Strengthening Rural Capacity to Support Newcomers

A toolkit to help rural communities with the attraction, retention and settlement of newcomers.

Strengthening Rural Capacity to Support Newcomers Toolkit

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Preface

RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (RDN)

Created in 2009 as a partnership of Alberta's 21 public post-secondary institutions, RDN began as the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN).

As a non-profit organization, RDN evolved and grew with the support of those institutions and the dedication of rural communities in Alberta, developing and delivering a wide range of projects, resources, and capacity-building services. RDN supports rural sustainability by accurately identifying social issues and finding effective solutions for them. We listen to hear and understand each community's needs and develop solutions in partnership with them. Each solution is tailored to reflect the uniqueness of the residents for whom it was created.

A key aspect of our work is supporting communities in actually implementing the proposed solutions by providing capacity-building. We work with communities to amplify the "rural voice" and collaborate to identify and bring focus to rural issues, build local capacity, and find innovative, rural-based solutions to unique issues.

THE RURAL IMMIGRATION INITIATIVE

The Rural Immigration Initiative was established in 2019 as a response to the emerging needs of rural communities, as well as new programs in place to attract and retain skilled immigrants in rural and remote communities. This initiative takes a holistic approach to support both communities and newcomers/refugees/immigrants to help enable successful settlement, integration, and retention. The rural immigration initiative supports a wide range of stakeholders, including individuals, community-based organizations, and service providers. Our aim is to empower rural communities and support settlement and integration for newcomers.

ASSIST COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE (ASSIST)

ASSIST Community Services Centre is a non-profit and charitable organization established in 1977 to address the needs of the immigrant population in Edmonton.

Our vision is to "Bridge People and Communities", with a mission to "Enhance the lives of individuals and families through quality programs and services". Our primary mandate is to assist immigrants to facilitate their successful integration into mainstream society through support and practical settlement services.

ASSIST is funded by all three levels of government and is now backed by over 40 years of community service experience serving over 20,000 immigrants and refugees from around the world through various collaborative and networking efforts. Currently, ASSIST offers 10 ongoing programs and services in 2 offices in Edmonton (Chinatown and Southwest Edmonton) as well as virtually. Our programs include services for all ages from Childcare, Youth Programs, Family and Seniors Programs. We strive to provide integrated and comprehensive programs to promote the health and well-being of immigrants of all ages, cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

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Introduction

1.0   THE PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit is reflective of the content that was developed for the Strengthening Rural Capacity to Support Newcomers Project. This project worked with four rural communities across Alberta to build the capacity of service providers, community organizations, municipalities and employers to attract and retain newcomers in their communities. The training covered topics such as the Needs of Newcomers in Rural Communities, Anti-Discrimination and Barriers to Access, Intercultural Competency, Power Dynamics and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace, and lastly, Welcoming and Inclusive Communities such as refugees, international students.. etc.

2.0   AUDIENCE

This toolkit has been developed for multiple audiences, such as:

- Service Provider Organizations
- Community Organizations
- Municipal Governments
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Employers

This toolkit is intended to promote the collaboration and collective understanding of multiple stakeholders in supporting the attraction, retention and settlement of newcomers in rural communities.

3.0   LIMITATIONS

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this guide. For the purpose of this guide, the term "newcomer" will be used to refer to an individual who has immigrated to Canada from a different country within the last 5 years. This guide will also use newcomer as an umbrella term to highlight immigrants of all different classes, refugees, international students, and other sub-populations. We recognize that different newcomer populations will experience settlement and integration through

3.0

different lenses and that not all immigration journeys are the same. While this toolkit will not be covering all equity-seeking groups, additional resources will be provided in the resources section.

In regards to data collection and research, there are limitations of the available data for newcomers settling in rural Alberta communities.

Finally, this is not a solutions-based document. The purpose of this guide is to provide information, practical tools and resources for communities who wish to further their capacity in welcoming newcomers. We acknowledge that many communities experience systemic barriers, such as housing and transportation, that affect their ability to attract and retain newcomers. This guide will provide a list of things to consider for communities on different levels of their welcoming journey.

4.0

DEFINING "RURAL"

Rural communities offer a plethora of opportunities for newcomers to Canada. As out-migration, low-birth rates, and rapid aging populations continue to affect the affluence of rural communities, welcoming newcomers into our workplaces and small centres will become important to continue to grow and diversify our communities.

The existence of multiple rural definitions reflect the reality that "rural" is a multidimensional concept. Under this project, we defined "rural" by the communities we worked with - each had a population under 15,000 and were located outside of major towns or urban areas. We also considered rural communities as the communities who did not have direct settlement services available to newcomers in the area.

5.0

PROJECT NEED

While immigration in Canada is often urban-focused and city-driven, rural communities can offer newcomers many opportunities and security for a good quality of life. Promoting immigration in our rural communities focuses on three main pillars: attraction, retention and integration. Each of these pillars is interrelated and is unique to each individual community.

According to a study done by the School of Public Policy in Calgary, the retention level of family class immigrants after five years in rural Alberta is 70%, whereas in urban centres, the retention rate is 85%. In terms of skilled workers, the retention level in rural Alberta is 55%; whereas in Calgary - an urban centre - it is 79%. This data shows that retention rates for specific immigrant groups are greatly in favour of urban retention (Falconer, 2019).

5.0

Despite the eagerness to attract newcomers, many rural communities experience a lack of capacity-building opportunities to prepare their service provider organizations, workplaces and municipalities to be able to welcome, settle and retain newcomers. As the Government of Alberta has begun creating many initiatives to attract newcomers to rural Alberta, communities will need to prepare to include, accept, and champion diversity and inclusion.

Rural communities face their own unique challenges when it comes to attracting and retaining newcomers. In addition to providing accessible housing, transportation systems and suitable employment opportunities, rural communities often face challenges in recruiting, retaining and settling newcomers due to the lack of institutional and resource capacity of local service providers. Rural communities also experience a lack of training specific to their rural and unique needs. Professional development opportunities for settlement support may also be costly or unavailable for these rural groups. Often, these organizations do not have appropriate intercultural training and professional development to deliver culturally appropriate and anti-discriminatory services required for settlement.

This toolkit has been created based on the training: Strengthening Rural Capacity to Support Newcomers, as well as facilitator insights, an environmental scan and data from the needs assessment survey. This guide has been designed to reflect the content in each of the training sessions and will be intended for use by the participating communities, as well as other communities across rural Alberta that are looking to access additional resources in supporting newcomers. This Toolkit is created to provide rural communities with the tools and resources required to attract, retain and settle newcomers into their communities.

The toolkit will serve as a resource for continued professional development for immigrant-serving providers, municipalities and rural communities across Alberta.

Needs Assessment Survey

This Strengthening Rural Capacity to Support Newcomers project conducted a needs assessment survey to identify the gaps experienced by service providers in the participating communities. The project surveyed 36 service provider participants who provided insights based on their experiences working with, and welcoming newcomers to their organizations. While each rural community is different, this data highlights many of the gaps and challenges that rural communities across Alberta experience when serving newcomers.

Through the collection of this data, training modules were tailored to meet the needs and fill the identified knowledge gaps of service providers working with newcomers in these communities.

| 2.0 | NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS SERVED |

NEWCOMERS SERVED IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Unsure
32.3%

Less than 10
19.4%

75+
6.5%

10-20
12.9%

50-75
9.7%

20-50
19.4%
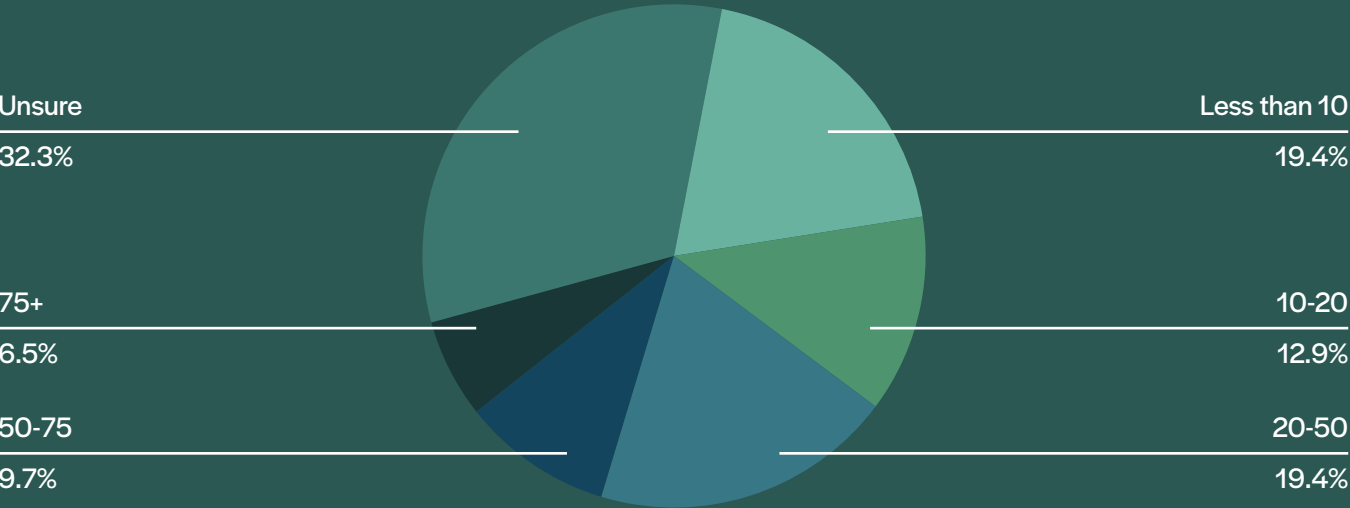
Many rural communities were unsure of the number of newcomers served in the region. Moreover, some service providers reported serving less than 10 newcomers in their organizations. This could be a result of a number of different factors, including newcomers being unaware of the services offered in the community, or newcomers receiving other support or services beyond the community.

2.1 ETHNO-CULTURAL GROUPS REPRESENTED IN THE COMMUNITY

Service provider organizations were surveyed on the different ethno-cultural groups that are represented in their community. Here are the different ethnocultural groups that have been identified in the participating communities. This is exemplary of the diversity that rural communities in Alberta are attracting.
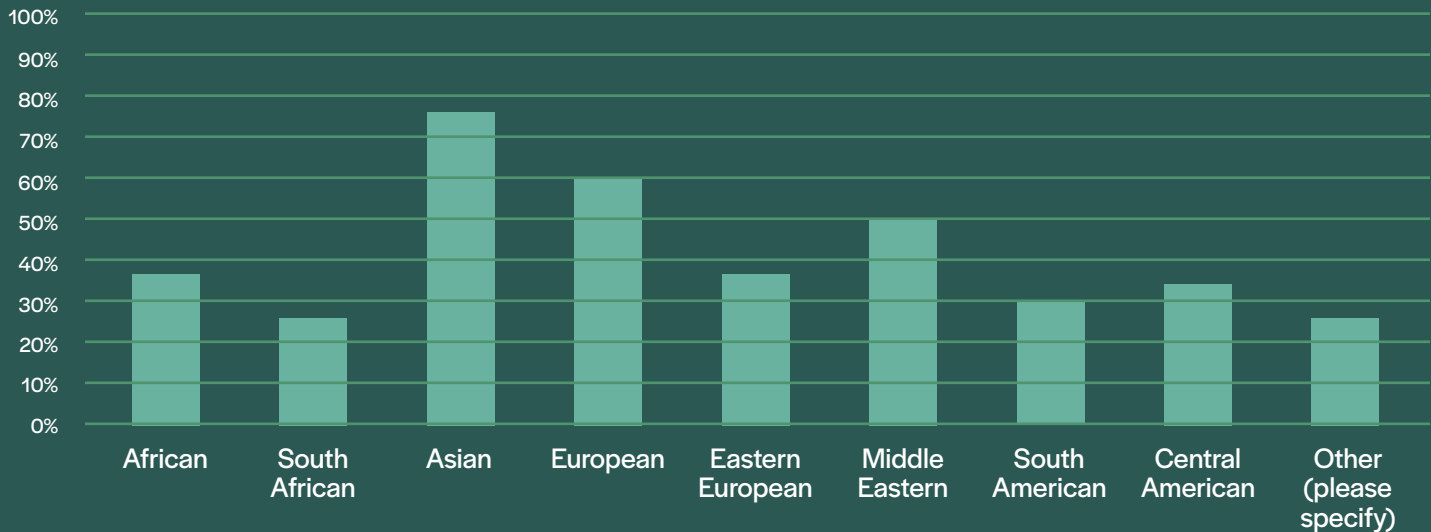
2.2 TOP 5 NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS (AS PER SERVICE PROVIDERS)

The needs assessment survey asked service providers to rank the top 5 needs of newcomers through their lens and experience working with newcomer clients. Here are the results:

- Language support
- Cultural Orientation
- Employment Support
- Transportation
- Adaptation to Canadian life (diet, weather, social relationships)

Overall, the survey highlighted that rural communities experience similar gaps when trying to serve newcomers. While each community is different, there are some common challenges that affect the attraction and settlement of newcomers in these rural communities. These gaps will be further explored throughout the toolkit.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOUR CURRENT ORGANIZATION'S SERVICES MEETING THESE NEEDS?

Many service providers noted that their organization could not meet the identified needs of newcomers, or could meet the needs "to a small extent". This exemplified the need for training, as many organizations have never participated in training that supports the attraction, retention and settlement of newcomers in their community.

