



## MAP Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 28, 2021 - 9:30AM – 12:00 PM

**Attendees:** Jenny Lam (Options), Thanh Lam (MPNH), Diana Delgado (Options), Iris Solorzano (Options), Shelley Dhaliwal (Options), Vanessa Roth (JHC), Barry Growe (JHC), Ricardo Rocha (JHC), Carillon Kinley (IRCC), Claire Rowlands (IRCC), Bridget Bell (IRB), Xania Labreche (IRB), Marissa Deweerdt (IRB), Chelsea Smith-Hould (IRB), Marzieh Nezakat (MOSAIC), Jackie Sarvini (MOSAIC), Lucia Hernandez (MOSAIC), Mssko Wakil (MOSAIC), Adrienne Bale (DIVERSEcity), Meheret Bisrat (DIVERSEcity), Monika Isaak (Archway CS), Geeta Bhardwaj (Archway CS), Sabrina Dumitra (AMSSA), Masha Rademakers (Impact North Shore), Devinder Chattha (PICS), Jaswinder Sandhu (PICS), Nazanin Moghadami (Rainbow Refugee), Aleks Manzur-Dughman, (Rainbow Refugee), Garfield Hunter, Jose Fernandez Garcia (UBC), Elmira Tayvar (UBC), Rainer Nicdau (MSDPR), Paige Levirs (MSDPR), Valentina Stanciu (MSDPR), Joni Rose (MUNI), Alex Kang (MUNI), Tammy Johnson (Inasmuch), Sarah Mills (Inasmuch), Derek Chu (Kinbrace), Ryan Reid (Kinbrace), Mohammed Zaqout (Kinbrace), Sophia Underhill (Ready Tour), Fran Gallo, Mahak Mahmoodi (Red Cross), Mahi Khalef (SOS-ISSofBC), Julia Wu (bc211), Samuel Chan (SUCCESS), Sara Lopez (VAST), Mariana Martinez V (VAST), Diana Barry (Vancity), Alan Huang (SND Div), Wazhma Wakil (Umbrella MHC), Abeer Hatab (REACH Clinic), Sireen El-Nashar (Zaytuna), Ali Mustafa (Muslim Food Bank), Imtiaz Popat (Fraser Health), Wen Ren (LMNH), Richard Soo (ECC), Jenny Moss (MAP)

Regrets: Loren Balisky,

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**Welcome from Co-Chair:** Jenny Lam

**Jenny acknowledged and thanked** the hən̓qəmin̓əm̓ (HUNKAMEENAM) and Skwxwú7mesh (SQUAMISH) peoples, as well as the peoples of other traditional territories where our members are situated, and where we do much of our work.

Jenny also **acknowledged the generous funding from Ministry of Municipal Affairs (formerly MJEDC)** that makes MAP's work possible.

Jenny welcomed participants from **35 MAP member agencies**.

First time introductions:

- Sarah Mills – new settlement worker at Inasmuch CS
- Claire Rowlands – IRCC
- Mssko Wakil – new Legal Advocate at MOSAIC for Afghan clients and family reunification
- Abeer Hatab – REACH Clinic – new position: violence prevention support worker for Arabic speaking women

Jenny covered the meeting protocol including recording for Minute taking only – it will be deleted once the Minutes are approved.

The **Agenda** was outlined, and breakout rooms described: 1) LGBTQI+ refugee issues hosted by guest speakers 2) Settlement 3) Housing.

Agency Updates were added to the CHAT and distributed later the same day.

The **September 23, 2021 meeting Minutes** were approved with the following addition:

- The **IRB** asked for statistical updates up to September 30<sup>th</sup> to be added – these can be found at the end of the Minutes.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

##### **IRB Update – provided by Bridget Bell**

Principal referrals in Vancouver: August 148 (228 in total)

September: 149 (211 in total)

*Top source countries for April 1 – Sept 30:*

Iran: 217 Principal Claims

India: 177

Mexico: 52

Afghanistan: 28

Other countries: 220

*In the Vancouver inventory of claimants:*

42% from Iran

17% from India

8% from Mexico

3% from China

2% from Afghanistan

28% - all other countries

**Question** regarding numbers of claims from Hong Kong.

Response: Hong Kong claims are listed separately, and there are very few in Vancouver.

Jenny thanked Bridget.

#### **Presentation 1: Introducing Rainbow Refugee (RR) programs and services**

Jenny introduced the speakers from Rainbow Refugee:

**Aleks Selim Dughman Manzur (They/Them) – Program Director**

**Nazanin Moghadami – Support Manager**

**Aleks provided an historical context to RR's work:** currently approximately 71 countries do not protect LGBTQI people from discrimination based on their gender ID, sexual orientation etc. and criminalize their activities. 114 countries do not protect persons from discrimination, and 68 who criminalize sexual orientation and many who criminalize gender identity.

As a result there are many who need to leave the country and seek protection because of state sponsored homo/trans phobias.

