

# **Devolving Settlement Funding from the Government of Canada: The British Columbia Experience, 1998-2013**

Prepared by

Heather Dickson, Evert Lindquist, Ben Pollard, Miu Chung Yan

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## 1. Overview

In May 1998, the Governments of Canada and British Columbia entered into the first of three bilateral agreements dedicated to devolving<sup>12\*</sup> responsibility for the design and delivery of immigration settlement and integration services to the BC government. Over time the mix and diversity of these programs changed, and two subsequent agreements between the governments were signed in 2004 and 2010 with increased funding for BC. Under these arrangements, the BC government developed a wide array of innovative programming and put its relationship service-providers on an entirely new footing. With the Government of Canada's announcement that the Settlement Agreements with Manitoba and British Columbia will be cancelled (effective April 1, 2013 for Manitoba and April 1, 2014 for BC), it is timely to examine the development and evolution of settlement program delivery in BC and Manitoba, which might provide useful models and points of reference to CIC's design and delivery of settlement programs for these and other provinces in the years to come.

This case study focuses on the BC experience, informed by a multi-pronged approach. We examined publicly available documents as well as several provided by the BC government and CIC (see Annex 2). We undertook thirty-seven interviews with current and former federal and provincial officials familiar with the transfer, design and delivery of settlement program, as well as current and former leaders of service-provider organizations representing the diversity of services and regions in British Columbia (seen Annex 3 for a list of respondents). Two authors were familiar with BC immigration settlement and integration programs, and another with BC's procurement and contracting regime since 2003. We shared preliminary findings at a workshop at a conference hosted by the Western Canadian Consortium on Integration, Citizenship and Cohesion in Calgary on March 8-10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and received encouraging feedback. We circulated a draft version of our report with CIC and BC government representatives, as well as many of the individuals who were interviewed and, again, received valuable feedback.

In preparing this succinct report, we sought to keep in mind the diverse perspectives on how the BC government has approached the design, delivery and reporting on immigrant settlement and integration programs: service providers as individual organizations *and* as networks; the distinctive views of officials working for the BC government and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC); and, very importantly, the experience of service users.

In general we learned that under three Agreements (1998, 2004, 2010), the BC government:

- Transformed program and service delivery by working across relevant ministries to create an integrated, community-based system of services for immigrants, tailored for diverse regions and users.
- Worked closely with a variety of service providers (SPOs) as experts and partners, while retaining competition, to create a flexible, holistic, and integrated client-centred delivery system to respond to evolving demands.
- Built a culture of evaluation and accountability, responding in part to the requirements under the 2004 and 2010 CBCIAs, but is mid-way through the maturity process for that culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Most informants used the term devolution or devolving, but the technically correct term re-alignment will be used in this paper.

- Dealt with funding management challenges including BC funding of the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program and the public post-secondary sector, the limitations of annual funding arrangements, and the rapid increase of funds that led to a surplus (the increased funding also provided opportunity for award winning innovative program design and implementation, but its rapid increase created a surplus).
- Did not increase provincial funding to meet the federal increases, so it became proportionately less against the total funding amount.

As the Government of Canada takes on the responsibilities for delivering immigration programs in BC, we identified several lessons that could inform the design and strategic management of programs:

- Keep the service-delivery systems professional and stable
- Provide flexible and responsive programming
- Continue to support evidence-informed practice
- Maintain an integrated, systems approach to settlement services
- Establish and maintain key relationships

In Section 10, which reflects on BC's accomplishments and approach, and various success factors, we identify several questions to ask as the transfer of responsibilities proceeds.

The organization and flow of this paper is as follows:

- **Section 2** provides some background on the three agreements which defined how Canada and BC re-aligned settlement and integration programs, how financing generally worked, and how the mix of programs evolved from 1998-2013;
- **Section 3** offers a more detailed perspective of the evolution of BC's settlement and integration services.
- **Section 4** provides a snapshot of the mix of programs under WelcomeBC in early 2013;
- **Sections 5-9** take a closer look at key aspects of how settlement programs were designed, managed, and governed, including: procurement and contracting, government-service provider relationship and sector development, BC government direction and cross-ministry coordination, reporting and evaluation, and managing the Canada-BC relationship under the Agreements.
- **Section 10** draws together the findings from the paper and provides some perspective about what worked in BC and why, and what is worth retaining from the BC model in light of the more general governance, design and service principles informing the three Canada-BC agreements. It poses "going-forward" questions for the new delivery regime in light of the BC experience.
- **Section 11** concludes with a summary of the overall experience and some going-forward lessons for the Government of Canada to bear in mind as it manages the return of a different mix of programs to be delivered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, presumably in cooperation with the provinces and service deliverers.

Several annexes provide information on the individuals we interviewed, the Agreements providing the framework for re-aligning settlement services, as well as the references and reports we relied on.

## 2. Background: The Agreements, Funding, Program Phases

This report provides reflections on the BC experience in delivering immigrant settlement programs under an alternative service delivery arrangement with the Government of Canada from 1998-2013, as well as lessons for Citizenship and Immigration Canada to consider as it seeks to provide advice on how to design and deliver programs going forward for BC and elsewhere in the country.

Before sharing these reflections it is useful to have an overview of the Settlement agreements between the Canadian and BC governments, the funding mechanisms which guided how resources flowed to the BC government, and the general trajectory and evolution of the programming which resulted from the agreements. Different facets of these agreements, funding and programs are explored in further detail in subsequent sections of this report (see Figure 1, next page).

### Three Agreements: 1998, 2004, and 2010

The Canada-BC agreements on Cooperation on Immigration are important because they delineate the principles animating and guiding the re-aligned arrangements, the legal foundations enabling the funding for programs to flow, the parameters guiding programs and information-sharing, and the reporting and accountability regime. Each agreement, of course, was a product of its time, with language and priorities reflecting the interests of the respective governments.

Reviewing these agreements is not only important for understanding the legal and administrative context in which the settlement programs emerged and proceeded from 1998-2013, but, as we discuss towards the end of this report, also serve as a compass for thinking about future arrangements as the Government of Canada takes on responsibility for these programs and considers how specifically to serve immigrants in the regions and communities of British Columbia going forward.

#### *The 1998 Canada-British Columbia Co-operation Agreement on Immigration*

This agreement was negotiated in the aftermath of the Government of Canada's 1994-98 Program Review initiative, which sought to dramatically reduce program outlays to stabilize and reduce national public deficits and debt (Paquet and Shepherd 1995; Bourgon 2009). The Program Review involved federal officials and ministers systematically reviewing all federal programs, leading to significant reductions in program outlays and staff, in the range of 17% to 50%. A key feature of the review was 'tests' or questions asked of all programs, which included ascertaining whether it was essential for the program to be delivered at all, and whether it had to be delivered by the federal government. This led to active exploration and adoption of alternative models for delivering programs, including re-alignment, privatization, collaborative arrangements with government and non-government partners, new financing models, and different kinds of service-delivery agencies.

