were enrolled in LINC or ESL.
- Few of the service provider organizations monitor participants' activities so little data was available. It was reported, however, that the length of stay varied dramatically by community from 14 days to 43 days, reflecting variations in apartment vacancy rates across communities.
- Site visit and key informant data suggested the program is operating as envisaged by policy makers although it was apparent that each service organization operates slightly differently so that few outstanding practices across all could be reported here.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Program was reviewed in 2001 using multiple methods and showed positive impact on most outcomes of interest.

Best Practices Implications:

- The Resettlement Assistance Program model meets a very immediate need for newcomers arriving in Canada by providing immediate practical assistance and orientation.
- A longer duration of programming (beyond the 14-43 days) is needed to ensure that refugees have the life skills they need to function in their new community. Without such life skills, longer-term aspects of settlement such as gainful employment and educational upgrading, cannot be achieved.

Generalizability: Government-assisted refugees.

References:

Power Analysis Inc. Evaluation of the Resettlement Assistance Program: Final Report.
January 2002.

http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/rap-par/description_e.asp

Program name: *The Women's Sewing Group*

Delivery Organization: Southwest Youth and Family Services

Target Group: Isolated immigrant and refugee women (primarily Cambodian, other Southeast Asian, East African women)

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: City-wide (Seattle, U.S.)

Program Budget: The Southwest Youth and Family Services obtains funding from the Community Research Centre of Seattle for the group and provides agency support. Some funding provided by Division of Developmental Disabilities so that the group is able to serve parents of children with special needs.

Number Served: Total figure unavailable; group is usually attended by 5-10 women and 4-10 children.

Program Duration: Ongoing – held on Saturdays, twice a month for 3 hours.

Program Description: Initially begun 5 years ago as a group of Cambodian women who met on weekends and invited speakers to educate women on community concerns, the Women's Sewing Group evolved and grew into a multicultural group, led by two facilitators, that meets regularly to sew, discuss, learn English, learn computers, interact, laugh and share. Childcare is provided on site; the group is held in a small conference room that opens into the library so that children and women can have access to reading material, computers, and have space to conduct ESL classes. The group is usually attended by 5-10 participants at any one time. Women are instrumental in giving input on the direction and activities of the group.

Program Components:

- Childcare and incorporation of older children into group projects
- Sewing projects created by the women
- Peer support among women attending
- ESL instruction from a trained ESL teacher.

Evaluation: Six-month qualitative study including participants and staff. Data were gathered in four ways:

- Participant observation (via participation in sewing group)
- Individual interviews: with both facilitators and staff person at Southwest Youth and Family Services
- Group interviews with participants (n=7)
- Meeting minutes

Outcomes of Interest: Investigation of both process issues and impact on participants and their families.

Findings:

- Overall the feeling in the group is very positive and supportive. Women in the group are busy sewing, talking, laughing. Children are well integrated into the group, either by helping with sewing projects, using the library, or just “toddling around”.
- Atmosphere is very informal and facilitators encourage decision-making and participation by the women in group decisions. Women learn English from the teacher but largely from one another.
- Food sharing is an important social aspect of the group.
- Positive aspect of the group is that a woman doesn’t have to have something wrong with her to attend.
- Most participants found out about the group through a personal connection with the facilitator.
- Most participants said they attend the group because of the social aspects and the practical aspect of learning a skill.
- Participants said the group provides respite from the problems of daily life, a supportive environment as well as an opportunity to sew items that can be used.
- Women expressed pride at learning to sew.
- A few participants expressed benefit over learning from other cultures. Participants often shared information about their cultures during informal group discussions.
- Women suggested having more sewing machines and more hours of operation so that the sewing community can grow.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Although a limited number of English-speaking participants were included in the evaluation, and drop-outs were not contacted, the evaluation questions and multiple methods used to collect data provide some strength to the overall design. Also, the in-depth questioning of a small sample is very appropriate for a qualitative study. The evaluation findings have provided some insightful information on which to understand the benefits of the program and to make recommendations for program refinement. The program appears to be quite promising. Full scale evaluation will help to better understand the complete impact of the program.

Best Practices Implications: The Women’s Sewing Group provides a unique model of women from different cultures participating together in a group. The group clearly fills an important need for refugee and immigrant women. The program provides a model for other agencies that are trying to provide opportunities for social support for refugee and immigrant women. Specific best practices of the group include:

- This program uses a traditional activity (sewing) to create a focus for women to obtain peer support.
- Childcare provision and integration of children into meeting groups is a critical component.

- Food sharing is an important social aspect of the group and it provides an opportunity to learn about another culture.
- Participatory nature of the group – women contribute ideas for the types of activities the group should do.
- Women do not need to have something wrong to attend.
- Transportation provision would allow more women, especially those with children to attend.
- Childcare allowance is provided for women to attend the group. Many would not be able to attend without this.
- Inclusive model - parents of children with special needs share the space with other children who do not have special needs, thus promoting awareness and positive attitudes toward these special needs children.
- Commitment of facilitators to working with immigrant and refugee women. Participants see facilitators as role models (they are professional women) and talk with them about how they have adapted to living in the US and raising children here. The facilitators, in many ways, are also participants and peers.
- Because of the multiple languages represented in the group, English is the dominant language spoken. The group therefore provides a non-threatening forum for women to practice speaking English.

Generalizability: Small multicultural groups of women and their children

References:

Sullivan, M., Stone, M., Ap, J., & Westerman, N. (2002). *Evaluation report: The Women's Sewing Group*. Seattle, WA: Seattle Partners for Healthy Communities, Community Research Center and Southwest Youth and Family Services.

Program name: *Latina Women's Group*

Delivery Organization: Southwest Youth and Family Services

Target Group: Latina immigrant and refugee women.

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: Neighbourhood (South Park, Seattle, U.S.)

Program Budget: Information not available.

Number Served: 18 women.

Program Duration: On-going support group held weekly.

Program Description: The support group began in January of 2001 and met weekly over the course of the year for a total of 40 sessions. The format of the group is a combination of guest speakers and discussion, sometimes supplemented by other instructional videos or audio tapes. Discussion topics are selected by the participants to ensure that the group is meeting their needs, as well as provide a sense of ownership. Topics include: depression, acculturation, domestic violence, women's health. The goal of the group is to provide support in Spanish to women with limited English skills. Two native Spanish-speaking facilitators from the community and guest speakers also provide information and resources to women about immigration issues, women's rights, etc. Groups provide an opportunity for women and families to connect with available services and resources in the community.

The role of the facilitators is to plan and conduct each session with support from Southwest Youth and Family Services staff. Facilitators receive on-going supervision and support from the program manager.

Program Components:

- Support group for women including information sessions on specific topics
- Childcare provided so women can attend session
- Dinner provided by women in the group to enhance the social aspect

Evaluation: Case study (support group) through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with program staff, focus group with women, monthly meetings with program managers.

Outcomes of Interest: Perceived benefits of support group attendance, group process, program value (i.e. enhanced support to women), access to resources, increased self-advocacy skills.

Findings:

Perceived benefits:

- Supportive function, lifts moods, eases tension, counteracts feelings of depression.
- Learn practical issues: communication skills, parenting education and advice, using public transportation, accessing medical care
- Helps them to understand living in U.S. and eases tension with children who know more than their parents do
- Reduced social isolation

Group process:

- Like the variety of topics, enjoy learning from other's personal experiences
- Childcare essential and a break for women
- Transportation, transient population, lack of community awareness are all a problem for attendance
- Facilitators are Latina women with strong connections to their community. Facilitators are constantly mentored by South West Youth and Family Services staff who provide information for group topics, take responsibility for referrals.

Program Value:

- Enhance knowledge about community services and resources, laws regarding child discipline, and rights with respect to domestic violence and immigration.
- Evaluation did not investigate whether women were able to act on their knowledge (e.g. advocating for their children).

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

The program has been evaluated in a well-designed qualitative study and showed only moderate impact on the outcomes of interest. A number of recommendations were made which could strengthen the program to become a better model for an immigrant women's support group.

Best Practices Implications:

The Latina Women's support group is unique in that women do not have to have a problem to join the group. The group is held in Spanish so women can talk about problems in their own language. Community-based support groups, operating on a drop-in basis, meet an important need for otherwise isolated immigrant women who are staying home with children.

To improve the support group model, the evaluators recommended that:

- Additional institutional supports be made available to the two facilitators. A significant amount of planning is required of facilitators who are planning weekly information sessions. One possibility is to create a central repository of curriculum and resource information so that the materials can be easily accessed by facilitators.
- Participants in this study described the support group as a "class" rather than a support group. It may be that there is too much emphasis on instruction and not enough on sharing and peer learning. Facilitators need to ensure that women have enough time to talk and socialize, thus allowing the group to reach its goal of social support.

- Group facilitators are paraprofessional community members who have received training and mentoring from the Southwest Youth and Family Services. This model works well since the facilitators were found to be well-liked and have a good rapport with the participants. However, facilitators need training about how to establish boundaries with members who may be friends or neighbours and, also, need training about how to provide information without judgement or opinion.
- Women reported gaining knowledge in a variety of areas. However, it was unclear whether or not women were able to “act” on the new knowledge. Focusing the support group on knowledge provision in a classroom style may not be the best way to reach the goal of skill development and self-advocacy.

Generalizability: Small group setting for a single cultural group.

References:

Sullivan, M., Martinez, E., Martinez, J., & Westerman, N. (2002). *Evaluation report: Southwest Youth and Family Services Latina Women's Group*. Seattle, WA: Seattle Partners for Health Communities, Community Research Center and Southwest Youth and Family Services.

Program name: *Somali Community Services of Seattle Child Development Program*

Delivery Organization: Somali Community Services of Seattle

Target Group: Somali children (gr. 1-12) and their parents

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: City-wide (Seattle, U.S.)