RR was founded in 2000 by Rob Hughes with Chris Morrissey and Bridget Cole when the need for a distinct society to protect refugee claimants was seen as people were frequently asking for support

coming from overseas.

Active for around 21 years and used various ways to assist: information, referral, peer groups and in 2001 drop in support was started.

In 2011 – RR started assembling private sponsorship groups of 7/8 committed to support for a year.

RR Assistance Partnership started with IRCC to enable private sponsorship based on LGBTQI identity – firstly it was a pilot program but since 2019 it has been changed to a 5-year program – blended program with the government that RR hopes will become a permanent program – which allows more people to be sponsored.

Mission: A Safe and Just World for LGBTQ2I+ people

See slides attached for current programs and services and delivery models.

Email Nazanin at [support@rainbowrefugee.ca](mailto:support@rainbowrefugee.ca) to make referrals of refugee claimants. RR can help others too if they are isolated and in real need of their specialized support.

RR also partners and acknowledges the work of VAST, I Belong at MOSAIC, REACH Clinic.

Q&A was provided in the breakout room

## **Presentation 2: Rainbow Housing: Challenges and Solutions to Housing LGBTQI+ Refugees in Metro Vancouver**

**Presenters: Garfield Hunter: Urban social equity planning research consultant**

**Jose Fernandez Garcia: Urban Community Planner and Research Consultant**

Jose opened the presentation on the report from this research program that took place over last year. The speakers introduced themselves – drawing attention to their lived experience as LGBTQI+ refugee claimants to Canada. Jose recognized and acknowledged the unceded territory where they both spoke.

Housing precarity and homelessness are common for newly arrived refugee claimants who are LGBTQI+. Poverty, unaffordable housing, job precarity, racism and gender discrimination as well as language and cultural barriers cause homelessness and unsafe housing and Covid has exacerbated the challenges and vulnerability for many.

The experience of LGBTQI+ refugees and housing has not been properly documented before.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SLIDES FOR METHODOLOGY, RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Next steps:

- Full report ready - Summary report being reviewed for launch with presentation
- Presentation to BC Housing Senior Housing
- Presentation to LGBTQI+ refugees who participated in the research
- Advocacy regarding the recommendations
- Wider presentations to establish partnerships with City of Vancouver and other municipalities.

Any questions or comments please contact:

**Garfield W. Hunter, Ph.D.,** Urban Planning and Sustainability Strategist

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236-338-0212

**José Fernández García, MSc.,** Community and Regional Planner  
[jose.fernandez.garcia@gmail.com](mailto:jose.fernandez.garcia@gmail.com)  
778-316-1004

Q&A was provided in the breakout room

BREAK

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

There was no report this month as Bahar was not available.

### **Update on BC CHARMS - Housing Referral & Data Management System**

**Jackie Sarvini (MOSAIC – BC CHARMS Coordinator)**

- **Report book** – 5 themed sections include:
  - Who belongs? Stories of belonging and struggles of claimants looking for housing
  - Am I eligible? Navigating the unaffordable and often unreachable rental market
  - What makes a home? What does a home mean to claimants?
  - Where do I go? Stories of claimants reflecting on the barriers to gaining housing and what they would do.
  - The Future is Bright Stories of claimants looking to the future with hope and resilience.

The Report Book has been submitted to the funder for approval and will be presented at Nov 16 BCNPHA Housing Central Conference.

- **Innovative Housing Solutions Project** – the selected consultants have submitted the first draft of their research – highlighted the barriers against claimants integrating successfully into society. Planning that the consultants will be able to provide the final report as a presentation to MAP.
- **Refugee Claimant Navigation Website** – a sub-project of BC CHARMS to provide information needed on first arrival in a simple format. MOSAIC has met with the referred website developer and there will be more news soon.
- **Data Referral System** – Since July, the MAP/MOSAIC team have attended with the Social Solutions Team (from Apricot) 12 one-hour meetings to implement suggestions/recommendations to the system including a robust privacy & security system. The team is constantly testing the system internally – and afterwards will invite external agency reps to test the system also to gain more feedback. This will be followed by system user recruitment and training.

### **Report from MAP Emergency Task Force**

**Barry Growse (Journey Home Community)**

We have held our first meeting. Members include Thanh Lam (MAP co-chair/MPNH), Jenny Moss (MAP), Sara Maria Lopez (VAST), Mahi Khalaf (SOS-ISSofBC), Joni Rose (MUNI) and Loren Balisky (Kinbrace) as a corresponding member. Barry Growse is the Chair.

Our responsibility is to take the recommendations from the 50-page report submitted to MAP by Richard Belcham regarding a potential very large increase in refugee claimant arrivals and create a practical and succinct Emergency Response Plan. We will complete in about 5-6 months and then present the plan to MAP members.

To proceed the MAP Executive asked for participants to vote their approval of this planning process.