Bar chart showing extent to which organizations' services meet needs:
- To a large extent: ~11%
- To a moderate extent: ~18%
- To a small extent: ~55%
- To no extent: ~15%
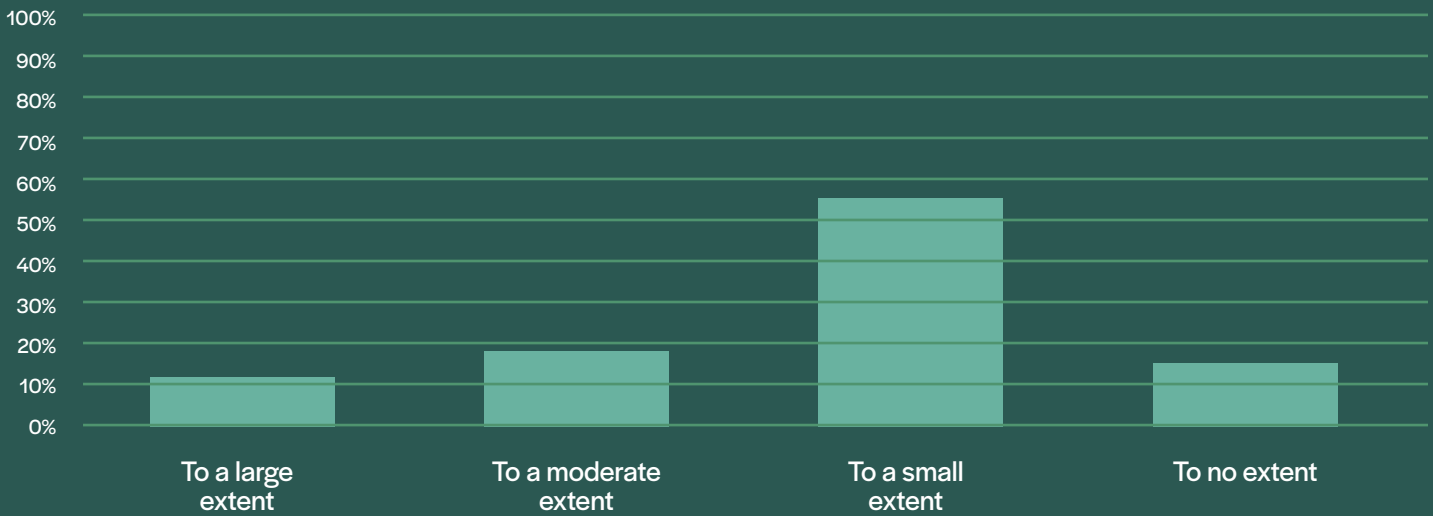
2.4 WHAT ARE THE CURRENT GAPS PRESENT IN RURAL COMMUNITIES WHEN OFFERING SERVICES TO NEWCOMERS?

Service providers were also asked to identify the gaps that their community experiences when offering services to newcomers. The top 5 gaps were identified:

- Language support
- Cultural Orientation
- Employment Support
- Transportation
- Adaptation to Canadian life (diet, weather, social relationships)

Overall, the needs assessment survey highlighted that rural communities experience similar gaps when trying to serve newcomers. While each community is different, there are some common challenges that affect the attraction and settlement of newcomers in these rural communities. These gaps will be further explored throughout the toolkit.

"Community capacity refers to the ability of community members to make a difference over time. Capacity isn't a one-time thing; it's not something that disappears once you've experienced it; we get better the more we practice."

FAWCETT, 2022

The Settlement of Newcomers in Rural Communities

3.0 ## WHAT IS "SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION"?

To understand the needs of newcomers in rural communities, it is necessary to first understand the difference between settlement and integration. There are many layers to the settlement process, but the overarching goal of settlement is for newcomers to meet their initial needs and establish themselves in their new homes. Integration is a more in-depth process that involves merging diverse groups of people within a single social context (Murphy, 2010, p.12). Integration can also be seen as the amalgamation of different ethnocultural groups in the housing, education, political and socio-economic pillars of society. The overarching goal of integration is for newcomers to keep their own cultural identity while participating fully in a new society (CRRF, 2015).

THE SETTLEMENT NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS

Newcomers to Canada have different needs - even before their arrival. Different immigration pathways and journeys will require different settlement needs. Some newcomers will arrive more established or well-versed in travel and adaptation, while others may be fleeing in uncertainty or from unsafe situations. Regardless of the motivation, newcomers will generally have different needs throughout their immigration and settlement journey (Murphy, 2010, p.13).

These needs are additionally amplified in rural communities where newcomer integration and settlement systems are not yet established or routinely utilized. In comparison to urban centres, where ethnocultural communities may already exist and groups or systems are already in place to support the integration of newcomers, rural communities generally have less diversity and may not have already-established ethnocultural groups or systems to support newcomers. Urban centres also often house more diversity, culture and a wider range of languages.

When considering the needs of newcomers, it is important to remember that a **one-size-fits-all approach will not work** for each newcomer.

PRE-ARRIVAL

In this stage, newcomers are preparing for their move to Canada. They are also setting their expectations for their lives and trying to gain a sense of what life in Canada will be like. The pre-arrival stage is also incredibly busy for newcomers, as they are gathering all the necessary documents to immigrate. Some newcomers will be occupied with selling all of their belongings in their home country, to be able to bring more money with them to Canada. This is very common for families coming here for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, as there are many associated costs with work permit applications, in addition to airfares, health insurance, etc.

This initial stage will affect each newcomer differently. Some newcomer populations may not have the opportunity to prepare during the pre-arrival stage. If you are already in contact with newcomers during this pre-arrival stage - whether employer or service provider - **setting expectations** will play an important role in preparing newcomers to arrive in Canada. One of the ways to offer pre-arrival services is through a service like Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA) which is an initiative to deliver a series of online courses to new immigrants who **intend** to come to Canada. Alberta is one of the provinces that has the participant settlement agencies for SOPA. These pre-arrival courses are designed to help new immigrants develop Canadian job search skills, improve communication skills for the Canadian workplace, connect with local resources in Canada well before their arrival and continue availing services after.

Here are some of the initial resources that newcomers will need upon their arrival in your community.

▶ **Temporary Housing**

Housing is the number one priority for newcomers when arriving in Canada. Ideally, newcomers will be looking for long-term housing that can accommodate their families. Upon arrival, temporary housing is important for newcomers to be able to feel at home and secure throughout their integration process. Temporary housing can be sought through apartment rentals, hotel stays, or living with relatives already established in Canada. However, apartment rentals can be costly and often require a first and last month deposit that many newcomers may not have. In this case, some newcomers couch surf or turn to house shelters during their first few months in Canada.

Community recommendation

Determine if there are any shelters available in the community where newcomers can go to access housing support services. Local Family and Community Services Centres (FCSS) can support housing and wraparound support for local families. Service providers or municipal leaders could also consider building relationships with local landlords to support housing newcomers when they arrive.

▶ **Transportation**

Transportation is another immediate concern for newcomers upon their arrival. For rural or remote communities, the first consideration for newcomers is getting from the airport to their new community. Upon arrival, other considerations need to be taken into account, such as: getting a Canadian Driver's License, accessing public transportation - if this exists in your community - as well as getting around town or to larger communities to access services. Once established, newcomers will then look to lease or buy a vehicle for the longer term.

> **Community recommendation**
>
> Communities can consider offering incentives or short-term solutions to assist with transportation barriers. Yard sales or bike drives where newcomers can purchase or use bicycles can be a useful practice to adopt. Communities can also consider offering newcomers a free one-month bus pass, utilizing volunteer drivers, or establishing transportation groups that post when someone is venturing to the nearest big city.

▶ **Employment**

For newcomers who do not arrive in Canada with an existing job offer or employment opportunity, finding work is an extreme priority for families in order to create a sustainable life in Canada. It is important to recognize that many newcomers who arrive in Canada with certain skills or experiences may not find employment in those fields and are often forced to start a new career in a different or often unknown industry (Murphy, 2010, p.14).

▶ **Acquiring Important Documents to Live and Work in Canada**

Some of the important documents that newcomers will need to get upon arrival are:

Social Insurance Number (SIN)
to be legally recognized in Canada and to be able to work and be paid.

Bank account/credit card
Canadian bank account to be able to pay for things and start building credit history in the country.

Alberta health card
to be able to visit the doctor, get prescriptions, access mental health services, etc.

Canadian driver's license
obtain a Canadian driver's license to be able to legally drive and buy a car in Alberta.

> **Questions to Consider**
> - Can a newcomer get these important documents in your community?
> - If not, where is the closest location they can obtain these documents?
> - Are there any services that provide this information to newcomers in your community?

▶ **Upgrading Language Skills**

Learning English or French is a major priority for newcomers arriving in Canada. For those who already speak English, this could include building confidence to speak English. For those who may struggle with their language skills, enrolling in English courses or practicing on their own time is a priority.

Questions to be Considered

- Who are the English language providers in the community?
- Does your community have an ESL program or an Adult Learning Centre?
- If online classes do not exist, where can newcomers receive support for their language needs? (Consider your local FCSS, community churches, volunteers or Adult Learning Centres)

▶ **School Registration**

For newcomers arriving with children, registering their children in school will be another important step in their settlement process. Learning the school system, managing online school accounts, understanding online learning apps, and knowing the school bus systems are some of the added priorities of an immigrant parent. Parents will also need to understand their expectations if they are required to pay for bus fares, school lunches, school supplies and field trips.

3.3 POST-ARRIVAL

Post-arrival focuses on the long-term and setting newcomers up for success. Once newcomers have initially settled, they will then begin feeling a sense of attachment or belonging in Canada, without giving up their attachment and belonging to their home countries. It is at this stage that the deeper forms of integration and inclusion should occur. This stage is also where newcomers are looking for more opportunities to establish their foothold and make deeper connections in their new homes.

▶ Long-Term Housing

After finding initial accommodations - this can often be relatives if newcomers have family in the community - newcomers will then look for long-term and sustainable housing options, such as renting or buying a house and getting a mortgage.

Opportunity to Consider

Many communities experience challenges in providing affordable housing. Consider connecting with RDN's Sustainable Housing Initiative (SHI) to see how they can support your community with your housing needs and challenges.

civida.ca

▶ Understanding the Canadian Healthcare System

Understanding the Canadian healthcare system is an important part of integration. How the system works, what is covered for individuals and families, and dentistry and prescription medications are all important aspects of the healthcare system that newcomers will need to know. Newcomers will also need to understand how emergency systems work and what to do in the case of an emergency in their rural community. Apart from the Alberta Health Card, newcomers may be eligible for the Alberta Health Benefits Card. Those who meet this criterion will need a further understanding of what the benefits card does, and what kind of coverage it has for individuals and families.

Questions to be Considered

- Are there any physicians in your community who can speak another language or provide culturally-appropriate services?
- If not, do you know where you can refer newcomers to receive this type of medical support?

▶ Access to Mental Healthcare

It is important to emphasize mental healthcare separate from physical healthcare for numerous reasons. Firstly, the understanding of mental health could look different in other countries, so newcomers may not understand their right or opportunity to access mental health resources in Canada. Additionally, mental health stigmas could often be associated with different cultures. Some countries around the world may not recognize mental health as an important component of healthcare, and newcomers may not have experience in accessing services to address their mental health needs.

Access to mental health services will also be important for newcomers who have experienced trauma, social isolation, culture shock, or for those trying to navigate everyday life in their new community or workplace. Refugees who have come from war-torn countries, or who have undergone a familial separation, forced relocation, loss, death or injury will need to access mental health services and trauma-informed services to begin their healing process while integrating into Canada. Moreover, despite Canada's universal healthcare system, it has been recognized that certain populations, including immigrants and refugees, are under-served by the Canadian healthcare system and there still remains variation in the health status of immigrant subgroups. For example, government-assisted refugees (GARs) may have greater health needs than other immigrants due to their pre-migration and resettlement experiences in Canada.

Opportunity to Consider

There is a free Immigrant and Refugee Mental Health Course that service providers or community members can take to understand more about mental health for newcomers. This course is created by the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH).

▶ **Understanding the Canadian Labour Market**

Starting a new job in Canada comes with a lot of adjustment - especially if newcomers are starting a new career in a new industry. Learning the ins and outs of different workplaces, workplace cultures and the labour market will be important in the settlement process. Newcomers will also need to understand their rights as workers and what they are entitled to.

▶ **Acclimation to Canadian Winter**

Adjusting to the climate is part of any transition when moving to a new country. Canada however, has below-freezing temperatures that many newcomers will not be used to. Families will need to buy proper winter clothing, adjust to below-freezing temperatures, prepare their vehicles with winter tires, adjust to winter driving conditions, and acclimatize their bodies to new temperatures.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your community or welcoming committee have a "checklist" of items that newcomers will need when moving to Canada?
- Do you have a map or any resources on where newcomers can obtain winter and/or used clothing?

▶ **Recreation Services**

Finding recreational activities will also be a focus post-arrival. To settle into a new home and promote a sense of belongingness, newcomers will turn to community activities and building their hobbies and social networks to build a good quality of life in their new home.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your community offer free or recreational services for youth adults or teens?
- Where can newcomers register or get information on the different community programs available?

▶ **Filing Taxes**

Learning to file taxes and understanding the tax system is an important need for newcomers. Even within different provinces of Canada, the tax filing system is different. Newcomers will need to be educated on how to file their taxes, and what resources they will need to complete the filing process. Once newcomers file taxes, they are also entitled to receive more benefits, which is something that will need to be taught or explained further to those who are employed or unemployed within Canada.

Opportunity to Consider

ASSIST Community Services Centre offers a tax clinic to all newcomers throughout Alberta. They offer free income tax filing services for eligible low-income individuals and families who are permanent residents and landed immigrants with language barriers. The tax clinic services are provided in the month of March and April every year through appointment. The clients will be assessed over the phone initially for eligibility by appointment.

▶ **Navigating Court Systems**

Many newcomers who arrive in Canada do not know or understand how the Canadian court system works. This includes their laws in Canada - criminal and civil - and learning about the rights they have in Canada that may differ from their home country.

> **Opportunity to Consider**
> ASSIST's Responding to Family Violence Program offers culturally sensitive support to victims of family violence while helping to understand and navigate the court systems.

▶ **Additional Supports Needed for Newcomers**

Some newcomers may also require income support or access to emergency shelters. For those who have experienced trauma, trauma-informed care or emergency housing could also be a reality. Other supports include food bank services, free community programs for families, public library services, newcomer awareness support, and helping to connect with cultural and religious organizations, among many other supports.

3.4 NEWCOMER INTEGRATION

When considering the settlement of newcomers, it is important to know the difference between integration and assimilation. Canada is a country that embraces multiculturalism - this means that people from different cultures are encouraged to continue practicing their cultures, religions or faiths - free from discrimination. When newcomers move to Canada, they are encouraged to practice whatever culture they choose - whether that be adapting to Canadian culture, keeping their culture from their home countries or adapting aspects from both cultures.

Integration is a longer-term settlement process by which newcomers feel and become full participants in society (Canadian Council for Refugees, 1998).

Inclusion is appreciating and valuing human differences by creating an atmosphere where everyone feels respected and valued for their uniqueness. In an inclusive environment, each person is recognized and developed, and their skills are routinely utilized. In an inclusive environment, people are valued because of, not in spite of, their differences so everyone can fully participate and thrive (AUMA, 2014).

