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Syrian Refugees in Peel Region: A Summary of Activities

(April 2016)

For Planning and Discussion

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Introduction

Since November 2015, the **Peel Newcomer Strategy Group** (PNSG) has been part of several conversations and activities to facilitate the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Peel region. The purpose of this report is to share our learnings, activities and conversations and we invite other Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and partners in the community to use the findings and resources in this report to further their work in supporting Syrian refugees.

In response to the Government of Canada's plan to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees - a plan fulfilled on February 29, 2016, PNSG has been playing a role in supporting different levels of government (municipal, regional and provincial), non-profit sector (settlement, education, health, etc.), business sector, and the wider community (faith-based institutions, ethnic groups, etc.) in Peel region to support the resettlement of Syrian refugees. Like many newcomers and refugees, Syrian refugees are also in need of several supports including affordable and long-term housing, social inclusion programs, and employment supports, among many others which will be outlined further.

PNSG is the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) in Peel designed to develop a coordinated and integrated settlement services model to enhance the social and economic inclusion of newcomers, immigrants and refugees to the Peel community.

As a LIP, PNSG is well-positioned to build on the expertise of the non-profit sector and the existing networks to enhance service delivery in Peel region to ensure that Syrian refugees can access a wide range of services and that their settlement experience is as smooth as possible. Peel has been welcoming refugees to the region for many years and, as such, the settlement sector in Peel has been well equipped and informed to service refugees. However, the recent influx of Syrian refugees to Canada and to the region has left the sector with many gaps in terms of capacity and unpredictability. Specifically, how many are settling via secondary migration and how many are privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) versus government assisted refugees (GARs). PNSG's role is to help the community strategize on how, as a region, we need to work collaboratively to ensure that the available services and supports are enhanced to match the needs identified. PNSG is committed to providing information that will help strengthen the existing efforts so that responses are coordinated and the gaps in services are identified.

PNSG has been involved in several conversations around Syrian refugee resettlement such as the Governor General's Forum in Ottawa on "Welcoming Syrian Refugees to Canada", and was a key organizer of the Peel "Syrian Refugee Consultation Meeting" convened by United Way of Peel Region (UWPR) and the Region of Peel (ROP) in December of 2015.

PNSG is currently a member of the *Syrian Settlement Support Working Group* co-chaired by ROP and UWPR, with a growing membership list – Members include: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade (MCIIT); City of Mississauga; City of Brampton; Settlement Agencies; Faith based institutions; and the Peel District School Board (PDSB). PNSG is also an active member of *Inter-Professional Project Advisory Committee (IPAC)* which acts as a consultation group to the Refugee Mental Health Project at the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH).

Peel Context and Data

After Toronto, Peel region remains a highly attractive region for newcomers to settle in because of its faith based institutions, ethno-specific amenities as well as large network of newcomers and immigrants. Peel region continues to welcome over 34,000 new residents every year. In 2015, Peel region received 12,990 permanent residents to Canada. In 2015, of the 12,990 permanent residents to Peel, 2,230 either have Syrian citizenship or Syrian as country of birth (IRCC). Of the 76 new people arriving in Peel every day, 53 are newcomers (2011, NHS Data).

In 2014, of the 260,404 new Canadians welcomed into Canada, 23,286 were refugees and of those refugees, 11,400 settled in Ontario.

Mississauga specifically is an attractive choice for newcomers and refugees of Syrian descent. According to the 2011 National Household Survey, Mississauga is third in terms of recent immigrants with a Syrian place of birth:

- Montreal- 915
- Toronto- 540
- Mississauga- 415

It was confirmed through COSTI Immigrant Services in Toronto, that 1,845 Syrian GARs were temporarily housed in Toronto between Nov. 4th and March 1st. Of that 1,845 refugees, 40% have settled in Peel as of April 2016.

Peel has now welcomed, through secondary migration, the following Syrian GARs:

- 153 Families
- 277 Adults
- 455 Children
- 732 Persons

Municipality breakdown:

- Mississauga total persons 708
- Brampton total persons 24
- Caledon total 0

Through Peel District School Board it was confirmed that since Jan.4th it has registered 425 Syrian students as of mid-April 2016.

In terms of Syrian refugee sponsorship, the following numbers are as of April 24, 2016: (IRCC)

- **99** government-organized flights have arrived in Canada
- **26,921** Syrian refugees have landed since November 4, 2015
- **3,352** Syrian refugee applications have been finalized, but they have not arrived in Canada
- **14,632** refugee resettlement applications are still in progress
- **140** Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) applications have been submitted from Mississauga since November 4, and there are 450 waiting in the inventory
- **33** Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) refugees have entered Mississauga since November 4
- **26** PSRs applications have been submitted from Brampton since November 4, and there are 49 in the inventory
- **7** Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) refugees have entered Brampton since November 4
- **Less than 5 PSRs** applications have been submitted from Caledon since November 4, and there are 0 in the inventory

Gap Analysis Survey

Summary

In January 2016, PNSG conducted a “**Capacity to Serve Syrian Refugees**” survey (see Appendix 3 for a copy of the survey). The survey was sent out to settlement and mainstream agencies serving refugees across Peel.

The objectives of this survey were to:

- Compile a list of current services and programs that could be used by Syrian refugees;
- Identify service gaps and help the sector get a better understanding of the information and supports needed by service providers, community groups and private sponsors to better serve Syrian refugees.

Who participated?

The survey invitation was sent to all PNSG working groups, Central Planning Table, PNSG and UWPR broader mailing lists, social media, and the attendees of the “Syrian Refugee Consultation Meeting” forum convened by UWPR and ROP in December of 2015.