**Motion: “The MAP membership hereby approves of the MAP Emergency Task Force continuing the planning for a response to an unanticipated influx of refugee claimant arrivals, in support of member agencies and in the spirit of collaboration.”**

Voting took place via anonymous poll (1 vote per agency)

Results: Carried 82% in favour, none against, and five abstentions.

## **Agency Updates –**

### **Impact North Shore - Masha Rademaker**

**North Shore Multicultural Society** has changed its name to **Impact North Shore** – it is a more compact name that better reflects the purpose of our work. The agency will be working from the same 2 offices and providing the same programs for newcomers. Just a name/website change: <https://impactnorthshore.ca/>

**Mahi Khalaf (SOS-ISSofBC) – have issued some** Informational videos in Arabic, Farsi & Spanish as well as English as a resource for claimants and settlement sector. <https://issbc.org/our-resource/refugee-related-application-videos>

### **Shelley Dhaliwal (Options CS)**

24 November Employment Law Clinic (online) in partnership with the South Asian Legal Clinic

3 November - Meet the Employer Event with Amazon (online)

Food security support continues

**Sara Lopez – VAST:** Amnesty & Humans Rights Watch have launched a campaign to end detention for asylum seekers in provincial jails in Canada. There are some video interviews included on the website: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-new-human-rights-campaign-targets-canadian-practice-of-holding-some/>

### **Imtiaz - (Fraser Health)**

Vaccine Clinics are on hold as FH focuses on 3<sup>rd</sup> doses for long term care patients

3<sup>rd</sup> dose for regular population will begin in January

People with language barriers have difficulty understanding how to organize their Vaccine Passport and there are still people who need vaccinations. Please access FH videos to help:

<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus/translated-resources#.YUzZNvnMI2x>

**Lucia H (MOSAIC)** Conversation Circles for refugee claimants and International Students starting Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2 levels – beginner and intermediate in person.

**Jenny Moss (MAP)** – Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) is holding its Fall Consultation at the end of November and registration is now open at <https://ccrweb.ca/en/meetings> together with a full schedule.

Note: Barry Grove will be presenting on the Emergency Planning process MAP BC has been involved in.

A **feedback poll** was launched re: this MAP meeting – thank you everyone for your participation.

Adjourned 12:40 PM.

**Next Meeting:** November 25 online.

***Agency Updates from the CHAT (previously circulated)***

- **Jose Fernandez Garcia/Garfield Hunter** – If you have any questions or comments about the Rainbow Housing Research presented at MAP on Oct 28 please contact Jose Fernandez Garcia at: [Jose.Fernandez.Garcia@vancouver.ca](mailto:Jose.Fernandez.Garcia@vancouver.ca) or Garfield Hunter at: [garfield.hunter@yahoo.com](mailto:garfield.hunter@yahoo.com)
- **Sara Lopez (VAST)**  
We run a support group for refugee claimants Wednesdays 10 am - 12 pm. Via Zoom, for more information please email to [referrals@vast-vancouver.ca](mailto:referrals@vast-vancouver.ca)
- **Shelley Dhaliwal, Options Community Services**  
Update from Options Community Services
- **Nazanin Moghadami (Rainbow Refugee)**  
At Rainbow Refugee Society we continue to run online groups for LGBTQI refugee claimants. To connect with us, contact Nazanin at [support@rainbowrefugee.ca](mailto:support@rainbowrefugee.ca)
- **Sophia Underhill, Kinbrace**  
We have our next two READY Tours on the following dates:  
1) Tomorrow, October 29th, 9:30am  
2) Friday November 12th, 9:30am.  
Please email Sophia at [ready@refugeeclaim.ca](mailto:ready@refugeeclaim.ca) to refer anyone! Interpreters are provided. We also have a Refugee Appeal Division information session on Thursday November 18th at 11:30am!
- **Mahi Khalaf, ISSofBC**  
Refugee Claimants Applications Videos in English, Arabic, Spanish and Farsi <https://issbc.org/our-resource/refugee-related-application-videos>
- **Samuel Chan, SUCCESS**  
SUCCESS BCSIS. We have new cohorts for our English Conversation Groups starting up again. Please check us out at our website here: <https://www.successbcsis.com/events>  
Feel free to email us [bcsis@success.bc.ca](mailto:bcsis@success.bc.ca) for more information for services regarding employment and settlement.
- **Sara Lopez VAST**  
Amnesty/Human Rights Watch Campaign: <https://www.hrw.org/welcometocanada>  
Article about the campaign at: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-new-human-rights-campaign-targets-canadian-practice-of-holding-some/>
- **Mahi Khalaf, SOS-ISSofBC**  
ISSofBC SOS Program continues to organize monthly workshops: Upcoming workshop in Farsi about Work Permits on 4th Nov. contact [mojgan.radfar@issbc.org](mailto:mojgan.radfar@issbc.org) to register your clients
- **Abeer Hattab (Reach Clinic)**

REACH continues supporting the community, and now we have support group for Arab women experiencing domestic violence, we accept referrals at [ahattab@reachcentre.bc.ca](mailto:ahattab@reachcentre.bc.ca)

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