

8-1-2024

Equity and Consistency: Resettlement Needs Assessment and Referral Service Standards for Government-Assisted Refugees

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Abstract

The dissertation-in-practice (DiP) addresses the equity and consistency of the resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for government-assisted refugees (GARs) within the confines of defined autonomy and equity, diversity, and inclusion at Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector, a midsize national resettlement sector in Canada. The current service standards are inequitable and inconsistent, and their application marginalizes GARs. In the DiP, I adopt and adapt an integrated Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach rooted in a decolonizing lens and embedded in equity by addressing inequitable social conditions of a community-in-practice service that causes injustices. The change implementation plan, enacted on the premise of collaborative governance and collectivism, is articulated to invite Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector employees to share their voices equitably to address the product, process, and human-centric change from a regional-specific perspective in the multicultural diaspora of global GARs. As the daughter of South Africa and adopted daughter of Canada, my experience as a marginalized woman of colour has taught me that there is no path to social justice in addressing this problem of practice: Social justice is the path in this DiP to achieve equity because without embracing the social justice path, the dream and hope of achieving service equity for all GARs becomes unclear. The equitable change journey ahead is filled with humility, compassion, and empathy and will be beneficial for the resettlement service agencies administering the service standards and global GARs receiving service standards equity.

Keywords: needs assessment, government-assisted refugees, equity, transformative leadership, Ubuntu, social justice

Executive Summary

The dissertation-in-practice (DiP) aspires to reach a solution for equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for all government-assisted refugees (GARs) at Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector (SHRRS; a pseudonym), a refugee resettlement sector in Canada. The resettlement needs assessment and referral service is administered to GARs within the first few days of their arrival in Canada to determine immediate and essential needs and to refer clients to targeted follow-up services supporting resettlement during their first 4–6 weeks in the country (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2019), before they transition to settlement services.

My experience and subject matter expertise identified systemic inequity, inconsistency, and social justice imbalances in the community-of-practice service standards that have marginalized refugee cohorts for over two decades. Needs assessment and referral service standards are delivered in all SHRRS resettlement communities in Canada. To address the faults systemically, embracing good governance, respecting different worldviews, and being transformative, deliberate, and transparent about one's actions is required (Nzimakwe, 2014; Trommel, 2020). “Collaborative governance” (Holbrook, 2020, p. 87) is another governance strategy incorporated in this DiP to address the problem of practice (PoP), expressed by inviting all voices to the table for vibrant diverse conversations.

The DiP comprises three chapters that examine the PoP, the appropriate leadership approach and change framework to inform the implementation plan, and associated plans to support equitable and consistent resettlement service standards for needs assessment and referrals for GARs at SHRRS.

Chapter 1 addresses the PoP from my perspective in the context of SHRRS, which

operates among one of the largest resettlement programs in the world. With my personal positionality as a woman of colour facing the adversities of unjust systems and my professional positionality as director of the national refugee resettlement secretariat, I use appropriate theoretical approaches and frameworks to effect change in this community-in-practice service. Critical theory is action-oriented and used to challenge the status quo, to rewrite the oversight of issues of power and wrongs from a postmodern approach for equitable change (Capper, 2019; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Chapter 1 provides a contextual factor analysis of the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental framework in which the PoP is framed; guiding questions; geopolitical atrocities and impact on SHRRS; an overview of the structure and leadership at SHRRS; and the ways these elements influence and contribute to the PoP.

In Chapter 2, I articulate the planning and development strategies of the DiP, within the deeply rooted diverse sector diaspora, to address the PoP. A blended Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) is required for dialogue and critical reflection; this blend guides the inquiry and actions throughout the DiP. The framework to lead the product, process, and human-centric change includes Kotter's (2012) eight-stage change framework, enhanced by Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu human-centric ontologies and beliefs (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010). The chapter includes an assessment of SHRRS's organizational readiness for change performed from a multidimensional perspective to assess change valence and efficacy to implement the change effort (Deszca et al., 2020; Weiner, 2009). The chapter concludes with parameters of leadership ethics and by addressing and evaluating potential solutions to the PoP that are equitable, consistent, and socially just for all GARs. The best solution is found to be the development of regional-specific service standards (RSSS).

Chapter 3 provides a detailed change implementation plan for the chosen solution, the RSSS within the confines of defined autonomy (Waters & Marzano, 2006). A sequential Kotter (2012) change framework with blended Ubuntu ontologies and the blended transformative leadership approach guides the development of the change implementation plan for the RSSS. The change framework provides a progressive eight-stage, step-by-step change process (Deszca et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). Associated plans for communication and monitoring and evaluation adopt Kotter's step-by-step process so that all plans align. Common elements for all three plans include Kotter's eight stages, goals, actions, responsibilities, and timelines. The communication plan addresses strategic communication in Kotter's stages and the monitoring and evaluation plan adopts the plan-do-study-act cycle for process monitoring and evaluation of the change plan (Saunders, 2016). Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership is weaved into the plans. The logic model outcomes allow for summative and effective evaluation of the implementation plan to ascertain if the plan is aligned to address the equity, diversity, and inclusion focus of the DiP. The chapter concludes with next steps and future considerations to sustain the impact of RSSS.

The information and knowledge generated in this human-centric DiP provides lifelong learning for all change recipients and benefits all stakeholders. Ultimately, when GARs are equitably and consistently served by SHRRS agencies, they will enrich the social, economic, and cultural well-being of Canadian communities.

Acknowledgments

It is my belief that achievement is neither inherited nor genetic, but in essence it is defined by courage, perseverance, passion, and resilience. There is no heart stronger than those of the people who supported me to serve humanity with humility and to follow my destiny to advocate for equitable and socially just systems for diverse, vulnerable, and equity-seeking populations.

To my husband, Morgan, who walked alongside me for 35 years as I aspired to fulfill my heart's desires in my personal, professional, and academic pursuits: These journeys were arduous, first with my stage IV cancer 33 years ago and now with the doctorate. I am eternally grateful for your love, generosity of spirit, and belief in me. To my beautiful and brilliant daughter, Jivanya, you have made me very proud. You taught me that dreams are worth pursuing and to never stop yearning to follow them. In pursuit of this doctorate, I dared to dream, and now I rejoice in this accomplishment. The encouragement received from my family, friends, and colleagues inspired me and gave me strength to remain undeterred. You know who you all are, and I thank you.

To my friends from the community leadership cohort, thank you for your constructive feedback and critical thought that urged me to question myself and continuously refine my DiP. Special thanks to my friends, Tiffany Castell and Kymberly Briggs: Your empathy, compassion, and humility is appreciated. Finally, my gratitude to all my instructors for your tireless guidance. Special thanks to Drs. Courtney and Edwards: I have the highest order of respect and admiration for your wisdom, empathy, and mentorship in the DiP proposal and writing stages. Your unwavering dedication guided my path and will always be remembered.

Although I take ownership of this DiP, it belongs to all of us because we lived this for three years. The culmination of my work in this DiP is captured in the spirit of the Ubuntu idiom “I am because we are” (Mangaliso et al., 2022, p. 1035).

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Acronyms

CFP	Call for Proposals
DiP	Dissertation-in-Practice
EDI	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
GARs	Government-Assisted Refugees
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
PDSA	Plan, Do, Study, Act
PoP	Problem of Practice
PRO	Public Relations Officer
RSSS	Regional-Specific Service Standards
SGG	Strategic Governance Group
SHRRS	Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector
SHRRS-WG	Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector Working Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WC	Working Committee (operational committee in the change process)

Definitions

Government-assisted refugee: A person outside Canada who is identified as a convention refugee and receives financial and other Government of Canada support for 1 year from the date of arrival (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2023c).

Equality: A state attained when everybody receives the same opportunity and experience on the assumption that all start at the same place and everyone is treated the same (Minow, 2021).

Equity: A state reached when everybody gets what they deserve and does not start at the same place; support is tailored to specific needs (Minow, 2021; Tan, 2019). Equity overcomes the historical legacy of marginalization (Minow, 2021; Tan, 2019). In this dissertation-in-practice (DiP), the principle of equity considers people's unique experiences in different situations and ensures that they have access to resources and opportunities to attain just outcomes by eliminating disparities (IRCC, 2023d).

Indigenous: In this DiP, Indigenous refers to the world's refugee populations in Canada who have been displaced from their land of origin; share a distinct social background, language, and culture; and bring Indigenous knowledge (Stewart, 2018).

Polyocular vision: A shared vision that is obtained from different perspectives and allows for multiple worldviews (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010).

Regional-specific service standards: The development of regional-specific needs assessment and referral service standards is the goal of my chosen solution to the problem of practice.

Renaissance: The "rebirth of classical knowledge that led to a renewed interest in thinkers such as Pythagoras, Plato and Plotinus" (Ogren, 2009, p. 6). However, in this DiP, renaissance is a postcolonial term referring to the rebirth, revitalization, and rediscovery (Battiste, 2013; Kroeker, 2022) of the needs assessment and referral service standards.

Ubuntu: A Nguni term of “compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity” (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 2) captured by the Ubuntu idiom “I am because we are” (Mangaliso et al., 2022, p. 1035).

Chapter 1: Problem Posing

Canada's refugee resettlement sector, referred to by the pseudonym Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector (SHRRS), has solidified its reputation among the global leaders of resettlement. SHRRS is mandated to provide the resettlement needs assessment and referral service to government-assisted refugees (GARs) upon their arrival to Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2019). Research, experience, and subject matter expertise identify systemic inequity, inconsistency, and social justice imbalances in the community-of-practice service standards that have marginalized refugee cohorts for over two decades. Geopolitical tensions shift in a nanosecond, increasing the influx of refugees. To address this systemic fault, embracing good governance, respecting different worldviews, and being deliberate and transparent about one's actions are required (Nzimakwe, 2014; Trommel, 2020). This dissertation-in-practice (DiP) addresses the lack of equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for equitable outcomes for GARs in Canada, with the exception of the province of Quebec because of the Canada–Quebec Accord whereby Quebec provides its own services for integration of refugees (IRCC, 1991).

I solidify my position as a transformative leader in SHRRS and acknowledge that as a woman of colour, adversities have always walked beside and set me back because of the unjust systems I crossed paths with. I faced injustices in the context of discrimination and racism living under the apartheid regiment in South Africa and covert discrimination as a woman of colour aspiring to break through the glass ceiling in the work force in Canada. Therefore, I feel a deep connection through a larger purpose and a divine pledge to “mak[e] the world a better place” (Berg, 2015, p. 1) for refugee resettlement. Injustices are addressed with a call to action. In rewriting oversights from the past, I set the background for Chapter 1, which includes the

SHRRS context and structure; leadership position, positionality, and agency; framing the PoP in the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental framework; historical setting; guiding questions; leadership vision for change; and the ways these elements influence the PoP. I am who I am because of my transformative positionality and equity lens, the sector context, and agency within which I live, learn, play, and practice and where the problem is posed, described, and guided. I adopt a “polyocular” (Ncube, 2010, p. 79; see also Maruyama, 2004) vision obtained from different perspectives for equitable and inclusive change and postmodern and postcolonial discourse to model the way (Mangena, 2016; Ncube, 2010). A harmonious blend of Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous worldviews will challenge the status quo ethically. SHRRS remains committed: There is no path to social justice in addressing this community problem; social justice is the path in this DiP. Without embracing the social justice path deliberately, the dream and hope of service equity for all GARs becomes unclear.

Positionality and Lens Statement

I acknowledge my positionality as an immigrant woman, daughter of South Africa, and adopted daughter of Canada. My moral and social compass are rooted in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) of marginalized populations. Lifelong learning has shaped my identity and the soul of my equity and social justice work for 36 years in two countries. My embodiment of care is attributed to “personal and professional histories” (Sinclair & Ladkin, 2020, p. 63) that define my positionality and lens statement.

Personal Leadership Position

I am of Indian descent, and a descendant of indentured migrant labourers brought through the indentured labour system from India to the British colony of Natal, South Africa, from 1860 to 1911 to work on the plantations (Vahed, 2019). Therefore, I am a colonized fourth-generation

South African and a decolonized first-generation Canadian, sharing the land as a settler of colonialist-expropriated land (Shah, 2021). My human development is shaped by early experiences, the environment, and learning, and my actions align with my values.

My leadership beliefs include respect, empathy, humility, and compassion inspired by my elders and community influencers. In alliance with these beliefs, the Ubuntu philosophy of “compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity” (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 2) inspires my humanitarian work. A combination of my early childhood morals and the Ubuntu perspectives coin my personal leadership position to serve humanity equitably with humility through a culturally responsive and sensitive transformative leadership lens. Shields’s (2010) transformative leadership approach is a reference to equity, signifying that every individual in society should be treated ethically with dignity, respect, and with deep regard to social justice. Inspiration from Nelson Mandela’s self-mastery and empathy (Pietersen, 2015) and the ethics instilled in me by my elders inspire me to improve services for the vulnerable and voiceless.

I must be mindful to acknowledge that potential biases can originate from overt racism in the previous White apartheid South Africa and cohesive covert discrimination in Canada by the White privileged. However, lessons learned from the profound empathetic practices of Nelson Mandela and my morality motivate my agency to develop services for the diverse refugee segment of humanity from a bias-free, social justice, equity, and inclusion lens.

Agency

I am the national secretariat director of refugee resettlement at SHRRS, appointed to provide program and service leadership support to SHRRS resettlement agencies. My primary agency and ethical responsibility are to assist the resettlement agencies with the settlement and integration of global refugees. I am based in a not-for-profit resettlement agency, but I serve the

sector from a national perspective. High-importance priorities for 30 months until January 2024 included the national coordination and regional implementation of the resettlement of 47,010 Afghan refugees (IRCC, 2023i). A second integral priority is to address the service anomalies from a sector context by leveraging partnerships, collaboration, and innovation to change the landscape of the resettlement programs equitably to align with evolving needs of refugees (IRCC, 2023d). The SHRRS working group (SHRRS-WG) and federal government assigned me the responsibility of leading a distributed coalition of sector leaders from all levels of leadership to address and reach an equitable, consistent, and desirable future state for the needs assessment and referral service standards. In 2021, when the Afghan refugees arrived in Canada, in collaboration with sector partners, an equitable needs assessment and referral service standards short-term pilot to provide timely and targeted services for that population was codeveloped. Education and experience taught me that leadership strength is defined by sector partner contributions. Being open about my positionality and lens will support the service standards change seamlessly. Regarding decision-making, I have positional power to lead change equitably and make recommendations to the SHRRS-WG on behalf of the service agencies. I have informal power of daily service operations, so when the new service standards are implemented, I will rely on the social cohesion of regional leadership and front-line employees to support the implementation as a collaborative inspired by my personal leadership and EDI principles.

Personal Leadership Lens in an EDI Context

As a colonized and decolonized leader surrounded by equity and social justice issues, equity is ingrained in my gene pattern because I lived, experienced, observed, and learned about systemic injustices. My leadership philosophy aligns with appropriate theories, such as transformative leadership, that can influence the world of leadership practice.

In the new federal government call for proposals (CFP) for 2024, which takes effect April 2025, EDI is a priority (IRCC, 2023d) and the resolution of the PoP is timely. The rules that Eurocentric dominance have played by are outdated and have impeded equitable and inclusive service development for humanity (Ermine, 2007). I am a critical theorist who has always critiqued the archaic status quo with the knowledge gained from my lived experience, subject expertise, and wisdom. My leadership is rooted in transformative, equitable, and systemic service change from community-in-practice and evidence-based standpoints. Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership frameworks are grounded in critically oriented epistemologies (Capper, 2019). Ubuntu transformative human-centric beliefs (Ncube, 2010) and ontologies (Mangaliso et al., 2022) are privileged in equity and social justice leadership. I will make a difference by identifying and addressing the PoP. Critical theory is action-oriented and challenges the status quo to rewrite the oversight of issues of power and wrongs from a postmodern approach for change (Capper, 2019; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Mangena, 2016; Ncube, 2010; Shields, 2016, 2020b).

Past injustices rendered me voiceless until recently, when SHRRS, a bureaucratic, hierarchical resettlement sector, recognized my theoretical and experiential leadership and tasked me with correcting the systemic imbalance of this mandatory service. Social justice is a social construction; therefore, “socially constructed identities” (Shah, 2018, p. 29) define my identity. As a lifelong transformative leader, I question and critique the unjust treatment of those excluded. In my mission to embrace social justice change, adopting the voice of Shields (2020a), to “decry the inequities in the status quo and seek ways of redressing them” (p. 3) is profound. Addressing the PoP is beneficial because Canada will remain a global leader in refugee

resettlement (Perzyna & Agrawal, 2022) and stay committed to the protection of the refugee segment of humanity (Immigration and Refugee Protection Act [IRPA], 2001).

In 2021, when the Afghan refugees landed in Canada, SHRRS cocreated a nationally coordinated and regionally implemented engagement structure that provided a platform for ethical dialogue of diverse worldviews and collaboration for collective impact for this 30-month project. Suffice it to say, I am part of the SHRRS context and SHRRS is part of me.

Organizational Context

I acknowledge that my positionality and agency are contextualized in a sector background that extends beyond a single agency. Historically, in the 20th century, charities and faith-based agencies supported the resettlement of immigrants and refugees. By adopting a multiculturalism policy in 1970, the government funded and developed “a rich tapestry of resettlement organizations” (Hamilton et al., 2020, p. 9) to provide this service. SHRRS is Canada’s only mid-size, national, not-for-profit refugee resettlement sector of 40 resettlement agencies in Canada, and its primary responsibility is to resettle GARs. The sector is a diverse and dynamic open refugee-resettlement ecosystem grounded in systems theory where the “whole is bigger than the sum of its parts” (Jung & Vakharia, 2019, p. 258). Tensions in the external environment have an impact on SHRRS; for example, the unexpected Afghan refugee resettlement program from August 2021 to January 2024 managed mass Afghan arrivals. The next section describes the political, economic, social, cultural, and policy context of SHRRS.

Political, Economic, Social, Cultural, and Policy Context

Politically, since the 1980s, the settlement sector has been situated in a permanent federal government austerity and neoliberal context, and Canada’s immigration policy acknowledges that the not-for-profit agencies are the best governance practice model for settlement and

integration (Lowe et al., 2017). Canada is committed to protecting displaced individuals (IRPA, 2001), but the federal government's promises are disguised by neoliberalism: What seems like a devolution of power to the not-for-profit human service sector is an illusion because tight controls impact SHRRS operations. The federal government imposes government contracts, policies, reduced funding, and administrative and functional guidance (Lowe et al., 2017). Public policy formulation is the responsibility of the federal government, and their policy controls and compliance measures reduce the advocacy voice of not-for-profit agencies, leaving little or no time for strategic transformative change and leading to a disconnect between policy and practice in SHRRS. Janzen et al. (2022) noted that Canada leads global refugee intake but does not have the same commitment to evaluate policies and programs for refugees.

Socioeconomically, refugee resettlement is a social and economic return on investment for GARs, because social and economic integration are determinants of well-being. Canada grew from the diaspora of newcomers who enriched its social, cultural, and economic fabric. SHRRS measures a sense of belonging through social and cultural integration, community connections, civil society participation, and labour market integration. The federal government is the primary source of funding for SHRRS and is driven by public policies, procedures, and functional guidance. Compliance is required to avoid economic sanctioning of contractual agreements (Lager, 2010). Government funding contributes largely to SHRRS's efficient and effective operations. The bureaucratic system in SHRRS is due to the drivers of that bureaucracy rather than the beliefs and values of those leading the organizations, and services in SHRRS measure quantity over quality and equity. SHRRS, like all other government-funded sectors, operates in a restricted funding environment where, according to Lowe et al. (2017), funding cutbacks are a reality. Despite these constraints, employees continue to address the increased complexity of

refugee resettlement from a humanitarian heart. For refugees, the needs assessment process impacts the social and economic determinants of belonging and social cohesion. Failure to retrieve equitable, accurate, and consistent information for referrals across the sector from inequitable and inconsistent service standards causes obstacles in socioeconomic and cultural integration (Fang et al., 2020).

Culturally, SHRRS adopts a culturally competent and sensitive system of care approach (Claeys et al., 2020; Lau & Rodgers, 2021) to meet the social, cultural, and faith-based beliefs of refugees from diverse backgrounds. Canada has been a land of immigrants since confederation in 1867 (Statistics Canada, 2018). SHRRS employees are generations of multilingual immigrants and refugees and are culturally competent because they hold the cultural skills to address varied sociocultural and sociolinguistic needs (Lau & Rodgers, 2021). Although skills competency is the sector's unique selling position, putting forward a more intentional commitment to EDI in service standards is critical.

Context and Commitment to EDI

Bureaucratic neoliberalist controls of SHRRS leave little or no room for service equity initiatives. Consumed with federal government mandates and a concentration on client outputs, sector employees have limited time to reflect and improve service equitability outcomes. SHRRS's assets and strengths are characterized by a diverse, engaged, and compassionate multilingual workforce, and its aspiration is in diversity and inclusion efforts to settle and integrate refugees to reach their full potential. Diversity and inclusion do not mean equity and often create confusion and an illusion that services are equitable. Diversity indicates differences within the sector, inclusion is the ongoing effort toward people of different identities fully

participating in society, and equity is when people receive what they deserve tailored to specific needs (Minow, 2021; Tan, 2019). To reach a solution to the PoP, equity is paramount.

Outcomes and input ratios are vital in defining equity, but if all designated stakeholders are not included, the ratios are unequal and inequity exists (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983). As mass refugee arrivals increase, striving for equitable service access is vital to deeply impact the resettlement of all GARs from an equitable collaborative lens. The Syrian refugee resettlement project advised that resource reallocation is important and raised concerns about the sector's risk of creating inequities between different refugee cohorts and other vulnerable populations (Hamilton et al., 2020; Veronis et al., 2020). Equitable public policy measures will not create preferential treatment for some refugees and marginalize others (Veronis et al., 2020). SHRRS is a social sector whose structure and commitment have a cause and effect relationship.

SHRRS Structure and Burke–Litwin Causal Model

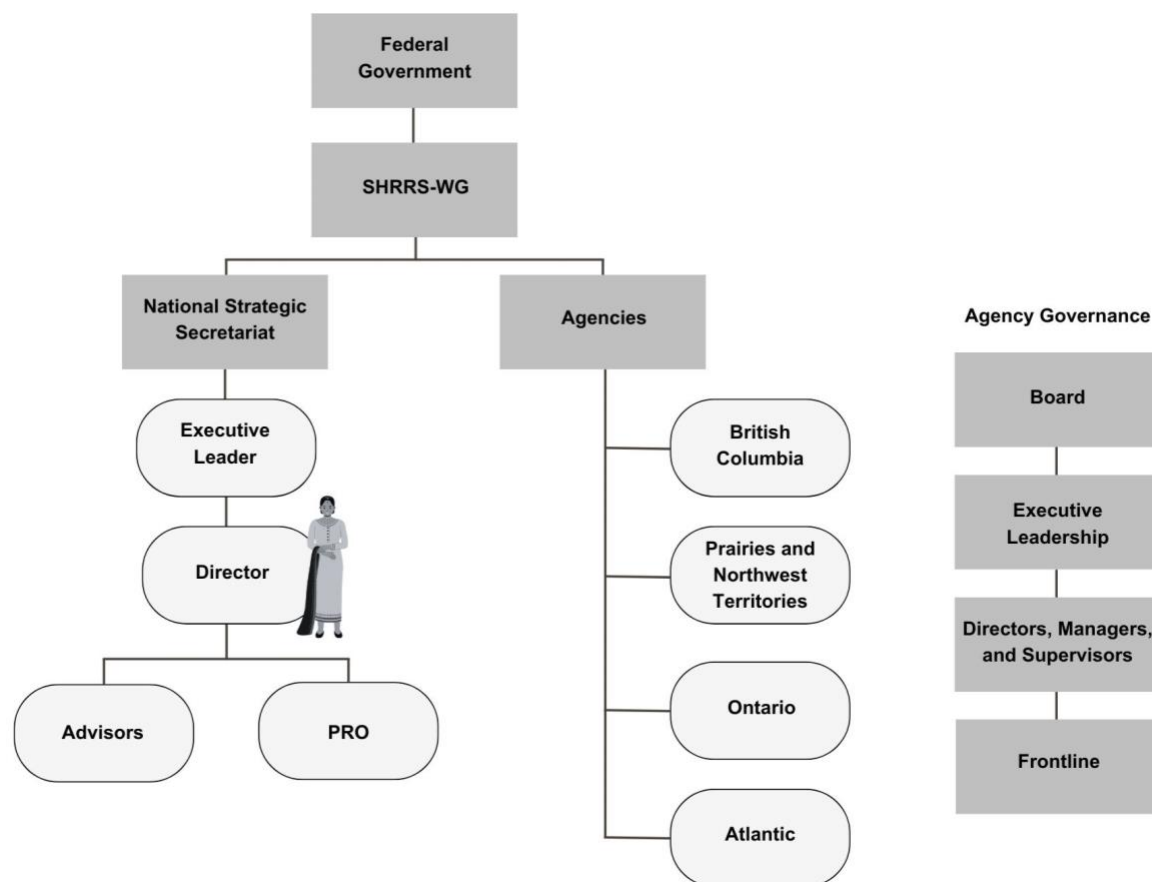
The SHRRS structure is a transformational, bureaucratic, culturally diverse, and policy-driven service sector. The sector comprises 40 urban, small, and rural resettlement agencies dispersed across Canada. The SHRRS structure broadly aligns with the Burke–Litwin's 12-dimension open system theory causal model of organizational performance (Burke, 2018). The sector theory is rooted in a structural-functional epistemology and aspires to efficiency, effectiveness, and sector performance (Burke, 2018; Capper, 2019). Dimensions in the Burke–Litwin model are categorized into inputs, throughputs, and outputs (Burke, 2018). The external environment plays a significant cause and effect role in operations and performance (Burke, 2018). Geopolitical tensions generate mass refugee arrivals for resettlement and increase the demand for service equity and consistency to support the sector's vision and core principles.