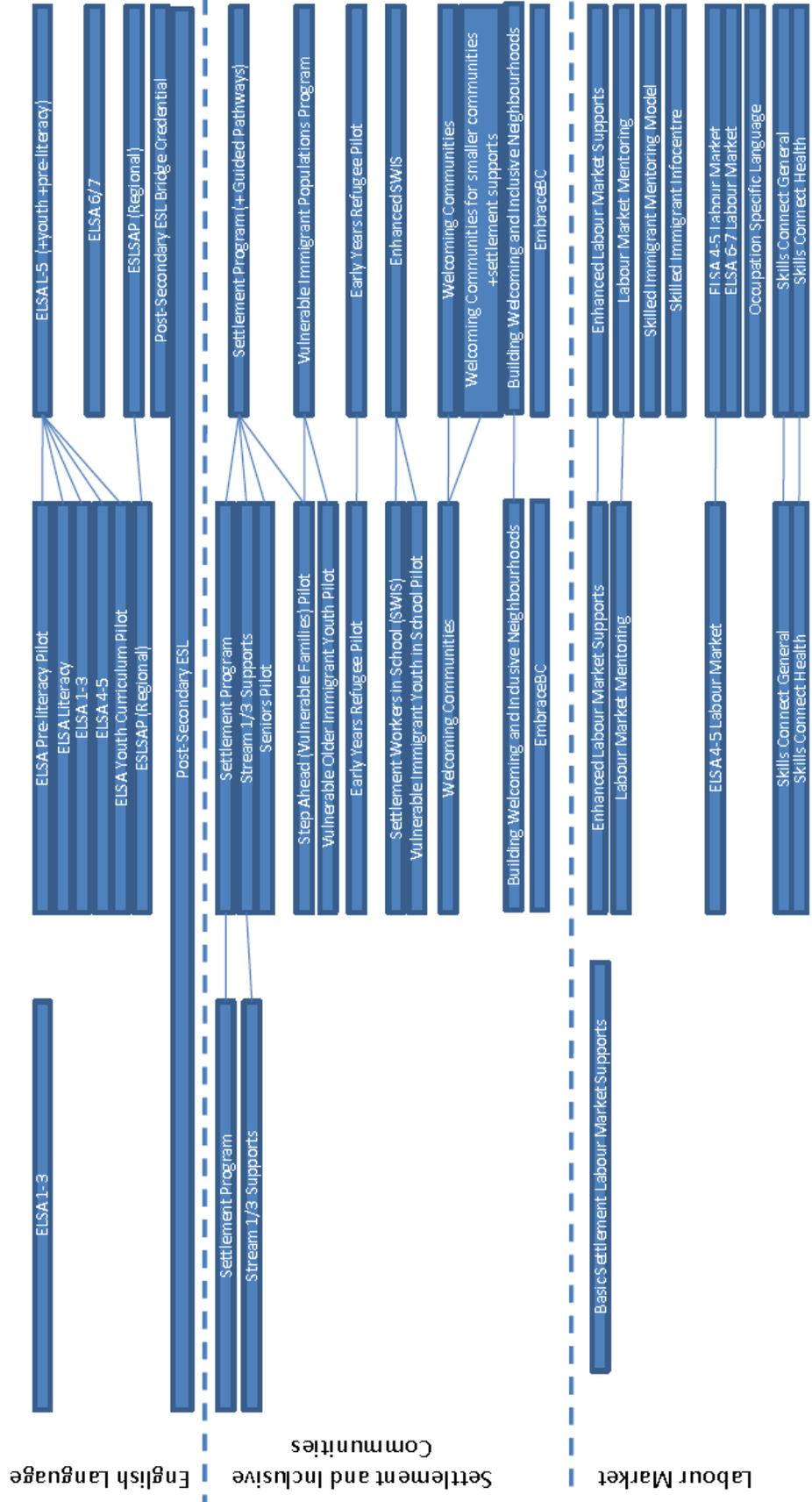
BC was one of only two jurisdictions that signed re-aligned agreements. Where BC was concerned there were several dynamics that led to completing the first CBCIA.

- At the political level there was a strong interest (and direction) in having an immigration agreement similar to the one recently signed between Quebec and Canada;
- There was an interest and a vision, from the outset to create a "made-in-BC" immigrant settlement service system

1998-2005

2005-2009

2009-2012



The 1998 cooperation agreement was animated by several key principles about the responsibilities of newcomers and governments:

- Integration of newcomers involves responsibility on the part of the newcomers and on the part of Canadians (governments, communities, and workplaces) to, respectively, adapt and welcome.
- Develop an ability to communicate in one of Canada’s official languages.
- Newcomers should have opportunities for economic and social participation with the goal of becoming economically self-sufficient and socially engaged.
- Newcomers should be made aware of Canadian values and traditions.
- Settlement and immigrations services should focus on self-sufficiency, but priority should be given to those with the highest barriers.
- Services should be flexible, responsive, and reasonably comparable (first two reflected well in subsequent BC experience, latter is about overall balance in funding across jurisdictions).

These principles, with some elaboration and variation in language, continued to underpin subsequent agreements negotiated in 2004 and 2010. Later, increased attention would be directed to showcasing the responsibilities of communities and employers.

The 1998 Agreement also reflected more general themes in public administration reform of the 1990s, including an emphasis on reducing overlap and duplication, and the growing interest of the federal and provincial governments in results and outcomes, which would also affect reporting (Lindquist 1998, 1999). Section 2 of the Agreement (for the entire agreement, see Annex 3) indicates that its purpose was “to realign the roles and responsibilities of Canada and British Columbia indefinitely in order to:

- a) enable British Columbia to assume primary responsibility for the design, administration and delivery of settlement and integration services for immigrants and refugees in British Columbia;
- b) eliminate administrative overlap between federal and provincial settlement and integration services;
- c) simplify the administration of settlement and integration services;
- d) encourage community involvement in identifying local settlement and integration priorities; and
- e) Promote results-based accountability to ensure settlement and integration services are efficient and effective.”

Section 4.2a) of the Agreement itemized which immigration settlement and integration programs would be the focus of cooperation and re-alignment: “orientation, reception, adult language training, settlement counselling, referral to other services, labour market preparation, temporary or one time interventions to facilitate service adaptations in mainstream public services in light of newcomer settlement needs, and activities which help to develop a more informed and welcoming environment for newcomers to Canada” (see Annex 2, this report).

