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An Assessment of Service and Program Support for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) in a Multi-Level Policy Delivery System: A Case of Selected Ontario Municipalities

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ABSTRACT

Since the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) came into effect in 2002, Canada has stopped placing so much emphasis in the selection process on refugee skills and ability to integrate. Rather, emphasis is placed on resettling refugees who need protection. As a result, post-IRPA Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) arriving in Canada are younger and have higher needs than previous groups of GARs. In Canada the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) is responsible for providing GAR's with their immediate needs. RAP came into effect in 1998. A key component of RAP saw a change in the service delivery method, with a shift from direct provision of services by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to the use of third-party contractors to provide the necessary services at the local level. The signing of the Canadian Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) and the subsequent signing of the Local Immigration Partnership has strengthened local settlement agencies and local government in the delivery of settlement programs for GAR's in Ontario.

This research assesses the extent to which local settlement agencies can create programs at the local level for GARs in this new collaborative environment, using the federal government funding agreements with Ontario municipalities. The case studies selected include Hamilton, Waterloo region, Windsor, Ottawa and London. The Local Immigration Partnerships agreements (LIPS) is empowering these cities and they are making positive strides in providing services and programs for GARs such as healthcare, employment services counselling for victims of trauma, housing support, social protection among other services. However, there are capacity gaps in some cases which will be highlighted, coupled with fiscal constraints and challenges with policy coordination between different levels of government.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BVRs	Blended Visa Refugees
CCI	Catholic Center for Immigrants
CCR	Canadian Council for Refugees
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
COIA	Canadian Ontario Immigration Agreement
GARs	Government Assisted Refugees
HIPC	Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IRPA	Immigration and Refugees Protection Act
LEPC	Local Employment Planning Council
LIPs	Local Immigration Partnerships
LMLIP	London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership
OLIP	Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership
PNP	Provincial Nominee Program
PSRs	Privately Sponsored Refugees
RAP	Resettlement Assistance Program
RRP	Refugee Resettlement Project

SEA   South East Asia

SISO   Settlement and Integration Services Organisation

WELIP   Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership

WRIP   Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership Council

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

The influx of Syrian refugees has been thought as disruptive for many local communities in Canada. The Federal government itself had anticipated that "the number and pace of refugee arrivals… will likely challenge even communities with established settlement/resettlement services and growing labour markets" (IRCC, 2016). Between November 2015 and January 2017, Canada accepted just over 40,000 refugees.

The province of Ontario has received 23,055, including 11,330 GARs, 9,080 PSRs and 2, 645 Blended Visa office Referred (IRCC, 2016). The three main refugee streams (Government Assisted Refugees-GARs, privately sponsored refugees – PSRs and Blended Visa office Referred-BVRs) each bring strengths and weaknesses to the resettlement process.

PSRs tend to have better informal support systems compared to GARs because their private sponsors connect them to the resource within the community. On the other hand, GARs have direct access to government-funded resettlement services in their first year, even if case workers were overwhelmed in providing needed support during the Syrian influx. However GARs often lack the longer-lasting informal support networks in comparison to PSRs.

In Ontario the signing of the Canadian Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) in November 2005 has increased the role municipal government play in the development of immigration programs (Burr, 2011). The subsequent signing of the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) in Ontario has given local governments and local settlement agencies a lot more leeway when it comes to creating programs for refugees/newcomers. Burr (2011) argues that there is increased interest from many sectors in the development of welcoming and inclusive communities. Provinces, territories, municipalities, and neighbourhood associations are developing plans to

attract and retain newcomers to Canada- while libraries, schools, employers, police services, health centres, and others focus on responding to the unique needs of immigrants and refugees. The value of community-level planning and localized responses is progressively being recognized.

In order for public policy to have meaningful impact on the intended targets, it requires local responses or lens. As Bradford (2009:14) stated, "policy interventions must increasingly work from the ground up to generate solutions rooted in the particular concerns of local communities, attuned to the specific needs and capacities of residents". Through the LIPs, Citizen and Immigration Canada (CIC) supports a new form of locally based collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

These partnerships enable communities to develop strategic plans to address the opportunities and challenges associated with fostering inclusive and responsive environments for refugees and newcomers. Burr notes that they also signify an innovation in multi-level collaborative governance- encouraging co-operation among federal, provincial, municipal governments, and service providers.

Local Immigration Partnerships play an essential role in organizing various groups to develop coordinated strategies and target mainstream institutions, with the goal of factoring immigrant settlement and integration into the broader community planning process. LIPs represent a significant opportunity to build welcoming communities (Burr, 2011).

However, one of the major issues has to do with whether the local organizations have adequate capacities to provide services and programs that meet the needs of GARs? The research question that this study seeks to address is whether the new multilevel governance system of refugee settlement allows localities to develop programs that are responsive to the unique needs of

Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) in those specific localities selected to be examined . The cities selected for the case studies are Ottawa, Windsor, Region of Waterloo, London and Hamilton.

These cities were purposefully selected because they have functional Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) , which makes them useful examples to demonstrate how local actors provide services and programs for refugees in a multi-level institutional framework. Using multiple cases will allow for the research question to be analyzed from different perspectives and insights on the conditions and stipulations of intergovernmental agreements and their impact on local responses.

1.2. Structure of the paper

The paper is made of five chapters. The first chapter sets the foundations for the discussion by highlighting the useful contextual issues in relation to statistics on refugee influx in Canada and the province of Ontario. The second chapter reviews literature on GARs, their characteristics, vital they are to the Canadian economy and how they influence programming at different levels of government. The theoretical framework guiding and informing this research is multi-level governance as the issue of refugees has become a 'wicked problem' which can better be addressed through multi-stakeholder collaboration. Chapter three explains the research methodology used.

The paper uses a multi-case study approach in which selected cities from Ontario are examined in the context of their Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), how effective it is in meeting the needs of GARs and in working within an intergovernmental and multilevel governance framework. The information used was drawn from secondary material such as progress reports from LIPs, federal and provincial reports, reports from municipalities, data on spending and

budgets among other relevant secondary documents. The results from the documents review are discussed and analysed in chapter four.

Though the LIPs indicate positive achievements in providing services and programs for GARs, they still face some major challenges such as capacity constraints and ineffective coordination with other actors. Chapter 5 concludes the paper and provides some recommendations to strengthen the capacity of LIPs to deliver services and programs in an effective and efficient manner.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERARURE REVIEW

Refugees are an important part of the social fabric of Canadian society and they have and continued to contribute to the Canadian society socially, economically and politically . The purpose of this chapter is to explain why integrating refugees, especially at local level is important. The different characteristics of GARs are also outlined and what they mean for programming. The theory on multi-level governance is presented as the analytical framework that informs this study.

2.1. Importance of refugee integration

Refugees and Newcomers have played a major role in the economic development and sustainability of the Canadian workforce and economy. Their contribution to the Canadian economy is so vital that it is estimated that between 60-100% of the economic growth in Canada is the result of the labor, income, taxes, and investments that immigrants and refugees contribute to the economy (Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2014). In 2015, a report by the conference board of Canada highlighted the fact that "the country would have to increase immigration to over 350,000 per year to prevent an economic recession, and the labor provided by refugees will make significant contributions to maintaining economic prosperity in the country" (Conference Board of Canada, 2015). According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 731,000 refugees entered the country between 1990 and 2014, which accounted for 11% and 17% of all newcomers. Moreover, 60% of all new arrivals are under the age of 25, and a large portion of them will have a long-term connection to the labor market, thus it important to understand their labor market trajectories (IRCC, 2016).

Integration is a two-way process, requiring adjustment on the part of both newcomers and host communities. The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) of 2001* reflects this, stating that the successful integration of permanent residents into Canada involves mutual obligations for new immigrants and Canadian society (Burr, 2011). Ultimately, the goal is to support newcomers to become fully engaged in the social, economic, political, and cultural life of Canada.

