



Refugee Newcomers in Surrey
Approaches to building a more welcoming
and inclusive community
March 2014

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Focus Group Findings.....	3
3. Promising Practices for Refugee Integration	6
3.1. Education and Youth.....	6
3.1.1. Assessment of K-12 students.....	8
3.1.2. Assessment for university-ready students	8
3.1.3. Refugee Week.....	10
3.1.4. Funding for Higher Education	10
3.1.5. Refugee Mentoring Program in Western Sydney and York University Buddy Program	11
3.1.6. Sports as Integration for Youth.....	12
3.1.7. Computers in Homes - Bridging the Digital Divide.....	13
3.2 Employment.....	13
3.2.1. Employability Forum.....	14
3.2.2. The Wuppertal Partizipation Network	14
3.2.3. Betet Skara and the Mitten Project of Botkyra, Sweden	15
3.2.4. The Immigrant Access Fund (IAF).....	16
3.2.5. Mingo – Let’s talk about your business. Ideally in your mother tongue.....	17
3.2.6. EMBERS.....	17
3.2.7. The role of trade unions.....	17
3.3. Access to Housing.....	18
3.3.1. Affordable Housing.....	18
3.3.2. Reach In	19
3.4 Existing Surrey Initiatives.....	19
3.4.1. Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)	20
3.4.2. Surrey Libraries.....	21
3.4.2. Moving Ahead Program (MAP)	21
3.4.3. Get in the Know!	21
3.5 Mental Health Services	21
3.5.1. Rainbow Refugees.....	22
Appendix 1 Promising Practices contact information	23

1. Introduction

The City of Surrey has become one of British Columbia's greatest recipients of immigrants and refugees. As a part of the Surrey Welcoming Communities project and specifically the Refugee Myth Busting Campaign ISSofBC was asked to seek input from Surrey residents, who came as refugees, on how the City could enhance their capacity to support refugee integration as well as undertake a review of promising practices elsewhere in Canada and around the world that could be replicated. This report is one of several Campaign activities to increase the understanding of refugee newcomer needs but also their assets and contributions to the City. Other Campaign components of this one year initiative included training sessions on refugees for the Surrey Board of Education, Douglas College, Simon Fraser University and Kwantlen Polytechnic University, quarterly newsletter, media campaign and the "Surrey a Place of Refuge" travelling exhibit.

The life and migration experiences of refugees settling in the City of Surrey are unique and vary from person to person. However, refugees fleeing persecution share one common experience when coming to Canada: to make a new home for themselves and their families in a new community that is often vastly different to the place they came from. Many refugees often have to learn a new language, find a place to live, a job to sustain themselves and their family. In addition, resettled refugees must avail themselves of a Government of Canada interest bearing transportation loan in order to travel to Canada. Refugees do not plan or choose to leave their home. The adaptation and settlement process for refugees can be daunting and overwhelming and can lead to feelings of alienation, loneliness, and frustration.

Cities, organizations and individuals around the world have developed not only culturally responsive local practices to support the successful integration of refugee populations but also introduced promising practices that engage local residents and public institutions to build more welcoming and inclusive communities

When integration is successful, the outcome is cohesive communities, stable economies, and the richness of cultural diversity, but when they fail, the result may be poverty, and segregation.

2. Focus Group Findings

Refugee immigration to the City of Surrey has steadily increased over the past decade resulting in changing the cultural vibrancy of the community. A refugee coming to a new country faces many new processes and challenges.

An important element of the Refugee Myth Busting Campaign initiative was hearing first hand from refugees on their settlement experiences to Surrey and to ascertain from these experiences whether there were future considerations needed to enhance refugee newcomer's opportunity to contribute and be welcomed in their new home.

Four focus groups were held between July 3rd and September 19th, 2013. In undertaking these focus groups we intentionally held one for women (7 participants), one for youth (4 participants), and two mixed adult groups (19 participants), for a total of 30 participants.¹ The focus groups were

¹ Focus Group 1 (women): 7 women, including individuals from Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, and 3 interpreters.

scheduled at different times and locations as well, participants were provided by a small honorarium and bus tickets to ensure accessibility. In the case of the women's focus group, childcare was provided. Interpreters were offered to participants to ensure that language was not a barrier to participating. All groups were assigned at least one interpreter. For the women's group, three interpreters were present.

All participants of the focus groups self-identified as a former refugee, or having "arrived in Canada as a refugee". Focus group participants represented the three refugee categories, including government assisted refugees (GARs), privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) and refugee landed in Canada. Participants also represented nine (9) different source countries including; Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Palestine, Somalia and Syria. Most participants had been living in Surrey less than five (5) years.

It is important to remember that the issues and concerns focus group participants raised are a sample of issues by thirty (30) people and should not be misconstrued as those shared by every Surrey resident who was a former or current refugee. The findings should be considered a snapshot of some refugees' reflection on the city they live in, the services they receive, and the obstacles they encounter.

The following quotes capture the perception of refugees in Surrey. Please note that focus group participants might not always have been aware of services available or might not have the full picture or understand why and how decisions are made (that seemed to be the case with some issues related to the school system). This information should be taken as valuable insights in themselves: what participants said about the lack of services or the way services function might not be true, but their lack of information or knowledge is true.

When asked about stereotypes and myths that the general public might have about refugees, participants answered the following:

"In the news – on the bus – some teenagers were told on the bus that they should go back where they came from. In schools, the teachers and counselors could be provided training on tolerance – the teachers need to learn about the background and culture of the new students as well as about their lived experiences."

"Lots of people say to us "you guys are nothing but refugees". This really hurts. Even if it is a Somali but they've been here a long time, they still say that to us."

"Kids at school use the word 'refugee' to make other kids feel bad. Then these kids don't want to go to school. Young people are not mature enough to deal with the word. This can lead the child to drop out of school and ruin their future. You 'kill the kid'."

"Even though my kids are born here, they hear this word [refugee] at school. It's hard for young children to understand and deal with this."

Focus Group 2 (youth): 4 youth and young adults (2 male and 2 female) ages 13 to 24, including individuals from Iraq, Eritrea and Somalia, and 1 interpreter.

Focus Group 3 (mixed adults): 5 individuals (3 female and 3 male), including individuals from Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar and 2 interpreters.

Focus Group 4 (mixed adults): 14 individuals (4 male and 10 female), including individuals from Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Iran, Somalia, Syria, Palestine and 1 interpreter.

“Our families are new – our kids don’t know the language and the culture – they don’t know anything and are sometimes placed in Grade 10 when they start school. They are called names by the other kids “nothing but refugees”. Our kids are dropping out of school, their self esteem is suffering. Surrey should do more to educate people to not discriminate. This is a big problem.”