Section 5 outlined shared roles and responsibilities, which included: defining ‘reasonably comparable settlement services’, developing ‘common measures and indicators of results to serve accountability and evaluations needs’, improving the understanding of Canadians of immigration and the need for integration, and setting out a program of research and evaluation projects to increase settlement and integration and inform decision-making. These themes were emphasized in the subsequent agreements.

### *The 2004 and 2010 Canada-BC Immigration Agreements*

In comparing the 1998 and 2004 agreements, what is most remarkable is the extent to which they did not change. Most of the language is similar. This masks, however, significant political change, first in BC with the arrival in 2001 of the Liberal government led by Premier Gordon Campbell with its “New Era” platform and the launching of its Core Review process in order to reduce the provincial deficit and to identify new ways to deliver programs, much like the federal Program Review of the mid-1990s. The second change came at the federal level, with the Conservatives led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper winning a minority government, capitalizing in part on the sponsorship scandal, and introducing the *Government Accountability Act* which built on the already tighter approval, evaluation, audit, and reporting regime introduced by the previous minority Liberal government led by Prime Minister Paul Martin. Federal funding for settlement tripled over this period and resources destined to BC increased according to the settlement allocation model that is largely based on number of landings in a jurisdiction over the previous three years. Also during the mid-2000s the BC government under Premier Campbell took a more aggressive approach to economic development, marketing BC as attractive for investment, along with its successful bid to host the 2010 Olympics. During 2009, the BC government undertook a new round of program reviews, designed to find more effective and efficient ways to deliver services.

Accordingly, the biggest shifts in the language of the agreements can be found in the 2010 Agreement (see Annex 3 for a comparison of the 2004 and 2010 agreements). The most noteworthy changes were:

- greater emphasis on welcoming communities and workplaces, particularly that communities should better acknowledge contributions of immigrants;
- going beyond the previous emphasis on encouraging economic self-sufficiency of immigrants to promoting labour market integration and to furthering Canada’s economic development;
- emphasis on flexible *and* responsive programs and services, not only for individual immigrants but also for communities;
- improving accountability and reporting for federal funding, ensuring that
  - evaluation and audit information generated by the BC governments is more quickly made available to the Government of Canada;
  - provision by BC of a three-year service plan in addition to other forms of reporting;
  - service-providers do not charge extra fees for services; and
  - All federally funded programs to be evaluated over a five-year cycle, along with increased funding for this purpose.
- developing an accountability framework for immigration settlement and integration programs in a multilateral forum; and
- Identifying priorities for funding from a national Innovation fund and reporting on progress with funded pilot projects.

Here we have simply reviewed the shifts in the cooperation agreement and in the broader governance environments, but later in this section and throughout the rest of the report, we will supply more detail to explain how some of these shifts in emphasis and priorities came to pass.

## **The Transfer of Resources: Levels and Mechanisms**

The three agreements also provide useful rolling snapshots of funding levels for the re-aligned programs which BC was to administer and sometimes invent. The 1998 agreement indicates that BC was to receive \$23.37m for 1998-1999 fiscal year, and \$22.4 million for 1999/2000 fiscal year, out of an overall national budget of \$173.2m for this purpose (Section 6.1), without including Quebec. The 1998 agreement notes that, starting in April 1, 2000, funding for BC would be driven by a broader formula for allocating funding to the provinces and territories based on projected and assigned shares of immigration.

The 2004 agreement shows that funding to BC increased to \$36.4 million a few years later, with \$1.2 million allocated for administration. By 2010, the third agreement indicated that \$120.7 million would be allocated in support of design, administration, delivery and performance measurement and evaluation, plus \$7.3 million for administration in 2009-10. This was a significant shift in funding for BC.

These funds were transferred directly to the BC government by means of administrative agreement; they were not transferred to the Consolidated Revenue Fund, where there would have been potential for the funds to be diverted to other purposes. As we discuss later, this served not only to protect the funds but also meant that BC public servants were directly accountable for administering the funds, since for all intents and purposes they were 'encumbered' by the agreement, but also created scope for innovation consistent with goals and principles of the agreement. However this may have limited political interest in the programs per se. In return, BC had to supply annual service plans (looking forward) and annual reports (looking back) showing that funds were used in a manner consistent with the principles in the agreements and indeed used for settlement and immigration programs, what results were achieved, and what the province's administrative costs and contributions were.

The 1998 Agreement is interesting for one other reason. It contained language concerning the transfer of positions and staff from Citizenship and Immigration, an outcome of the federal Program Review that sought to shift responsibilities and sometimes staff (with protections) to other jurisdictions or sectors. In this case, 26 positions were no longer required at the federal level, with ten positions shifting to the BC government as 'unencumbered' positions and 16 federal staff potentially moving into positions with the BC public service. Not surprisingly transition matters were not a focus of subsequent agreements. This could become a consideration as the federal government reclaims responsibilities for delivering immigration settlement and integration programs.

## **The Evolution of Settlement Programming: An Overview**

Agreements between governments can be seen as snapshots of how two parties believe that programs should be administered in light of experience and ambitions. They provide hints about issues and some history about the programs captured or envisioned by the agreement, but they really do not provide a good sense of the evolution of policies and programs. What follows, for the purpose of providing high-level background, briefly outlines the main phases of the evolution of BC's immigration programs under the Canada-BC agreements from 1998 to 2013.

1. *1998-2005: Re-alignment, Core review and minor modifications.* During the period after re-alignment, with stable funding from the CBCIA, there was little change to the core programs: English as a second language (ESL), settlement orientation and information, and Community Connections. Some efforts were made to expand into specialized groups (e.g. the Blended ELSA/Settlement program for those with need of a high level of support), and some changes were made because of Core Review (e.g. a tightening of the range of offerings available under the settlement orientation

and information). Overall, though, the program mix stayed very similar to the federal program lines of Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and Host Volunteer Matching Program (HOST). This period also saw the introduction of new procurement policy for BC, which resulted in a switch from an application style process to the BCBid model.

2. *2006-2009: Pilots and new initiatives with expanded funding.* With the increase in federal funding, and an infusion of funds to support labour-market initiatives, there were opportunities to address issues identified through consultations with the sector and other public sector actors including BC ministries, local governments, colleges, school districts and health authorities. It was during this time that BC moved forward with its award-winning WelcomeBC portal for settlement and integration services. There was significant growth in the use of pilots to address issues of concern that were not adequately addressed by the basic ESL, settlement orientation and information and community connections programming. Examples of pilots included specialized programs for vulnerable populations, the welcoming community initiatives, labour market, cross-ministry partnerships, and regional programs.
3. *2009-2012: Program Review and procuring new ongoing programs.* In 2009, three factors combined to initiate a Program Review of the WelcomeBC programming: a change in the leadership of the Branch, preparing a WelcomeBC Investment and Action Plan to support the new 2010 Canada-BC Agreement on immigration services, and the need for a funding model to achieve a sustainable, ongoing funding level, while appropriately investing deferred funding that had grown as a result of increased federal funding. The review looked at all the programs, pilots, initiatives and partnerships funded under WelcomeBC, with the intention of developing a rationalized, sustainable and effective program and system mix, with efficiencies in procurement and contract management.

