

Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP)

**Thursday, September 27, 2018**

Location: ISSofBC

*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); John Dubé (MOSAIC); Darae Lee (MOSAIC); Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC); Katherine Griffin (MOSAIC); Loren Balisky (Kinbrace); Raul Gatica (Kinbrace); Fran Gallo (Ready Tour); Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST); Sara Lopez (VAST); Shabnam Khatibich (VAST); Frank Cohn (VAST); Kathleen Muir (VAST intern); Nathan Wright (bc211); Helen Su (Collingwood NH); Melissa Giles (MCC); Teresa Fuller (MCC); Gerardo Munnariz (MCC); Anna Czarkowski (JHS); Katie Osborne (JHS); Carl@ Campodónico (Qmunity); Osmel Guerra (Qmunity); James Grunau (Journey Home); Vanessa Roth (Journey Home); Brad Kinnie (Journey Home); Laura Mannix (DIVERSEcity); Carmen Miranda (LMNHS); Kalliopi Ketalaras (IRB); Peter Prediger (Inasmuch); Tammy Johnson (Inasmuch); Richard Belcham (Inasmuch); Khim Tan (Options); Iris Solozarno (Options); Dennis Juarez (Options); Mona Hassania (SOS); Kathy Sherrill (ISS); Nasra Mire (SOS); Queenie Lo (IRCC); Sophia Abraham (IRCC); Mark Konrad (IRCC); Gulalai Habib (Kiwassa N.H.); Patricia Mahecha (Inland Refugee Society); Thanh Lam (MPNH); Motoi Matsukura (Purpose); Franklin Amabfoku (Purpose); Vicki Chiu (MJTT); Amos Kambere (UMOJA); Rainer Nicdau (MSDPR); Claudia Buendia (MSDPR); Mary Kam (SUCCESS); Brendan O’Leary (Inland Refugee Society); Adeline Yu (Fraser Health New Canadian Clinic); Bahar Taheri (BC Refugee Hub); Andrea Loewen (Abbotsford Community Services); Jenny Moss (MAP)

**Apologies:** Catherine Ludgate (Vancity),

**9:30 am**

- Co-Chair: Saleem Spindari (MOSAIC)
- Saleem acknowledged for MAP that our meeting was held on the unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations
- Thanks to Vancity and the Provincial Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology for funding in support of MAP and its work.
- Introduction of all participants
- The Agenda was approved
- Approval of June MAP Minutes  
Cecilia Tagle (SWIS/CCR) had requested the following correction:  
**Under - Report back from 2018 CCR International Conference the Minutes should state:**  
“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.”

The Minutes, once corrected, were approved.

## **PRESENTATION: Report to members on MAP's Strategic Meeting and going forward**

Saleem Spindari and Marianne Martinez Vieyra (co-chairs) introduced the presentation

A Strategic Planning meeting was called on July 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss the direction and future goals of MAP. The reason for the timing was because funding provided by Vancity (and later by the Province through MJTT) enabled MAP to increase its profile and achieve more to respond to the needs of RC's.

The following MAP members assisted with the process:

Saleem Spindari – MOSAIC

Mariana Martinez Vieyra – VAST

Catherine Ludgate - Vancity

Loren Balisky – Kinbrace Society

Mona Hassannia - SOS

Khim Tan – OPTIONS

Mary Kam – SUCCESS

Gulalai Habib – Kiwassa NH

Jenny Moss – MAP

The process was ably facilitated by a consultant: Alice Sundberg, who provided the report.