“There are misconceptions that refugees use a lot of resources, but they don’t see that we need these services to move up the ladder to gain equality with others. We do use the services more but only because we need to learn English, get job training, build a life and others only see it as abusing the system. Maybe there should be an awareness campaign for the locals so they would know how difficult it is for newcomers.”

Most participants acknowledged the support they received from the Canadian government, private sponsor, service providers and Canadian citizens in general. Many were thankful for the respect and kindness that Canadians and Surrey citizens showed them.

“In terms of human rights, we feel we have been born anew and we are respected in our old age. “

“Everyone is very patient and even uses sign language to get their message across; even at places like the bank, library, gym, hospital.”

“We feel safe here.”

“I was surprised when I discovered Canadians talk to you about everything and try to make you feel comfortable. Surrey as a community is beautiful for me”.

“I feel better in Surrey than in other cities of the lower mainland because of multiculturalism – I feel comfortable as I dress the same as other communities e.g. the East Indian community and therefore I feel like I belong.”

Overall, the main concerns of focus group participants seemed to revolve around access to employment and education. Refugees arrive with a wide range of experiences and qualifications, but most of them will face the same challenges: obtaining employment and particularly employment in their field of study or internally acquired work experience or securing the education they need for meaningful employment (for themselves or their children). Several barriers were raised that are interconnected including their lack of English language skills and difficulties to access English language training particularly schools that offer childcare; as well as difficulties to “access Canadian culture, Canadian friends, and Canadian work experience”. Most focus group participants stated the fact that they needed support in the beginning of their settlement process to put them **“on the right track”**. They provided different examples of the types of early support needed, such as a scholarship to pursue their studies, a chance to have their internationally acquired credentials recognized, assistance in obtaining their first job in Canada, more child care spaces in order for them to study English, and more access to a first language settlement worker to assist them to navigate and understand Canadian systems. Most participants stated that timing of this support is critical – **“the first months and years is paramount”**. Several participants felt they lost precious time dealing with issues on their own in the beginning.

The rest of the document focuses on areas that focus group participants identified as mainly problematic in their settlement and integration process. It is not surprising to see that many initiatives and projects exist in Canada and worldwide to attempt answering some of the needs that newcomer refugees in Surrey have been pinpointing during the focus groups.

A majority of participants to focus groups voiced concerns regarding education for themselves or

their children and access to employment. Some issues such as a lack of affordable housing and access to mental health services were not as overwhelmingly mentioned during the focus groups but are known to have a great impact on refugees' resettlement process.

3. Promising Practices for Refugee Integration

Besides hearing from former refugees themselves on their experiences of living in Surrey, the other main objective of this report was to undertake a study of some promising practices on refugee integration that both already exist in Surrey but also elsewhere in the world. By reviewing some of the promising practices, those service providers and public institutions that interface with refugee newcomers can learn from previous successes while considering the adaptation of strategies in their own communities.

The practices featured in this report are considered 'promising' rather than 'best'. This is intentional as there is no evaluation framework that determines what a 'best' practice is.

The demographics and conditions for integration vary from one place to another, meaning that efforts tailored to fit Oslo, Norway, may not be 'best' for the City of Surrey, BC.. Although it is true that one size does not fit all, the following practices have potential for success and are intended to stimulate discussion by local service providers. The selection of promising practices for this report has been heavily informed by the focus group discussions with refugee newcomers.

Each promising practice example has been organized to share some basic information on where and how it is conducted, and at the end of each there is a note on what element of the practice is considered promising, and what might be transferrable to other communities. For further information about the different practices, there is a list at the end of this document containing all of the practices with accompanying websites.

The examples of promising practices are divided into five areas; *Education and Youth*, *Housing*, *Employment*, *Existing Surrey Initiatives*, and a final topic that was not raised by focus group participants, but which remains an important concern, *Mental Health*. Some of these categories overlap. For example, a promising practice of English as a Learning Language pertains both to *Education* and *Employment*, but is placed in the former category because its specific relevance is strongest to education. Each category has a minor introductory section to inform the reader about expressed concerns in the Refugee Myth Busting Campaign's focus groups and to give some context to the following Promising Practices.

3.1. Education and Youth

"Students in refugee camps believe passionately in school because they want to make their future better, because there is nowhere else to go. They want to learn. They want a better quality of life."

In the focus groups conducted by ISSofBC for the Welcoming Communities' Committee, participants expressed many issues that pertain to young people in the education system, or recent high school graduates. Many of the youth who participated in the focus groups felt that

they were in integration limbo: not old enough to be aided by programs for newcomer adults², and not young enough for the integration process to be gradual and family mediated, as it is for many children. Several participants explained that they arrived with high expectations and high hope regarding their own or their children's education in Canada. They were discouraged and frustrated when they realized that they wouldn't be able to afford to study or that it would take a long time and a lot of efforts to do so.

“School is a problem for our kids, especially the ESL system. It's taking too long. The kids should have an opportunity to mingle with all other kids so they can practice their English. (...) Plus, our kids should not be put in grades as per their age. They have a lot of catching up to do.”

“In Canada, students are assigned to grades by age, not abilities. There should be an assessment of knowledge before being placed in a grade. Some kids don't know basic math or have never gone to school and they are placed in grade 12. (...) Students should be assisted with math, science and other subjects, not just English.”

It is often difficult for children and youth to adapt to school, learn English and other subjects. The differential demographic of Surrey's refugee population complicates this further; youth from one country might be highly apt at math and pure sciences, but struggle with the language, while in other cases tell of youth from different source countries that are capable of English, but are not necessarily at the same level in other school subjects as their Canadian peers. Navigating a new language, with little access to interpreters may also have something to do with why the group participants expressed difficulty for their youths to make friends with Canadian peers. Some families expressed their feeling that the Surrey School District staff is not listening to them and not answering their questions or the problems they raise.³ In addition, the cost for youth or young adults to go to post-secondary education programs is higher than expected.

“When I came, I had dreams to study but did not have any proper information on how to go about it. No one told me what to do. Of course, first priority was survival but I could still have studied.”

“When I came as a young teenager, my parents were so busy trying to get work and survive that nobody could guide and direct me to the proper resources to get a proper education. I would like everybody in that situation to get oriented to resources that are available and to get enough information so they start off on the right track.”

“We spoke to the Principal and the teachers but have not received any positive response at all. The school is not even addressing our concerns or returning phone calls. My eighteen-year-old daughter wanted to take Math and English and the school said no – she did them online, now the school has put her in a different class. She didn't get the courses she wanted. We get no explanations.”