There were a total of 51 respondents from the survey representing 40 agencies in Peel. The majority of the respondents were managers and frontline workers from the settlement and employment sector, and others from mainstream agencies. A breakdown of respondents can be found below:

Sector	No. of Respondents
Settlement, Language training, Employment, etc.	18
Education	6
Mental health and Crisis Counseling, Trauma and Family Counseling	3
Social Services	3
Medical Services	1
Other: Financial, Local Business, Youth, Furniture Bank, Food Bank, VAW Advocacy Group, Faith Group	9
Total agencies participated	40

RESULTS:

Existing services that can be used by Syrian refugees

- The most common type of services offered by Arabic and French speaking staff are settlement and employment services which include: orientation, referral services, provision of information related to school integration, housing, employment, health, getting involved in community, sports and recreation, libraries and education.
- Workshops being conducted in the Arabic language on various topics such as family relationships, parenting, family sponsorship, and professional development.
- Language training, translation and interpretation services
- For survivors of domestic abuse, the safety planning handbook is available in both Arabic and French. There is also a referral process for French language services for shelter and counseling needs.

Anticipated challenges in Serving Syrian refugees

Several potential issues were identified by agencies which could affect their ability to serve Syrian refugees effectively, including the lack of:

- Capacity to provide mental health counseling and crisis intervention
- Financial resources to hire Arabic speaking staff and train front line staff
- Knowledge on supporting refugees with disability (deaf and hard of hearing)
- Awareness of individuals and groups who are currently serving Syrian refugees
- Access to ESL classes (long wait times)
- Access to affordable housing
- Capacity to connect and engage private sponsors (especially faith-based groups)

Proposed strategies for more effective service delivery

Respondents had several ideas on how to improve service delivery for Syrian refugees. Here are a few of the strategies proposed:

- Provision of wrap around services for refugees including mental health and trauma counseling
- Provision of mental health and trauma counseling training for front line workers
- Creating an inter-agency roundtable to provide coordinated services including: employment, language training, workplace communications, business supports, etc.
- Hold consultation meetings with residents of Syrian ethnic origin
- Create stronger partnerships between mainstream and settlement agencies
- Facilitate connections between private sponsorship groups and services available
- Customize language and employment training to address the needs of those who have never worked outside the home
- Translation of various training materials including software, literacy, information, education and outreach materials;
- Provision of childcare support services including homework help;
- Recreational activities on a regular and ongoing basis

Information and Training Event for Sponsors

SUMMARY

In an effort to bridge the gap between services and private sponsors, PNSG collaborated with UWPR and ROP to host a Training and Information Fair on January 21, 2016. This fair was geared toward private sponsors of Syrian refugees, many of which comprised of faith based groups in Peel, as well as those interested in sponsoring.

The event brought together a total of 134 attendees:

- 45 attendees representing 20 faith-based sponsoring groups with the majority being church groups;
- 80 service providers and staff representing 35 agencies in Peel region;
- 3 business owners; and,
- 6 private individuals.

The fair allowed for private sponsor groups to meet one another and learn more about the services already being offered to refugees in Peel by visiting a wide display of services. It also provided a training opportunity to individuals and groups interested in becoming private sponsors to learn about the refugee sponsorship process, as well as to those who are already private sponsors that may need additional information.

With the large turnout, positive feedback, and several requests, additional events are being planned for mid-2016 and will continue as the need arises.

EVENT PLANNING & OUTREACH

It took three weeks to prepare for the fair and effective outreach was critical in the event's success. A wide array of services providers, agencies and community groups were contacted to promote this event.

Funding

A collaborative effort of three funders was necessary in providing funds and staffing for the event. The event flyer (see Appendix 5 for event agenda) was uploaded on the PNSG and UWPR websites. PNSG also promoted the event on social media using Facebook and Twitter.

Outreach

Additionally, PNSG requested assistance from the Interfaith Council of Peel (ICP) Steering Committee to help promote the event. PNSG sits on this committee and distributed flyers at one of the ICP meetings. Some committee members expressed an interest and agreed to share the information with their contacts. Individual follow up with these individuals was also made. PNSG contacted various organizations and faith groups around the GTA, separate to the ICP, with a request to circulate event information to their contacts in Peel region.

Flyers were sent out widely to PNSG contacts and networks of the many stakeholders at the *Syrian Settlement Support Working Group*. Individual follow ups were made with service providers who initially confirmed their participation at the Information Fair. PNSG ensured registration and contact via email was made on a regular basis to share information and updates about the event.

Presenters

Catholic Cross Cultural Services (CCCS) through its Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) agreed to conduct the training and information session for the private sponsors attending. PNSG staff coordinated and worked with CCCS staff to ensure that the presentation was relevant to the Peel community.

Volunteers

PNSG engaged volunteers to support PNSG staff with registration and overall managing of the event. This also included a social media presence, note taking and capturing overall discussions.

Media advisory and media release

PNSG issued a media advisory and release about the event and also prepared a media kit for distribution to media.