During the day the participants:

- **Approved the MAP MISSION as it stands:**

*"The mission of MAP is to work collaboratively to identify barriers and provide solutions to promote the protection and well-being of refugee claimants and service providers, by facilitating networking and information sharing."*

- **Created a new 3-Year VISION:**

*"Within the next three years Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP) will be a model of collaborative engagement with the validity, recognition and capacity to respond to the vulnerabilities and the potential of refugee claimants. MAP will enhance the well-being of service providers by effectively catalyzing coordination among all those with the will, expertise and resources to address refugee claimant issues."*

- **Underwent a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to gain a better understanding of where we are and where we want to focus our attentions:**

### **STRENGTHS: *What MAP does very well***

- Provides a safe, structured and neutral space for networking and information sharing on Refugee Claimant issues.
- Long history and trusted reputation
- Advances relationship-building collaborative work and joint projects
- Provides a common voice on Refugee Claimant issues

### **WEAKNESSES/GAPS: *Areas needing improvement***

- Needs more financial resources:
  - capacity to provide public education

- ability to promote and market MAP
- website is weak
- not achieving potential
- Informal structure – Not a non-profit society or charity to apply for funding.
- Leadership experiences time and energy constraints and members don't all feel a sense of belonging.
- Not enough working together - lack of clarity around a collective voice.
- Dissonance and competition due to member diversity and funding.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES - *factors that could assist MAP achieve its mission***

- Refugee Claimants are a little-known population that gets lots of media
- Current funders' support and connections
- MAP could provide member expertise at forums and make services known
- Possible recognition as a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)
- MAP could be recognized nationally as a model umbrella organization
- Member agencies could assist by applying for grants to support MAP
- Upcoming elections

#### **CHALLENGES – *potential barriers to MAP's mission***

- Myths about the Refugee Claimant population
- Lower priority of Refugee Claimant issues among larger MAP members
- MAP is not a charitable society

As a result, a set of **Strategic Goals** were decided on for the next 3 years:

- Increased public awareness of Refugee Claimant issues and a more welcoming attitude.
- Enhanced visibility and presence of MAP throughout the province and eventually Canada.
- Paid staff representing MAP to provide more capacity.
- Asset Mapping to describe the resources, services and programs for refugee claimants in the region and to recommend how Refugee Claimants can be settled into safe, secure permanent housing and begin to create 'home' surrounded by a welcoming community.
- Sponsoring agencies for funding requests for MAP.

The Strategic Plan was circulated for all members to retain a copy and will be posted on the new website.

Lastly, the Strategic Planning group agreed to an **Action Plan** to see these goals achieved together with a timeline and a note of who is responsible. A **Workplan** is being created based on the Action Plan.

One of the important actionable items is to institute again the **Information Working Group** that will be tasked with:

- a) Public awareness and education of Refugee Claimant issues through campaigns
- b) Enhanced visibility of MAP through the development of a marketing plan a logo and a new website

**Saleem** requested comments, questions and approval for the new Strategic Plan.

**APPROVAL** was unanimous. The creation of a new Information Working Group was also approved.

**Jenny** asked for volunteers who want to join the IWG to contact her at the break or after MAP today.

### **Update on activities and new Provincial contract: MAP Housing Working Group**

**Co-chairs: Loren Balisky and James Grunau**

The Housing Working Group has been active throughout the summer with presentations to community groups, conferences, and the successful acquisition of funding through the Provincial Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology to pursue a Solution to the housing needs of refugee claimants.

#### **Our presentations focus on:**

- **The situation at hand** - RC's are in shelters, they are having a very hard time finding affordable housing – taking spaces from other needy folks and are in need of solutions.
- **Describing the population we serve:** RC's, not convention refugees
- **We present statistics of RC's arriving into Canada** – and BC specifically – both over time and currently. BC receives 5% of RC's annually.
- **We document the Housing Forum and report** – together with the Action Plan and short and long term goals
- **Recently achieved Provincial funding** to build capacity – from September to March 2019 with the leadership thro' HWG.

The Provincially funded project provides for 4 areas of activity:

1. Capacity building for MAP & HWG – 2 paid days/ week (formerly 3 days/month)
2. Increase Public Awareness – Information Working Group will take this on; new website
3. Build capacity within housing providers – **James** commented on the need to provide clearer navigation and coordination between housing providers and RC's
4. Establish a strategic coordinated plan for RC reception, housing and integration. Based on research and the support of:
  - Advisory Committee chaired by Theresa Harding (Metro Vancouver Council on Homelessness)
  - Asset mapping via a paid consultantWith the aim of producing strategic recommendations and a plan for housing in the future.

