

VANCOUVER NGOS AS AGENTS OF SETTLEMENT PROGRAM DELIVERY AND THE
FINANCING OF IMMIGRATION POLICY IN CANADA

by

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Abstract

In 1971, Canada undertook a multicultural policy that dignified all Canadians as equal regardless of cultural background.¹ It was a celebration of Canadian diversity. Immigration policy is very important in Canada, as approximately a quarter of a million newcomers make Canada their home every year.² Since newcomers are settled into Canada by means of arms length organizations not direct government service delivery, it is important that the service delivery is assessed and continually improved upon. The following research questions will be explored: How are immigrant settlement programs funded in Vancouver? Does this result in issues with their advocacy work? The interviews reveal that the funding structure does result in issues with the advocacy work of settlement organizations. Several recommendations will be provided to improve Vancouver's settlement NGOs.

¹ Government of Canada. October 19, 2012. Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp>.

² *Ibid.*

Preface

The author of this M.A. thesis is Suzanne Jolene De Luca. The work contained therein is the independent, unpublished, and original work of the author.

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Rossana and Dom De Luca. Thank you for always encouraging me to work hard and dream big. Mom, you make the world a better place. Your involvement in our community has always inspired me to make things better for others. Dad, your work ethic is impeccable. You always go the extra mile for everyone and I have always looked up to you.

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Introduction

In 2012, Canada had the highest intake of newcomers of all G8 countries.³ This means that one in five Canadians were born outside of Canada's borders, making effective settlement programs an important need for Canada's immigration system. Ever since Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in 2002, which replaced the 1976 Immigration Act, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been used to deliver immigration settlement programs.⁴ It is important that we are critical of the settlement process to ensure it adequately provides the necessary supports and settlement services to newcomers arriving in Canada. Some scholars believe that immigration policy in Canada is in crisis, needing a review of the fundamental policies.⁵

In 2016, immigrant settlement organizations in Canada received federal funding to administer settlement services including but not limited to: language services, assistance with employment, assistance with applications and paperwork, and legal aid.⁶ The following research questions will be explored: How are immigrant settlement programs funded in Vancouver? Does this result in issues with their advocacy work? These research questions are examined through interviews with a sampling of settlement NGOs in Vancouver. Vancouver has been chosen as a focus for this study since it is one of the top three cities for newcomers in Canada and thus a good city to explore immigrant settlement

³ Government of Canada. October 19, 2012. Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp>.

⁴ Canadian Council for Refugees. About the CCR. (n.d.). Retrieved September 20, 2015 from <http://ccrweb.ca/en/about-ccr>.

⁵ Richmond, T., & Shields, J. (2005). NGO-government relations and immigrant services: Contradictions and challenges. *Journal of International Migration and Integration/Revue de l'integration et de la migration internationale*, 6(3-4), p. 514. See also Canada Needs a New Immigration Policy Says UBC Law Dean. (May 8, 2016). Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/the180/vancouver-recovers-from-jane-jacobs-women-on-banknotes-and-the-politics-of-climate-change-and-wildfires-1.3570513/canada-needs-a-new-immigration-policy-says-ubc-law-dean-1.3570610>.

⁶ Mulholland, M. L., & Biles, J. (2004). Newcomer Integration Policy in Canada, p. 29.

programs.⁷ In this research, settlement organizations, non-profits, NGOs, and alternative service delivery are used interchangeably as they are discussed in a similar way throughout the literature.

The four NGOs that have been selected for this project are: the Multicultural Helping House Society (MHH), Immigrant Service Society of BC (ISSBC), the Jewish Family Service Agency (JFSA), and Mosaic BC. These organizations have been selected based on their funding sources, number of clients assisted, and location in Vancouver. This is because settlement organizations operate differently from province to province. They also operate differently depending on the location in individual provinces. For example, settlement organizations in Vancouver operate much differently when compared to settlement organizations in Surrey.⁸ Differences result from the intake of clients.

In order to garner the best results for comparison, the organizations selected are all based in Vancouver. The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA) has also been included in this project as it is an umbrella organization that works to coordinate and support the settlement services in Vancouver. The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC provides a holistic picture of settlement organizations, as AMSSA works closely with all organizations and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the system. AMSSA's inclusion in this research helps inform the recommendations section and provides additional information for improved service delivery of immigration settlement in Vancouver.

⁷ Statistics Canada. (2011). Vast majority of foreign born live in four provinces. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.cfm>.

⁸ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

My research fills a gap as it focuses on immigration settlement programs in Vancouver, and Canada in general, something that is currently under researched. In this thesis, the methodology and the rationale for the selection of cases will be discussed. Each settlement organization selected for this project will be outlined and interviews will be elaborated upon to determine whether there are issues with the funding structure and advocacy of immigrant settlement organizations. A literature review will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of alternative service delivery programs in relation to the funding structure. The funding structure of the various organizations will be outlined and interpreted to explain the impacts that the funding structure has on the settlement organizations and possible implications on their advocacy work. Finally, my conclusion and recommendations section for improved service delivery in Vancouver will be discussed and future research in this field will be elaborated upon.

Methodology

Interviews have been conducted with a sampling of settlement organizations in Vancouver to provide a detailed account of the process and various mechanisms involved with settlement services. The interview responses will be analyzed in order to assess whether or not the funding structure creates issues with the advocacy work of settlement NGOs. An ethics proposal was submitted and approved prior to the start of the interviews. All settlement organizations were first contacted by email which outlined the aims of this research and the questions that will be asked of the settlement organizations. After contact was made via email, the interviewees received a follow-up call to confirm the date and location of the meeting. All interviewees received a thank you note and follow-up questions after the meeting.

The main interview questions for this study are:

- Is the funding from the federal government consistent every year?
- What activities are most important to your organization?
- What, if anything, has changed given the influx of Syrian refugees?⁹

Interviews have been used for this research to compare the different issues faced by each settlement organization. The interviews have provided the needed detail that cannot be found on the organization's website or the literature to gain a further understanding of the financial structure as it relates to the settlement organizations. The settlement organization's websites provided most of the background material, but they do not reveal the day to day workings of the organizations and the everyday struggles that they experience. My research helps identify if there are any issues with the current financial

⁹ The focus of this research are the NGOs as agents administering public policy. The research question was formulated before the influx of Syrian refugees into Canada, in 2015 and 2016. It was interesting to examine the additional impacts of Syrian refugees on the settlement organizations in Vancouver, but this was not the focus of the research.

structure of these programs and if the funding structure results in other issues related to the organization's advocacy work.