Vision and Core Principles

The settlement and integration program currently is operating under the vision of “successful settlement and integration of newcomers benefits Canada by building a more inclusive, diverse and productive nation. This is achieved through a shared effort that helps all reach their economic and social potential” (IRCC, 2023a, Settlement and Vision Section). The vision for the future in the new CFP is embedded in equity, and according to IRCC (2023d), the vision is “to foster a program that delivers the right service, to the right client at the right time” (Settlement and Integration Vision section). The new vision informs the sector mission and core principles and affirms what *right* means. The right service ensures that services are aligned to the clients’ strengths and needs, allowing clients of diverse populations to access and share in the benefits of settlement services at the right time by improving service quality, consistency, and customization regardless of where clients are in their immigration journey (IRCC, 2023d). Services are aligned with core principles: client-centred, responsive to client’s needs, and outcomes driven, with effective use of resources (IRCC, 2023d).

Structure, Culture, Leadership Approach, and Theory and Practice

The SHRRS governance structure indicated in Figure 1 produces “particular types of outcome” (Heck, 2004, p. 23), aimed at the successful resettlement and integration of refugees, and the resettlement needs assessment is one such mandatory service. The resettlement program and the needs assessment and referral service are delivered by resettlement agencies with a combined employee base of 700–900 employees. Many personnel do not speak English as their first language, are refugees and immigrants, and have lived contextual experience and subject matter expertise. Therefore, the culture and the way things are done in SHRRS is client focused, but service equity remains a concern.

Figure 1*SHRRS Governance Structure*

Note. SHRRS-WG = Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector working group; PRO = public relations officer. Adapted from the SHRRS governance structure to include generic job titles.

The structure includes the SHRRS-WG, and I report to the secretariat executive leader who is also the chair of the SHRRS-WG. The secretariat is the liaison between the government and the resettlement agencies, was enacted in 2021 when the Afghan refugees arrived, and reports to the chair of SHRRS-WG. The system-wide resettlement agencies have an internal governance structure led by a board of directors, policies, and bylaws. Common employee

positions in the agencies include the executive director or chief executive officer, resettlement directors, managers, supervisors, and front-line practitioners. Common work units in each agency include human resources, finance, communications, technology, and programs and services.

The procedural resettlement handbook defines the resettlement program. Individual and agency performance outputs are measured against a set of competencies and management practices that support employees to achieve indicators. SHRRS's governance structure illustrates the hierarchies and the relationships. The SHRRS-WG is a national advisory body and the sector chair has positional power to make recommendations to the federal government.

From my observation and learning in the Doctorate of Education course, the transformational leadership approach (Bass & Riggio, 2005) thrives in the sector, but many leaders are unaware they are practising this leadership. This status quo leadership approach and practice currently supports equality and agency efficiency, as expressed in Shields (2010), but excludes systemic and structural inequities. The lack of morality of the transformational leadership approach attributes too much credit to the leader, and power can be abused (Díaz Sáenz, 2011; Hay, 2006). Based on my sector experience, the dynamics of urban leaders being considered over small and rural sector leaders are at play. On a positive side, the dimensions of transformational leadership are required to inspire and influence employees to engage in the sector space for change. As mentioned earlier, EDI is a priority in the new CFP, and the CFP is supportive of an equity and consistency lens (IRCC, 2023d).

Leadership Problem of Practice

Historically, bureaucratic culture and official power have influenced workforces (Hendryadi et al., 2019; Kanter, 2021). SHRRS leadership has influenced and supported inequity

of services, transformational leadership practices, silo-based thinking, and inequitable and inconsistent needs assessment and referral service standards. Limited effort in collaborative governance (Holbrook, 2020), lack of accountability, and absence of equitable and consistent service standards in the resettlement program handbook (IRCC, 2019) impacts this service. This ingrained agency culture impedes transformative leadership theory, practice, and service equity standards, specifically with this service. Recent global humanitarian crises displaced over 70 million people (Shultz et al., 2020). Mass refugee arrivals in Canada increased resettlement complexities and demands. A transition is needed from service equality where everybody receives the same opportunity on the assumption that all start at the same place (Minow, 2021) to service equity where everybody gets what they deserve and do not start at the same place, where support is tailored to specific needs (Minow, 2021). This transition is imperative to meet increased demands equitably. Service equity is critical to sustain efficiency, effectiveness, and relevancy (Capper, 2019), and it is required in this refugee environment.

The PoP to be addressed is the lack of equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards in SHRRS for GARs' specific needs and referral outcomes. Although refugees each have a unique experience, refugees' cumulative pathways share patterns, personal stories, reasons, and effects of displacement (Shultz et al., 2020). Given that all global GARs are received through public policy measures, they should receive equitable and consistent service standards in SHRRS, but the current state is not aligned accordingly.

Current State

In SHRRS, resettlement needs assessment and referrals are essential and immediate services administered in the context of the resettlement assistance program to GARs on arrival, available from SHRRS resettlement agencies. Research and subject expertise identify a system-

wide imbalance. This service lacks equitable and consistent service standards, resulting in multiple inconsistent assessments that marginalize GARs. This inconsistency compromises consistent data transfer to identify national trends, service gaps, and equitable needs of global GARs and impacts coherent outcomes and evaluation. Research suggests that assessments are irregular and evaluative practices are “sporadic and piecemeal” (Janzen et al., 2022, p. 13) in resettlement. During the recent Afghan refugee needs assessment and referral service pilot, my experience leading equitable needs assessment service standards codevelopment confirmed that the service standards administered by the agencies were inconsistent, inequitable, and marginalized GARs.

In their first year, many refugees leave their initial resettlement location and relocate to another geographical location in Canada for better social integration and are deemed secondary migrants (Simich et al., 2002). Inequitable resources lend themselves to an equity and social justice challenge because GARs are likely to get a different needs assessment and referral service and not a service continuation.

Research from the Syrian refugee mass arrivals indicated that all refugees need accurate information at the right time (Esses et al., 2020). Congruence is necessary between required and provided information, and awareness needed of the service inequities in the resettlement process between refugee cohorts when preferential treatment is given to some cohorts (Abid, 2020; Esses et al., 2020; Fang et al., 2020). Ontario’s big city mayors expressed that increased refugee arrivals have raised the pressure on a system that is over capacity (Trewartha, 2023). Refugees prefer to live in metropolitan cities; for example, Calgary and Vancouver received approximately 3,260 and 1,840 Afghan GARs respectively from August 2021 to January 2024 (IRCC, 2023i). To reduce some of this pressure on larger cities, the government invested \$35 million to expand

resettlement centres in small towns and rural communities (IRCC, 2022b).

There is no national resettlement training and development program for the needs assessment and referral service. The current resettlement program handbook does not provide consistent and equitable service standards and clear direction to ensure equity. However, lessons learned from the Afghan refugee resettlement inspired a collaborative handbook review which is in process and will include an equity-focused lens. The PoP will be addressed to reach a desired future.

Desirable State

Equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards, administered to GARs across Canada (excluding Quebec) is the core ethos of the desired future, with a polyocular vision (Ncube, 2010) ingrained in the culture providing clear direction. Service standards adopting a mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) for deeper refugee intervention would elevate the datasets from quantitative to qualitative to tell the refugee story more fully. The desired state includes equitability of internal SHRRS resources to administer, assess, and identify immediate, essential, and urgent needs. In this future, the availability of broader community resources and services to meet refugee needs through tailored and timely referrals provide multisectoral community connections for settlement and integration. Equitable and consistent service standards incorporated in the national resettlement program handbook and national cross-cultural employee service standards training in multiple languages would be the new normal. The equitable and inclusive governance culture required to navigate the complexities (Salas et al., 2012; Trommel, 2020) in the refugee environment would include a coalition of leaders practising Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership for dialogue, critical reflection, and service equitability. Consistent national refugee

data transfer for national dashboards and evaluating impact would be enacted. Contributing factors and framing of the PoP in historical and broader contexts are addressed next.

Framing of the Problem of Practice

Maintaining systemic service equity and consistent standards is an essential service that requires a commitment to remember the past, embrace the present, and move forward optimistically to improve services for the betterment of all GAR clients.

Historical Overview

Historically, Canada's commitment to protecting individuals in danger of being forced out of their countries is outlined in the IRPA (2001). Despite COVID-19, Canada continued to welcome GARs during the pandemic through innovative solutions while protecting Canadians' health and safety (IRCC, 2022a). When GARs land in Canada and are destined for SHRRS resettlement communities, resettlement agencies receive notification of the incoming refugee clients. Clients are welcomed and housed in temporary accommodation, and SHRRS starts to provide the needs assessment service. The resettlement needs assessment and referral service is a single service and part of a continuum of services within the resettlement assistance program. The service is administered to GARs within the first few days of arrival to inform the resettlement practitioners of specific immediate and essential needs and to refer clients to targeted and follow-up services to support resettlement during the first 4–6 weeks before transitioning to permanent accommodations and settlement services (IRCC, 2019).

The government of Canada works in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration as external partners in the refugee prearrival stages. UNHCR (2017) administers a “joint needs assessment” (p. 14) where agencies share a common interest in partnership, design, and delivery

and results are evaluated to improve services when the refugees are in their care. The International Organization for Migration (2023) arranges prearrival orientation services and orderly and humane migration. As mass refugee arrivals increase, the demand for this service will also increase. To say this simply, “if humanitarian actors do not know what the needs are, how can they respond to them effectively?” (UNHCR, 2017, p. 10).

Social Justice Context

Social justice is a social construction; therefore, my “socially constructed” (Shah, 2018, p. 29) identity influenced by structural barriers is profound and is required in broadening options and solutions (Bardwell, 1991) to address the PoP, which is rooted in a social justice context. The need to administer a resettlement needs assessment is stimulated by violations of individuals’ human rights, forcing them to flee as refugees. However, when they arrive in Canada, refugees are confronted by a service that has inequitable and inconsistent standards. Access and equity thrive in a social justice environment, and the inequitable needs assessment and referral service is a situation of differential access (Shah, 2018), whose current state is marginalizing GARs. For far too long in SHRRS, leadership practices in a diverse environment have been inspired by a Eurocentric leadership narrative. Historically, only select people entered a monocultural colonial dialogue inspired by a “monocular” (Ncube, 2010, p. 79) vision. A consideration of legitimate Afrocentric Indigenous transformative postmodern worldviews (Mangena, 2016; Ncube, 2010) and the embracing of diverse thought as an alternative to only Eurocentric transformative leadership practices are proposed in the DiP.

Contextual Factor Analysis

The broader external context, complexities, and key drivers influence the PoP’s current and future states. Framing them in a systemic political, economic, social, technological, legal,

and environmental framework provides a detailed impression of the external environment and a holistic approach to assessing the PoP (Kansongue et al., 2022; Kolios & Read, 2013).

Political

Canada is mandated to protect refugees (IRPA, 2001). As a recognized international leader in welcoming refugees, Canada sees its investment as contributing to Canadian culture, the economy, and population growth (IRCC, 2022b; Janzen et al., 2022). Politics can dramatically impact the current and future state of the PoP because it is immersed in a dynamic environment. The government's 3-year immigration levels plan identifies immigration targets (IRCC, 2023e), indicating the number of GAR admissions each year. SHRRS anticipates the number of needs assessment and referral services that will be administered. Based on public policy measures, SHRRS aspires to efficiency and compliance. The PoP is situated in a Liberal ruling party government environment, and although financial support is available, the government masquerades under the pretext of neoliberalism, where controls are evident (Lowe et al., 2017). Political benefits of equitable assessments are to follow trajectories of the GARs from the first needs assessment to naturalization.

Economic

The government supports all newcomers' economic growth, prosperity, and labour market needs (IRCC, 2022a). Funding for resettlement agencies to prepare newcomers to meet labour market needs depends on the government's list of priorities, so economic adversities impact SHRRS services that meet refugee needs because of reliance on that government funding. Depending on the political mandate of the government in power, the funding model can change and impact SHRRS. Historically, this has been the trend: Government funds are unpredictable and are affected by global crises. Increased funding of \$588.6 M (IRCC, 2023b) was allocated in

2022–2023 for resettlement and settlement services. Competing priorities of a mass refugee movement could delay addressing the PoP.

Social

Resettlement is an ongoing health and social problem as refugees settle in the wider context (Clinton-Davis & Fassil, 1992). Addressing the PoP will benefit the refugee clients and the employees administering the service. Elevated employee stress levels may limit participation in addressing this problem, but overall, employees may look at addressing the PoP as a benefit of having equitable service standards for all GARs. Leaders are encouraged to understand the social and cultural milieu and shift to transformative leadership for equity.

Technological

SHRRS is a hybrid technological sector with robust infrastructure and capacity to embrace transformative change. There are opportunities for creating national virtual leadership coalitions to address the PoP and share equitable needs assessment and referral service standards. The system provides opportunities for employee training and development to understand and administer the service as per equitable and consistent standards. Currently, a centralized government system is in place to receive consistent and equitable data, but inconsistent and inequitable services impede equitable data transfer and reduce national evidence-based evaluation impact outcomes.

Legal and Environmental

Legally, the federal government has a legal services unit with a senior general counsel and legal team to support operations, policy development, and new legislation (IRCC, 2022c), and the service is regulated by policy. Agencies in SHRRS operate independently as per board bylaws and some engage a lawyer for legal support. Environmentally, global geopolitical

tensions and the displacement of refugees create volatility in the external environment and impact SHRRS operations. These factors increase refugee influx and the demand for more needs assessment and referral services, therefore service equitability and consistency are integral.

Internal and External Data

Limited internal data are available on the equity and consistency of needs assessment and referral service standards. SHRRS client internal data are shared with the federal government through a centralized data collection system. They are collated and shared back with SHRRS via dashboards. Data demonstrate that only 23% of newcomers received the needs assessment and referral service when they landed (IRCC, 2021b, p. 5). This finding confirmed external Canadian research that the information the refugees receive is mismatched or they are not taking advantage of this national service (Esses et al., 2020). The government planned to receive 37,000 GARs for 2021–2023 (IRCC, 2021a), inclusive of 23,295 Afghan GARs (IRCC, 2023i).

Geopolitical atrocities in Afghanistan forced individuals to flee, and in 30 months, from August 2021 to January 2024, Canada received 47,010 Afghan refugees, including GARs, privately sponsored, and extended family refugees (IRCC, 2023i). SHRRS resettled 23,295 (IRCC, 2023i) Afghan GARs nationally, excluding Quebec. In October 2021, Afghans entering Canada were administered the Afghan equitable and consistent needs assessment and referral service pilot that ended in March 2023, but the data from that are currently pending. Canada is destined to receive 59,915 global GARs from 2023 to 2025 (IRCC, 2022d) and 56,615 from 2024 to 2026 (IRCC, 2023e). Relevant data illustrate the facts, validate what is happening, comprehend the current status of the service, predict patterns, and guide the inquiry in this DiP.

Guiding questions about the PoP in the next section provide further inquiry that influence decisions about how to address the main problem.

Guiding Questions From the Problem of Practice

Scientific research and the methodical pursuit of knowledge (Park et al., 2020) are guided by assumptions and questions that inspire reflection, incite critical thinking, stimulate curiosity, and promote understanding of potential factors that influence the problem (Tofade et al., 2013). My first guiding question is, “Why is it essential to blend Afrocentric Indigenous and Eurocentric transformative leadership theories in the DiP?” Leadership theories have been present for decades, but very few include an Indigenous perspective and “richness in cross-cultural fertilization” (Ncube, 2010, p. 78). Eurocentric knowledge has historically been seen as intellectually refined knowledge, whereas Indigenous knowledge has been interpreted as the voice of the marginalized (Battiste, 2013). Eurocentric methodologies, theories, policies, and practices are evident in SHRRS, contributing to service inequity. As a critical theorist and transformative leader, I must ensure that charitable work does not mean social justice (Capper, 2019). As diversity grows, it is time to challenge the status quo because the PoP is embedded in an ethnically diverse sociolinguistic and cultural environment (Mangaliso et al., 2022) of a worldwide Indigenous culture of refugees who forcibly left their native lands to settle in Canada. Merging Eurocentric and Indigenous thinking (Battiste, 2013), and specifically the postcolonial diverse human-centred leadership theory of Ubuntu (Ncube, 2010), provides a social justice change of product, process, and the human element. *Indigenous* in this DiP refers to the global refugee populations that have been displaced and live in Canada and who have a rich cultural heritage and Indigenous knowledge (Stewart, 2018). Blended Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous transformative theories harmonize and diversify the dialogue and rectify the wrongs.

My second guiding question is, “Will there be availability and equitability of resources to address the PoP?” The availability and equitability of resources for a cross-sectional equitable

sample of SHRRS agencies to participate in addressing the PoP is fundamental. Research illustrates that Canada needs to consider redistributing resources (Hamilton et al., 2020) for resettlement. Equity becomes a contentious point when public resources are distributed (Leclerc, 2017, as cited in Stone, 2002). Not-for-profits are under pressure because of funding cutbacks (Lowe et al., 2017) that affect agency stability and the availability of resources. More refugees are being sent to small and rural communities because of affordability, increasing the demand for needs assessment and referral services. Rural centres have confirmed that they provide good refugee integration opportunities but lack the resources to sustain those refugees (Haugen, 2019). Criteria for consideration for evaluation of equitable distribution of resources should be based on effectiveness of the resource to meet a need, efficiency of the resource based on outputs, and equity of resource distribution based on individuals receiving equivalent portions (Leclerc et al., 2017). Determining what resources to distribute to whom when addressing the PoP is required for those who participate in the revitalization (Battiste, 2013) of the PoP.

Finally, my third guiding question is, “How might SHRRS agencies move to a sector space for collaborative engagement?” Silo-based structures and internal politics exist in SHRRS. Although relationships are developed, collaboration for some traditional thinkers is an area of contention. Addressing the PoP necessitates the inclusion of diverse, powerful voices who have been silenced for far too long to bring varied thoughts for change equity. Transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2005) thrives in SHRRS. Although it is not the preferred leadership practice in this when an articulating equitable change process, transformational leadership could be to SHRRS’s advantage. SHRRS agency leader influence is profound, and leaders can act as catalysts to use transformational leadership to influence, inspire, and stimulate employees to transition into the sector space for collaborative action in this systemic change. The opportunity

for “collaborative governance [or] joined-up approaches” (Holbrook, 2020, p. 87) has been used to address social problems and will be a learning process as my team addresses the PoP.

Reaching a desirable future will require equal and equitable participation, valuing all voices in decision-making (Wang, 2018) and a leadership-focused vision.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

My leadership vision for change is authentic and purpose-driven, originates from my past values, and includes strategic foresight (Heger & Rohrbeck, 2012). Leadership is a privilege and not an entitlement. Therefore, leading authentically with values provides a clearer picture of the person I am and the vision I envision (Sime, 2019) for the future state of SHRRS. In this DiP, the leadership vision for change is a polyocular vision of diverse worldviews to ultimately “foster a program that delivers the right service, to the right client at the right time” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2023d, Settlement and Integration Vision Section). Global complexities and unstable geopolitical directives (California 100 & School of International Studies, n.d.; Chabay, 2020) create a world of volatilities, uncertainties, challenges, and ambiguities (Schwarz et al., 2023). Leaders are called to reshape SHRRS’s future. Strategic foresight (Heger & Rohrbeck, 2012) to reduce the uncertainties by integrating methodologies and embracing futures and design thinking (Brady & Chugh, 2023; Schwarz et al., 2023) to address change in a “more anticipatory manner” (California 100 & School of International Studies, n.d., p. 2) is required. Design thinking is a human-centred process of using creative strategies for problem solving (Schwarz et al., 2023), and futures thinking is the range of human values of exploring options for the future (Brady & Chugh, 2023).

On the premise of “envisioning, energising and enabling” (Bezboruah, 2013, p. 130), privileging a systemic Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous vision for this transformative

change will be the pathway to an equitable and sustainable future state for SHRRS. The vision defines the future state and communicates, stimulates, and empowers SHRRS employees to achieve what is authentically congruent with SHRRS goals, values, and culture to reach the future state. Considerations for change from present to the future state are expressed in the DiP.

Present and Envisioned Future State

An authentic gap analysis between the current and envisioned future states can be articulated using Nadler and Tushman's (1980) open system congruence paradigm of inputs, transformational processes, and outputs. The model serves as a compass (Errida & Lotfi, 2021) to identify the gaps, diagnose behaviour, and understand what needs to change for a reliable prognosis. SHRRS is an open system: Inputs from the environment and resources affect strategy formulation and the level of congruence among the transformational components of task, individual, culture, and formal and informal organizational arrangements (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Global geopolitical tensions and rising numbers of GARs increase the demand for needs assessment and referral service, hence the task in this DiP. The lack of resources and inequitable resource distribution cause undue pressure and limit the ability of some sector agencies to innovate equitably as needed. SHRRS narrative and leadership practice have historically been embedded in a Eurocentric transformational environment. Individualized influence, leader credit, and power tend to render others voiceless (Bass & Riggio, 2005; Kanter, 2021).

The analysis of the transformation factors indicates incongruities and a lack of coherence with internal components (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Eurocentric narrative, practice, transformational culture, funder regulation, and compliance (Lager, 2010) define the needs assessment and referral service standards task in this DiP. Adopting a colonial narrative in task design and application of the service standards by SHRRS employees with the lack of an

equitable vision for a diverse refugee diaspora lacks coherence. The lack of systemic, formal, equitable and consistent structure and processes to produce equitable service standards marginalizes GARs and does not meet equity demands. Although the efficient, multilingual, and experienced refugee employees have the skills to administer the service, no formal systemic written standards or arrangements detail systemic equity or consistent structure, processes, and procedures. Employees revert to informal support from resettlement agency leaders who provide multiple structures and processes for the same task. This situation adversely hinders the equitable performance of the needs assessment and referral service.

For a more reliable social justice and equity prognosis, the systemic coexistence of Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous perspectives could be the new way of learning, innovation, and practice. This combination would require the support of stakeholders to collaborate in a human-centric sector space to relearn and codevelop, equitable, and consistent sector structures, processes, and methods for the future state (Nadler & Tushman, 1980).

Future State: Levelling the Inequitable Playing Fields

Strategic foresight (Heger & Rohrbeck, 2012) and futures thinking (Brady & Chugh, 2023) will inspire SHRRS to reach the future state of equitable and consistent needs assessment and referral service standards. This new service, ingrained in the SHRRS culture, will equitably advance all GARs. Reaching the future will require a culture and paradigm shift of a renewed mindset and commitment of all SHRRS leadership to transition from an archaic Eurocentric transformational leadership approach to a blended Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative approach (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). Stakeholders in the future state embrace a polyocular vision (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010), with engagement and learning to build capacity and sustain this state.