Based on the principles of acceptance and respect, a welcoming community should: openly receive newcomers and create an inclusive environment; strive to understand the needs of newcomers and provide access to a full range of services and programs; and ensure newcomers are able to participate fully in all aspects of community life and Canadian society. Newcomers, in turn, should attempt to act on opportunities for participation; strive to contribute to community life within the context of Canadian laws and customs; and help others in the community. Research undertaken by Esses et al. (2010) outlined further characteristics that enable communities to attract and retain newcomers. Linkages between the main actors providing services for newcomers and the presence of newcomer-serving agencies that can successfully meet the needs of newcomers were among the features mentioned in the analysis. Table 1 illustrates the impacts of adequate versus inadequate social supports and highlights the need for interventions at the local level.

Table 1: Importance of Social Supports for Newcomers

When settlement services work	When Settlement Services Are Not Accessed
Adequate social support positively impacts newcomers:	Inadequate social support negatively impacts newcomers:

• Enhancement of integration, network building, and empowerment • Facilitation of employment and sharing of experiences • Reduction of stress, loneliness, and despair • Improvement of physical and mental health	• Social isolation • Loneliness • Depression • Inadequacy • Being in limbo • Lack of identity • Difficulty seeking employment

Source: Burr (2011).

2.2. Characteristics of GARs and their specific integration challenges

Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) are members of the UN Convention on Refugees (Wilkinson and Garcea, 2017). In terms of resettlement, the Government of Canada is responsible for providing the necessary support to ensure that their immediate needs are met when they arrived to Canada. GARs have different distinctive needs in comparison to Private Sponsor Refugees (PSRs) and Blended Visa Refugees (BVRs) (IRCC. 2016). GARs have a much more difficult time integrating into Canada for various reasons. PSRs tend to have a better education and are much more economically established than GARs, who are selected because they might be facing challenges that make them vulnerable. In contrast, PSRs are usually selected for their professional skills and their ability to speak English (IRCC, 2016).

The huge gap in language skills and education level impacts the ability of GARs to integrate socially and economically. Unemployment is also much higher amongst GARs in comparison to PSRs.

A study conducted by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) reveal that PSRs are much likely to obtain employment and be earning a decent wage after their first 3 years in Canada. In

contrast, GARs have a much more difficult time in obtaining employment. GARs are usually left to maneuver the complicated bureaucracy with minimum language skills and limited support system in comparison to PSRs.

An Evaluation study by Immigration and Citizenship Canada comparing the characteristics of Government Assisted Refugees who were resettled between 2010-2014 to Private Sponsor Refugee (PSR) and Blended Visa Refugees (BVR) discovered that on average PSRs knew at least one of the official languages than either GARs or BVR refugees. Moreover, PSR are much more likely to arrive as single in comparison to GARS, for example only 11.7% Syrian GARs are single in comparison to 48.9% of PSR and 20.6 % BVRs (IRCC, p.16). "Moreover, there were no PSR cases with family sizes higher than nine, compared to 40 GAR cases and 11 BVR cases.

Another reason why it is important to create distinctive program for GARs is they have less education than their counterparts. Only 5.3 % of adult Syrian GARs have some form of university education in comparison 31.6 % of adult PSRs and 3.1% of BVR (IRCC, p.17). Furthermore, a higher proportion of adult Syrian GARs (81.3%) had secondary education or less, compared to adult Syrian PSR and adult Syrian BVR refugees (52.7% and 48.3%, respectively). Adult Syrian PSRs also had more knowledge of Canada official languages, 18.2% of adult PSRs do not have any knowledge of Canada official language in comparison to 83.6% of adult Syrian GARs and 50% of adult BVR (IRCC, 2010: 25).

 The report also compared adult GARs to the adult GARs who settled between 2010-2014 and found that Syrian GARs tended to be less educated and had less understanding of both Canada official languages. However, the adult Syrian PSRs are much more educated and have more

knowledge of both Canada official languages compared to the resettled PSRs admitted between 2010-2014.

Beiser and Hou (2000) use data from the Refugee Resettlement Project (RRP)-a decade-long investigation of the resettlement of Southeast Asian (SEA) refugees in western Canada, to "examined gender differences in the English language acquisition and male-female differences in the employment consequences of language proficiency of refugees" (Beiser and Hou, 2000: 300). Using a longitudinal research method, the researchers were able to determine the factors that affect English language acquisition as "well as the sequencing of relationships between variables such as participation in the labor market and language proficiency" (Beiser and Hou, 2010: 314).

The result of the study reveals that language proficiency played an integral role for SEA women refugees in attaining employment more so than a man from the same background.

Similarly, Wilkson argues that language proficiency plays an integral role in determining successful economic integration. Less than 40% of refugees have a good understanding of English or French prior to their arrival to host country and the wait list to access English language skills often time take a prolonged period of time. The authors noted that in British Columbia there is "over 5,000 people on its waiting list for English language classes (Wilkson, p.92). Lack of proficiency in English and French is often cited by refugees "as the main problem preventing them from finding suitable employment" (Wilson, p. 96).

The literature reviewed so far offers an overview of the struggles and possibilities refugees face. We have seen how the conditions of their country of origin shape their journey in terms of socio-political characteristics and pre-arrival experiences – refugee-like situations, displacement and protracted camp experience. Once in Canada, refugees continue to face challenges. The literature

shows how housing, employment, health and education needs can be sources of distress for the newly arrived refugees. On many occasions, refugees also face different types of discrimination based on multiple aspects of their identity such as race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, and family composition among others.

2.3. Implications for GAR programming

The characterization of GARs has implications for programming. Program that are tailored to meet the needs of newcomers are available and also to to help them overcome some of the specific barriers outline in the preceding section. Refugees receive monthly income support which is comparable to provincial social assistance rate depending from the federal government and introduced to Canadian culture through orientation and training programs during their first year in Canada.

These services are designed to facilitate their settling in to their communities, connect them with mainstream service providers, and access language classes or workforce preparation (Wilkinson and Garcea, 2017). However, barriers and limits persist that make it difficult for refugees to take advantage of the full range of supports and benefits these programs provide (ibid). These obstacles include lack of capacity on the part of service providers that prevents them from enrolling in programs to support their integration process, unable to navigate the transportation system and time constraints that make it difficult for refugees to invest in training and personal development (Wilkinson and Garcea, 2017).

In 2011 in report by the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) identified six key priority areas that needed to improve in order for refugees to be able to integrate into the wider Canadian society which was access to adequate employment, health centers, language training programs, family reunification, access to housing and credential recognition (CCR, 2011). Similarly, a

report by Immigration and Citizenship Canada called *A Statistical Profile of Government-Assisted Refugees* also identified employment; housing and mental health programs as an important component to help refugees integrate (p.6). The report argued that GARs have distinctive needs in comparison to the immigrants who migrate to Canada, who often time have the financial resources and educational level to integrate into the Canadian society.

The report further noted, since the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) came into effect in 2002, Canada has stopped placing so much emphasis on refugee skills and ability to integrate, rather emphasis is placed on resettling refugees who are in need of protection, as a result Post-IRPA (GARs) arriving in Canada are younger have higher needs than previously.

 A report by Citizenship and Immigration Canada titled *Evaluation of Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) and Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)* also noted the distinctive needs of refugees such as having a lower level of education, limited financial resources and high rate of mental health in comparison to other categories of immigrants (p.20).

Research conducted by CERIS the leading network of researchers, policymakers and practitioners who work and specialize in migration and settlement produced a report called *Refugee Research Synthesis 2009 – 2013*. The report argued two-thirds of all refugees live in protracted situations and their experience is often accompanied by trauma and harm that have repercussions on settlement in Canada. As a result, resettled refugees often arrive with physical and mental health issues alongside low literacy levels in their original languages, larger households, and single-headed households (p.2). Moreover, because resettled refugees arrive with distinct experiences settlement services that are specifically design for refugees can help refugees achieve integration.