James opened the presentation up for feedback and comments leading to an approval:

**Question: Darae (MOSAIC):** Focussing on Task #3 Build capacity within housing providers – do we have a concrete plan?

**A:** We hope to Identify vacant places, church and community groups, empty nesters, work with Airbnb.

**Question:** are you including all the housing Vancouver has, including ‘harm reduction’ housing? Rainbow Refugee has been successful in obtaining certain units.

**Osmel (Qmunity):** (the building Rainbow has – is ours). Is MAP HWG looking for more housing for LGBTQ RC’s?

**Claudia (MSDPR)** – what are we doing for RC’s with disabilities – can we look for families to rent suites and provide support?

**A: Saleem** – we’re just starting – we are looking at a lot of opportunities all over LMR – HWG is open to new members.

**Nathan – BC211** – should we look daily at RC housing providers’ spaces as well as shelters?

**A:** Yes – we will be working closely with BC211

#### **SUMMER MEETING WITH FEDERAL IRCC:**

**Saleem** provided an update about the summer meeting MAP had with federal IRCC:

Saleem, Mariana, Loren and Jenny met with Deputy Minister Harpreet Kochhar and Director General Louis Dumas – both are in touch with the movement of refugee claimants across the country.

Meeting took place for about 45 minutes on Aug 1<sup>st</sup>.

Asked Feds to recognize MAP as a key partner in RC discussions in BC.

Loren described the HWG housing model and vision for the future and asked for federal help (\$\$) to help with modular housing offer (land purchase)

We met with 7 individuals from IRCC both local and federal specifically involved with funding RC programs. The meeting was very positive, and we believe that MAP is now definitely ‘on the map’ at a federal level.

A presentation of gifts and warm wishes was made to Mona Hassania (SOS) as she leaves on her maternity leave and the arrival of twins! Mona thanked MAP for constant support and collaboration.

#### **BREAK**

#### ***NEW! Regular feature:***

#### **Quantitative and qualitative update on Refugee Claimants in the Lower Mainland**

#### **Bahar Taheri, BC Refugee Hub**

Bahar has been working with ISSofBC and The Province of BC on the BC Refugee Hub since its inception in 2015. Formerly the ISSofBC Refugee Readiness Hub (RRH), was established to support BC’s share of the 25,000 Syrian refugees resettled to Canada in 2016. With funding from the Provincial Government of BC’s Refugee Readiness Fund the original RRH was targeted only at those sponsoring and supporting

Syrian refugee resettlement efforts. This mandate has now been extended to include information on all refugee categories throughout the province. And the Hub will be focussing more on RC's going forward.

#### **BC Refugee Hub Activities as related to RC's:**

- Information sheets available on many topics related to refugees
- Currently engaged in a Survey in the RC sector – so far she has heard that:
  - people want info on the basics
  - resources and training especially on trauma and PTSD, domestic violence,
  - RC eligibility for programs and services
  - stats on RC: who they are, their skills, languages spoken
- Currently talking to MOSAIC about including their statistics
- Service provider profile – if your agency wants to be featured please contact Bahar at bahartaheri@gmail.com
- Stream A providers survey re: inventory of services in different cities
- RC FAQ sheet – who can apply, how to apply, eligibility. Bahar wants to make this available as a one-stop shop for information about RC's.

#### **Future plans:**

- Collaborate with MAP members re webinars, trainings, information to provide to clients  
Bahar is joining the new MAP Information Working Group to streamline information sharing.

**Question:** how does BC Refugee Hub work with the MAP website?

Bahar will be part of IWG and we will collaborate. The MAP website is to be totally overhauled.

#### **PRESENTATION: Stream B Services**

Two presentations were provided by MOSAIC and ISSoBC who are directly funded by the Province to provide services to refugee claimants.