Sections 3 and 4 of this report provide more detail on the evolution of immigration settlement and integration programs in BC, explaining the drivers of change as well as issues which arose.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This section has provided some background on the three Canada-BC cooperation agreements which allowed the BC government to deliver immigration settlement and integration services. We reviewed some of the goals, principles, and requirements of the agreements, as well as the steadily increasing flow of funding from the Government of Canada. Figure 1 shows the interaction over time of the agreements, funding and programming.

As we shall see later, changes in programming and funding levels occurred in fits and starts, variously reflecting policy and broader reform initiatives of the respective governments. Even here we can see that the settlement and integration programs delivered by BC, evolved from a simple set of programs to something far more complex. Indeed, during the 2000s, settlement and integration services were transformed in British Columbia, a result of increased scope and funding from the agreements which permitted policy and program innovation, as well as the inventiveness, work and dialogue of officials, providers, and client groups.

### 3. Provincial Design and Delivery of Programs: Three Phases

As noted in Section 2 on Background, there were three major phases in the evolution of settlement programs delivered in British Columbia. They included the following:

- 1998-2005: Re-alignment, Core Review and Minor Modifications
- 2006 - 2009: Pilots and New Initiatives with Expanded Funding
- 2009-2012: Program Review and Procurement of New Ongoing Programming

This section reviews in more detail the evolution of the structure and scope of settlement programs in BC. In each sub-section we provide some background on the nature of programming during that time, as well as major initiatives, changes and other intervening factors. It also provides findings from evaluations that were undertaken by or for the province, and the perspectives of various provincial, federal, and SPO respondents we interviewed for this study.

#### **1998-2005: Re-alignment, Core Review and Minor Modifications**

During this period, there were relatively minor changes to the original programming. The province offered similar services to those that had been re-aligned, with basic language programs, settlement programs and host-mentoring programs continuing to be offered.

With the change in government, BC underwent a Core Review process in 2001, which resulted in cuts and shifts in resources across government. However, respondents said that BC's Core Review process in 2001 impacted the programs to a minor extent. Some of the program elements that had been supported initially and as a continuation of the pre-re-alignment program mix were no longer supported, including some of the workshop-style activities offered under the basic settlement program. However, overall, Core Review had only a minor impact on the programming offer and the funding available.

In 2002, the BC Coalition for Immigrant Integration issued "The Inter-Provincial Report Card on Immigrant Settlement & Labour Market Integration Services" which compared service offerings across Canada, and highlighted room for improvement in BC. Respondents were mixed about the importance of the Report Card: some service providers felt it had the effect of moving the provincial government; while among a few government respondents from that time, the sense was that the impact of the report was not felt strongly inside government as there was disagreement about the methodology used for the comparison, and not a lot of degrees of freedom given the requirement that expenditures meet the terms and conditions of the federal settlement program..

Two important developments related to programming and funding arose in this period. The first was the 1998 decision by the BC government to allocate a portion of the federal funding to support post-secondary ESL offerings. This topic will be taken up in Section X of the report. The second was the introduction of a new procurement model for the BC government, which shifted the program from an application-based process to an open procurement process including the BCBid portal. This was a challenging process, and this is taken up more in the procurement section 5 below.

While this period was not frequently discussed by respondents, the sense is that after some initial enthusiasm for the re-alignment, the minor reduction in provincial funding during BC's Core Review process and the lack of any additional federal funds during this period resulted in a relatively stable

program with minimal changes to the program lines as inherited from the federal program and as existed in BC before. Respondents identified this as a challenging time for two reasons. First, there was some frustration with the lack of substantial change under the provincial responsibility: as one respondent put it, the promise of re-alignment 'rang hollow' during this time. The switch in procurement processes was also a challenging transition for both the Branch and the sector, and caused issues in the relationship between the Branch and the service providing organizations. While there was consultation in order to inform allocations and programming decisions, because of the relatively static nature of the programming, it was not as consultative as subsequent periods.

### **2005-2009: Pilots and New Initiatives with Expanded Funding**

During the period of 2005-2009, there was a considerable increase in the funding level under the Agreement. This additional funding allowed for innovation through the launch of pilots and initiatives, and shifts in programming to address needs identified by stakeholders, and changing emphases in the Agreement. This period also saw the Formative Evaluation of the BC Settlement and Adaptation Program (BCSAP) and was the period that saw the start of the WelcomeBC brand.

The major rationales for programming shifts and new initiatives and pilots during this period were:

1. *Increased emphasis on vulnerable populations.* It was recognized that traditional programming was not sufficient for high needs individuals. Several pilots were initiated to address the needs of specialized target groups such as seniors, vulnerable older immigrant youth and young adults, and multi-barrier families and parents.
2. *Increased emphasis on youth in the school system.* There was an identified gap in services to help youth settle in BC. This resulted in the launch of the BC Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program, and a few years later, the launch of the Immigrant Youth in Schools pilots to address the needs of more vulnerable students in the school system, or who were at risk of leaving the school system. Contracting directly with the School Districts was seen by the Branch as an effective way of changing the school system to be more inclusive, better supporting the integration of newcomers, and integrating settlement work with teachers, counsellors and others who previously provided referrals. However, this was a contentious issue for SPOs which we discuss in Section 6 (p.31). Also initiated was the Older Immigrant Youth pilot for vulnerable out-of-school students.
3. *Increased variety in providing language training.* During this period, the language offerings increased to include both more labour-market focused language, as well as occupation-specific language offerings. Pilots were launched to support young adult learners, as well as pre-literacy offerings.
4. *Greater emphasis on family offerings and supports.* Several pilots focused on the family as a whole unit, rather than just as individuals. These included programs to support multi-barrier families and help newcomers learn parenting in a Canadian context (in partnership with the United Way and other BC Ministries). It also included a renewed emphasis on child minding to support language programs, including a hub model for daycare services for parents attending classes.
5. *Increased focus on the labour market outcomes.* In 2005/06, the BC government committed about \$5 million annually in new funding to support the BC Skills Connect Program and, in late 2006, announced that it would commit \$5m (over three years) of new funding to support development and delivery of higher levels of language instruction (ELSA 4/5) for immigrant newcomers. WelcomeBC developed programs to better support the labour market success of newcomers, such as:

- The Skills Connect program, to help newcomers get their foreign credentials recognized and find employment commensurate with skills and abilities;
  - Implementation of Labour Market "Tier II" services in the settlement program to provide additional supports to newcomers;
  - Increased emphasis on labour market language;
  - Development of labour market information tools (Pathways guides);
  - Labour market mentoring; and
  - Creation of Immigrant Employment Council of BC, in order to bring employers to the table on issues related to immigration.
6. *Introduction of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.* Due to the introduction of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in 2002 which removed “ability to establish” as a selection criteria for Government Assisted Refugees, Canada has seen an increase in the number of high needs refugees coming to Canada. This has resulted in a need for more specialized settlement services to support this vulnerable population. In response to this need, BC developed specific programming aimed at ensuring these newcomers had the targeted supports required for their successful settlement.
  7. *Regional focus.* There was also an increased desire to support newcomers in mid-sized and smaller centres in regions around BC. Funding was increased to support mid-sized centres, and English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP) was introduced to support centres that had some immigration, but may not enough to support a full settlement program. The ESLSAP model was also used to complement ELSA programming in some mid-sized centres.
  8. *Increased emphasis on Welcoming Communities initiatives.* There was a conceptual shift in the approach to settlement, from one primarily about giving newcomers the skills and knowledge to integrate to a ‘two-way street of integration’ model recognizing the important role that communities and workplaces play in the settlement and integration process. This shift led to an increased emphasis on supporting communities and workplaces to become more welcoming and inclusive of newcomers. BC developed and implemented the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program (WICWP) in partnership with settlement agencies, multicultural agencies, municipalities, and non-traditional stakeholders. Under this general rationale, BC also invested in Safe Harbour, an AMSSA program to support workplaces and organizations, and the Building Welcoming and Inclusive Neighbourhoods program to support the work of Neighbourhood Houses.
  9. *Expanded stakeholder relationships with other BC ministries, local governments, and business and public sector organizations.* The recognition of the two-way street of settlement and integration, as well as opportunities identified as a result of the increased funding, resulted in a stronger emphasis on cross-ministry partnerships in order to leverage resources and programs to develop more integrated responses, or to build capacity in other ministries to better support newcomers through targeted training or resource development.
  10. *Increased support for sector capacity.* BC also increased its investment in sector capacity to support newcomers, through several initiatives: increased funding to the umbrella organizations, development of settlement competencies dictionary, and implementing a training allocation under the funding formula to support organizations to build the capacity of their staff (see Section 6 for more details).

11. *WelcomeBC.ca information portal*<sup>23\*</sup> Supported by federal and provincial funding, a sophisticated information services portal was first launched in April 2008 with the objectives of increasing the number of international clients selecting BC as their destination of choice in which to live, work and study; and to increase the number of domestic clients accessing settlement and other BC services.

Respondents, in talking about this period emphasized the responsiveness of the programming to identified needs, and the willingness to be innovative in the approach taken. This period also saw an increased collaboration and improved relationships with the sector.

### **2009-2012: Program Review and Procurement of New Ongoing Programming**

2009 was a pivotal year in the evolution of the WelcomeBC branch and its programming approach. To inform the renewal and Cabinet approval of the 2010 Agreement, a major strategic planning process was initiated to set strategic directions. This planning proceeded in the context of significant accrued deferred federal funding. It was informed by predictions of plateauing or declining new federal funding. This required significant financial modeling in order to appropriately invest the deferred funds while achieving longer-term sustainable programming levels. 2009 also saw significant changes in the Branch, with new leadership at the Executive Director and Director of Program Management and Evaluation positions, and a new manager of procurement and contract management.

To support the strategic planning process, and inform the next round of programs and procurement, the Branch launched a significant program review. The review looked at all of the pilots, programs and initiatives launched or extended during the 2005-2009 period. This review included both a significant internal review, as well as stakeholder consultation processes. As a result, the same general program rationales identified above were identified as of continuing importance; however, additional pressures and issues were identified that informed the next round of program design and procurement. The review identified five major areas of work for the next round of program design and procurement:

1. *Incorporate learning from 2005-09 pilots and initiatives into sustainable ongoing programs.* Through the pilot process and the early implementation of various initiatives, there was considerable learning about the effectiveness of the approaches taken. Some approaches were seen as quite effective, and others helped to increase knowledge. However, there were significant challenges, both financial and structural, with allowing the pilots to continue as originally implemented. The Program Review process identified which of the pieces or approaches in the pilots were best suited for incorporation into a different program model. For example the 'vulnerable populations' pilots showed varying degrees of success, but were not financially sustainable, sufficiently available or incorporated into a broader system. However, specific components (group work, case management, and accompaniment) from various pilots informed the new Vulnerable Immigrant Populations program. Another key finding from the Step Ahead project that helped to inform both the Vulnerable Immigrant Population program and the new Settlement and Integration Program was the improved outcomes of newcomers with more intensive interventions and case management.

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<sup>2</sup> This portal, WelcomeBC.ca, assists more than 1,000,000 clients each year through a multilingual, multi-channel approach (web, mobile, video, and collateral materials.) In the last fiscal year (2012-2013) approximately \$800,000 in federal funding was allocated to website development. The BC approach to information services (WelcomeBC.ca and its related channels) has received international recognition including being designated a "global best practice" by Accenture, a global management consulting and technology services organization.

Learning from Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program launched in 2008 led to the redesign of that program to the new Welcoming Communities program.