Assimilation, on the other hand, is when minority groups come to resemble a society's majority group or assume all the values, behaviours and beliefs of another group. For newcomers, this is when they completely lose their culture and convert to a new one - usually the one of the majority, or in this case, the host country. This is not the goal of successful integration (Dasgupta, n.d).

Belongingness

The ultimate goal for successful integration is for newcomers to **feel like they belong in their new hom**e. Belongingness means that newcomers are able to practice and experience their own culture and be accepted fully into society. Belongingness also fosters participation and acceptance in society. When newcomers feel like they belong in their new home, their integration and adaptation to Canadian life will be successful.

3.5   **INTERSECTIONALITY**

Intersectionality is a way to think about our identities and how we experience the world. It is a framework that describes how our overlapping social identities relate to social structures of racism and oppression. Intersectionality merges many identity markers, including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, and more, to create a more truthful and complex identity. It takes on a multi-dimensional approach when looking at marginalized populations, such as immigrants and refugees (Cho,Crenshaw,& McCall, 2013). For example, a queer black woman may experience the world on the basis of her sexuality, gender, and race — a unique experience based on how those identities intersect in her life.

Intersectionality is the concept that multiple factors, such as nationality, gender, sexuality racial identity and disability can contribute to the positionality of a person. This includes both advantages and disadvantages. An intersectional lens is all-encompassing and takes on a multi-dimensional approach when looking at marginalized populations, such as immigrants and refugees (Cho,Crenshaw,& McCall, 2013).

As mentioned, "rurality" can also be seen as an important intersectional dimension. There are many characteristics associated with rural living in comparison to urban cities. Firstly, rural communities have differences in transportation systems, availability of resources and proximity to resources. In addition, some remote communities may not have stable internet, paved roads, or established neighbourhoods. Rural is an intersectional lens that can affect any population, not only newcomers. When considering this lens, services in rural communities should take a holistic approach to meet the needs of their clients.

Service providers often think about settlement as the process newcomers experience when arriving in Canada, however, they should also consider some of the experiences that immigrants and refugees experienced before coming to Canada. It is also important to consider the various intersecting identities that newcomers have. These experiences and identities could shape the integration experience of newcomers in your community.

When trying to provide inclusive services that meet the needs of multi-barriered newcomers, service providers should consider the different intersecting barriers or challenges that affect minority newcomer populations. While each integration experience will be different, some newcomer groups will experience multiple barriers that will impact their entire settlement experience - including how they access services and adapt to their new community.

3.6 NEWCOMERS WITH INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES

The term "newcomer" is often used to encompass several different populations. All newcomer populations ensure different immigrant and settlement experiences. Before and after the immigration process, newcomers will experience different barriers that will affect their integration into Canada. When offering services to newcomers, it is important to consider newcomers with intersectional identities. Here are some intersections taken into consideration:

▶ **Older Immigrants and Refugees**
Canada's immigration policies focus heavily on younger immigrants. Older immigrants and refugees are not as prominent of an immigration group however, they are equally as important. Newcomers who are older are often refugees or are sponsored directly by a family member - a permanent resident - in Canada. Older immigrants face multiple barriers in regards to their integration process and may be more challenged to learn English and and may be more challenged to learn English. In turn, this may render it more difficult for older newcomers to adapt to a new culture or environment. This can create increased feelings of isolation and loneliness (The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2021).

Many older immigrants may also miss their home country and being surrounded by their familiar culture. Regarding integration support, older newcomers may require more translation services, connections with their ethnocultural community, and social support networks (The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2021). Those coming to Canada using the Parent and Grandparent Super Visa program are ineligible to receive any settlement services, government income support, or public health care services. This creates a huge impact on the settlement and integration of older immigrants. Lastly, it is important to note that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is often amplified for older immigrants and refugees from war-torn countries.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your community have an organization or group that could connect seniors together?
- Do you have a program that can connect youth mentors with seniors?
- What seems to help seniors adjust to Canadian life faster and easier is having a person to support them in almost every aspect of their lives.
- How can your community support this?

▶ **LGBTQIA+ Newcomers**

Newcomers to Canada who identify as LGBTQIA+ will need regular settlement support, but may also need to connect to LGBTQIA+ support groups or social groups. People in this community often experience isolation due to the lack of culturally relevant activities and support within the community, in situations like moving alone and being separated from their families and friends. Connecting with ethnocultural communities comes naturally with most newcomers, but it will be different for LGBTQIA+ communities. It is important to consider LGBTQIA+ populations when offering services for newcomers to Canada because most LGBTQIA+ people immigrate to Canada because Canada has an international reputation as a leader in LGBTQ rights.

Newcomers in this population may also be fleeing their country because of persecution for identifying as LGBTQIA+. When offering support for these newcomers, this may be important to consider as some individuals may not have had a choice to leave their country. Trauma-informed care should be considered when working with these newcomers.

▶ **Newcomers with Disabilities**

Despite the availability of various support programs to assist with newcomer integration and social assistance programs to lessen financial hardship, those with disabilities continue to experience various systemic barriers (Tam, et.al, 2021). Newcomers with disabilities can be regarded as multi-barriered, for many may experience language barriers that can affect their comprehension of navigating the healthcare system. In addition, disability in Canada correlates negatively with employment rates, income, education, and housing, so newcomers with disabilities can be expected to face additional hardship in these areas (AMSSA, 2016).

▶ **Newcomer Children and Youth**

Newcomer youth are also considered a multi-barriered group. Once a family moves to Canada, an adaptive, exciting journey awaits school-aged children. This is especially true for youth who arrive in Canada without family or friends, or who have experienced trauma. Effectively integrating into the Albertan school systems, learning a completely new culture and language, making new friends, finding ways to get educated in a new system, contributing to new communities, and coping with cultural, social, emotional, and other relationship-related challenges affect the settlement process of newcomer children and youth. While this can be exciting, it can also overwhelm and provide challenges. It is important to consider the many barriers that newcomer children and youth experience, as these will be added layers that will affect their integration process into school, society and Canada in general. To support newcomer students, many schools offer cultural liaisons,

social workers, guidance counsellors, and Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) to make the transition easier for children and youth newcomers and their entire families by sharing information, providing resources and making community connections. Service providers should also make children and youth aware of the resources for mental health and well-being support for newcomer families.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your organization have programs enabling children & youth to share their culture with the wider community?
- Does your community have programs supporting youth community advocacy, to increase youth engagement and develop positive relationships with adults?

▶ **Newcomer Women**

Women are another minority group to consider when thinking about multi-barriered newcomers. In addition to regular settlement hurdles, women are subject to both gender and race-based discrimination, low income, and a lack of affordable childcare. Culturally, many newcomer women may also be stay-at-home mothers. This can be challenging when women are trying to find employment in Canada, or build social support networks (Government of Canada, 2019). Communities and services should consider some of the barriers that newcomer women may experience. Having women-focused services, culturally-relevant services or centres, including services that specialize in trauma-informed care, will be important for many newcomer women to access during their integration process. Domestic violence may also be a factor to consider for women immigrating to Canada (Government of Canada, 2019).

Questions to be Considered

- Does your community have a safe centre where women who are experiencing domestic violence can go?
- Do you know where you can refer women to access support in your community? Outside of your community?

▶ International Students

International students can experience a multitude of challenges that need to be considered while providing settlement and integration services in rural communities. There are also many limitations associated with an international student status. To begin, international students have to receive a study permit (visa) to be able to study at a Designated Learning Institution in Canada (DLI). There are several DLIs across Alberta, and some are even located in rural communities. These institutions are important in bringing international students to rural areas and can act as important facilitators in promoting immigration to rural communities. As of December 2021, there were 621,565 international students studying in Canada - a number that is set to increase over the next decade (IRCC, 2022).

In addition to adjusting to Canadian life, international students have an extra barrier to adjusting to post-secondary education and a new curriculum. Fitting into the school system, new community and new country can create added stress for international students. There are also barriers to accessing employment, as students are only allowed to work up to 20 hours per week - impacting their ability to work full-time. After graduation, international students will also need employment and settlement support to begin their careers in Canada. It is important to consider that international students will require settlement support, just like any newcomer to Canada. Communities and Post-Secondary Institutions should consider this when developing an attraction and retention strategy for international students.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your organization provide consistent direct and referral services for international students seeking settlement and psychosocial needs?
- As a service provider, to what extent do you support international students to be linked to wider community networks?
- Does your organization provide direct referral services?

Inclusive Education Canada (IEC) is a national non-governmental organization (NGO) committed to quality education for all students in Canadian schools. They are working towards building capacity in our schools and classrooms to make inclusion both a successful and practical reality (IEC).

The Importance of Recognizing Intersectionality for Newcomers

A lack of collaboration between different sectors of identity can reinforce an individualized way of thinking, which can limit an individual to certain aspects of his/her identity. For example, a newcomer is treated either as an immigrant or as someone with disabilities, but never as an individual who exists at the intersection of these and many other identities and social categories. Recognizing the multiple barriers that newcomers may experience also promotes a more inclusive community (Kusari, El-Lahib & Spagnuolo, 2019). Your organization should consider how you can support newcomers with multiple barriers for better overall service delivery.

3.7   BARRIERS FACED BY NEWCOMERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

THE
6 C'S

COLOUR	CLIMATE
CULTURAL CONFUSION	COMPUTERS
CREDENTIAL EVALUATION	COMMUNICATION & CONNECTION

There are many barriers that newcomers experience when integrating into rural communities. These barriers can be represented through **the 6 C's**: Colour, Climate, Cultural Confusion, Computers, Credential Evaluation, and Communication & Connection (Robertson, 2017).

Colour

Represents barriers as related to race and appearance - especially seen in communities that do not foster a lot of diversity. This barrier includes racism and discrimination that newcomers may experience based on the colour of their skin or their ethnocultural background (Robertson, 2017).

Climate

The climate in Canada can be very cold and many newcomers may not be used to the below-freezing temperatures that occur during the winter months. Newcomers may also experience various physical and psychological health issues including seasonal depression. The climate is a major barrier for many to overcome and will take newcomers some time (and often years) to acclimatize to Canadian weather (Robertson, 2017).

Cultural Confusion

Cultural confusion is a significant barrier for newcomers. This barrier occurs when newcomers' expectations of Canada are different from the reality after arrival. Many newcomers may feel like they must choose between their home culture and assimilating to Canadian culture. This can cause confusion and unexpected hardships for newcomers trying to adjust to their new home and secure their own identity in Canada (Robertson, 2017).

Computers

As many services have moved virtually, many new immigrants may not have the experience or understanding of technology to be able to access certain services or information. Moreover, not all newcomers will have access to a computer and may have to use community services to access the technology necessary (a computer at the library) to access certain supports. Especially in rural communities where settlement services may be offered remotely, newcomers will need to rely on these online services during their settlement process and may not be able to get the support they need to access these virtual services (Robertson, 2017).

Credential Evaluation

Foreign credential recognition has been an enduring problem in Canada. Immigrant professionals often immigrate to Canada with good educational credentials from around the world hoping to enter into professional jobs. However, these qualifications do not seem to hold the prestige they should. This requirement can be seen as discriminatory for immigrants, and many are forced to re-do schooling to get a job equal to the one they had in their country of origin. Also, if newcomers apply for a job at a slightly lower level than the qualification they had back home, they are often told they are "overqualified." This can create additional barriers for newcomers who are unable to practice the careers they have been pursuing in their home countries. Often, newcomers need to restart and begin new careers in Canada until (if ever) their credentials are recognized.

Communication & Connection

Communication is a major barrier for newcomers. Not being able to converse with people can lead to frustration, isolation and missed opportunities among newcomers. Newcomers also need to be able to connect with others for their successful integration and to feel like they belong in their new home, workplace or community (Robertson, 2017). Communication is further explored throughout this toolkit.

3.8 THE CORE STRESSORS FOR NEWCOMERS

Newcomers may experience many stressors after arriving in Canada. These stressors can be caused throughout the immigration process or could be a response to pre-arrival trauma or stress. As each newcomer's journey is different, some of these stressors may not be relevant to each newcomer however, it is important to be able to recognize that there are several stressors that can affect the settlement and integration of newcomers. (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, n.d.)

Some of the core stressors that newcomers may experience are:

ACCULTURATION

Acculturation is the process of losing one's cultural identity when immigrating to a new country. Often, newcomers will undergo this experience upon their arrival to Canada, as everything will be different and they will need to adjust to their new environment. It will be important for newcomers to still feel a sense of their own culture after arriving in Canada. Introducing them to people from the same religion, culture, ethnocultural community, country, or even someone who may speak the same language can be an important tool for mitigating some of this acculturation stress.

ISOLATION

Isolation is especially emphasized in rural or remote communities. Many newcomers may stick to themselves, or feel isolated due to discrimination, lack of diversity, loneliness from missing family or culture shock. Isolation can also be challenging for newcomers who have a language barrier and aren't able to easily communicate with others.

TRAUMA

Dealing with past or present traumas are a big stressor for newcomers. In addition to everyday settlement stressors, newcomers may also be dealing with trauma from back home, or even trauma during their immigration process. This will require effective emotional and social support from immigrant service providers of that particular community.

RESETTLEMENT

The huge stressor for newcomers throughout their immigration process is the resettlement aspect. Finding and affording basic needs, financial stability, health care accessibility and many more contribute to resettlement stress.

3.9   CULTURE SHOCK

Newcomers may experience stress from cultural changes and acculturation during their integration process. As immigrants learn new cultural expectations, customs and a new language, they may feel overwhelmed with all of the cultural unfamiliarities in Canada. Culture shock is a concept that many newcomers will experience upon their integration into Canada. According to the Government of Canada, Culture Shock is defined as "a sense of dislocation and general uneasiness when coming to a new country" (Government of Canada, 2016).

Culture Shock is not necessarily only associated with immigration, but can also be experienced by just visiting a foreign location or when travelling to a different country.

Recognizing Culture Shock in Newcomers

Culture shock is not immediately recognized in newcomers. Service providers should be mindful about various symptoms that newcomers experience while undergoing culture shock. Symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Newcomers may feel angry, uncomfortable, confused, frustrated or irritable and sometimes may even lose their sense of humour.
- They may also withdraw from social settings, and spend excessive
- amounts of time alone. They may even develop negative feelings about the people and culture of the host country. Newcomers may develop negative feelings about the people and culture of the host country.
- Some other associated symptoms include compulsive eating, drinking or sleeping, boredom, fatigue and unable to concentrate or work effectively, etc.