It is important to note the challenges associated with the research on immigration settlement programs. Since the settlement organizations are independent, their work and programs are not uniform across Vancouver. This means that consistent information and data are often difficult to find as the organizations did not operate in the same manner. Working independently from the government is inherent with alternative service delivery and there is currently no central hub that has reliable, comparable Canada wide data and information on immigrant settlement organizations. This can make things confusing for both the client and the administrative staff. The interviews conducted with AMSSA served to fill in many of the gaps that were unable to be answered by the settlement organizations themselves. Similarly, the funding was often presented differently in all annual reports observed, which made it difficult to compare and contrast the types of funding received and the impacts it had on the organization. For example, some of the organizations, such as Mosaic BC, showed their funding in percentages but did not show the actual dollar amounts. Other organizations, such as the Immigrant Service Society of BC, showed how the money was spent and the revenue accumulated from other services, such as additional language services being provided at a cost.

Initially, I wanted to examine if the NGOs catered towards its largest donor, and whether donations had an impact on the settlement services offered, by assessing how much money was received from each level of government and each donor. This proved to be very difficult due to the lack of information available. While there are challenges associated with this research, it is important that these settlement organizations are

assessed and continually improved upon as they are an important service offered in Canada. This research will help ensure that quality settlement services are being provided in Vancouver and Canada at large.

The Government of Canada undertook an aggressive, high profile policy to bring a large number of Syrian refugees to Canada in a very short period beginning in December 2015. Justin Trudeau, the new prime minister, used this policy to establish a distinctive Canadian presence internationally and to differentiate his government from Stephen Harper's Conservatives. However, the Syrian refugee influx created many problems for Vancouver's immigrant settlement organizations who found themselves dealing with unanticipated challenges and major upsets to their working procedures. My research did not anticipate this and some problems of access occurred because of disorder in the NGO network sampled in Vancouver.

Literature Review

A substantial literature studies the use of NGOs to deliver government services in various countries but Canada is still very lightly researched.¹⁰ Little research focuses specifically on Canada's settlement programs, as opposed to alternative service delivery in general. When reviewing the literature, out of the top three Canadian Political Science journals — *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *Canadian Public Policy*, and *Canadian Public Administration*, — only twelve journal articles discussed issues related to immigration in the past decade. When examining the number of articles published in each of these journals over the past ten years, the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* had only eight articles that discussed the concept of alternative service delivery. This means that out of approximately three hundred published journal articles, only about three percent of the articles discussed this topic. In *Canadian Public Administration*, the likely place to find articles on alternative service delivery, only four articles can be found. *Canadian Public Policy* had no relevant articles published on immigrant settlement organizations within the past decade. This lack of scholarly attention is surprising as alternative service delivery in Canada began with the welfare state during the 1960s and continues to be an important avenue for the delivery of settlement services in Canada, and in many other policy areas.¹¹ My research aims to fill a large gap in an important and underdeveloped area.

A problem for both employees and clients with the use of alternative service delivery programs is cash flow and a reliance on donors.¹² This may lead to problems with

¹⁰ Smith, S. R., Ferlie, E., Lynn Jr, L. E., & Pollitt, C. (2005). NGOs and contracting. *The Oxford handbook of public management*, p. 594.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 593-594.

¹² Smith, S. R., Ferlie, E., Lynn Jr, L. E., & Pollitt, C. (2005). NGOs and contracting. *The Oxford handbook of public management*, p. 592.

sustaining programs over the long haul.¹³ A major issue discussed by Steven Rathgeb Smith, professor of Public Affairs at Washington State University, is the problem with NGO financing. As stated by Smith: "NGOs often have problems with cash flow and may be unable to adequately invest in their capital infrastructure. Undercapitalization places NGOs in a politically vulnerable position vis-a-vis government."¹⁴ This can result in issues with the organization functioning effectively and inevitable problems with the cancelation of certain services.

This funding arrangement is rooted in New Public Management (NPM) theory. By NPM, I mean greater discretion is given to the NGO.¹⁵ Some of the key aspects of the NPM model include: maximizing the use of funds, a focus on program outputs, and the view that firms and not for profit organizations are often better service providers than government bureaucracies.¹⁶ When NPM is applied to immigrant settlement organizations, it has the potential to create a system that is volatile, as settlement organizations must compete against each other for funding. Other problems associated with the application of NPM theory to immigrant settlement programs could result in the referral of clients to other settlement NGOs, as the competitive funding structure results in some organizations being able to offer more settlement services than others.

Ted Richmond and John Shields, two Canadian political scientists, found that the funding structure of settlement organizations can contribute to a shrinking of services experienced by all organizations in the settlement sector, as the system creates

¹³ Smith, S. R., Ferlie, E., Lynn Jr, L. E., & Pollitt, C. (2005). NGOs and contracting. *The Oxford handbook of public management*, p. 592.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Farazmand, Ali (Feb 2, 2006). "New Public Management". *Handbook of Globalization, Governance, and Public Administration*, p. 888.

¹⁶ Pfiffner, J. P. (1999). Traditional public administration versus the new public management: accountability versus efficiency.

competition, leaving some organizations with more resources when compared to others.¹⁷ This is because some organizations can offer more programs, making certain organizations overburdened with clients when they offer a service that is high in demand. Some organizations struggle to find the necessary funding for their settlement services, and may have to resort to other means such as volunteer efforts or the cancelation of particular settlement services altogether. For example, in Vancouver, the Multicultural Helping House Society discussed the difficulties associated with planning when a lack of funding is present. When funding is not sufficient, or fluctuates from a year to year basis, programs are often downsized and can only be sustained with volunteers.¹⁸ If a volunteer program cannot be created, the particular settlement service will be cut. Settlement services can become unevenly distributed across Vancouver and clients will be shuffled from one settlement organization to another. For example, when conducting interviews with the settlement organizations for this research, the Jewish Family Service Agency discussed referring Syrian refugees to other settlement organizations.

Richmond and Shield's conducted their study in Ontario and observed an overall income loss around \$350 000, over a four year period, for a sample of alternative service delivery programs.¹⁹ They attributed this financial loss to funding cuts coupled with a high demand for services.²⁰ They connected this problem to the neoliberal policies that were implemented gradually and conclude that these issues have now created a crisis for

¹⁷ Richmond, T., & Shields, J. (2005). NGO-government relations and immigrant services: Contradictions and challenges. *Journal of International Migration and Integration/Revue de l'integration et de la migration internationale*, 6(3-4), p. 517.

¹⁸ M. Alparaque. Personal Communication. November 13, 2015.