Similarly, Beiser et al research on the mental health of refugee noted that "Service providers and policymakers have observed that having social support helps newcomers by fostering a sense of empowerment, community, and social integration, building networks, sharing experiences and problems, reducing stress, and contributing to physical and mental health. Conversely, inadequate social support has negative impacts, such as increasing feelings of loneliness and social isolation, loss of identity, discouragement, e.g., about seeking employment), and lack of knowledge of available options." (Beiser et al, 253).

2.4. The theory of Multi-level governance

The academic debates on governance in multilevel settings define various ways of configuring relations between different levels of governments. Scholten (2013) brings these different ways together in a typology that distinguishes between four ideal types of configurations of relations between government levels: centralist (top-down), localist (bottom-up), multilevel, and decoupled. First, the centralist perspective in this approach there is a clear hierarchy and division of labour between government levels.

This involves a top-down relationship between the different levels of government, such as a clear division of labour between different levels of government. In addition, there are control mechanisms to ensure that policy implementation at the lower levels follows the rules and the policy being implemented reflects the central policy frame. This implies a strong institutional structure for policy coordination. Second, the localist and bottom-up perspective states that policy competencies follow the principle of subsidiarity; that is, what can be done locally should be done locally. Local governments do more than just implement policy; they formulate policies, respond to local policy agendas, and exchange knowledge and information horizontally with

other local governments. The localist type may lead to greater policy divergence between the national and the local level. It speaks to what some scholars describe as "the local dimension of migrant integration policies" (Alexander, 2007; Caponio and Borkert, 2010; Penninx et al, 2004), which stresses that local governments are often confronted with integration problems in different ways than the federal and provincial governments.

Third, the multilevel governance refers to interaction and joint coordination of relations between the various levels of government without clear dominance of one level. This means that "vertical venues" are needed where governments from different levels jointly engage in meaningful policy coordination. These might involve forums or networks in which organizations from different government levels meet. The fourth type is decoupled relations between government levels. Such a situation is characterized by the absence of any meaningful policy coordination between levels. Thus, in any single policy domain, policies at different levels are dissociated and may even be contradictory. This type can lead to policy conflicts between different government levels.

The role of municipal governments is somewhat different, at least in the initial settlement period, which falls primarily under the jurisdiction of the federal and provincial governments. Municipalities are service providers. Gunn (2012:3) notes that multi-level governance has become critical that certain Canadian municipalities have even developed formalized intergovernmental partnerships in which the municipal level of government assumes an equal status to its federal and provincial counterparts regarding settlement/integration policy formation and service delivery. In the new era of intergovernmental agreement, municipal government plays an important role in the development of settlement programs because of the knowledge and information they know about their local communities. Young (2013) et al state:

> "municipal governments have a lot of information about the
> locality. Similarly, provincial and federal agencies also have much

information. In Ontario, for example, where immigrant settlement is concerned, the federal department, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and the provincial ministry of Citizenship and Immigration possess localized information about immigrant flows, settlement agencies, language needs, and so on. However, this information is not integrated with other knowledge about the community that is relevant to immigrant settlement-such as housing, libraries, recreation, local businesses, and so on. Integrated local information is the specialty of the municipal government" (p.2).

In managing the response to migrants and refugee flows especially the Syrian refugees, cities have been at the forefront in delivering services and shown great innovative approaches. One way in which local action has increased in response to migrations is through cities' role in delivering public services. Many experts estimate that local governments are best placed to respond to the needs of migrants and refugees, given their proximity to their constituency, their knowledge of the local context and their ability to develop policies and programs, engage stakeholders at the local level and evaluate the impact programs have on the intended population. In practice, local governments have been at the forefront of public service delivery including but not limited to public housing, healthcare, language training, education, vocational training, and social, economic, political and cultural integration.

One of the key reason why there is been a persistent trend towards multi-level governance on immigration policy is because of how diverse cities have become. Multi-level governance can address this by leveraging diverse ideas, coordinates shared resources and uses new tools and techniques to improve and steer decision-making. Leo and August (2009: 500) examined the factors that contributed to the success of Manitoba's immigration and settlement programs. Their research revealed the "provincial government's early and continuing consultation with community stakeholders, and close relations with the community service providers made it

possible for the programs to achieve adaptation to local circumstances/ context". In addition, they argue that multilevel governance made it possible and laid the basis for community collaboration in achieving effective and economical operation of the settlement program.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The focus of this chapter is to describe how the study was conducted. The research is largely a qualitative, desktop study that draws data from multiple case studies from Ontario. Data was largely drawn from secondary sources including reports from federal, provincial and municipal agencies that are involved in activities related to refugee settlement and integration.

Majority of the reports are publicly available on municipal as well as other government websites. The following cities were selected to examine how the multi-level governance framework in Ontario impact on the local responses to the integration of GARs: Ottawa, London, Windsor and Hamilton. The justification for selecting these cases is highlighted. The chapter also provides a brief overview of the selected cities, in terms of population and other characteristics.

3.1. Multi-case study approach

Case study method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific localitie/context. In most cases, a case study method selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects of study.

Case studies, in essences is used to conduct exploratory research and case study as a research method is also useful when investigating contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events, and their relationships. By using multiple cases from Ontario, it was possible to make general conclusions about how effectively local settlement agencies provide services and programs to GARs, not only based on insights from one municipality.

3.2. Rationale for case selection

The rationale for the selection of case studies was informed by several reasons. All the case studies have functional and seemingly vibrant Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) that operate within a multi-governance framework. The cities were also selected based on the history of receiving GARs. For example, majority of GARs who arrived from Syrian have settled in Ottawa, in addition Ottawa has the federal funded program called the Resettlement Assistance Program; only six Ontario cities have RAP.

Through RAP GARs received monthly income from the Government of Canada for up to one year after their arrival, out of the 2000 Syrian refugees received in Ottawa between November 2015 and late 2016, just over 1500 of them were GARs (IRCC, 2016). Since then, an array of community agencies and organizations have been involved in refugee integration, particularly as the role of governments have shifted, with more responsibility placed on municipal actors to play a role in immigrant settlement. In Hamilton, the arrival of Syrian GARs started on December 21, 2015 but the City has a long history of welcoming refugees. This scenario t makes it interesting to assess in terms of the preparedness of the City of Hamilton and other local actors in providing services for refugees in regards to settlement and integration into various communities across the City.

3.3. An overview of the selected cities

In this section, a summary of the selected cities is presented, focusing on issues such as population, employment statistics, and municipal programmes supporting refugees among other relevant factors.

3.3.1. Ottawa

Ottawa is the capital of Canada, with a population of 934,243 (Statistics Canada, 2016). The population is expected to continue growing. The City's Official Plan predicts growth of 16% over the next 15 years (2016-31). Immigration is a major reason Ottawa's population continues to grow faster than that other cities in Ontario.