Program Budget: \$1,500/month provided by City of Seattle, Human Services Department

Number Served: 25 children per month

Program Duration: On-going

Program Description: Program was established in 1998 to meet the needs of the Somali children and families in transitioning to the U.S. education system. The program provides mainly after-school (5-7pm) and weekend tutoring to assist children with homework and support in an environment that facilitates understanding and learning in a way that may not be possible in tutoring programs provided by the school district. The program goals are:

- 1) Increasing children's leadership skills and self-confidence;
- 2) Improving children's academic performance; and
- 3) Actively involving children and parents in the design and development of program activities.

Tutoring is provided by two Somali Community Services staff and two volunteers from the Somali community.

Program Components:

- After-school tutoring for Somali children to provide help with homework. Tutoring provided by community volunteers and sometimes by other Somali students in the session (i.e. peer support).
- Family support also included via parent education classes held every Saturday to teach parents how to use school-based resources such as counsellors and health care, and information provision to help parents' transition to their new community.

Evaluation: Qualitative design using semi-structured interviews with program staff/volunteers, parents and children.

Outcomes of Interest: Satisfaction with program, program benefits, program strengths, community benefits.

Findings: Five major themes emerged from analysis of the data collected.

Program Benefits

- The tutoring program appears to benefit the students and families in many ways including: providing a link between families and schools by improving parental understanding of the education system and assisting with communication between parents and teachers; improved academic performance; enhanced self-confidence; sharing among peers.

Program Strengths

- Responsive staff to children's needs; cultural relevance; parent and child satisfaction with program implementation; good communication between staff and parents

Community Benefits

- Program provides an outlet for Somali community members to volunteer in service to their own community
- Diffusion of benefits from families in the program to others in the Somali community

Challenges

- Transportation; funds to run program; community support for the program – need for outreach to volunteer teachers from the Somali community; parents not increasing activity in communicating with teachers and the school

Suggestions

- Develop regular transportation (e.g. a van)
- Outreach to community for teachers, drivers, administration
- Increase number of hours of operation per week; greater computer use
- Encourage more families to participate and communicate (possibly via translators), possibly via ESL classes, workshops and seminars

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Program evaluated in well-designed study and showed positive impact on most outcomes of interest. Evaluation also helped to formulate a number of concrete recommendations for strengthening the program.

Best Practices Implications: One of the main strengths of the program is its cultural relevance and responsiveness to the Somali families it serves. The program outreaches to the Somali community and recruits volunteer teachers. Evaluation showed that drivers and administrators could also be recruited from the Somali community to help run the program.

Generalizability: The Child Development Program, although running in the Somali community, serves as a model for other ethnic groups to develop similar after-school tutoring programs and supports in their community.

References:

Casey, B., Sullivan, M., & Roble, M.A. (2000). *Evaluation report: Somali Community Services of Seattle Child Development Program*. Seattle, WA: Seattle Partners for Healthy Communities.

Program name: *Crossroads Café – A Model for Distance ESL Learning*

Target group: Working immigrants

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: National (United States)

Program Duration: Dependent on individual

Program description: Crossroads Café is a video and print series that assists working immigrants who want to learn English and who find it difficult to attend ESL classes. The materials may not be appropriate for very low-level English learners but may be better suited to low-intermediate English learners. The program was first implemented in the Chicago metropolitan area but can serve as a model for other cities. The videos dramatize events in the lives of people who work at and visit a restaurant called the Crossroads Café. The episodes feature diverse ethnicities and real life stories; through comedy and drama, the stories depict cultural and social issues that are a part of life in the U.S. They also include Word Play, an animated segment that demonstrates the appropriate language to use when communicating specific types of information as well as grammar usage. Cultural issues include the importance of time, the role of the police, finding and interviewing for a job, and worker protection and benefits. In terms of language, students learn to ask for directions, complete job applications, write a letter etc. The video is supplemented by two workbooks with language exercises and tutoring materials to be used by friends or relatives.

Program components:

- ESL instructional materials including video, manuals and in-class or telephone-based tutorial.

Evaluation: Crossroads Café has undergone extensive field evaluation beginning in 1995 by many independent research agencies. Evaluation has been done in numerous American cities, using many different methods, and has compared three different modes of home delivery: home self-study, self-study supplemented by a tutor, and in-class use.

Outcomes of Interest: Student language improvement and retention.

Findings: Presented below is a summary of findings from the many research studies which have evaluated the Crossroads Café program. Typically, evaluation has pre-and-post-tested learners on vocabulary, cultural knowledge, reading and writing.

- Regardless of the delivery model, learners demonstrated significant gains in all four areas of vocabulary, cultural knowledge, reading and writing.
- One study found that retention rates were highest in the distance learning programs, compared with facilitated or classroom programs. It was found that adults who engaged children in their learning were more motivated to learn

because they could spend time with their children, were able to obtain help from them, and became motivated to work in spite of a lack of childcare. In addition, many of the topics led to family discussion about gangs and parenting.

- The Crossroads Café model has been successfully implemented across the U.S. in a variety of ways including: airing on cable television, direct mail with an instructor who exchanges videos, assignments and evaluation; broadcasts at community centers, and on about 350 public television stations. The Crossroads Café materials have also been used successfully in many workplace literacy programs in the U.S.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Program evaluated in well designed study and showed positive impact on most outcomes of interest.

Best Practices Implications:

- Engaging the whole family in learning
- Flexible scheduling
- Designing programs with childcare needs in mind.
- Since many immigrants spend a large number of hours at work, the workplace has proven to be an important channel for ESL distance learning opportunities.

for Impact Research.

Generalizability: Adult learners

References:

Center for Impact Research, 2002. *What's new? Reaching working adults with English for speakers of other languages instruction: a best practices report.* Chicago, Illinois: Center for Impact Research.

Program name: *Profession to Profession – City of Toronto Mentoring Project*

Delivery Organization: Partnership between the City of Toronto and a consortium of community agencies

Target Group: Internationally trained immigrant professionals

Service Area: Employment Support

Location/Scope: City-wide (Toronto)

Program Budget: Information not available.

Number Served: Pilot project – 29 mentors and 29 mentees.

Program Duration: 4 months, 4-6 hours/month.

Program Description: The project involves experienced City professionals in the occupations of accounting, engineering and information technology, volunteering as mentors to internationally educated immigrant professionals. The job-ready immigrant protégés receive job search advice and support from the mentor, while the mentor develops leadership and coaching skills and insight into working with internationally trained colleagues from diverse cultures. Mentors can participate either by face-to-face mentoring or on-line mentoring. Both mentors and mentees attend a half-day orientation training which covers topics such as roles and responsibilities and cross-cultural communication.

The City of Toronto works with a consortium of community agencies to deliver the mentoring project. These member agencies are ACCESS, COSTI, JVS, JobStart, Humber College, Seneca College and Skills for Change. The City takes on the role of recruiting volunteer mentors, promotion and marketing of the project, and project evaluation. The Consortium role is to conduct training for mentors and protégés, facilitate matching, recruit protégés, and monitor the mentor-mentee relationship.

Program Components:

- City-community mentorship and peer support (i.e. partnership between municipal government (source of mentors) and consortium of community agencies (source of mentees)).

Evaluation: Pilot project (September 2003-June 2004). Methodology included mentee administered evaluation forms and qualitative interviews with mentors.

Outcomes of Interest: Linking of immigrants to employment opportunities in their fields of expertise. Specifically, the project aimed for 60% employment outcomes within the four-month mentoring period.

Findings:

- The top ways that mentors helped their mentees were: completing the resume, identifying skills to meet market demand, self-marketing techniques and confidence building, and where to look for work.
- 67% of participants and 73% of participants in the online and face-to-face mentoring programs, respectively, found employment by the end of the program
- Majority of participants in both the face-to-face and the online mentoring program reported a high degree of satisfaction with the mentoring program (including frequency of contact, relationship, quality of mentoring, effectiveness of mentoring).
- 90% of mentors in the online program and 86% of mentors in the face-to-face program said they would volunteer again as a mentor.
- Mentors expressed a desire to review feedback from the mentees so that they could improve their mentoring skills.
- Despite the high ratings on satisfaction with the mentoring relationship, evaluation found that on-line communication alone was thought to be insufficient and pose a barrier to the development of a trusting relationship between mentor and mentee; a combination of in-person, telephone and e-mail was seen to be most beneficial in nurturing the relationship.
- Many mentors and mentees suggested that an internship opportunity (paid or unpaid) for mentees would be helpful in acquiring hands-on work experience.
- Mentees suggested the provision of networking opportunities among mentors, mentees, and employers to allow for interaction and exchange of information.
- Mentors and mentees suggested integrating seminars or workshops into the mentoring program to meet skill-building and learning needs.
- Listing of employment resources should be made available to mentors to use with mentees. Possibility of involving human resources department of the City of Toronto to assist in finding employment.
- Duration (4 months) could be extended to 6 months, or until the mentee has found a job.
- Topics identified by mentors and mentees should be communicated to and integrated into the existing employment programs at the member agencies.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Program has been evaluated in a well designed study and showed positive impact on the outcomes of interest.

Best Practices Implications:

- Partnership model between a municipal department and community-based agencies has proven to be an effective model for facilitating mentor-mentee relationships.

Generalizability: Model can be replicated with a municipal department committed to permitting its employees to volunteer time to mentor newcomers and community-based agencies which provide employment-related services.

References:

Lee, R., Lim, A., & Barnard, J. (2004). *Profession to Profession: Mentoring Immigrants Pilot Project*. City of Toronto: Diversity Management and Community Engagement Unit and Employment Equity Unit, Human Resources.