2. *Increase efficiency of programs/offerings and allocate funding rationally and equitably.* An issue identified through the program review was the discrepancy in costs between pilots, and between providers within the same program or pilot. While some discrepancy is normal, especially within a pilot phase, or even between providers due to the competitive nature of pricing or in situations of monopoly, there was a need to better align pricing of services and control for some of the outliers. Financial modeling of services was developed as part of the program review and redesign process, which ensured increased efficiency and reasonable costs of delivery in all service areas. There were also challenges in ensuring appropriate levels of services in all service areas. Previous procurements had comparatively overfunded some areas while others were comparatively underfunded for the level of immigration they had. As part of the program review and redesign process, new funding allocation models were developed to support an appropriate level of service in all areas.
3. *Better procurement and bundling of programs and contracts.* Through the growth period of 2005-2009 programs and pilots were all procured separately due to different timeframes for stakeholder consultation, program design, and procurement. Because of the procurement processes that were used, significant changes to the contracted services (e.g. adding higher levels of language to a contract) could not be made during the term of the contract. This lack of flexibility was a challenge to responding to changing client needs and demands and to making linkages between programs and services. Under the program review, opportunities for effective bundling were identified (e.g. offering a Settlement and Integration program that combined information and orientation, labour market, community connections and mentoring, and case management and additional supports for higher needs clients). As well, the need to improve the procurement process was identified, making it less onerous and including sufficient stakeholder consultation during the solicitation phase.
4. *Building a better system of supports.* There were two major considerations here. First, a systems view on WelcomeBC led to thinking about how diverse program areas interacted with each other, and whether there could be a more integrated and cohesive system to support a broad range of newcomers to fully settle and integrate in BC and Canada. This meant identifying the continuum of needs, ensuring sufficient programs to address diverse needs, and setting out pathways for newcomers to move through various programs to fully settle and integrate. For example, the English Language Development program was enhanced to support learners from Literacy to CLB 8 within the ELSA program, followed by development of an ESL credential to support bridging of newcomers to Canadian post-secondary education, and occupation-specific higher-level language curricula to support those who wanted to enter a regulated occupation. A similar pathway was developed on the settlement side: clients from the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations program with high levels of need could be transferred into the Guided Pathways component of the Settlement and Integration Program, until they were ready to operate with only basic settlement information and orientation support. Second, efforts were made to better align WelcomeBC programming with other programs in other Ministries and public sector organizations as well as the public post secondary institutions. This involved interventions such as capacity-building in other organizations (e.g. refugee trauma training for social workers) and the exploration and development of bridging programs such as the ESL Credential with Vancouver Community College to support the bridging of students from ELSA programming to post-secondary and the labour market (this initiative was to complement some of the PPSI ESL programs that already supported transition to post-secondary studies)

5. *Address continuing or newly identified gaps.* In the review process, additional gaps were identified in the existing set of programs and pilots to ensure that the continuum of needs of newcomers was appropriately addressed. These included labour market initiatives, higher level language (extending ELSA to CLB 8; occupation specific language) and increased programming to support the settlement and integration of newcomers into regional communities, including smaller communities.

Provincial government and SPO respondents identified this as a time of continued good relations, which further advanced programming, building a solid foundation and comprehensive system of programs based on learning from previous pilots and programs. The consultative approach developed during 2005-2009 continued, albeit more often done through the procurement process as part of the Branch's efforts to implement best practice in its procurement of services in order to meet procurement policy. Government/sector relationships continued to be well supported through engaging the umbrella groups and the Branch's continued support.

There were concerns from a program perspective, particularly with respect to the potential or real loss of program models developed with the pilots. For the most part, the Branch attempted to keep the best practices going forward, but with the view to sustainability and rational allocation of funding within the broader system. In some cases, more expensive pilot and program activities were not continued due to financial constraints and opportunity costs for the funding. However, for the most part, respondents felt that the resulting program mix was effective, flexible and responsive.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Programming for WelcomeBC evolved considerably from 1998-2013: it moved from a relatively stable period, through a very dynamic, innovative and experimental period, to one focused on learning and implementing a more sustainable, consistent, and system-building approach to programs. The next section outlines some key features of the current program model that emerged from this evolution.

## 4. Settlement Programs Transformed: WelcomeBC in Early 2013

In 2009, the Branch developed the WelcomeBC Strategic Framework, providing the backbone for programming decisions and approaches to policy and process. BC respondents said that the WelcomeBC Strategic Framework was designed to embody and translate the principles and purposes of the CBCIA into a document to guide BC’s decision-making.

Figure 2 below shows the Strategic Framework including the WelcomeBC Vision, the three Strategic Lines of Business and their Defining Positions (goal or objective statements) and the foundational elements that inform all of the work under WelcomeBC.

This section addresses the Strategic Lines of Business and describes the set of programs and initiatives that arose out of the WelcomeBC strategic planning and program review processes. It identifies three key dimensions of each line of business: the range of programs and initiatives; regional and community variation; and connections, capacity development and partnerships.



## English Language Development (ELD)

*WelcomeBC Strategic Framework Defining Position: BC Immigrants will have access to English language training and gain language skills relevant to the labour market and communities they live in.*

The English Language Development component of WelcomeBC contains three major program areas. By far, the largest of the program areas is English Language Training for Adults, which comprises the English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) program as well as post-secondary ESL. The second program area is Regional Access, which reflects the efforts to address the needs of smaller communities, and the third is Alternate Service Delivery, which includes small programs that address language acquisition in a non-traditional way. The 2011/12 expenditures for these programs were:

	\$m
English Language Training for Adults	55.7
Regional Access	1.9
Alternative Service Delivery	0.3

*Range of Programs.* The ELD line of business under WelcomeBC has expanded considerably in range of offerings since its inception. The main program line is the English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) which has expanded from an initial offering of that addressed the Canadian Language Benchmarks 1-4 to include both pre-literacy initiatives (for newcomers not literate in their first language) and up to CLB 8 within the core ELSA programs.

The ELD programs have also expanded to include labour market curricula, with generalized labour market language at the CLB 5-8 range in ELSA, as well as occupation-specific language curriculum development for targeted occupations at the CLB7-10 levels, in order to facilitate labour market success. As well, there is curriculum and programming that has been developed in order to better support newcomer youth in attaining English language skills, as well as conversation classes in order to create alternate opportunities for engaging newcomers in language acquisition.

There has also been considerable effort in increasing participation in the ELSA program, through marketing and outreach initiatives such as advertising on transit, on WelcomeBC.ca, and in ethnic newspapers. These efforts have been fairly successful: the number of newcomers in ELSA programs increased by about 80% over a 5 year period. As well, a strong emphasis on ensuring sufficient childminding for ELSA students helped to increase participation.

*Regional and Community Variation.* The ELD funding allocation model in the 2009 procurement proceeded on the basis of real demand for courses and course levels; regional allocations were based on existing demand at time of purchase, with some room for growth built in. The ELSA program also offered greater level of in-contract flexibility to add additional courses as demand increased, or shift resources when there was no longer sufficient demand. As regions showed different levels of need, contracts were modified to meet the need.

The ELD program was modified to address regional needs. For instance, in medium-sized communities, programming allowed for a wider range of class offerings through combined offers (e.g. multi-level classes, combined regular and labour market programming). As well, funding has been available to all communities outside the Lower Mainland that meet a demand threshold.

Many smaller communities across BC had immigration levels below what was required to warrant an ELSA class. WelcomeBC, in partnership with the Adult Literacy group at the Ministry of Advanced Education, designed and implemented a program called the English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program, a small budget volunteer-tutor/community connection and conversation class approach. This program was considered quite successful by stakeholders, and won the 2011 Grundtvig Award for Excellence in Adult Education (Outside of Europe Category). This program operated in more than 50 communities across BC.