Figure 1: Projected population and employment growth, Ottawa, 2006-2031
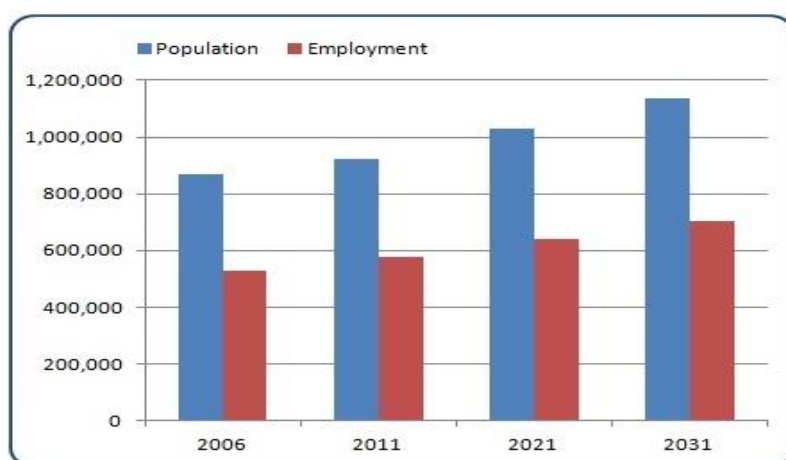
Source: Official Plan Projections

While Ottawa residents are slightly younger than the provincial average (13.2% aged 65 and over in Ottawa in 2011 versus 14.6% aged 65 and over for the province), major demographic shift is occurring in Ottawa as the population ages, which is also part of a national demographic change. The proportion of children in Ottawa has been dropping since the 1960s. The population aged 19 and younger made up 40% of the city's population in 1966. Today, that age group represents approximately 23% of the population. Their share will drop even more to approximately 20% of the total population in 2031. In fact, every age group below age 60 will see a decline in its share of the overall population by 2021 (Statistic Canada, 2016).

Ottawa is a major point of entry into Canada for immigrants from around the world. Statistics

Canada data show that immigrants to Canada tend to settle mainly in big cities. Immigrants who

settle in Ottawa are attracted by high-paying professional jobs or post-secondary studies. They

are typically more educated, earn higher wages, and have higher levels of employment than

immigrants who settle in other cities. Ottawa also receives the highest percentage of refugees and

family-related immigration of any major Canadian centre. Overall, 202,605 people born outside

Canada reside in Ottawa. They make up over 23% of the City's population.

3.3.2. London

London is known as a welcoming and vibrant city; it provides the advantage of smaller

community living, such as affordability, safety and sense of community but still has the

necessary infrastructure to support a growing population. The city's population currently

stands at 383,822 according to the 2016 National Census (Statistics Canada, 2016). This is 4.8%

more residents than in 2011 when London's population was 366,151. However, London has an

aging population and declining birth rates, which increase's the demand for the attraction,

retention and integration of Newcomers and multigenerational immigrants is identified by the

City as a top priority for Londoners, City Council and Civic Administration (City of London

Newcomer Strategy, 2018-2023). London was the third largest recipient of Syrian refugees in

Ontario after Hamilton, Toronto, and Ottawa. As of the end of December 2016, London has

received 1,181 Syrian Government Assisted Refugees (GARs), 382 Private Sponsored Refugees

(PSRs) (with applications for another 260 people in progress) and 75 Blended Visa Office

Referrals (BVOR).

3.3.3. Hamilton

According to Statistics Canada (2016), Hamilton has a population of 536,917, which represents a 3.3 % change from 2011 (519,949). Hamilton has the third largest number of permanent residents arriving in Ontario behind Toronto and Ottawa. There are 8925 permanent residents in Hamilton, of which 31 % of them arrive as refugees and 67 % of the refugee population are Syrian (GARs). Every year, Hamilton welcomes refugees from around the world. In the four-month period between December 2015 and March 2016, Hamilton received approximately 3 times the volume typically received in an average year (IRCC, 2016).

3.3.4. Windsor-Essex County

The City of Windsor has a population of 329,14 9 (Statistics Canada, 2016), representing a 3.1 % from 2011(319,246). The city of Windsor and the surrounding municipalities of Essex County have a collective population of 402,000 residents. Windsor-Essex County has a high rate of unemployment which usually fluctuates between 8-10% and government assistance accounts for 16% of the total income of the population.

Windsor-Essex County has a diverse population; over 1 in 5 residents are immigrants and 15% of residents are visible minorities. The City of Windsor has a history of welcoming and providing services for GARs and has received a large portion of Syrian refugees.

Between November 4, 2015, and December 31, 2016, Windsor received 1,220 government-assisted refugees (GARs) 152 private sponsored refugees (PSRs) and 17 blended visa office refugees (BVORs). In addition, Windsor receives between 200 to 300 non- Syrian refugees on a yearly basis.

3.3.5. Region of Waterloo

Waterloo Region is one of the largest and fastest growing regions in Ontario. It has the tenth largest population in Canada and the fourth largest in Ontario (Waterloo Region community profile, 2018). The Waterloo Region total population as is estimated at 2016 583,500 people, including university and college students temporarily residing in the Region. Between 2011 and 2016, Waterloo Region's growth rate was 5.5 per cent, which exceeded both provincial and national growth rates of 4.6 per cent and 5 per cent respectively.

The Province's Growth Plan projects that Waterloo Region's population will grow by 185,000 people over the next 15 years. 1 in 8 immigrants living in Waterloo Region moved to Canada between 2011 and 2016. The number of refugee arrivals to Waterloo Region was over 250% greater than previous years (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 2015), at a time when Federal funding for settlement supports was decreasing. The estimated number of GARs is 1013, with PSRs estimated at 226 and BVORS at 160. The average annual GARs intake is 280.

3.4. Data collection

The necessary data needed in order to complete this research project was collected through desk research. Government websites were consulted to review statistics on population growth, employment, immigration and services provided by the federal and provincial government to support refugees at local level. Other secondary documents consulted include municipal reports, reports from LIPs, budget provisions and other useful secondary material. Due to time constraints, primary data through surveys and interviews could not be collected. Primary data would have offered different opinions of those who are involved directly in the provision of services to GARs and understand their working relationships with other levels of government and local actors.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS, DISCUSION AND ANALYSIS

The chapter starts by outlining federal and provincial interventions to support GARs, including the funding commitments. The local responses through Local Immigration Partnerships will then be explained, followed by a detailed account of selected municipalities on how they are providing services and programs to support GARs and the challenges and barriers they face in a multi-level institutional framework.

4.1. Federal government intervention on refugee integration

The federal and provincial governments have responded to the influx of refugees by providing additional funding for local settlement agencies. In 2015, the federal government approved the allocation of approximately $760 million of supplementary funds, over four years" (IRCC, 2016) to assist in the Syrian refugee resettlement initiative. The additional funds were for supporting the Department's Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), developed new programs and "expand settlement services for refugees who settled outside Quebec" (IRCC, 2016). A total of 257 million will be allocated over four years to expand the settlement programs to support Syrian refugees integrate into Canadian society (IRCC, 2016).

Formally, the federal and provincial governments share responsibility for immigration, although up until the 1990s and 2000s, the federal government tended to take a more active role, with provinces generally avoiding the policy field (Paquet, 2014). The creation of bilateral federal-provincial immigration agreements, the involvement of third-party organizations in the delivery of settlement services, and provincial governments' downloading of several responsibilities, such as public health and social housing, to municipalities led immigrant and refugee settlement to gradually become a multi-sectoral policy field (Biles et al, 2011; Paquet, 2014; Tolley and

Young, 2011). Leo and August (2009: 6) argue that "multi-level agreements address the question of how best to ensure that national immigration policies are appropriately adjusted to meet the disparate requirements of different communities". Multi-level governance relationship is quiet a contentious issue at times because of the federalist system that Canada operates within. The federal government produces an Immigration Levels Plan, which provides the targeted number of immigrants and refugees it will accept each year. Some of the actions that have been taken by the federal government include the Community Partnership Settlement Plan process. This was developed in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments and includes a self-assessment checklist and criteria to help municipalities respond to Syrian refugees (Moloney et al, 2017).

One of the key legislation to empower provincial government is the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). The development of provincial and territorial nominee programs represents a change in Canada's nearly century-old immigration practice under which the selection and admission of immigrants (except for those in Quebec) have been exercised almost exclusively through the federal immigration program" (Schmidtke, 2014: 81). Schmidtke (2014) also adds that over the past twenty years there has been a consistent trend toward decentralizing Canada immigration policy.