EVALUATION

All attendees were requested to complete an evaluation form and some specific suggestions have been included below:

- Provide specific information about services for children (e.g., dental, transportation, school)
- Organize another event and invite panelists with experience with Syrian refugee settlement in GTA
- Training on the settlement plan, and training on the sponsorship application process should be separated
- Provide more opportunities for attendees to share their experiences
- Split the sponsorship application training between those already engaged in the sponsorship process and those recently considering it

The attendees also requested the following information/assistance:

- Local services/supports in Peel
- Creating a housing inventory including basement apartments
- Accessing housing for larger families
- Experiences of current sponsors of Syrian refugees
- Expectations once the Syrian refugees have arrived (e.g. financial needs, health check-ups)
- Processes that were not considered during planning (e.g. dental and immunizations)
- What financial supports are needed so they can be addressed
- How to support Syrian refugees after they arrive
- Technical aspect of completing immigration forms

Data Tracking Tool on Syrian Refugees

Through the suggestions received at Peel-Halton's Executive Council (consisting of executive directors of agencies serving newcomers in Peel and Halton that are funded by IRCC), PNSG created a data tracking tool asking specific questions about the refugee client (date of arrival, languages spoken, services accessed etc). This was developed so all agencies serving refugees could ask and track the same information consistently. This information will then be analyzed to shed some light on any additional supports that may be needed to support refugees and sponsoring groups. Furthermore, this analysis will help the sector get some insight into who has been served and the extent of secondary migration. It will also be useful for funders to see the supports that are being offered across Peel. The data tracking tool is available in Appendix 4.

Five agencies (Newcomer Centre of Peel, The Centre for Education and Training, India Rainbow Community Services, Afghan Women's Organization, and Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services) are regularly updating and sending the numbers of refugees accessing services through the completed Data Tracking Tool.

The agencies detailed that most of the clients that they see are referred by: friends, relatives, settlement agencies and other service providers. The most common services currently being provided are: Language assessment, settlement, interpretation services for medical appointments, GST/HST and Child Tax Benefits applications, daycare, referral to food banks, referral to the Salvation Army, and translation of documents.

Reported numbers of Syrian Refugees accessing services in Peel*	
(Between September 2015 – March 2016)	
Adults	674
Youth	141
Children	742
Total	1557

**Note: These are not unique clients, and these can include PSRs as well as GARs*

Key Recommendations

As we move forward, ongoing discussions around tackling common obstacles to the sponsorship and settlement process for Syrian refugees is required. To address these challenges efficiently, it is important to ensure that there is a forum for various agencies, community groups and other stakeholders to share their knowledge and develop partnerships. The following questions need to be explored:

- Who else needs to be engaged?
- How can we stay connected?
- How can we communicate with more ease and continue to inform each other about the work that we do?

The following recommendations have emerged through our recent activities and collaboration in Peel:

Community Engagement:

Engaging the Faith Community	Faith based groups may have limited connection to social services and knowledge of supports available for Syrian refugees. It is important to continue to facilitate connections between these groups and service providers to keep them informed. Connecting these groups with one another and other mainstream social services will support them in the sponsorship process and assist them in providing support to all refugees that may access their services.
Engaging the Syrian Community	Connecting and consulting with community residents specifically those of Syrian origin can contribute in broadening our understanding of the cultural nuances as well as prevent social isolation.

Housing:

Access to affordable rental housing	Although housing is a complex issue that requires a long-term solution, such conversations are imperative in the resettlement of refugees. A dialogue and partnership between levels of government responsible for housing is also imperative since many refugees are often unaware of the landlord/tenant rights and agreements.
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<p>Space for large families</p>	<p>Many families are comprised of an average of 6-8 individuals and require housing in which the family unit can live together. Currently many of the apartments available for these families have spilt the family in order to provide shelter in a timely manner. This needs to be addressed so families continue residing together.</p>
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Diversity:

<p>Culturally and linguistically appropriate services</p>	<p>Providing culturally competent services is imperative in effectively responding to the needs of Syrian refugees. Generating resources to address the training needs of front line staff, especially those from mainstream agencies, is essential. This is to ensure that front line staff have a greater understanding of Syrian history, people and cultures. There is also a need for appropriate linguistic services. The availability and awareness of existing interpretation services is also required.</p>
<p>Understanding the capacity of Peel-based agencies to provide language support services</p>	<p>ESL students can face a long wait time before joining because most classes are overbooked and are often overcrowded. About 11 out of 40 agencies participating in the survey are offering ESL classes. Classes should continue to be offered in flexible time with the provision of transportation and childminding support services. Agencies should also make a concerted effort to engage other potential partners such as the Ontario Literacy Coalition, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres in considering developing additional community-based language support programs.</p>

Healthcare:

<p>Lack of capacity to provide trauma counseling and other mental health services</p>	<p>Out of the 40 agencies, only a total of 8 agencies provide trauma counseling services; 4 out of these 8 agencies provides trauma counseling services in the Arabic language; 3 provide interpretation services; and 1 provides trauma counseling in Arabic, once a week. This needs to be increased.</p> <p>The Mental Health Commission of Canada released a report in January 2016 titled “<i>Supporting the Mental Health of Refugees to Canada</i>” which mentions the higher rates of PTSD and depression experienced among refugees, and the importance of social inclusion and mental health promotion in trying to address those needs.</p>
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<p>Connecting Syrian refugees to primary health care</p>	<p>Syrian refugees will first and foremost need primary care. There is limited information gathered from the survey about availability of health care to Syrian refugees due to limited participation of agencies providing such services. It is crucial that connections with hospitals, walk-in clinics and other health care organizations that have experience working with refugees is made. In some neighbourhoods, community health centres are already reaching out to settlement agencies and allowing them to offer their services within their office location. This should be modeled in other areas in need of such services.</p>
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Sector capacity:

<p>Enhancing the capacity of the existing services</p>	<p>Most survey respondents commented on the lack of financial resources to translate their existing information, software, outreach and education materials into various languages. Many also have indicated that they need resources to provide additional childcare support services, mental health and trauma counseling, as well as cultural competency training for their staff.</p> <p>In addition, it is necessary to understand the different complexities and barriers to service experienced by Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) that can impede full integration.</p> <p>Agencies are being encouraged to use the tracking tool developed by PNSG. This will help agencies collect and present useful information to their funders to develop more supports for Syrian refugees.</p>
<p>Create stronger partnerships between mainstream and settlement agencies</p>	<p>The need for stronger partnerships between all sectors was apparent in the survey results. The gap analysis was done for all agencies in Peel Region (mainstream and settlement) and much of what was expressed spoke to the need for cross-sectoral collaboration and streamlining of services to address the continuum of issues identified. This needs to be continued and further improved by addressing the missing players and innovative solutions to recurring issues.</p>

Children and Youth:

<p>Education: Homework Tutors</p>	<p>Enhancing the existing children and parenting programs and customizing them to fit the needs of Syrian refugees is needed. Much support can be given through volunteers with respect to tutoring and mentoring these students to integrate more effectively. Only very few agencies who participated in the survey have indicated that they offer homework assistance programs.</p>
<p>Recreation: Lack of access to recreational programs and activities</p>	<p>Although many respondents identified that Syrian refugees should have enough access to recreational programs and activities, PNSG was only able to map 7 agencies out of 40 respondents that provide sports and recreation programs in Peel region. Information and promotion of the existing recreation programs and drop in activities offered by the City of Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon is required.</p> <p>Several barriers to service need to be addressed. These include: Transportation, programming for large families, interpretation and education on the role of recreation in integration.</p>

Employment:

<p>Onsite Workplace Language Support</p>	<p>Given that many Syrian refugees will endeavour to work long before language proficiency is achieved (despite advice to tackle language concerns first), it is important to provide workplace based language supports to ensure that Syrian refugees can be well positioned to get opportunities in their careers.</p>
<p>Bridging Program Model Adapted to Ensure a Continuum of Care</p>	<p>In order to respond to a need to secure skilled positions as soon as possible, bridging programs accepting Syrian refugees should consider reducing their eligibility criteria. By reducing from CLB 8 to CLB 6, it will ensure that workplace and language skills are developed simultaneously. This can be achieved through the appointment of Language Coaches and through the implementation of a document editing service that leverages the editing exercise as a means in which to enhance language proficiency levels.</p>

Next Steps

For the past few months, we have seen a clear and strong commitment from all levels of government in addressing the needs of Syrian refugees. PNSG is playing a crucial role in ensuring that these commitments are translated into concrete actions at the local level and is convening partners and facilitating dialogue to make this happen. That said, there is lots more work to be done.

The results from the survey provide us the opportunity to look at the many existing community resources and services that can be used by Syrian refugees. PNSG will be using the results to frame what the gaps are and examine how we can work together differently to effectively respond to all of the emerging needs within our community. The services available to Syrian refugees will evolve as we work together to identify the availability of additional resources and support services.

Furthermore, to ease providers in referring clients to accessing timely services, the services available for Syrian refugees are now embedded into the PNSG Newcomer Profile Tool¹ (www.peelnewcomer.org/npt). The interactive mapping component will showcase refugee serving agencies across the region and include an additional file that will have information around the types of services, language offered etc., by each agency. This will allow for easier, more seamless referrals and also help the sector identify the gaps in service provision for Peel's ability to service refugees.

We look forward to working with you.

¹ PNSG, in collaboration with the Peel Data Centre at the Region of Peel, have made it easy to navigate services in your community with the **Newcomer Profile Tool**:

- Data on languages, poverty levels, education levels, ethnicities, and housing of newcomers
- Compare both immigrant and non-immigrant populations across the region
- Identify location and complexities of refugee services
- Enhance outreach, program planning and implementation

The online resource shares newcomer specific data and an interactive map of Peel. Learn more at www.peelnewcomer/npt

PNSG Resources

To update the wider community on Syrian refugees, a PNSG webpage – [www.peelnewcomer.org /refugees](http://www.peelnewcomer.org/refugees) has been created to house resources and documents relevant to work with refugees, and some specifically for Syrian refugees. The webpage will continue to be updated and shared with local data and information on Canada's role in resettling Syrian refugees. Information on this PNSG webpage includes the following:

- Appendix 1:** Refugee **Myth and Fact sheet** with misconceptions of refugees, and what the facts are.
- Appendix 2:** **Syrian Refugees fact sheet** – This contains statistics on refugees in Canada and Peel region, and information on Canada's response to the crisis and plans in the resettlement process.
- Appendix 3:** **Peel Capacity survey** to provide a current list of services and programs available for Syrian refugees, and identify gaps in services. The results will be shared with service providers (settlement and beyond) across Peel region.
- Appendix 4** **Data tracking tool** created for service providers to track how many Syrian refugees are being served in Peel region. This will help collect and analyze data to see what additional supports are needed across Peel.
- Appendix 5:** Agenda for the **Training and Information Fair for Private Sponsors** which was held on January 21, 2016 to support private sponsors of Syrian refugees.
- Appendix 6:** **Glossary of key terms** explaining terminology and acronyms which are often used during discussions, and in circles familiar with refugee groups and processes.
- Appendix 7:** List of Agencies that Responded to the **Capacity to Serve Syrian refugees Survey**

Appendix 1

Refugees in Canada - Myth and Fact sheet

MYTH: Real refugees are those who wait in refugee camps overseas. Those who make a claim in Canada jump the line and are not as deserving.

FACT: Refugees are people who have been forced from their homes by human rights abuses. All refugees have a right to protection, wherever they are. Canada also has legal obligations towards refugees in Canada under the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the Convention against Torture. The Supreme Court of Canada has also confirmed that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights of asylum-seekers to fundamental justice.