Program name: *Verein Integration Project*

Delivery Organization: Public Employment Service

Target Group: Unemployed immigrants or refugees from 28 countries with diverse education and training backgrounds; 57% women.

Service Area: Employment Support

Location/Scope: City-wide (Vienna, Austria)

Program Budget: Information not available. Program requires 6 FTE plus visiting experts.

Number Served: 78 clients per year

Program Duration: 12-18 weeks

Program Description: This program integrates language needs, vocational training, job search skills and post-training support to foster labour market and social integration. The training includes seven components:

- Peer Group Support: Creating a supportive group in which members trusted each other and felt safe.
- Information Support: Providing information on health care, legal rights etc.
- Credentialing: Collecting information about former experiences and qualifications, and assisting with having credentials and experience recognized in Austria. Includes individual counselling.
- Exploring Educational and Work Opportunities: The goal was to build a bridge between former experience and educational/work opportunities in Austria. It often involved finding a compromise between wishes and dreams and possibilities in Austria.
- Internship: Participants interned in a job for 2-4 weeks with the goal of either investigating career interests, or interning with employers who would employ them in the future.
- Job Search and Training
- Post-Program Support: one meeting per week for 2 months

Program Components:

- Small group language training
- Vocational training via 2-4 week internships
- Job search skills training
- Post-training support via individual counselling.

Evaluation: Pre- and post-test design with 2-year follow-up.

Outcomes of Interest: Employment.

Findings:

Employment Results:

- Pre-program - participants averaged 17.3% employment, which worked out to an average of 63 days/year. Post-program, rates were 71% employment for an average of 258 days/year. These results were sustained in the follow-up study two years later.
- Employment stability increased: The number of employers per year changed to 1.1 per year, down from 1.5 per year.

Qualitative Results:

- Participants felt very positive about the program. Participants reported feeling like they felt like they were in a family. Those who had experienced racism said it was the first time they had felt like they were treated as equals. They felt that their qualifications and background were respected.
- Some didn't like the qualification training or role playing. Some felt it was difficult to listen to problems of others.
- Many felt duration was too short; they would have liked it to be longer and also would have liked the post-course counselling longer.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Program evaluated in well-designed study and showed positive impact on the outcomes of interest.

Best Practices Implications:

- This model of an employment support program contains a number of key components including: sufficient duration of 12 weeks, and up to 18 if needed; provision of individual counselling and a case management approach; opportunities to learn on the job; provision of follow-up support once the formal training has been completed; and attention to a peer support component.
- In spite of success of program and positive evaluation results, the program has had to change because funding for an established program is not available (typically only new programs are funded).

Generalizability: Multicultural immigrants or refugees seeking employment.

References:

<http://www.integrationshaus.at>

Program name: *Central Valley Partnership for Citizenship, Building New Citizens Civic Engagement and Participation*

Delivery Organization: Various organizations serving a huge geographic community

Target Group: Immigrants (citizens and non citizens) living in the Central Valley of California.

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location: 17 counties in Central Valley, California, USA

Program Budget: Information not available.

Number Served: Population of 17 counties

Program Duration: 16-month evaluation study but initiative has been underway for 4 years.

Program Description: The CVP was initiated in 1996 by the James Irvine Foundation as a “partnership for citizenship”. The three objectives have been to provide assistance and support to immigrants seeking citizenship; to promote civic participation throughout the Central Valley’s immigrant communities; to enhance the leadership capacity and organizational resources available to Central Valley immigrants by addressing the problems they face. The initiative was designed to support the evolution of a collaborative network, bringing smaller, community-based organizations together with organizations which could provide specialized expertise in a number of critical areas including immigration, law, policy analysis, and communication with the public.

The effort includes strategies to assure that immigrants who are not yet citizens can actively participate in civic life. The design of the CVP initiative is unique in three respects: in its commitment to promote civic participation as an integral part of advice, support, and instruction provided to naturalization applicants; in the emphasis on a multi-tiered collaborative “learning network” as the strategy for bring this about; and in its sponsorship of “action projects” which provide immigrants with opportunities to gain direct experience with community involvement in the California context.

Program Components: Program components are multiple but fall into these broad categories:

- Training and leadership development on immigration law for service providers
- Research support, policy analyses, individualized technical assistance for partner organizations
- Video production, training and broadcast programming
- Leadership development for community members
- Small Grants Program for community organizations to engage in partnership building and immigrant service provision

- Small group ESL/citizenship instruction led by a team of volunteers.

Evaluation: 16-month study using a quasi-experimental design.

Outcomes of Interest: Citizenship, civic participation, leadership capacity.

Findings:

- CBP has provided assistance to 10,000 naturalization applicants over 3 years.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 1

Program evaluated in well-designed study and showed positive impact on most outcomes of interest.

Best Practices Implications:

- The vision of CBP as a collaborative, learning-driven network of community organizations devoted to equalizing power and distribution of resources within a huge geographic area to ensure a fair multi-ethnic society has great promise.
- The Small Grants Program is an important milestone to bring new perspectives, innovations, and strategies for building immigrants' civic involvement. Projects are expected to build inter-ethnic cooperation and multi-generational collaboration and engage citizens and their families into the social, cultural and political life of Central Valley communities.
- Team-based approach for volunteer-based ESL/citizenship instruction provides a compelling demonstration of the power of collaboration and immigrants' ability to help themselves. In particular, the practice of affording teenagers and young adults opportunities to help those of their parent's generation is exemplary. The service is cost-effective and has strengthened inter-generational ties in immigrant communities undergoing rapid changes in values and lifestyle.

The Central Valley Project is a complex undertaking which continues to be modified, improved and expanded. The profile provided in this report describes just a few of CVPs accomplishments. The reader is encouraged to refer to the evaluation report referenced below to gain a full understanding of this innovative and effective program.

Generalizability: Large communities of immigrants served by an established network of agencies.

References:

Aguirre Group (1999). *“Evaluation of the Central Valley Partnership for Citizenship”* Final report to The James Irvine Foundation. California: Central Valley.

Programs Demonstrating Promising Practices

Program name: *Women in Crisis Project*

Delivery Organization: British Red Cross, The Refugee Unit, London

Target Group: Newly arrived refugee women in need of emergency assistance. Many clients have experienced trauma and persecution at home, and poverty and isolation in the UK. Forty-seven percent are single mothers. Two-thirds are between the ages of 20 and 40. Primary area of origin is Africa.

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: City-wide (London, England)

Program Budget: Information not available. Program requires one staff and ~16 volunteers. Funded by City Parochial Foundation and Refugee Unit of Red Cross

Number Served: 172 women per year

Program Duration: 8-10 weeks

Program Description: The Women in Crisis project aims to meet the gender-specific needs of women with health and social care challenges through a dedicated Program Coordinator and a team of volunteers with specialist training in this area.

The Program Coordinator provides one-to-one support to vulnerable women in London for a period of 8 to 10 weeks. Each client is allocated a specially-trained volunteer who will work on a one-to-one basis with her. Together with the service user, the volunteer establishes a clear work plan. The case is reviewed on a regular basis by the program coordinator, and there is also a case closure meeting. In some cases, a volunteer is not necessary or appropriate, and the Program Coordinator takes the case herself.

Volunteers who deliver the program are sometimes former service recipients; 30% are themselves asylum seekers or refugees. The volunteers attend a 6-day training course which covers a range of subjects including: refugee awareness, mental health, Red Cross policies and procedure, Red Cross ideals in action, communication skills, stress management and general service information. On-going training is provided on a monthly basis during the evenings. Volunteers commit one day a week to the program for a minimum of 6 months. Service is provided in the client's own language.

Program Components:

- Individual case management for women provided by a trained counsellor.

Evaluation: No formal evaluation. Program review completed August 2004.

Outcomes of Interest: Meeting of immediate settlement needs (food, shelter, support) leading to increased independence.

Findings:

- Advertised through meetings and talks given by the project worker and the rest of the team to various organizations as well as sending the leaflet and the poster to key organizations proved to be a successful strategy. People are also referred from the medical foundation. External meetings with other organizations has also helped to raise the profile of the Women in Crisis project.
- Legislative changes occurring in the UK (i.e. loss of financial support upon loss of asylum claim) leading to increasing numbers of destitute people will put increasing financial and time pressures on the service. Further, short-term project funding (3 years) makes it difficult to plan for the long-term and to provide long-term solutions.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications:

- Meeting of emergency, immediate needs of newcomers is an essential beginning to settlement.
- Intensive and specialized training of volunteers is necessary to work with women who have emergency and immediate needs.
- Volunteers are committed to helping asylum seekers and operate within the Red Cross philosophy of alleviating human suffering and assisting the most vulnerable.

Generalizability: Destitute refugee women

References:

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/localservice.asp?id=2429>

Program name: *Home-bound Citizenship Tutoring Program*

Delivery Organization: International District Housing Alliance (IDHA), a member of New Citizens Initiative Coalition (NCI), a group of over 30 agencies and Mutual Assistance Associations who contract with the City of Seattle to provide services.

Target Group: Low-income, disabled, elderly and home-bound immigrants and refugees⁴ living either in public housing or in the International District of Seattle.

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: City-wide (Seattle, U.S.)

Program Budget: \$10-12,000 per year (Funding provided in part by Community Research Center, Seattle Partners for Healthy Communities)

Number Served: 12-15 people/year

Program Duration: 2 years.

Program Description: A home-bound citizenship tutoring program run by the International District Housing Alliance which partners with other local agencies to identify individuals in need of service. Bilingual volunteer tutors are trained and matched with program participants to provide instruction, develop a relationship, and act as liaison between the participant and their agency case manager. The bilingual nature of the program promotes the preservation of culture and language. Volunteers also provide social services such as housing, health and public benefits advocacy.

Program Components:

- Home-based tutoring on citizenship education (including information and referral assistance; home visits; teaching citizenship; advocacy; interpretation and translation; social work).