¹⁹ Richmond, T., & Shields, J. (2005). NGO-government relations and immigrant services: Contradictions and challenges. *Journal of International Migration and Integration/Revue de l'integration et de la migration internationale*, 6(3-4), p. 517.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Canada's settlement sector, as funding is being cut to a service that is in high demand and essential for newcomers in Canada.²¹ The problems associated with the neoliberal policies include creating contracts that are closely controlled. This prohibits the distribution of incremental funding throughout the duration of the contract, even if it is needed.²² They quote Susan Phillips who describes that the non-profit sector is used to deliver the services but is often left out of the discussion for improved policy.²³ Solutions to the problems associated with the funding structure, and overall consultation with alternative service delivery providers, are noted in the recommendations as priorities for future research.

Richmond and Shields discuss the well known argument that the delivery of government programs through NGOs has weakened civil society, as organizations have become strained and overburdened with clients. Other factors that contribute to the weakening of civil society include the contractual relationship between the donors and the organizations, which can reduce the settlement organization's ability to advocate on behalf of its clients.²⁴ This is because the organization might not partake in activities that would reduce the likelihood of funding.²⁵ As stated by Richmond and Shields, "Rather than promoting civil society and democracy through the strengthening of community voices, these new 'partnerships' have tended to work against these goals."²⁶ This demonstrates a need for greater consultation between policy makers and alternative service delivery programs so that the system can be improved. Canada admits approximately a quarter of a

²¹ Richmond, T., & Shields, J. (2004). *Third sector restructuring and the new contracting regime: the case of immigrant serving agencies in Ontario*. Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement, p. 20.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

million newcomers every year and the demand for services will only continue to increase as immigrants frequent the settlement organization multiple times for assistance.

A study conducted by Katherine Scott, vice-president of research for the Canadian Council of Social Development, on the funding structure of non-profit organizations found similar findings to Richmond and Shields.²⁷ Scott organized focus groups with over 100 non-profit organizations, and also organized interviews with the donors. Her main findings revealed that non-profit organizations experience huge shifts in revenue. When revenue declines, the organizations struggle to meet the high demand for services, resulting in a system that is overburdened with clients. Scott also found that the organizations would often need to change its stated mission in order to secure more funding or to keep a valuable donor. She found that the settlement organizations would experience a loss of capability due to a lack of resources to support the administrative costs of the organization. Sometimes, this could result in employees being laid off from their jobs. Her findings reveal that the employees experienced burnout and an overall decline in their abilities to advocate on behalf of their clients, due to a strained system.²⁸ Since settlement organizations in Vancouver operate in a similar manner, Scott's study is important to consider when examining Vancouver's settlement NGOs.

Susan Phillips and Karine Levasseur, Canadian political scientists, examined the impacts of government grants on non-profit organizations and whether or not this had an adverse effect on accountability.²⁹ They discuss the concept of accountability as having

²⁷ Scott, K. (2003). *Funding matters: The impact of Canada's new funding regime on nonprofit and voluntary organizations*. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, xiii.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Phillips, S., & Levasseur, K. (2004). The Snakes and Ladders of Accountability: Contradictions between contracting and collaboration for Canada's voluntary sector. *Canadian Public Administration*, 47(4), p. 454.

implications in three broad areas. First, accountability is an assurance by the non-profit organization that funding was not misused or mismanaged; second, accountability is about building public trust with the community; and third, accountability can be defined as continual improvement which sometimes involves taking risks.³⁰ Phillips and Levasseur note that by using alternative service delivery programs, it is often difficult for a government to be both the contractor and, at the same time, the evaluator of program performance.³¹ They noted that the strict accountability measures in the Canadian non-profit sector had a detrimental impact on these organizations because they severely limit the organization's ability to be innovative and creative.³² In their interviews, they found that the non-profit organizations respected the accountability measures in place, but due to the cutbacks on funding, were beginning to be limited in the services that they can provide.³³ They also found that the budgeting had significant impacts on attracting quality staff members, which decreased the organization's credibility with the public.³⁴ This loss in credibility has significant impacts on the trust that the community puts into the organization, weakening the organizations ability to advocate on behalf of their clients. Phillips and Levasseur also found that the reporting for the non-profit organizations can get onerous and time consuming, due to budget changes.³⁵

Steven Rathgeb Smith's article on accountability and the non-profit sector provides recommendations on how governments should encourage wider public discussion about

³⁰ Phillips, S., & Levasseur, K. (2004). The Snakes and Ladders of Accountability: Contradictions between contracting and collaboration for Canada's voluntary sector. *Canadian Public Administration*, 47(4), p. 454.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 458.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 454-455.

³⁴ Phillips, S., & Levasseur, K. (2004). The Snakes and Ladders of Accountability: Contradictions between contracting and collaboration for Canada's voluntary sector. *Canadian Public Administration*, 47(4), p. 454.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 463.

NGO accountability.³⁶ Some of these recommendations include: community representation on boards to help advise the organization, meetings where community members can provide their input, and community events that discuss program planning.³⁷ By thinking about accountability more broadly, Smith's aim is to have non-profits that work effectively and advocate for the community through continuous community input and feedback.

The funding structure of settlement organizations is important to discuss as it can potentially impact the organization's ability to function effectively and advocate on behalf of its clients. The amount of funding received by each organization will largely determine both the number of services being offered and the amount of staff administering the services. If resources are sparse, and if the settlement organizations do not have sufficient staff to administer the services, the settlement NGOs may not be able to successfully assist and advocate on behalf of their clients. The next section will outline how settlement organizations are funded and the resulting implications on the advocacy work of the settlement sector.

³⁶ Smith, S. (2014-08-04). Accountability and the Nonprofit Sector. *Oxford Handbooks Online*. Retrieved 17 Jul. 2016, from <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199641253.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199641253-e-022>, p. 351-352.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

NGOs and the Government of Canada's Funding Structure

The organizations that have been chosen for this research are registered with the federal government under Citizenship and Immigration Canada.³⁸ The funding contracts between the federal government and the settlement organizations are renewed every three years.³⁹ According to CIC's website, from 2012-2013 the federal government provided almost \$600M to settlement organizations in Canada, a number which has decreased since the funding cuts started.⁴⁰ The previous Conservative government cut federal funding by approximately ten percent per year for the three year period of funding from 2014-2017.⁴¹ The ten percent decrease is variable and is dependent upon the number of immigrants that the province receives. This means that provinces with a high intake of immigrants, such as British Columbia, will not be cut as much when compared to provinces with fewer immigrants.⁴² Since BC has one of the highest rates of immigration in Canada, the ten percent decrease is approximately six percent each year over the three year funding period.⁴³ Vancouver-based settlement organizations felt the pinch of the funding cuts.⁴⁴

The 2015 federal election marked a change in government for Canada, but so far, the Liberals have maintained the funding status quo. Katie Rosenberger, Executive Director for the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC, explains, "with the new government and the focus on Syrian refugee resettlement, the federal government extended all contracts by one year, and the whole country will negotiate this fall for 3 year

³⁸ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Government of Canada. Backgrounder – Government of Canada 2012-13 Settlement Funding Allocations. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/backgrounders/2011/2011-11-25.asp>.