“We have the same issue. We only get one or two meetings with the teacher in the year. They may listen but our suggestions are not followed up on. The school is not listening to us.”

² As of October 2012, the Moving Ahead Program has been offering services specifically to youth, but this is still a recent program.

³ During a conversation in November 2013, a teacher working in a Surrey elementary school with children from the same community mentioned that it was difficult for teachers and school staff to communicate with families, mainly because of a lack of resources (interpretation). When asked about the Multicultural Worker, the teacher said that this worker was working out of several schools and wasn't always available to interpret and help with cross-cultural communication.

[3.1.1. Assessment of K-12 students](#)

A challenge when changing schools for anyone, let alone refugees, is matching up the skills of the child or young person with the level of the welcoming class. In order to be sensitive to the needs and abilities of the new student, assessment of skills is crucial. In **Val de Marne** outside of **Paris, France**, the Ministry for Education manages a project for the assessment of students. The project is developed to have a holistic, wide-ranging approach targeted at young refugees that are new to France. The aim is to support the appropriate placement and integration of individual students in different educational institutions. The project is similar to the SWIS program already operating in Surrey but has additional elements that bring extra attention to the new student:

- The assessment of the administrative, legal and family situation.
- The assessment of the educational level of the young person through the use of tests that are written in her/his first language (in some topics benchmark standards have been established for these tests). For example, a test in math from primary-first level to secondary-last level was translated into 257 languages in order to test the pupils' abilities in their first language. A similar test has been developed for literacy, in order to assess pupils' skills in their first language. This test is currently available in 15 languages. The results of these tests are used to place pupils more accurately according to their capability in a less discriminatory manner.
- The discussion and planning of the personal and professional aims and objectives of the young person, both on an individual level and in collaboration with her/his parents. This process aims to link past experiences with the new reality facing the young person and her/his family.
- Working with the young person in order to draft an individual 'action plan' and liaising with all those who will be involved in its future implementation.

This project gathers a network of organizations from the public and voluntary sectors that will be able to facilitate the implementation of tailor-made action plans appropriate for the age group. The young person is seen to be the main actor and follow-up support is always provided. Action plans are developed during a series of activities: a welcome meeting; an assessment; and the presentation of options for further education, vocational training, or employment. A drop-in advice service is also available for one day each week.

A Promising Aspect: While time and resource demanding, this project enables the tailoring of education for students with differential needs through individual assessments: both tests and conversation. Understanding the students' prior achievements service providers can this draw a comparison with the host country's curriculum, and identify gaps and needs. In addition, continuous conversations provide feedback and input to the students' trajectory, which makes their success at school a two-way process. Finally, devising an action plan for the individual student clarifies goals, and creates awareness of progress or deviation from the plan.

[3.1.2. Assessment for university-ready students](#)

AP(E)L stands for Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning, and is a process that takes place at the **London Metropolitan University**, by their Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit. This combines APL (Assessment of Prior Learning) which covers any learning done at school, college, university or other educational institution, for which the refugee may hold no certificate and APEL (Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning) which covers any experiential learning resulting from

experience, such as during employment, hobbies, or looking after a family.⁴

This process recognizes life-long learning for the purpose of giving credits, exemptions, or recognition of a person's achievements regardless of when, where or how the learning took place. The finished product is a personal portfolio, which can be used as evidence accounting for past learning, which is backed up by documentary evidence wherever possible. The portfolio also contains ideas and ambitions for the future - it is a reflection of the individual's life.

An important feature of AP(E)L is that credits, exemptions or recognition can be given for skills (technical, IT, management, design etc.), knowledge, understanding (the ability to analyze, evaluate, interpret information etc.), and achievements (projects, exhibitions, prizes and publications)

This process is particularly valuable for refugees who have had a wide variety of experiences and have learning and knowledge that can be demonstrated, but for which they might not have certificates.

It is also useful when starting a new life to assess the possibilities carefully and to be able to make informed choices as a result. They can assess their skill and experiences; gain exemptions (for example gain entry to the second or third year of a course rather than having to start from the beginning and in some cases direct entry to postgraduate study depending on the experience); decide what form of education they wish to access; identify training needs; produce a portfolio which can be shown to employers; and improve personal development.

A Promising Aspect: With the University's approval, individuals who go through the AP(E)L gain the credits and documentation for further studies at the institution. While it isn't a national standard, the AP(E)L cuts through some of the bureaucratic red tape that refugees have to deal with in so many other aspects of their arrival and integration process. An effort like this requires the university's collaboration, as it requires the guarantee and quality of the institution. In BC, the University of British Columbia is involved in the World University Service of Canada, sponsoring refugees, 55 since 1981, to attend the institution. This shows an interest (and strong student lobby) in related issues, and might be an entry for an AP(E)L program.

Some participants also identified a need for more awareness of the general public and support workers regarding refugee unique experience (and therefore their unique needs) as well as the fact that they participate and contribute – or would like to contribute – to society like any other person.

⁴ Most integration programs in northern European countries assess needs and offer career guidance before, during and after the program. The Dutch system provides an average of 600 hours of language classes and social and cultural orientation, and, usually, vocational training leading to potential employment is also offered. In Finland, a similar program is run, but without any time limit - a refugee is provided with free language classes and free training at any time. In Denmark, the Integration Act, which came into effect on 1 January 1999, affects every refugee or migrant who arrived prior to that date and is a recipient of social security. The Act states that language classes combined with social and cultural orientation should be provided, and language centres have been contracted by the local authorities to run the classes. A plan is drawn up for each individual that considers her/his previous education, qualifications, experience, and ambitions for the future, such as whether she/he would like to go to concentrate on academic or vocational study. The plan is reassessed at regular intervals.

“Sometimes people think refugees come here and bring their elders to take advantage of the social services and health care system and to put a burden on taxpayers. However, we eventually start working and paying taxes. We build our life here and work hard.”

“Teachers should realize that not all children can be treated the same. They should have more awareness of our situation so they can help us and understand.”

“[...] Also, more opportunities for volunteer positions where we would feel useful.”

“Refugees are not different. They are the same as others. “I am the same as you. I eat, I blink, but I am from a different culture”.”

3.1.3. Refugee Week

In **Victoria, Australia**, all schools hold an annual Refugee Week with the intention of creating a more welcoming and inclusive school. All schools are encouraged to involve their staff, students and communities in activities to raise awareness about refugees, through the school curriculum, extra-curricular activities and neighbourhood events during the week. The government provides online resources that the schools may use freely, and has several suggestions for activities they can engage in. Suggestions are:

- choosing children’s and young adult literature and picture storybooks with a focus on refugees
- selecting units of work from the [Racism, No Way!](#) website including class lessons on migration and refugees. This Australian web-based resource for schools also includes lesson plans for all key learning areas and year levels, fact sheets, student activities, news from schools and an extensive library
- involving students in organizing a student forum or debate on a relevant topic, a school or network poetry or essay competition, or exhibitions of student artwork
- local community participation in developing garden areas or murals featuring themes from students' countries of origin
- staging school assemblies, concerts, or family twilight activities celebrating the diversity of the local community.