Evaluation: No formal evaluation completed.

Outcomes of Interest: Civic participation, capacity building for community development, naturalization (i.e. citizenship).

Findings:

- Recruiting participants is best done through existing social networks and attendance at community events, programs, and classes, rather than through formal channels during business hours.

⁴ The definition of disabled is quite broad in this study, and the reasons for being home-bound multiple. Among the client population are included people who are isolated, depressed, and who have a lack of English skills.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Program has not been formally evaluated.

Best Practices Implications: Home visitation allows the program to reach very vulnerable and/or isolated people for whom the traditional classes and services are not accessible or appropriate.

Generalizability: Isolated, homebound vulnerable newcomers

References:

Walsh, C. (2000). Inter-Agency, Cross-Cultural Exploration: *Expanding Home-bound Citizenship Tutoring*. Washington: School of Social Work, University of Washington.

Program name: *Seniors Holistic Health*

Delivery Organization: Hong Fook Mental Health Association

Target Group: Mandarin seniors

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location/Scope: district-wide (North York)

Program Budget: Information is not available. Program requires 4-7 hours staff time/week

Number Served: 120 registered; average 40 participate each week

Program Duration: Ongoing drop-in, Mondays, 1-3pm

Program Description: Mandarin-speaking seniors from Mainland China are often socially isolated because their children are working, and they struggle with isolation, language barriers, and the loss of financial independence. The Seniors Holistic Health Program addresses these issues with weekly drop-in meetings. Held at a neighbourhood community centre, the program is built on a philosophy of empowerment and capacity building. A core group of seven volunteer leaders help to plan and facilitate activities such as line dancing, discussion groups, tai chi, gardening, painting and workshop talks on health topics. By involving the seniors in planning, it makes the program more relevant.

Program Components:

- Drop-in program for seniors who are socially isolated. Program includes a variety of seniors games, health talks and exercise classes.

Evaluation: No formal evaluation completed.

Outcomes of Interest: Reduced isolation.

Findings:

- Seniors have made their own arrangements to meet outside the weekly meetings for celebrations, tai chi sessions, painting and calligraphy.
- Seniors have formed a gardening club that looks after the Hong Fook garden (including growing food for events).
- Seniors have talked on radio on health and immigrant experiences, and written articles for newsletters.
- One senior said it is like a second home.
- At a community level, seniors participate by hosting a booth at community displays, and participating in a walkathon.

- Participation not just restricted to drop-in activities. Seniors are exposed to the community to aid in integration.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications: Self-run model means that seniors employ their own skills to develop programs for themselves and each other that are appropriate, comfortable and sustainable. Provides the seniors with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Generalizability: Newcomers

References:

<http://www.hongfook.ca/index.asp>

Program name: *Bamboo Network Mentoring Program*

Delivery Organization: Multicultural Helping House Society (MHHS)

Target Group: Newcomers who are in Canada for up to 3 years and who have training and/or work experience in a profession or trade outside Canada.

Service Area: Employment Support

Location/Scope: Province-wide (British Columbia)

Program Budget: Information not available.

Number Served: Information not available.

Program Duration: 6 months.

Program Description: The Bamboo Network is a host mentoring program whose goal is to provide information resources and a link between the newly arrived immigrant and the Canadian workplace. Newcomers are partnered with volunteer Canadian mentors who are recruited from the community and who are professionals, apprentices or tradespersons with a similar degree or training as the newcomer. Many are immigrants themselves who have managed to receive Canadian designation in their professions and are now able to assist newcomers adjust to life in Canada and guide them in their future careers and professions. Mentoring activities include one-on-one or face-to-face meetings and group sessions.

Host mentors provide:

- General orientation to life in Canada and to professions or trades
- Insight and advice in understanding the differences or similarities between foreign professional, apprenticeships or trades practice and Canadian norms and practices, to assist immigrants in transitioning to the Canadian workplace
- Contacts and referrals for employment, volunteer opportunities, education, accreditation
- References for employment or volunteer positions
- Feedback to the newcomer's job search techniques

The Host Mentoring Program is advertised through various community sources including the media. Organizational partners agree to promote and recruit host mentors within their organization as well as to provide possible job shadowing opportunities for newcomers.

Program Components:

- Mentorship provided to newcomers by volunteer community members who are professionals, apprentices or tradespersons.

Evaluation: Feedback forms completed by mentors (n=8) and mentees (n=17).

Outcomes of Interest: Entry into an accreditation or licensing process, or into an education program; entry into a job shadowing, internship or volunteer position; employment in newcomer's (or in a related) field.

Findings:

- Mentors and mentees found the program to be very helpful overall. Contact with the mentee was made through in-person meetings, consultations, or phone discussions at least twice a month or a minimum of 6 hours over a 6-month period.
- Mentors were recruited primarily through the Multicultural Helping House coordinator and/or board of directors, officers and staff. Some mentors responded to an ad or learned about the opportunity through word-of-mouth, but these strategies proved to be less successful.
- An equal number of mentors expressed preference for a structured mentoring and for a non-structured arrangement.
- Almost all mentors expressed a willingness to continue their mentoring role.
- Mentors felt the need to be appropriately matched with their mentee based on job interest.
- Mentees expressed a desire for more information workshops (in addition to the 10+ already offered), technical seminars, and for networking opportunities.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Program has not been formally evaluated.

Generalizability: Newcomers who have training from their country of origin

References:

<http://www.integration-net.cic.cg.ca/inet/english/region/cbc/2004-01.htm>

Highlights of the Bamboo Network Host Mentoring Program Evaluation. (2004). Unpublished document. No author.

Program name: *Canadian Employment Skills Program*

Delivery Organization: YWCA of Calgary

Target Group: Newcomers who already have occupational skills developed through training and experience in their countries of origin.

Service Area: Employment Support

Location/Scope: City-wide (Calgary)

Program Budget: Information not available. Program funded by Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Government of Canada.

Number Served: ~ 100 clients (Sept 1999 – March 2002)

Program Duration: 22 weeks of training and 6 months follow-up

Program Description: The program runs for a period of 22 weeks. Clients first participate in classroom training, followed by on-site work experience, job search and then, once employed, continue to receive support from the YWCA of Calgary. Clients are provided with a free membership at the YWCA's Fitness facility so they have the opportunity to control and reduce stress levels through physical activity.

The program accepts people with a variety of occupations including: engineers, computer programmers, office administrators, accountants, bank officers, hairdressers, etc.

Program Components:

- Classroom training including job search, resume writing, interviewing techniques (5 days/wk for 6 wks)
- On-site job experience (5 days/wk for 12 weeks)
- Job search and maintenance workshops and support once job is obtained (4 weeks)
- Support via individual coaching and counselling (6 months).

Evaluation: Client outcomes (attendance and employment) monitored.

Outcomes of Interest: Employment.

Findings:

- Of 120 clients who began the program, 101 completed the 12-week work experience.
- 77% of the clients were successfully employed three months and six months after completing the program.
- Clients reported feeling more positive and hopeful, less depressed and frustrated.

- Families of clients reported feeling more settled and less insecure. Parents expressed having more time to show interest in their children's progress at school.
- Clients began volunteering with immigrant-serving agencies to help other newcomers to Canada, thus benefiting the community-at-large.
- Hosting clients for a work experience led to increased awareness among employers of the pool of potential future employees among newcomers. Many employers regularly contact Canada Employment Skills staff to inquire about potential work experience placements.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications: Program points to the importance of individual support to newcomers seeking employment. Support must be provided one-on-one and for a sufficient duration (in this case, 6 months).

Generalizability: Newcomers who possess occupational skills from their country-of-origin.

References:

http://ftpd.maytree.com/resources_view.phtml?resid=291

Program name: *Women's Neighbourhood Co-operative*

Delivery Organization: Women's Union of the Dutch Federation of Trade Unions

Target Group: Single mothers dependent on social welfare

Service Area: Employment Support

Location/Scope: City-wide (Netherlands). Three co-operatives are currently operational and three projects will be operation within several months.

Program Budget: \$80,000 per year for an individual project (including costs for professionals)

Number Served: 50 single mothers

Program Duration: 2 years

Program Description: The Netherlands Women's Union developed a model for the Women's Neighbourhood Co-operative that now is implemented in several cities in the country. The objective of this project is to enable single mothers and women that want to re-enter the work force to try out what their talents and possibilities are. With the local authorities, arrangements are made for employment-specific training, activities and childcare. If women attend a Women's Neighbourhood Co-operative, they are allowed to keep their social security benefits. The participants develop their own targets and control the manner in which they achieve them. In one co-operative, women are developing their creative art skills making handicrafts to sell. The products are sold in a co-operative run shop in the neighbourhood.

Program Components:

- Assessment of women's employment-related skills and interests
- Vocational training for women in host employment sites
- Peer support provided among the women attending the program
- Childcare provided.

Evaluation: No formal evaluation completed.

Outcomes of Interest: Employment skills.

Findings:

- Close cooperation with local authorities is a necessity
- Motivation of the participants is a necessity
- Working on concrete and feasible activities
- Taking the child care responsibilities of the participants in close consideration

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications:

- Careful consideration of the childcare responsibilities of this target group through the provision of free childcare and flexible program hours
- Working on existing talents and interests
- Working on services and activities for the local community to strengthen the community as a whole and to help women to feel engaged with the community
- Importance of involving municipal and social organizations to ensure that the project becomes part of the local social policies (i.e. maintaining social security benefits).
- Vocational training is a necessity.
- The practice of focusing on individual talents, interests and needs, within a group format that allows for networking and peer support, has led to positive outcomes.