Newcomers may not necessarily have all these symptoms, but most newcomers will experience these stages throughout different periods of their integration process.

The Canadian Immigration System

Immigration is an important part of the Government of Canada's plan to keep our economy growing. Every year, the Canadian Government sets a target for each category of immigrants coming to the country. The majority of immigrants who come to Canada are selected based on their ability to contribute economically. As a nation, Canada also prioritizes the reunification of families and has space to help the most vulnerable populations around the world. Canada's immigration system has many different layers that affect the positionality and status of newcomers. As service providers or settlement agencies, understanding the basic components of the immigration system within Canada can help support newcomers with their integration process, while gaining further understanding of the immigration journey they experienced.

4.1 **IMMIGRATION STATUS**

The immigration status of newcomers is an important consideration for several reasons – access to services, a sense of security, and travel or visitation limitations. Immigration status can also provide a sense of vulnerability for newcomers who are awaiting permanent status or citizenship. Despite the various immigration streams that newcomers can utilize in applying for their Permanent Resident status, the process can be lengthy and in some cases, costly.

Different immigration and refugee statuses that newcomers can hold in Canada:

▶ **Temporary Residence** - A temporary resident is someone who is granted permission to be in Canada on a temporary basis. A temporary resident can include visitors, workers, international students, business visitors, tourists, and those who hold study or work permits. Temporary residents have a time limitation to be in Canada. This timeframe can be extended however, if residents put in another application or a request for an extension (Government of Canada, 2022).

▶ **Permanent Residence (PR)** - A permanent resident is someone who is granted permanent status within Canada and has many of the same rights and privileges as Canadian citizens. An important fact to consider is that permanent residents in Canada are fragile towards losing their status if they are apprehended for any kind of criminality within the country. Should a permanent resident get in trouble with the law, they risk losing their permanent residence and in some cases, are required to return to their home country (if possible). There is only one type of permanent residency, and all newcomers who apply have to undergo an application process. The application process will look different depending on which stream newcomers use to apply for their PR (Government of Canada, 2022).

IMMIGRATION STREAMS

There are many different immigration streams that newcomers can apply through to get their permanent status in Canada:

- Economic Streams
- Family-Sponsorship Streams
- Protected Persons / Refugee Streams
- Humanitarian and Compassionate Cases

Economic Class Immigrants

The most popular class of immigrants who come to Canada are economic immigrants. **About 65% of all immigrants who arrive in Canada** come through this classification.

Economic Immigrants are those who are able to come to Canada and work - either through a work permit or a study permit. Here are some of the programs that newcomers can use, through the economic class and work. Most immigrants will either obtain a work permit or a study permit.:

- Federal Skilled Trades
- Federal Skilled Worker
- Canadian Experience Class
- Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program
- Provincial Nominee Program

Family-Sponsored Immigrants

Immigrants who are sponsored by family members make up about **25% of all immigrants in Canada**. Family sponsorship is only applicable to immediate family members -spouses, partners and children. Parents and grandparents can also be sponsored, however, there is a lottery system applied that will affect the likelihood of these relatives immigrating permanently to Canada.

Refugee class

> **Refugees, or Protected Persons account for about 10% of all immigrants in Canada.**

There are two streams dedicated to refugees immigrating to Canada

▶ **Protected Persons (refugees)**

About 10 % of all refugee immigrants come to Canada under protected person stream either through private sponsorship or through Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) sponsorship.

▶ **Other Immigrant Populations**

Other types of immigrants represent about **1% of all immigrants in Canada.** These newcomers are categorized under the Humanitarian and Compassionate Cases category. This category is for extremely compelling circumstances, where the benefits of a newcomer staying in Canada outweigh the negatives of them being sent back to their home country. Examples of this could include war, if the newcomer has a significant health risk and would not be able to receive support or care in their home country, and if there is a child that could be negatively affected, among several others.

4.3   RURAL-SPECIFIC IMMIGRATION STREAMS

While most immigration streams are run by the Federal Government, many provinces have begun implementing their own immigration streams that cater to the labour needs of that specific province. The Government of Alberta has recognized the need for newcomers to move to rural communities and has therefore implemented some rural-specific streams to attract and retain newcomers to rural communities.

▶ **The Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) Program**

This program is a community-driven program that creates a path to permanent residence for skilled foreign workers who want to work and live in one of the participating RNIP communities. This program is designed to spread the benefits of economic immigration to smaller and rural communities. The criteria for this program centers on candidates having a valid job offer from a participating RNIP community, among other community-specific criteria determined by each individual community.
(Government of Canada, 2022)

▶ **The Rural Renewal Stream**

This stream was created to attract and retain newcomers to rural Albertan communities. A designated community works with employers to attract and recruit workers and collaborates with a settlement organization to retain newcomers by sharing information on settlement support. A candidate must be endorsed by a designated community and meet all criteria for the Rural Renewal Stream. Interested communities can fill out a Community Designation Application form to begin the application process.
(Government of Alberta, 2022)

▶ The Rural Entrepreneurship Stream

The Rural Entrepreneurship Stream is an economic stream that allows the province of Alberta to nominate qualified and capable immigrant entrepreneurs who want to start a new or buy an existing business in a rural Alberta community. Interested applicants can submit an Expression of Interest and there are opportunities for interested applicants to visit the communities of rural Alberta so they can see where they will live and operate their business, and for the community to meet the entrepreneur and assess the business idea (Government of Alberta, 2022).

4.3 OBTAINING CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

There are two ways in which Canadians can obtain citizenship. The first way to obtain Canadian citizenship by birth. Those born in Canada will automatically be considered Canadian citizens and can pass this citizenship down one generation to their children.

The second way to obtain Canadian citizenship is by Naturalization. Permanent residents in Canada are eligible to apply for their citizenship after being permanent residents and residing in Canada for 3 years (or 1,095 days). Once eligible, applicants must complete a citizenship test. This process ends in a ceremony where residents are sworn in. Once getting their citizenship, newcomers have free mobility and the right to vote within Canada. Citizens will also be able to get a Canadian passport.

Anti-Discrimination

Discrimination is the denial of equal treatment and opportunity to individuals or a group because of the personal characteristics and memberships in specific groups, with respect to education, accommodation, healthcare, employment, and access to services, goods and facilities (CRRF, 2015). Discrimination can occur on various different platforms and affect individuals on different levels.

5.1 THE TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

There are several different types of discrimination. Newcomers, along with other minority populations, may experience one or several different types of discrimination. In order to address and promote anti-discrimination, it is important to understand the different types and how they affect newcomers on different levels.

▶ **Internalized Discrimination**

This type of discrimination is based on the internalized beliefs and feelings of an individual. Internalized discrimination does not necessarily require an external representation, but it exists within individuals. This type of discrimination could also be a result of an individual belonging to a systemically racist society (CRRF, 2015).

▶ **Interpersonal Discrimination**

This type of discrimination might be expressed through discriminatory words and actions resulting from bigotry and biases shown between individuals (CRRF, 2015).

▶ **Institutional Discrimination**

Discriminatory policies and practices within organizations or institutions. This type of discrimination refers to racial bias inferred into policies or laws as well as its practice (e.g. enforcement and judiciary etc). Such bias can be explicit by ignoring the needs of minority groups (CRRF, 2015).

▶

Systemic Discrimination

The ongoing racial inequalities maintained the society. This includes discriminatory practices in organizations, governments and communities at large (CRRF, 2015).

Self-Reflection

- Is my approach conducive to supporting immigrants and refugees to make their own decisions?
- Does my approach further reinforce negative and harmful power dynamics?
- Am I aware of my assumptions and (un)conscious biases I may have towards different cultures?
- How am I reflecting on my assumptions during my interactions with newcomers?
- What kind of power relation do I have with the newcomers availing the services?
- Am I aware of my privileges throughout my interaction with newcomers during my practice?

5.2 MICROAGGRESSIONS

Microaggressions are a common way that newcomers are discriminated against. Microaggressions are hostile verbal or behavioural insults or slurs that specifically target groups of people or communities. Microaggressions are often normalized and are thus often not recognized as aggressive or inappropriate (CFRAC, 2022).

One of the most common examples of racial microaggressions is when racial minorities are assumed to be foreign-born. Common questions such as: "where are you from?", "where were you born?", or "you speak good English" are all examples of microaggressions that are commonly used. While the intent may not necessarily be bad, these are phrases that need to be addressed right away because they further deepen the racism and discrimination that minority populations experience.

Other common examples of racial microaggressions are statements that indicate that an individual does not want to acknowledge race. For example, "when I look at you, I don't see colour" or "there is only one race - the human race." These phrases deny a person of colour's racial-ethnic experiences. This is also an example of assimilation and acculturation. These are harmful phrases that should be further explained to individuals who feel this way (Sue, D. W., et.al., 2007).

PRIVILEGE

Recognizing privilege plays an important role in understanding discrimination. Privilege is the experience of **unearned** freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded to some people because of their social context or because they belong to a certain majority group (CRRF, 2015).

Type of Oppression	Target Group	Non-Target Group
Racial	Racialized persons	Non-racialized persons
Sexual orientation	Lesbian, gay, bisexual	Heterosexual people
Ability	People with disabilities	People without disabilities
Education	People without Canadian education / foreign credentials	People with Canadian education
Immigrant status	Immigrant	Canadian born, non-Indigenous
Language	Non-English	English
Work Experience	Foreign experience	Canadian experience

5.4

DISCRIMINATION FACED BY NEWCOMERS

Immigrants are often attracted to Canada because of its emphasis on multiculturalism and the country's dedication to rights and freedoms for all. Canada also boasts a safe place to live where there are many opportunities for newcomers to thrive and succeed. However, despite the opportunities and safety that Canada allows for newcomers, the reality is that many newcomers still experience discrimination. In order to address and create systemic change, it's necessary to first recognize and understand the different ways that newcomers experience discrimination.

▶ **Employment**

No Canadian Experience = No employment consideration
This policy is the biggest hurdle newcomers have to overcome in their settlement journey

Employment is the most common discriminatory practice experienced by newcomers. Discrimination on this level is often seen through the requirement of Canadian work experience. Many immigrants are unable to get their qualifications from their home countries recognized. Employers also expect newcomers to have Canadian experience when applying for jobs. Due to the difficulties in accreditation, many newcomers are unable to obtain Canadian experience, which prevents them from being considered for many employment opportunities.

Instead of asking for Canadian experience, employers should ask for all of the previous work experience that newcomers hold in order to find out how those experiences can be applied in the Canadian workplace. This approach opens the door of acceptance to newcomers instead of discrimination. While there are certain jobs that require Canadian certifications or experience due to specific Canadian practices, newcomers should be given equal rights and opportunities for jobs when possible.

In addition, some employers may make assumptions about an applicant's language skills because of the candidate's country of education, type of work experience, or even because of their name. In such cases, immigrants often are forced to change their names to something that is easier for an employer to pronounce. Employers may also be susceptible to discrimination, whether consciously or subconsciously, based on prejudices or stereotypes of people from certain countries or ethnicities (Oreopoulos, 2011).

Employer consideration
Consider providing a bridging program where newcomers can start an internship to gain Canadian work experience, which can then translate to full-time employment. If there are no opportunities for newcomers to work in a Canadian environment, they will not be able to adapt or gain the required Canadian experience.

▶ **Access to Services**
Newcomers also experience discrimination through limited access to resources - specifically healthcare resources. Language barriers and lack of cultural awareness are major contributors to difficulties in accessing services. The status of the newcomer may also present a barrier, as many services are offered for Permanent Residents and those in Canada on a temporary basis may not be awarded the same access. There has also been a growing awareness of the role played by discrimination in the provision of health care

services to immigrant newcomers and refugees. Examples of discriminatory practices include physicians not allowing the proper time that newcomers with language barriers may experience to understand the treatment and procedures clearly, mistreatment from workplace staff, or a lack of patience when dealing with someone from a different culture. Various forms of cultural discrimination also exist in healthcare settings, for example, "ignorance with respect to newcomers' cultural beliefs" on the part of healthcare providers could lead to improper care for immigrants or refugees experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder.

▶ Immigration Status

Discrimination exists based on the immigration status of newcomers to Canada. For example, Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) are granted less access to services, funding and resources in comparison to Permanent Residents or Canadian citizens. Discrimination based on status is pre-dominently visible in the Canadian job market and political systems as well.

▶ Appearance

Discrimination based on experience is also prevalent for newcomers. Treating people unfairly because of how they look, the way they dress, their accent or their body language are all common examples of this discriminatory practice. This type of discrimination can occur in a variety of settings, including social environments, schools, and workplaces.

▶ Race / Ethnicity

Intersecting identities that are not the same as the majority population can be subject to discrimination. This type of mistreatment occurs when individuals are intentionally treated differently based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin. For example, a landlord does not rent to people of colour.

5.5 DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

There are several stigmas that Indigenous people experience at the same level as newcomers. Along with limited access to services - especially mental health services - transportation, education, employment and funding, Indigenous peoples also experience systemic racism to a similar degree as newcomers. As Indigenous communities may have a strong, shared narrative to newcomers, these groups can connect to better understand each other and promote community belongingness. If service providers or communities can create opportunities for Indigenous and newcomer populations to connect, there will be a possibility for increased inclusion within the community, as there is often

power in connection and understanding between groups. By increasing our knowledge and learning through storytelling, we are giving a voice to all of those who experience oppression in society because of their intersecting identities.

Similarly to newcomers, service providers should properly remunerate and credit Indigenous people for their knowledge and time and recognize that Indigenous peoples have ownership, control, access, and possession of their information, knowledge, experiences, and stories.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE THE EXPERTS OF THEIR OWN REALITIES AND HISTORIES

5.6

BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO PROMOTE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Service providers often act as community champions for immigration. To further encourage service providers in promoting the positives of immigration in the community, there are some best practices that they can adapt to help change the narrative and amplify the benefits of immigration.

▶ **Promoting Organizational Change**

Promoting anti-discrimination initiatives and organizational change first begins when communities and organizations can recognize that discrimination exists. Acknowledging the ways in which newcomers experience discrimination will help identify the gaps and barriers that need to be addressed on micro and macro levels.

Organizational change also needs to center those who are in positions of power, as well as those affected by discrimination. Organizational leaders must understand that diverse workforces have embedded assumptions and ways of thinking. Without attention to cultural differences, organizational change is hard to enforce, which leads to lack of collaboration. Increasing diversity does not, by itself, increase effectiveness. Working groups and advisory committees are the keys to provide opportunities to learn and work together and enhance organizational change.