While the federal government is still in charge of recruiting migrants, "the provision of services to newcomers/refugees and efforts to integrate them into the fabric of society have been transferred decisively to the provincial and local level of government" (Schmidtke, 2014). For example, Ontario provincial government launched a Refugee Resettlement Plan. This included establishing the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Secretariat to coordinate across government departments. That secretariat has since been renamed the Ontario Refugee Resettlement

Secretariat and is tasked with the coordination of all refugee resettlement and integration efforts in the province. As part of their Syrian-specific activities, the provincial government committed $330,000 to Lifeline Syria to assist with the recruitment and training of private sponsors. In September 2015, they announced an additional $10.5 million over the next two and a half years to provide community-based support to refugees, integration and settlement services, and to support Syrian relief efforts (Moloney et al, 2017).

4.2. Local responses to refugee integration and settlement

In November 2005, Ontario signed the first Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) with the federal government. Consequently, LIPs were introduced through COIA. According to Bradford and Andrew (2010:2), LIPs are a living experiment in the new public governance-embracing collaboration, responding to community rhythms, and forging relationships across levels of government and public, private, and voluntary sectors.

These partnerships enable communities to develop strategic plans to address the opportunities and challenges associated with fostering inclusive and responsive environments. LIPs provide a mechanism through which CIC provide assistances and supports the development of community-based partnership programs to support newcomers and refugees. The main goal of LIPs is to engage various stakeholders to develop coordinated strategies, with the intention of factoring immigrant settlement and integration into the broader community planning process. Such partners include employers, school boards, healthcare providers, boards of trade, professional associations, ethnocultural and faith-based organizations, and the community and social services sectors (Burr, 2011).

LIPs are a new and innovative multi-level governance approach involving municipal, provincial and federal partners. Their focus is basically to support the development of multi-sectoral

partnerships at the local community level and to integrate newcomer needs into the community planning process while Identifying community-specific strategic priorities related to newcomer settlement program to improved refugee/newcomers' outcome.

4.3. Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership and refugee settlement and integration

Statistically, Ottawa received more than 2000 Syrian refugees between November 2015 and late 2016 (Moloney et al, 2017). This was described as an exceptional situation as a large number of refugees were received with a short space of time in Ottawa. During this period, there were a wide variety of agencies and organizations who were involved in welcoming and settling Syrian refugees. The interventions had become multi-sectoral in nature. The settlement sector was naturally a key the resettling effort, but it was not alone; housing, education, employment, health and all three levels of government were all involved. Frontline workers and organizations responded to the Syrian refugee crisis in extraordinary ways, working long hours and reallocating resources away from other work to address the pressing need. The community also responded and raised funds to help fill some of the gaps in programs and services (Moloney et al, 2017).

In responding to the arrival of Syrian refugees, the City of Ottawa provided direct services, including Ottawa Public Health in the early months and Ontario Works later on; they also helped bring together public and partners and to disseminate information. The study conducted by Moloney et al (2017) pointed out some interesting dynamics with regards to integration and settlement of GARs. The respondents of the study noted that the Syrian refugees for example had several specific characteristics that distinguished them from other refugee populations, including large family sizes and a very high proportion of children. Other characteristics included lower levels of literacy, a higher incidence of chronic health problems, dental issues and some evidence

of trauma and mental health challenges. These characteristics required adaptations in the service response. Although the services provided to Syrian refugees were overall similar to those that are provided to all refugees, the context did test the community's capacity to respond. One important change was the increased interaction and collaboration between the various actors involved in immigrant settlement.

In Ottawa, this had been facilitated by the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) which, through its sectoral tables, brought together many of the key players, including those in the settlement, health, housing, employment and education sectors, as well as key government departments. In addition, the City had developed its Municipal Immigration Strategy, which was aligned with OLIP's Ottawa Immigration Strategy and with the policy directions of other levels of government. This alignment helped expedite the City's response to the arrival of the Syrian refugees. Because of these intergovernmental and local service providers strategies on newcomer integration and on-going collaborations, there is a greater expectation that organizations will work together to settle and help integrate newcomers, including refugees.

Although the framework for collaboration and collective action existed, the increasing influx of refugees created some problems with regards to coordination of interventions (Moloney et al, 2017). The federal government's initial settlement plan did not include funding for a coordinating body, a gap that also distinguished the settlement of Syrian refugees from the settlement of Indochinese refugees nearly 40 years earlier (Alboim, 2016).

4.3.1. Successes on refugee integration and settlement responses in Ottawa

In Ottawa, there are certain successes when it comes to services and programs for GARs. For example, supporting the settlement of over 2,000 refugees in a short period of time is a massive undertaking. An effort of this magnitude cannot succeed in the absence of collaboration. In a

study by Moloney et al (2017), respondents indicated that there is power in working together, both among leaders and at the operational level. At the leadership level, several collaboration tables existed prior to the arrival of Syrian refugees. Bringing together perhaps the widest range of partners was Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP), which includes representatives from the settlement, health, employment, education and language training sectors, as well as government bodies, including the City of Ottawa and the Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC).

In September 2015, the Mayor of Ottawa established Mayor's Working Group on Syrian Resettlement Efforts, bringing together faith base group, settlement, funding and community leaders, as well as other levels of government. This kind of collaborative action is what contributed to successful integration and settlement of GARs. Program level partnerships were also central to the settlement response in Ottawa. Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) and Catholic Center for Immigrants (CCI) both indicated they collaborated with more than 100 partners.

They were also other partnerships with other settlement agencies, Community Health Centres, food banks, colleges, school boards, the United Way, large employers, private sector donors, faith groups, landlords, charitable organizations, and all three levels of government (Moloney et al, 2017). The OLIP is effective in leveraging existing partnerships and creating new ones. Considering that GARs have special characteristics that distinguish them from other categories of refugees, local actors in Ottawa were able to develop specific programs and tailor their responses to meet needs of GARs.

For example, the Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre continued to provide its normal suite of activities, which includes the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic, Ottawa Language Access, and

Multicultural Health Navigators, but with higher usage rate while also adding new services they do not normally provide. Community Health Centers also incorporated cultural norms into service delivery, including the provision of a female nurse practitioner for female clients (Moloney et al, 2017). Through the programmes by OCISO, several refugees began working with a construction firm called Tangent; through the RAISE program, OCISO was able to offer Arabic workplace safety training. This allowed the employees to begin working immediately with English language training offered on-the-job. Service providers in the settlement sector did receive funds to meet many of the additional demands. In some cases, provincial ministries encouraged service providers to provide the services needed with the ministries later reimbursing them for these additional costs (Moloney et al, 2017).

Some gaps in programs and services existed but aside from these, service providers were largely able to ensure the core services were provided to the Syrian refugees. There was also adequate support given to meet GARs' housing needs. Several efforts in the housing sector helped support refugees in securing affordable housing as they transitioned out of their initial accommodation in the reception house and hotels. For example, CCI leveraged long-standing relationship with landlords to obtain rent reductions where feasible (Moloney et al, 2017).

4.3.2. Challenges experienced

A multi-level governance framework sometimes creates problems, especially in relation to coordination of responses from various actors. A Syrian refugee research initiative conducted by Moloney et al (2017) confirms that interventions from federal, provincial and municipal actors were not always well coordinated. There were also discrepancies in terms of services and programs provided to the refugee communities. The discrepancy between services provided to Syrian refugees and others was so marked that it became a source of tension and discord among

clients. Some respondents in Moloney et al's study criticized IRCC for directing funding specifically to programs for Syrian refugees.