A Promising Aspect: Though only for a week, this program creates a focused awareness of the refugee population, their culture and situation in the community around the school. The week has the potential of being a celebratory, exceptional event that mixes up the everyday at school events with learning about the people new to the community. While every week should be Refugee week, as this awareness shouldn’t be limited to a small period of the year, having a starting point to address difference in the classroom is a step forward. This is more a goal oriented than process oriented event.

3.1.4. Funding for Higher Education

“Education is a challenge. (...) Newcomer’s incomes are low and they can’t afford bus fare to school. (...) Newcomers would like a chance at scholarships and for moral support. Newcomers need more chances, and help from government.”

“It is very important to try to get scholarships for the newcomers to help them continue their education and to do better in life. Kids want to study more but cannot afford it.”

There are limited options available to refugees who wish to study at higher education levels in Canada, something several of the respondents in the focus group highlighted. Potential students who are refugees must either apply for study grants or for special student's loans. In most northern European countries however, policy has made it so that refugees are exempt from university fees or can access concessionary fees.

B.C. Student Aid offers financial assistance for students pursuing higher education. Upon demonstrating the necessary enrolment and provincial residency, eligibility is granted to citizens, permanent residents and protected persons. Despite the exemption for a few categories, study fees, both international and Canadian, continue to pose a major barrier preventing refugees from accessing higher education.

Scholarships Canada's website (see Appendix 1) has resources that help individuals with computer and language skills in finding scholarships and awards according to university, or their own personal profile. One has to register for these sites, but the search service is free.

Under the "4.3 Employment" heading further down in this document there is information about the Immigrant Access Fund (IAF), which is a Canadian initiative intended to aid immigrant entrepreneurs. The fund also accepts applications relating to education.

[3.1.5. Refugee Mentoring Program in Western Sydney and York University Buddy Program](#)

Students from disadvantaged and refugee backgrounds that attend four western Sydney high schools visit the **University of Western Sydney** as a part of a mentoring outreach program organized by the **New South Wales** (NSW) Department of Education and Communities. Prior to the high school students' visit of the University campus, university student-mentors have visited schools in western and southwestern Sydney. The students encourage and support disadvantaged high school students to aspire to and successfully transition into higher education.

The high school students are given a campus tour followed by lunch. They also participate in several interactive lectures and activities designed to give them a taste for life on campus and help them develop awareness about school and university cultures in the Australian context.

Since 2010, and the program's inception, more than 200 students have participated in the mentoring program reaching more than 400 high school students from disadvantaged and refugee backgrounds.

A Promising Aspect: One of the concerns mentioned during the focus groups is that refugee youth who arrive in the last years of High School do not have time to learn about and prepare for University, including life on campus. This experience provides some insight for refugee youth who might otherwise feel very unprepared.

"I think the main thing to help new refugees is to have instructional meetings and provide them orientation and guidance to navigate Canadian life."

"As newcomers, we need a person who can lead us – a one-on-one connection, someone who can guide us."

York University Buddy Program: The Buddy Program is a York International program which matches returning domestic and international students (peer support volunteers) with new incoming international students (buddies).

The program, which runs during the summer, fall and Winter Terms, is designed to assist new students with their adjustment to York, Toronto and Canada. The support provided by the Buddy Program is intended to present students with the opportunity to create a social network and community atmosphere through regular social events organized throughout the academic year as well as through individual meetings with their buddies/peer support volunteers.

A Promising Aspect: The buddy program gives incoming students the chance to have a one on one interaction with a person who can show them the ropes, and it can therefore create a more stable social relationship in a phase that requires a lot from the new student. These programs run on voluntary bases, and usually consist of activities that are sociable and informative, as well as not having a high cost.

3.1.6. Sports as Integration for Youth

“There should be more programs aimed at the newcomer youth. More after school programs to occupy them and keep them from going to the wrong place. Our key concern is our kids and our kid’s futures.”

In **Fredericton, New Brunswick**, the **Newcomer Youth Participation in Sports (NYPS)** program bridges newcomer youth, 13 years of age and older, to local sports in the community. The project creates a supportive environment for the youth to attain the knowledge, resources, skills, and confidence to participate in mainstream sports programming. Program activities include introduction to local sports and venues, training, coaching, and mentoring. The program has built a base of equipment to be loaned and created a buddy system of youth more experienced in sports including transportation assistance to newcomer youth. This also includes building a base of culturally diverse trainers and coaches

The program works closely with Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF) staff members, who speak over 30 languages, to ensure that newcomer youth and their families are aware of the NYPS project and are comfortable accessing it. The program provides transportation assistance to participating youth to ensure that they can access sports opportunities in the community and that transportation is not a barrier to their participation.

The participants determine what sports they would like to be engaged in. Regular meetings are held with participants in the program to determine what their interests and needs are and what sports they are interested in participating in. There is a regular youth drop-in, which ensures that the youth can come in and share their thoughts on what they would like to become engaged in - in an informal and relaxed setting. The buddy system ensures that, once youth determine which sport it is they want to be engaged in, there are older newcomer youth who are more familiar with the sport and who can provide support, encouragement, and guidance often in the first language of the youth.

A Promising Aspect: For many newcomer youth, participation in sports activities provides a space to transcend daily challenges and concerns that they may be dealing with as part of their settlement process. Through participation in sports, many newcomer youth feel a deeper sense of inclusion in, and belonging to, their community.

In Surrey there are existing initiatives around sport, especially soccer. For example, in August 2010, the Surrey Champions Leadership Project held a fair trade soccer match for youth between 13 and 21. The youth were refugees from three continents and local kids from socioeconomically strained

backgrounds who had volunteered once a week in planning the event, and playing soccer together three times a week. The purpose of the event was to use sport to bring together youths from various socioeconomic backgrounds in the spirit of friendship and fair play.

[3.1.7. Computers in Homes - Bridging the Digital Divide](#)

In **Wellington, New Zealand**, the not-for-profit, **Computers in Homes (CIH)**, is making an effort to reduce the barriers to services and exclusion for immigrant refugees by the use of technology. For newly arrived refugee families with few possessions and limited English skills, the access to Internet and technology may be limited, which in turn may exclude the newcomer families from services and information that is useful for them in the process of integration.