▶ **Community Advocacy**

Service providers trying to promote an inclusive community can promote advocacy in their organizations and the community. Part of advocacy means leading by example and calling out situations that are discriminatory or racist, and engaging in media advocacy. One way that service providers can support advocacy is by listening to newcomers most affected by discrimination. By listening to their voices and amplifying their concerns, service providers can engage in meaningful community advocacy. Advocacy can also be seen as dispelling stereotypes in the community, supporting the goals of newcomers, encouraging positive information about newcomers, and supporting equity and diversity initiatives. Being an advocate, you will be able to call in and call out in certain situations.

Calling IN means there is a mutual sense of understanding across differences and seeking to understand or learn more. It helps imagine different perspectives and is primarily possible if there is the existence of a close relationship.

An example of calling in: You are at a family gathering and you hear a relative using microaggressions about immigrants. You can use this opportunity to talk about the benefits of immigration, or how immigrants are good people and those types of words are not acceptable to say about someone.

Calling OUT means you let someone know if words or actions are unacceptable and will not be tolerated and interrupted in order to prevent further harm. This is practically possible if the involved people perhaps have no relationship among them.

An example of calling out: You are walking down the street and someone starts harassing a newcomer family that is walking their children to school. As this can cause harm and you may be worried about the situation escalating, this is where you call out and stop the behaviour immediately.

5.7 UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF IMMIGRATION

Part of the advocacy work necessary for rural communities will be promoting the importance of immigration. Immigration is necessary for Canada's social, economic and political make-up. Beyond needing newcomers for the economy, rural communities value immigration to spur innovation, promote diversity and create more fruitful, vibrant communities. For some rural communities, there may not be many newcomers who have immigrated to the region or some communities may not foster a lot of diversity. This can create barriers for community members in welcoming and understanding the value of immigration. Through these tools, communities can adapt some best practices on educating and informing about the value immigration has for our rural communities.

▶ **Immigrants contribute to the economy and create jobs for Canadians.**

Immigrants contribute to our economy - not only by filling gaps in our labour force and paying taxes, but also by spending money on goods, services, housing and transportation. In addition, immigrants in Canada also create jobs by owning and running businesses. These businesses not only employ other immigrants, but Canadian-born individuals as well. In a campaign conducted by the Government of Canada, it was found that **59% of food and beverage services, 53% of grocery stores and 56% of truck transportation businesses in Canada are owned by immigrants** (Government of Canada, 2016). These businesses have created thousands of jobs that contribute positively to our communities - both urban and rural. Without immigration, there would be significantly fewer employment opportunities in these fields.

Opportunity to Consider

The Government of Canada has launched a campaign called Immigration Matters that provides up-to-date data and success stories from immigrants to Canada (Government of Canada, 2021).

▶ **Immigrants deliver and improve our health and social services**

As many immigrants are motivated to move to Canada to find work, they contribute more than they receive in benefits over their lifetime. Healthcare is a major industry that immigrants are making a difference in the Canadian economy. According to the 2016 Census, more than **335,000** immigrants work in health-related occupations (Government of Canada, 2021). Immigrants also account for **36% of physicians**, and **37% of pharmacists** (Government of Canada, 2021). These percentages are exemplary of the many ways that immigrants contribute to the healthcare system in Canada.

Overall, we can use the data and statistics about immigrants in Canada to help promote the importance that immigration plays within the country. By championing statistics, facts and data, we can help limit many of the stereotypes or misinformation that rural communities may have associated with newcomers or welcoming newcomers into the community.

▶ **Promoting Allyship**

An ally is a member of a dominant social group that takes a stand against social injustices directed towards a specific group who is targeted by discrimination (CRRF, 2015). A good ally takes responsibility for learning about other groups' experiences, cultures and how oppression affects others' everyday lives, listens and respects the perspectives and experiences of other group members, and recognizes that un-learning certain beliefs, assumptions and processes is a life-long experience (Pillar Nonprofit Network, n.d.).

An ally plays a significant role in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for newcomers. This is especially true for service providers who work with newcomer populations. Leaders in the community who promote allyship with newcomers can set a good example in countering negative stereotypes and discrimination that may occur. By becoming an ally, service providers can also provide support to newcomers and let them know that they are welcomed and valued in the community.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your community have any allies that can support newcomers?
- What organizations or community groups are present to help promote allyship?
- Would you consider yourself an ally for newcomers in your community?

▶ **Continued Education and Professional Development**

Education plays a major role in our organizations and communities. In order to promote more anti-discrimination initiatives in our communities, service providers should continue building their professional development and personal skills through continued education and learning opportunities. Professional development will not only support service providers, but will enhance the quality of services offered to newcomers. Service providers can gain many skills in dealing with discrimination, working with newcomers, and understanding some of the best practices to help promote inclusivity within their organization and community at large.

▶ Discrimination in Rural Communities

Discrimination in rural communities is amplified when compared to urban centers (Kemp, 2021). While rural communities have many opportunities for newcomers, urban centres offer greater diversity and ethnocultural groups for newcomers to connect with (Kemp, 2021). For rural communities that may not foster much diversity, this can result in further discrimination and stereotypes associated with newcomers, a lack of awareness of the immigration process of newcomers and, a lack of understanding of the needs of newcomers. For communities that do not have access to training or opportunities to connect with newcomer populations, this can further impact their welcoming capacity. Rural communities also experience gaps in accessing relevant, up-to-date data regarding immigration to small towns in Alberta. When communities are not able to understand the diversity that they have, they will not be able to respond to the needs of these various groups.

Based on the practical tips mentioned above, rural communities do not necessarily have to have diversity in their population to be able to promote inclusion. Everyone has the responsibility of being welcoming and debunking stereotypes and myths related to immigrants.

While service providers may work directly with newcomers, businesses, the municipality, schools and the community at large, all have the responsibility of discouraging discrimination and having zero tolerance for hate. The ability to build tight-knit relationships with community members and the ease of reaching out to ask or give assistance to anyone in need are some of the benefits of living in rural communities, which can help in minimizing discrimination. While rural communities may not have the same level of diversity as urban centres, they do offer a plethora of opportunity and welcoming capacities that could help newcomers feel at home in their new town.

Barries to Access Services for Newcomers

Newcomers face multitudes of barriers in their settlement journey. Cultural and emotional barriers, communication barriers, transportation barriers and barriers due to non-recognition of credentials are few among those which affect newcomers in their initial settlement. These barriers are all experienced at varying degrees; however, communication and transportation barriers significantly impact newcomers to a greater extent in integrating into both rural and urban communities.

▶ Communication Barriers

Communication barriers are often the number one challenge for both newcomers and service providers, as it affects their ability to communicate with each other and establish a good relationship. Language barriers can create several problems for newcomers, including difficulty finding employment, getting an education, obtaining medical care, finding housing, accessing transportation, and utilizing several other general services. Newcomers also experience communication barriers in knowing which services are available in the community and where to access those services. Idioms, slang or jargon in languages used by the general public makes it even more challenging for newcomers to fit in and communicate with local people, as there may be dialects in a particular community or even in a province that are not taught in English language courses for newcomers.

When English is not a newcomer's first language, they may also lack the confidence to engage in conversations with service providers or community members. For this reason, it is important not to assume that newcomers cannot speak English, but perhaps reflect that they could be nervous about putting their English to use in a practical setting.

Questions to be Considered
- Does your community have culturally relevant services?
- Does your community offer services or resources in languages other than English?
- Do service providers in your community know that cultural barriers may exist for newcomer clients?

Practical Communication Tips

To mitigate communication barriers between newcomers and service providers, there are some practical tips that can support cross-cultural communication.

- **Translation tools:** The use of translation tools, such as Google Translate work great when trying to communicate with someone who has a language barrier.
- **Written Text:** Provide your questions in a written format in simple language to allow for newcomers to read and understand at their own pace.
- **Using Plain Language:** When talking with newcomers who do not understand English, using simple or easy phrases will help with comprehension. For example "Full Name, Birthday".
- **Speaking slower, not louder:** If there are language barriers, it is recommended to speak slower to newcomer clients instead of louder. Speaking louder may feel patronizing to those trying to translate in their heads. Don't forget, this may be the first time they are using English in person in a new country. It will take time for them to adjust!
- **Initiate conversation in a comfortable manner:** Initiate your conversation with newcomers by asking simple questions like: Are you feeling comfortable in this space? Can you tell me about yourself? How do you feel about the move? What have you learned so far? What are your major concerns? Do you find it challenging? Open-ended questions leave more room for discussion with newcomers.

6.1 ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a strategy that service providers can adopt when speaking with newcomers. Changing the dialogue or phrasing of a conversation can increase a newcomer's response or understanding of a specific question or phrase. Consider the examples below when asking questions to newcomers.

Active Listening

Do you understand?	→ What did you understand?
What do you mean?	→ That's very interesting. Could you explain a bit more?
Actually, were you trying to say this?	→ Right! Do you mean this?
Wow, that must have been hard for you	→ Wow, was that hard for you?

"Stories have a transformative power to allow us to see the world in a different way than we do if we just encounter it on our own. Stories are an entry point to understanding a different experience of the world."

EMPATHY MUSEUM, 2022

▶ **Connecting with Newcomers**

Sharing stories can be an important learning and healing tool for newcomers. Storytelling can also be a powerful tool that service providers can use to connect and better understand newcomers. Providing connections with newcomers is an important part of the integration process, and can contribute positively to a welcoming and inclusive community experience.

Settlement services are about providing various forms of support and assistance to immigrant populations to help them get settled and meet their core needs for their integration into Canada. Settlement support is not only about meeting the immediate needs of newcomers, but it includes a longer-term process of deeper integration. With this in mind, settlement services should take a holistic approach to help newcomers adapt to Canadian society by considering every aspect of a newcomer's life, culture, skillset, education, and career. Service providers should also primarily focus on engaging with newcomers to build trustful relationships. Having a conversation with a settlement worker can provide clarity and help newcomers to connect and have a better understanding of the service or topic.

Service providers can also provide support to newcomers beyond the borders of their workplace. For example, introduce yourself at a grocery store, or at a local school during drop-off could make a huge difference and spur connections with newcomers. Especially in rural communities, utilizing the closeness of the community to be friendly and make connections with other newcomer families can serve to be an important tool for relationship-building with newcomers.

Engagement through Storytelling

One of the best ways to develop trust and build relationships with newcomers is to practice storytelling as a means of connection. Service providers can consider sharing a story of one of their own personal experiences, or a situation that they may be able to relate to the newcomer. Providing examples of other newcomer settlement experiences can also provide comfort for newcomers. Connecting through storytelling also requires active listening and a sense of open-mindedness where newcomers feel heard and understood. Non-verbal communication can be very important in letting newcomers know that you are listening - even if a language barrier exists. Facial expressions and body language are both important tools to show understanding or comprehension.

Storytelling also provides a basis to connect with newcomers on a humanistic level. One does not need to immigrate to a country in order to understand an immigrant family's desire to provide better opportunities for their children, or the need to feel safe within your home. We can use storytelling to break barriers and power dynamics with newcomers at every level - individually, collectively and as a community.

"For newcomers, telling stories of their home country, culture, family, and friends helps bring parts of themselves to the present. While some immigrants may be trying to forget their past, especially if it involves traumatic experiences, telling stories of the things they love about their home country can help keep the good memories separate from challenging memories."

SARA BURNETT, 2015

▶ **Transportation Barriers**

Transportation is a significant barrier for newcomers in rural communities. Transportation is not only important for accessing services, but it is essential for education and employment opportunities. In remote areas with limited transportation options, newcomers are often challenged with getting to appointments, dropping off and picking up children at school or daycare, or traveling to urban communities to access services and resources.

In addition, with Canadian driver's licenses issued by provincial or territorial governments, newcomers will need to check specific regulations for the province they intend to live in. Upon initial arrival, it is possible for newcomers to drive using their license from their home country with an International Driving Permit (IDP). The province of Alberta however, encourages immigrants to obtain a Canadian driver's license if they intend on staying in the country for longer than 3 months.

Moreover, purchasing a car with no credit history, unfamiliarity with public transit routes and schedules, unexpected cancellation of public bus services, expensive taxi services (if any) and road conditions in winter are added challenges with transportation for newcomers. Transportation barriers also affect other populations, such as persons with disabilities and those who may have lower socioeconomic status.

For newcomers, transportation barriers can also include not having access to a GPS to navigate through the community and to larger centres, not being able to find affordable driving lessons, adjusting to new driving rules, and difficulties in navigating Canadian winter conditions.

Questions to be Considered

- What kinds of transportation options are available in your community?
- Does your organization offer any carpooling services through any community partnership programs?
- Does your organization have any supporting policy (for example, providing or subsidizing bus tickets) and infrastructure programs aimed at improving access to transportation for newcomers?

Opportunity to Consider

ASSIST Community Services Centre offers a 2-day workshop for Arabic-speaking newcomers to support them in obtaining their GDL 7 knowledge test.

Intercultural
Competency

What is Culture?

Culture is the combination of ideas, beliefs, values, behavioural and social norms, knowledge and traditions held by a group of individuals who share a historical, geographic, religious, racial, linguistic, ethnic and / or social context. This combination is passed on from one generation to another, resulting in a set of expectations for appropriate behaviour in seemingly similar contexts (CRRF, 2015).

▶ **Intercultural Competency**

Intercultural competence is the ability of a person to effectively interact, work, and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds. Gaining cultural competence is a lifelong process of increasing self-awareness, developing social skills and behaviors around diversity, and gaining the ability to advocate for others.

Intercultural competency also includes recognizing and respecting diversity through words and actions in all cultural contexts. For those working with refugees or immigrants in our communities, it is essential to understand experiences, cultural differences or religious beliefs that underlie the behaviours or actions of newcomers.
Intercultural competency starts first and foremost, with self-reflection. It goes beyond just recognizing differences and instead involves being appreciative, affirming, and inclusive of all cultural backgrounds.

> **Inclusion doesn't just happen - it is the result of work, skill and intention which is collectively called cultural competence.**

▶ **Intercultural Conflict Management**

To address intercultural conflict within the workplace or community, there are some best practices that service providers or employers can use to mitigate and prevent conflict before it occurs.