There was a sense that this contradicts the ethos of the settlement community, which works to support all newcomers, regardless of nationality. There was significant diversity in the refugee population, and one of the biggest challenges facing organizations was responding to the wide range of needs (Moloney et al, 2017). During working with the Syrian refugees, service providers noted a range of areas where they encountered gaps in programs and services. Some of the gaps were specific to the large influx associated with the Syrian arrivals, but most were pre-existing challenges that were highlighted by the additional pressure of resettling so many Syrian refugees in a short time period.

There were issues to do with some GARs having complex needs. The influx of Syrian refugees put a great deal of stress on the system. However, that stress created a lot of opportunity for collaboration and innovation (ibid). There was a gap in casework services for youth and young adults; this category of refugees has needs different than those of adults or families.

Another obstacle that came out of the study was the issue of difficulty of charting the scope of the settlement effort. This is partly indicative of a policy area in which jurisdictional responsibility is shared and many community organizations are involved, and there was no single organization responsible.

4.4. London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP)

The London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) is a collaborative community initiative designed to strengthen the role of local service providers, providing services for immigrants and refugees. LMLIP is guided by a Central Council and six issue-specific Sub-councils and the support of the community. With the immigrant as the focal point, LMLIP works

to achieve five overarching outcomes: Supports and Services for Immigrants, Communication and Access to Information, Host Community, and Supports for Service Providers, and Advocacy. The operations of the LMLP are based on a client centred approach that includes and works with immigrants to enhance their successful integration into Canadian society (Hussein, 2015). The primary goals of the LMLIP are to strengthen the capacity of the community in serving and integrating immigrants, and to enhance delivery of integration services to all immigrants. The London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership Council is the strategic planning body that ensures that multiple stakeholders participate in this planning and coordination. The Council develops and implements strategies to facilitate increased access to all services, especially current services supported by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, and assists non-settlement service providers and the community to develop a greater understanding of immigrants' needs and services (Balakrishnan, 2016).

4.4.1. Services and programmes offered to support integration of GARs in London

The London and Middlesex Immigration Portal is a tool to attract and retain immigrants. In 2016, enhancements were made through provincial funding to attract immigrant entrepreneurs and to add a tool for immigrants to plan their move to London and Middlesex. The City of London continues to support Canada's efforts to welcome Syrian refugees as well as future changes in federal immigration policies (City of London Multi-year budget, 2016-2019). The total allocation of funding from 2016 to 2019 is $ 40 000 per year. The current contract between the LMLIP and IRCC provides a total funding of $ 204 000 of annual funding to support service and program support for the GARs.

The London Cross Cultural Learning Center (LCCLC) is the main umbrella organization in charge of running refugee and immigrant related programs. Programs included   a Job Search Workshop (JSW) for refugees and newcomers in London. The programs help with interview skills, resume development, employer expectations, computer literacy, customize employment plan, and a tutor that helps with jobs searching skills. Other area of focus since 2016 is resume development specifically for Syrian GARs (LCCLC.

 The Skills to Work Program at Pathway skill development is other program that support refugees integrate into the workforce in London Ontario. The programs help train young adults and newcomers age 18-29 in light industrial, construction technology, administrative and clerical and Property and Maintenance training. The program is funding from January 1, 2017 to January 1, 2019 by the Local Poverty Reduction (LCCLC).

The Occupation-Specific Language Training (OSLT) is a course that prepares newcomers and refugees with the skills they need to communicate effectively in the workplace. It also teaches students Canadian terminology used in specific professions and teaches them Canadian workplace norms. Overall the course is meant to equipped refugee/newcomers with the necessary and practical skills they need to obtain and retain employment in Canada. The course is offered through Fanshawe College free of charge (LCCLC).

4.4.2. Needs and gaps in services and programming

Despite the positive stories highlighted, there are certain needs and gaps including under-provided services for immigrants. Figure 2 shows the picture of under-provided services for immigrants based on the study conducted by Balakrishnan et al (2016).

Figure 2: Specific services or supports for lacking or underprovided in London and Middlesex
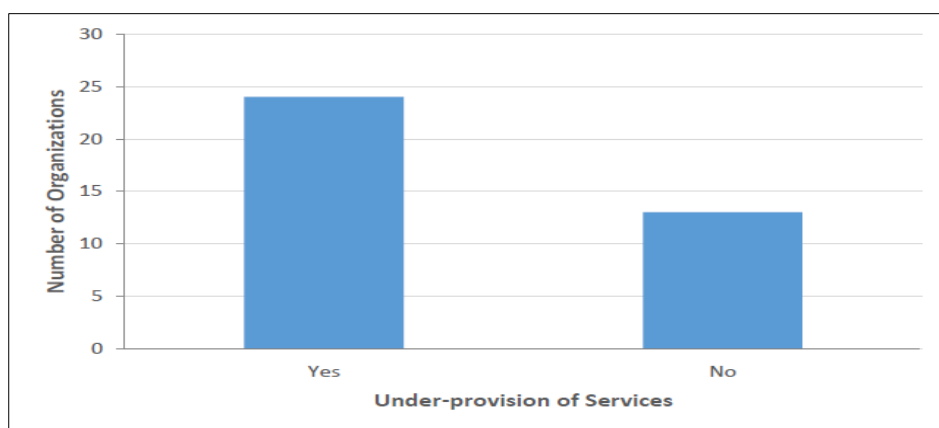
Source: Balakrishnan et al (2016: 40).

This is based on the responses of 37 organizations out of the 24 (65%) organizations who responded to this question suggested that there are other activities that can be initiated to help support newcomers to London and Middlesex, including enhanced language services and cross-cultural sensitivity and language training for health and social service providers, along with investment at all three levels of government.

The study recommended increasing awareness and accessibility of existing programs and services, providing additional funding for existing and new services, increased housing accommodations and mentorship programs for newcomers/refugees (Balakrishnan et al, 2016). In addition to this organizations Organization indicated that the federal, provincial, municipal government could play a more active role in filling in gaps in the provision of refugee and newcomer services. This shows that there might be gaps in the multi-stakeholder approaches used in this case. For example, it was suggested that the following organisations could be

involved to fill the gaps: various levels of government and government organizations (e.g., the city of London, the Ministry of Health), Professional, non-profit, and education groups (e.g., law firms, colleges, school boards), Health and social service agencies, Funding agencies and Local community, ethnocultural, and faith groups. There were also concerns raised about the way in which the LMIP delivers its services and programs. For instance, it has been criticized for being disorganized and lacking clear focus and intent. It needs more decision-makers at the table and improved means of enacting plans and ideas.

There are also challenges and pressure points that may impact service. The federal government has introduced significant changes to immigration regulations. It is also anticipated that federal changes will continue as the federal government may shift its focus towards economic refugees. Another challenge is that the needs of immigrants are becoming more complex. This creates pressure on settlement services and supports.

4.5. The case of Waterloo region

The Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership (WRIP) emerged as an important catalyst in initiating and maintaining a community-wide response to the local Syrian refugee influx. Hosted by the regional government since 2010, the WRIP was instrumental in engaging municipal leadership (across 8 municipalities) and harnessing regional government resources for a rapid refugee response at a level not seen before. Yet the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Preparedness Plan that was newly created was a "community-owned" structure that actively engaged and coordinated the many existing and new supporters of refugees, while at the same time recognizing the central role of Reception House Waterloo Region. The result was a dynamic and flexible structure in which the WRIP infrastructure, expertise and members were leveraged to

initiate broad-based collaborative planning and action. The region of Waterloo has demonstrated significant impact in terms of providing services and support to GARs.

4.5.1. Successes in program and service delivery processes

There are notable success stories from the Region of Waterloo with regards to processes of delivery services and programs to GARs, especially Syrian refugees. One of the innovative ways to deliver services and programs used is collaborative planning, in which there is increasing cooperation among local leaders across sectors (often in the absence of Federal directives and communication). Local organizations co-hosted events to share information on the various streams of refugees coming to the Waterloo Region (Janzen et al, 2017). One of the key informants interviewed in a study by Janzen et al (2017) stated "Looking at this collaborative structure, the collaborative leadership by the Regional government and the community agencies has been the key -the one thing that has made this a success over the last year and changed the way different stakeholders engage with the resettlement of refugees."