Generalizability: Single mothers wanting to enter the workforce

References:

<http://www.fnvvrouwenbond.nl>

Program name: *Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women*

Delivery Organization: New Experiences for Newcomer Women (NEW)

Target Group: Unemployed newcomer women

Service Area: Employment Support

Location: City-wide (Toronto)

Program Budget: Information not available.

Number Served: 150 women

Program Duration: Varies by component

Program Description: The Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women aims to assist unemployed newcomer women to find employment by providing pre-employment preparation and job search assistance, case management of clients including action plans for returning to work, and facilitating entry to full-time employment. The program involves group workshops and one-to-one counselling, peer support, work placements, skills development, resource provision and some outreach to prospective employers.

Program Components:

- Seminars and presentations about how to find and secure employment, resume writing, interviewing techniques, etc.,
- Networking opportunities between women and employers
- Volunteer work placements to gain on-the-job experience
- Marketing and outreach to employers to become involved in the program by hosting placements
- Individual case management provided by an employment counsellor
- Peer support among women in the program.

Evaluation: A formal evaluation has not been undertaken. A 9-month program update was available at the time of this study.

Outcomes of Interest: Clients will gain the ability to conduct self-directed job-search (including completing job applications, produce resumes, workplace ESL, employer contact).

Findings: A review of the Employment Services Program at the end of December 2004 revealed that:

- The program is running well and has provided orientation and assessment for 137 women. So far the facilitator has taken on a case load of 49 clients – cases

remaining open for 6 months from the start of the program. On average, 3.5 counselling hours are spent with each client. Of the total clients in the program, ~ one-third have secured employment.

- Program is staffed by a full-time program facilitator, one part-time project manager, a development officer, bookkeeper and administrative assistant along with enormous contributions of volunteers, especially from a community member and a co-op student from George Brown College's Career and Work Counsellor program.
- Clients on placement and/or active job search identified a need for weekly support, primarily from their peers. As a result, a weekly networking group was formed. The group meets on a drop-in basis and provides a forum for discussing workplace culture issues that have arisen on placement, sharing leads, and expressing frustrations.
- Volunteer work placements are very popular with clients as volunteer work is perceived to be an effective method to overcome the lack of Canadian experience barrier. NEW recently became a recognized “training agency” with WSIB which permits them to offer WSIB coverage to employers during a client’s placement – reducing reluctance on the part of some host employers.
- Several small associations and companies have offered to host ongoing placements (often with a small stipend) as a way to support the NEW program and to meet their own internal staffing needs. This has proved to be a win-win scenario.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of the program given that a formal evaluation has not been completed. The program review indicates, however, that the program is being promoted well, is attracting clients and employers, and is fulfilling its goal of providing women with volunteer work placements.

Best Practices Implications: The Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women is unique in that it is a gender-exclusive program.

- Many of the marketing and outreach strategies utilized to promote the services to newcomers and to employers are geared to the way in which women network and engage employment.
- The program itself is delivered and administered wholly by women.
- The program recognizes that many women are the primary caregivers in their families, are often delayed in entering the workforce due to childcare issues and may struggle with confidence and esteem issues.
- By providing women-only programming, the program is able to address potential anxieties and rebuild each woman’s sense of self-worth in a holistic and non-competitive environment.
- The program hours (M-W 9:30-12:30) for classes permit women to accommodate their child and family care requirements, pursue survival work, and continue their active job search.

Generalizability: Newcomer women who are ready to seek employment

References:

New Experiences for Newcomer Women. *Employment Services Program for Newcomer Women*. Nine month program update, April 01, 2004 – December 31, 2004.

Program name: *Ethno-Cultural Seniors Project*

Delivery Organization: Rexdale Women's Centre

Target Group: Isolated ethno-cultural seniors

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location/Scope: City-wide (Rexdale)

Program Budget: Information not available. Program requires two paid staff (FTEs) plus 684 volunteer hours over one year (~22 volunteers).

Number Served: 468 seniors (2004)

Program Duration: Ongoing

Program Description: The Ethno-Cultural Seniors program builds the capacity of seniors to engage with, and access services in, their community through numerous civic engagement activities including:

- Meetings with officials from local organizations and institutions
- Successful actions and deputations at Toronto City Hall
- Participation in community and city-wide forums, activities and coalitions
- Collection of petitions on different issues of importance to seniors

A multicultural Rexdale Ethno-Cultural Seniors Group meets monthly. Within the group, 2-3 leaders have emerged who are responsible for training other group members, who in turn train members of the community to participate in civic engagement activities.

Program Components:

- Group meetings held between community members to discuss issues and develop solutions
- Peer training and mentorship activities (where leaders act as mentors to other community members) to develop leaders in the community.

Evaluation: The implementation and short-term outcomes of the program are monitored regularly by program staff through attendance tracking, recording of staff observation, participant-completed satisfaction forms, and feedback from community partners.

Outcomes of Interest: Skill development, involvement in organizing and participating in groups, development of mentors and leaders, engagement in civic activities, seniors and community satisfaction.

Findings:

(period from April 1, 2003 – March 31, 2004)

- 50 seniors reported using the skills they learned in the program
- 55 seniors organized and or participated in a socio-recreational group
- 25 seniors became leaders or mentors
- 55 seniors engaged in civic activities
- 6 seniors received Volunteer Service Awards
- 1 senior received Seniors Achievement Award from the provincial government
- 1 senior highlighted by United Way through City TV, Toronto Star and Toronto Sun for outstanding contribution to the community through the Ethno-Cultural Seniors Program.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

The program appears to be achieving its outcomes, but has not been evaluated in a well-designed study.

Best Practices Implications:

- The train-the-trainer model used in the program allows for a few empowered community seniors with leadership capacity to train and inform others in the community so that many seniors in the community can benefit. Rather than capacity residing with a few individuals who meet through the city’s Rexdale Seniors group to work on broad issues, the capacity is spread throughout the community so that local leaders are able to work intensively on neighbourhood senior’s issues.
- The multicultural nature of the program means that better relations are fostered among the various ethnic groups.

Generalizability: Ethno-Cultural seniors living together in one community.

References:

Rexdale Women’s Centre entitled: *Ethno-Cultural Seniors Program – Community Capacity Building*. Author unknown.

<http://rexdalewomencentre1.tripod.com/>

Program name: *Nonprofit Business Training for Leaders of Immigrant Community Organizations*

Delivery Organization: Multicultural Services, Jewish Family & Vocational Service

Target Group: Emerging refugee and immigrant community organizations – initially served: Somali community, Iranian community, Hispanic/Latino Coalition, Hispanic Business Association, Kurdish community, Cuban community, and Hispanic learning center. The program was intended to work with organizations whose membership was primarily made up of low- to moderate-income individuals or households, relatively newly arrived in the United States (less than 7 years).

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location/Scope: City-wide (Louisville, Kentucky, USA)

Program Budget: \$2,000/month

Number Served: 16 leaders from 7 organizations

Program Duration: Classes - 12 weeks; Technical assistance - ongoing

Program Description: A series of 12 workshops provide information on how to create, strengthen, and operate a successful community organization. Training focuses on using business planning techniques to operate a nonprofit organization. During the training each organization completes a plan suitable for presentation to potential funders.

Workshop sessions include:

- The Nonprofit World (an overview on the US nonprofit system, types of nonprofits, formal and informal organizations, etc.)
- Defining Your Vision (working with the community to identify issues, needs, concerns then developing a mission and vision)
- Nonprofit Funding (an overview of where nonprofits get their funding, different kind of funding resources)
- Community Organizing Basics (an overview of how to organize, how to get the community involved, how grassroots organizations make their voices heard)
- Program Outcomes (using United Way outcomes training – identifying what you want to accomplish, change)
- Program Planning (steps involved in planning a program or project that achieves your outcomes – still using United Way outcomes training)
- The All Important Budget (how to develop a realistic budget, items to consider in planning a budget, reviewing and revising a budget)
- The Business of Running a Nonprofit (organizational structure, nonprofits boards – roles and responsibilities)
- Paperwork! Paperwork! Welcome to America (record keeping, incorporation, applying for and maintaining nonprofit status, progress reporting)

- Managing Finances (basic accounting procedures, maintaining adequate records, establishing effective controls)
- Locating Funders (how to use the Foundation Center resources). During the training, participants develop a plan for their organization and in the final session present this plan to representatives of several funding organizations who provide advice and suggestions.

Program Components:

- Classes about how to run a successful non-profit
- Technical assistance (e.g. assisting with incorporation papers to helping research potential funders and reviewing grant applications. For newer groups, it has involved facilitation of organizational meetings and assisting in developing a community organizing plan; for more established groups, some conflict resolution. Often technical assistance simply involves being a sounding board when a group is clear on what it wants to do but needs reassurance; other times it involves filling in information gaps or referring them for a specific type of help).

Evaluation: No formal evaluation completed.

Outcomes of Interest: Organizations that successfully emerge from the process will be strong, rooted deeply in their communities, and able to effectively address their communities' needs and concerns. Established organizations will have regular board meetings, be involved in project implementation, and be able to secure funding.

Findings:

(No formal evaluation completed. Findings are based on informal observation and experiences of project manager).

- Three emerging groups are now well established, have a board meeting with some regularity, and are carrying out projects. Two of these have become nonprofits, one is working on this, and one has received a grant of \$5,000 from a local foundation.
- Two groups worked with were already established – they were looking to stabilize. One is now in the process of developing a restructuring plan, the other lost their director and is in a waiting pattern.
- Two emerging groups continue to struggle with initial planning – they are at various stages of identifying the needs and concerns within their communities.
- Since the training was offered, JFVS has been approached by another Somali organization, the Rwandan community, the Liberian women's community, the Somali Bantu, the Bosnian community, and a group representing a number of African communities with small local populations (Congo, Togo, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Nigeria) and have provided some individualized assistance – JFVS may offer class series again.
- Expected that after training, groups would be able to move ahead on their own – in fact, most still needed a great deal of support. The training itself, while a modified version of training for grassroots organizations of native-born individuals, was probably too complex and provided too much information for the

target population. It would have been better to focus more on some of the basics of planning and organizing, provide only a brief overview of management information, and provide a management series later.