*Alternative Service Delivery.* BC also piloted and delivered alternative service delivery models to support and complement the core language programming. These included initiatives such as the SHARE English practice groups (which was later expanded to support ELSAP in some communities) as well as innovative programs such as the Immigrant Parents as Literacy Supporters, which used a whole-family approach to support language acquisition.

*Connections, capacity development and partnerships.* The ELSANet organization provides sectoral support to English language providers, including resource and curriculum development, professional development opportunities, and networking opportunities. As well, a key issue in the WelcomeBC ELD approach was building linkages between the ELSA providers and the post-secondary system. In some communities, there had been a natural partnership developed between the local college and the ELSA provider, and in other areas, the college was an ELSA provider.

A key gap identified in the 2009 Program Review was a lack of a bridge from settlement-focused language into the post-secondary sector or the labour market. WelcomeBC entered into a partnership with Vancouver Community College to develop a post-secondary ESL credential system, which would build from ELSA and settlement language offerings into a recognized credential acceptable for post-secondary entrance or labour market purposes. Work has been underway at the community-level to facilitate the development of a blueprint for localized partnership building to address the issue of the lack of bridging from settlement-focused language into the post secondary sector and labour market.

## **Settlement and Inclusive Communities**

*WelcomeBC Strategic Framework Defining Position: BC immigrants will have access to enhanced immigrant settlement services and be part of welcoming communities that accelerate their social and economic integration.*

This is the most diverse line of business under WelcomeBC. It addresses the range of settlement needs of newcomers, including vulnerable populations, as well as work to support communities to become more welcoming of newcomers and support diversity. This line of business also includes the work of the WelcomeBC.ca portal, which provides information to newcomers, service providers, communities and stakeholders. The 2011/12 expenditures in this line of business were:

	\$m
Settlement Information and Referral	32.1
Vulnerable Populations	11.5
Welcoming and Inclusive Communities	4.3
EmbraceBC	1.3
WelcomeBC.ca Portal	0.5

*Range of programs.* The programs and pilots increased considerably during the 2005-2009 period, before being consolidated into fewer program lines after the Program Review. For community and school-based programs, there has been increased emphasis on the needs of vulnerable immigrant populations, and creating a continuum of intensity of services in settlement programs to more support immigrants with different needs. The two main community-based programs are:

- The Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program built on lessons from the 2005-2009 pilots. The Settlement and Integration Program brought together services previously offered under Information, orientation and Referral, mentoring/community connections programs, seniors initiatives and some programs for those with some additional needs, and added a component of ‘light-touch’ case management called the ‘Guided Pathways’ approach to support new immigrants who need some additional support.
- The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program, which was designed to address the needs of immigrant youth in the school system, contained a similar logic. The SWIS program enhances the original SWIS with activities based on the learnings from the Vulnerable Immigrant Youth In Schools pilot to better address the needs of the full range of immigrant youth.

High need/vulnerable	Medium need	Low need
Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program: Intensive case management Targeted programs	SIP Guided Pathways approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light touch case management</li> <li>• Information and referral</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Mentoring/community connections</li> </ul>	SIP General: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and referral</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Mentoring/community connections</li> </ul>
Settlement Workers in Schools: Targeted initiatives for Vulnerable Youth		Settlement Workers in Schools: General program

In addition to these core programs, interesting partnerships were funded to address the fuller range of needs of newcomers:

- The Early Years Refugee program is a partnership with the United Way and other Ministries (Health, Children and Family Development) to address the integration of refugee children and their parents into Canadian society and teach parenting in a Canadian context.
- The Public Legal Education for Immigrants program is a partnership with the Ministry of Justice to educate newcomers about BC’s and Canada’s legal system.

In the latest offering of the Settlement and Integration and the Vulnerable Immigrant Population programs, supports such as child-minding were available to clients while they attended workshops.

*Regional and community variation.* The programs under the Settlement and Inclusive Communities line of business were designed to be responsive to community needs in two ways:

- Differential planning/program design and funding for different regions and communities. On the program design side, for example, the approach to vulnerable populations shifted depending on the concentration of vulnerable populations: in communities with significant concentrations of vulnerable immigrant populations, the VIPP was procured as a separate program with significant resources attached; in communities with fewer vulnerable immigrants, the funding and program was attached to the existing settlement program. Another example was the approach to smaller communities with insufficient immigration to warrant a full settlement program: a new model of

community-led initiatives was designed to support the settlement and retention of newcomers in these communities. On the funding side differential funding allocations and acceptable costs per client ensured effective provision of services in regional communities without the economies of scale available in the Lower Mainland.

- Increased emphasis was placed on community planning, especially in the Welcoming Communities program line. This included having the community take the lead on developing needs assessments, action plans, and initiatives to address Welcoming Communities goals.

These approaches led to a very regionalized, community-specific approach within the same overall frameworks, which took into account local planning and priorities, and ensured sufficient funding levels to support settlement and integration activities.

*Connections, capacity development and partnerships.* The ‘building bridges’ theme was strongly emphasized in the Settlement and Inclusive Communities line of business, due to the complex nature of the issues addressed under this program lines, and the range of stakeholders required to effectively address them. Connections, capacity development and partnerships happened in three ways:

- *Addressing two-way street of integration, by supporting communities to be more welcoming and inclusive.* Activities funded under this initiative include local community partnership tables, capacity building, public education, knowledge development and demonstration projects that addressed community specific issues.
- *Developing bridges within other ministries.* Here the goal is to better serve newcomers and ease the transition from settlement to ‘mainstream’ services. For example, a capacity-building project was developed to train trauma workers from other ministries to better address the trauma that associated with refugee situations or migration issues.
- *Strongly emphasizing building bridges within programs.* This emphasized building partnerships among contracted service agencies with the sector support group (AMSSA), which organizes partnership, networking and capacity development initiatives among service providers. For example, the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program encouraged non-traditional service providers to partner with SPOs to build wrap-around services and bridge newcomers to ‘mainstream’ services. And, the Early Years initiative brought together partners such as United Way, Ministry of Health (and local authorities), Ministry of Children and Family Development (and local managers) and other partners, the project built a more cohesive, wraparound project than would have been possible with only SPOs and federal settlement funding.

Overall, the Settlement and Inclusive Communities programs developed a wide range of partnerships, bringing together diverse actors and expertise in order to build more cohesive, systemic responses to complex problems. While there were challenges in building these connections, respondents identified partnerships and program connections as a key component of WelcomeBC.

## **Labour Market Programs**

*WelcomeBC Strategic Framework Defining Position: BC Immigrants’ international education, skills and experience will be utilized and valued in BC’s labour market and economy.*

The labour market programs under WelcomeBC are a mix of initiatives offered in conjunction with other program lines and more targeted programs and initiatives.

