

Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP)

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Location: MOSAIC

The meeting was held on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples including the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam nations.

Attendees: Saleem Spindari (MOSAIC); Darae Lee (MOSAIC); Masashi Yoshida (MOSAIC); Selene Chan (MOSAIC); Loren Balisky (Kinbrace); Raul Gatica (Kinbrace); Mariana Martinez (VAST); Sara Lopez (VAST); Julia Wu (bc211); Brad Kinnie (Journey Home); Vanessa Roth (Journey Home); Iris Solozarno (Options); Ana Machado (PIRS); Mona Hassania (SOS-ISS); Jake Conly (IRCC); Sophia Abraham (IRCC); Mia Morin (Vancity); Gulalai Habib (Kiwassa N.H.); Patricia Mahecha (Inland Refugee Society); Cecilia Tagle (VSB-SWIS); Thanh Lam (MPNH); Motoi Matsukura (Purpose); Vicki Chiu (MJTT); Celine Mauboules (HSABC); Sabrina Dumitra (AMSSA); Rochelle Appleby (LSS); Amos Kambere (UMOJA); John Beshell (MSDPR); Valentina Stanciu (MSDPR); Arran Smith (Canadian Red Cross); Cloe Clayton (Canadian Red Cross); Chris Morrissey (Rainbow Refugee Services); Jenny Moss (MAP)

Apologies: Khim Tan (Options), Fran (Ready Tour), Catherine Ludgate (Vancity), Katie Osborne (JHS), (Tina Murphy (Fraser Health)

9:30 am

- Co-Chair: Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST)
- Acknowledgement that our meeting was held on the unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations
- Thanks to Vancity for the funding in support of MAP and its work
- Introduction of all participants
- The Agenda was approved
- Approval of May MAP Minutes: John Dubé made a correction: Under Agency Updates where it reads: *'The additional Legal advocate hours were increased to twice a week. The additional lawyer provides support re: public benefits and housing'* the word 'lawyer' should read 'legal advocate'.
The corrected May Minutes were then approved
- MAP Membership: Participants were reminded to hand in their updated Agreements to Collaborate with MAP, or take a form if they were not present at the May meeting. Mailout listings for each agency can also be updated.

9:45 **Update on Provincial Funding for Refugee Claimant Services**

Presenter: Vicki Chiu: Ministry of Jobs, Trade & Technology

Vicki is the Senior Program Advisor with MJTT in the Immigration & Integration Branch. This falls under the 'Jobs' side of the ministry as the work involves attracting appropriate labor to BC and helping immigrants adjust; as well as vulnerable groups such as RC'S.

BC's **Services and Integration Program** is RC specific. Historically funding has been provided to ISS of BC (through SOS) to provide intensive wraparound services to RC's mainly in downtown Vancouver through the Welcome Center.

Starting July 1, 2018 MJTT is expanding to support RC's in Surrey and Fraser Valley through an agreement with MOSAIC, as well as continuing the contract with ISS. The 2 specialized contracts will complement each other and cover all of Metro Vancouver:

- **ISS CONTRACT**
 - Will cover Vancouver out of the Welcome Center and Surrey with 3 new service locations.
 - Will provide trauma counselling to all refugees via VAST
 - Will provide training and consultation services including a toll-free mental health line
 - The website with statistics and information for refugees will be expanded to include RC's
 - Some counselling services will be supported in Victoria via Clinical Counsellors.
- **MOSAIC CONTRACT**
 - To focus on building capacity in Surrey and Fraser Valley specifically for RC's coming across border.
 - Partnering with Options (Surrey) and Kinbrace, Abbotsford Community Services to provide wraparound services including trauma counselling.
 - MOSAIC Employment Support for RC's in Surrey and Fraser Valley will be customized to their needs to expedite meaningful work for RC's.

At our next MAP meeting (September 27) we will look at these new services in more detail.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Loren (Kinbrace) – it would be good to see everything mapped out in a visual to present in September
Answer: Vicki will arrange a visual.

10:05: Report back from 2018 Canadian Council for Refugees International Conference **Presented by: Saleem Spindari (MOSAIC) and Chris Morrissey (RAINBOW REFUGEE)**

Saleem: every year CCR organizes two consultations in spring and winter. Normally the meetings are National and topics discussed fall under the CCR Working Groups where Sherman Chan and Saleem operate. This year the spring event was titled the **International Refugee Rights Conference** and it ran from June 7-9 at York University, Ontario.