To counter this, the CIH program is offered to 90 refugee families each year. They receive 30 hours of basic computer training, including how to use email, create word processing documents and surf the Web. At the end of the training, families receive a refurbished computer to take home with free Internet access for one year (followed by a subsidized rate). Most importantly, the families also receive free transport, childcare, interpreters and a family liaison home visitor to help the success of the 30 hours of basic computer training.

The program has received funding from the Ministry of Education, and is collaborating with an initiative that has been placing computers in low-income families' homes since 2000. Unique for this version of the program is that it is tailored to meet the needs of immigrant refugees.

A Promising Aspect: This program is resource intensive in many ways, requiring teachers with basic computer skills, as well as funds to cover transport and childcare. The aspect that entails refurbishing computers so that recently arrived families can take them home and have access to the web from their houses, can be achieved by donation of the many fully functioning computers that people have replaced with newer models.

3.2 Employment

Getting a job and access to the job market is one of the most important steps towards integration, as it entails financial independence, an opportunity to contribute and access to a social network. Through the employment of refugees, Canadian society can also benefit from the skills and experiences of different cultures and practices.

As part of the Refugee Myth Busting Campaign's focus groups, refugee participants expressed their understanding of the need to have Canadian work experience, but were at loss to know where to get it, as one seems to have to *have* experience in order to get experience. Others expressed the difficulty of starting a small business, while concerns of discrimination during the hiring process were also shared.

Finally, the participants mentioned a structural problem that often affects women more than men; affordable childminding. Accessing training, employment or even voluntary experience is difficult when you either do not know anyone who can mind your children while you're at it, or you don't have the sufficient funds to pay for someone.

"There are so many young adults and kids willing to work but there are no opportunities. Surrey should try to create better employment opportunities."

"Problem is work, which is extremely hard to find."

“There are very few opportunities to get work. That is very stressful.”

3.2.1. Employability Forum

In **London, UK**, the Employability Forum develops innovative programs that improve long-term employment opportunities for refugees and migrants. At the heart of this work is a collaborative and multi-pronged approach that brings together direct support to refugees, bridge building with employers, and work at the policy level. They especially focus on refugees with foreign credentials with teaching, finance, engineering and health professionals.

As an example, their program directed towards teachers, Opening Doors for Refugee Teachers was an opportunity to put into practice the recommendations set out in their well-researched Refugee Teachers Task Force report.⁵ The funding the Employability Forum received after writing this report was used to support a network of organizations working with refugee teachers outside London, to raise awareness with employers of this untapped resource of potential employees and to establish a London partnership that worked collaboratively in assisting refugee teachers into the education workforce.

A key success of the project was the Diploma in Post-Compulsory Education, a unique course commissioned for delivery by the Institute of Education following success of the pilot stage at Birkbeck University. The course was constructed as a part-time, two-year course, and students were supported by a specialist agency, Reconnect, who also assisted in recruitment. Through this course, the teachers received British accreditation for their skills, making them more “legible” to future employers of British background.

A Promising Aspect: As with the previously mentioned AP(E)L assessment, the crucial point in connecting refugees with qualifications to an employer that needs their skill set, is in the role of a recognized institution. An established institution serving as a qualifier can provide an assessment that employers will trust. Monetary resources to make such an assessment and the legal practicality might still prove to be a challenge.

“Lots of people’s educational certificates are deemed invalid. It takes a long time to get University Degrees evaluated for equivalency. A Lebanese family was told the evaluators could not communicate with the University of Lebanon due to the time difference!”

“We want to work, we have our degrees, we just need that extra push and help. That’s all we ask for.”

“Education is a challenge. If you graduate at home, prior education is not recognized so have to go to adult school.”

3.2.2. The Wuppertal Partizipation Network

The Partizipation Network was a multi-sector initiative led by the city of **Wuppertal, Germany**, with local NGOs as operational partners. The network’s systematic, proactive approach includes door-to-door recruitment of clients (asylum seekers on the city lists) and more cold calling to identify

potential employers and job placements. Not-for-profit community partners provide focused job coaching, training courses, mentoring and help with resumes and job applications. Their expertise also helps prioritize the needs of this client group, ensuring women are not left behind, for example, and motivating young people to participate.

Once identified, trained social workers meet face-to-face with clients to assess their educational and professional qualifications, German skills, motivational readiness and ability to participate in employment. Together, they develop a work plan to guide the next steps in the job search. Signed by both parties, the work plan includes follow-up appointments every 4-6 weeks.

Essential to the success of the labour-market integration program is the scale of support offered to a client group marginalized by lack of opportunity. Appointments, reminders, counseling, guidance and support for the participants are as important as the interactions of project managers with employers and other stakeholders.

A Promising Aspect: Assessing the needs and actors in the labour market via telephone calls and door to door recruitment is a way to identify new employment opportunities for businesses and people who aren't actively seeking the refugee immigrant demographic.

“Employment is harder to get here as employers favor Chinese and Punjabi workers as they speak the language most in demand. It's easier to get a job in other communities. Here employers only accept “their people”, not other communities.”

[3.2.3. Betet Skara and the Mitten Project of Botkyra, Sweden⁶](#)

Betet Skara is a local weaving house in **Antwerp, Belgium**, that employs Assyrian Christian refugees who use traditional weaving techniques they have used for centuries in southeast Turkey. The craft of hand weaving was declining in Belgium, but has now been revitalized by this social enterprise that has integrated “hidden” skills of refugee immigrants in the city's thriving fashion scene.

Local Belgian Aldegonde Van Alsenoy started the weaving house as an employment program for a group of political refugees. It has now grown into a full business that offers services to companies all over Europe.

The Labour Market Administration and the Office of Public Schools collaborate in the running of the Mitten Project in **Botkyrka, Sweden**. The project aims to combine language study (part of the standard ‘Swedish for Immigrants’ national program) with practical skills such as textile work. The target group is women who have acquired basic Swedish, but who face barriers in their language development and lack vocational training that would provide access to the job market. The textile classes are focused on embroidery with an emphasis on traditional Swedish techniques, such as embroidery on woolen materials.

Students were asked to create new patterns based on those of their own cultures, which encouraged an exchange of cultural information. The production of mittens was a deliberate choice combining the cold climate of Sweden with symbolic patterns of other cultures. This cross-fertilization of cultures is part of a creative attempt to enrich both cultures. Working creatively in a

⁶ A Similar initiative exists in BC: The Malalay Afghan Women's Sewing Co-op was incorporated in 2005 with coordination/incubation support by ISSofBC, technical support by CCEDNet, DEVCO and financial support by Vancity, Status of Women Canada, and the Vancouver Foundation. Malaly Coop is an example of the resilience of refugees, as well as the collective efforts of a community to support such initiatives.

group with forms and colours stimulates the process of language learning and communication. The Mitten Project culminated in an exhibition at the Swedish Handicraft Society at which the products were sold.