The first national, cross-cultural, and curriculum-based needs assessment and referral service standards training program in multiple languages for all resettlement practitioners will be fully operationalized. Canada has been praised for its resettlement model but criticized in the assessment of national evaluation impact outcomes (Janzen et al., 2022). An equitable and consistent needs assessment paradigm shift will allow for consistent national data transfer to measure refugee evaluation impact outcomes. The collective governance (Holbrook, 2020) future state will close the inequitable resource gap (Hamilton et al., 2020). This future state will introduce a culture of sharing and cocreating that will be beneficial to small and rural agencies, which have expressed that inadequate resources limit their innovation to retain refugees (Haugen, 2019). Resource recreating is a waste of public funds in an era where funding scarcity looms over SHRRS.

Priorities for Change Through a Culture and Paradigm Shift

Conditions in SHRRS started to change in 2021 in response to the announcement of the public policy measure of the planned arrival of 40,000 Afghan refugees (IRCC, 2023g). This announcement enabled SHRRS agency partners to manage resettlement expectations and address immediate priorities as a collaborative. However, as the Afghan refugee project drew to a close, service standards inequities and inconsistencies, influential leadership power, and silo-based thinking were still present in this Eurocentric culture. Lessons from the Afghan refugee mass arrival resettlement project will serve as integral reference points in the DiP as I explore and exemplify the social justice applications for equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for all GARs in Canada. Given my positional power and influence, the time is right to capitalize on the positive synergies developed in this nationally

coordinated and regionally implemented engagement structure for the Afghan refugee resettlement to address the PoP.

Culture and vision are profound in articulating and accepting change (Phillips & Klein, 2023). Prioritization for change is inspired by the heart of a culture that appreciates and respects human relationships in any equitable change activity (Nussbaum, 2003). Introducing and relearning an inclusive blended transformative culture of Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous beliefs from a “polyocular” instead of a “monocular” (Ncube, 2010, p. 79) vision for the future offers an inclusive path to service equity and consistency. I reaffirm this vision from wisdom, knowledge, and over three decades of leading in various social settings where I have experienced situations from diverse viewpoints. Cultural conditions encourage equitable transformative change that can be reflected in the vision.

Fragmented needs assessment and referral service standards are the primary cause of inconsistency. Equity and social justice ramifications are created for GARs when single agencies try to solve a community issue. All SHRRS agencies will need to be involved to address this PoP. The processes of equitable and consistent needs assessment and referral service standards are an interagency and multisectoral partnership priority. Solutions cannot be addressed within the boundaries of a single agency entity (Bianchi et al., 2021). Making learning a priority and applying collaborative governance will bring the community together. Developing formal organizational arrangements (Nadler & Tushman, 1980) for service standards is another priority to drive the change towards equity. Resource availability, equitability, and reallocation should take priority (Hamilton et al., 2020) for SHRRS leaders.

Macro, Meso, and Micro Levels of Leadership

Multiple levels of leadership exist in bureaucratic hierarchies like SHRRS. I acknowledge

that I work as a national meso-level leader, directed by macro-level leadership and policy to address the PoP by using multilevel framing (Caldwell & Mays, 2012). Collaborative, diverse, and cross-functional teams are visible in SHRRS. All levels of leadership are part of the stakeholder circle (Bourne & Walker, 2006) and will be leveraged to guide the transformative PoP renaissance. The federal government and SHRRS-WG are macro- and meso-level leaders with significant influence. Although the government provided the directive to address the PoP, it also has the prerogative to change this because of competing priorities. Public policy measures and functional and financial guidance are the government's responsibilities. Macro- and meso-level leadership comprise a large and diverse cohort of executive leaders and directors based in SHRRS agencies. Primary responsibilities are agency-specific strategic leadership and decision-making. Leveraging macro-, meso-, and micro-level leadership support is critical in cocreating and improving systemic conditions for the needs assessment and referral service standards for GARs.

This relearning of how to relate in an ethical Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative space to challenge the status quo and move into a future state of social justice and equity is needed (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). Micro-level leadership are front-line culturally diverse and multilingual newcomer practitioners distributed throughout the agencies, playing roles in implementing equitable change for all GARs. A leader's strength is in the ability to leverage support of other leaders (Manz & Sims, 1991). Ultimately, leadership for social justice should be contextualized not only where leaders are leading change but also on who is leading change (Shah, 2018).

Chapter Summary

Needs assessment and referral service early intervention provide a diagnosis of refugee

families' immediate and essential information needs for an intentional prognosis for settlement and integration. The lack of equitable and consistent service standards increases fragmentation, discoordination, and equity problems. SHRRS is making a deliberate call for an action-oriented systemic transformative culture and paradigm shift. SHRRS leaders are being called upon to adopt a shared vision to model the way forward by challenging the status quo. Collaborative engagement in an ethical space and embracing diverse worldviews will point SHRRS in the direction of success. In the spirit of forging ahead with optimism to the next decade of equitable services, the planning and development work in Chapter 2 identifies a national leadership approach, develops a framework for change, ascertains sector readiness for change, and considers leadership ethics and potential solutions for this community-in-practice problem.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

In Chapter 1, I presented a description of the problem of practice (PoP) and the urgency for change at Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector (SHRRS). Global geopolitical tensions and increased refugee displacements influence this federal government-directed change. Canada is committed to protecting refugees and SHRRS is mandated to resettle and integrate government-assisted refugees (GARs). A gap analysis demonstrated that the needs assessment and referral service standards lack consistency and equity and marginalize GARs. SHRRS finds itself in a vulnerable position in the current state as mass refugee arrivals increase exponentially and services are demanded. This confirms the urgency of this humanitarian commitment and the need to address the PoP from an equity and consistency perspective.

Change is addressed positively if the people who make it or are affected by it feel optimistic about its authenticity and it leading to sustainability and development (Talim, 2012). A challenge for leaders is their ability to take their organizations into the future, so assessment and planning are important elements of the change process (Battilana et al., 2010). In Chapter 2, I adopt a holistic approach to change planning and development. I identify and introduce my change intervention strategy: a blended leadership approach of Euro-Afrocentric Indigenous transformative leadership for meaningful and sustainable change and an enhanced Kotter's (2012) eight-stage change model. I examine ethical considerations and the assessment of change readiness at SHRRS, then identify three realistic solutions for change. After a comparative analysis, I conclude the chapter by identifying the best solution for change implementation.

Leadership Approach to Change

According to Shields (2020b), the trajectory of Eurocentric leadership theories has been visible for decades and applied to diverse diasporic settings to solve social justice and equity

problems. Few theories include Indigenous ontologies and beliefs, limiting their application to diverse settings (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010). Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous transformative leadership (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) with human-centred and social justice relevance is essential to address the PoP from an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) lens.

Transformative Leadership: Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Approaches

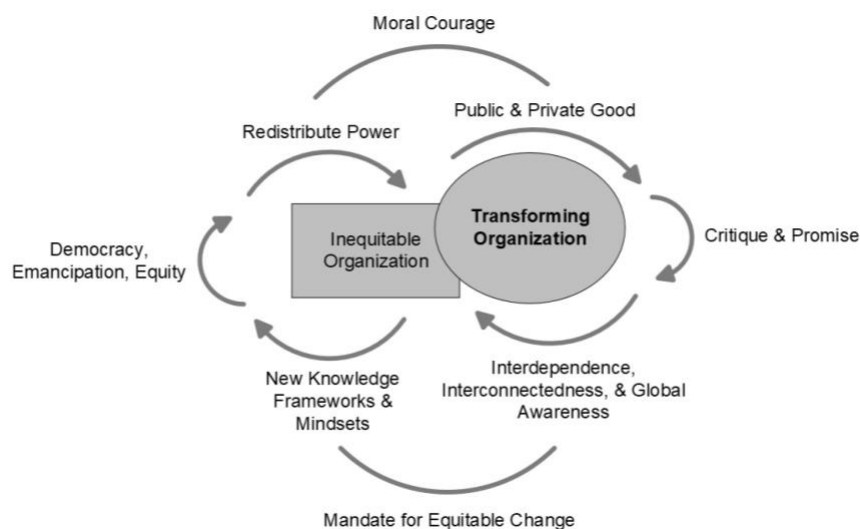
As the diaspora grows in Canada, there is a need for revitalized systems that include a combination of Eurocentric and Indigenous approaches (Battiste, 2013).

Eurocentric Approach

Transformative leadership is a democratic and equitable approach rooted in “deep and equitable” (Shields, 2010, p. 563) actions for systemic emancipation (Shields & Hesbol, 2020). The PoP is in a diverse environment where inequitable service standards marginalize GARs and perpetuate injustices. Transformative leadership theory had earlier articulations in advocacy and moral leadership (Burns, 1978). Shields and Hesbol’s (2020) core tenets illustrated in Figure 2 include moral courage; redistribution of power; private and public good; new knowledge frameworks and mindsets; critique and promise; democracy, emancipation, and equity; interdependence, interconnectedness, and global awareness; and mandate for equitable change.

Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu Transformative Leadership Approach

Ubuntu is an Afrocentric Indigenous and postcolonial transformative leadership philosophy prioritizing a human-centred collectivist approach to community well-being, social justice, and cohesiveness (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010). Ubuntu’s core ethos postulates that humanity is about acknowledging the humanity of other individuals (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020). The Ubuntu leadership philosophy adds value to Eurocentric philosophies, diversifying discourse and embracing other marginalized traditions (Ncube, 2010).

Figure 2*Model for Transformative Theory*

Note. The model includes two parallel theoretical hypotheses and eight supporting tenets.

Adapted from “Transformative Leadership Approaches to Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice,”

by C. Shields and K. Hesbol, 2020, *Journal of School Leadership*, 30(1), p. 6

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The Ubuntu social justice framework is based on the Ubuntu ethics of respect and sharing, respect and empowerment, equitable distribution of resources, promotion of social justice, and inspiring economic progress (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020), as illustrated in Figure 3. The framework is a subcomponent of the Ubuntu transformative leadership philosophy and addresses the human-centric and social justice issues in the PoP. Deeply rooted in the Ubuntu transformative worldview, the framework is essential to addressing the PoP and creating the conditions for social justice and change equity. The framework acknowledges that humans exist in diverse settings and communities shape each other for social good.

Figure 3*Ubuntu Social Justice Framework*

Note. Adapted from “Now, the Theory of Ubuntu Has its Space in Social Work” by J. R.

Mugumbate and A. Chereni, 2020, *African Journal of Social Work*, 10(1), p. viii

(<https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1486>). CC-NC 4.0.

Ubuntu’s transformative leadership beliefs of collectivism and solidarity, reciprocity and sharing, and interconnectedness and interdependency (Ncube, 2010) are blended in the social justice framework to embellish the Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach. The decolonizing lens of Ubuntu provides an opportunity to challenge the proliferation of hegemony and provides other equitable ways of knowing (Held, 2023) when addressing the PoP. Ubuntu will demonstrate a deep consideration for richness in diversity and indigenization discourse (Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2010) and is grounded in moral theory that claims that moral good is a foundation for human rights (Metz, 2011).

Blended Approach: Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu Transformative Leadership

The Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu blended leadership approach illustrated in Appendix A is a combination of the core tenets of Shields and Hesbol’s (2020) Eurocentric transformative leadership approach, Mugumbate and Chereni’s (2020) Ubuntu social justice framework, and Ncube’s (2010) Ubuntu transformative leadership beliefs. Both transformative leadership

approaches create bold conditions for a decolonizing lens (Battiste, 2013) and are embedded in the critical theory ontology of addressing inequitable social conditions and injustices and disrupting power (Capper, 2019; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The blended leadership approach provides holistic solutions for product, process, and human-centred service standards change in an era with a surge in GARs and a demand for service equity, consistency, and social justice.

Diagnosing, Analyzing, and Effecting Change: Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu Approach

Diagnosing, analyzing, and effecting change starts with conscientization by developing critical consciousness (Shields, 2016; E. Weiner, 2003) to study the context and accept the equitable mandate for change (Shields, 2016, 2020a, 2020b; Shields & Hesbol, 2020).

Using Shields and Hesbol's (2020) approach of critiquing knowledge systems that perpetuate inequity and building more equitable systems allowed me to analyze the extent of the imbalance of the current service standards that perpetuate fragmented and inequitable services. This finding encouraged me to seek change from the perspective of solidarity and respect and empowerment (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010). Applying Mugumbate and Chereni's (2020) tenet of equitable distribution of resources is necessary to determine where there are resource shortages. To redistribute resources for inclusive participation in the change process, I used Stone's (2002) principle of equitable distribution (from my second guiding question). Shields and Hesbol's tenet of inequity in power distribution was needed to diagnose and analyze leadership behaviours and silo cultures as potential barriers to change. Ncube's (2010) beliefs of reciprocity and sharing and Shields and Hesbol's (2020) private and public good are essential to disrupt power (Capper, 2019) and inspire interdependency to reconstruct equitable knowledge systems (Shields & Hesbol, 2020).

My agency is to address service irregularities and reconstruct them into more equitable

standards to address marginalization with the blended leadership approach. Doing so will mean a service standards *renaissance*, a postcolonial global Indigenous term that refers to revitalization (Battiste, 2013) of a colonial-generated service to reach a desired state. I have positional power to lead change and make recommendations to the sector advisory group. Because of this directed change, the federal government will require leaders to embrace that change needs to be effected. The blended approach includes core elements of two renowned approaches that are essential to redress the wrongs (Shields, 2020b) for a product, process, and human-centric change. Humans are significant resources required to trust and effect change but are often forgotten in the change process. The application of this approach addresses marginalization, respect, and empowerment (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020), providing that Ubuntu's social justice approach respects that the principles of democracy and civil society are universally applied (Haley, 2008) and the activist agenda of Shields's (2010) transformative leadership approach does not inspire biases. Ultimately, this blended leadership approach will encourage a social economic return on investment for GARs who predominantly come from countries other than Europe. Canada's top five GAR admission countries in 2021 were Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, Iraq, and Somalia, totalling 16,791 GARs (45% of all GARs; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2022a). From 2015 to 2023, Canada resettled 121,545 GARs from countries other than European ones (IRCC, 2020).

Limitations of the Transformative Leadership Approaches

The Eurocentric approach has conceptual significance but limited empirical research from real-life settings (Shields, 2010). Grounded in an activist agenda, potential biases can occur from leaders who suffer from previous experiences of marginalization. Regarding the Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu approach, Haley (2008) noted that contradictions in the

principles of democracy, citizenship, and civil society are universal and not culture-specific, and if the approach is related to culture only, then its wider application is limited. So, although the SHRRS context is culturally diverse, service standards will be equitable, consistent, and democratically administered to all GARs. Ubuntu emphasizes group loyalty as conforming to communalism and allegiance to the individual's ethnic group and not the wider community (Haley, 2008). No approach is free of limitations, but its impact comes down to how the leader addresses those limitations. To address communal allegiance, GARs all fall into the same immigration category when they are destined to SHRRS: They are seen as the global GAR community and SHRRS will ensure that service standards are based on reciprocity and sharing, collectivism and solidarity, and equitable distribution of resources (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010). For an effective change framework, consideration of inclusivity, adaptability to SHRRS, and GAR-centred needs will be favoured over ethnic loyalty.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Change is often confronted by “paralyzing bureaucracy” (Kotter, 2012, p. 22), anxiety, and resistance to stepping out of the comfort zone (Claggett et al., 2013). Selecting an inclusive change framework for articulating change is a crucial determinant of success (Bezboruah, 2013; Wentworth et al., 2020). To lead change, I will embrace the process, product, and human element and will include Kotter's eight-stage change framework (Kotter, 2012), enhanced by Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu human-centric ontologies and beliefs (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010). I explain the change framework and its application to the SHRRS context in this section.

Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Model

Kotter's (2012) eight-stage change model is processual and sequential (Errida & Lotfi,

2021; Pollack & Pollack, 2015) and serves as a framework for equitable change. The first four stages critique the status quo and inspire the deconstruction of inequitable systems (Kotter, 2012; Shields, 2020b). The next three stages offer solutions to new practices and motivate the reconstruction of systems with equity (Kotter, 2012; Shields, 2020b). The last stage embeds changes in the culture and encourages new initiatives (Kotter, 2012).

Kotter's model has been applied to program changes in public sector organizations (Wentworth et al., 2020), so I am confident that Kotter's model is the right primary change model for my PoP. The commitment of SHRRS stakeholders involved in the change may be easy to obtain because the model is clear. When the government announced the Afghan refugees were arriving in 2021, SHRRS had 2 weeks to design a resettlement plan to manage this unplanned mass arrival. SHRRS created a resettlement path for the Afghan refugees by using transformative leadership theory and Kotter's eight-stage model. These efforts were well received and Canada welcomed over 47,010 Afghan refugees (IRCC, 2023i) in 30 months. Although this plan worked for one refugee cohort, the needs assessment and referral service standards change is intended to be a sustainable and equitable product, process, and human-centric change for all GARs. Incorporating Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs in the SHRRS culture in this planned change humanizes the change and shows respect for SHRRS employees.

Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu Ontologies and Beliefs

The human side of change is complicated. To mitigate this, I will blend Ubuntu ontologies and core beliefs of leadership (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010) with Kotter's eight-stage process model (Kotter, 2012), so the change path is inclusive of the people, process, and product. Ontologies include harmony associated with solidarity and togetherness, commitment is the dedication to the cause; respect and honour are common courtesies; and

humility is showing modesty as leaders (Mangaliso et al., 2022). Ubuntu beliefs include modelling the way as leaders, adopting a shared vision, showing reciprocity and sharing, collaborating, and recognizing contributions of others (Ncube, 2010).

Blended Change Framework: A Linear and Human-Centred Sequence for Change

The change framework selected in this dissertation-in-practice (DiP) is a blended change model as described above. Here, I explain each stage of the model in detail.

Establishing a Sense of Urgency

A sense of complacency and a “false sense of security” (Kotter, 2012, p. 44) exists in the resettlement sector, resulting in the sector being reactive in a refugee crisis. Stage 1 of the change model requires leaders to be proactive by raising concerns about the global refugee crisis and its impact on the sustainable future of the sector, because if the sector continues to be complacent and does not embrace change, it renders itself vulnerable. The federal government issued a directive to cocreate a more equitable service standards for all GARs. As the sponsor, the federal government, in collaboration with the Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector Working Group (SHRRS-WG) leadership and me, will advocate for the need for change and inspire the commitment ontology (Mangaliso et al., 2022) of the employees.

Creating the Guiding Coalition

This stage involves bringing together a group of leaders who have stature, credibility, and respect to influence their colleagues during the change process (Wentworth et al., 2020). The leaders need to understand that change is needed to move the process forward (Deszca et al., 2020). My plan is to leverage the support of cross-sectional leaders with influence and enact a strategic governance group (SGG) to take care of governance issues and a working committee (WC) to take care of the change operations with decision-making power and acting as role

models. Integrating Ubuntu ontologies will require a consideration of harmony associated with solidarity and synchronicity to inspire collective participation. Respect is a human courtesy to consider, because with respect comes dedicated commitment (Mangaliso et al., 2022). The commitment ontology of Mangaliso et al. (2022) is associated with tenets of blended leadership of interconnectedness and solidarity (Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020).

Developing a Vision and Strategy

The narrative expressed in a vision not only defines the future but also serves as a way to inspire individuals to aspire to the common goal in the narrative (Chabay, 2020). Csillag et al. (2022) noted that the sustainable future must not diminish opportunities for future generations but inspire them. Aligned with this, my plan is to leverage the diverse voices of the SGG to cocreate an inspiring shared vision (Ncube, 2010) of equity and social justice for the service standards that will be purposeful for all GARs and meaningful to all people within SHRRS. Leaders will model the way (Ncube, 2010) to inspire employee support for the vision, thus shaping the direction of the change effort, the implementation plan, and strategies.

Communicating the Change Vision

Communicating the change vision is a crucial lever for change management to have a profound impact (Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012). Wentworth et al. (2020) advised that people must learn about a change sooner rather than later, and using Ubuntu ontologies of respect and beliefs of reciprocity and sharing to ask questions about the vision will provide a collective understanding of the future, leading to informed decisions about the change process. Appelbaum et al. (2012) advised that effective strategies applied in different stages of the change process are essential. Aligned with this, SHRRS will embrace the established hybrid communication infrastructure to articulate effective communication. Media format and language are important

because of gender, age, culture, and language diversity (Bourne, 2016) and will be essential for culturally sensitive communication.

Empowering Broad-Based Action

Getting the support of a broad circle of people who trust the change process helps to implement change (Wentworth et al., 2020). Ensuring that systems and structures support change reduces barriers to change (Deszca et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). According to Zell (2003), change is difficult, leading to what Elrod and Tippet (2002) described as employees having emotions of denial before acceptance, so the SGG will need to address these possible blockages to change. Showing common Ubuntu courtesies of respect and honour can encourage commitment and harmony and show the humility of the leader (Mangaliso et al., 2022). Homan (TEDx Talks, 2017) noted that the more one manages change, the more likely it is that the change will fail.

Generating Short-Term Wins

Change can take a considerable amount of time, and people can lose momentum (Kotter, 2012). To keep up the momentum, generating and celebrating early successes and short-term wins are ways of recognizing and celebrating people's work, keeping people motivated and energized to stay committed (Deszca et al., 2020). This approach also demonstrates that the change process is working (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Some wins in SHRRS could include a national employee training and development program before piloting the new service standards to an equitable sample of regional resettlement teams. An inclusive second pilot of the service by all agencies could be recommended because they will become aware of this new service. Providing intrinsic rewards expresses respect and honour and encourages commitment (Mangaliso et al., 2022).

Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

Change can take a considerable time, but embracing more support can snowball further changes (Wentworth et al., 2020). Shields's (2020b) second tenet, deconstructing inequitable knowledge systems and frameworks and reconstructing equitable structures, will be required to consolidate gains and update the procedural handbook so that inequitable services standards can be replaced. The credibility and commitment of SGG and WC leaders are needed to align other structures and systems with the change and produce further changes. Showing respect for employee commitment (Mangaliso et al., 2022) can assist the future.

Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

The final stage is institutionalizing the new and improved change, ensuring it is ingrained in the culture and has become the new normal (Kotter, 2012; Wentworth et al., 2020). This stage will inform the institutionalization of the service standards in SHRRS and will include opportunities for monitoring the new service. SHRRS employees are compassionate about settling GARs, so I am confident they will be committed to new approaches that prevent marginalization. Accountability measures can be included in the funding agreements to perpetuate service standards equity and consistency for a sustainable future. Reaching service equitability and anchoring the new way of life harmoniously from a human-centric process is attributed to commitment, respect, honour, and humility of stakeholders in the change process.

First-, Second-, and Third-Order Change

Adopting a cognitively complex framework of changing schemata as described by Bartunek and Moch (1987) in SHRRS may be challenging because the refugees and immigrant employees are predominantly people whose first language is not English, so communication is complicated and confusion could reduce commitment to change. A first-order change is one

consistent with current schemata. A second-order change proposes a reconfiguration of existing schemata and replacement with new schemata. The third order suggests that people change their schemata as they desire (Bartunek & Moch, 1987). A first-order change will not work to address the PoP because the new service standards cannot be applied in increments: They need complete replacement. The DiP aligns with second-order change because the new service standards will replace the old with equitable standards within defined autonomy (Waters & Marzano, 2006).

Limitations of the Kotter Model

The limitations of Kotter's (2012) model are that it is too prescriptive and sequential and does not fully represent the actual reality of the organization (Pollack & Pollack, 2015). Change frameworks are seldom applied in SHRRS planning, so in this planned leadership change process, some resistance may be encountered from leaders who may be unwilling to follow this linear process. The DiP will enhance Kotter's model by including Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs, as described earlier in this chapter and illustrated in Appendix B, to create a more human-centric approach. Kotter's model concentrates on the process of changing the product and blending in the ontologies and beliefs of Ubuntu humanizes the change process and shows empathy and compassion. The organizational readiness for change assessment provides an indication of individual and sector change capacity.