- 800 participants from all over world
- Theme was 'Networking, Advocating and Strengthening NGO's'
- Saleem moderated 2 sessions: **Family Reunification** and **Immigration Detention**
 - **Family Reunification (see: <http://ccrweb.ca/en/family-reunification>)**
Speakers from Costa Rica, UNHCR, refugees inc. a Sri Lankan who had fled by boat.
 - **Immigration Detention**
Speaker from Hungary who described demonization of RC's who are shamed as terrorists by media and have been criminalized by the state, as well as NGO's who work with RC's.
These were both issues with big implications for Canada.
- **Inland Protection WG**
Shared issues such as big influxes to Quebec & Ontario and movement between provinces
Not huge numbers into BC but the situation is being monitored.
- Saleem mentioned a successful campaign by the City of Toronto to combat racism. (see: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/community/toronto-for-all/>) The campaign opened everyone's eyes to the changing demographics across the country and the need to combat racism.

- The conference allowed for good networking – e.g. US lawyer talked about assisting Colombians in hiding.

Chris Morrissey:

Agreed that the different format at CCR precluded getting any recommendations passed or discussing much of Canadian importance as usual, but was more an interesting listening and sharing opportunity.

Chris had three occasions where she could raise LGBTQ issues –

- New toolkit: **SOGIE - Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression**
Derek Deans (IRCC) who works with Rainbow Refugee and Sharalyn Jordan explained the SOGIE guidelines for boards who are hearing complaints from individuals about treatment related to their sexual orientation.
- Sponsorship Program that Rainbow has with the government
- Caucus And Workshop 180 spokespeople from S. Korea, Austria and Africa talked about the challenges in talking about LGBTQ issues in their countries – especially working in agencies with LGBTQ staff. They discussed solutions to make the process easier. There is especially very little support in S. Korea and Austria where its very difficult to advance LGBTQ needs.

Saleem also moderated a session on the IRB Determination Process – there were many speakers available to explain the process and necessary changes.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Rochelle Appleby (LSS) Recently the IRB released a report with recommendations which would be important for CCR to look at and comment.

SUGGESTED: Jenny to attach the report to the Minutes and MAP members can send their comments to Saleem (via Jenny) to take back to the CCR WG. (Report is on IRCC website)

Saleem (MOSAIC) – very important to maintain IRB separate. Saleem encouraged discussion through MAP and sending recommendations forward.

Darae (MOSAIC) – Speaking for the Newcomer Transgender Support Group – it's very important to have an organization to facilitate conversation about LGBTQ matters – to be a focal point for these issues.

Mariana (VAST) – it was great so many RC's from BC could attend and share their experiences. Fund exists to pay for RC's to attend CCR conferences – available for the Fall Consultation in Montreal.

Cecilia (SWIS) – we need to bring forward issues for all RC's regarding work permits for those coming from 'Designated countries' including youth; to CCR. Claimants from a Designated country have to wait either 6 months, or for a decision from the IRB to request a work permit. That is making it challenging for some families.

FYI: CCR Fall Consultation 2018

Monday November 26 to Wednesday November 28, 2018

Hotel Marriott Chateau Champlain, Montreal

10:20 Report on City of Vancouver's Summit on Reducing Poverty for Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

Presenter: Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST)

As new co-chair of MAP Mariana has taken over from Andrew Kuiper in attending the City WG on Immigration Poverty – in time to help organize the Summit. Mariana brought refugees to the planning meetings with the focus on RC's and minorities like trans, disabled, seniors, youth, families. Vancity compensated RC participants for their participation.

The Summit was held on Monday June 11 and instead of the traditional keynote speaker four refugees opened the event which set the tone for dialogue.

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

Jenny (MAP) – attended and agreed that the event was very much guided by the priorities and messages set by the refugees who sat at every discussion table. Employment issues were frequently raised.

Sara (VAST) – there were lots of suggestions for RC's: English classes, better medical services, housing, transportation. (All services exist in Vancouver and as RC's often live in Surrey transit is expensive). Mentioned better training for social workers and CBSA because there is confused messaging to RC's.

Mariana concluded that all 3 levels of govt. attended the Summit to listen, and that the report which is based on the event plus other meetings will be sent to all govt levels as well as a video.

BREAK

10:45 World Refugee Day 2018 Video

Presented by Saleem Spindari and Jenny Moss (MAP)

Mariana acknowledged the work done by the volunteers WRD Planning Committee. Saleem introduced the video made by his cousin of the event.