A Promising Aspect: Both the projects above were created especially for women⁷, focusing on language learning and new skills, as well as encouraging cultural exchange. Social and cultural orientation allows for a deeper form of integration and is an asset to the labour market, beyond knowing the day-to-day language. A danger to a project related to craft, sewing and knitting is that it perpetuates the stereotype that these skills are particularly feminine, and simultaneously neglects other skills that women have and may cultivate for the labour market.

“Encourage small businesses. I have an idea but I don’t know if I’ll get support for it.”

3.2.4. The Immigrant Access Fund (IAF)

The **IAF Loan Program** provides internationally trained newcomers, regardless of occupation or training, with loans of up to \$10,000 to help cover costs to get back to work in their field in Canada. The non-profit organization started in **Alberta** in 2005, and with support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada’s Foreign Credentials Referral Office, IAF developed an implementation plan to expand the program to other provinces. IAF **Saskatchewan** launched in early 2012.

While most loans cover training, professional fees, exam expenses, assessments and books, the director of IAF maintains a loan is for whatever will lead to employment success. The public sector provides funding for most IAF program delivery and operating costs. The IAF programs look to the private sector for special project funding and to top-up shortfalls in government funding. Individuals and businesses donate funds for program delivery/operating costs, and for loan capital. Loan capital for IAF Alberta comes from private donors and through lines of credit with HSBC Bank Canada and RBC, which have been secured by personal guarantees from community leaders. Loan capital for IAF Saskatchewan has been provided by the Government of Canada, Canada’s Foreign Recognition Credential Program and by private donors.

Similar to this project is **Philadelphia’s** lending circle project, **Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA)**. The city of Philadelphia invited two of its community partners, micro-lenders FINANTA and Entrepreneur Works, to design and coordinate a lending circle program for low-income business owners. ROSCA lending circles typically are made up of 14 entrepreneurs who receive a \$1,400 loan and must pay back \$100 per week during a 15-week period. Participants gain credit history while developing professional networks and relationships with lenders (who report back to credit bureaus).

A Promising Aspect: The people IAF lends to have low-paying/low-level employment (if they are working at all), often do not have a credit history in Canada, and typically do not have collateral. It is difficult for them to access comparable credit from mainstream sources. IAF micro loans are character-based. Loans are approved on the strength of applicants’ character and the strength of their accreditation/learning plan.

While IAF is looking to expand, similar initiatives can be started in BC, by collaborating with the banking partners mentioned above, as they already have joined this venture elsewhere.

⁷ A similar project was also initiated in 2000? In BC ... Afghan women coop

[3.2.5. Mingo – Let’s talk about your business. Ideally in your mother tongue](#)

Language can be a barrier for a city’s economy in fully benefitting from immigrant entrepreneurs, and vice versa. Since 2007, **Vienna, Switzerland** has created a stream within its business incubation agency, Mingo (Move in and grow) Migrant Enterprises (MME), to address the unique needs of immigrant entrepreneurs, with a special focus on their mother tongue.

The services MME provides to migrant entrepreneurs resemble what is offered through Mingo itself – such as coaching on issues regarding financing and developing business plans – but goes further by including intercultural classes to help immigrants understand Viennese business culture; networking events as well as personal consultations for entrepreneurs in a number of languages such as Turkish, English and Russian.

In 2011, MME expanded its services to with free bilingual one-day workshops where the speaker addresses participants in both German and another language (English, Polish, Turkish, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian). While the workshops are held in German, technical terms are explained in the mother tongue language. Participants are able to ask questions in either language and trainers can respond in either language too. In addition to these workshops, MME works with the VHS Landstraße – Adult Education Center and the [Academy for the Promotion of Adult Education among Immigrants](#) to hold another series of classes in English which cover topics such as project management, finance and accounting, and strategic management.

A Promising Aspect: A private enterprise uses its resources to stimulate the local businesses, and create future business partners and entrepreneurs that contribute to the city’s economy. The migrants learn about the local environment, and are connected to other entrepreneurial people participating in the workshop.

[3.2.6. EMBERS](#)

EMBERS Staffing Solutions was launched in 2008 as a means of reaching people in the community who need help in transitioning back to work. As a temporary staffing company founded and based in **Vancouver, BC**, EMBERS Staffing Solutions is focused on delivering a higher level of service to employers requiring temporary service workers, while providing tangible supports to workers, including training. EMBERS Staffing Solutions is Canada’s only non-profit temporary staffing agency, providing socially responsible temporary services for companies in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. The company individually assesses each worker to find a suitable match through an interview, and at their website they provide several resources to best prepare the potential worker.

A Promising Aspect: Temporary labour jobs can be an effective means of re-entering the workforce after an absence, or to transition into a new job market, whether through a skilled or general labour position. EMBERS pays their staff weekly, and the workers gain valuable skills, experience and references. Though not targeted at refugees, EMBERS has a structure and intention that can very well also cater to the refugee demographic.

[3.2.7. The role of trade unions](#)

There is often a focus on individual achievements and efforts towards integration in the labour market. Trade unions are often neglected as a contributor to labour integration, despite the potential strong impact they can have in creating solidarity and community integration. Italian and

Spanish trade unions in particular have, on the whole, a good record in protecting the interests of refugees, though they frequently do not distinguish between refugees and other immigrants. This reflects the general approach in those countries, where there still are a significant number of immigrants. They tend (as in the Confederation of Workers in Italy-CGIL) to seek to treat refugees and migrants as workers but at the same time are able to promote specific refugee integration projects. These projects contribute to solidify support and sympathy within the work-force for refugee issues amongst other workers and the refugees themselves. Unions can be an important player in defending the rights of people (including refugees and migrants) who find themselves in frequently exploitative situations in the informal economy.

Similarly in Spain, unions (such as the Unión General de Trabajadores /General Workers' Confederation-UGT and Comisiones Obreras / Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions-CC.OO) are working on social action programs especially with women, ethnic minorities including refugees, and younger and older people, seeking to help with their integration programs. These traditions in Italy and Spain reflect some of the history of the southern countries in Europe with their own history of dictatorship and emigration, whether for political or economic reasons, and their experience of their unions' active representation of their own nationals as migrant workers Western and Northern Europe in the past, where they were initially treated frequently as exploited ethnic minorities.