⁴¹ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

contracts effective April 2017 – March 2020."⁴⁵ The review has the potential to provide a new direction for the funding of settlement organizations in Canada.

Prior to 2014, there was a federal-provincial agreement in British Columbia that outlined the funding arrangement for settlement services. These agreements started in May 1998 and were renewed in 2005 and 2010.⁴⁶ The Canada-BC agreement outlined how the federal government would devolve its responsibility of immigrant settlement to the provincial government of BC. The agreement discussed how the federal government would transfer money to the provinces and in turn the province would allocate the funding to the settlement organizations.⁴⁷ In Section 6.0 under Financial Arrangements it states, "Canada's continuing role will include the allocation annually to British Columbia of a share of funding available for settlement and integration services based upon an allocation model developed in consultation with British Columbia."⁴⁸ On April 1, 2014, the Canada-BC agreement was canceled.⁴⁹ The change resulted in the federal government providing the funds directly to the settlement NGOs. The provincial government of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver still provide funding to settlement organizations, but it is on a case by case basis when requested by the settlement NGO.⁵⁰

Settlement organizations obtain funding by filling out applications with the respective donor. If successful, a contract will be created between the donor and settlement

⁴⁵ K. Rosenberger. Personal Communication. August 4, 2016.

⁴⁶ Dickson, H., Lindquist, E., Pollard, B., & Chung Yan, M. "Devolving Settlement Funding from the Government of Canada: The British Columbia Experience." July 13, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.amssa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/BC_CIC_Settlement_Report_July_23rd_20131.pdf, p. 3.

⁴⁷ Canada-British Columbia Agreement. Canada-British Columbia Immigration Agreement Annex A: Responsibilities for Federally Funded Settlement and Integration Services. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/laws-policy/agreements/bc/bc-2010-annex-a.asp>.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Dickson, H., Lindquist, E., Pollard, B., & Chung Yan, M. "Devolving Settlement Funding from the Government of Canada: The British Columbia Experience." July 13, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.amssa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/BC_CIC_Settlement_Report_July_23rd_20131.pdf, p. 3.

⁵⁰ P. Bruckmann. Personal Communication. April 13, 2016.

organization. This arrangement makes it difficult for smaller organizations to compete for funding and for settlement organizations to plan their programs. "There is stress for smaller organizations to operate in that structure," says Rosenberger.⁵¹ Rosenberger also discussed how the funding structure creates many issues with planning, as settlement organizations will not know whether the funding from a particular donor will continue, be canceled, or decrease.⁵² Her point is echoed by; Robert Vineberg, former Director General of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Prairies and Northern Territories,

Many continuously deliver the same services, yet they receive their funding as if it were for a time-limited, one-off project. As a result, service providers often don't know if CIC funding will be forthcoming until April 1, and are forced to issue layoff notices to staff at Christmas time...It must also develop a new funding model that recognizes the ongoing nature of Canada's Immigrant Settlement Program instead of treating it as something that could end tomorrow.⁵³

This major funding change has raised considerable concerns among Vancouver based NGOs about Ottawa's longer term intentions and the impact of the current funding structure on settlement organizations in Canada.⁵⁴

A section in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act discusses settlement programs in Canada.⁵⁵ The Act states Canada's commitment to immigration settlement when it says, "to fulfill Canada's international legal obligations with respect to refugees and affirm Canada's commitment to international efforts to provide assistance to those in need of settlement."⁵⁶ The federal government has several best practices that must be followed

⁵¹ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Vineberg, Robert. "After 40 years, Immigrant Settlement Program needs an overhaul." April 21, 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/after-40-years-immigrant-settlement-program-needs-an-overhaul/article18075025/>.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. (2015). Retrieved from <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/I-2.5.pdf>.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

by all settlement organizations in Canada.⁵⁷ The best practices outlined in the Act include the following: information and orientation, language skills, labour market access, welcoming communities, and policy and program development.⁵⁸ Citizenship and Immigration Canada provides accountability measures in terms of extensive reporting, but essentially allows the settlement providers to tailor the services in accordance with the best practices. The discretion that each settlement organization has enables them to choose the services most relevant to their client's needs and the community in Vancouver to which they serve. This allows settlement organizations to offer the range of settlement services that are realistic to their financial income while supporting community tailored services.

In 2000, the Canadian Council for Refugees created a Framework for Settlement Services in Canada.⁵⁹ The Framework serves as a guideline for settlement NGOs and the different settlement services that each organization can offer. It has not yet been established as a standardized tool that all settlement organizations must follow, but currently serves as a useful reference to develop programming across the best practices outlined in Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Canada's federal government has made a commitment to provide settlement services to newcomers in Canada, making it important to review these organizations and their effectiveness as agents of policy delivery.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has funding guidelines for settlement services.⁶⁰ It has three main programs to fund immigration services in Canada. These three programs are: settlement, resettlement assistance, and inter-action (multiculturalism). In

⁵⁷ Best Practices in Settlement Services. (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/partner/bpss/>.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Canadian National Settlement Service Standards Framework. May 2000. Retrieved from http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/static-files/standards.htm#HISTORICAL_CONTEXT.

⁶⁰ Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Funding Guidelines: National Call for Proposal. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/grants-contributions-funding/cfp-guidelines-2015.asp#2>.

order to request funding, settlement organizations must submit applications that are available from CIC's website and submit the application by the deadline.⁶¹ Citizenship and Immigration Canada does not assist prospective applicants with the process, making the quality of the applications the sole responsibility of the applicant. The federal government only provides funding for services assisting permanent residents. All other newcomers, such as temporary foreign workers and refugee claimants, are not funded under Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Rosenberger explains this point further,

The federal government only funds permanent residents, so international students, refugee claimants, naturalized citizens, temporary foreign workers, etc. are not covered by the federal funds...The provincial government has issued "top up funding" to organizations that applied to them who serve this population. It is a small amount of money (\$4 million per year for the whole province) but has been critical for organizations that see clients that are not permanent residents.⁶²

CIC is not required to fund all prospective applicants, making the applications for funding a competitive process. Citizenship and Immigration Canada's website states the following,

CIC will allocate a minimum of 90% of Settlement Program funding (from the overall settlement budget) to support direct services to newcomers. A maximum of 10% of the available Settlement Program funding envelope will be allocated to indirect services, i.e., not involving a direct interaction or service to eligible newcomer clients.⁶³

In order to receive settlement program funding, projects must meet the following criteria: target clients deemed eligible for services, discuss the activities that need funding, target a theme under CIC's settlement program, and outline two outcomes for the project, one short term and one long term.⁶⁴ The themes, as outlined on CIC's website, correspond to Citizenship and Immigration Canada's best practices. For example, one of the themes listed

⁶¹ Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Funding Guidelines: National Call for Proposal. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/grants-contributions-funding/cfp-guidelines-2015.asp#2>.