MYTH: Refugee claimants pose threats to Canada's security.

FACT: Refugee claimants are not threats to security – they are seeking security and protection from threats to their own lives. Refugee claimants all go through a front-end security screening. Through this process, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) checks all refugee claimants on arrival in Canada. Since the screening was put in place in 2001, the number of claimants found to represent any kind of security concern has been statistically insignificant.

MYTH: Refugees are a drain on our economy.

FACT: Only a handful of the world's refugees (about .007% in 2008) receive assistance from the Canadian government usually for a very limited amount of time (one year). All refugees who resettle to Canada (except for Syrian refugees) are expected to pay back the travel costs associated with their resettlement. Studies show that refugees and immigrants also contribute positively to the Canadian economy. Many refugees start small businesses that employ both themselves and native Canadians. In addition, immigration helps to offset the effects of our declining birth rate and aging population.

MYTH: Refugees want to abuse the system and get rich.

FACT: Refugees do not come to Canada to abuse the system or get rich. It is important to remember the cause for which they resettle to Canada. Unlike economic migrants, refugees have arrived in Canada in search of protection. The wars and conflicts that caused people to flee their countries in the first place did not discriminate between the rich or poor, and many of them led successful lives before being forced to leave everything behind in search of safety.

MYTH: Government-assisted refugees receive more money for food than Canadians on welfare.

FACT: Refugee claimants and refugees recognized by the Immigration and Refugee Board receive no special income assistance. They may, depending on provincial regulations, be entitled, like other residents, to social assistance.

- **Privately sponsored refugees** are not entitled to any government income assistance (federal or the provincial government) during the period of their sponsorship (usually for one year after arrival). Their income support must be provided by their sponsors.
- **Government assisted refugees** have access to financial assistance from the federal government through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). This financial assistance is generally for one year

maximum and is received only if they do not have their own financial resources or income. The exact rate depends on the size of the family and is tied to social assistance rates.

In Ontario in July 2013, for example, a single person receives \$781 per month. In addition, government-assisted refugees are entitled to a one-time set up allowance, to cover such things as clothes, basic household effects and staples, and telephone installation. For a single person there is a maximum one-time allowance of \$905, plus a \$564 loan for house rental and telephone line deposits.

MYTH: Canada is finally opening its doors to refugees after years of being closed to the idea.

FACT: Canada has been welcoming refugees for decades now. Each year, Canada provides asylum to more than 10,000 persecuted persons and welcomes another 12,000 refugees from abroad.

As a member of the international community, Canada helps find solutions to prolonged and emerging refugee situations and helps emerging democracies try to solve many of the problems that create refugee populations. To do this, Canada works closely with the UNHCR.

MYTH: Canada does more than its share to assist refugees and asylum-seekers when compared to other countries.

FACT: Only a small minority of refugees and asylum-seekers make claims in the world's richest countries, including Canada. In 2013, developing countries hosted 86 percent of the world's refugees (which is an increase of 16 percent from 10 years ago). The least developed countries were providing asylum to 2.8 million refugees by the end of 2013.

According to UNHCR figures, more than 5.4 million refugees reside in countries where the GDP per capita is below USD 5000. Top Host countries in 2013: Pakistan (1.6 million); Iran (857,400); Lebanon (856,500); Jordan (641,900); Turkey (609,900). Other host countries include Kenya, Chad, Ethiopia, China.

According to the CIC Immigration Levels Plan for 2015, Canada will accept:

- GARs: 6500 (high) -- 5800 (low)
- Privately Sponsored Refugees: 6500 (high) -- 4500 (low)

According to the UNHCR, the top 5 major source countries of refugees at the end of 2013 were:

- Afghanistan (2,556,600)
- Syria (2,468,400)
- Somalia (1,121,700)
- Sudan (649,300)
- Congo (499,500)

Appendix 2

Syrian Refugees Fact Sheet

Peel Statistics

In 2014, of the 260,404 new Canadians welcomed into Canada, 23,286 were refugees. 11,400 of those refugees settled in Ontario.

Peel region continues to welcome over 34,000 new residents every year. (2011/2012) Of the 76 new people arriving in Peel everyday, 53 are newcomers (landed immigrants).

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) 2,500 people in Peel reported a Syrian ethnic origin, approximately 1,670 of which were immigrants.

In 2012, Peel housed 1,375 refugees

- o Brampton housed 515
- o Caledon housed 5
- o Mississauga housed 860

The breakdown of type of refugee is as follows:

- o Government-assisted refugees – 150
- o Privately sponsored refugees- 235
- o Refugee dependents- 320
- o Refugees landed in Canada -670

In 2012 there were 125 total Syrian immigrants and 15 total Syrian refugees (Source: Peel Data Centre, Region of Peel).

What is Canada doing about the crisis in Syria?

Canada's goal was to welcome 10,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees by December 31, 2015.

In terms of Syrian refugee sponsorship, the following numbers are as of April 10, 2016: (IRCC)

- 99 government-organized flights have arrived in Canada
- 26,262 Syrian refugees have landed since November 4, 2015
- 3,090 Syrian refugee applications have been finalized, but they have not arrived in Canada
- 14,234 refugee resettlement applications are still in progress
- 140 Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) applications have been submitted from Mississauga since November 4, and there are 450 waiting in the inventory
- 33 Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) refugees have entered Mississauga since November 4
- 26 PSR applications have been submitted from Brampton since November 4, and there are 49 in the inventory
- 7 Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) refugees have entered Brampton since November 4
- Less than 5 PSRs have entered Caledon since November 4, and there are 0 in the inventory

According to the 2011 NHS, Mississauga is third in terms of recent immigrants with Syrian place of birth:

- Montreal- 915
- Toronto- 540
- Mississauga-415

How many refugees who have entered will be coming to Ontario?