3.3. Access to Housing

Housing is often a key link in giving access to, and enabling refugees to take advantage of, support services. Settled accommodation provides an address from which to apply for benefits, training or a job, and establishes entitlement to a school place. Housing-related support workers act as key links with health, education, training and other services. The Lower Mainland is expensive when it comes to housing, and often rent is the greater hurdle, over discrimination or access to public transport.

In the Focus Groups, some issues that are known by settlement workers to be very problematic were not raised by focus group participants. Housing is one such issue. This is possibly because people may consider a lack of employment and a lack of income as their main concerns. They might believe that if they were able to secure employment, they would be able to provide better shelter for their family.

Some innovative solutions in meeting refugee housing needs include putting liaison measures in place to minimize the risk of homelessness, making constructive use of private sector accommodation, and self-build (or renovation) projects involving refugees.

3.3.1. Affordable Housing

Because of their financial position, most refugees cannot afford to buy a house, so they have to rely on the social and private rented sector. Most commonly though, landlords ask for rent in advance (sometimes up to three months), or a rent deposit. Even if refugees are able to pay the monthly rent, many of them do not have enough funds to pay an additional fee in advance.

To tackle affordability problems in the United Kingdom, rent in advance guarantee and/or deposit schemes have been set up in some municipalities. Instead of a monthly amount to reduce rent payments, these schemes provide funding to pay the security deposit or rent in advance that are often required when moving into accommodation. Yet the NGOs carrying out these schemes

usually do not have sufficient funds to be able to continue these for more than a few years. Often these schemes are useful for helping refugees to find accommodation and to support them for some time, during which time it is hoped that landlords will have discovered that refugee tenants are just as trustworthy as any other tenant, and that they will be prepared to continue the letting contract.

The **Refugee Council in London, UK** developed a pilot project with the main objective to improve the access of refugees to private rented housing. The Rent-in-Advance Guarantee Scheme administered a fund from which four weeks rent-in-advance were paid to a participating landlord/managing agent and reclaimed through housing benefit. Subsequent rent payments went directly to the landlord/agent. Instead of a cash deposit, a written guarantee was issued against an agreed inventory, liability being met by the Fund (up to the four weeks rent-in-advance). Potential tenants were referred by participating agencies using a formal application and selection procedure. The Scheme acted as an ‘honest broker’ between landlord and tenant, providing advice to both.

A Promising Aspect: The project brings refugees and landlords together in a way that can establish a relationship of trust, and aims to provide long-term accommodation. Local settlement organizations can carry out the ‘honest broker’-role well, as they likely will know the individuals from other parts of the settlement process. There is a risk of financial loss that makes funding for such a scheme challenging (although in the above mentioned example, no claims were made on the guarantee fund).

[3.3.2. Reach In](#)

In **Bolton, outside of Manchester, UK**, the housing associations’ charitable trust (HACT) developed a project to address the housing and employment needs of refugees. The original idea was simple: the project would place refugees in short-term work placements with housing sector organizations to help build mutual understanding and promote integration. During the 3-6 month placements, refugees would gain work experience; receive on-the-job training and a professional qualification. Housing providers would embed and reflect a more informed understanding of refugee needs into their services.

Their website features a detailed toolkit for housing providers on how to recruit refugee volunteers.

A Promising Aspect: Through work, the refugees themselves are able to inform landlords about the housing needs of refugees, in addition to challenging preconceived notions that landlords might have about refugees. Placing this Promising Practice under the category of *Housing* is justified by how this practice pertains to the education of landlords or housing providers, in addition to providing work experience for refugees.

3.4 Existing Surrey Initiatives

The need to be explained things from the beginning and having someone who can show how to do things was a prevalent need amongst the participants in the focus groups. Receiving advice from schools, peers, and especially settlement workers seemed valuable. Many solid services exist already in Surrey and the Lower Mainland, but it doesn’t help much if the potential users of these services are not aware of their existence.

“Lots of people should be hired to work as interpreters at banks, hospitals etc. More information should be provided in first language.”

Some participants noted a need for first language services in Pashto and Farsi (including SWIS, NGOs and WorkBC). Some of these services are already available in Surrey, but participants didn't know about them. This is an indicator of how visibility and service promotion is equally important as the quality of services. Refugees are willing and able to take the responsibility and control over their integration into Surrey, but knowledge about the services is crucial to be able to use them. The individuals who expressed frustration about the lack of (actually existing) services were all Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR). This speaks to the gaps that may occur when organizations or individuals take on the enormous task of sponsoring refugees. Compared to the Government Assisted Refugees (GARs), the PSRs do not go through the same governmental standardized processes of integration, and this may point to why there is an expressed concern about the lack of services.

“If it weren't for Manal (Moving Ahead Worker), we wouldn't have been able to make any progress.”

“Upon first arrival, I could not find any program for informing refugees about resources. I only accidentally came upon Sireen (Settlement Worker) and she solved a lot of my problems.”

“At school it's ok, as there are settlement workers who have developed good programs. [...] One Karen settlement worker in the Surrey school district helped me to reach out to programs such as “Youth Advisory Team”.”

3.4.1. Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)

The **Surrey Board of Education** supports efforts to involve newcomer parents, neighborhoods and ethnic communities. In neighbourhoods with particular high number of immigrants, integration advisors (multicultural workers) based at local elementary and secondary schools are helping newcomer parents with education and other issues concerning integration. The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program is a partnership of settlement agencies and Boards of Education. The program was originally launched through WelcomeBC in the Fall of 2007. It provides recently arrived immigrant students in the K-12 public school system, and their families, with orientation information and support, and connects them with services and resources in their community, such as:

- Providing initial welcome and orientation for English Language Learner families new to the school district and community
- Settlement counseling
- Facilitating workshops to enhance families' understanding of Canadian culture
- Referring and linking families to appropriate school and community programs, services, and resources

Created in response to the emerging needs of immigrant, refugee, and ethnic minority school children and youth, along with their families, the SWIS program aims for the successful integration of its target population into the Surrey school system.

A Promising Aspect: The program's service delivery model is based on an original idea: taking settlement services to the schools and related places where the client population and other stakeholders are located. That way, the clients will have an arena to gather information, often in

their own language. However, this pertains only to newcomers who have family members entering the school system.

[3.4.2. Surrey Libraries](#)

In all of Surrey's nine (9) libraries there are programs directed towards immigrants and refugees with no cost to participate or enter. The libraries have books in many languages and have a multicultural staff. Through the libraries' online site, or at the different locations, immigrants can gain access to information about citizenship, citizenship tests and classes, information sessions about Canadian culture, English conversation classes and other ESL activities, classes about foreign credentials, in addition to the settlement workers who are present at the library on special days. Information is available in numerous languages, in addition to English and French.