⁶² K. Rosenberger. Personal Communication. August 4, 2016.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Funding Guidelines: National Call for Proposal. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/grants-contributions-funding/cfp-guidelines-2015.asp#2>.

is language training.⁶⁵ The settlement organizations must fill out the appropriate documents in order to be considered for funding from the federal government.

Settlement organizations in Vancouver have written contracts between themselves and the donors making financial contributions. This means that settlement organizations deal with multiple contracts, all with different reporting periods.⁶⁶ For example, Mosaic BC must deal with multiple contracts with the federal government, provincial government, foundations, and private donations.⁶⁷ All settlement organizations in Vancouver have multiple donors, and contracts with these donors, in order to support the organization's activities. As described by Saleem Spindari, Manager for Refugee Settlement and Support Projects at Mosaic BC, "Every year, we [Mosaic BC] apply for funding from the Law Foundation, sometimes we receive the funding and sometimes we do not."⁶⁸ Christopher Leo, professor at the University of Winnipeg, and Jeremy Enns, Senior Program Advisor for Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, argue that there is too much competition for funding among the NGOs in Vancouver. They discuss that competition for funding exists to ensure fairness and transparency, but in reality, Leo and Enns argue that it leaves larger organizations, that offer more services, underfunded.⁶⁹ They provide an example of private, for profit schools receiving language funding from the federal government, despite the fact that the schools may only offer language services and not the wide variety of services outlined in Citizenship and Immigration Canada's best practices. As stated by Leo and Enns,

⁶⁵ Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Funding Guidelines: National Call for Proposal. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/grants-contributions-funding/cfp-guidelines-2015.asp#2>.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Mosaic BC. Annual Report. (2015). Retrieved from <https://mosaicbc.org/wp-content/uploads/AnnualReports/MOSAIC-Annual-Report-Newsletter-2015.pdf>.

⁶⁸ S. Spindari. Personal Communication. February 22, 2016.

⁶⁹ Leo, C., & Enns, J. (2009). Multi-level governance and ideological rigidity: The failure of deep federalism. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 42(01), p. 108.

[S]chool boards and colleges which do not deal specifically with settlement services, might win funding, and private language schools, private immigration consultants, as well as private, for-profit agencies offering services to visa students might enter the “market” for settlement services, draining money away from what was seen as real settlement work.⁷⁰

As emphasized, there appears to be too many actors competing for funding in Vancouver.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada lists a variety of eligible organizations who can receive federal funding including: businesses, Canadian non-for-profit organizations, educational and public institutions, international organizations, and individuals.⁷¹ Private language schools should not fall under the same category for government funding as immigrant NGOs as the quality of services and the purpose of the organizations provided are very different. Moreover, private language schools do not necessarily focus on newcomers. For example, a private language school could provide assistance to all individuals seeking to learn a new language, which means the service does not provide special assistance to newcomers. Due to the funding structure, and the necessity of multiple contracts, Vancouver settlement organizations are faced with competition that is not necessarily positive for settlement services.

When assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the settlement sector in Vancouver, it is important understand how these organizations are funded. Since the settlement organizations can only operate with sufficient funds, it is possible that the funding structure may have an adverse effect on the NGOs daily operations and advocacy work. A sampling of settlement NGOs have been selected for this research, based on their size and location in Vancouver, in order to assess the impacts that the funding has on the organizations. These four organizations are: Multicultural Helping House, Immigrant

⁷⁰ Leo, C., & Enns, J. (2009). Multi-level governance and ideological rigidity: The failure of deep federalism. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 42(01), p. 108.

⁷¹ Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Funding Guidelines: National Call for Proposal. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/grants-contributions-funding/cfp-guidelines-2015.asp#2>.

Service Society of BC, Jewish Family Service Agency, and Mosaic BC. The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC has also been interviewed for this research, in order to provide a holistic picture of the funding structure and its impacts on settlement services in Vancouver.

i) Multicultural Helping House Society

Multicultural Helping House Society (MHH) began in 1996 as a multicultural organization for immigrants from the Philippines. It now provides services to all newcomers to Canada, regardless of their country of origin; although, MHH still has deep roots in Vancouver's Philippine community.⁷² MHH receives the majority of its funds from the federal government.⁷³ The amounts of the federal grants are not made available to the public. A major grant from the federal government helps immigrants while they are still in the Philippines. Accordingly, it is called the "pre-arrival" program.⁷⁴ A second grant funds immigrant settlement as conventionally defined and understood. It extends a variety of services to newly arrived immigrants in Vancouver.⁷⁵ Overall, the Multicultural Helping House has considerable discretion over the content and structure of the programs that it develops. For example, many of the newcomers are teenagers and MHH established the "Kapwa" society, which means "we are the same people", to mentor youth who are transitioning to a new culture in Vancouver.⁷⁶ The assistance provided by the MHH has evolved to suit the needs of its clients.

⁷² Multicultural Helping House Society. (2015) Retrieved from <http://www.helpinghouse.ca/about-us/>.

⁷³ M. Alparaque. Personal Communication. November 13, 2015.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

As mentioned, the Multicultural Helping House now focuses on all immigrants in Vancouver, particularly those who are in immediate crisis, such as those who lack adequate housing accommodations.⁷⁷ According to Marius Alparaque, Treasurer for the Multicultural Helping House, the centre helps, on average, 1000 clients per year.⁷⁸ In addition, MHH also focuses on helping newcomers who have arrived in Canada as caregivers, which is a major part of the organization's work. The centre offers respite for caregivers and free temporary accommodations for immigrant newcomers.