Organizational Change Readiness

Organizational readiness for change is a multifaceted construct and multidimensional antecedent that assesses change valence and efficacy to implement the change effort (Deszca et al., 2020; B. J. Weiner, 2009). Deszca et al. (2020) stated that employees are significant resources to identify what is misaligned and what needs realigning. B. J. Weiner (2009) advised of a psychological state associated with change valence and efficacy constructs. Change valence

is about individual and collective belief in the value, need, and benefit of change (B. J. Weiner, 2009). Change valence is related to motivation theory through individual and collective enthusiasm for change (Haque et al., 2014). B. J. Weiner described change efficacy as the individual and organizational capacity for change, related to Bandura's (2001) social cognitive theory and collaborative action for change. I will use Deszca et al.'s (2020) multidimensional change readiness assessment tool because it encompasses previous experience, executive support, credible leadership and change champions, openness to change, rewards for change, and measures of accountability to assess change readiness. Readiness scores can range from -25 to +50, and the higher the score, the more ready the organization is for change (Deszca et al., 2020).

Previous Change Experience

The change readiness assessment tool includes questions on earlier change experiences and mood (Deszca et al., 2020). Over the last decade, SHRRS had positive experiences with change because of the settlement and integration of 25,000 Syrian refugees (Hamilton et al., 2020) and 47,010 Afghan refugees (IRCC, 2023i). SHRRS cocreated a successful Afghan refugee equitable resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards short-term pilot to learn more about this population. Change has been part of the history of SHRRS. Previous change experience receives a score of +3.

Executive Support

Deszca et al.'s (2020) tool measures executive support, change sponsor, and clarity for change. SHRRS leadership includes executive directors, senior directors, managers, and supervisors. The change is sponsored by the federal government and a clear directive has been issued for all senior leadership to be directly involved in the future of the service standards. Executive leadership is aware that this transformative change is dependent on their successful

collaborative support, and Kanter's (2021) recommendation about learning how to share power to solve problems will be required to gain leadership support. Core Ubuntu tenets of reciprocity and sharing and collectivism and solidarity of the blended leadership approach will question and disrupt power and lead the way equitably through shared power for collective impact (Capper, 2019). The executive support dimension returns a score of +6.

Credible Leadership and Change Champions

This dimension of the change readiness tool evaluates leadership trust and support to achieve collective goals, recruitment and retention of change champions, and the necessity and suitability of change (Deszca et al., 2020). Based on Bass and Riggio's (2005) transformational leadership that is currently practiced, senior leaders are trusted and are able to inspire, influence, and stimulate employees to achieve goals. SHRRS attracts refugee and immigrant leaders who have previous lived experience of accessing inequitable service standards and who will be champions of this equitable change. Regarding the necessity of this change, senior leaders will follow the directive of the federal government sponsor and will view the change as appropriate because it will address the marginalization of GARs. This dimension returns a score of +6.

Openness to Change

Openness to change includes systems capability, culture, employee awareness, and response to the change effort (Deszca et al., 2020). Sinval et al. (2021) noted that openness to change affects various levels of organizational hierarchy and is impacted by system validity and how employees respond to change. Although there are no findings of a comprehensive SHRRS environmental scan, individual agencies conduct scans on an annual basis and realign operations. An interdependent relationship among sector agencies and community partners exists for the purposes of referral services. This aligns with Shields's (2020b) and Ncube's (2010) core tenets

of interconnectedness and interdependency. A local and regional silo-based culture exists in SHRRS. However, when the Afghan refugees arrived, the nationally coordinated and regionally implemented engagement structure bridged the gap for more collaborative action in a national space and may continue to encourage ongoing collaboration. The sector welcomes and inspires innovation through the service delivery improvement initiative to test new and innovative ideas on service delivery and sector capacity building (IRCC, 2023f, 2023h). All SHRRS agencies have board-approved human resources and conflict resolution policies. An established national and agency-specific communications infrastructure exists. Most SHRRS employees are immigrants and refugees who passionately support newcomers and will support this change because of the equity and social justice intent for all GARs. The Syrian refugee study by Hamilton et al. (2020) recommended reallocating resources to address crises, and agencies can request resources through funding amendments. The openness to change score is +14.

Rewards for Change, Measure for Change, and Accountability

This dimension of the tool focuses on rewards and accountability (Deszca et al., 2020). Rewarding employees through an established rewards system is respectful (Manzoor et al., 2021). However, financial incentives are currently not a supported benefit in SHRRS. Therefore, agency executives provide nonfinancial rewards by recognizing ability, effort, and initiative and employees settle for these rewards and believe in their ethical and humanitarian duty to support the change for GARs. From a measure of accountability, the federal government has a centralized reporting environment (IRCC, 2014) that can measure and manage input and output data and provide provincial dashboards. This dimension receives score of +4.

Change Readiness Assessment Synopsis

The full customized assessment is presented in Appendix C and includes Deszca et al.'s

(2020) multidimensional factors that assess employee and sector capacity for change. All dimensions yielded a positive result. Deszca et al. stated that realignment can achieve better outcomes if resources are realigned. However, the positive result for individual dimensions and the overall positive score of +33 confirms that SHRRS is ready to advance equitable change.

Stakeholder Responsibility and Competing Forces

The change readiness assessment sets the premise for change. The power of change is when all stakeholders are aware of the vision for change and feel that they are contributing to change. Bourne and Walker's (2006) stakeholder circle is essential in identifying the stakeholders in the change process who will bring about change. The secretariat director will lead change and will provide education about the blended transformative leadership framework. To articulate this leadership lens, SHRRS must deconstruct the inequitable systemic service standards and reconstruct them equitably and consistently. This deconstruction aligns with Shields's (2020b) core tenet of dismantling knowledge systems that promote inequity by rebuilding them equitably. The cocreation and communication of a shared vision will create awareness and support for collaborative change. Competing external forces that create urgency for change stem from the displacement of millions of refugees (Shultz et al., 2020) and the government's directive for equitable and social justice service standards change. Wood and Hilton's (2012) ethical paradigms will be required in advancing leadership ethics in the change process at SHRRS to change the current landscape of this service.

Leadership Ethics in Organizational Change

In order to lead change authentically, SHRRS must lead within the parameters of leadership ethics. Integrating leadership ethics into practice supports moral values, employee attributes, and responsibility and integrity (Grigoropoulos, 2019; Guo, 2022). Considerations and

challenges of justice, care, community (Wood & Hilton, 2012) and responsibility (Knights & O’Leary, 2006) are applicable for equitable change.

Ethic of Justice

Individuals have a right to share in liberties, choose what is good and right, and have equal and equitable opportunities to follow what is good and right (Turhan, 2010). The ethic of justice is about the rule of law, fairness, equity, and justice (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Although all GARs receive the needs assessment service, the service is inequitable and inconsistent. According to Frønes et al. (2020), equity is about meeting individual needs. SHRRS will leverage assets ethically for equitable and consistent service standards outcomes. The government’s mandate includes client-focused services for vulnerable populations and the requirement that all resettlement agencies have policies that support equity (IRCC, 2023d). For a social justice change, transitioning to the blended transformative leadership approach can be promising.

Ethic of Care

According to Tomkins (2020), the origins of care theory developed by feminist philosophers exudes a moral maternalistic voice, and the ethic of care is based on commitment contextualized in social morality. The ethic of care values people’s development, understanding, and trust. Ciulla (2009) noted that although expectations are for social justice and good, society leaders need to perfect the good by being ethical. Change is stressful, so adopting the human-centric Ubuntu values of compassion, commitment, and respect is imperative because they show respect and empathy for people affected by change (Ncube, 2010).

Ethics of Local Community

The ethic of community addresses community needs from the perspective of public good

versus private good and makes ethical leadership decisions in the community's best interest (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Aspiring for the greater good of the community benefits vulnerable populations (Racher, 2007). SHRRS has an ethical obligation to support the GAR community. All GARs are people of the same refugee humanitarian class of refugees, even though they arrive from diverse cultures. SHRRS's responsibility is to treat the community of GARs from a collectivist agenda where society takes precedence and GARs are seen as part of the community.

Ethic of Responsibility

Social responsibility is recognizing that leaders are responsible for implementing ethical behaviour and selflessly respecting the rights of others by adopting a sense of duty for their welfare (Bocean et al., 2022). SHRRS has an ethical responsibility to Canada's commitment to accepting GARs and an immediate social responsibility to the well-being of all GARs (Immigration and Refugee Protection Act [IRPA], 2001). Service equity is a critical component that leads to harmony and respect in integrating GARs. The social responsibility is to reform and revitalize this service (Battiste, 2013) and any related knowledge systems to one of equity.

Ethical Responsibilities: SHRRS, Stakeholders, and Leadership Approach

Organizations are operating in changing environments and often have to adapt to stay relevant (Metwally et al., 2019). SHRRS is no exception because of the increased mass refugee arrivals and the demand for resettlement services. It is the responsibility of actors and supporting actors to do what they must for GARs to settle and integrate them, in a way that is socially just, caring, ethically correct, and responsible. SHRRS's core responsibility is to Canada's commitment to global displaced GARs. Participation from a moral theoretical perspective is related to duty (Zajac & Bruhn, 1999). From an ethical perspective, all leaders are required to participate in this change process. The blended transformative leadership approach will be

significant in guiding the responsibilities of leadership to bring about equitable change. Leaders can address this change ethically and inspire inclusive participation in diverse coalitions that bring different worldviews to find possible solutions to resolve this problem. Ubuntu beliefs of reciprocity and sharing (Ncube, 2010) will be essential to reconstruct new systems in equitable ways (Shields & Hesbol, 2020) when addressing and evaluating solutions to the PoP.

Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Developing innovative solutions under extreme stress during crises (Fredberg & Pregmark, 2022) is how SHRRS has coped with demand. However, increased GAR arrivals have triggered sector vulnerability to provide timely, consistent, and equitable services to meet GAR needs (Abid, 2020). I propose three solutions for equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for all GARs. After a comparative analysis of the three solutions, I identify the best solution to address the PoP.

Solution 1: Imposed Service Standards From Federal Government On SHRRS

Solution 1 is a bureaucratic arrangement that will create change from a top-down perspective (Zhou et al., 2021). The federal government will unilaterally create national equitable and consistent service standards and impose them on the SHRRS agencies to operationalize. My agency will be as a limited, bilateral, and discrete supporting actor, acting as the liaison between agency leaders and the federal government and providing feedback. This solution may adopt a historical approach with no logical framework (Takahara, 2021) in creating the new service standards. Although this solution attempts to deconstruct the previous fragmented service framework and standards perpetuating inequity (Shields, 2010) and recreate a consistent and equitable standard, it excludes the sector's voice. There will be minimal-to-no bottom-up intervention of lived experience and subject expertise from leadership and

practitioners (Zhou et al., 2021). The development will occur in a closed Eurocentric space where Eurocentric knowledge and colonial dialogue apply (Battiste, 2013) and will not embrace the blended transformative leadership environment. It has no ethical engagement space (Ermine, 2007) for diverse discourse, sector representation, collaborative governance (Holbrook, 2020), and no reciprocity and sharing (Ncube, 2010). These service standards will allow for consistent national data collection and transfer via the existing government system. The result will include one system-wide, consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards product and process created change, endorsed and imposed by the federal government on SHRRS.

Resources Required and Ethical Considerations

The medium time commitment of the federal government developer will be from the employees of the federal government and will be incorporated into their regular jobs, so there will be minimal human resource costs. An existing technological infrastructure will accommodate this virtual process at a low cost. Regarding change communication, the secretariat's public relations officer (PRO) and I will communicate on behalf of the federal government at a low cost. Ultimately, the overall cost for this solution will be low.

The ethic of justice in this solution is deontological and viewed as the federal government's sense of duty and responsibility to make this change (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Ethical considerations filter into the ethic of critique, where the moral issues of justice (Wood & Hilton, 2012) of the new service are questioned, and the ethic of responsibility addresses this moral issue. My ethical responsibility is to exhibit moral courage and promote social justice to ensure this solution benefits SHRRS and the GARs by including the human element.

Solution 2: Service Standards Cocreated Across the Sector By All Agencies

The second solution is a collaborative, multilateral, inclusive, and participative process to

achieve equity. The secretariat will manage the cocreation of the national equitable and consistent service standards in collaboration with all SHRRS agencies. This solution aligns with advancing equity and collaboration in the federal government's new funding call for proposals (CFP; IRCC, 2023d). A nationally coordinated systemic process with diverse multilevel agency partners is core. Solution 2 embraces a human-centred approach and values reciprocity and sharing, lived experience, and expertise. Collaborative governance (Holbrook, 2020) will be used to codevelop in an ethical engagement sector space (Ermine, 2007) in cross-functional guiding coalitions (Kotter, 2012). The current SHRRS culture is a siloed culture. Therefore, an equity-mindedness and cognitive plan (Liera & Desir, 2023) will be needed for the solution to gain momentum to transition to the blended transformative leadership environment. This plan will create a culture shift to collectivism and solidarity (Ncube, 2010). Developing a shared vision for equitable change (Ncube, 2010; Shields, 2020b; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) will be one outcome of this solution. Leadership teams will engage in diverse discourse, share fragmented service templates, start to deconstruct inequitable service standards, and cocreate equitable standards. The result will include one set of system-wide consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards, cocreated and implemented by all SHRRS agencies.

Resources Required and Ethical Considerations

A substantially high time commitment of multilevel leadership, individuals, and work groups is required that will be merged into their regular roles and responsibilities. There will be no financial incentives but intrinsic rewards. The secretariat has adequate resources to lead this solution. Small and rural centres have limited employees and could require a reallocation of fiscal, human, and technological resources at a low cost to participate. An efficient technological infrastructure will accommodate this virtual process. In terms of communication, the secretariat's

PRO will be responsible for all information sharing, at a low cost.

Ethical considerations take the position of ethic of justice from a deontological perspective (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Agencies will view this as their responsibility, but I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the 20 years of silo culture that SHRRS employees will have to work through. Sharing in collective action to critique the status quo to redress the wrongs will be a consideration (Shields, 2020b; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). The ethic of care will be required to reach service standards of equity for all GARs. The values of collectivism (Ncube, 2010) and the ethics of the community (Wood & Hilton, 2012) will inspire agencies to show their selfless commitment and care for local GARs through sector collaboration to reach an equitable solution.

Solution 3: Regional-Specific Service Standards Aligned With Federal Guidelines

The uniqueness of the third solution is that it builds on Solution 2 but proposes an equitable, collaborative, inclusive, and customized client-centred process. In collaboration with regional sector agencies, the secretariat will oversee the cocreation of equitable and consistent regional-specific service standards (RSSS) within the confines of defined autonomy. Autonomy is a valued attribute inspired by pragmatism and a rich intellectual tradition of diverse thinkers who propose similar and different positions (Racine et al., 2021), and defined autonomy involves leading within the same pragmatic environment but within a set of boundaries (Waters & Marzano, 2006). This “surprising and perplexing finding” (Waters & Marzano, 2006, p. 4) of defined autonomy was discovered in Waters and Marzano’s (2006) meta-analysis of school district leadership in the United States. This solution relies on building autonomy within boundaries. Unique elements of this solution include the opportunity for equity, consistency, customization, and a client-centred approach. The regional coordination and implemented systemic process will be led by an established guiding coalition (Kotter, 2012) of regional

leaders. Solution 3 will leverage the 20-year regional connections of established relationships in the change process. The mentoring aspect of defined autonomy is essential for leadership success, ownership, and empowerment (Ackerlund, 2023).

The stakeholders embarking on the defined autonomy journey will align with the shared vision of SHRRS, and a designated set of federal government-defined mandatory categories will be included in the cocreation of the service standards to ensure national equitability and consistency for all GARs. This process has several benefits. First, although the service standards will include designated categories for inclusion, there is autonomy to customize service standards as per regional availability of resources. Second, the federal government will have access to consistent and equitable data generated by the mandatory categories to provide regional and national outcomes impact reports of early settlement and integration trends of the GARs. Similarly, this solution will move forward in a blended transformative leadership environment that will value reciprocity and sharing (Ncube, 2010). Collaborative governance (Holbrook, 2020) will take precedence for engagement in an ethical space (Ermine, 2007) for change liberation (Shields& Hesbol, 2020). Four sets of equitable, consistent, and customized RSSS with mandatory categories will be designed and shared among the regions.

Resources Required and Ethical Considerations

A substantially high time commitment of multilevel regional leadership, individuals, and work groups will be required because this change will be incorporated into regular roles. No financial incentives will be awarded for this task. The secretariat has sufficient resources to guide this solution at a low cost. Although there are adequate resettlement employees in the sector, small and rural centres have limited employees, so they could request a reallocation of resources or additional funding for more human resources to participate at a low cost. An efficient

technological infrastructure in SHRRS will accommodate this virtual change and the secretariat's PRO will be responsible for all information sharing at a low cost. Overall fiscal cost will be low.

The ethics of autonomy is making decisions while being respectful of the rights of others (Racine et al., 2021), and the ethics of defined autonomy is acting within defined boundaries (Waters & Marzano, 2006), which models the way to the ethics of justice, care, responsibility, and community. Regional leaders are respected for their decision-making as they lead this process of equity within set boundaries. The ethic of care focuses on the moral decisions of leaders to solve a moral problem (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Regional leaders and their teams will commit to the process with no financial gain because of the ethic of care and local community. Regional agencies have supported their local GARs for decades and know their communities well. This initiative is another gesture of the region taking care of the social justice interests of local communities. Ultimately, leaders can apply the ethic of critique (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005) linked to critical theory that surrounds the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership environment to challenge inconsistencies for the social good for all.

EDI Considerations

Although EDI aspects of the solutions adopt decolonization from an action-oriented lens (MacMath et al., 2023), the level of effect varies. Solutions 2 and 3 address EDI and decolonization by adopting the principles of Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) to listen, learn, and cocreate. Solution 1 is an obligation to address consistency and diversity in an inequitable and exclusive colonial environment with colonial thinking, creating, and imposition of the service. Each solution will affect culture, buy-in, and change implementation. Solution 1 excludes the sector voice and raises barriers of inclusivity and equity. Solutions 2 and 3 show positive

synergies of EDI.

Change Drivers

Change is the constant variable that helps maintain the increasing stress of global competition (Sundaram et al., 2020). Geopolitical megatrends are changing the landscape of the future of refugees. Change drivers play an integral role in encouraging change.

The first change driver is the federal government's commitment to IRPA (2001), which grants refugee protection to displaced and persecuted persons. Canada is a leader in resettling refugees (Perzyna & Agrawal, 2022), and to honour the commitment to IRPA and maintain its leadership position, the government needs to ensure that all GARs receive consistent and equitable resettlement services. The second change driver draws from the first driver. The federal government is the sponsor of directed change to ensure equity and social justice of the resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards to meet the demand of mass GAR arrivals. All SHRRS agencies must be part of this PoP change to prevent the sector vulnerability. The third change driver was stimulated by Abid's (2020) resettlement services report commissioned by the federal government to review resettlement services practices and stated that refugees "need to be provided with accurate refugee information to ensure that GARs needs are effectively met" (p. 9). The PoP aligns with this recommendation and confirms that timely information can be generated from service equity for early resettlement and integration. The fourth and most recent change driver is the 2024 federal government resettlement program CFP that features EDI considerations prominently (IRCC, 2023d).

Theory of Change Evaluation: Three Solutions

Components of the theory of change will be used to evaluate the solutions. According to Reinholz and Andrews (2020), the theory of change is rooted in evaluation and social change and

uses desired outcomes to guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation of an intervention.

The three solutions' root cause and need for change (Ghate, 2018) point to their strength-based approach to addressing service inequities in different capacities. Factors that cause the need for a solution include the response to the federal government directive for change because of the sector's vulnerability to cope with mass arrivals and inequitable and inconsistent service standards for the sustainable future. All solutions attempt to address the need for equitable and consistent needs assessment and referral service standards for GARs.

Resources and activities equate to the theory of change inputs and outputs (Ghate, 2018). Solution 1 is a limited bureaucratically driven process of a single-handed creation of a national service standard with limited input from the SHRRS operations team. Solution 2 is an inclusive process of all SHRRS agencies taking collective action to cocreate the national service standards. Solution 3 is a collaborative and customized client-centred process of regional SHRRS agencies cocreating RSSS within defined autonomy. Resources for the solutions range between low and high. Resources for Solution 1 range from low to medium federal resources because the federal government is primarily involved in this change process with limited secretariat support. Solutions 2 and 3 range from low to high because the sector stakeholders and the secretariat are largely included in the change process. Appendix D illustrates the resource evaluations for the solutions and proximity of equity, consistency, customization, and client-centred factors.

The outcomes differ for each solution. For Solution 1, a consistent process and product result from system-wide federal government change imposed on SHRRS agencies. Its limitations include the exclusion of the diverse sector voice and imposition on the sector. For Solution 2, a process and human-centred system-wide equitable service standards change by all agencies for all GARs is the outcome. Limitations for Solution 2 include trying to break the 20-year national

silo culture in a short time and inviting all to a common space, which is unrealistic given the project timelines. Designing one service without consideration of the availability of referral resources in each region can limit service provision. In Solution 3, a product, process, and human-centred equitable change is collaborative, customized, client centred, and regional-specific and the most plausible desirable future. Considering equity, consistency, client-centredness, and customization, Solution 1 is low, Solution 2 is medium, and Solution 3 is high.

Ethical and EDI Considerations

Ethically, Solution 1 views the ethic of justice as a sense of duty and moral responsibility of the federal government to address this issue. Although Solutions 2 and 3 closely align with the ethical paradigm of justice, care, responsibility, community, and critique (Wood and Hilton, 2012), Solution 3 shows ethical consideration for customized care. From an EDI standpoint, Solution 1 maintains the Eurocentric colonial environment to make an equitable change and excludes diverse stakeholder discourse. Solutions 2 and 3 invite all voices to the table to address change in a blended transformative leadership environment.

Consequences of the Solutions

All three solutions would present equitable and consistent service standards for the first time, and this will impact behavioural changes among SHRRS leadership and employees. Solution 1 may be met with some resistance because employees will not be invited to participate in the change process and decisions will be made on behalf of their clients. Solution 2 may impact the existing silo-based culture by forcing agencies to enter a national space, invoking some resistance for the change process. Solution 3 is favourable because it connects regional partners with existing good relationships to codevelop and implement RSSS.

Most Appropriate Solution

The analysis demonstrated that although all three solutions attempt to provide a path to social justice, Solution 3 is the solution of choice and desired path. The leadership journey and learnings for stakeholders involved in the change process will lead to the final destination of equitable, consistent, and customized client-centred resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards. The solution aligns with the equity stream in the new CFP (IRCC, 2023d). I feel confident about applying this educational leadership concept in resettlement because autonomy is a concept of ethics and provides creativity and innovation in a rich, pragmatic environment (Racine et al., 2021) of diverse worldviews. The RSSS change solution is realistic and achievable, and a familiar group of regional leaders will engage in collective change.

Chapter Summary

Planning design and development are the backbone of analysis and articulation of change (Bezboruah, 2013). Chapter 2 includes the fundamental components of planning and development. A blended leadership approach will address change within the ethical paradigm of justice, care, responsibility, and community (Wood & Hilton, 2012). In collaboration with the leadership approach, Kotter's (2012) eight-stage sequential change model enhanced by Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs will be the linear and human-centred framework for change. Deszca et al.'s (2020) change readiness assessment tool confirmed that SHRRS is ready to advance change. Solution 3, RSSS aligned with federal guidelines, is the appropriate solution. This solution meets consistency, equity, customization, and client-centred needs for all GARs. Establishing Solution 3, as described in Chapter 3, will need planning, communication, monitoring, and evaluation.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Communication, and Evaluation

In Chapter 3, I introduce the change implementation, communication, and monitoring and evaluation plans for the cocreation of regional-specific service standards (RSSS) for equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service for government-assisted refugees (GARs) within the confines of defined autonomy (Waters & Marzano, 2006). In Chapter 2, I described the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) and Kotter's (2012) eight-stage processual change framework blended with Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs. The transformative leadership approach and the change framework are the foundation upon which the plans will be enacted and connected to reach a sustainable future for the RSSS. Alignment of the plans to the Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector (SHRRS) strategy; equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI); and social justice are included. The chapter includes elements of knowledge mobilization and concludes with next steps and future considerations to sustain RSSS at SHRRS.