##### **1. John Dubé: Senior Manager for Settlement Programs, MOSAIC**

A PowerPoint presentation was provided that is attached.

MOSAIC provides Stream B wraparound support in Fraser Valley: Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Mission. Services are delivered via the following partnerships: Kinbrace, Inasmuch, Abbotsford Community Services, VAST and Options to look at the unique needs of RC'.

#### **Questions and Comments:**

- We will work closely with Abbotsford CS and together will develop a new MAP group in the Fraser Valley – co-lead by Abbotsford CS and MOSAIC
- Will be researching the situation for RC's in the area - RC numbers in Fraser Valley unknown.
- **KHIM (Options)** Asset mapping – is there a tool to share the info?  
**Answer:** Bahar is organizing this with Saleem at MOSAIC
- **Q:** Would you consider looking specifically at LGBTQ as a minority within the minority of RC's?  
**Answer:** We will monitor carefully all minorities respecting confidentiality and safety.

- **Loren:** What is Stream A& B?  
Stream A is funding for foreign students, temporary foreign workers and RC's,  
Stream B is strictly RC's and focussed on their needs – Stream A was lacking in the wraparound aspect for RC's.  
For example: Psycho-social support was added in July 2018
- **Loren** – asset mapping at MAP HWG should synergize with MOSAIC's research.  
**Answer:** absolutely – this will add to the richness of the report results.

## **2. Kathy Sherrill: Associate Director - Settlement Services, ISSofBC**

Kathy provided a **PowerPoint** (attached) outlining the Stream B services of ISSofBC.

They continue to serve out of the **Vancouver Office on Victoria Drive**, but will now run a new site in **Surrey at 103/152A**.

SOS will be housed in both offices.

ISS are referring some services out to Stream A providers:

**VAST** to provide services to all refugees in Surrey – in many languages

**VICTORIA expansion** – via Mariana as Provincial Mental Health Coordinator – providing VAST training and direct services in Victoria.

*Non-stream B services available for RC's:*

- 2-way text messaging system – e.g. clothing handout on Saturday to 80 people
- Vancity on site at both buildings
- temporary housing – limited number of beds available to RC's

### **QUESTIONS:**

**Peter (Inasmuch):** Can RC's use the medical clinic? Does this include x-rays?

Answer: Yes, RC's can use the clinic. Kathy will check whether tests are included.

**Mary (SUCCESS):** is there any difference between RC clinic (need ID) and New Canadian Clinic?

Answer: Same vision – to be available to everyone.

Can **privately sponsored RC's** access clinic? **Answer:** yes.

**ISS-SOS as Housing providers** – they will be the go-to service with 2 housing centers. SOS will work with HWG to clarify the referral process.

**Iris (Options):** When are the services starting for RC's in Surrey?

Answer: ISS staff are on site here in Vancouver getting trained before being sent out to Surrey

If Surrey clients need SOS-ISS services they should come to Victoria Drive in the meantime and transportation will be provided by ISS – people must ask for the 2 bus tickets.

**Kathy asked:** Would you like a staff member deployed out to Surrey now? If so talk to Nasra (new SOS Manager nasra.mire@sosbc.ca)

**Gulalai:** are the services there for the clients? In her experience there is not enough detail provided to

help with the issues faced by RC families.

**Kathy:** SOS & VAST have done a great job dealing with new numbers.

**Mariana:** since July, and new funding, we have been building capacity and talking to everyone.

**Brad:** Can we refer clients into 2-way text messaging? (Texting service for newcomers)

Answer: We are testing – we need consent for new clients. We have established this for SOS clients and will have to go through the same process for other agencies.

**Carl@:** language should be more client-centered. Plain English, not sector jargon not sector jargon on forms, postings etc.

**IRCC:** What's happening with Airbnb and possible accommodation?

**Saleem:** described the **Open Homes** meeting Airbnb had with **MAP** – so far, it's not working but they do provide some temporary credit.