In Ontario alone, the goal is to welcome 10,000 Syrians by the end of 2016. Approximately 4,000 who arrived in 2015 were expected to stay in Ontario.

What assistance do refugees receive in Canada?

Refugees are either privately sponsored or government sponsored. Most of the refugees that Canada will welcome will be privately sponsored.

Government-assisted refugees (GARs) receive monthly financial support based on provincial social assistance rates for **up to a year**. It is the minimum amount needed to cover only the most basic food and shelter needs. These refugees also get a one-time "start-up" allowance to cover basic needs, such as clothes, necessary household items and phone installation.

Privately-sponsored refugees are supported by sponsors who agree to provide them with care, lodging, settlement assistance, and social support. Normally, a private sponsor supports a refugee **for one year**, starting from the refugee's arrival in Canada or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first.

Where will the Syrian refugees live?

Privately sponsored refugees will be supported by their sponsor groups. For government assisted refugees, there are housing options besides military base camps. Canada's housing market vacancy rate has increased to 3.3 per cent from 2.8 per cent in one year. "We have a vacancy rate of about 2 per cent. Housing may not be cheap, and it may be difficult for everybody to find a good quality place. But the impact will be small," said David Hulchanski.

What health coverage will be available to these refugees?

Syrian refugees are eligible for Type 1 benefits under the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP). Both Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) would receive Type 1 benefits. Type 1 benefits include:

- Basic coverage
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Supplemental coverage (includes psychotherapy counselling or psychology counselling in a private clinic or addiction centre, for a maximum of 10 sessions.)

Syrian refugees will receive a federal health card upon arrival at Pearson Airport and that will entitle them to health care through the IFHP until they transition across to OHIP coverage.

Health services may be provided in temporary accommodations depending on the number of refugees housed in temporary accommodations coordinated by the Public Health Agency of Canada at "mini-clinics". If there are very few numbers or if more complex health services are required, this would be accessed from providers in the community. For example those that require hospitalization, or emergency dental services, refugees would be transported to nearby facilities. In these cases, costs would be covered on a fee for service basis through the IFHP.

Appendix 3

PNSG's Peel Capacity survey (Gap Analysis)

PNSG is supporting the sector in their efforts to effectively respond to the needs of Syrian refugees. We are working on compiling a list of current services and programs that could be used by Syrian refugees and identify gaps in services to help us get a better understanding of the information and support needed by service providers, community groups and private sponsors to better serve them.

1. Please provide information about your agency:

Name of Agency: _____

Address (including postal code): _____

Sector (health, settlement, education, housing etc.): _____

Your Position: _____

Email: _____

2. Does your organization primarily serve refugees? Yes No

3. Which neighbourhood(s) does your agency primarily serve? _____

4. What services does your organization offer? Which of these services can be used by all refugees and in particular Syrian refugees? Please check all that apply.

	<i>All refugees</i>	<i>Syrian refugees</i>	<i>Offered by Arabic Speaking Staff/volunteers</i>
Housing			
Health Services			
Settlement services			
Employment			
ESL and LINC classes			
Educational services			
Mental health services			
Trauma and Crisis Counseling			
Family Counseling			
Legal Services			
Ethno-specific support services			
Programs for seniors			
Cultural awareness, anti-racism and welcoming			

communities services			
Advocacy			
Recreational and sports programs			
Financial services			
Business support			
Other (please specify):			

5. Does your organization provide refugee support to service providers (i.e. training, workshops, knowledge transfer, etc.)? If so, please indicate the different support(s) you provide.

6. Do you also provide support to groups/individuals sponsoring refugees? If yes, please indicate what type of support(s).

7. Do you offer services in Arabic and French? Yes No

8. If you answered yes, please indicate the type of services offered by the Arabic and French speaking staff:

9. Do you have volunteers that speak Arabic and French? Yes No

10. If you answered no, do you need Arabic and French speaking volunteers? Yes No

11. What are the greatest challenges you face in serving Syrian refugees?

- A lack of information specific to Syrian refugees
- A lack of staff training specific to Syrian refugee issues
- A lack of training to support private sponsors
- Other: _____

12. Of the refugees or in particular the Syrian refugees you are seeing, are there specific groups (i.e., lone-parents, LGBTQ, etc.) within that may need additional, specific supports? If so, which groups are these and which specific supports may they need?

13. If you serve a rural community, what are some of the challenges refugees face?

- A lack of employment opportunities
 - A lack of transportation to settlement and health services
 - A lack for greater cultural awareness for frontline staff
 - Other (please specify)
-

14. What type of resources would your organization benefit from to enhance your ability to provide support to refugees?

15. Do you have any suggestions or strategies that your organization has used to better serve Syrian refugees?

Thank you!

Appendix 4

PNSG's Data Tracking Tool

Date of Arrival	
Language spoken at home (Arabic, French, both)	
Other Languages	
# of Family Members <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults• Youth• Children	
Type of services used in your organization	
Referred by	
Referrals made	
Notes	

Appendix 5

Training and Information Fair for Private Sponsors

AGENDA

Thursday January 21, 2016

5:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Mississauga Convention Centre
75 Derry Road West, Mississauga ON L5W 1G3

1	Registration	20 minutes	5:00
2	Welcome Remarks Aamna Ashraf Director, Peel Newcomer Strategy Group	10 minutes	5:20
3	Training to be conducted by Refugees Sponsorship Training Program-Catholic Cross Cultural Services - Overview of the Sponsorship Program - Detailed settlement planning and guidance on filling CIC settlement forms - Preparing for arrival: considering health, housing, employment, language, education, etc . Question and Answer	120 minutes	5:30
4	Closing Remarks United Way Peel Region Region of Peel	10 minutes	7:30
5	Information sharing and networking The settlement sector will have displays on their services, and have conversations with the sponsoring families and organizations.	80 minutes	7:40

Appendix 6

Glossary of Key Terms

Asylum/Refugee Claimant

A foreign national seeking protection at an in-land office or at a port of entry.