Change Implementation Plan

A sequential Kotter (2012) staging change framework with Ubuntu ontologies and the blended transformative leadership approach guided the change implementation plan for the RSSS. The change framework provides a progressive eight-stage step-by-step change process (Deszca et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). Application of the Kotter model is required for the RSSS product and process change, and the Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010) are required to humanize the model and consider employee involvement in reaching the RSSS solution. Elements of the change implementation plan detail the short-, medium-, and long-term specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-limited goals; actions; timelines; and stakeholder roles and responsibilities. I will be the primary transformative

change agent and leader over the 22 months of the plan, from September 2024 to June 2026.

Alignment With the SHRRS Context, Strategy, and Structure

The change plan will be implemented in an “incredibly diverse and sociocultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity” (Mangaliso et al., 2022, p. 1032) context. The established culture of regional collaborative relationships affirms that the change plan for RSSS is the best solution to address the problem of practice (PoP). The RSSS solution aligns with the regional culture, strategy, and vision of SHRRS. The change is directed by the federal government and is guided by the new settlement and integration equity focused vision that takes effect in 2025 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2023d). The implementation plan aligns with settlement principles of being client centred, outcomes driven, responsive, and with effective use of resources (IRCC, 2023d).

Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu Approach and Kotter–Ubuntu Change Framework

The change framework and leadership approach share positive synergies. The Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach is a combined Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous transformative approach (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) that has product, process, and human-centred relevance to the PoP. Kotter’s (2012) eight-stage change framework and Shields and Hesbol’s (2020) transformative leadership are enhanced by Ubuntu postcolonial social justice narrative, ontologies, and beliefs. The transformative leadership approach will support equitable and social justice actions.

Kotter and Ubuntu Blended Leading-Change Framework

Kotter’s (2012) eight stages of change merged with Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs are included in a detailed implementation plan with short-, medium-, and long-term goals; action indicators; and detailed timelines to achieve the desired future in Appendix E. In the following

section, I discuss how I will approach and articulate the change process for the eight stages.

Stage 1: Establishing a Sense of Urgency

Before implementing the change framework, the wave of Afghan refugees in Canada in 2021 increased SHRRS's vulnerability and established a sense of urgency because of the inequitable needs assessment and referral service standards, aligning with Kotter's (2012) first stage. I successfully led and implemented a government directive to codevelop a short-term pilot for equitable service standards for Afghan refugees in 2021.

According to Kotter (2012), in this stage "gaining needed cooperation" (p. 37) is vital. I will gather research on the inequitable service standards; Afghan refugee service standards pilot; global refugee statistics; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis; political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental analysis; and the sector readiness assessment. I will compile research findings into an evidence-based report in September 2024 in multiple languages for ease of access and put it in the repository for employees. The directive for change will be modelled by the federal government director in October 2024. Awareness of the inequitable service standards will be created as will be the need for respect and commitment to embrace the blended transformative leadership approach to dismantle inequitable systems for more equitable ones, embracing solidarity. Employee engagement will be through virtual townhalls via the national coordinated Zoom platform (<https://zoom.us>) and in-person regional town halls. Meeting agendas, notes, and documents will be in multiple languages in the repository for sharing.

Stage 2: Creating the Guiding Coalition

According to Kotter (2012), "a powerful force is required to sustain the process" (p. 53). I will need to enact two cross-functional diverse coalitions of employees of positional power,

leadership, and credibility. Deszca et al. (2020) suggested a suitable coalition size of 10 to 50 people. The coalition members will be selected equitably by November 2024 with diverse representation. The SGG will guide the strategic governance of the change process and the WC will oversee the change operations. The SGG will include me, the secretariat employees, agency executive leadership, and resettlement and federal government directors. The working group (WC) will be the agency managers, supervisors, front-line employees, and regional federal government officers. Terms of reference will be cocreated independently by the teams in November 2024 to map the way forward. I will provide a virtual education session to strategic governance group (SGG) and WC to demonstrate the benefits of the leadership approach for change, followed by a survey for feedback in December 2024. Ubuntu's core tenets of reciprocity and sharing for change equity and respect, honour, harmony, and commitment ontologies will be the team ethic.

Stage 3: Developing a Vision and Strategy

According to Kotter (2012), visions provide direction for change and inspire people to coordinate and take change actions. This third stage is important because RSSS will be codeveloped by the SGG. I will facilitate with SGG in the development of a polyocular Ubuntu vision (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010) to inform the strategy for RSSS. A version of the polyocular vision as building capacity education will be provided in January 2025 to guide the direction of the future of the implementation plan for RSSS. From experience, I know diverse voices generate shared worldviews. Listening and collaborative human action will lead to the codevelopment of the RSSS vision in February 2025 by the SGG for testing understanding with the WC. Core tenets of interconnectedness (Ncube, 2010; Shields, & Hesbol, 2020) from the blended leadership approach and working in harmony (Mangaliso et al., 2022) will guide the

codevelopment and finalize the vision and strategies from an EDI lens. The RSSS vision will be finalized and RSSS pilots will be developed in March 2025 and tested in Stage 6.

Stage 4: Communicating the Change Vision

According to Kotter (2012), “clarity and simplicity of the message” (p. 91) is related to effective communication, informing a communication strategy to be enacted in April 2025. I will employ the cross-cultural framework (Shrivastava et al., 2022) to communicate the vision by embracing Ubuntu ontologies of respect and honour for all employees in May 2025 and send a survey for feedback on the vision in June 2025. From Ubuntu transformative leadership tenets of respect, reciprocity, and sharing, I will introduce the leadership approach, leading-change framework, and connection to the implementation plan in May 2025. Multilingual communication is important for clear understanding of change. SHRRS has a hybrid communication infrastructure that can be leveraged when communicating the vision. Regional leaders will reiterate the vision in town hall meetings in May 2025. The RSSS vision and evolving plan will be available in the repository.

Stage 5: Empowering Broad-Based Action

According to Kotter (2012), “major internal transformations rarely happen unless many people assist” (p. 105). From July to August 2025, the SGG and WC will engage with employees in the nationally coordinated and regionally implemented engagement space and embark on a system-wide campaign to gain a larger number of SHRRS employees from urban, small, and rural agencies to trust in the vision and implementation plan and bring the required knowledge and skills to the teams in the spirit of Ubuntu and solidarity. A survey will be sent for feedback on systems and structures changes. The goals of the campaign will be to (a) reiterate how the current inequitable standards are marginalizing GARs, (b) provide education sessions about the

blended transformative leadership approach for RSSS change, and (c) acknowledge that change is emotional (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979/2008) –human resources and the employee assistance program details will be provided to address employee resistance and trust issues. This stage demonstrates Ubuntu ontologies of respect for commitment and harmonious work by removing blockages and encouraging freedom of speech for human engagement and diverse conversation for originality and authenticity.

Stage 6: Generate Short-Term Wins

Short-term wins (by December 2025) express Ubuntu ontologies of commitment, honour, and working in harmony by recognizing the contributions of people making a difference. SGG also has the opportunity to engage in formative assessment, a simple diagnostic assessment tool used to determine if the vision is working (Ismail et al., 2022). I will work collaboratively with the SGG and WC from August to December 2025 to plan projects to support RSSS. For example, we will strengthen the document repository; complete RSSS pilot tests, first with a small sample of regional agencies and then a second pilot to all regional agencies; offer training and development; and optimize and expand the repository. Formative and summative assessments (Ismail et al., 2022) can course-correct and measure learnings from the RSSS pilots.

Stage 7: Consolidating Gains and Producing More Changes

RSSS will take time to be ingrained in the gene pattern and culture of SHRRS, so SGG will not “declare victory too soon” (Kotter, 1995, p. 66). Findings will be embraced from Stage 6 in January 2026 and if all goes according to plan, RSSS is earmarked to be a transformative blended leadership intervention for a more equitable human designed way forward and is scheduled to be in operation in July 2026. I will show humility, respect, and honour to recognize contributions to sustain the influence of the human-centric SGG and WC coalitions, because the

implementation plan for RSSS can activate new opportunities that may need teams to embrace Ubuntu's commitment ontology to model the way, for example, to update the systems readiness assessment and RSSS procedural handbook in February–March 2026.

Stage 8: Anchor New Approaches in the Culture

According to Kotter (2012), culture is a reference to shared behavioural norms and values amidst a group of people. I am confident that SGG will embed the RSSS in the SHRRS culture. This affirms that SHRRS is ready to embrace ethical, equitable, and consistent service standards for all GARs, harmoniously addressed from a product, process, and human-centric perspective. The launch will be announced in April 2026 and SHRRS coalitions will be celebrated by with Ubuntu ontologies of honour, respect, and humility. Before the announcement of the launch, I will ensure a training and development program is developed and delivered so that employees have the capacity to implement RSSS; design a RSSS program logic model to conduct summative and effective evaluation (Saunders, 2016) 1 year after the launch, which is common procedure for all resettlement programs and services, and I will prepare a postlaunch process for monitoring and evaluation (Saunders, 2016) for the SGG to perform using a plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) from July 2026 to July 2027.

Potential Change Implementation Plan Issues, Limitations, and Challenges

Despite the EDI considerations in the implementation plan, it is impossible to anticipate and plan for every risk. To ensure seamless transition of the implementation plan, I will consider the mitigating factors discussed in this section. Time commitment and scheduling of the SGG and WC with participation of coalition members from four different time zones may cause limitations, reduce participation, delay implementation strategies, and distort timelines. RSSS is a regional implementation solution of a national service, so to mitigate the time commitment and

meeting scheduling, I will be flexible and consider the time zones when scheduling meetings.

Communication and knowledge mobilization plans (Lavis et al., 2003) will be considered to enhance information sharing, learning, and knowledge by translating documents into the most used languages. However, translation resources may not always be available because of funding cutbacks (Lowe et al., 2017) and the vision, goals, and strategies may not reach some of the employees in SHRRS whose first language is not English. To mitigate this and ensure that the plan reaches employees, a diverse certified team of multilingual volunteers can translate written communication and provide interpretation services on demand.

Unexpected mass refugee arrivals can cause potential challenges that can intercept the timelines of the implementation plan, causing SGG and WC priorities to change. For example, Afghan refugees were a sector priority so other priorities had limited focus. Employee health and wellness challenges can become an issue when working at a fast pace to serve mass arrivals. According to Wirth et al. (2019), job demands, mental health problems, and coping strategies of staff working with this degree of vulnerability raises issues: Increased workloads can elevate employee stress levels and this stress could reduce participation, especially in regional small and remote centres. Because of the unavailability of time and human resources, the implementation plan for RSSS could be compromised. Although these factors are beyond my control, I can minimize the risk by ensuring that the employee assistance program is available to help with the stress and SGG and WC members support the plan.

Resistance to change is complex and can include (a) individuals being self-centred and thinking about their own self-interest of loss, (b) misunderstanding of the vision for the change process causing trust issues, (c) assessment of the change process being prone to an individual's understanding, and (d) individuals resisting change because they fear that they will not be able to

adjust to new skills sets (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979/2008). Although national silo structures exist in SHRRS, one of the factors that led me to the selected RSSS solution is that I do not expect resistance of regional collaboration because of the longstanding regional relationships. Resistance to trust can be because of multilingual employees and misunderstanding due to language barriers and employee “comfort zone” (Kiknadze & Leary, 2021) with the status quo.

Elrod and Tippet (2002) noted that “specific actions can be taken by leaders to minimize the disruptions brought on by change” (p. 288). I will mitigate the risks through education and communication and participation and involvement (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979/2008), ensuring multilingual communication informs the change process simply and that stakeholder participation is inclusive and listened to in the SGG, WC, and the broader community of SHRRS. Manipulation and co-optation (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979/2008) will not be necessary, because of the directed change all SHRRS employees must be on board. The plan is inclusive of the Ubuntu human-centric approach. Humanizing the plan shows empathy and respect of the employees and can help with employee resistance, hence the ethics of care and consideration for the employees.

Change Implementation Plan: Improving Equity and Social Justice Outcomes

The desired outcome of the plan is to codevelop equitable and consistent needs assessment and referral service standards for all global GARs, and RSSS is the most equitable, customized client-centred solution. Social justice and equity core tenets will guide the plan to achieve several equity and social justice outcomes for all stakeholder

Merging Eurocentric and Indigenous thinking (Battiste, 2013) and the postcolonial diverse human-centred leadership theory of Ubuntu (Ncube, 2010) in RSSS provides social justice and EDI outcomes for the product, process, and the human element of change.

Collaborative governance (Holbrook, 2020) will take precedence for engagement in an ethical space (Ermine, 2007) for an inclusive group of SHRRS employees to collaborate and share diverse worldviews in the change plan process for equitable change. The ultimate beneficiaries of RSSS will be regional GARs, who will receive RSSS and referrals to community partners as per regional availability. Consistent and equitable RSSS will bridge the marginalization divide by embracing Shields and Hesbol's (2020) transformative leadership for public good.

The inequitable service standards will be overwritten by the equitable RSSS. The procedural handbook will be revised to guide SHRRS front-line employees in this new direction of RSSS. The federal government will benefit, because they will be able to include their mandatory categories in the service standards template in this solution to ensure they are able to track consistent data from all regions for national evaluation impact. Front-line SHRRS regional staff can embrace the tenets of Ubuntu's reciprocity and sharing (Ncube, 2010) to learn, share, and avoid service duplication. The communication plan will provide communication strategies, processes, and tactics to strengthen the implementation plan.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process

"Communication is the crucial lever for change management" (Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012, p. 53) and a fundamental feature in the change implementation plan. Communication is a catalyst in information dissemination to understand change (Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012), and the awareness of cultural values and expectations by diverse stakeholders can secure employee trust (Bourne, 2016; Shrivastava et al., 2022). In the communication plan, I first identify stakeholder circles and engagement strategies for effective communication. Next, the four purposes of communication and the cross-cultural theoretical framework connect the what, how, and why of communication. Third, Lavis et al.'s (2003) foundation for knowledge mobilization

to advance learning is considered.

Approaches to Communication

As a transformative leader and primary change agent, I will advocate for an inclusive strategy of SHRRS's employees from large, small, and rural agencies. I will leverage regional agency leader credibility to inspire and give voice to the unheard. Bourne (2016) noted that approaches to communication in Anglo-American contexts do not translate well in diverse cultures, so the communication plan will inspire collective work and solidarity and will promote the blended transformative leadership and social justice (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). SHRRS has an information, communications, and technology infrastructure and national and agency-specific communication specialists to support change communication.

Analyzing the Stakeholder Community: Effective Communication Engagement Strategy

Communication effectiveness is about communicating the what, how, and who of change to the right people at the right time (Bourne, 2016; Shrivastava et al., 2022). The stakeholder circle described briefly in Chapter 2 identified stakeholder proximity in the change process (Bourne & Walker, 2006) and allows for a communication and engagement strategy that is inclusive and customized to frame change communication and avoid information overload. The regional community partners who provide referral services to the GARs are remote but are influential stakeholders. Individuals of the SGG are close to the change, have influence, strategic decision-making power, and hold credibility to influence their teams. A significant stakeholder will be the federal government sponsor, who creates the urgency for change and holds the power to defund the implementation of RSSS. The SGG has significant influence and decision-making power, and the WC has operational influence. Stakeholders with limited influence but with the power to create resistance are employees who do not buy-in to the change process and could

jeopardize change. GARs are integral participants during the RSSS pilot.

Stakeholder engagement aligns with unique stakeholder characteristics: “Each brain sees the world according to its own wiring, and selects or ignores information depending on its filters” (Bourne, 2016, p. 434). Personality and culture play an integral role in how people receive, understand, and use information. According to Shrivastava et al. (2022), communication is related to context, culture, and values and can drive the understanding of change. All of these factors have been considered in developing the communication plan.

Purpose of Communication in the Change Process

Shrivastava et al. (2022) acknowledged that communication serves a purpose in the change process and proposed four communication purposes (disrupting, envisioning, legitimizing, and cocreating) that highlight the issues with the current status quo and suggest a more desired alternative to capture employee interest in change.

Disrupting, according to Shrivastava et al. (2022), is when employees resist change if they do not fully understand that the status quo is not working. Disruptive communication is about demonstrating what and why to communicate, for example, communicating an evidentiary report of the crisis in the current service standards and the benefits of a more equitable and consistent service standards to address marginalization of GARs.

Envisioning, according to Shrivastava et al. (2022), states that vision, values, and desired outcomes influence the recipient’s understanding of an envisioned future. Envisioning can enhance buy-in and clarify change conditions so that change is actionable and recipients see the value of change for themselves (Shrivastava et al., 2022), for example, envisioning a polyocular Ubuntu shared vision (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010) of diverse worldviews for RSSS.

Legitimizing presents the change initiative to all stakeholders and requires advocating for

effectiveness and a desirable future (Shrivastava et al., 2022). Legitimizing communication is the use of appropriate and persuasive language that can receive positive acceptance from the stakeholders (Shrivastava et al., 2022). Legitimizing communication will ensure that communication is in multiple languages in the document repository for inclusive access.

Cocreating addresses two-way communication between the change recipients and change agents about the change initiative (Shrivastava et al., 2022). Ford (1999) stated that organizations themselves are the networks of communication. Conversations encourage participation to cocreate an improved reality for the organization (Shrivastava et al., 2022), for example, collaborating to cocreate and communicate the equitable RSSS vision and strategies for GARs.

Communicating the Change Path

The communication plan is multidimensional and intended for transparent communication; it caters to SHRRS's diversity and includes Kotter's eight stages of change and the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach and Ubuntu ontologies. Stakeholder engagement and communication tactics are framed in the narrative in this section and detailed in Appendix F with specific timelines.

Stage 1: Establishing a Sense of Urgency

According to Kotter (1995), "without credible communication . . . the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured" (p. 63). Ubuntu ontologies of respect inspire commitment and sincere communication is integral. I will be the lead for the research report that justifies change. The federal government director will embrace Ubuntu beliefs to model the way to lead the communication, supported by the SHRRS-WG chair and me, to raise the crisis and demonstrate the need for more equitable services in a Zoom meeting with agency executives to inspire buy-in for this planned change. Tactics to communicate the change will target accessibility, awareness,

and engagement, for example, through regional in-person town halls, two-way communication, written multiple-language communication, and the document repository.

Stage 2: Creating the Guiding Coalition

Kotter (2012) stated that change is not easy to accomplish and a powerful influence is required. Influential voices can promote change equity and social justice (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). Ubuntu beliefs of modelling the way will be embraced by the coalitions to communicate to a cross-cultural demographic to attract buy-in for each coalition, including opinion leaders of the SGG and I, who can persuade employees, make decisions, and have influence and knowledge that change is needed (Deszca et al., 2020). The WC group of multilevel employees will communicate change operations. The recruitment video for SGG and WC will be emailed by the public relations officer (PRO) to attract interest. Communication tactics like Zoom virtual meetings and text messaging will support the groups' logistics for governance and operations.

Stage 3: Developing a Vision and Strategy

The vision for the future must be clear and easy to communicate (Kotter, 1995), therefore communication tactics will ensure a simple vision and strategies that provide the future direction of RSSS. Embracing the Ubuntu ontology of harmony for collaborative codevelopment and applying multiple-language and multidimensional communication tactics will inspire diverse conversations in the codevelopment of the transformative polyocular Ubuntu vision (Maruyama 2004; Ncube, 2010). For example, virtual ideation employee sessions of critical thinking and dialogue will inspire freedom of speech and communication of diverse worldviews. I will create a draft vision in a Google Doc (<https://docs.google.com>) as a starting point to codevelop the vision. Vision sessions will be via the Zoom platform. Respect for social justice, equity, and

blended transformative leadership will be in my communication rhetoric.

Stage 4: Communicating the Change Vision

SHRRS's hybrid virtual and in-person communication and technological infrastructure will be leveraged to communicate the change vision. The legitimizing purpose is applicable in this stage when communicating the vision. Communicating the change vision through a cross-cultural strategy to generate buy-in from SHRRS employees is my goal. I will use Ubuntu social justice leadership to embrace the Ubuntu leadership path of the respect ontology and reciprocity and sharing to ensure that the RSSS vision is accessible to all employees for awareness and understanding and that the communication and engagement strategy will be supportive. Communication tactics will include Zoom and regional in-person town halls, portals, two-way communication, the document repository, and written communication.

Stage 5: Empowering Broad-Based Action

According to Kotter (1995), the more people involved, the better the outcome. Communication strategies to influence and capture the emotions of a large stakeholder circle to support the vision is important so that systems and structures do not obstruct change. Interconnectedness and working in harmony are core tenets of the blended transformative leadership approach and will be essential for effective communication. The cocreating purpose of communication resonates in this stage. The PRO and I will design a YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com>) engagement video to appeal for diverse support. Additional communication tactics will include virtual town hall and Zoom meetings where I will make a second appeal, in-person town halls for regional leaders to galvanize employee support, two-way communication, and virtual education sessions for education of the blended transformative leadership approach.

Stage 6: Generating Short-Term Wins

Kotter (2012) stated that people like to see evidence that efforts are working. Ubuntu ontologies of respect, honour, and commitment will be infused in the communication when short-term wins are generated and celebrated. Communication will inspire collaborative action and Ubuntu's collectivism and solidarity as wins start to produce equitable systems. Communication tactics will include creating town hall meetings on Zoom and in-person meetings to announce, celebrate, honour, and communicate the wins generated by employees and strengthening the document repository.

Stage 7: Consolidating Gains and Producing More Changes

According to Kotter (2012), credibility is core to addressing systems and structures that do not align with change. I will communicate and celebrate the wins using the Ubuntu ontologies of respect and honour and consolidate the gains. My communication will demonstrate a deeper purpose to embrace credibility as a way forward to promote transformative leadership and social justice and address other inequitable systems and structures that do not align with the RSSS transformative change. Communication tactics that sustain momentum will be Zoom meetings with the SGG and WC to produce more gains and Zoom town halls to reward gains.

Stage 8: Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

Communication will assume a group approach to institutionalize RSSS and the blended leadership approach into SHRRS. I will show respect for commitment and recognize contributions of employees that supported this equity initiative in my communication. Embracing transformative leadership for public good for all is fundamental. The important rhetoric is about the product, process, and human-centred approach that shows compassion and solidarity for employees. Communication tactics will include a Zoom town hall for the announcement of RSSS

and the blended transformative approach by me, the federal government director, and SHRRS-WG chair; regional in-person town halls, to reiterate the message; and a celebration to honour commitment. The core values of learning, knowledge, and knowledge mobilization are evident in the plan.

Knowledge Mobilization: Framework and Strategy

Knowledge mobilization is the synthesis of disseminated information and the transforming application of knowledge (Barwick et al., 2014). Organizational context impacts knowledge mobilization and the ability to learn and make decisions. Lavis et al. (2003) proposed a framework for knowledge transfer: (a) what knowledge will be transferred for actionable decision-making, (b) who should be the target audience, (c) the credibility of those transferring the knowledge, (d) how the knowledge should be transferred, and (e) the intended effect of the knowledge. As a transformative leader, I believe that for knowledge transfer and mobilization to attain its goal, systems must be equitable and transformative. I propose a transformative strategy aligned with my leadership approach.

According to Anderson and McLachlan (2015), inequitable knowledge systems created marginalization; however, the transformative approach provides a voice to actors who have not been heard. Anderson and McLachlan proposed three transformative strategies: (a) layering, the level of detail and the language used in the knowledge transfer specific to the context and actors; (b) building bridges, recognizing that knowledge mobilizers are from different disciplines so familiar words remove barriers; and (c) transmedia, where knowledge mobilization uses multiple communication forms to reach its target audiences. This dissertation-in-practice (DiP) generates knowledge for multidirectional mobilization and for reciprocity and sharing (Ncube, 2010) to create more as equitable systems (Shields & Hesbol, 2020). Appendix G provides a visual of

knowledge mobilization for one aspect in the DiP where knowledge is mobilized.

Description of Knowledge Mobilization and Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Model

In Stage 1, as primary change agent, I will disseminate an evidence-based knowledge report, layered in high-level language to the federal government director and SHRRS-WG chair via email to make a decision for equitable change. The federal government director will transfer the report to regional executive leaders in a Zoom town hall for executive leaders to decide and use credibility to influence employees to action change.

In Stage 2, I will provide education sessions to build capacity and knowledge to the SGG coalition about the blended leadership approach and defined autonomy (Waters & Marzano, 2006), with simple language via a Zoom town hall meeting for the SGG to make informed decisions in the codevelopment of the vision and strategy for RSSS in Stage 3.