The municipality has also done well in bringing in new players to support its refugee integration efforts. Figure 3 shows the integration of new players into the refugee support system in Waterloo.

Figure 3: Integration of new players into the refugee support system in Waterloo (n=34)
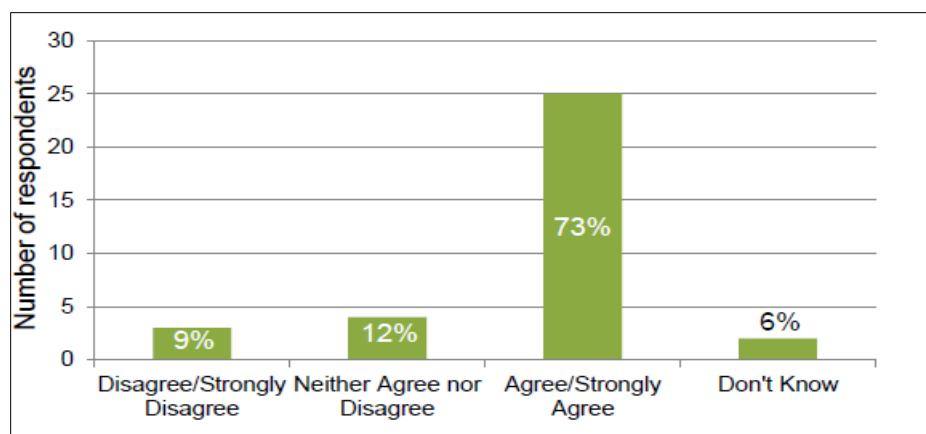
Source: Janzen et al (2017:21)

New partnerships between formal and informal sectors, between faith and other community groups are being created. Many first time private sponsorship groups are also getting intimately involved in refugee settlement -learning about many community services and supports. Building on existing trusted relationships was key to initially develop a rapid response. Developing new relationships was key to manage a robust response in the case of Waterloo.

The processes in integrating refugees in Waterloo have also been positive due to leveraging monetary support: Citizens and organizations were stepping up to offer financial supports (e.g., the Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers). The Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers was launched with a $100 donation, but within days $80,000 worth of donations flooded in. The KWCF also stepped up by establishing a matching program. Between pledges received from fund holders and the support of The KWCF unrestricted fund, $400,000 was committed for matched donations.

4.5.2. Challenges faced with interventions and programming

The integration of GARs is not without hurdles in Waterloo. Challenges did lead to some negative impact and these include unmet expectations (for example finding adequate housing,

leveraging goodwill of private sponsors, utilizing the outpour of support). There is also a growing gap between available resources and what is needed for effective programming. There are also issues around personal and system stress caused by resource limitations as well as service provider fatigue and organizational capacity being stretched.

4.6. Windsor and Essex County Local Immigration Partnership (WELIP)

Windsor is one of the first cities in Ontario designated a Resettlement Assistance Program community by the federal government. The Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership is responsible for coordinating programs and services for the region and City.

In November 2008, the City of Windsor signed an agreement with CIC to serve as project manager for the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership (WELIP) Initiative. The membership of the Council is diverse and includes stakeholders from 34 organizations including the Settlement, Language Training, and Employment-related sectors, as well as mainstream organizations (City of Windsor website).

The influx of Syrian refugee has force MCC to expand its services in order to provide adequate services for Syrian and non-Syrian GARs. One of the programs administered by MCC for GARs in Windsor is the Family Wellness Program, in order to meet the needs of Syrian GARs MCC has partner with the YMCA of Western Ontario (YWO) and Women's Enterprise Skills Training Inc, (WEST) to deliver service for GARs youth and programs for women to enhance their skills so that they can be successful at finding employment. The services provided through the program are interactive workshops focused on family wellness themes, emotional health, and resilience (City of Windsor website).

The HOST program is another innovative program design to help integrate GARs to the community. The program connects GARs with volunteers from the community who can help

connect them to resources and also help them adjust to life in the host community. The purpose of the program is to limit social isolation and help expand social circles which help them network for employment opportunities. HOST also helps develop GARs language skills because the participant is able to communicate with the volunteer.

Despite its size, Windsor boasts over 90 organizations which assist newcomers, and all of them joined forces as part of a Windsor-Essex Local Immigration Partnership. It is part of this big success that is helping the federal government achieve its goal of integrating 35,000 Syrian refugees into Canadian society

4.7. Refugee integration in Hamilton

Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) is one of 77 Local Immigration Partnerships (LIP) in Canada funded by the federal government. The key objective of LIP is to create a collaborative table where settlement agencies and community partners can discuss critical and important issues about refugees/newcomers make and implement collective action decisions necessary to successfully integrate newcomers into their communities (City of Hamilton staff report, 2017). The HIPC was established in 2009 and is comprised of over 85 community partners. Sectoral representatives on HIPC include housing, health, employment, education, language training, research, settlement services, businesses, community organizations, media and other levels of government. Since the dissolution of Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO) in 2011, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council has become the coordinating partnership of settlement service agencies and community partners in Hamilton. The HIPC receives funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) on a 3-year funding agreement basis. Between July 2009 and March 2017, a total sum of $2.22 million was injected by IRCC to the City of Hamilton to operate the partnership (City of Hamilton,

2017). There was also in-kind support from HIPC partners, which was over $4.1 million over the same period. The table below show funding provisions to HIPC from 2009-2020

Table 2: Overview of HIPC funding provisions from 2009-2020

	Fiscal Year	**Amount**
1	July 15, 2009 – March 31, 2011	$ 285,195
2	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2011	$ 393,145
3	April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012	$ 297,168
4	April 1, 2012 – March 31, 2013	$ 260,311
5	April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014	$ 261,266
6	April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015	$ 246,818
7	April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016	$ 237,500
8	April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017	$ 242,600 *A
9	April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018	$ 320,245 *B
10	April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019	$ 230,120
11	April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020	$ 206,488

Source: City of Hamilton staff report (August 2017)

*A: *The 2016-2017 IRCC funding included a one-time project grant of $5,100 to support the evaluation of Syrian newcomers' resettlement in Hamilton.*

*B: *The 2017-2018 IRCC funding included one-time project grants of $25,023 and $52,128 respectively, to support a sectoral mapping project and a community engagement initiative with newcomers.*

The table shows financial commitments, including from the federal government to boost the capacity of the HIPC to provides services to GARs. The HIPC has been receiving regular funding since its inception, which shows some stability and steadiness over the years. The funds are used to advance the key priorities outlined in HIPC's strategic plan (2017-2020).

In terms of coordination, the City's Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives Division oversees all contractual agreements with IRCC in accordance with LIPs Policy Directions. The division also provides municipal oversight and leadership to ensure HIPC's goals and strategic priorities continue to meet the needs of newcomers and supporting settlement agencies in Hamilton.

4.7.1. Achievements of the HIPC in settlement and integration

The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) and its partners continue to play pivotal roles in ensuring the needs of newcomers are understood and addressed within the framework of the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs). Between 2010 and 2015 for example, the HIPC managed to produce research on newcomer needs, the role of informal services in settlement and integration and employers' readiness and experience in hiring immigrants. It also managed to develop a variety of resources guides to assist both service providers and newcomers. For 2016, the HIPC produced newcomer service and housing guides.