- JFVS used volunteers as presenters for most sessions – while they were able to share their expertise and offered the workshop presenters an opportunity to begin to develop relationships with the local nonprofit system, they also had a hard time adapting their materials to the target population. In a future series it is recommended that someone familiar with the target population provide the bulk of the training, with each session including an invited speaker who would focus on a specific aspect of the general topic for about 30 minutes.
- Need to ensure that the main portion of the workshop session (before the speaker) includes a brief segment preparing participants for the invited speaker – a brief overview of what the speaker would be talking about, review of related terminology he/she might use, the specific ways the information he/she presents might be of benefit, etc.
- While many of the participants in the workshop were well-educated and had leadership experience in their own countries, they were fairly naïve about how to manipulate the complex system in the U.S. for even small nonprofit organizations. As a result, the workshop material did not enable most participants to develop the skills they needed to move forward without additional assistance. JFVS has found that, while the workshops provide an organizing framework, most groups needed (and continue to need) individualized technical assistance as they reach specific points in their organizing and developing process. Follow-up technical assistance should be a planned component of any effort to work with this population in the future.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Program has not been evaluated but offers a promising model for community capacity building.

Best Practices Implications:

- Meetings with leaders of each community before beginning the workshop series helps to identify specific training needs of each participant – where they were in the organizing process, where they wanted to go, what skills or information they needed to achieve their goals.
- After completing the first workshop series, need to spend sufficient time on such pre-workshop meetings to get a clear understanding of the participants.
- The use of outside speakers provides an excellent opportunity for the emerging immigrant organizations to begin connecting with the broader local nonprofit community, and to establish relationships with organizations who could be ongoing resources and assist with securing future funding. However, unless the program staff has sufficient time to train these outside speakers to work with a population for whom English is a second language and who are generally unfamiliar with the U.S. system, their training role should be limited and the participants well-prepared prior to their presentations.

- Training should be offered in stages, addressing different needs as organizations progress through the planning and development process.
- Any program planning to provide emerging immigrant community organizations representing relatively new arrivals with organizing/strengthening types of assistance should plan to include a fairly extensive technical assistance component.

Generalizability: Immigrant communities who are trying to get organized.

References:

<http://www.jewishlouisville.org/agencies/jfvs/jfvsmultic091704.html>

Program name: *One Voice One Vote*

Delivery Organization: Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition - Member Organizing and Leadership Division

Target Group: Immigrant community leaders including member organizations that serves immigrants or refugees.

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location/Scope: State-wide (Massachusetts, U.S.)

Program Budget: \$155,000 per year given to the Member Organizing and Leadership Division (29% of the organization's total budget; funders include primarily foundations and 12% United Way of Massachusetts Bay.

Number Served: 90 organizational members, 500-1000 community participants.

Program Duration: On-going

Program Description: Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy's fundamental goal is to build a relationship between immigrant constituents and their legislators. The Initiative consists of leadership training, community mobilization and political lobbying.

- *Leadership Training* fosters existing and creates new local leadership that strengthens Massachusetts's immigrant and refugee communities. Leaders emerge from immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations, local immigrant businesses, and local communities. Staff organizes, develops and amplifies local immigrant leaders' capacity to advocate for fair and equitable public policies for immigrants by providing services, training programs (health and benefits access, immigration law, media and advocacy), and resources. Training and education modules are posted on the member-accessible web site to facilitate on-line learning.
- *Community Mobilization and Political Lobbying* strategies include the convening of six Regional Committees across the state with members drawn from local immigrant and refugee organizations. Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy organizes these events:
 - Immigrants' Day in the District, where immigrant-serving organizations throughout the Commonwealth meet with their local, state and federal elected officials to discuss immigrant needs and priorities.
 - Immigrants' Day at the State House, typically held in April of each year. The event is held in the State House, and includes legislative visits that follow up on issues discussed at district events.

- Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy Annual Meeting, where members elect the Board of Directors and formally endorse an Immigrant Rights Platform.
- New Voter Candidates Forums held for the first time in the 2004 election year in Massachusetts.

There are six steps involved in the support work that Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy does for these activities:

- Research, analyze, and monitor appropriate issues.
- Disseminate information to members and other constituents.
- Define and take a position on select issues and determine appropriate action steps in collaboration with membership.
- Organize and mobilize membership on priority issues.
- Coordinate and implement policy and administrative advocacy initiatives with membership.
- Evaluate outcomes and make changes as appropriate.

Program Components:

- Leadership training for community members via on-line educational modules
- Community mobilization activities and political lobbying including the convening of committees to organize political events.

Evaluation: Continuous monitoring of quantitative program outcomes.

Outcomes of Interest: Leadership Training, community mobilization, political lobbying.

Findings:

Leadership Training:

- Trained nearly 1,000 service providers regarding access to benefits, the naturalization process, immigration law and advocacy;

Community Mobilization:

- Sent a delegation of over 40 youth to Washington DC on April 18, 2004 to advocate for the DREAM Act;
- Held the first New England Regional Summit on Comprehensive Immigration Reform on February 28, 2004 that gathered over 100 immigration rights activists from states across New England;
- Held *Immigrants' Day in the District* events in Pittsfield, New Bedford and Worcester that provided a forum for hundreds of immigrant constituents to dialogue with their legislative leaders;
- Convened the 8th *Annual Immigrants' Day in the State House* on April 7, 2004 that drew over 1,000 immigrants (and for the first time, 6 anti-immigrant activists) from across Massachusetts to meet their legislators on Beacon Hill;

- Held the first annual *Immigrant Thanksgiving Luncheon: Celebration of the Immigrant Family* that gathered over 200 immigrants, legislators and media;

Political Lobbying:

- Restored MassHealth coverage for elderly and disabled legal immigrants and fought off cuts to emergency cash assistance;
- Secured language within the FY 2005 budget to continue MassHealth coverage, and to provide undocumented immigrant youth access to in-state tuition rates;
- Swiftly responded to gubernatorial vetoes of both items, in the media and mobilized an override campaign with communities across the state;
- Continued to work with the Department of Homeland Security and regional offices of Citizenship and Immigration Services to improve the citizenship system and reduce the impact of unfair detentions and deportations;
- Secured the passage of the Court Advisement Bill into law so immigrants are provided clear information regarding the impact of their courtroom pleas;

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications:

- Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy's efforts attempt to strengthen the ability of communities and their leaders to make decisions and mobilize around issues that they deem relevant.
- Organizations with more capacity, as well as those with minimal capacity, benefit from participation, and over time, grow in strength.
- The program can deal with local, state and national issues.

Generalizability: Immigrant communities.

References:

<http://www.miracoalition.org>

Program name: *Peer Leadership Training*

Delivery Organization: Hong Fook Mental Health Association

Target Group: East and Southeast Asian immigrant and refugee women

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location/Scope: City-wide (Toronto, York Region/Markham, Mississauga/Peel)

Program Budget: Information not available. Program requires 5 FTEs

Number Served: 127 women completed training program (2002)

Program Duration: 9 weeks training plus 10-20 hours placement

Program Description: Training program to train peer leaders to teach about holistic health issues in the community. Hong Fook community workers train women from the community to engage in holistic health promotion activities in the community. Participants attend 9 holistic health training sessions once a week (some evenings, some weekends); then complete 10-20 hours of placement.

Sessions are run using participatory methods and peer learning. Language-specific manuals developed with input from peer leaders are available for staff to train trainers, and for women to use when they go out to the community.

Program Components:

- Train-the-trainer course for community women to deliver health promotion activities in the community.

Evaluation: No formal evaluation completed. Feedback forms completed.

Outcomes of Interest: Skill development, increased knowledge, creation of peer support networks, enhanced health behaviour, community contribution.

Findings:

- Majority of women found that the process has helped them learn about health and communication – understanding and overcoming stigma of mental health
- More aware of health in self care and holistic health
- Peer leaders have offered to co-facilitate future peer leader training programs.
- Increased confidence - women said they didn't think they could share with others in front of a group, or do a presentation in the community.
- Ask for more sessions speakers on specific areas that they are interested in.
- Women also like to use this as preparation for employment – they attend a graduation ceremony and receive a certificate that they have finished the training.

- One challenge is that women find a job part way through the training and have to leave.
- Finding staff time to follow up on issues that come up in group sessions with personal counselling is difficult.
- Each community has different challenges as well around stigma.
- Translation requires more resources than are sometimes available.
- One peer leader went on the radio to talk about how they got out of depression by reaching out to help others through this program.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications: Interesting model of engaging community members to develop leadership capacity to deliver services to one another. Also a good model of how to sustain a program which extends beyond the area of mental health.

Generalizability: Immigrant communities

References:

Wong, R.Y., Wong, J.P.H., Fung, K.P., & Shung, R.C.Y. (year unknown). *Promoting Mental Health Among East and Southeast Asian Immigrant/Refugee Women in Ontario*. Hong Fook Mental Health Association.

<http://www.hongfook.ca/index.asp>

Program name: *New Americans Vote*

Delivery Organization: Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)

Target Group: 15 diverse immigrant communities and 6 congressional districts

Service Area: Community Engagement

Location/Scope: State-wide (Illinois, U.S.)

Program Budget: \$200,000 per year

Number Served: 100 participants in leadership training, 1600 volunteers, 27,054 voters registered

Program Duration: 6 months

Program Description: Immigrant leaders and members of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights decided to leverage their community organizing capacity for a collective, targeted strategy of electoral organizing around three main political issues of importance to immigrant communities: citizenship, family re-unification, restoration of civil rights and liberties lost to anti-immigrant post-9/11 policies.