In Stage 3, I will disseminate a research and knowledge fact sheet on polyocular vision (Maruyama, 2004), layered in simple language via a Google Doc to the SGG, so the SGG can make decisions to bring diverse worldviews to the codevelopment of the vision.

In Stage 4, I will provide an education and knowledge session about the leadership approach and polyocular vision to SHRRS employees with simple language via a Zoom town hall meeting and unfold the RSSS vision to all SHRRS employees so they can make informed decisions about their role in RSSS operations.

In Stage 5, the PRO and I will create a survey layered in simple multiple languages, that will be sent via email to the broad-based action group to acquire feedback about obstacles so that systems do not block support; feedback will be shared with the SGG make decisions.

In Stage 6, the PRO will work in collaboration with the information technology department to strengthen the multiple-language repository on the resettlement website as an

information and knowledge storage repository that allows for the dissemination of information and for the transfer and mobilization of knowledge for employees to make actionable decisions.

In Stage 7, I will hold a Zoom meeting with the SGG group to brainstorm about future change equity, for example, monitoring and evaluation systems, RSSS professional development training, and RSSS handbook review so that information, knowledge, and feedback are shared with me, as primary change agent, to make decisions about what changes to make

In Stage 8, the federal government director, SHRRS-WG, and I will announce and anchor RSSS and the blended transformative leadership approach in the SHRRS culture as the new equitable knowledge framework and leadership approach in a Zoom town hall at SHRRS.

Realistically, change plans are enacted all the time, but service change integrity requires monitoring and evaluation to be embedded in the implementation plan. In the next section, I describe the process to monitor and evaluate the plan and evaluate the EDI success.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

The advancement of the implementation plan will require robust monitoring and evaluation. Saunders (2016) stated that evaluation has two distinct categories: process evaluation and summative or effective evaluation. Process evaluation examines what takes place during implementation by monitoring, testing mechanisms, and fine-tuning to keep a program aligned. Process evaluation equates to monitoring. Summative or effective evaluation, according to Saunders (2016), takes place at the end of a project to determine if the project reached its desired outcomes and impacts. The implementation plan will be monitored and evaluated using the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) as the plan evolves to reach the desired future. The logic model outcomes will be embraced for summative and effective evaluation of the implementation plan to ascertain if the plan addressed the EDI focus of the PoP. Appendix H includes a detailed

process monitoring and evaluation plan.

Gauging Progress: Assessing and Realigning Change

Embedding equitable and consistent RSSS in the SHRRS culture for all GARs by maintaining EDI and social justice are the fundamental indicators of success of the change implementation plan. However, success is “neither uniform nor absolute” (Nystrom et al., 2019, p. 477). The blended transformative leadership approach of respect, reciprocity, and sharing (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010) generates ongoing learning and knowledge in the implementation plan, which can be regarded as success.

I will monitor and evaluate the implementation plan within Kotter’s (2012) eight-stage process of change to “guide the change, gauge progress, and make midcourse corrections” (Deszca et al., p. 373). The monitoring and evaluation plan include activities and indicators to measure the progress of the activities (Robertson & Sawadogo-Lewis, 2022). I will include process and outcomes quality measures (Jazieh, 2020) for monitoring and evaluation accuracy and align with the plan’s actions, goals, implementation outcomes, and eventual outcomes in the logic model.

PDSA Cycle

Although the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) is used as an iterative quality improvement process in health care (Christoff, 2018; Taylor et. al., 2014), it is simple to understand, can be applied in other contextual settings, and is an appropriate monitoring tool for the implementation plan and SHRRS’s diverse culture of employees whose first language is not English. The plan stage in the PDSA cycle identifies evidentiary support as a justification for change enacted in the do stage (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017). In the study stage, analysis of the data identifies if the change reached its desired impact, and the act stage is the incorporation or

adaptation of the change solution.

Process Monitoring and Evaluation: PDSA Cycle and Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Model

Stage 1 addresses the short-term goal of defining the problem, providing a directive for change, and creating awareness for employee buy-in to address the PoP. The plan stage of the PDSA cycle advises of decisions to justify the rationale for change (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017). Data gathering and research pre-dates this stage, because in 2021 with the mass Afghan refugee arrivals, the needs assessment and referral service standards were realized to be inequitable, inspiring the urgency for change and leading to data gathering and research. Applying transformative leadership and dismantling inequitable knowledge frameworks for more equitable systems (Shields & Hesbol, 2020) shows respect for the GARs. The evidence report, meeting notes, fact sheets, focus group feedback, and discussions will be compiled, translated in multiple languages, and stored in the repository for equitable access. Process and outcome measures will be the documentation generated from the goals and actions of the plan, monitored and evaluated against the indicators. Refining the implementation plan is possible if buy-in from SHRS employees is not achieved because change is daunting. Monitoring and evaluation results may require me to increase focus group sessions and hire a multilingual volunteer interpretation team to reiterate the awareness in multiple languages.

Stage 2 focuses on the short-term goal of establishing coalitions to collaboratively lead the change governance and operations. Moen and Norman (2009) stated that PDSA cycles “facilitates the use of teamwork to make improvements”(p. 10). In the plan stage of the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017), the recruitment campaign for leaders will require leaders to embrace the blended leadership ethics of interconnectedness (Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) for collaborative decision-making. The plan requires leaders to show Ubuntu ontologies of

and beliefs of courage and model the way with respect and commitment to harmonize change (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010). During this time, a recruitment video, meeting schedules, coalition terms of reference, agendas and meeting notes, education sessions, and facts sheets will be compiled, translated in multiple languages, and stored in the repository as the process measures that drive the outcome. Ethics of the blended Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership and Ubuntu ontologies of respect and reciprocity, sharing, solidarity, and harmony are required to work collaboratively by listening and learning from each other. Refinement of the plan may be needed because of lack of collaborative team governance, misunderstanding of the leadership approach or defined autonomy, or unexpected mass arrivals delaying meetings. I can introduce team-building exercises, add more education sessions in multiple languages, and adapt meeting schedules.

Stage 3 focuses on the short-term goal of the codevelopment of a shared vision to provide future direction and strategies for RSSS. The plan stage of the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) will be applied. The primary focus is collaborative sharing of diverse worldviews to arrive at an Ubuntu polyocular vision for RSSS by embracing harmony. Diverse discussion, meeting agendas and notes, ideation sessions, fact sheets, pre- and posttest surveys, and education sessions will generate data that will be the process and outcome measures during monitoring and evaluation. Refinement of the plan per the data may be needed if (a) end of fiscal year commitments and unavailability of coalition members cause delays in the enactment of the vision and strategies, or (b) I am unable to get consensus for a polyocular vision. If clarity about the vision is needed, then time extension and education will be considered because the vision and strategies are the heart and soul of EDI in the plan for employee buy-in.

Stage 4 focuses on the medium-term goal of communicating the vision for change via a

communication strategy to inform, educate, and galvanize employee support by embracing the Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs of respect and reciprocity and sharing. The do stage of the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) will be applied. In this stage, the support of the SGG and WC will be acknowledged, and the quality measures of equity and client-centred customized approach of RSSS will be celebrated. The intention of the doing is applying the core tenet of transformative leadership to break down inequitable systems, revitalizing them for more equity. Documents and resources, including communication strategy, vision and strategy document, meeting notes, survey feedback, and reports will be designed in multiple languages stored in the repository, serving as process and outcome measures. Refinement of the plan will be due to employee feedback about the vision.

Stage 5 focuses on the medium-term goal of gathering a supportive network of employees to embrace the change vision and any related systems supporting change. The core tenet of change is transformative leadership's public good. The do phase of the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) will be applied. During this time, an equitable recruitment campaign will invite all voices to the table and obstacles will be removed, for example, indicators like human resources and health, wellness, and anxiety issues or professional development that block change. Data will include education sessions, agendas and meeting notes, employee assistance documents, and human resources contacts in the repository for employee access. Discussion, interviews, observation, and pre- and posttest surveys will evaluate the data. Refinement may require more education, knowledge, learning, and training.

Stage 6 focuses on the medium-term goals of planning, demonstrating, and rewarding short-term wins. Ubuntu ontologies of respect, honour, and commitment affirm gratitude to employees and inspire more changes. In the study stage of the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad,

2017), the SGG will receive data from the short-term wins and analyze and synthesize data to see if the change is reaching its desired intent. Data generated from wins will include RSSS pilots, optimization of the document repository, and employee training and development. Wins and data from formative and summative and pre- and posttest assessment, surveys, agendas, and meeting notes will be the process and outcome measures. Refinement to the plan can be due to the data from the RSSS pilots that can cause a delay in the RSSS launch.

Stages 7 and 8 focus on the long-term goals of using the credibility of the teams to produce further changes and institutionalize the national service and the blended leadership approach in the culture. The act stage of the PDSA cycle (Crowfoot & Prasad, 2017) applies and is dependent on final decisions from the data in Stage 6 of whether change is incorporated or adapted (Christoff, 2018). The RSSS pilot and employee training data are primary data for success. In Stage 7, I will focus on a second system readiness check and on the final RSSS procedural handbook. In Stage 8, I am confident, when process monitoring and evaluation concludes and confirms equitable and consistent service standards for all GARs has been accomplished, the outcome will be institutionalization. Refinement is possible if Stage 6 data need addressing – then a new PDSA cycle will be launched and anchoring the new approach will be delayed. Stages 7 and 8 conclude the process monitoring and evaluation. The next section includes a discussion of summative and effective evaluation of the plan as it relates to the EDI factors of the PoP.

Summative and Effective Evaluation: EDI Outcomes

Summative and effective evaluation will determine if the implementation plan has made its desired impact (Saunders, 2016). Equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service for GARs is the goal and the indicator of success. EDI and social justice are the

outcome measures that enabled me to reach the indicator of success. The outcomes component of the logic model serves as components for summative and effective evaluation (Saunders, 2016) of the PoP. The RSSS solution described in Chapter 2 was evaluated using the theory of change components, similar to the logic model components of change need, resources, outputs, and outcomes (Ghate, 2018). The implementation plan aims to make an equity and consistency impact of equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards. Therefore, summative and effective evaluation will examine the short-, medium-, and long-term outcome measures in relation to culture, behaviour, learning, and knowledge. Culture is integral to human behaviour and specific to actions (Raeff et al., 2020). Disseminated information transformed into learning is knowledge mobilization (Barwick et al., 2014).

Short-Term Outcomes

Short-term EDI outcome measures that contribute to service standards equity and consistency include (a) the development of two diverse coalitions to lead change, (b) the provision of Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership education, and (c) the codevelopment of the RSSS vision and strategies from a polyocular vision (Maruyama, 2004) and defined autonomy (Waters & Marzano, 2006). A culture shift from a Eurocentric approach to a Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach inspires cultural and behavioural changes. Voices that were previously marginalized will be invited to embrace “collaborative governance” (Holbrook, 2020, p. 87) in an “ethical space of engagement” (Ermine, 2007, p. 1) to lead change through the Ubuntu transformative tenets of reciprocity and sharing to dismantle inequitable structures and remodel equitable ones (Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). A revitalized culture generates a new level of education, learning, and knowledge to make equitable decisions. The evaluation metric to evaluate this outcome measure would be the

existence of a coalition of diverse voices that share distinct worldviews and apply the blended transformative leadership approach in the culture when codeveloping the RSSS vision.

Medium-Term Outcomes

Medium-term EDI outcome measures that contribute to the indicator of success include (a) the development of a cross-cultural communication strategy in multiple languages, (b) the enactment of a broad-based sustainable network of diverse employees, and (c) employee feedback to address systems that do not align. Reaching out to a broader stakeholder circle to support the vision is an equitable action to address the inequitable distribution for public good and shows respect for empowerment in the behaviour and culture of SHRRS. Learning from the employees about systems that block participation sends a message that all voices are heard. Learning in a respectful space creates new learning and knowledge and the establishment of more equitable transformative systems (Shields & Hesbol, 2020). The evaluation metric to evaluate the outcome will be the feedback solicited through the communication strategy.

Long-Term Outcomes

Long-term EDI outcomes that contribute to the indicator of success include (a) the review and update of the procedural handbook for RSSS, (b) equitable outcomes of the RSSS to promote social justice, and (c) SGG and WC recognized as change leaders. Research, learning, and knowledge gained during the ideation sessions of the handbook review provide an opportunity for community-in-practice employees to voice their in-practice experiences to guide the RSSS handbook to promote social justice. Ubuntu ontologies of commitment, honour, and humility thrive in the SHRRS culture when SGG and WC are recognized as change leaders. This confirms the human-centric ethic and culture and behaviour in the spirit of Ubuntu social justice (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020) in the plan. The evaluation metric would be the reviewed

handbook in operation and the institutionalization of RSSS.

Process monitoring and evaluation and effective and summative evaluation (Saunders, 2016) of the outcomes of the implementation plan confirm that (a) the plan governance and operations are aligned, (b) the plan makes allowance for refinement, (c) the EDI and social justice lens contribute to equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment service standards for GARs, and (d) the language repository shows respect to the diverse employees. Summative evaluation confirms that the RSSS change implementation plan addresses the lack of equitable and consistent resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for GARs at SHRRS within the confines of EDI. The next section addresses additional barriers and risk and mitigation strategies.

Managing the Risk of Additional Barriers

Multiple-language resources are essential for understanding, access, and engagement and the plan caters for the document repository and translators. If competing priorities impact the availability of translation resources, engaging diverse language-speaking volunteers mitigates the risk. The implementation plan is a human-centric plan and requires human intervention to support the change. Although the coalitions may want to remain committed, mass refugee arrivals are unpredictable and bureaucratic directives may change, causing mental health issues, wellness challenges, and burnout. These stresses will impact employee commitment in the implementation plan. To mitigate this, Wirth et al. (2019) proposed a stress consultation service, for example, employing an occupational consultant to work with individuals to improve self-efficacy in real time. Insufficient human resources support could delay the change implementation process because the plan is a human-centred support plan.

Linear change frameworks are exposed to rigidity, with mandated timelines and

deliverables, and often do not go as planned and can pose barriers and can be brought to a halt. Change in this DiP is long term, and external environment dynamics constantly change the sector landscape. Although this linear model is ideal for change for the chosen solution, I will need flexibility and adaptability to revisit the design and realign the goals, outcomes, and timelines of this change for ultimate success and sustainability.

Coalitions need to have an equitable distribution of large, small, and rural agency representation so they can leverage support from each other through interdependency (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020). Cross-cultural communication, knowledge mobilization, process monitoring and evaluation, and summative evaluation of EDI with blended transformative leadership weaved into the respective components create conditions for success for equitable and consistent change. Next steps and future considerations strengthen the improvement process.

Next Steps and Future Considerations of the Plan

Geopolitical tensions continue to displace over 36.4 million refugees (UNHCR, n.d.). The resettlement of 47,010 Afghan refugees in Canada since August 2021 (IRCC, 2023i) confirmed mass refugee arrivals as the new normal and the need to address the inequitable and inconsistent needs assessment and referral service standards that marginalize GARs. The next steps and future consideration include equitable data transfer and impact evaluation of RSSS data. The federal government needs evidence of their investments in the public domain to assess both positive and negative impacts (Reed et al., 2021). Service standards have not been applied equitably to generate consistent data and not all agencies have online client management systems for electronic data transfer. Client relationship management systems must be considered as a connected goal for the future (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012).

RSSS needs to become an equitable community-in-practice service. For this to happen,

RSSS will need to be fully ingrained in the SHRRS learning culture. Commitment and perseverance of all SHRRS employees is required. Commitment is an Ubuntu ontology in the change framework and is required to advance RSSS into the next decade.

Another consideration is SHRRS's plan to ensure resource equity, reallocation, and sustainability is essential. The principles for consideration for equitable distribution of resources proposed by Stone (2002), based on equity, agency differences, and redefining equity guided me to find the RSSS solution and, upon reflection, it will need to guide SHRRS to continue to request resource equity for sustainability of this directed change.

Continuous employee training and development as the status quo are vital aspects of employee and organizational performance (Mpofu & Hlatywayo, 2015) required to build the capacity of individuals to remain committed to RSSS. Comprehensive curriculum-based onboarding and refresher employee training to administer RSSS will need to become a permanent, mandatory feature of the SHRRS culture to influence committed employee action.

Finally, the needs assessment and referral service standards are part of a continuum of resettlement services. From a social justice lens, other resettlement services, such as case management, should strive for regional equity within the confines of defined autonomy (Waters & Marzano, 2006) and align with the availability of health, housing, and employment resources.

Chapter Summary

RSSS for GARs at SHRRS requires an integrated approach of implementation, communication, monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge mobilization in this systemic product, process, and human-centric change. The polyocular vision for SHRRS change adopts a blended transformative leadership approach as the basis upon which the respective components in Chapter 3 evolve to achieve EDI and social justice success. The change implementation plan

provided a stage-by-stage Kotter and Ubuntu change framework for equitable and consistent RSSS within the confines of Euro-Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership and defined autonomy. The communication plan communicates the change path and includes identifying the stakeholder circle and engagement strategies for effective communication by using a cross-sectional framework. The monitoring and evaluation plan adopts process monitoring and evaluation commitments using a PDSA tool and summative and effective evaluation using the outcomes components to evaluate the EDI aspects of the implementation and the plan. The chapter concludes with next steps, such as equitable RSSS data transfer and evaluation on GARs, ongoing curriculum-based training and development, and resource equity.

Dissertation-in-Practice Conclusion

The DiP identified that the resettlement needs assessment and referral service standards for GARs in SHRRS is inequitable, inconsistent, and marginalizes GARs and boldly proposed to challenge the current status quo and address this service standards inequity and inconsistency from a blended Eurocentric and Afrocentric Indigenous Ubuntu leadership approach and change framework. The DiP clarified expectations in the early stages that (a) attempting to reach a solution for a problem rooted in a global Indigenous GAR context but applying Eurocentric knowledge and colonial dialogue (Battiste, 2013) will not suffice for change; (b) for change to gain momentum it should be a holistic product, process and human-centric change; and, (c), human intervention and collaborative governance will guide the change path to social justice.

Given the diversity of the chosen theoretical change frameworks, models, and leadership approach that provide direction for change implementation amidst risks and challenges, the DiP demonstrates that there is hope and endless possibilities for further inquiry for service equity with related resettlement programs in the continuum of services in SHRRS. The human commitment ontology in this DiP is captured by the Ubuntu idiom “I am because we are” (Mangaliso et al., 2022, p. 1035) that demonstrates my transformative moral compass that challenged the Eurocentric status quo. Embracing the equitable service standards for all global GARs elevates SHRRS’s resettlement position on the global stage to one of authentic service equity and social justice and serves as an equity promising practice model for global partners resettling refugees to adopt and adapt. Embracing moral courage as an immigrant woman to challenge inequities and reenact a PoP renaissance is embodied by “We will not be quiet! For those days of silent acceptance are of the past and we, of the future” (Naidu, 2024, Epigraph).

Narrative Epilogue

GARs embrace SHRRS resettlement services and challenge themselves to settle and integrate in their new communities, but they are oblivious to service standards inequities and inconsistencies. When an experienced resettlement systems leader like me, with decades of lived experience of injustices, is directed to address the service standards status quo, I am reminded of the ethos and relevance of EDI in the hope of undoing the wrongs of the past and rewriting equitable standards. Through this DiP, I reflected that it is incumbent on me to make a transformative change, invoking a postcolonial renaissance inspired by the Ubuntu social justice philosophy. My motivation in this DiP was to address service standards inequities and map my community-in-practice journey from a blended theoretical leadership approach and call to action by inspiring the right people to share diverse worldviews to effect the right change.

Eurocentric applications currently thrive in SHRRS, but this DiP provided a gateway to introduce, educate, relearn, and inspire a Euro-Afro-Ubuntu Indigenous transformative leadership change in a diverse context. As I move forward with this paradigm shift for GARs, I have confidence in my fellow leaders to embrace collaborative action, because the majority are immigrants or refugees. This DiP journey has embellished my learning, knowledge, and reawakened my sense of respect and empathy for humanity and reiterated that mindfulness of equity and consistency should be a priority for leaders serving authentically in diverse diasporas.

I leave this DiP feeling perplexed that this service inequity that marginalized GARs was left unaddressed for decades and proud that I embraced the opportunity to challenge the status quo to make a community-in-practice difference and created hope for future success in equity and consistency for other resettlement service standards.

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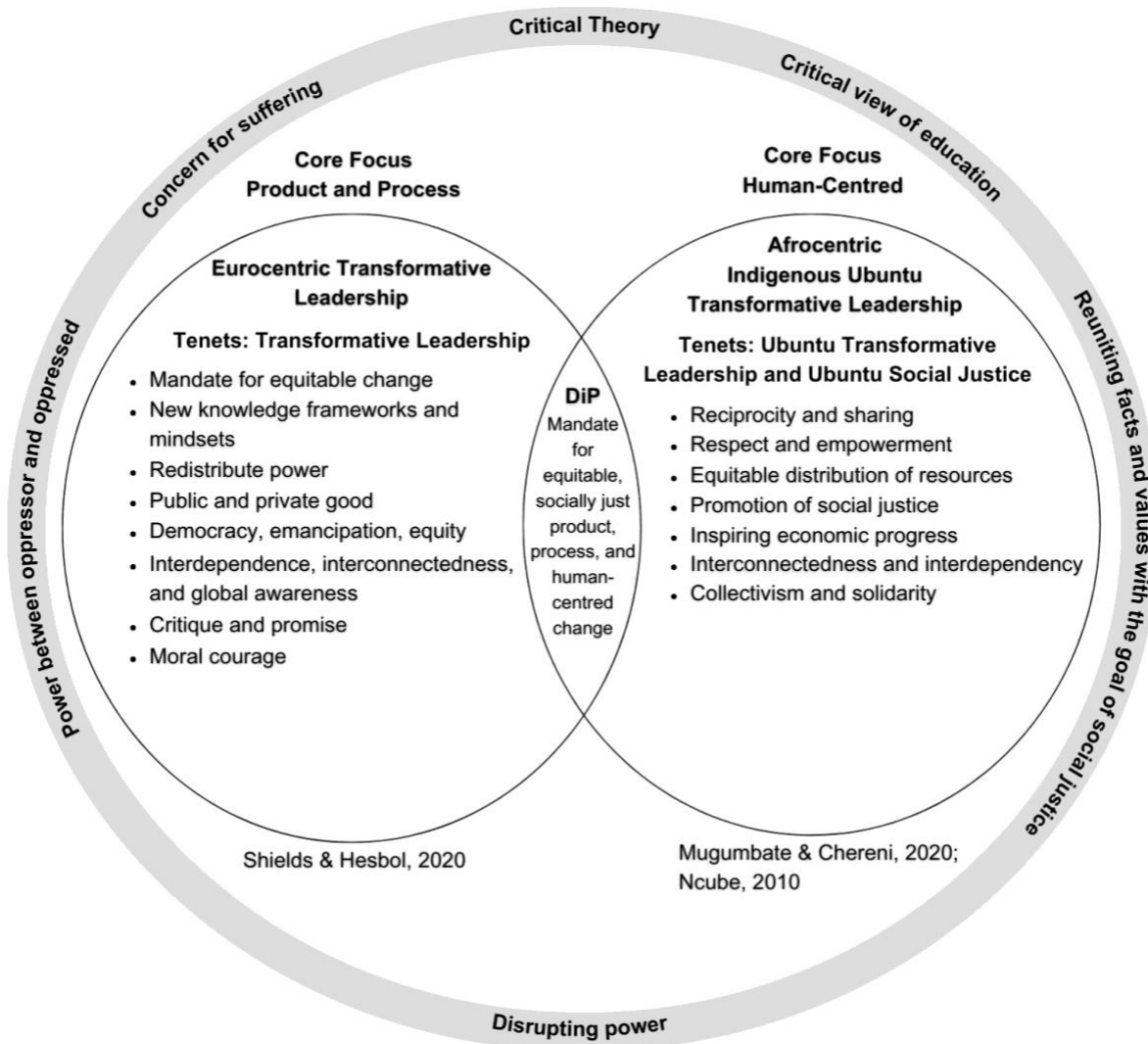
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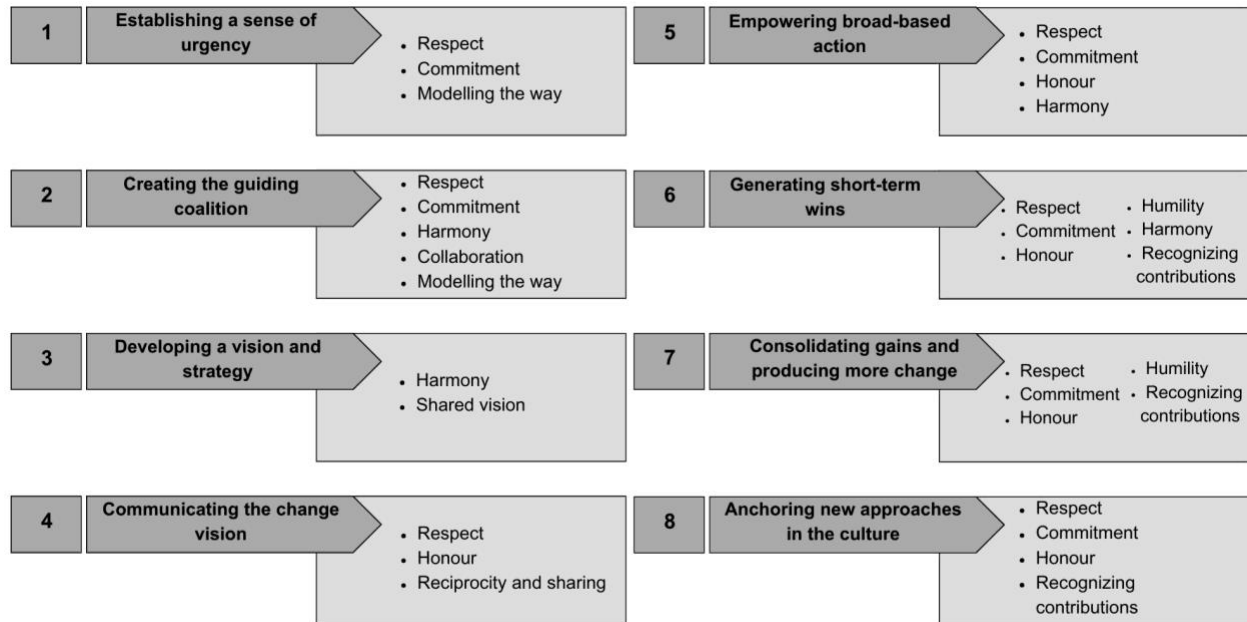
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Appendix A: Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu Leadership Approach



Note. The Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu approach combines core tenets of Shields and Hesbol's (2020) transformative leadership approach, Mugumbate and Chereni's (2020) Ubuntu social justice framework, and Ncube's (2010) Ubuntu transformative leadership beliefs. The model is surrounded by Capper's (2019) critical theory ontology because transformative leadership is grounded in critical theory. I developed this approach to describe how I diagnose, analyze, and effect change in this dissertation-in-practice (DiP).