[3.4.2. Moving Ahead Program \(MAP\)](#)

The Moving Ahead Program (MAP), started in British Columbia in October 2012, encompasses a wide variety of support services that used to be categorized in different programs. However, these services are now under one roof. The program, which is geared towards high need refugee and immigrant individuals and families, starts with an in-depth needs assessment that helps identify useful supports and services.

Depending on each client's needs, a settlement enhancement counselor provides one-on-one and family services such as settlement assistance, home visitations, job search and career exploration. In addition, MAP offers group services to clients to support their emotional, social, literacy, life skills and essential skills development. The end goal of the program is to help each client successfully integrate into the community.

The Moving Ahead Program is offered in Surrey through DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society, Options Community Services, Pacific Community Resources, and Langley Community Services Society.

[3.4.3. Get in the Know!](#)

A starting place for accessing information about services and initiatives for recently arrived immigrants and refugees is online. Get in the Know is a **Surrey-based** coalition of business leaders, stakeholders and services agencies who share innovative strategies to recruit, retain and advance new immigrants in the workplace. The website offers information for both employers and new immigrants to get to know the Surrey community, contact information about services and activities that are both essential and helpful in the integration process. In order to build a thriving workforce, Get in the Know offers print resources, online materials and workshops.

[3.5 Mental Health Services](#)

One area that wasn't mentioned in the focus group discussions was mental health. Many academic and organizational sources write how this issue is important and increasing amongst those communities that are not able to access the services or satisfy the needs that are voiced previously in this report. Acquiring access to services and practical matters, such as a Care card in the initial phases of arrival may prevent problems down the line. Trauma is a distinct concern amongst

refugees, and many refugees suffer from depression.⁸ Mental health issues can be caused by social factors in Canada, such as isolation, loss of social support, family separation, unemployment, and adaptation challenges, in addition to pre-migration trauma.

Several persons mentioned a need for more first language information or interpretation. Hospitals were the main example given for where there should be better access to interpretation.

The following Promising Practice pertains both to mental and legal aid, and speaks only to a minor component of the potential issues within the topic category of mental health.

“When I first came to Canada I didn’t leave my house for 3 months and was considering suicide. I went to the emergency at the hospital and returned crying as they had no interpreters and I couldn’t get help.”

3.5.1. Rainbow Refugees

Founded in 2000, the Rainbow Refugee Committee (RRC) is a **Vancouver-based** community group that supports and advocates with people seeking refugee protection because of persecution based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status. RRC engages in outreach, advocacy and public education on QLGBT/HIV tied to refugee issues. RRC is completely driven by its members and is all-volunteer based. In addition to assisting refugees in Vancouver, the RRC also provides information to refugees outside Canada.

The organization holds information drop-ins where lesbian gay bi trans queer /HIV+ people considering or making a claim, can learn about the application process and community resources. In addition to English and French, the volunteers at RRC speak Spanish, Farsi, and Arabic.

A Promising Aspect: The drop-in sessions that Rainbow Refugees hold reduces the barriers to assistance in mental health or legal issues for a population that is young and marginalized.

In conclusion, many of the concerns and issues raised by refugees who participated in the focus groups are likely to be shared by Canadian born individuals living in poverty: difficulties to access education and employment as well as lack of affordable housing and child minding. As newcomers to Canada, refugees also face specific obstacles such as a low level of English, lack of Canadian work experience and lack of professional and social networks.

However, focus group participants widely acknowledged the support they received from the Canadian government, private sponsors and service providers and they emphasized their gratitude towards Canada and Canadian citizens in general. They shared their hope for their future and their children’s future, their willingness to contribute to the Canadian society and to give back to their new community.

It is also interesting to note that most of the promising initiatives referenced in this document are scaled at the city level and many were initiated by municipal services. As well, a majority of these initiatives bring together several stakeholders and their collaboration is often identified to be both at the centre of the project and the condition for its success.

⁸ A report made by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto (CAMH) provides thorough research, strategies and discussion around this topic. A link to this can be found in the Appendix

Appendix 1 Promising Practices contact information

For more information on the promising practices identified in this report, contact information is provided below:

Education and Youth

SWIS program:

<http://www.welcomebc.ca/Communities-and-Service-Providers/Service-Providers/funded-services/inclusive-communities/swis.aspx>

Assessment of K-12 students (only in French):

<http://www.men.public.lu/fr/fondamental/passage-enseignement-secondaire-technique/index.html>

Assessment for university-ready students: <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/faculties/faculty-of-social-sciences-and-humanities/areas-of-the-faculty/school-of-social-professions/subject-areas/refugee-assessment-and-guidance-unit/>

Refugee week:

<http://www.refugeeweek.org.au/events/vic.php>

Funding for higher education:

<http://www.scholarshipscanada.com/>

Refugee mentoring program:

<http://www.mq.edu.au/newsroom/2012/10/22/refugee-mentoring-program-help-students-succeed/>

Sports as integration for Youth:

<http://www.truesportfoundation.ca/en/page-111>

Computers in Homes:

<http://www.computersinhomes.org.nz/>

Housing

Affordable Housing:

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what_we_do/refugee_services/access_to_housing/housing_resettlement_and_rent_deposit_guarantee_scheme

Reach In:

<http://www.reachin-hact.org.uk/>

Employment

Employability Forum

<http://www.employabilityforum.co.uk/>

The Wuppertal Partizipation Network:

http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/from-asylum-to-employment-the-wuppertal-partizipation-network/

the original German site:

<http://www.partizipation-wuppertal.de/>

Betet Skara:

<http://www.atour.com/links/media/Betet-Skara-ImmigrationCaseStudy.pdf>

The Immigrant Access Fund:

<http://www.iafcanada.org>

Mingo:

http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/practice/details.cfm?ID_ITEMS=13495

the original Swiss site

<https://www.mingo.at/de/services/migrant-enterprises>

EMBERS:

<http://www.embersvancouver.com/>

Existing Surrey Initiatives

Surrey Libraries:

<http://www.surreylibraries.ca/programs-services/4872.aspx>

The Moving Ahead Program:

<http://www.options.bc.ca/immigrant-services/moving-ahead-program>

Get in the Know!:

<http://www.getintheknow.ca/>

Vancity Bank Account:

https://www.vancity.com/SharedContent/documents/impact/immigrant_services.pdf

Mental Health

Report from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto:

https://knowledgex.camh.net/policy_health/mhpromotion/Documents/BPGRefugees.pdf

Rainbow Refugees:

<http://www.rainbowrefugee.ca/>