Using census data and current organization strength, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights chose areas in which to work containing high numbers of Asian and Latino residents, large member organizations, a good leadership base, low numbers of registered voters and low voter turnout in previous elections. In each of the targeted communities, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights partnered with various member institutions (n = 50) including neighborhood organizations, schools, churches, policy and advocacy groups, and social service organizations.

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights provided a training program for 100 immigrant leaders from the targeted communities that consisted of five hour sessions held once a month for 6 months. The training content included topics such as voter registration mechanics, theories of voter mobilization and turnout, crafting a political message, working with the media and election day operations. The program also included 20 phone banking centres and 100 volunteers working door-to-door and on the phones plus a voter protection project with 40 lawyers and law students on call during Election Day.

Program Components:

- Leadership training for community members including topics on voting, political messaging and media
- Community organizing by enhancing partnerships among various institutions such as schools, churches, and social service organizations

- Awareness raising of the importance of voting using the media and the crafting of effective political messages

Evaluation: Quantitative data monitored concerning number of volunteers, attendance at events, number of voters registered, increase in number of voters on election day.

Outcomes of Interest: Voting behaviour

Findings:

- 100 immigrant leaders trained
- 1400 volunteers were recruited to register, contact and mobilize voters. Actions from this mobilization effort included rallies, meetings with legislators and press conferences.
- 27,054 voters were registered through this effort
- 30,000 automated phone messages in 8 languages
- 14,000 mail pieces were sent
- 1,600 volunteers worked on election day at 20 calling centres to get the vote out
- An increase of 62,486 voters in the three counties (up by 1/3rd)
- By registering 27,054 new voters and bringing an additional 62,486 voters to the polls in three counties, immigrants hold the balance of power and can now demand that candidate seeking office discuss immigration reform and other issues of concern to immigrant families.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 2

Best Practices Implications: Participatory models used to increase voting behaviour.

Generalizability: Large immigrant communities.

References:

<http://www.icill.org>

Practices to be Tracked (evaluation underway)

Program name: *Program Without Walls (PWW)*

Delivery Organization: Delivered by a coalition of 7 agencies.

Target Group: Pregnant women and families with children 0-6 yrs. Serves diverse ethnic and age groups; primarily low-income; also serves isolated parents.

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: National (Canada – neighbourhoods or homes)

Program Budget: Information not available. Receives Health Canada funding under Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) initiative.

Number Served: During the evaluation period (June 2003 – Fall 2005), the Program Without Walls initiative served up to 120 participants in one program area alone⁵.

Program Duration: Varies by component

Program Description: Parent education and support program using a variety of approaches and activities to effectively involve families of diverse cultures, languages and needs. Five different program areas are included in the Program Without Walls initiative including:

- Family Support, Education and Resources – parent education and training, drop-ins, home visiting
- Healthy Child Development – nursery
- Nutrition – access to healthy food, cooking workshops
- Community Development – creative expressions, outreach, volunteer support, community capacity building activities
- Service System Change – collaboration with other sectors

Program Components:

- Education and training for parents about parenting
- Peer and family support provided by members during drop-in sessions
- Family involvement by including all family members in the program
- Home visiting to provide advice, information and support to parents

⁵ Data on the # of participants served by the PWW program are available by breakdown per program area only. The maximum number of participants for any program area is 120.

Evaluation: Regional evaluation using pre- and post- design in process; data collected through face-to-face interviews with participants. The evaluation is investigating the following components of the Program Without Walls program:

- Community Parent Program (home visiting) – to increase knowledge of services in the community; provision of parenting strategies and developmental resources to parents to improve parent’s perceived competency for parenting.
- Art Starts (drama and creative) – enhanced social support and connectedness among participants through art.
- COPE (parent education) – to improve parent’s sense of competency. Social support is a core component of the program.
- Nobody’s Perfect (parent education) – to improve parent’s sense of competency. Social support is a core component of the program.
- We Need a Break (nursery program)

Outcomes of Interest: Measure of short-term outcomes including: decreased parenting stress, increased social contacts and supports, increased self-esteem among parents and caregivers; increased access to food, decreased stress and increased cooking skills; increased participation by ethno-specific communities, increased access to resources, increased parental involvement in the community; increased collaboration among community members and service providers; increased awareness among other sectors and the community about the importance of the early years; long term outcomes include: improved life chances for children, self and family.

Findings: Evaluation data will be available September 2005.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 3

The evaluation of the Program Without Walls initiative is scheduled to be completed September 2005. The evaluation plan for the Program Without Walls initiative is well-designed and thus is worthy of follow-up upon completion in the fall of 2005.

Generalizability: The program is generalizable to groups of low-income women who are either pregnant or who have young children (0-6 yrs). The home visiting component is appropriate for isolated women and families. The program serves numerous ethnic groups.

References:

Robertson, J., & Hayward, K. (date unknown). *Program Without Walls Regional Evaluation Plan, June 2003-Fall 2005*. Canada.

Program name: *Lifeskills Support Program (Pilot Project)*

Delivery Organization: COSTI Reception Centre

Target Group: Government assisted refugees (GARs) with high needs

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: Province-wide (Toronto, London, Hamilton, Kitchener/Waterloo, Ottawa, Windsor)

Program Budget: \$50,000 (lifeskills counsellor, coordinator/supervisor)

Number Served: 13 families over 3 months (program to run for another 3 months)

Program Duration: 6 months

Program Description: The Lifeskills Support Program provides support to refugees once they have left the reception centres and are living in the community. The program assigns a lifeskills counsellor to refugees who are in further need of support once they have left the reception centre. The counsellor teaches basic skills that are necessary for living in a Canadian home (e.g. hygiene skills, health needs, school entry, operation of electrical devices, elevators, refrigerators, microwaves, washer/ dryer). In the pilot project, the counsellors are trying different models for teaching lifeskills, including colour coding (red stickers for things that are dangerous to touch, coloured arrows for temperature settings on stoves, etc.) and are investigating ways of teaching lifeskills for people who have no literacy skills. The counsellors also connect their clients with services in the community such as Immigration and Settlement Assistance Program (ISAP) workers, etc.

Program Components:

- Lifeskills counselling and home visiting including hygiene skills, health care, school entry, operating electrical devices and appliances.

Evaluation: Evaluation currently underway, results will be available June, 2005

Outcomes of Interest: Acquired lifeskills, number of cases served, effective learning models for teaching lifeskills, challenges faced.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 3

Pilot project results will be available June 2005.

Best Practices Implications:

- The Lifeskills Support model meets an important need for refugees who have been recently housed in Canada. Some refugees have very high needs and poor language skills. The Lifeskills Support program model provides continuity of

support to refugees who have left a settlement house and are now living in the community.

- Lifeskills teaching through home visiting allows refugees to learn the very practical, hands-on skills they need to stay safe and function effectively inside their home. The program also teaches skills to function effectively in the community.

Generalizability: Refugees with limited language and life skills.

References:

<http://www.costi.org>

(Note: Lifeskills Support Program is in pilot phase and is not contained on the COSTI website).

Program name: *Community Engagement Project*

Delivery Organization: Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO)

Target Group: Government-assisted refugees primarily. Secondary group is immigrant communities in Hamilton.

Service Area: Settlement and Integration

Location/Scope: City-wide (Hamilton, Ontario)

Program Budget: Funding information not available. Program is run by one full-time coordinator and two part-time Community Engagement Project workers.

Number Served: 150 refugees.

Program Duration: Ongoing. Pilot project is 6 months.

Program Description: The Community Engagement Project is a six month pilot project with the broad goal of easing settlement and enhancing the integration of newcomers by reducing social isolation and providing settlement information. The need for the program was identified when sixty Resettlement Assistance Program clients moved from Hamilton to other communities in Southern Ontario because they lacked contacts with people of their own background in Hamilton. The program aims to address this problem by engaging established communities and community organizations in assisting newcomers with settlement and integration challenges, and by creating community groups for newcomers. Volunteers are trained to run the program activities.

The program has a special focus on addressing settlement and integration challenges faced by youth, women and elderly newcomers. Specifically:

- Youth organizations were formed which arranged youth-specific activities involving sports, education and social gatherings.
- Women's groups were organized which addressed isolation issues and gave them the opportunity to discuss their settlement issues, learn arts, crafts and cooking, and get information on women's rights, duties and resources available to them.
- Meetings of elderly people were held to help them overcome isolation, speak in their own language and share their experiences.

Other activities included an annual community gathering for each immigrant community, partnering with local arts and other organizations for programming activities, inviting local media to cover events, create welcome circles and reception committees.

Program Components:

- Reception Committees (Consist of community members who greet newcomers upon arrival in Hamilton. There are 6-8 community members in each of 4 reception committees)
- Welcome Circles (organized by reception committee upon settlement in permanent housing and consisting of hundreds of community members)
- Youth organizations, women's groups and group meetings for elderly people
- Partnering with arts and other organizations to provide experiences for committees and groups.

Evaluation: Pilot evaluation to be completed March 2005.

Outcomes of Interest: Engagement of settled community members and community organizations in the process of settling newcomers.

Findings: Information not available.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 3

Best Practices Implications: Settlement model draws upon existing resources available in community to assist in settlement and integration of newcomers. Support to newcomers from their own community and from former newcomers means that support is appropriate and needs are well understood. Model allows for support to newcomers to be sustained and not dependent on funding.

Generalizability: Newcomers arriving in immigrant communities.

References:

Ibrahim, M. (2005). *Community Engagement Project (CEP) Draft Model*. Settlement and Integration Services Organization. Hamilton: Ontario.

Ibrahim, M. (2005). *Community Engagement Program (CEP) Action Plan*. Settlement and Integration Services Organization. Hamilton: Ontario.