Appendix B: Kotter and Ubuntu Blended Leading-Change Framework



Note. The Kotter and Ubuntu linear human-centred framework for change is a combination of Kotter's (2012) linear processual eight-stage model and Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs in each stage. This combination enhances the humanness impact of the model and illustrates how change is led in the dissertation-in-practice.

Appendix C: SHRRS Multidimensional Change Readiness Assessment

Readiness dimensions	Score range	Actual score
Previous change experience		
Has the organization had generally positive experience with change?	0 to +2	2
Has the organization had recent failure experience with change?	0 to -2	0
What is the mood of the organization: upbeat and positive?	0 to +2	1
What is the mood of the organization: negative and cynical?	0 to -3	0
Does the organization appear to be resting on its laurels?	0 to -3	0
Change experience total		+3
Executive support		
Are senior managers directly involved in sponsoring the change?	0 to +2	2
Is there a clear picture of the future?	0 to +3	3
Is executive success dependent upon the change occurring?	0 to +2	2
Are some senior managers likely to demonstrate a lack of support?	0 to -3	-1
Executive support total		+6
Credible leadership and change champions		
Are senior leaders in the organization trusted?	0 to +3	2
Are senior leaders able to credibly show others how to achieve their collective goals?	0 to +1	+1
Is the organization able to attract and retain capable and respected change champions?	0 to +2	+1
Are middle managers able to effectively link senior managers with the rest of the organization?	0 to +1	0
Are senior leaders likely to view the proposed change as generally appropriate for the organization?	0 to +2	1
Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by the senior leaders?	0 to +2	1
Credible leadership and change champions total		+6
Openness to change		
Does the organization have scanning mechanisms to monitor the internal and external environment?	0 to +2	1
Is there a culture of scanning and paying attention to those scans?	0 to +2	1
Does the organization have the ability to focus on root causes and recognize interdependencies both inside and outside the organization's boundaries?	0 to +2	2
Does "turf" protection exist in the organization that could affect change?	0 to -3	-2
Are middle and/or senior managers hidebound or locked into the use of past strategies, approaches, and solutions?	0 to -4	-2
Are employees able to constructively voice their concerns or support?	0 to +2	2
Is conflict dealt with openly, with a focus on resolution?	0 to +2	2
Is conflict suppressed and smoothed over?	0 to -2	0
Does the organization have a culture that is innovative and encourages innovative activities?	0 to +2	2
Does the organization have communications channels that work	0 to +2	2

Readiness dimensions	Score range	Actual score
effectively in all directions?		
Will the proposed change be viewed as generally appropriate for the organization by those not in senior leadership roles?	0 to +2	2
Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by those not in senior leadership roles?	0 to +2	2
Do those who will be affected believe they have the energy needed to undertake the change?	0 to +2	1
Do those who will be affected believe there will be access to sufficient resources to support the change?	0 to +2	2
Openness to change total		+14
Measures for change and accountability		
Does the reward system value innovation and change?	0 to +2	1
Does the reward system focus exclusively on short-term results?	0 to -2	0
Are people censured for attempting change and failing?	0 to -3	0
Are there good measures available for assessing the need for change and tracking progress?	0 to +1	1
Does the organization attend to the data that it collects?	0 to +1	1
Does the organization measure and evaluate customer satisfaction?	0 to +1	0
Is the organization able to carefully steward resources and successfully meet predetermined deadlines?	0 to +1	1
Measures for change and accountability total		+4
SHRRS cumulative readiness for change score		+33

Note. The multidimensional change readiness assessment scoring questionnaire is from

Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit (4th ed., p. 113) by G. Deszca, C. Ingols, and T. F. Cawsey, 2020, SAGE Publications. Copyright 2020 by SAGE Publications. The scores range from -25 to +50 and the higher the score, the more ready the organization is for change.

Appendix D: Evaluation of Solutions

Solution	Communication	Time	Fiscal	Human resources	Technological	Equity, consistency, customized, and client-centred
1						
2						
3						

Note. The resource evaluation of the three solutions is inclusive and includes a category for proximity to equity, consistency, and customized client-centred alignment

Low	Medium	High
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Appendix E: Change Implementation Plan

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 1 Establishing a sense of urgency	Short-term Make a compelling evidence-based case for urgency for change, demonstrate evidence of systemic vulnerability, and create and raise awareness	I will incorporate all evidentiary research and data from August 2021 and compile a report that will serve as a rationale for change and send to the federal government director and SHRRS-WG chair.	Federal government director Primary change agent	September 2024–October 2024
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect commitment, and modelling the way		Federal government director will model the way (Ncube, 2010), and exhibit moral courage (Shields & Hesbol, 2020) to create an inequity crisis and advise executive leaders of the urgency of a more equitable system change (Shields & Hesbol, 2020) in a Zoom town hall meeting.	SHRRS-WG Chair Regional SHRRS executive leaders PRO Note takers Translators	September Evidence-based report completed October Directive for urgency for change is provided in zoom town hall and at in person town hall meetings
		Out of respect (Mangaliso et al., 2022) for all SHRRS employees, sharing transparently with employees for better understanding to make independent decisions about the change is a human-centric characteristic in this plan.		Document repository created and updated
		Regional leaders arrange regional focus group meetings and will share the information and knowledge learned		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		with management and front-line employees who have operational power in RSSS implementation.		
		Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes, data, and documents in the repository. As a common courtesy of respect (Mangaliso et al., 2022) for employees, all documents will be translated in multiple languages, pointing to a human-centric characteristic and caring about equitable access for all		
Stage 2 Creating the guiding coalition	Short-term Enact two diverse groups of 10–50 influential	Recruitment video will be prepared by PRO and me to recruit coalition members.	Primary change agent PRO	November–December 2024
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, harmony, collaboration, and modelling the way	SHRRS regional agency leaders with decision-making power and knowledge of change as catalysts to guide collaborative change implementation	I will enact two diverse regional coalitions of 10–50 members (SGG & WCC; Deszca et al., 2020). a. SGG as the catalyst will guide the overall governance strategic change process. b. WC will oversee the change implementation operations. SGG and WC members will be invited	Note takers National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers) WC and SGG (provide feedback in online survey)	November Coalition enacted TOR completed December Building capacity education sessions Online feedback

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		<p>to the inaugural virtual meeting. I will lead the first team meeting and coordinate the meeting schedules. Two cochairs will be elected through a democratic process. SGG and WC will codevelop the TORs for SGG and WC. All meetings will be through Zoom (https://zoom.us). This human-centric intervention will allow the coalitions to use their diverse voices and to codevelop the TOR from an interconnectedness perspective (Shields & Hesbol, 2020; Ncube, 2010) under my guidance and mentorship.</p> <p>Core ethos required by the teams will be commitment, harmony, collaboration, and reciprocity and sharing (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020).</p> <p>Coalition members will agree on biweekly meeting schedules.</p> <p>PRO and note takers will track all communication.</p> <p>I will introduce a building capacity</p>	Translators	<p>survey about education sessions</p> <p>Written report and infographic report</p> <p>Document repository created and updated</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024– June 2026
		<p>education session on the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach and defined autonomy via a PowerPoint presentation followed by an online survey for feedback in a Zoom capacity building session.</p> <p>Online survey: feedback from SGG about the leadership approach and defined autonomy will be reviewed by me.</p> <p>Report: (a) provided in a December 2024 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic report in December 2024 as an update report to all employees.</p> <p>Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes, data, and documents in the repository. As a common courtesy and out of respect for employee communication, all documents will be translated in multiple languages.</p>		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 3	Short-term	RSSS will be codeveloped in this stage.	Primary change agent	Q4 January – March 2025
Developing a vision for change	Codevelop a polyocular (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010)	I will share a draft fact sheet of the polyocular vision (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010) with the SGG group and facilitate the ideation sessions for the codevelopment of a clear and compelling shared vision and strategies for RSSS. Diverse worldviews will inspire this humancentric codevelopment of the visions and strategies by listening, learning, and sharing information with each other.	SGG	January-March
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: polyocular vision and harmony	transformative vision to provide the future direction and strategies for the RSSS implementation plan	SGG will model the way and meet biweekly, from a zoom platform.	PRO	January
		SGG will adopt an EDI lens. Core tenets of transformative leadership approach of reciprocity, and sharing (Ncube, 2010) will be required to codevelop RSSS in harmony (Mangaliso et al., 2022)	Note takers	Shares draft polyocular vision with SGG, codevelopment of RSSS and final vision and strategies by March
		I will test understanding of the RSSS vision and strategies with WC group.	WC	
		Zoom: regional leaders will lead focus group discussion, meet with regional	Federal government	
			SHRRS-WG	
			Translators	February
				Draft RSSS vision tested for understanding with WC
				March
				RSSS pilots for the four regions developed and sent to RSSS
				RSSS finalized and developed,

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		federal government colleagues to design the RSSS pilot assessment for the four regions as per the vision and strategies and report to large SGG.		vision and strategies sent to SHRRS-WG for vetting
		I will finalize the RSSS vision and will share with SHRRS-WG chair and the federal government director team for final vetting.		Written report and infographic report
		Report: (a) provided in a March 2025 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic report in March 2025 as an update report to all employees.		Document repository created and updated
		Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes, data, and documents in the repository. As a common courtesy and out of respect for employee communication all documents will be translated in multiple languages. (Note: RSSS vision and strategies, pilot templates will not be included in the repository until the vision is communicated in April-June 2025).		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 4 Communicating the change vision Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, honour, reciprocity and sharing	Medium-term Adopt a simple cross-cultural approach to communicate the RSSS vision and strategies to all SHRRS employees to learn and understand the vision for change	PRO and I will use a cross-cultural framework (Shrivastava et al., 2022) to co-develop a communication strategy to communicate the RSSS vision and strategies out of respect (Mangaliso et al., 2022) of the employees. Strategy will be translated in multiple languages and stored in the repository. I will introduce the leadership approach as the precursor for the equitable RSSS vision and strategies and also introduce the leadership approach in a virtual town hall and emphasize deep equitable socially just RSSS product, process, and human-centred change (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). I will unfold the RSSS vision and strategies via virtual townhalls from a Zoom platform using the core value of respect, reciprocity, and sharing (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010).	Primary change agent SGG PRO Regional leaders Note takers Translators	April–June 2025 April Communication strategy completed and translated into multiple languages May Leadership approach education session and unfolding of RSSS vision and strategies In-person regional town halls to communicate vision June Online survey link Written report

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024– June 2026
		Regional leaders will communicate change vision at in-person regional town hall meetings.		and infographic report
		Regional agencies will include strategy on agency portals and intranets.		Document repository created and updated
		Employee survey link will be administered by PRO for employee reactions to the vision and strategies.		
		Feedback will be reviewed by SGG and the implementation plan will be adjusted accordingly.		
		Report: (a) provided in a June 2025 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic report in June 2025 as an update report to all employees.		
		Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes, data, and documents in the repository. As a common courtesy and out of respect for employee communication all documents will be translated in multiple languages.		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 5 Empowering broad-based action Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment honour, and harmony,	Medium-term Empower a broader SHRRS employee stakeholder circle with the knowledge required to support the vision and goals and for employees to action the change implementation	<p>The PRO and I will codevelop an engagement video to attract a larger cohort of stakeholders to change the inequitable structures and systems that block RSSS.</p> <p>I will show humility and engage with SHRRS employees via virtual town halls from a zoom platform through the nationally coordinated and regionally implemented engagement platform to humbly request for employee commitment to work in harmony (Mangaliso et al., 2022) especially those that have more knowledge and skills to support RSSS.</p> <p>WC will connect via in-person meetings to galvanize employee support for facilitating or managing the equitable re-alignment of priority projects to support RSSS.</p> <p>PRO will send a survey link to get employee reactions and suggestions of structures in the system they wish to support.</p>	<p>Primary change agent</p> <p>WC</p> <p>Broad-based action subcommittees</p> <p>Note takers</p> <p>Translators</p>	<p>July–August 2025</p> <p>YouTube engagement video</p> <p>Engagement and recruitment of board-based action groups</p> <p>Online survey: PRO sends survey link for systems and structures</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024– June 2026
		<p>WC will form mini subcommittees for the broader-based employees to work interconnectedly on projects and manage employee schedules. Human centric involvement will include respect for freedom of speech, human engagement, and diverse conversations.</p> <p>Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes, data, and documents in the repository. As a common courtesy and out of respect for employee communication all documents will be translated in multiple languages.</p>		
<p>Stage 6 Generating short-term wins</p> <p>Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, honour, humility, harmony, and recognizing</p>	<p>Demonstrate evidence of short successes to SHRRS and reward employees who contribute to keep the momentum high</p>	<p>Primary change agent and SGG will collaborate on priority short projects to strengthen the plan and generate more equitable short term wins.</p> <p>WC will oversee projects and projects will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Two RSSS pilots Optimize and expand repository Outcomes-based employee training and development program for RSSS. 	<p>Primary change agent</p> <p>WC and SGG</p> <p>PRO</p> <p>National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers)</p> <p>Broad-based action</p>	<p>August 2025– December 2025</p> <p>August–October Zoom and email: broad based action teams</p> <p>Gateway: RSSS pilot</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
contributions		Formative and summative assessments (Ismail et al., 2022) will evaluate the pilots.	project teams SGG	Survey. Focus group feedback
		I will develop a short-term win report, celebrate wins, show humility, recognise contributions, honour (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010) and celebrate employees in a virtual town hall zoom meeting.		November Zoom town halls: announce and celebrate short term wins
		Short- term report will be translated in multiple languages and stored in the repository.		December Online survey: short term wins feedback
		Demonstrate the short-term wins and honour employees.		Written report and infographic report
		PRO will administer survey link to employees after the town hall to get employee reactions and will share findings with SGG to review.		Document repository created and updated
		Focus group feedback: short-term wins.		
		Report: (a) provided in December 2025 to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024– June 2026
		report in December 2025 as an update report to all employees.		
		Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes, data, and documents in the repository. As a common courtesy and out of respect for employee communication all documents will be translated in multiple languages.		
Stage 7		I will meet with SGG about other changes that need equitable changing.	Primary change agent	January–March 2026
Consolidating gains and producing more changes		I will embrace findings from stage 6 and run this by SGG and WC.	Regional leaders	January Meeting with SGG
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, honour, humility and recognizing contributions		I will work in collaboration with SGG to conduct a SHRRS equitable system and structure readiness check out of respect (Mangaliso et al., 2022) for employees prior to institutionalization.	SGG and WC	Embrace findings from Stage 6
		I will work with SGG to update the RSSS procedural handbook for SHRRS by SGG.	National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers)	February Systems and structures readiness check
		I will meet with SGG and WC to	Translators	March Procedural handbook update

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		strategize and operationalize RSSS.		Written report and infographic report
		Report: (a) provided in March 2026 to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic report in March 2026 as an update report to all employees: Main intention of report to advise that RSSS is soon to be institutionalized.		Document repository created and updated
		Note takers will record and store meeting agendas and notes and all documents in the repository. From a human centric perspective, as a common courtesy and out of respect for employee communication the repository will include multiple language documents for access.		
Stage 8	Long-term		Primary change agent	April–June 2026
Anchoring new approaches in the culture	Anchor the equitable advances made in RSSS, include	Federal government director, SHRRS-WG chair, and I will announce the institutionalization of RSSS as the new status quo for all agencies as the product of deep equitable social just	Federal government director	April–May
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, honour, and	the national service in the regional wide system so that RSSS is the new	product, process, and human-centred change (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020). Contributions will be	SHRRS-WG chair	Anchor RSSS in SHRRS culture: Launch date July 2026
			WC	
			Regional leaders	Institutionalize

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
recognizing contributions	normal	recognized (Ncube, 2010) Launch start date: July 2026.	SGG	Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach
		SGG group will prepare logic program model to perform summative and effective evaluation before RSSS is launched and this will be communicated to WC and the operations team.	PRO Note takers	Rewards in-person meeting
		I will institutionalize the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach as the culture of leadership and will continue to provide education sessions.		Zoom education session
				Zoom education session
		I will meet with the WC to discuss operational issues with regional teams to institutionalize the change.		June Celebratory town hall meeting to recognize contributions
		I will institutionalize the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach as the culture of leadership and will continue to provide education sessions.		Program logic model
		RSSS staff training and development refresher sessions will be provided before the launch.		Written report and infographic report

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024– June 2026
		I will honour commitment and harmony of change agents with humility and celebrate collectivism and solidarity (Ncube, 2010) at a zoom town hall meeting.		SGG to process monitor and evaluate RSSS - post launch July 2026–July 2027 with new PDSA cycle
		Rewards: change agents will receive an RSSS change implementation coin at in-person regional/agency meetings, PRO will order coins.		
		Post monitoring and evaluation capabilities addressed: SGG to monitor and evaluate RSSS post launch July 2026-July 2027 and ensure a PDSA cycle is in place for process monitoring and evaluation.		
		Report: (a) provided in a June 2026 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic report in June 2026 as an update report to all employees.		

Note. SHRRS = Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector; RSSS = regional specific service standard; GAR = government-assisted refugee; Q = quarter; SGG =strategic governance group; WC = working committee; SHRRS-WG = Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector Working Group; TOR = terms of reference; PRO = public relations officer.

Appendix F: Communication Plan

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 1 Establishing a sense of urgency	Short-term Cause a crisis, disrupt the status quo, stress the equity gap, create awareness, and aim for buy-in from leadership for change	Reporting: I will use reporting as a standard communication tactic to provide the evidence-based report via email to the federal government director and SHRRS-WG. Knowledge mobilization: I will disseminate an evidence-based knowledge report, layered in high level language to the federal government director and SHRRS-WG chair via email for an actionable decision for change equity.	Primary change agent Federal government director Regional SHRRS leaders PRO National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers) Translators	September 2024–October 2024 September Reporting: evidence based report October Directed communication : evidence based report Zoom town hall Directed in-person town hall meeting Summary fact sheets, FAQ, and meeting notes
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: respect commitment, and modelling the way		Directed communication: I will share the report out of respect (Mangaliso et al., 2022) with agency executive leaders via email. Zoom town hall and broadcast communication: federal government director, SHRRS-WG chair, and I will model the way (Ncube, 2010), and exhibit moral courage (Shields & Hesbol, 2020) to create an inequity crisis and advise executive leaders of the urgency of a more equitable system		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		<p>change (Shields & Hesbol, 2020).</p> <p>Knowledge mobilization: federal government director will transfer the report to regional executive leaders in a Zoom town hall for executive leaders to decide to use their credibility and influence employees to action change.</p> <p>Directed in-person town hall: regional leaders arrange regional focus group meetings to share the information and knowledge learned with management and frontline line employees who have operational power in RSSS implementation.</p> <p>Knowledge mobilization: regional executive leaders will transfer a fact sheet of the report. layered in simple building bridges and multiple languages to managers and front-line employees and will meet in an in-person town hall and focus groups to inspire group decision to operationalize and implement RSSS.</p> <p>Summary infographic fact sheets and FAQ: PRO will prepare, arrange for translation, store in the repository, and</p>		Written communication

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		send via the news bulletin.		
		Written communication: note takers will record meeting notes, have notes translated, and stored in in repository.		
Stage 2 Creating the guiding coalition	Short-term Cocreate an engagement YouTube video to attract diverse SGG and WC coalition members and send to a target audience	YouTube video: I will work collaboratively with PRO to cocreate and narrate a short engagement video for employee collectivism and solidarity (Ncube, 2010).	Primary change agent PRO	November–December 2024
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: respect, commitment, harmony, collaboration, and modelling the way	Use diverse communication tactics to address coalition logistics (meetings and schedules)	Directed communication: PRO distributes video via email, instant messaging or, linked in to targeted individuals across the four regions to engage their commitment (Mangaliso, et al., 2022).	Note takers National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers)	November YouTube video
		Zoom meeting: SGG and WC will be invited to inaugural virtual meeting.	WC and SGG (provide feedback in online survey)	December Directed communication : virtual inaugural meeting
		Directed communication: coordinate meeting schedules of SGG and WC. Change recipients are close to the change and have significant governance and operational influence.	Translators	Zoom town hall education sessions

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		<p>Zoom: meeting interactions for SGG and WC will be via virtual monthly meetings.</p> <p>Interactive communication: sharing and interconnectedness (Shields & Hesbol, 2020; Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020) will be communication ethic.</p> <p>Zoom building capacity sessions: introduce the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach and defined autonomy via a PowerPoint presentation followed by an online survey for feedback.</p> <p>Knowledge mobilization: I will provide building capacity education, knowledge, and learning sessions to the SGG coalition about the leadership approach (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Shields & Hesbol, 2020) and defined autonomy (Waters and Marzano, 2006), with simple language via a Zoom town hall meeting so SGG makes informed decisions in the co-development of the vision and</p>	<p>Summary fact sheet</p> <p>Written communication</p> <p>Reporting: written report and infographic report</p>	

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		strategies for RSSS.		
		Reporting: (a) use reporting as standard communication and provide a December 2024 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic Q3 update report to employees.		
		Summary fact sheet: infographic summary fact sheet in multiple languages accessible from the repository and news bulletin.		
		Written communication: large virtual and small regional focus group meeting notes will be documented, translated, and stored in repository.		
Stage 3	Short-term	Written communication: I will share draft polyocular vision and strategies (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010) of RSSS with the SGG and facilitate the virtual Zoom ideation sessions.	Primary change agent	January–March 2025
Developing a vision for change	Apply multilingual and multidimensional communication tactics to inspire diverse conversations in the		SGG	
Ubuntu ontologies			WC	January–February
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs:		Knowledge mobilization: I will disseminate a research and knowledge fact sheet on polyocular vision	PRO	Written communication
polyocular vision			Federal government	: draft vision shared