Leadership Tips

- Recognizing the role and influence that culture may play in situations
- Understanding how each of our backgrounds affects our responses and reactions to others
- Building on the strengths and resources of each culture in an organization, workplace or community
- Not assuming that all members of cultural groups share the same beliefs and practices
- Acknowledging how past experiences affect present interactions
- Creating opportunities for cross-cultural communication and understanding

Organizational Tips

- Allocate resources for leadership and staff development in the area of cultural awareness, sensitivity, and understanding
- Actively review policies and practices to eliminate prejudice and discrimination
- Share the power among leaders from different cultural backgrounds
- Evaluate and challenge the organization's cultural competence on a regular basis

Power Dynamics

Power is the ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs. Power dynamics is fundamental to creating safety. When we ignore these dynamics, there is a great potential for harm to occur.

CRRF, 2015

▶ **Factors Affecting Power Dynamics**

There are many factors that impact an individual's power dynamics, such as:

- The privilege that you hold in society
- Your interaction with others or your communication style
- Educational status or access to knowledge and resources
- Financial status
- The position of authority (title, credentials) you hold or your social status
- Your trauma histories
- Personal or professional boundaries

It is important to identify all these factors and how it affects your power dynamics while working with newcomers - regardless of if you are a service provider, business owner or member of the community.

Importance of Understanding Power Dynamics

Power dynamics between newcomers and service providers are important for several reasons. Firstly, it is important to understand that power dynamics are often unseen or unspoken. When providing services, service providers may not be aware of the power dynamics that they hold when interacting with newcomers, and this can create barriers to access services for newcomers. Understanding and acknowledging this concept will help with your service provision.

Moreover, understanding the impacts of the power differential is the core of effective settlement services. Newcomers seeking support are in a position in which they must trust in the knowledge and guidance of their service providers. It is a fact that the client's perception of power is all that it takes to affect the relationship.

A service provider meeting a newcomer for the first time does not know that particular individual's history prior to accessing service, or what has impacted that individual in the past when interacting with someone in a position of power, or the history of being impacted by power differentials. For example, relationships with authority figures vary by country, and newcomer families arrive in Canada with different experiences. The assumed position of power held by authority figures, such as police, government, teachers or service providers, may cause confusion for newcomer families. They may feel intimidated to approach authority figures, and it may take a great deal of effort even to walk through the door of a service provider, school or community centre. In some cases, cultural misunderstanding on the first visit can cause families to not return to access services again. Relationship-building is key in creating equitable power dynamics in the service sector.

> **Questions to be Considered**
> - Does your organization have the capacity to support trauma-informed care?
> - Have you ever acknowledged your position of power as a service provider?
> - What can your organization do to better recognize and address power differentials with newcomer clients?

Practical Tips When Navigating Power Dynamics

Some of the practical tips that service providers can adopt in the day to day interactions with new immigrants are as follows:

- Be open and upfront about what your position is and what title you hold
- Acknowledge power differential
- Set boundaries and expectations about what you can or cannot do
- Understanding family dynamics when working with newcomers who struggle with language barriers
- Focus on relationship-building with newcomer clients to build trust. This can be achieved through storytelling, active listening, and offering initial settlement and orientation services.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

Diversity

Diversity is the acceptance and respect of various dimensions, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, age, physical abilities, political beliefs, or other ideologies (CRRF, 2015). Diversity is not just acknowledging or tolerating difference, but a set of conscious practices empowering people and appreciating what makes them different.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the extent to which diverse members of a group (society/organization) feel valued, respected and welcomed (CRRF, 2015). Inclusion requires participation on all levels and engages individuals to make them feel heard and as being essential to the success of the organization.

In an inclusive environment all individuals, depending on their roles and positions, will have decision-making authority.

Equity

Equity is the inclusive and respectful treatment of all individuals. Equity does not mean treating people the same - it considers the individual differences and factors that affect individuals (CRRF, 2015). Equity acknowledges differences and makes adjustments to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities, despite differences.

Many communities or organizations often use the terms diversity and inclusion interchangeably, just as some use equality and equity interchangeably. However, these terms mean different things for newcomers and can affect them in different ways.

The Types of Diversity in the Workplace

There are different types of diversity in the workplace. These are:

- Culture
- Race
- Religion
- Age
- Sexual orientation and gender
- Disability
- Socioeconomic status
- Education

9.1   WHAT DOES DIVERSITY MEAN FOR NEWCOMERS?

- In general, newcomers will have a more difficult time integrating in a new role if there is a lack of diversity. Starting a new job already has its challenges, but when you are a minority in a new country, it can be extremely intimidating and even scary to be alone or feel like an outsider at work. This is true not only for newcomers but also for other individuals who have diverse backgrounds based on the list above.

- Inclusion is connected to belongingness. Having a luncheon for all your workers is a great way for everyone to bond. Intentionally and personally inviting newcomers would mean a lot more and would make them feel like they want to participate.

> ### Questions to be Considered
>
> - How can you utilize newcomers' talents and knowledge beyond making requirements for a job description? How can they use their unique skills to contribute to the workplace, and feel valued? This is also what inclusion means for them.
>
> - What happens after you hire diversity? To retain your employees, you should make sure that you provide them with what they need to be successful at work, such as providing professional development training.

9.2   THE CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN RURAL WORKPLACES

▶ **Implementation barriers for new policies or new initiatives**

In order to implement new initiatives, organizations could have a team to support the workplace and provide resources to take the diversity ideas into an implementation phase. For example, creating a diversity and inclusion committee that is active and acts as a point of reference for those in the organization who have questions or would like to participate in an inclusive dimension of the workplace. Hiring a third-party consultant to work with the leadership or HR team to assist with the implementation process can also be an option for organizations.

▶ **Overcoming bias and microaggressions in everyday interactions within the workplace**

Individuals have the tendency to bring bias into their everyday interactions - including the workplace. Biases can later translate to stereotypes, racism and discrimination. In an organization, the leadership team needs to establish specific policies about the acceptance of microaggressions, stereotyping and discrimination. By allowing any kind

of acceptance of this behaviour, workplaces can become unsafe environments for newcomers and can negatively affect workplace culture. Training can support leaders to be able to call out behaviour that is unacceptable, as well as create policies and procedures to determine the proper steps when unacceptable behaviour occurs.

▶ **Internal resistance among your current workforce**

Unfortunately, not everyone in your organization will be ready to accept the diversification of the workplace. Some workers may be uncomfortable with the unfamiliarity and will eventually adjust. But others may be actively opposed to the idea of intentionally building diversity in the workplace. No matter the reason for the internal resistance, it is important that the leadership team of an organization makes an effort to constantly educate their employees about the reason behind implementing diversity efforts. In this stage, it is also important to clearly outline how much resistance the organization will tolerate.

9.3 THE TOP 5 BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY IN WORKPLACE

One of the ways that employers can advocate for more diverse workplaces is to understand the benefits that diversity can bring to the organization.

▶ **New perspectives**

When you hire people from diverse backgrounds, nationalities, and cultures, you're bringing a fresh array of perspectives to the table. This can lead to benefits like better problem solving and increased productivity (Lee, 2021).

▶ **Access to a wider talent pool**

A company that embraces diversity will attract a wider range of candidates who are looking for a progressive place to work. As a result, diverse companies are more likely to attract the best talent from countries around the world (Lee, 2021).

▶ **Increased innovation**

Workplace diversity leads to more innovation. If your workplace has a diverse group of people, their thought patterns, life experiences and problem-solving skills are likely to be diverse as well which lead to more creative discussions and solutions (Lee, 2021).

▶ **Better employee performance**

Diversity and inclusion go hand-in-hand. If your workplace is diverse, where employees feel included and see a representation of a variety of cultures, backgrounds, and ways of thinking, then this will lead to a more productive, happier workplace. This will also decrease turnover rates within your organization (Lee, 2021).

▶ **Increased profits**

Increasing the diversity of leadership teams can also lead to improved financial performance. Innovation and creativity can also increase profit margins. Finally, as mentioned, the less turnover a company has, the less money you have to invest in hiring new workers every few months. So a diverse team can bring in more profits (Lee, 2021).

9.4 INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

There are some hiring practices that employers can adopt to create a more inclusive approach when hiring candidates. By utilizing these practices, employers will have the opportunity to attract the best talent to their organization and mitigate opportunities for discrimination.

- **Factor in soft skills and leadership skills** - these are skills that are reflective of who an individual is. TThese skills are applicable into any workforce or profession and should be heavily considered during the hiring process. Transferable and adaptable skills can provide a greater benefit to the workplace than solely considering industry-specific skills.
- **Consider previous work experience beyond Canadian borders** - many skilled and talented newcomers may not have Canadian experience. To provide a more inclusive hiring approach, consider reviewing specific duties and job descriptions in lieu of Canadian workplace experience.
- **Prepare your existing team to accept diversity** - shifting mindsets in the organization and approaching diversity through a positive lens will create a more welcoming work environment for all types of diversity.
- **Establish an employee resource group** - one that is open to everyone. Employee resource groups are great to help facilitate organizational education, provide space for dialogue on specific issues, and act as a mediator between leadership teams and staff. This can translate into more equitable hiring methods, or even outside of the box critical thinking for attracting new workers.
- **Be prepared ahead of time, not afterwards** - Instead of dealing with issues as they come, implement some preventative measures within your organization, such as doing research on temporary foreign worker work permits. If you have someone who applies to your organization with an open work permit, you will understand the process and can consider them an equal candidate, as you already know the process or expectations.

9.5 EQUITABLE WORKPLACE INTEGRATION PRACTICES

Here are some best practices that organizations can implement to create a more equitable integration experience for newcomers in the organization.

- Provide new workers with a **detailed tour of the facilities** and highlight very specific elements, such as the lunch room (how it works, where to put their lunch bag, where the dishes are, etc.)
- **Discuss workplace culture** and outline the expectations of workers - these can include formal and informal expectations
- **Invest in translation services** or the translation of important documents, such as health and safety guides, or training manuals
    - By having written text and instructions, newcomers will be able to better translate what is required. Providing a PDF version of documents can also be beneficial and allow for newcomers to access translation tools to support their full understanding of the document(s)
- **Team bonding or skills-based training opportunities for everyone** in the organization. This will allow for newcomers to create relationships with your current workforce, while showing already existing employees that they are valued and recognized in the workplace
- **Frequent check-ins and performance reviews** to ensure workers are integrating properly into the organization. You may consider having frequent reviews within the first three months of employment. This will allow for more opportunities to address any concerns or questions that new workers may have and can increase trust for the worker.

9.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF NEWCOMER INTEGRATION FOR RETENTION IN THE WORKPLACE

Retention in the workplace offers numerous benefits for not only the organization, but the community as well.

▶ **Financial benefits**

Employers will have a reduction in hiring costs, as labour gaps will be filled for longer periods of time and turnover rates will be less prevalent.

▶ **Increased productivity**

Organizations will have less turnover rates, which results in less training and orientation of new employees. This will increase general productivity of the entire organization - especially those in leadership positions.

▶ **Reputation benefits**

The organization will gain a good reputation within the community if it continuously retains workers. This will also promote the organization as an ideal place to work, which can attract skilled talents to the organization.

▶ **Community benefits**

If workers are employed for long periods of time, they will remain in the community and contribute economically, socially and politically to the community.

Retention in the workplace begins with a proper integration experience. If workers are integrated successfully into their new positions, both the worker and the organization can benefit significantly. Many employers should also consider that employment plays a major role in the settlement of immigrants in the community. If employers are engaged and active in the integration process, they can provide significant opportunities to support newcomers through their settlement challenges. This also allows newcomers to feel a sense of connection with their employer, and a sense of belonging in the workplace. Lastly, employers should also consider that integration in the workplace is equally as important as in the community. Broader community issues can also be reflected in the workplace, like racism, discrimination, and feeling lonely or isolated.

Questions to be Considered

- Does your organization have an integration process for immigrant workers?
- Does your organization understand the settlement needs of newcomers?
- What unique practices does your organization have during their onboarding process? Does this look different to newcomer workers?

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities

Building a reputation as an inclusive community is the key to attracting the diversity of individuals required to contribute to the labour market, the economy, and the social and cultural dimensions of your municipality (Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Toolkit)

AUMA 2014

WHAT IS A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY?

A Welcoming and Inclusive Community is a community where its members feel safe, respected, and comfortable in being themselves and expressing all aspects of their identities. It is a home or a place where each person shares a sense of belonging with its other members.

An inclusive community values all its members and helps them to meet their basic needs like affordable and suitable housing, providing educational and employment opportunities, ensuring accessible and suitable public transit and healthcare, enabling opportunities for the use of public space and recreation facilities, providing opportunities for political participation and many more.

AUMA 2014

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10.2 **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATION**

Much like welcoming communities, organizations can adopt some practices to become more welcoming and inclusive for newcomers.

- A welcoming and inclusive organization promotes a p**ositive attitude towards immigrants/refugees**
- The services provided will be **sensitive and specific to the needs of newcomers**, creating a safer environment for everyone
- An inclusive organization also **promotes cultural diversity within the organization**, thereby providing a sense of belonging, or a feeling of acceptance, promoting roots and making connections in the workplace.
- A welcoming and Inclusive organization should be **willing to be adaptable and make accommodations.**

Examples of workplace adaptability
- Allowing workers to adjust their schedules to be able to attend English language courses
- Arranging transportation for workers to be able to travel to work for those who do not have a means of transportation
  - This could include carpooling services or discounted bus passes
- Accommodations for cultural holidays
- Flexible schedules to allow for childcare or school pick up

- Promoting a sense of belongingness in the workplace. This can be done in small everyday practices and through establishing a positive, inclusive workplace culture.
  - For example, employers doing regular check-ins with their workers, asking about newcomers' families, and promoting social activities in the workplace to allow new workers to connect and get to know the other employees.

If your organization meets most of these characteristics, this will not only benefit your current workforce, but your organization may get a positive response and reputation from the community.

10.3 WELCOMING STRATEGIES FOR MUNICIPALITIES

Municipalities that take on the role of newcomer attraction will not only attract more immigrants, but will be able to do so in a strategic, proactive way which can benefit the entire community and promote retention of newcomer families.