Border Services Officer (BSO)

Officers of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), a federal government agency, who have the legal authority to decide who can enter and remain in Canada. These officers have many of the same powers as police officers, including the right to conduct searches, make arrests, and seize documents or goods.

Blended Visa Office-Referred Program (BVOR)

The Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Program matches refugees identified for resettlement by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) with private sponsors in Canada. IRCC, in consultation with the Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) community, will identify the populations that can be sponsored through the BVOR Program.

Community Sponsor (CS)

An organization that sponsors refugees but has not signed a formal agreement with IRCC. A community sponsor would normally sponsor fewer refugees than a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH).

Constituent Group (CG)

A group authorized in writing by a sponsorship agreement holder (SAH) to sponsor refugees under the SAH's sponsorship agreement. An example of a Constituent Group is a local congregation or chapter of a national church or organization that is a SAH.

Convention Refugee (CR)

A person who is outside of their home country or country where they normally live and fears returning to that country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

Government-Assisted Refugee (GAR)

A person who is outside Canada and has been determined to be a Convention refugee and who receives financial and other support from the Government of Canada or Province of Quebec for up to one year after their arrival in Canada. GARs are selected from applicants referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other referral organizations.

Group of Five (G5)

A group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents, each of whom is at least 18 years of age, who agree to work together to sponsor a refugee.

Interim Federal Health Program (IFH)

The Interim Federal Health Program provides all resettled refugees with coverage for the following, until provincial health insurance is available: essential and emergency health services for the treatment and prevention of serious medical conditions; the treatment of emergency dental conditions; contraception, prenatal and obstetrical care, eye wear; and approved prescription medications.

Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)

Under the JAS program, refugees receive support from the government and a private sponsor for up to 24 months, depending on the case. In a few cases, the private sponsor may provide support for up to 36 months. These refugees get income support from the Government of Canada for food, shelter, clothing and basic household goods. They are also matched with a private sponsorship group. The sponsorship group helps refugees adjust to life in Canada by providing settlement help and emotional support.

Matching Centre (MC)

The Matching Centre determines the destination for government-assisted refugees. It works with CIC visa offices abroad and with IRCC's regional and local offices to determine the best suit each needs, based on the language they speak, where family and friends live in Canada, ethnic, cultural and religious communities in the area, medical needs and availability of settlement services. Once a city has been chosen, the Matching Centre informs the visa office, travel arrangements for the refugee are made, and arrival details are shared with local IRCC offices, ports of entry, service-providing organizations and sponsoring groups (if applicable) to help officials prepare for the refugee's arrival.

Permanent Resident (PR)

A person who has legally immigrated to Canada but is not yet a Canadian citizen.

Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR)

A person outside Canada who has been determined to be a Convention refugee who receives financial and other support from a private sponsor for one year after their arrival in Canada. Private sponsors are Sponsorship Agreement Holders, Groups of Five or Community Sponsors.

Protected Temporary Resident (PTR)

A person admitted to Canada on a temporary resident permit because a Canadian visa officer abroad has determined that they face an immediate threat to their life, liberty or physical safety.

Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)

The Resettlement Assistance Program provides immediate and essential support to GARs who are selected overseas on the basis of their need for protection the Humanitarian Resettlement Program. RAP (which is separate from the Settlement Program) provides a bridge to mainstream settlement and integration services that are available to all newcomers. Under RAP, GARs are provided with immediate resettlement assistance, orientation services and income support upon arrival in Canada. Financial support is administered by IRCC and delivered directly to clients, while services such as assistance at reception centres, the provision of temporary accommodation, help in finding permanent housing and orientation to life in Canada are provided by SPOs through Contribution Agreements.

Resettlement Program

Canada's Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement program selects refugee-like situations overseas on the basis of their need for protection. There are two streams of resettlement: 1. The Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) program provides government-funded assistance upon arrival in Canada through RAP. 2. The Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program is a volunteer-based initiative and generally does not involve contribution funds or contribution agreements. Instead, the Department enters into non-financial agreements with sponsoring organizations.

Settlement Program

The Settlement Program assists immigrants, including refugees, to overcome barriers specific to the newcomer experience, such as a lack of official language skills and employment skills. With a limited knowledge of Canada, newcomers may also experience some barriers in participating in social, cultural, civic and economic life in Canada. To help newcomers overcome these barriers, services such as language training, community and employment bridging, settlement information and support services are offered to facilitate their settlement.

Service Provider Organization (SPO)

A service provider organization is an agency that provides services for newcomers to Canada. Service provider organizations offer programs that can give newcomers resources and training to live and work in Canada. Their programs can help refugees who often have a difficult time with day-to-day tasks like finding an apartment, taking public transportation, or making a doctor's appointment. These organizations can also help refugees receive permanent resident cards, health insurance, social insurance numbers, etc. They also offer interpretation and translation services to help with such special needs as giving medical backgrounds to doctors.

Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH)

An incorporated organization that signs an agreement with IRCC to sponsor refugees abroad. A SAH can authorize other groups in the community to sponsor refugees under its agreement. These groups are known as 'constituent groups'.