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
and harmony	codevelopment of polyocular transformative vision and strategies for RSSS	<p>(Maruyama, 2004), layered in simple language via a Google Doc to the SGG, so SGG can put this into action and bring diverse worldviews in the codevelopment of the vision.</p> <p>Zoom meeting: SGG will meet biweekly to emulate interconnectedness, reciprocity, and sharing (Ncube, 2010) and to work in harmony (Mangaliso, et al., 2022).</p> <p>Zoom: regional leaders will lead focus group discussion, meet with regional federal government colleagues to design RSSS pilot assessment templates for the four regions as per the vision and strategies.</p> <p>Online pre-and posttest survey: test understanding of the RSSS vision with WC to learn from.</p> <p>Google Docs and shared drives: will be used as teams work on the RSSS vision and strategies for real time changes.</p>	<p>SHRRS-WG</p> <p>Note takers</p> <p>Translators</p>	<p>Zoom: biweekly meetings</p> <p>Google Docs and shared drives</p> <p>RSSS pilots email communication</p> <p>Online voting poll</p> <p>March Email communication : share final vision</p> <p>Reporting: written report and infographic report</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		Online voting poll: SGG will prepare a democratic voting poll for consensus for RSSS vision.		
		Email communication: share RSSS final vision strategies of RSSS as a pilot with federal government and SHRRS-WG for vetting.		
		Written communication: note takers will record meeting notes and ideation sessions, meeting notes will be translated and stored in repository.		
		Reporting: (a) use reporting as standard communication and provide a March 2025 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic March 2025 update report to employees. Communication narrative: RSSS vision, strategies and RSSS pilot developed.		
Stage 4 Communicating the change vision Ubuntu ontologies	Medium-term Communicate the vision for change in multiple languages for	Written communication: The PRO and I will enact a communication strategy for respectfully communicating the RSSS vision and strategies.	Primary change agent SGG PRO	April–June 2025 April Written communication

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
and beliefs: respect, honour, reciprocity and sharing	inclusive understanding and to generate a buy-in for the vision from SHRRS employees	<p>Zoom meeting education session and communicating the vision: I will introduce the leadership approach as the precursor for the equitable RSSS vision and strategies and the SGG and I will unfold the RSSS vision and strategies.</p> <p>Knowledge mobilization: I will provide an education, knowledge, and learning session to SHRRS employees about the leadership approach and polyocular vision (Maruyama, 2004; Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Shields & Hesbol, 2020), with simple language via a Zoom town hall meeting and unfold the RSSS vision to all SHRRS employees so they make informed decisions about their role in operationalizing RSSS.</p> <p>In-person town halls: regional leaders will communicate the RSSS change vision to regional employees.</p> <p>Communication tactics: vision and strategies and included on agency portals and repository for regional</p>	<p>Regional leaders</p> <p>Note takers</p> <p>Translators</p>	<p>: strategy</p> <p>Strategy translation</p> <p>May Zoom education town halls and unfolding the vision</p> <p>In-person regional town halls</p> <p>June Written communication</p> <p>Summary fact sheets and FAQ</p> <p>Reporting: written report and infographic report</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		access.		
		<p>Knowledge mobilization: PRO will create online employee feedback survey layered in simple language, sent via email, to SHRRS managers and front-line staff, so that the SGG can learn and incorporate new knowledge and learning from community in practice to the RSSS design.</p>		
		<p>Written communication: meeting notes in multiple languages in repository.</p>		
		<p>Summary fact sheets and FAQ: infographics, translated and stored in repository.</p>		
		<p>Reporting: (a) use reporting as standard communication and provide a June 2025 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic June 2025 update report to employees. Communication narrative: RSSS vision and strategy communicated and RSSS is ready for piloting.</p>		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 5 Empowering broad-based action Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: respect, commitment honour, and harmony,	Medium-term Articulate communication to influence, persuade, and capture the emotions of the stakeholder circle SHRRS employees to support the RSSS vision	<p>YouTube video: The PRO and I will codevelop an engagement video to attract a larger cohort of stakeholders for their commitment (Mangaliso et al., 2022) to change the inequitable structures and systems that block RSSS.</p> <p>Zoom town hall: second engagement to appeal for equity structures and systems support for RSSS.</p> <p>Directed communication: WC will connect via in-person meetings to get more support and to advise about equity projects to support RSSS.</p> <p>Online survey: PRO will send a survey link to get employee reactions and suggestions of structures in the system they wish to support.</p> <p>Online/in-person subcommittees: WC will form mini subcommittees for the broader-based employees to work interconnectedly on projects and manage employee schedules.</p>	<p>Primary change agent</p> <p>WC</p> <p>Broad-based action subcommittees SHRRS meso- and micro-level employees</p> <p>Note takers</p> <p>Translators</p>	<p>July–August 2025 YouTube engagement video</p> <p>Zoom town hall Directed communication : WC connects in, in-person town halls</p> <p>Online survey: PRO sends survey link</p> <p>Written communication</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 6 Generating short-term wins Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: respect, commitment, honour, humility, harmony, and recognizing contributions	Medium-term Communicate, inform, honour, and celebrate wins via multiple communication channels to keep the RSSS change momentum high	Written communication: Note takers will take notes for each subcommittee translate and store notes in the repository.		
		Zoom and email: WC will communicate with broad-based action project teams.	Primary change agent WC and SGG	August 2025–December 2025
		Directed communication: communication gateway for the RSSS pilot tests will be communicated in regional meetings and will be tested. Communications and technology will work closely Online survey: sent to all employees to get feedback about the short-term win projects.	PRO National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers)	August–October Zoom and email: broad based action teams
		Online survey: sent to all employees to get feedback about the short-term win projects and RSSS pilots.	Broad-based action project teams SGG	Directed communication : communication gateway: RSSS pilot
		Focus group feedback: short-term wins. Meeting repository: strengthened for sustainable knowledge mobilization and learning in multiple languages. Knowledge mobilization: PRO will work in collaboration with the		Directed communication : Focus group feedback

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		information technology department to strengthen the multiple language repository on the resettlement website as an information and knowledge storage repository that allows for the dissemination of information and for the transfer and mobilization of knowledge for employees to make actionable decisions.		November Zoom town halls: announce and celebrate short term wins
		SHRRS-WG. Infographic report will be translated and stored in meeting repository.		December Written communication : short term wins report
		Reporting: (a) use reporting as standard communication and provide a December 2025 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic December 2025 update report to employees. Communication narrative: RSSS pilot completed, share short term wins, and analysis of surveys.		Reporting: written report and infographic report
		Zoom town halls: will demonstrate the short-term wins and honour employees.		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
Stage 7 Consolidating gains and producing more changes Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: respect, commitment, honour, humility, and recognizing contributions	Long-term Communicate and promote the credibility of change agents to inspire more system changes to align with RSSS	<p>Zoom meeting: I will meet with SGG about other changes that need equitable changing.</p> <p>Knowledge mobilization: I will hold a Zoom meeting with the SGG group to brainstorm about future equitable change example, monitoring and evaluation systems, RSSS professional development training, and RSSS handbook review so that information, knowledge, and learnings are shared for me to make decisions about what changes to make.</p> <p>Zoom meetings: I will meet with SGG and WC to strategize and operationalize RSSS.</p> <p>Zoom town hall: I will share updates, celebrate change progress, recognize contributions and reciprocity and sharing (Mangaliso et al., 2022; Ncube, 2010) and promote more changes and advise that RSSS will be the new status quo.</p> <p>In-person and Zoom meetings: Regional leaders will meet with their teams.</p>	<p>PRO</p> <p>SGG and WC</p> <p>Primary change agent</p> <p>Regional leaders</p> <p>National secretariat co-advisors (admin and note takers)</p> <p>Translators</p>	<p>January–March 2026</p> <p>January–March Zoom meeting; SGG and WC</p> <p>Zoom town hall</p> <p>In-person and Zoom meetings</p> <p>Focus group and interviews</p> <p>Written communication</p> <p>Reporting: written report and infographic report</p>

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		<p>Written communication: I will develop a short-term-win report and send to federal government.</p> <p>Written communication: meeting notes, translated and stored in repository.</p> <p>Reporting: (a) use reporting as standard communication and provide a March 2026 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic March 2026 update report to employees.</p> <p>Communication narrative: report on more changes and that RSSS is soon to be institutionalized.</p> <p>SGG group prepares logic model to perform summative and effective evaluation before launch and communicates this to WC via email.</p>		
Stage 8 Anchoring new approaches in the	Long-term Communicate, honour, and	Zoom town hall: federal government director, SHRRS-WG chair and I will announce the institutionalization of	Primary change agent Federal government	April–June 2026 April–May

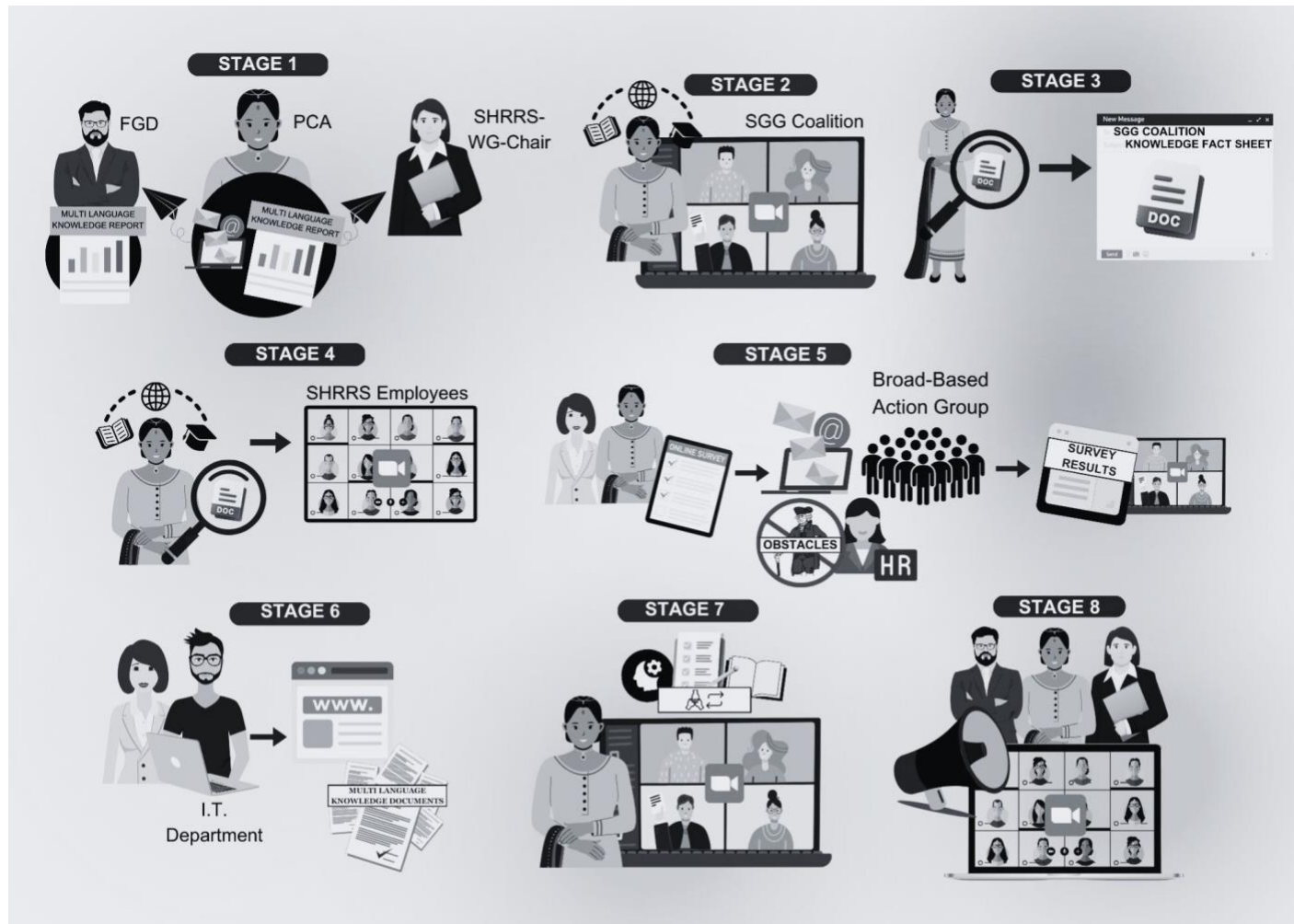
Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
culture	celebrate the change journey as RSSS becomes the new normal	RSSS as the new status quo for all agencies and a product of deep equitable social just product, process, and human-centred change (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020; Shields & Hesbol, 2020).	director	Logic model
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: respect, commitment, honour, and recognizing contributions	nationally coordinated service	Zoom: education sessions: I will institutionalize the Euro-Afro-Indigenous	SHRRS-WG Chair	Zoom town hall: embed RSSS systemically
		Ubuntu transformative leadership approach as the culture of leadership and will continue to provide education sessions.	WC	In-person operational meeting-
		Knowledge mobilization: federal government director, SHRRS-WG and I will declare the institutionalization of RSSS and the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach in the SHRRS culture as the new equitable knowledge and learning frameworks in a Zoom town hall of SHRRS employees to action.	Regional leaders	Rewards in-person meeting
		In-person/group operational meetings: WC will meet with regional teams to institutionalize the change.	SGG	Zoom education session
			PRO	Zoom education session
			Note takers	June Celebratory town hall meeting recognizes contributions
				Reporting: written report

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		Zoom): education sessions: I will institutionalize the Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership approach as the culture of leadership and will continue to provide education sessions.		and infographic report
		Zoom town hall: RSSS staff training and development sessions.		
		Zoom town hall celebratory event: I will honour commitment and harmony of change agents with humility and celebrate collectivism and solidarity (Ncube, 2010).		
		Rewards: change agents will receive an RSSS change implementation coin at in-person regional/agency meetings, PRO will order coins.		
		Multiple broadcast communication: PRO will ensure that written communication and verbal announcements of the unfolding of RSSS is communicated: agency portals, website blog, email, and repository.		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Action	Responsibility	Timeline: September 2024–June 2026
		<p>Reporting: (a) use reporting as standard communication and provide a June 2026 report to the federal government and SHRRS-WG and (b) infographic June 2026 update report to employees. Communication narrative: affirm the institutionalization of RSSS and celebratory event at a national town hall.</p>		

Note. SHRSS = Safe Haven Refugee Settlement Sector; RSSS = regional-specific service standard; GAR = government-assisted refugees; Q = quarter; SGG = strategic governance group; WC = working committee; SHRRS-WG = Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector working group; PRO = public relations officer; FAQ = frequently asked questions.

Appendix G: Knowledge Mobilization and Kotter's Model of Change



Note. FGD = federal government director; PCA = primary change agent; SHRRS-WG = Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector-working group chair; SGG = strategic governance group; HR = human resources; I.T. = information technology.

Appendix H: Process Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
Stage 1	Short-term	Evidence-based	Evidence report	Plan	Short-term
Establishing a sense of urgency	Make a compelling evidence-based case for urgency	report completed by me: September 2024	compiled with external and internal data and research gathered since 2021		Evidence-based report completed
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect commitment, and modelling the way	for change, demonstrate evidence of systemic vulnerability, and create and raise awareness	Directive for urgency for change given by primarily by federal government director: October 2024	Directive for change modelled and announced at a Zoom town hall, in-person town hall, and focus groups		Directive issued for the urgency for change
		Raise awareness for change by regional executive leaders: October 2024	Raised awareness at Zoom and in-person meetings; discussions through meeting notes and agendas; summary fact sheets translated in multiple languages and stored in meeting		Awareness for urgency for change raised
		Document repository: updated by PRO: October 2024			Document repository update completed

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
			repository Document repository updated with information and knowledge documents; data; reports; summary fact sheets; meeting notes; and agendas; and translated in multiple languages		
Stage 2 Creating the guiding coalition	Short-term Enact two diverse groups of 10–50 influential leaders	Two coalitions enacted by me: November 2024	Recruitment video prepared to recruit coalition members	Plan	Short term Strategic governance group and operation coalitions established
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, harmony, collaboration, and modelling the way	SHRRS regional agency leaders with decision-making power and knowledge of change as catalysts to guide collaborative change implementation via a TOR	Agreement on biweekly meeting schedules by coalition members: November 2024 Agreement on TOR for SGG and WC by coalition members: December 2024	Coalition members agree on biweekly meeting schedules with respect and flexibility Meeting agendas and notes recorded, translated in multiple languages, and stored in document		Attendance and engagement at monthly meetings, to address the change implementation plan achieved
					Completed TOR

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
		Collaborative and respectful team work ethic	repository Agreement of TOR through collaborative and respectful discussions at coalition meetings to reach agreement on TOR via a voting poll		document for the coalitions and consensus reached
		Education sessions and online survey feedback Euro-Afro Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership and defined autonomy by me: December 2024	Collaborative team work through reciprocity and sharing, collectivism and solidarity and interconnectedness (Ncube, 2010; Shields & Hesbol, 2020)		Education sessions feedback survey on Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership and defined autonomy completed
		Document repository: updated by PRO: December 2024	Education session on Euro-Afro-Indigenous Ubuntu transformative leadership and		Document repository update completed

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
			defined autonomy delivered in a Zoom meeting with request for feedback to be incorporated		
			Document repository updated with recruitment video; meeting notes and agendas; TORs; education sessions; and summary fact sheets; all in multiple languages		
Stage 3 Developing a vision for change	Short-term Codevelop a polyocular (Maruyama, 2004; Ncube, 2010)	Research and knowledge fact sheet on polyocular vision by me: January 2025	Research and knowledge fact sheet on polyocular vision shared in a Zoom meeting with ideation breakout sessions with SGG	Plan	Short-term Completed research and knowledge fact sheet on polyocular vision
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Polyocular vision and harmony	transformative vision to provide the future direction and strategies for the	Agreement on RSSS polyocular vision and strategies by	Agreement of polyocular RSSS		Completed the design of RSSS. Consensus reached via voting poll, and tested

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
	implementation plan	SGG: March 2025	vision for change within the confines of defined autonomy through collaborative and respectful discussions at coalition meetings to reach agreement via a voting poll, meeting agendas and notes will be recorded		with WC
		Pre-and posttest survey data March 2025			Two RSSS pilots designed for four regions for future testing in Stage 6
		Two RSSS pilots for each of the 4 regions designed by SGG: March 2025			Quarterly report completed
		Quarterly report by me: March 2025			Document repository updated
		Document repository: updated by PRO: March 2025	Pre-and posttest surveys to test RSSS pilots sent to a controlled WC group		
			Quarterly report prepared and sent to federal government and SHRRS-WG in narrative form to provide quarterly update		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
			Document repository meeting notes and agendas; education sessions; and summary fact sheets in multiple languages (Note RSSS vision and strategies, RSSS pilot test information and RSSS templates will be shared after vision is communicated in Stage 4)		
Stage 4 Communicating the change vision	Medium-term Adopt a simple cross-cultural approach to communicate the RSSS vision and strategies to all SHRRS employees to learn and	Communication strategy by PRO: April 2025 Education session on leadership approach by me: May 2025 Communicate the	Cross-cultural communication strategy designed for multicultural and multilingual SHRRS Model the way and communicate the RSSS vision and	Do	Medium -term Communication strategy completed RSSS change vision and strategies communicated to SHRRS employees

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
	understand the vision for change	RSSS vision and strategies to SHRRS employees SGG and I: May 2025	strategies at a Zoom town hall, in-person town hall, and focus groups		Feedback received and vision refined
		Online survey data collection for vision feedback: June 2025	Survey feedback from SHRRS employees, data received and incorporated to refine vision		Quarterly report completed
		Quarterly report by me: March 2025			Document repository updated
		Document repository: updated by PRO: June 2025	Quarterly report prepared and sent to federal government and SHRRS-WG in narrative form to provide update		
			Document repository updated with information and knowledge documents; communication strategy; vision and strategy		

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
			documents; meeting notes; data; and reports all in multiple languages		
Stage 5 Empowering broad-based action Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment honour, and harmony,	Medium-term Empower a broader SHRRS employee stakeholder circle with the knowledge required to support the vision and goals and for employees to action the change implementation	Recruitment and engagement video campaign by PRO and me: July 2025 Online data collection survey by August 2025 Document repository updated by PRO: August 2025	Engagement video campaign to attract a larger stakeholder cohort for broad-based action to support the vision Online data collection survey to get an idea of systems and structures blocking RSSS and to embrace data: example health, wellness, and anxiety and professional training and development support	Do	Medium-term Recruitment and engagement video campaign and development of a diverse sustainable network completed Online survey completed and findings address structures

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
			Document repository updated with information and data; agendas; meeting notes; documents of structure and systems; employee assistance information; and reports all in multiple languages		
Stage 6 Generating short-term wins	Medium-term Demonstrate evidence of short successes to SHRRS and reward employees who contribute to keep the momentum high	Equitable RSSS pilot by test team: October 2025	RSSS pilots will test for equity and consistency	Study	Medium-term RSSS test pilots completed
Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, honour, humility, harmony, and recognizing contributions		Optimize and expand repository by I.T. and PRO: October 2025	Document repository optimized, expanded, and included on the website		Repository optimization and expansion completed
		Equitable employee training and development program to pilot RSSS	Training and development program designed and delivered before RSSS pilot		Employee training and development program completed
		Celebrate wins:			Wins celebrated

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		November 2025	testing to build capacity of the employees		Quarterly report completed
		Online data survey short-term wins feedback: December 2025	Survey data embraced to course-correct RSSS test pilots		Document repository updated
		Document repository update by PRO: December 2025	Document repository updated with information and data; agendas; meeting notes; documents of structure and systems; employee assistance information; and reports all in multiple languages		
Stage 7 Consolidating gains and producing more changes	Long-term Maintain the credibility and influence of SGG and WC to equitably align structures,	Embrace findings from Stage 6 by SGG and WC January 2026	Data from Stage 6 includes pre-and posttest controlled RSSS pilot and staff training data marks the readiness to	Act	Long-term Systems and structural readiness check completed
Ubuntu ontologies		SHRRS equitable system and			RSSS test pilot data

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
and beliefs: Respect, commitment, honour, humility and recognizing contributions	policies, and procedures with the transformative change for new opportunities to strengthen and sustain RSSS	structure readiness check by SGG prior to institutionalization February 2026 Updated RSSS procedural handbook for SHRRS by SGG: March 2026 Update repository	institutionalize SHRRS equitable systems and structural readiness data will determine the status of the system to launch after 22 months SGG and WC will enter virtual ideation sessions with regional executive leaders to update the handbook Logic model summative and effective evaluation Document repository updated with agendas and meeting notes, data, and		received and confirms RSSS for institutionalization SHRRS procedural handbook completed for RSSS implementation Document repository updated

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
Stage 8 Anchoring new approaches in the culture Ubuntu ontologies and beliefs: Respect, commitment, honour, and recognizing contributions	Long-term Consolidate the equitable advances made in RSSS, include the national service in the regional wide system so that RSSS is the new normal Post monitoring and evaluation capabilities addressed	Institutionalize in the SHRRS culture for July 2026 launch Design RSSS program logic model before RSSS is operational Celebrate: June 2026 Quarterly report by June 2026 SGG to monitor and evaluate RSSS - post launch July 2026–July 2027	assessment handbook, and RSSS test pilot information Process and evaluation monitoring is thorough in the formative stages of monitoring then RSSS should be ready for launch A new PDSA cycle will be used for process monitoring and evaluation Quarterly report: June 2026	Act	Long-term Institutionalization of equitable and consistent RSSS in SHRRS culture for July 2026 launch Program logic model Equitable outcomes of the RSSS promote social justice SGG recognized as change leaders. Victory is celebrated Quarterly report PDSA cycle and logic model ready

Kotter's eight-stage change model and blended Ubuntu change framework	Goals	Indicators	Process measures	PDSA cycle stage	Outcome measures
					for post launch

Note. SHRSS = Safe Haven Refugee Settlement Sector; RSSS = regional-specific service standards; SGG = strategic governance group; WC = working committee; SHRRS-WG = Safe Haven Refugee Resettlement Sector working group ; PRO = public relations officer; PDSA= plan, do, study, act; TOR = terms of reference; I.T. = information technology department.