This can be achieved through different strategies like:

- **Centralizing information and services.** For example, instead of newcomers having to go to many different places to get information, having one central space, "a one stop shop" where they can access all the necessary resources can help make their settlement experience easier and more accessible.
- Forming a **local advisory group** with representatives from different organizations including newcomers with lived experience who have the opportunity to contribute thoughtfully to the committee.
  - Forming an advisory group will also help to strengthen local partnerships among various sectors which are directly or indirectly involved in immigrant settlement and integration.
- Host a **welcoming event or community event** as a welcoming strategy helps to promote engagement in the community and on the municipal level
  - For example, providing opportunities to connect and learn about other cultures, customs and traditions
  - Providing networking opportunities to share experiences and promising practices among various communities
- **Some other examples of welcoming initiatives include:**
  - Collaborating with a Post-Secondary Institution to bring international students to your community to live and work
  - Providing relocation or housing support for a newcomer's first few months in the community

- Providing free or subsidized recreational passes to use local facilities during the first month(s)
- Providing free or subsidized public transportation passes for use during the first month(s)
- Connecting newcomers a the local food bank can support them with their initial basic needs. Some charitable centers offer free household items, including furniture and kitchen appliances. One example of a centre that provides support is the Vincent de Paul Society, which has branches across Alberta.

10.4 THE BENEFITS OF A WELCOMING & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY (WIC)

There are many benefits of providing a welcoming and inclusive community that extend beyond just newcomer attraction and retention.

▶ Inclusion can benefit the entire community, not just newcomers

Inclusive practices can benefit different minority groups in your entire community, such as Indigenous communities, people with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals. All of these groups of people can be better served if a community practices inclusion and is welcoming to all. Promoting the acceptance and inclusion of different minority populations begins with community leadership.

▶ WICs benefit economic development

Attracting more people to live and work in a community naturally increases local demand for goods and services, and fills labour shortages, helps businesses grow and create local jobs, and thereby benefiting the entire local community. So, communities that successfully promote inclusion and a sense of cohesiveness result in economic development.

▶ WICs are more efficient

Engagement and participation of community members in attraction and retention strategies is beneficial on a broader basis. Inclusivity increases the resiliency of the community by improving community dynamics, increasing the capacity to collaborate, and also by identifying and meeting common goals. That means, the more a community embraces inclusivity, the more efficient the community will be.

▶ WICs are better, safer communities

Welcoming communities that promote inclusivity are safer for everyone. When inclusivity is prioritized, individuals from different minority groups will all feel safe and welcomed to be an active member of the community.

▶ **WICs are capable of attracting and retaining newcomers**

Welcoming and inclusive communities are more capable of attracting and retaining newcomers to live, work and settle in their region. Welcoming communities are those in which newcomers can comfortably call their new home and where they can put down roots. These communities are also able to retain more newcomers, as they promote a sense of belongingness for all.

10.5   OPPORTUNITIES FOR CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATIONS

Cross-sectoral collaboration provides opportunities for various community organizations to come together and collectively focus their expertise and resources on current trends and various complex issues of importance to the community they serve.

Collaborations help to have diverse perspectives and resources when settling newcomers into our community. Some examples of the most effective collaborations can occur when different sectors, such as the local police or RCMP, local landlords, Chamber of Commerce, the school board, local employers, and even the media are engaged in newcomer integration. This will ensure that immigrant service providers are not the only ones taking on the work of newcomer integration, but the entire community as well.

10.6   BARRIERS FOR COMMUNITIES IN BECOMING WELCOMING & INCLUSIVE

The terms **'newcomer'** and **'immigrant'** are umbrella terms used to describe several different newcomer populations, such as refugees, temporary foreign workers and international students. Each newcomer population however, has its own unique needs and will require different support services throughout their settlement. For rural or remote communities, it may be challenging to cater to the needs of each specific newcomer group. For example, Ukrainian refugees who may be coming to your community may require different support than an international student who moved to your community for a school placement.

▶ **Limited capacity and resources:** A barrier to being a welcoming and inclusive community is the inability to serve different types of immigrant populations because of the community's limitation in capacity and resources. Welcoming and inclusive communities are those that are able to meet the needs of newcomers and acknowledge that meeting all of these individual needs can be challenging. A strong recommendation for your community is to spread awareness and continue advocacy work about the importance of immigration. A welcoming community will also be open to all types of newcomers, regardless of their immigration status. By working on advocacy, you will be contributing to a less discriminatory, more open and inclusive community.

▶ **Employer's perceptions:** Some employers may not understand the value of immigration and may underestimate the potential of newcomers being able to perform and integrate into their workplaces. Perceptual barriers from employers can lead to many misconceptions and stereotyping. Managing and changing employer's perceptions can be difficult, however not impossible. Working on advocacy and dispelling common misconceptions, educating employers and showing them the value of immigration will serve to be very important to overcoming this barrier.

> **Opportunity to Consider**
> As an employer, consider asking potential immigrant workers for a copy of their International Qualification Assessment Service (IQAS) certificate. This is a report that can help employers identify and match the skillsets of immigrants to the corresponding skillset required in the Canadian workplace. This can be used to support an employer's understanding of a potential candidate's capabilities and transference of skills into the Canadian workplace (Government of Alberta, 2022).

▶ **Local perceptions:** These are very similar to employer perceptions, however on a larger scale. Sometimes, community members, colleagues or business owners are opposed to immigration and may exhibit negative attitudes towards diversity. This can certainly create barriers in providing a welcoming and inclusive space.

▶ **Cultural sensitivity & cultural competency barrier:** Not all community members or organizations will have the cultural competency or sensitivity to be able to work with, or welcome newcomers. Communities that aren't used to welcoming newcomers, or organizations that have never had diversity in their workforce before might struggle with "getting everyone on board". We encourage newcomers to retain their culture instead of assimilating to a new culture. Some community members or employers may not be open to welcoming "newness" or "difference". This can really hinder the welcoming process if your residents or your current workforce do not understand or know about different cultures. In an ideal world, everyone would have the opportunity to receive cultural sensitivity training, but if that's not possible, then encouraging the perception that diversity is valuable to the community and nurturing cooperation and tolerance among different backgrounds and cultures helps mitigate such conflicts.

▶ **Rural hurdles and challenges:** A lot of the characteristics of welcoming and inclusive communities focus on system or institutional capacities, and sometimes our communities don't have the infrastructure or the capacity to support many newcomers, whether that be providing affordable housing, transportation services, or translation services.

10.7 NEWCOMER ATTRACTION AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

Newcomer Attraction Strategies

The economic development and labour force dynamics in many rural communities of Alberta is shrinking because the number of people entering retirement outweighs the number of young people entering the labour force. Thus, attracting newcomers has become an important solution for workplaces and communities. Many stakeholders in rural regions have been working tremendously on attracting and retaining newcomers for the economic success and long-term vitality of their communities and municipalities.

Here are some attraction strategies that can support municipalities in attracting diverse populations to live and work in the region:

- Create an online presence and highlight the features of the community in a way that addresses potential concerns of newcomers and can help market your community.
- Highlight success stories from the perspective of employers, newcomers and the community using these online platforms.
- Advertise current employment opportunities by posting jobs using social media. Having a presence on various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn will also be effective in attracting workers as well as international talent in Canada.

- Work with all local municipality offices to integrate attraction and tourism initiatives in their economic development plans and make promotional materials and advertisements more diverse. For example, using possible slogans, such as: "Come to visit our community & stay for a lifetime".

Showcase that your community has an opportunity to support a newcomer's permanent residency process

- By being a Rural Renewal Stream community, a Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program community, or advertising your participation in these streams will attract talented workers from around the world.
- By showing that your community offers a pathway to permanent residency, you will not only gain interest from not only potential workers, but investors and entrepreneurs as well.

Showcasing Your Community

By showcasing your community in this way, it is easier to promote the benefits of living in your region to those looking at immigrating and making Canada their home. Highlight the uniqueness of your area and emphasize the reasons why your community should be the choice of newcomers to raise their families.

Here are some other creative examples to showcase your community:

- **Organizing targeted bus tours** can help showcase the benefits of living and working in rural communities. Bus tours are a great opportunity for newcomers to understand rural life and get a chance to see their new community.
- Create a **local resources page** on your website for people new to the area and one for people who are visiting the area. Ensure those pages include all the information they need.
- **Make a map of your community.** Consider creating an online or PDF walking map of how to get to each location.
- Participate in **hiring campaigns** and advertise in other communities, especially in urban centres

Questions to be Considered

- Why do YOU want to live in your community?
- What makes your community special? How can you promote this?
- What types of activities are offered specifically in your region that others do not?

When promoting your community, it is essential to take advantage of all available opportunities to showcase what your communities have to offer. By doing so, you can support the people, businesses, stakeholders, donors and funders that help your community and your organization thrive.

Newcomer Retention Strategies

The retention of newcomers is a significant goal for many municipalities. We know we can attract newcomers with job opportunities, but we also want them to stay and bring their families to build quality lives in our communities. Attracting newcomers to your community is the initial phase of community development. Retaining immigrants is the key to long-term success of the community. It is therefore important that the rural municipalities prepare for their success by creating a welcoming community to encourage retention. One of the major things we can do to support retention is to promote a sense of belongingness in the community.

Promoting a Sense of Belongingness in the Community

Retention is most successful when newcomers feel like they belong in their community. There are some strategies that municipalities can consider to promote a sense of inclusion to retain newcomers such as having Community connector programs, which utilizes volunteers within the community to meet and work with immigrants and hosting community events, which provide opportunities to connect with different cultural groups. Few other ways of promoting belongingness include representing flags from different nationalities in the community, participation from local businesses and organizing community tours to show newcomers around the community like grocery stores, schools, libraries, etc.

▶ **Engaging your Community**

Community engagement centres on two-way communication and reciprocity. There are several things to consider when starting your community engagement work. First, identify what role stakeholders can play in making your community more welcoming and inclusive. Then figure out how the community can support and involve newcomers at every level. And, finally, determine how your community can work towards a more inclusive environment?

10.8   **PRACTICAL TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY**

There are several different avenues that communities can explore to promote the engagement of community members. Below are some practical tools that rural communities can adopt to create a better sense of belongingness and inclusion in the community.

- Gather key leaders and influential community groups
- Develop relationships among municipal, provincial and community-based organizations
- Public consultations or community forums to discuss the importance of newcomer attraction (use relevant data in your community or organization to support your presentation)
- Make the community aware of existing population growth barriers, which can be resolved by attracting and retaining newcomers
- Organize events to attract a broad cross-section of the community
- Involve local media
- Create a community advisory group with representatives from various different organizations and minority groups

Local Champions

A local champion inspires action, builds momentum and brings necessary stakeholders to the table to promote the community's ideas and strategies. Stakeholders who work with newcomers are already great local champions for immigrants. Communities should consider who else may qualify to be a local champion. Including multiple sectors, such as housing, transportation, education, and community counselors, can help support successful retention within the community through the holistic engagement of the entire community.

"Celebrating our diversity and becoming a welcoming community will enhance the quality of life for all our residents, and make Brooks a prouder, stronger community."

CITY OF BROOKS (WELCOMING & INCLUSIVE TOOLKIT, 2014)

Conclusion

As labour shortages, out-migration and low-birth rates continue to increase, rural communities will be relying on immigration to grow their local economies, societies and workplaces. Rural communities across Alberta face multiple challenges with the attraction, settlement and retention of newcomers.

Firstly, rural communities often lack a settlement agency or have a limited capacity to provide rural settlement workers. Newcomers require settlement services upon their arrival and throughout their integration process in Canada and without those services and supports, the settlement and integration process can be challenging. Next, rural communities have limited financial resources and limited capacity to be able to support the settlement needs of newcomers. Many communities that do not have experience supporting newcomers may not necessarily have the knowledge of the settlement needs of newcomers, or how the immigration system in Canada works. Moreover, rural communities need support in promoting anti-discrimination practices, countering false narratives regarding immigration, and require support for integrating newcomers into rural organizations. Lastly, many rural communities may not understand immigration through a holistic lens and may not consider the different pillars and practices that create a welcoming and inclusive community for newcomers.

Rural communities are fruitful, opportunistic communities and welcoming places for newcomers to live, work and settle in. This toolkit is a working document that will continue to provide resources, information and best practices that rural service providers, municipalities and community members can adapt to help with the successful attraction, retention and settlement of newcomers into their communities. While there is no one-size fits all approach, rural communities across Alberta can truly benefit from collaborating to address challenges and gaps they may experience when welcoming newcomers, in addition to sharing and utilizing resources like this toolkit.

Templates

Terms of Reference

Here is a sample **Terms of Reference** document that you could use when forming a **welcoming and inclusive committee.**

Committee Name

What will your committee be called?

Purpose and/or Background

What is the purpose of the committee? Why does it exist?

Objectives

What are the objectives of the committee? What are you hoping to achieve?

Committee Membership

Who will be on the committee? Which community organizations/members of municipality will be involved?

Term of Membership

How long will the committee be active for? How often will your committee meet in a fiscal year?

Membership Duties

What does being a member of the committee entail? What are the expected responsibilities? Will you be expected to report back to your organization or community?

Decision-making

Who will be making the decisions on behalf of the committee? How will decisions be made and agreed upon? What processes exist?

Evaluation

How will you evaluate the success of this committee? How will you evaluate your objectives?

Reporting

How will the committee report? Who will it report to?

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Newcomer Information Session Sample

Adopted from Catholic Social Services Newcomer Orientation

Welcome! Bienvenue! Bienvenido! Benvenuto! ласкаво просимо!

Community-Wide Orientation Session for
Newcomers to Edmonton

2 hour English Online Session:
- An overview of **Edmonton** and **Canada**
- Steps to successfully settle in Edmonton
- Understand websites related to newcomer needs
- Introduction to a **Settlement Service Provider**
- **Orientation guidebook** for newcomers

*****French translation** will be provided throughout sessions

Dates and times:

Tuesday, May 17th 2022
5:00pm - 7:00pm

Thursday, May 19th, 2022
10:00am - 12:00pm

To register, please go to:
www.website.ca or
click here.

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For more information, please contact:
Soheila Homayed at
soheilah@ruraldevelopment.ca

Building Community Capacity to Support Newcomers: Webinar 4 Workbook

Soheila Homayed

CERTIFIED PROJECT MANAGER FROM LEBANON

Pronounced "Soh-hey-la"

Soheila Immigrated to Edmonton from Lebanon with her husband and 2 children. She is a **certified project manager with over 20 years of experience** managing a leadership team. Soheila can speak **Arabic, French and English**. In her spare time, Soheila likes to play basketball with her kids, go to the beach, and is excited to hike the beautiful Canadian mountains.

The Rural Development Network is excited to welcome Soheila to our organization. We are lucky to have her knowledge, expertise and professional skills to contribute to our team.