MHH's board is comprised of prominent members of Vancouver's Philippine community.⁷⁹ The MHH has a list of client testimonials on its website, which outlines the stories of community members that the organization has assisted.⁸⁰ The testimonials all describe the MHH as a caring organization that works hard to assist its clients.⁸¹ The president of the Multicultural Helping House, Tomas Avendano, started the MHH to help those facing similar challenges that he experienced when immigrating to Canada. Avendano is highly regarded in Vancouver, and community members respectfully call him "father" due to the support he provides newcomers.⁸²

The ability of the Multicultural Helping House to deliver the services that it finds most useful for its clients, with minimal governmental control over its operations, enables MHH to offer a variety of settlement services that best suit its client's needs. Alparaque mentioned that the services offered were highly dependent on the funding received in a

⁷⁷ M. Alparaque. Personal Communication. November 13, 2015.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Multicultural Helping House Society. (2015) Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://www.helpinghouse.ca/about-us/>.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2014 Award Recipient for Lifetime Achievement. http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/paulyzyk/recipients_2014.asp.

given year. Alparaque explained that, "if funding decreases, certain services will only be able to function with the help of a solid volunteer base and if volunteers cannot be recruited, a program might be cancelled."⁸³ This results in a volatile system that is subject to change its services from year to year, which is the reality for all settlement organizations in Vancouver.

ii) Immigrant Service Society of British Columbia

The Immigrant Service Society of BC (ISSBC) was established in 1972 and is the largest immigrant NGO in BC and western Canada.⁸⁴ In the recent period, it has been overburdened with the influx of Syrian refugees. Its services are offered across several different jurisdictions in BC, including Metro Vancouver and the Okanagan.⁸⁵ It is an interesting case to incorporate as it is a well developed organization that receives most of its revenue from its language training services.⁸⁶ According to the ISSBC's 2013 financial statement, over \$12 million was garnered from fees for service language classes and over \$300 000 was from donations.⁸⁷ The ISSBC also receives funding from all levels of government, although the precise amounts were not listed in their annual reports.⁸⁸

The ISSBC also offers a variety of free services, such as a peer support group for refugee women and a free intensive ten week language program.⁸⁹ It is important to note that the free language courses are only available to permanent residents, meaning that

⁸³ M. Alparaque. Personal Communication. November 13, 2015.

⁸⁴ Immigrant Service Society of BC. About US. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://www.issbc.org/prim-corp-nav/about-us>.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Immigrant Service Society of BC Annual Report Retrieved November 16, 2015 from http://issbc.org/system/cms/files/1182/files/original/Annual_Report_2013.pdf.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Immigrant Service Society of BC Funding Partners. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://www.issbc.org/prim-corp-nav/about-us/funding-partners>.

⁸⁹ Immigrant Service Society of BC. English Now. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://issbc.org/prim-nav/programs/career-services/english-now>.

other newcomers are not eligible for this service.⁹⁰ The ISSBC can be said to offer a variety of services to newcomers that help the specific needs of the community, such as assistance with finding a job and support programs for youth.⁹¹

iii) Jewish Family Service Agency

The Jewish Family Service Agency (JFSA) is the oldest NGO in my sample having been established in 1935.⁹² Although the JFSA receives federal funding for settlement services, its programs offered are wide ranging. Some of its programs include: the provision of food vouchers, counselling for at-risk youth, subsidies for adults who need various forms of therapy, home care support for seniors, resettlement and integration services, and a variety of other community development programming.⁹³ On average, the JFSA assists over 200 newcomers annually.⁹⁴ It has been incorporated into the research study because it is one of the smaller settlement organizations in Vancouver, which is interesting to compare with the largest settlement organization, the ISSBC.⁹⁵ As stated in its 2015 financial statement, fifty per cent of the JFSA's funding comes from private donors and fees for service.⁹⁶ Nine percent of its total funding comes from the provincial government — to this point, Ottawa is not a major funder. Federal funding was not listed on the 2015 annual report.⁹⁷

⁹⁰ Immigrant Service Society of BC. English Now. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://issbc.org/prim-nav/programs/career-services/english-now>.

⁹¹ Immigrant Service Society of BC. About US. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://www.issbc.org/prim-corp-nav/about-us>.

⁹² Jewish Family Service Agency of Vancouver. About. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://jfsa.ca/about/>.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Jewish Family Service Agency of Vancouver Financial Statements for the Year Ended August 31, 2014. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://jfsa.ca/testing/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2014-Independent-Auditors-Report.pdf>.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

The JFSA case shows the wide ranging activities taking place among the different immigrant NGO groups surveyed for this study and hints at its positive impacts in Vancouver. Some of the services that the JFSA provides include: counselling services to newcomers to assist with integration into the community and referral services for legal assistance.⁹⁸ Alexandra Greenberg, Settlement and Integration Counsellor for the JFSA, noted that the Jewish Family Service Agency did not apply for additional refugee funding from the federal government because it was not resettling refugees.⁹⁹ The wide variety of programs offered from JFSA shows that some settlement organizations offer more services, specific to newcomers, when compared to others. Although there is diversity in the services offered, each organization must meet the Federal Government's stated criteria¹⁰⁰ in order to qualify for funding.

iv) Mosaic BC

Mosaic BC was established as a non-profit organization in 1976.¹⁰¹ Mosaic BC has a \$24 million budget and employs more than 300 staff.¹⁰² On average, it helps 25 000 immigrants settle in Vancouver each year.¹⁰³ Mosaic BC's 2015 annual report states that 45 per cent of its funds come from federal grants. The remainder of its funding came primarily from the provincial government and private donations. Mosaic BC is a multilingual non-profit organization that offers assistance in twenty different languages, and supports immigrants and refugees in Vancouver. It offers 40 different settlement services for its

⁹⁸ Jewish Family Service Agency of Vancouver. About. Retrieved November 16, 2015 from <http://jfsa.ca/about/>.

⁹⁹ A. Greenberg. Personal Communication. February 29, 2016.

¹⁰⁰ Please see the section on funding for more detail.

¹⁰¹ Mosaic. About Us. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.mosaicbc.com/about-mosaic>.

¹⁰² *Ibid*.

¹⁰³ Annual Report. Clients by the Numbers. (2015). Retrieved from http://www.mosaicbc.com/sites/all/files/publications-public/MOSAIC%20Annual%20Report%202015_0.pdf.

clients. Some of the settlement services are: language programs, loans to help immigrants start businesses, assistance with finding work in Canada, programs for youth, clinical counselling, and a variety of other settlement services.¹⁰⁴ Similar to ISSBC, Mosaic BC's language courses provide a revenue stream for the organization.¹⁰⁵ Nine per cent of its total funds came from translation and interpretation fees.¹⁰⁶

Mosaic BC is on several governmental and nongovernmental boards such as the Mayor's Working Group on Immigration and BC Council for Families. These boards help with the advocacy work of Mosaic BC and provide networking opportunities. Mosaic BC formed when two predecessor organizations – Multilingual Social Services and Language Aid for Ethnic Groups – amalgamated in 1972.¹⁰⁷ Similar to the other settlement service organizations discussed to this point, Mosaic BC has three year grants with the federal government.¹⁰⁸ Its reporting to other donors, such as the Law Society, are dependent on the needs of the organization each year. All funding reports operate differently. Some of the reports are annual, others are quarterly, and some occur every three years.¹⁰⁹ This leads to problems with program planning and overall organizational issues for the settlement NGOs, as the services are dependent on the amount of funding received. In an interview with Saleem Spindari, Manager of Refugee Settlement Support Projects at Mosaic BC, he mentioned how the reporting can get onerous as individual reports are made for each

¹⁰⁴ Mosaic. About Us. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.mosaicbc.com/about-mosaic>.