Program name: *TRIEC Employer Promising Practices Tool Kit*

Delivery Organization: Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council

Target Group: Employers

Service Area: Employment Support

Location/Scope: City-wide (Toronto). Information will be accessible on a web site.

Program Budget: Information not available.

Number Served: Information not available - tool kit is being finalized.

Program Duration: Information not available.

Program Description: The Employer Practices Workgroup was established to investigate the practices that employers in Canada follow when hiring immigrants; how these practices can be improved upon; and, how other employers can find out about the practices. The workgroup has conducted extensive consultations with employers and is finalizing a toolkit of promising practices for immigrant labour market integration. The toolkit will document the practices currently in use, as well as the stories of those employers who use them, and how their business has excelled because of this use.

Share the Practices, an employer awareness campaign, is being designed to broadcast the findings and to increase awareness among employers that hiring immigrants is desirable. The campaign will include an interactive web site, pamphlets, conference, and media features.

Program Components:

- Tool kit of promising practices identified by employers will be posted on a website
- Awareness-raising campaign for employers to understand promising practices.

Evaluation: Information not available.

Outcomes of Interest: Employer awareness of the benefits of hiring immigrants.

Findings: Information not available.

Program Effectiveness Rating: 3

The tool kit of promising practices is being finalized and the campaign to be launched later this year.

Best Practices Implications: This project aims to improve the employability of newcomers by targeting programs and services to potential employers. The strength of

the program is that it addresses the resistance and barriers that employers raise when considering hiring immigrants, and does so in a way that offers concrete solutions from their peers. The Employer Promising Practices Tool Kit, which forms the basis of a larger employer awareness campaign, will provide employers with a useful, practical resource for integrating immigrants into their workplace.

The tool kit is scheduled for launch in May of 2005. The practices contained in the tool kit will provide United Way of Greater Toronto with additional information about best practices to guide funding for employer-focused programming.

Generalizability: Canadian employers

References:

No documents are available at the time of writing. The TRIEC website can be accessed at <http://www.triec.ca>.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Glossary of Terms

Best Practices: Those actions – programs, policies, research and more – that will have the greatest impact on reducing the current and future burden of problems. Best practice involves a process of systematically applying lessons learned in research (of various types) to practice. This entails selecting the most appropriate actions for situations based on the knowledge, capacities and infrastructure available at the time. Ongoing activities of research and practice should be linked in order to continuously improve the actions taken and the impacts they have on complex problems (Moyer, Garcia, Cameron & Maule, 2001).

Evidence: Information gained through the development, implementation, and evaluation of effective programs and policies through application of principles of scientific reasoning, including systematic uses of data and information systems, and appropriate use of program planning models (Brownson, et al., 1999, p.87).

Settlement: Refers to acclimatization and the early stages of adaptation, when newcomers make the basic adjustments to life in a new country, including finding somewhere to live, beginning to learn the local language, getting a job, and learning to find their way around an unfamiliar society (CCR, 1998)

Integration: The longer term process through which newcomers become full and equal participants in all the various dimensions of society (CCR, 1998), society would gain access to the full human resource potential in its immigrant communities (OCASI Training guide).

Service Area 1: Settlement and Integration services: specialized services focusing primarily on the early stages after arrival when the need is greatest. Services include interventions such as reception and orientation to Canada, settlement and orientation counselling, community contact, information and referral to services, translation and interpretation.

Service Area 2: Employment Supports: interventions that help newcomers integrate into the labour market, and include programs such as orientation, job-search skills, job experience placement, employment counselling and placement, specific skills upgrading and certificate programs, mentorship programs, internships, basic skills training, programs for foreign-trained professionals, programs for employers.

Service Area 3: Community Engagement: community development initiatives that help newcomer communities engage in the larger society by building community capacity, leadership and voice, particularly among at-risk and marginalized newcomers in low-income neighbourhoods.

Appendix 2. Search Strategy

Search sites included:

- The Maytree Foundation’s Fulfilling the Promise Database, which is a centralized virtual library of newcomer programs, research and reports conducted or available across Canada.
- The MOST virtual library of UNESCO
- CERIS virtual library
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) InfoCentre, Info-Net
- Metropolis virtual library
- Dutch Urban Expert Centre
- Refugeenet (EU Network)
- European Ministries of Immigration
- Eurasyllum (private research, evaluation and consulting company)
- Bibliographies of key reports
- Websites of key sources such as: CIC, OCASI, Looking Ahead Initiative in BC, 211 in Toronto (www.211.com).
- Searches of social science-related databases including: *Social Sciences Abstracts*; *Socio-file*; *Sociological Abstracts*
- The Google, AltaVista and Yahoo search engines. This included:
 - search of actual titles of programs, research papers or reports that had been identified from the above sources; and,
 - general key words search

Search terms included:

(immigrant and/or immigration and/or refugee) not (youth/adolescents/teenagers)
and
(settlement and/or integration and/or counsel* and/or translation and/or sponsorship
and/or labour and/or employment and/or training and/or mentorship)
and
(service and/or program and/or intervention and/or policy)
and
(evaluation and/or outcome and/or best practice)

Appendix 3. List of Key Informants (in alphabetical order)

Akram-Pall, Saadia
Program Coordinator – Ethno-Cultural Seniors Project
Rexdale Women’s Centre
Rexdale, Ontario

Anisef, Paul
Professor, Department of Sociology, York University
Associate Director, Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and
Settlement (CERIS),
Toronto, Ontario

Ariaratnam, Ari
Executive Director
Focus for Ethnic Women
Waterloo, Ontario

Bhole, Pratibha
Counsellor
Riverdale Immigrant Women’s Centre
Toronto, Ontario

Blair, Kay
Toronto, Canada

Bondugjie, Laila
Executive Director,
Arab Community Centre
Toronto, Ontario

Calla, Mario
Executive Director,
COSTI Immigrant Services
Toronto, Ontario

Chung, Raymond
Hong Fook Mental Health Association
Toronto, Ontario

Dasmohapatra, Soni
Community Development Coordinator
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
Toronto, Ontario

De Souza, Ruth

Wairua Consulting Limited
Titirangi, Waitakere City
New Zealand

Douglas, Debbie
Executive Director
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
Toronto, Ontario

Ecker, Gabi
Verein Projekt Integrationshaus
Vienna, Austria

Fishwick, Marie-Anne
Services Co-ordinator
Women in Crisis Project
British Red Cross, Refugee Unit
London, England

Freithofer, Elisabeth
Program Manager
Verein Projekt Integrationshaus
Vienna, Austria

Gonggrijp, Linde
Program Manager
Dutch UEC, Women's Neighbourhood Partnership
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Gopie, Kamala-Jean
Toronto, Ontario

Ibrahim, Mohammad
Settlement and Integration Services Organization
Hamilton, Ontario

Ibrahim, Shafiq
Board of Trustees
South Asian Community
Toronto, Ontario

Kang, Nino
Program Coordinator – Men's Abuse Program
MOSAIC Settlement and Family Programs
Vancouver, BC

Kerr, Gillian
Consultant
Real World Systems
Toronto, Ontario

Kissam, Edward
Principal Investigator, Aguirre Group
Central Valley Project
California, U.S.

Lee, Rebecca
Executive Director
South East Asian Services Centre
Toronto, Ontario

McGahey, Kelly
Project Developer – Special Initiatives
Local Agencies Serving Immigrants
Ottawa, Ontario

Micah, Raymond
Executive Director
African Canadian Social Development Council
Toronto, Ontario

Nichols, Marge
Research Director
United Way of Greater Los Angeles
Los Angeles, US

Noorani, Ali
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Association
Massachusetts, USA

Omidvar, Ratna
Executive Director
Maytree Foundation
Toronto, Ontario

Petsod, Daranee
Executive Director
Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees
Sebastopol, California

Philip, Anton
Executive Director

Eelam Society of Canada
Toronto, Ontario

Ponte, Marcie
Executive Director
Working Women's Community Centre
Toronto, Ontario

Robertson, Jo-Anne
Program Manager
Program Without Walls
Macaulay Child Development Centre
Toronto, Ontario

Simich, Laura
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry
Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto
Scientist, Culture Community and Health Studies
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Toronto, Ontario

Trinh, Hoa
Waterloo, Ontario

Tse, Angela
Hong Fook Mental Health Association
Toronto, Ontario

Vander Kooy, Magdalena
Manager, Malvern District
Toronto Public Library (Multicultural Services)
Toronto, Ontario

Vane, Jenny
Immigration and Settlement Unit
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
Toronto, Ontario

Viens, Odette
Planning and Development Officer
Social Analysis Department
United Way of Greater Montreal
Montreal, Canada

Wachtel, Andy
Research Associate

United Way of Lower Mainland
Vancouver, BC

Walker, Elizabeth
Executive Officer
Auckland Refugee Council (Inc)
Auckland, New Zealand

Yusuf, Mahad
Executive Director
Somali Immigrant Aid Society Toronto, Ontario

Appendix 4. Relevance Testing Form

Name of program or service: _____

Author: _____

1. Is the program/service or research concerned with developed countries?	YES	NO
2. Is the literature dealing with intervention studies?	YES	NO
3. Is the literature dealing with newcomers or immigrants?	YES	NO
4. Is the program for foreign trained professionals an intervention, and not just dealing with certification programs or policies?	YES	NO
5. Does the program or service not involve lending programs or IDAs?	YES	NO
6. Does the program deal with populations other than youth?	YES	NO
7. Does the study go beyond the narrative to deal with an actual program, service or research of a program or service?	YES	NO
8. Is the content area not covered by another sector (e.g. health, mental health)?	YES	NO

The materials must score “YES” on all criteria to be included in the review.

Include in review?

YES	NO
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