• MEET SOHEILA! •

"I am so excited to start a new life and opportunity in Canada. I am happy to give my children better education and opportunities."

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*Adding family photos and describing their interests adds a humanistic and a connection factor.

Assessing Your Community Capacity Checklist

Relational Capacity

- [ ] Who lives in your community right now? What types of diversity exist?
- [ ] What kinds of relationships are already established between cultural groups?
- [ ] What kind of struggles exist **between** cultures? **Within** cultural groups?
- [ ] Are there efforts to build alliances and coalitions between groups?
- [ ] What issues do different cultural groups have in common?

Institutional and Systemic Capacity

- [ ] What are the employment opportunities/labour shortages in your community?
- [ ] Are employers engaged in recruiting and retaining immigrant employees?
- [ ] Is there affordable, accommodating housing for new residents?
- [ ] Will families be able to find child care spaces for their children?
- [ ] Can new residents access health care? How can they access this information?
- [ ] Can new residents that do not have a driver's licence or car still get around?
- [ ] Is there any public transportation available?
- [ ] Who will help immigrants get settled in the community?

These checklist items can also be used to assess your **organization's capacity** to welcome new workers into your workforce. The same relational and systemic principles can be used, on a smaller scale.

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Building Community Capacity to Support Newcomers: Webinar 4 Workbook

Key Glossary

Acculturation: The process where culture, values and patterns of a different or new culture are adopted by a person or an ethnic, social, religious, language or national group while still retaining elements of the original culture, values and traditions. Acculturation can occur to both majority and minority cultures (CRRF, 2015).

Ally: A member of a dominant social group who enacts leadership against social injustice directed at a group or individual targeted by discrimination (CRRF, 2015).

Barrier: An obstacle which must be overcome for equality and progress to be possible (CRRF, 2015).

Bias: A subjective opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination - often formed without reasonable justification - which influences the ability of an individual or group to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately (CRRF, 2015).

Canadian Experience Class: An Express Entry stream for skilled workers who have Canadian work experience who want to become Permanent Residents in Canada (Government of Canada, 2021).

Culture: The mix of ideas, beliefs, values, behavioural and social norms, knowledge and traditions held by a group of individuals who share a historical, geographic, religious, racial, linguistic, ethnic and/ or social context. These aspects are passed on from one generation to another, resulting in a set of expectations for appropriate behaviour in seemingly similar contexts (CRRF, 2015).

Cultural awareness: The ability and willingness to objectively examine the values, beliefs, traditions and perceptions within our own and other cultures. At the most basic level, it is the ability to walk in someone else's shoes in terms of his or her cultural origins (CRRF, 2015).

Cultural competence: A range of cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills that lead to effective and appropriate communication with people of other cultures. Intercultural or cross-cultural education are terms used for the training to achieve cultural competence (CRRF, 2015).

Cultural knowledge: Familiarity with various cultural characteristics, including values, belief systems, history, and social norms (CRRF, 2015).

Cultural sensitivity: Being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value – positive or negative, better or worse, right or wrong (CRRF, 2015).

Discrimination: The denial of equal treatment and opportunity to individuals or groups because of personal characteristics and membership in specific groups, with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment, access to services, goods, and facilities. This behaviour results from distinguishing people on that basis without regard to individual merit, resulting in unequal outcomes for persons who are perceived as different. Differential treatment that may occur on the basis of any of the protected grounds enumerated in human rights law (CRRF, 2015).

Diversity: A term used to encompass the acceptance and respect of various dimensions including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, age, physical abilities, political beliefs, or other ideologies (CRRF, 2015).

Employment equity: A program designed to remove barriers to equality in employment for reasons unrelated to ability, by identifying and eliminating discriminatory policies and practices, remedying the effects of past discrimination, and ensuring appropriate representation of the designated groups (women; aboriginal peoples; persons with disabilities; and visible minorities). Employment Equity can be used as an active effort to improve the employment or educational opportunities of members of minority groups and women through explicit actions, policies or programs (CRRF, 2015).

Equity: A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences (CRRF, 2015).

Ethnic Origin: refers to the ethnic or cultural origins of a person's ancestors. Ethnic origin does not refer to citizenship, nationality, language or place of birth (CRRF, 2015).

Express Entry Stream: Application system for skilled workers to obtain their permanent residency, based on factors such as age, education level, marital status and English language proficiency.

Family-sponsored Stream: Application system for a permanent resident in Canada to sponsor a relative to live, work and study in Canada (Government of Canada, 2019).

Federal Skilled Trades Class (FSTC): An Express Entry pathway to permanent residency for immigrants working in a skilled trade in any province outside of Quebec (Government of Canada, 2019).

Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP): An Express Entry pathway for skilled workers with foreign experience who want to immigrate to Canada. This program takes into consideration work experience, language ability and educational credentials (Government of Canada, 2021).

Government-Assisted Refugee (GAR) Program: Initial resettlement in Canada is supported by the Government of Canada (Government of Canada, 2021).

Immigrants: persons born outside of Canada who have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently (CRRF, 2015).

Inclusion: Reflected in the ability of diverse peoples to raise their perspectives authentically, and for those voices to matter and impact decisions, where the organizational culture has been enabled for that to happen (CRRF, 2015).

Indigenous: Indigenous is understood to mean the communities, peoples, and nations that have a historical continuity with pre-invasion, pre-settler, or pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, as distinct from the other societies now prevailing on those territories (or parts of them) (CRRF, 2015).

Integration: The process of amalgamating diverse groups within a single social context, usually applied to inter-racial interaction in housing, education, political and socio-economic spheres or activity. People who are integrated still retain their cultural identity. Integration is the implemented policy that ends segregation (CRRF, 2015).

Marginalization: With reference to race and culture, the experience of persons outside the dominant group who face barriers to full and equal participating members of society. Refers also to the process of being "left out" of or silenced in a social group (CRRF, 2015).

Migrants: people who have moved across international borders or within a country/state but away from their normal place of residence. For example, someone who moves from Ontario to Alberta would also be considered a migrant. For the purposes of the course, migrant refers to international migrants (CRRF, 2015).

Municipal Nominee Program: Municipalities will have the opportunity to nominate newcomers in specific industries to increase their points and probability of getting their permanent residency (Government of Canada, 2021).

Newcomer: immigrants or refugees who have come to Canada within 5 years.

Permanent Resident: A permanent resident is someone who has been given permanent resident status by immigrating to Canada, but is not a Canadian citizen (Government of Canada, 2021).

Power: The ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs (CRRF, 2015).

Prejudice: A state of mind; a set of attitudes held, consciously or unconsciously, often in the absence of legitimate or sufficient evidence. A prejudiced person is considered irrational and very resistant to change, because concrete evidence that contradicts the prejudice is usually dismissed as exceptional (CRRF, 2015).

Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program: Resettlement in Canada is supported by a group of people in Canada (Government of Canada, 2021).

Privilege: The experience of unearned freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded some people because of their group membership or social context.

Provincial Nominee Program: Helps skilled-workers, students, business people obtain their permanent residency.

Racism: Racism is a belief that one group is superior to others performed through any individual action, or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify discrimination (CRRF, 2015).

Racial Discrimination: Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, which nullifies or impairs the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life (CRRF, 2015).

Racialized person/group or "visible minority": persons, other than Indigenous peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour expresses race as a social construct rather than as a description based on perceived biological traits (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005).

Refugees: people who are unable to safely remain in their own country, or are outside their country, on account of a fear of persecution due to their ethnicity, nationality, religion or social or political affiliations (CRRF, 2015).

Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP): community-driven program. It's designed to spread the benefits of economic immigration to smaller communities by creating a path to permanent residence for skilled foreign workers who want to work and live in one of the participating communities (Government of Canada, 2021).

Start-Up Visa Program: Entrepreneurs with business ideas and the support of Canadian investors can become permanent residents and launch their business here (Government of Canada, 2021).

Stereotype: A generalized belief about a particular category of people. It is an expectation that people might have about every person of a particular group (CRRF, 2015).

Systemic Discrimination: The institutionalization of discrimination through policies and practices which may appear neutral on the surface but which have an exclusionary impact on particular groups. This occurs in institutions and organizations, including government, where the policies, practices and procedures (e.g. employment systems – job requirements, hiring practices, promotion procedures, etc.) exclude and/or act as barriers to racialized groups (CRRF, 2015).

Temporary Foreign Worker: Have closed or open work permits and are only permitted in Canada for a certain length of time, and then the permit expires (Government of Canada, 2021).

Resources for Communities

This section will provide your organization with various different resources for different newcomer populations, resources for newcomer support, and continued professional development opportunities for immigrant-serving providers across Alberta.

ANTI-RACISM

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Learning Resources

https://alignab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CWLC-Anti-Racism_and_Anti-Oppression_Learning_Resources-JAN-2022.pdf

Anti-Racism Toolkit

https://ccrl-clrc.ca/anti-racism-toolkit/

Anti-Racist Organizational Change

https://communitywise.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/AROC-Resources-and-Toolsprintable-booklet.pdf

Anti-oppression Framework

https://shamelessmag.com/blog/entry/the-5-ws-and-the-h-of-the-anti-oppression-framework

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy

https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html

The Response Model for Hate Incidents in Alberta

http://coalitionscreatingequity.ca/alberta-response-model/

ARRIVAL RESOURCES FOR NEWCOMERS

ASSIST Community Services Centre

https://assistcsc.org/

Immigrant Settlement Service Connection App

iConnect (immigrantconnect.app)

Settlement Online Pre-Arrival

https://arriveprepared.ca/

Centre for Newcomers

https://www.centrefornewcomers.ca/

Newcomers to Alberta Support Centre

https://emcn.ab.ca/

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1524506203836/1557512859985

Canada's ArriveCan App

https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/services/arrivecan.html

Welcome to Alberta Phone App

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.settlementcalgary.slbc_app&hl=en_CA&gl=US

Welcome to Canada Document

https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/welcome.pdf

Engaging Newcomers Map

https://mapsab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/NC-Journey%20Map.pdf

Employment Support for Newcomers

https://employabilities.ab.ca/

CANADA'S IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

Canada's Immigration History: Milestones and Stories

https://openeducationalberta.ca/settlement/chapter/canadas-immigration-history-milestones-and-stories/

Canadian Experience Class

https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/canadian-experience-class.html

Federal skilled trades class (FSTC)

https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/permanent-residence/economic-classes/federal-skilled-trades.html

Federal Skilled Worker

https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/federal-skilled-workers.html

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND NEWCOMERS

Online Blanket Exercise

https://www.kairoscanada.org/

https://www.kairoscanada.org/indigenous-newcomer-friendships-just-inclusive-community

Bridging relationships between newcomers and indigenous populations

https://issbc.org/blog/welcome-to-our-homelands

Indigenous and newcomer friendship

https://www.kairoscanada.org/indigenous-newcomer-friendships-just-inclusive-community

Newcomer success story

https://www.calgarylip.ca/newcomer-success-stories

Newcomer story

www.durhamimmigration.ca/en/who-we-are/newcomer-stories.aspx#Nadias-Story

Bridging the gap between Indigenous people and newcomer

https://www.newcomernavigation.ca/en/news/bridging-the-gap-between-indigenous-people-and-newcomers

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

Relationship between new Canadians and Indigenous Peoples

https://thestarphoenix.com/entertainment/books/immigrants-and-reconciliation

Encouraging dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and newcomers - Video to bolster dialogue between Indigenous peoples and newcomers - ISSofBC (issbc.org)

Myths about Indigenous Peoples of Canada

https://www.immigrant-education.ca/knowledge-base/myth-busting-indigenous-myths/

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Graduate Entrepreneur Stream

https://www.canadim.com/immigrate/provincial-nominee-program/alberta/international-graduate-entrepreneur/

International Student success story

https://www.torontomu.ca/news-events/news/2018/08/creating-a-space-on-campus-for-canadian-newcomers/

LGBTQ+ NEWCOMERS

Rainbow Refugee Charity (Vancouver)

https://www.rainbowrefugee.com/

End of the Rainbow Charity (Calgary)

https://endoftherainbow.ca/

AAISA - Settlement Agencies in Alberta Supporting LGBTQ+ Newcomers

https://aaisa.ca/toolkit/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Settlement-agencies-in-Alberta-blazing-the-trail-for-LGBTQ-newcomers.pdf

LGBTQIA+ resources for educators and service providers

http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/

Rainbow health online training for LGBTQ+

https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/education-training/

NON-STATUS NEWCOMERS

Migrant Alberta

https://www.migrantealberta.ca/home

Living and Working Without Status in Alberta

https://www.parklandinstitute.ca/in_the_shadows

REFUGEES

Working with Refugees

https://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/static-files/bpfina1.html

Centre for Refugee Resilience

https://www.ccisab.ca/refugees/centre-for-refugee-resilience.html

AAISA: Evaluation of the Sogie Refugee Claim and the Hearing Process

https://aaisa.ca/toolkit/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/SOGIE-Refugee-Claim-and-Hearing-Process.pdf

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

Canadian Temporary Foreign Worker Program

https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers.html

Resources for Temporary Foreign Workers

https://www.alberta.ca/resources-temporary-foreign-workers.aspx

TERMINOLOGIES

CRRF Glossary of terms

https://www.google.com/search?q=crrf+glossary+of+terms&rlz=1C1JJTC_enCA960
CA960&oq=crrf+gl&aqs=chrome.0.69i59j0i512j69i57j69i60l3.2522j0j7&sourceid=
chrome&ie=UTF-8

WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Welcoming and Inclusive Toolkit -

https://www.abmunis.ca/sites/default/files/Advocacy/Programs_Initiatives/WIC/wic_
toolkit_-_march_2_2015_2.pdf

Municipal Evaluation Tool: Measuring Inclusion -

https://www.abmunis.ca/sites/default/files/Advocacy/Programs_Initiatives/WIC/auma_
met_august_25_2014_0.pdf

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http://www.govtgirlsekbalpur.com/Study_Materials/Geography/Part2_Hons_Geog_ Module7_UnitIII_TOPIC3-4_Cultural_Assimilation.pdf

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Our vision is to "Bridge People and Communities", with a mission to "Enhance the lives of individuals and families through quality programs and services".
Our primary mandate is to assist immigrants to facilitate their successful integration into mainstream society through support and practical settlement services.

Strengthening Rural Capacity to Support Newcomers

RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

www.assistcsc.org ASSIST Community Services Centre

Alberta Government