¹⁰⁵ Annual Report. Clients by the Numbers. (2015). Retrieved from http://www.mosaicbc.com/sites/all/files/publications-public/MOSAIC%20Annual%20Report%202015_0.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Saleem Spindari. Personal Communication. February 22, 2016.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

donor in order to secure funding for the following year.¹¹⁰ He explained that some of the reports are required on a monthly basis, which can be quite time consuming when assistance is needed to help newcomers.¹¹¹

Table I below illustrates the year each organization was established, the number of clients assisted, the number of staff supporting settlement work, and the types of funding received by each organization. All organizations rely on a variety of funding sources in order to sustain their settlement services.

¹¹⁰ Saleem Spindari. Personal Communication. February 22, 2016.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

Table 1

Settlement Organization	Founded	Newcomers Assisted Per Year	Number of Staff	Government Funding	Non-Government Funding
The Multicultural Helping House	1996	~ 1000	15	✓	✓
Immigrant Service Society of BC	1972	N/A ¹¹²	N/A	✓	✓
Jewish Family Service Agency	1935	~200	4	✓	✓
Mosaic BC	1976	~25 000	~300	✓	✓

Table 1 summarizes factual information about the settlement organizations sampled

v) Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC has been incorporated into this research study to provide an overview of the settlement process in Vancouver. AMSSA does not not deal with immigrants directly. Rather, it is an umbrella organization that provides a capacity building role and a variety of supports for settlement organizations.¹¹³ AMSSA works to coordinate with the settlement service NGOs by organizing events, sharing information amongst the settlement organizations, and coordinating important committees, such as the Research Advisory Committee.¹¹⁴ One of the sharing networks coordinated by AMSSA is Settlement Net, which is a secure database for settlement providers. Each week, settlement organizations in Vancouver receive an email updating them on settlement related news.¹¹⁵ A major committee that AMSSA

¹¹² The ISSofBC was unavailable for interview during the course of this project due to the influx of Syrian refugees.

¹¹³ AMSSA. Settlement and Integration. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.amssa.org/>.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

organizes is the Research Advisory Committee, which works to develop research priorities and BC settlement initiatives.¹¹⁶ In an interview, Katie Rosenberger, Executive Director at AMSSA, and Lucy Buchanan-Parker-Parker, Research and Information Coordinator, they discussed the funding structure as a "hindrance" for program planning.¹¹⁷ This is because the funding is provided in the form of contracts for a short period of time when in reality the projects are ongoing. Currently, the federal government provides a specific amount of funding for three years, which makes it difficult for settlement organizations to plan beyond that three year time period. Rosenberger and Buchanan-Parker explained how there is a lot of staff burnout in the settlement sector, due to the demand for these services in Vancouver.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ AMSSA. Settlement and Integration. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.amssa.org/>.

¹¹⁷ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Major Findings

My research confirms many of the broad concerns that have been expressed about alternative service delivery programs especially when administered through NGOs. The federal government's funding structure creates problems for the settlement organizations in different ways, making the system in need of review and improvement. One of the difficulties created include: organizations being overburdened with clients. For example, JFSA confirmed that it was not settling Syrian refugees; whereas, the ISSBC and Mosaic BC was assisting Syrian refugees. This shows that the resources are not distributed evenly across each organization because some organizations are well equipped to assist a wide variety of clients, such as Syrian refugees, and other organizations, such as the JFSA, are not. This is a result of the funding structure, as Citizenship and Immigration Canada will fund organizations that meet its stated criteria, regardless of the size and scope of the organization's settlement services. Other difficulties include: an inability to advocate effectively on behalf of newcomers due to the fear of upsetting a potential donor, spending excessive time reporting to funders at the expense of working directly with newcomers, low salaries, and low staff morale due to overwork. None of the settlement organizations surveyed can operate with only the current levels of government funding as it is inadequate to sustain their non salary operating costs, their programs, and their staff salaries.¹¹⁹ All settlement NGOs interviewed needed the assistance of multiple donors in order to operate effectively and federal funding cuts exacerbate this structural issue.¹²⁰ The

¹¹⁹ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

¹²⁰ Multiple interviewees suggested that the cut backs from the Federal Government would cause severe impacts on the services provided and even potential layoffs for employees.

remainder of the findings section discusses the common issues raised during the interviews and explains the big picture for both British Columbia and Canada.

i) Is the funding from the federal government consistent every year?

All settlement organizations interviewed for this project received funding from a variety of sources including: government, private, and corporate donations. Most organizations obtained funding from as many organizations as possible in order to support their settlement services and the salaries of employees.¹²¹ Additional funding from the city and other organizations will be provided when an NGO can convince the donor of their particular needs. Prior to 2013, the JFSA received only private donations but now receives grants from the federal government, which illustrates the demand that is associated with settlement services in Canada. More money is constantly needed for settlement organizations to simply maintain the current level of services.¹²² This poses a serious problem for the future of settlement services in Canada, as immigration in Canada is on the rise, especially with the recent influx of Syrian refugees.¹²³

A common thread in all interviews was that the settlement sector felt overloaded by reporting requirements, which led to problems with program planning. This point confirms Phillips and Levasseur's findings about Canadian non-profits being overloaded with financial reports to the government. Phillips and Levasseur stressed that the reporting process for charitable organizations can be onerous and time consuming.¹²⁴ Financial reporting made by the NGOs for the donors also posed other challenges with respect to

¹²¹ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

¹²² A. Greenberg. Personal Communication. February 29, 2016.

¹²³ Zilio, Michelle. Canada on track to welcome more than 300 000 immigrants. March 8, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-seeks-to-bring-more-than-300000-newcomers-this-year/article29069851/>.

¹²⁴ Phillips, S., & Levasseur, K. (2004). The Snakes and Ladders of Accountability: Contradictions between contracting and collaboration for Canada's voluntary sector. *Canadian Public Administration*, 47(4), p. 454.

program planning, as NGOs need to plan their "menu" of services on an annual basis. If settlement services are unsure whether they will continue to receive the same amount of funding, this causes considerable difficulty with program planning for the upcoming year.

In addition to the problems associated with program planning, the financial structure of the settlement organizations also posed anxiety with respect to jobs. According to Rosenberger, many employees were uncertain whether or not they would have a job from year to year, due to the volatile nature of the funding.¹²⁵ Rosenberger also stated that the federal government still views settlement organizations as a provincial responsibility, despite the fact that as of 2014 Ottawa has played a much larger role.¹²⁶ She explained that this creates "almost a two tiered system" but that it is possible the federal government still needs more time to adjust to this change in role.¹²⁷ The current funding structure can be said to resemble a two-tiered system because the settlement organizations apply for funding from both the federal government and provincial government, with some organizations receiving more funding than others. It is important to note that when compared to federal funding, the provincial funding is admittedly low.