Temporary Resident (TR)

A foreign national who is in Canada legally for a short period. Temporary residents include students, foreign workers and visitors, such as tourists.

Women at Risk Program (AWR)

The Women-at-Risk Program is designed to offer resettlement opportunities to women in perilous or permanently unstable situations, and in situations where urgent or expedited processing is necessary.

Appendix 7

List of Agencies that Responded to PNSG`s Peel Capacity Survey

Agency Name	Address	Phone
1. ACCES Employment	151 City Centre Dr #600, Mississauga, ON L5B 1M7	(905) 361-2522
2. Afghan Women's Organization	3050 Confederation Pkwy, Mississauga, ON L5B 3Z6 789 Don Mills Rd Suite 700 Toronto ON M3C 1T5	(905) 279-3679 (416) 588-3585
3. Brampton Library	150 Central Park Dr, Brampton, ON L6T 1B4	(905) 793-4636
4. Brampton Multicultural Community Centre	150 Central Park Drive, Suite 107, Brampton ON L6T2T9 197 County Ct Blvd, Brampton, ON L6W 4P6	(905) 790-8482 (905) 790-8482
5. Canadian Coptic Centre	6341 Mississauga Rd Mississauga ON L5N 1A5	
6. Canadian Hearing Society	2227 S Millway #300, Mississauga, ON L5L 3R6	(905) 608-0271
7. Catholic Crosscultural Services	3660 Hurontario St 7 th Floor, Mississauga ON L5B 3C4	(905) 273-4140
8. Catholic Family Services Peel Dufferin	60 West Drive Brampton L6T 3T6	(905) 450-1608
9. Centre for Education and Training	90 Burnhamthorpe Road West #210, Mississauga, ON L5B 3C3	(905) 949-0049
10. Child and Family Learning Centre-Lancaster Public School	7425 Netherwood Rd Mississauga N L42N7	905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146)
11. Child Development Resource Connection Peel (CDRCP)	103, 75 Watline Ave, Mississauga, ON L4Z 3E5	(905) 890-9432
12. Community Service Movers	3-3221 Derry Road West Suite 17, Mississauga, On L5N 8G5	(905) 997-0514
13. COSTI	10 Gillingham Dr, Brampton, ON L6X 5A5	(905) 459-8855

Agency Name	Address	Phone
14. Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre 3650 Dixie Rd Unit 103 Mississauga ON L4Y 3V9 (905) 629-1873	3650 Dixie Rd Unit 103 Mississauga ON L4Y 3V9	(905) 629-1873
15. Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board	40 Matheson Blvd West Mississauga ON L5R 1C5	
16. Erin Mills Youth Centre	3010 The Collegeway, Mississauga, ON L5L 4X9	(905) 820-3577
17. Family Services of Peel	151 City Centre Dr #501, Mississauga, ON L5B 1M7	(905) 270-2250
18. HEartHouse Hospice Inc	1-855 Matheson Blvd E, Mississauga, ON L4W 4L6	(905) 712-8119
19. Hope 24/7	10 Gillingham Dr #305, Brampton, ON L6X 5A5	(905) 792-0821
20. Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA Relief) Canada	6120 Montevideo Rd #1, Mississauga, ON L5N 3W5	(905) 997-8777
21. MIAG Centre for Diverse Women and Families	3034 Palstan Rd, Mississauga, ON L4Y 2Z6, Canada	905) 270-6252
22. Mississauga Community Legal Services	504-130 Dundas St E, Mississauga, ON L5A 3V8	(905) 896-2050
23. Mississauga Furniture Bank	505 Lroquois Shore Road, Unit #8 Mississauga, ON L6H 2R3	647-361-6950
24. Newcomer Centre of Peel	165 Dundas St W #116, Mississauga, ON L5B 2N6	905) 306-0577
25. National Zakat Foundation	1100 Central Pkwy West Mississauga ON L5C 4E0	
26. National Educational and Training Services (NETS)	1421 Clark Blvd Milton ON L9T 6M1	
27. North Bramalea United Church	363 Howden Blvd, Brampton, ON	(905) 450-8003
28. Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse	P.O. Box 45070, Mississauga, ON. L5G 1C9	905.823.3441
29. Peel Career Assessment Services Inc	975 Meyerside Dr, Mississauga, ON L5T 1P9	905) 670-1967
30. Peel Children's Centre	85A Aventura Court, Mississauga, ON L5T 2Y6	(905) 795-3500
31. Peel Multicultural Council	6630 Turner Valley Road Mississauga ON L5N 2P1	:(905) 819-1144

Agency Name	Address	Phone
32. Peel District School Board	5650 Hurontario St. Mississauga ON L5R1C6	(905) 890-1099
33. Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services	2225 Erin Mills Pkwy, Mississauga, ON L5K 1T8	905) 403-8860
34. Punjabi Community Health Services	2980 Drew Rd, Mississauga, ON L4T 0A7	(905) 677-0889
35. Region of Peel	10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite B, PO Box 2136, STN B, Brampton ON L6T 0E3	
36. Renewed Computer Technology	945 Meyerside Dr, Mississauga, ON L5T 1P9	(905) 795-5388
37. Sheridan College	4180 Duke of York Blvd Mississauga, Ontario L5B 0G5 7899 McLaughlin Road Brampton, Ontario L6Y 5H9	905 615 7944 905 459 7533
38. Skills for Change	21 Nelson Street West, Brampton L6X 1B7	905-595-1679
39. The Mississauga Food Bank	3121 Universal Dr, Mississauga, ON L4X	905) 270-5589
40. Volunteer MBC	601-7700 Hurontario St., Brampton ON L6Y 4M3	905.238.2622



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