The film will be sent as soon as available to MAP members and will be featured online and at the new MAP Facebook page.

A debrief meeting was held after the MAP meeting to gather suggestions for future events and a report will be circulated to all those involved.

11:00 Changes in LSS funding for legal aid for immigration and refugee cases.

Presented by Rochelle Appleby -LSS

There has been concern over the legal aid budget this year – but things are looking better.

The budget is set annually from Fed and Prov funds that were adequate for the 400 claimants normally arriving, but with numbers increasing to 1300+, and 500 appeal cases, plus the duty counsel program for those in detention there has been much anxiety over meeting needs.

Last year LSS twice announced there were imminent funding cuts but were able to find additional funds in time.

This year govt. has announced more funding by requiring each legal aid group to put forward a business case. LSS has applied for funding for 1300 – 1400 RC's, but its insufficient for a spike in entries over the border.

Presently there is some interim funding until early fall when Federal govt. will announce 2019 funding. However there is concern that some funds may need to be shifted to other provinces to address more need. Likely that this cycle of funding deficits in the middle of the year will continue as we experience shifts in numbers entering Canada.

Rochelle shared the brochure: 'Need help with your Refugee Claim?' available in many languages, and reconfirmed there is no slow down in access to legal aid and please encourage your clients to apply.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

Cecilia (SWIS)

Q: if a RC wants to change lawyers what is the process?

A: Client needs to return to Intake and will be asked why he/she wants to make a change. LSS will also contact the lawyer to find out what happened.

LSS are hesitant to change lawyers if the case is well advanced.

There is an appeal mechanism for denials of application.

Gulalai (Kiwassa)

Could Legal Aid provide community outreach with free lawyers?

A: LSS provides free legal education outreach.

ACCESS PROBONO provides some free legal counsel in different communities, but LSS doesn't as lawyers are not LSS employees.

Q: Can LSS cover translation costs?

A: yes, there is a core budget of \$400 per client for translations. Additional costs are 19c/word.

Q: Lawyers are not telling clients about this translation budget – so many don't know.

A: Usually lawyer will ask client for documents and get them translated with the core budget. In the case that the translation needs go over budget the lawyer will ask client to find another way to translate necessary documents.

Brad (Journey Home)

How many hours does legal aid provide?

A: 16 hours for RC

For a couple with the same claim: 16 hours for 1st person,
8 hours for 2nd (or 16 if unrelated claims)

LSS are monitoring this with the longer time it is taking to get cases to IRB.

11:15 MAP Housing Working Group Report

Presenter: Loren Balisky: co-chair MAP HWG

History of MAP HWG: when MAP was established 10 years ago there were working groups based on key RC needs including HWG. This group was re-started at the MAP meeting in May 2018 and provides this update:

- New HWG has met 3 times
- Drafted Terms of Reference for the HWG (attached, see #17) that must be approved by MAP
- Articulated a new Mission Statement: *To promote the safety and well-being of refugee claimants by finding and creating housing solutions along the continuum of need for them.*
- Established a new committee with two levels:
 - those who are actively involved and attend 6+ meetings/year
 - advisors who attend when their expertise is needed and/or when they can
- Produced a Housing Forum Report based on the excellent forum in May attended by many MAP members and other persons of interest. The report is an Action Plan with 1 year short term goals and 3 year long term goals.

SHORT TERM GOALS:

- Increase awareness and understanding of RC housing situation
- Identify vacant or under-used housing units
- Increase the supply of new units
- Support RC's in securing housing
- Strengthen and build collaborative network activity

LONG TERM GOALS:

- Increase awareness and understanding – get it printed, online, use as a tool
- Increase supply of new housing – less shelter and more long term
- Lobby for legislative change e.g. work permits, income assistance allowance

GOING FORWARD:

- Forum report will officially go out to participants and to MAP and everyone is encouraged to share widely
- The co-chairs will present to the Council of Community Homelessness Tables meeting on July 18. The Council includes many people interested in knowing more about RC housing needs.
- The HWG is encouraged to take action and keep the momentum going – please mention it to others and if interested join the group! For example, thanks to Celine Mauboules who has joined us from the background of the Homelessness world and John Dubé (MOSAIC) to finish the report.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

Raul (Kinbrace)

- Suggest to change the mission statement to mention 'affordable' housing because RC's can't afford local rentals.