4.8. Overall barriers faced municipalities in refugee settlement and integration

Within the inter-government context, welcoming communities like local governments continue to face challenges with regards to the successful integration of GARs. For example, the barriers inhibiting the integration and settlement of immigrants in London are commonly experienced in smaller cities across Canada (Tossutti and Esses, n.d). Many recent immigrants face unemployment or underemployment. London is facing a severe shortage of health care providers

and lacks health and mental health support services for refugees who have experienced trauma and torture. Many newcomers are on waiting lists for ESL training or are unable to access language training because of issues related to traveling distance and child care. Many landlords will not rent to immigrants and many service providers will not provide services to immigrants, simply because of their status.

A study conducted by Tossutti and Esses (n.d) discovered that in London, Ottawa and Windsor, three of the four largest immigrant receiving cities, between 80-100 percent of respondents felt their communities could serve newcomer needs. In Ottawa, respondents discussed the availability of English language training, increased federal funding for accreditation and strong immigrant umbrella organizations and college training programs for foreign professionals, although concerns were expressed about the relative lack of language training resources for francophone newcomers and for female homemakers and elderly parents.

4.9. Discussion and analysis

Since the introduction of IRPA the needs of GAR's has become more pronounced, which indicates the need for the RAP program has increased in the past 16 years. In the 2016 IRCC report evaluating the RAP, it noted that SPO providing service across Canada were meeting the immediate needs and urgent needs GAR's, however many SPO lack resources and experience delays in receiving funding from higher level governments(IRCC, 2016). This is problematic because services providers are working tirelessly and using most of their resources just to meet the urgent needs of GAR's, the level of sustained support and range of actors required for resettled refugees to achieve full integration into Canadian society is going to be difficult. "How the federal and provincial governments work to address this challenge is determined by the agreed-upon responsibilities from their immigration Agreements" (McGrath, 2010).

Federal and provincial immigration agreements play an important role in determining how both levels of government and municipal government and local settlement agencies respond to refugee needs. This study argues that where there is an agreement such as COIA which requires engagement at the community level, this agreement allows for local settlement agency to play a much more active role in the development of programs for refugees. This approach enables the design and delivery of settlement program to be tailored specifically to refugee/GAR's needs. greater engagement by local municipalities and the NGO sector in delivering and developing settlement programs for refugees there seems to be more flexibility and innovation of services. This is evident in almost all the case reviewed.

For example, in Ottawa, local actors demonstrate signs of flexibility and adaptability as evidence by tailored made services and programs to meet the needs of GARs. The municipalities also understand better their relationships with other local actors, which makes it easier to forge strategic alliances and partnerships to deliver services effectively. The London Middlesex Immigration Partnership (LMIP) is an example of this model. Through the LMIP city was able form a strategic partnership with local service providers such as health care, education, housing, children's services and police to fill in gaps that exist.

Although the LIP's was created primarily to serve the needs of immigrants, the community focus aspect of the programs allows it to response quickly to the needs of refugee. In a looking at the responsiveness of   LIP's in Hamilton, Ottawa, and Waterloo Region to determine how effective it was in the resettlement and integration of Syrian refugees. The researchers found that LIP's "acted as a catalyst for community-wide refugee resettlement planning and responses; created or enabled new working groups and bodies to oversee specific aspects of refugee resettlement; established new intersectoral partnerships; hosted welcome events and forums;

published resource guides in Arabic. Thus, the flexibility of the LIP model enables it to response

and develops programs for refugee/GAR.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

This paper concludes that for the Government of Canada to resettle refugees with high needs, it requires that settlement policy engage and leverage the support of actors at all levels of government. This allows for local actors to use their knowledge and expertise at the local level to develop programs that accommodate the special needs of GARs. Multi-level governance strategies are being used to address some of the challenges posed by GAR 's, municipalities are now being formally recognized as partners in the immigration policy formation process and are also partnering with local settlement agencies to create integration programs. Due to this partnership settlement programs are increasingly being oriented to suit the specific needs of newcomer populations. McGrath (2010) argues that the Key to addressing some of these concerns are federal/provincial settlement agreements that clearly articulate the roles and shared responsibilities of all actors engaged in the settlement process.

Given the innovative LIP's project in Ontario, there seems to be a role for municipal government in policy and funding discussions and decisions related to immigration issues. "Engaging municipal governments on issues of settlement and integration would help to build individual/family/household settlement decisions into the broader national discussion concerning the role of immigration and humanitarian programs." The signing of COIA has moved municipal government a step closer to achieving this goal of having a voice at the political table when it comes to immigration policies. LIP's has also increased the autonomy of SPO, because of the collaborative and community focus of approach taking; local services providers are being integrated into the settlement planning system.

Such as healthcare providers, social services organization, job agencies and settlement agencies. "Ultimately, the success of many of these initiatives will depend on the willingness of the federal and provincial levels of government to continue to recognize the important role of municipal governments in immigration matters, as well as depend on their willingness to continue funding locally developed settlement and integration program". Many refugees rely on mainstream settlement programs after that year and some require special services during that year, such as in the case of persons who have experienced torture. Access to post RAP settlement services is therefore crucial to the settlement experiences of refugees.

5.2. Policy recommendations

Although the cases reviewed suggests that there are some notable achievements in providing services and programs for GARs, there are some gaps that need attention. There is need to strengthen capacity for collaboration. As the Syrian experience in Ottawa has shown, the services and supports provided to settle refugees go far beyond those funded by IRCC. They involve a wide range of public and community services in many sectors, including health care, education, employment, housing, and settlement, as well as donations of time and money from members of the public.

Because of this, building capacity for collaboration between key sectors with a role in newcomers' settlement and integration is at the core of our response. If the focus is placed on just on the level of immediate tasks and activities, there may be hundreds of collaborations. This can create multiple challenges and tensions can arise when service providers work together without the benefit of shared protocols, connected systems, and clarity about each other's roles, capacities and constraints. As such, it is important to focus on strengthening the connectivity between the settlement system and other key service systems (e.g., housing, health, mental

health, youth services, and municipal services) by investing in opportunities for mutual understanding of respective mandates, practice philosophies and processes, service referral protocols. This policy proposal is crucial to enable effective collaborations in support of the settlement and integration of refugees, especially GARs. Municipalities and other actors can also invest in strengthening the capacity of settlement sector organizations to communicate with private sponsors of refugees and share information of settlement support services available to GARs.

The size and scope of the public response to Syrian refugees suggests that there is the potential to leverage more community support for the settlement and integration of refugees beyond the Syrian cohort. Although there were a number of factors that were unique, and which cannot be easily replicated, the public response to Syrian refugees points to a possibility for wide engagement in community efforts to settle refugees.

In the case of London, there are certain measures that can be taken to address the issue of the lacking or underprovided services and supports for immigrants including: the London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership also needs to increase awareness and accessibility of all services available to them, not just a selection, the LMIP should invest more time and resources to help new immigrants establish themselves in the community and exploring opportunities for greater consultation and cross-sharing in bridging supply and demand through Central planning tables between Local Immigration Partnerships and Immigrant Employment Councils.

The evidence from Waterloo suggests that looking forward there is need to reinforce a community-wide response through ensuring that refugee support remains the responsibility of the whole community (not just the role of designated agencies), promoting refugee independence

(not dependency), where refugees can be supported to transition beyond month 12 and contribute back to the community. There is need for continued use of the infrastructure of the Waterloo Region Local Immigration Partnership (WRIP) to coordinate future refugee support.

It is also important to continually equip both individuals and groups in supporting refugees. For example, ensure access to interpretation, inform people of existing refugee supports, promote cross-cultural awareness, develop creative fundraising strategies.

The City of Hamilton, as the project sponsor of HIPC, needs to continue working with community partners, key stakeholders and senior levels of government to realize the objectives of HIPC. The City of Hamilton also needs to ensure HIPC's staff structure, program operations and community support are positioned to meet the needs of the partnership and key priorities over the coming years.

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