Policy input, between the government, community members, and NGOs, was a problem noted by Richmond and Shields and was a problem discussed by interviewees.¹²⁸ An increase in coordination, perhaps by changing the way the financial reporting is made or the length of the funding contracts, would alleviate the burden placed on these service-providing NGOs. This finding supposes that the work of the immigrant organizations is

¹²⁵ K. Rosenberger & Lucy Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

¹²⁶ K. Rosenberger. Personal Communication. August 4, 2016.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ Richmond, T., & Shields, J. (2005). NGO-government relations and immigrant services: Contradictions and challenges. *Journal of International Migration and Integration/Revue de l'integration et de la migration internationale*, 6(3-4), p. 524.

being undermined by the funding structure, as the organizations can only do so much. It speaks to the need for more consultation with the community and policy workers, to improve the issues noted above, so that the funding structure can change and become something that is long lasting and sustainable rather than short term and variable. Furthermore, the demand for settlement services, and strains on the settlement organizations, will only increase as immigration in Canada is on the rise.¹²⁹

ii) What activities are most important to your organization?

This question received a wide variety of answers from the settlement organizations. In terms of the settlement services provided, some organizations provided only the basics as outlined in Citizenship and Immigration's best practices, such as assistance with language services and assistance filling out forms; whereas, other organizations provided a wide variety of services, such as welcoming programs for youth newcomers. The wide variety of services was beneficial to the community, but the funding structure led to an excessive burden on a number of NGOs. For example, not all settlement organizations were responsible for the settling of Syrian refugees. Out of the settlement organizations interviewed, only ISSBC and Mosaic BC were assisting refugees. Since all settlement organizations compete for funding, some will be better resourced than others. This results in a strained system, as more clients will frequent the organizations that are better resourced. The findings show that the settlement organizations are effective at listening to the needs of the community, but the funding structure creates issues with the number and types of services offered.

¹²⁹ Zilio, Michelle. Canada on track to welcome more than 300 000 immigrants. March 8, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-seeks-to-bring-more-than-300000-newcomers-this-year/article29069851/>.

iii) What, if anything, has changed given the influx of Syrian refugees?

As just noted, only the Immigrant Service Society of BC and Mosaic BC assisted with the Syrian refugees. This explains how the funding structure has been organized to treat settlement services as a short term project, rather than an ongoing and long term process. The unequal distribution of work across the settlement sector in Vancouver emphasizes the urgency of improvements needed to the funding structure itself. This finding again confirms Richmond and Shields conclusion that the system of outsourcing to alternative service delivery programs often results in some organizations being more burdened with work and clients than others. Ultimately, an excessive load for some NGOs creates a strained system where not all organizations have an equal share of the responsibilities as they are not equally funded. Since the ISSBC and Mosaic BC were the largest organizations, they were better equipped to handle the influx, but this has led to setbacks with all other clients. If all settlement organizations received equal amounts of funding, and if the funding contracts were designed to span several years, this would result in a system that would be better equipped to handle sudden fluctuations in clients. The refugees are required to "jump the line" at settlement organizations, as they are classified as vulnerable, and thereby are placed as high priority.¹³⁰ This leads to delays with other applicants who get pushed back. The government of British Columbia has also issued top up funding for settlement organizations responsible for settling the Syrian refugees.¹³¹ The Syrian refugees have placed a strain on the system, something that can be attributed to the funding structure of Canada's settlement organizations, as not all organizations are equally funded and offer the

¹³⁰ K. Rosenberger & L. Buchanan-Parker. Personal Communication. April 14, 2016.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

same number of resources. This results in some settlement NGOs being more strained when compared to others.

Conclusion

The research has shown that the funding structure of Canada's settlement organizations is in need of reform as it leads to problems with the advocacy work of the organizations. In the face of rising demand for settlement services, NGOs should offer the same range of services as others. All organizations were overloaded with reporting, which is something that has been discussed in the literature on charitable organizations. Since the settlement organizations can only offer the services it can afford, due to the competitive contract structure of settlement organizations, it is evident that some NGOs will be busier than others. This results in a weakening of immigrant service delivery in Vancouver, as not all organizations are running as effectively as possible. The settlement organizations provided programs that were tailored towards the needs of their clients, but short term funding contracts, and competition among many settlement organizations, were impediments to their work. This has resulted in a patchwork system that can be difficult for immigrants to navigate and has also overburdened some organizations with clients more than others. The interviews confirmed previous work on alternative services delivery, by noting the difficulties associated with the funding structure and contributed to the literature by specifically focusing on immigrant settlement organizations in Vancouver.

Recommendations

Four recommendations are advanced. These four recommendations do not involve eliminating the use of settlement NGOs for service delivery. Instead, they call for adjusting the relationship of settlement organizations with the federal government and the community at large.

The first recommendation involves changing the length of the contracts for the settlement organizations with the federal government. All organizations studied mentioned the length of the contracts as being an impediment for program planning. It would be appropriate to lengthen the federal contracts to four years and to bring them in line with the fixed election cycle. Second, in order to improve the delivery of settlement services, it would be helpful to increase the number of consultations that the organizations have with the community and policy workers. An increase in consultations with both community members and policy workers would enable the system to be continually assessed and overall improve the delivery of settlement services. The third recommendation involves streamlining the settlement NGOs in Vancouver. Since some are more burdened with clients than others, it might work well for the smaller organizations to merge with the larger organizations. This will also make the navigation of the settlement sector easier for newcomers, as there will only be three organizations and not, for example, ten. It will also save time for newcomers as they will not be referred to other organizations, as all organizations will be well staffed and funded. The fourth recommendation involves creating a hub for all settlement organizations in Canada. To date, there is no online resource that outlines Canada's settlement services, which makes the settlement organizations difficult to find and contact.

Taken together, these recommendations would improve the delivery of settlement services by creating a more effective system that is well equipped to meet the demands for newcomers in Canada. Since the recommendations involve improving the delivery of the settlement sector, rather than changing it, future research could explore the impacts of alternative service delivery programs in proportion to the size of the project and the length. It is possible that alternative service delivery programs are better suited to smaller and short term projects; whereas, larger and long term projects are not well suited to this form of service delivery. Other avenues for future research could use a mixed-methods approach to include more interviews while including a data set on the engagement of citizens, in order to measure the advocacy of settlement organizations. For example, one could examine the number of community outreach and advocacy programs that are organized by the settlement organizations and review how frequently settlement NGOs are discussed on social media.

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