- In the short term what kind of new units is the HWG considering? Shelter is not a solution so should the goal actually be to 'Increase the supply of new *permanent* units'?
- Increasing awareness is a goal – could this include working with homeowners to see if they can offer housing?

A: Yes – there is more detail behind the Action Points and the HWG can develop a fuller plan.

Gulalai (Kiwassa)

We must use the power of social media and other forms of media with communities who are already working with RC's.

11.30: Agency Updates

- **Saleem – MOSAIC**
MOSAIC to be partnering with Options, Inasmuch, Abbotsford CS, Kinbrace to provide employment, crisis counselling and READY Tours for RC's in Surrey/Fraser Valley region under new stream B funding. More details will be shared in September.
- **Brad – Journey Home**
Ride for Refugees is Sept. 29. The ride has ways RC's can volunteer to support the event and/or ride and raise funds. See: <https://rideforrefuge.org/home>
NEW STAFF! Brad introduced Vanessa Roth who is the new team lead at Journey Home in Settlement Services. Any matters regarding Intake will pertain to Vanessa.
- **Iris – Options**
Options is a new partner with MOSAIC in Stream B funding for RC's (Already provides Stream A). Looking forward to helping RC's with employment services.
- **Gulalai – Kiwassa NH**
Average 5-10 RC families per week – Kiwassa provides employment services by identifying temporary work. Also transport, childminding, and food services for RC's.
Kiwassa has 2 housing buildings which are both full.
Community organizations are often better placed to provide basic services and support to RC's.
Trying to set up a legal clinic especially because domestic violence is a big issue – they already have a social worker to help with this.
- **Thanh – MPNH**
Lack of resources for kids aged 6 – 12 (middle years) – MPNH is trying to partner privately to help – e.g. offering a pre-teen camp with all expenses paid for at MPNH.
- **Arran/Cloe – Canadian Red Cross**
Work in the Immigrant Detention Monitoring program at CRC, and they will be attending MAP meetings along with Mandana when she is not deployed to provincial disasters.

At the October meeting at Red Cross they will explain their duties fully – but to note they don't only monitor detention for RC's.

- **Chris – Rainbow Refugee**

Working with DIVERSECity to support LGBTQ RC's in Surrey.

- **Rochelle – LSS**

LSS will share information about new settlement services available to RS's with lawyers.

- **Cecilia – SWIS**

VSB offices will be open all summer to help with new registrations.

At end of August there will be a Resource Fair at Charles Tupper Secondary School for new families.

Expect between 500-800 people over 2 days.

- **Julia – bc211**

Remember – please make sure bc211 knows about any updates at your agency affecting RC's by emailing: updates@bc211.ca

- **Amos – UMOJA**

NEW MAP member! Welcome!

Umoja is beginning to see RC's at their office in Surrey.

In July they will start a new employment program for men looking for work.

- **Mona – SOS**

SOS has released its survey of RC's – **What's happening in Metro Vancouver** – it will be made available through MAP.

Since January average of 90 new RC's/month.

Pilot texting program for RC's to replace the email information system. Items such as warnings about scams that RC's need to be aware of are sent out.

- **Loren – Kinbrace**

Loren is stepping down from his Executive Director position at Kinbrace in the fall. A new director will be needed so interested people can inquire.

Loren will stay connected with Kinbrace and MAP.

- **Ana – PIRS**

Offering **Refugee Strong Start** program for refugees with children up to 5 years old this summer at a school in south Vancouver.

- **Mariana – VAST**

VAST will have a presence in Surrey from July 1. Hoping to connect with as many local agencies as possible and to form new support groups like the Wednesday group at Welcome Center.

Sara is a community-based staff member who provides a community kitchen, and a community-

based group for RC's to support and befriend each other. You can reach Sara on Mondays and Wednesdays.

VAST offers 'Getting through it' support program. Thanks to many lawyers who refer their clients to this group.

Mariana can send out the group program details in different languages to those interested.

- **Saleem - MOSAIC**

Thanked Loren for his leadership and although it's hard to imagine Kinbrace without him we look forward to Loren's continued interest and support to MAP.

QUESTION – Gulalai (Kiwassa)

Wonders why MAP does not include the words RC in its name?

Saleem: this is an important item for the Strategy Meeting coming up. We will also look at MAP funding, logo with Vancity's support.

12:00 pm Evaluation and Adjournment

NEXT MEETING: September 27, 2018, location TBA

Enjoy a wonderful and well-deserved summer!