**John Dube:** The conversation is in progress but slow because of issues around confidentiality and liability.

**Cathy Sherrill:** we also must be compliant with local municipal regulations.

Saleem thanked the two agencies for their updates on Stream B programs and Vicki Chiu representing the BC Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology for the funding to allow this expansion in services.

### **Agency Updates: refugee claimant updates only please!**

- **Peter (Inasmuch)**  
Currently signing a new lease for another house
- **Khim (Options)**  
Thanked MJTT for funds for Stream A in Surrey  
grateful for MOSAIC's partnership especially around employment
- **Katie Osborne (John Howard Society)**  
JHS housing as an alternative to detention program started with 1 client so far.
- **Vanessa (Journey Home)**  
She is the new settlement supervisor – please say hello!
- **Osmund (Qmunity)**  
Working with Rainbow for housing help and support to LGBTW RC's  
Carlo: Qmunity would like referrals for LGTBQ and will refer out appropriately
- **Fran (Ready Tours)**  
Ready tours of the IRB courtrooms for RC's offered twice a month – register yourself or a RC at [refugeeclaim.ca](http://refugeeclaim.ca). There is also a session for IRB-RAD – so far, no takers!  
New updates to online guide – check them out
- **Masashi (I Belong (MOSAIC))** – funded to provide settlement help to RC who are trans – working closely with Rainbow Refugee and VAST.

- **Kalliopi (IRB)** – August numbers: of the claims referred to IRB in Vancouver – 109 were principal claims and 182 claims came from principals and their associates.  
Top country claims received in BC: Iran (29), Mexico (11), India (11), Afghanistan (6), Iraq (6)  
The numbers are on track with those received last year

IRB forms have been updated, condensed and the ‘legalese’ removed to be simpler to read.

- **Franklin (Purpose Society)**  
Launched a new Immigration Support Program for HIV clients – to provide settlement support.
- **Sara (VAST)** –  
Agencies can refer clients via our website – please contact Sara if the link is not working.  
In October, for Surrey clients, there is a **Getting Through It** (VAST) group at **Options** with **Denis Juarez**
- **Andrea (Abbotsford CS)**  
Started providing services to RC’s.  
Working with **Alexandra (MOSAIC)** to set up **MAP** in **Fraser Valley**.
- **Frank (VAST)**  
Frank appreciates the collaboration of MAP with all the challenges RC’s are facing now.
- **Carmen (Little Mountain NH)**  
Agencies can send clients in their neighborhood as LMNH has funding for RC’s –  
for example they provide a computer basics course in Spanish and in Arabic.
- **Laura (DiverseCITY)**  
Safe Space pilot program with Rainbow Refugee and MOSAIC’s ‘I belong’ program will finish at the end of October.  
Peer support groups on Sundays – sexual and gender diverse backgrounds.  
Clinical psych assistance provided that is not based on immigration status – language specific.
- **Amos (Umoja)**  
Oct 16 gala fundraiser – sent out via MAP
- **Bahar (BC Refugee Hub)**  
FAQ doc coming out on website and RC process one pager
- **Mona (SOS)**  
96 new claimants  
Mona introduced **Nasra Mire** – SOS’s new temporary Manager while Mona is on mat leave
- **Rainer (MSDPR)**  
MSDPR outreach services at ISS and MOSAIC will start again in October.
- **Denis (Options)**  
Stream B services provided include customized employment support to RC’s

*Next Monday* – workshop on resume writing, English

Oct 10 – TransLink workshop – how to use their App and services

There will be an Employment assistance worker on site at Whalley and Newton (Wed/Fri)

- **Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC)**

New coordinator at MOSAIC for the valley.

- **Jenny (MAP)**

Residential Tenancy Trainings are being made available to service providers and clients.

There are several topics provided both for new tenants as well as landlords of buildings and individual houses. Contact Jenny for more information

**12:15pm: Evaluation and Adjournment**

***NEXT MEETING:*** *October 25, 2018, at Canadian Red Cross: 3400 Lake City Way, Burnaby (at Lougheed)*  
*Opposite the Lake City Way SkyTrain station and ample free parking available*