	\$m
Workplace Focused English Language Training	4.0
Connecting Immigrants to Employment	11.5
Labour market information and referral services	1.7
BC Employer Engagement	0..4

*Range of programs.* WelcomeBC offers a range of labour-market language programs. Some are offered through the public post secondary institutions. Under ELSA, there are general labour market focused language classes offered at CLB 5-8 (ELSA 4-7). As well, there are initiatives to develop occupation-specific language courses at the CLB7-10 level for targeted occupations such as accountants, engineers and architects.

General labour market services include supports through the Settlement and Integration Program and the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program such as information and workshops about succeeding in the Canadian labour market, as well as labour market mentoring. Information initiatives were targeted on skilled immigrants, including pathways guides developed and offered through the library system, along with more intensive mentoring for skilled immigrants.

However, BC's key innovation was the Skills Connect program, which helps newcomers get their skills and credentials recognized and connected to commensurate employment. The program has been jointly funded with federal settlement and provincial funds and provides workshops, employment connections, training and assistance navigating the credential recognition system. The program has two main components: Skills Connect General supports targeted occupations, while Skills Connect Health focuses on health-related occupations.

*Regional and community variation.* There is less regional variation in the programming than in other lines of business. The skilled immigrant initiatives are offered primarily in the Lower Mainland, although some offerings for Skills Connect Health occur in other regions. Labour market language offerings are integrated with the regular language offerings in smaller communities where a stand-alone labour market language class would not be cost-effective. The labour market supports offered through the Settlement and Integration Programs have the same regional variation as the base program.

*Connections, capacity development and partnerships.* Service providers delivering labour market initiatives through the integrated program lines (language and settlement labour market) are supported by the main sectoral support groups (ELSA Net and AMSSA). A Skills Connect working group brings together service providers. In addition, the Branch funded the development of the Immigrant Employment Council of BC, which brings together stakeholders such as employers, service providers, post-secondary institutions, labour organizations and government to address issues related to immigrant employment and developing resources and programs.

### **Looking Back on Settlement Programs: Respondent Perspectives**

Respondents from different stakeholder constituencies generally agreed that the BC model has been flexible, innovative and responsive to the special needs of different target groups and regions. They also observed that it extended the traditional individual-adult-based settlement and adaptation program at least along four different fronts.

*The BC model has expanded its scope of service users.* As part of the CBCIA agreement, the BC model was expected to meet the special needs of several groups of immigrant population who were left out of the conventional settlement program and have multiple and unique barriers of settlement. Through the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program, special needs of refugee youth and seniors were individually addressed in a case management process. By collaborating with other social and health service departments, special services were developed to support immigrant women experiencing violence and newcomers with traumatic experiences. According to an AMSSA recent publication (*Call for British Columbia Immigration Strategy 2013: Communication Resources*), the BC model has extended the eligibility of BC settlement services to refugee claimants, naturalized Canadian citizens, Canadian born children in naturalized Canadian citizen's families, individuals selected by CIC for permanent residents and PNP program without initial letters of approval from CIC, and individuals in Canada on temporary work permits or study permits who are not fee-payers to the school district.<sup>4</sup>

*The BC model recognizes the importance of community's capacity to welcome newcomers and support their settlement and adaptation.* The Welcoming Community and the Building Welcoming and Inclusive Neighbourhood initiatives are widely recognized as a major strength of the BC model. Through these community capacity building programs, the BC model has actively recognized the role and participation of municipal governments in immigrant settlement process. Respondents from municipal governments felt that a closer partnership between BC and municipal governments of some major immigrant reception cities has been established. Meanwhile, as some respondents commented, by supporting community capacity building programs and EmbraceBC, the BC model has put emphasis on the importance of a welcoming community in the two-way street of immigrant's integration and successfully bridged settlement with integration

*Many respondents appreciated BC effort to regionally contextualize settlement programs.* Three measures to address regional needs were highlighted. Settlement service money was allocated according to immigrant population distribution. For instance, as the most rapid growing immigrant reception centre, Surrey had significant expansion of settlement programs due to the adjustment of funding. For smaller communities, the BC government gave a bonus (1.5 times more than major urban centres) to small and rural communities for settlement program funding. Alternative service delivery models were encouraged: regional models of the main program lines were implemented to allow for regional variations. Examples of this include: the ELSAP program, which provided supports for language in communities that could not support an ELSA class; the modified version of settlement programming for smaller centres to support vulnerable populations better within the Settlement and Integration Program; and the joint Welcoming Communities for Smaller Centres which combined the local community planning table and welcoming communities initiatives with settlement supports for communities that had not had settlement supports before.

*The BC model sought to connect settlement programs with newcomer labour market needs.* Praised by a few respondents as a successful innovation, the Skills Connect program brought together partners from private sector, non-profit sector, and higher education sector to support skilled immigrants to find employment aligned with their pre-landing skills and qualifications. In 2011 and the first three quarters of 2012, 86% of the 1435 Skills Connect service users completed the program and achieved employment and 41% of them secured relevant work (Back in Motion Rehab Inc., 2012). However, some respondents felt that, despite this effort, BC lacks a policy to fully integrate immigrants in their local labour market.

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<sup>4</sup> Broadening the availability of settlement services by the BC government was a source of tension with the Government of Canada since some individuals receiving these services did not meet CIC eligibility requirements.

To many respondents, the flexibility and responsiveness of the BC model was made possible because of:

- *The rapid increase in funding since 2006-07.* Many pilot projects were initiated during this period such as Step Ahead project (later became part of the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations program), Welcoming and Inclusive Community and Workplace Initiative, and the provision of higher level of ELSA program in the community.
- *The practice of “tapping into local knowledge” was fundamental.* In the last fifteen years, the BC government actively engaged and consulted major sector stakeholders through umbrella organizations, conferences and seminars, and special advisory committees, etc. This approach was consistent with the CBCIA which specifies that BC government should identify existing and emerging settlement and integration needs and in setting priorities for the provision of settlement and integration services through consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including settlement and mainstream service providers, umbrella organizations and clients. Many respondents say the BC model was very consultative.
- *Quick feedback loops between sector and government.* As providers of provincial programs, the sector can provide feedback easier and faster to the provincial decision-making process through different channels such as the Minister’s office, MLAs and responsible ministries. Some respondents suggested provincial decision makers are also more knowledgeable of and sensitive and responsive to local needs, because it is “close to home”. They felt that Branch staff has established a trustful relationship with the sector. Many sector respondents noted that the Branch has a very dedicated and approachable team of staff who are accessible and are willing to listen and talk to the sector. Also, turnover of personnel in the Branch has been quite low, allowing the Branch to accumulate rich knowledge of the programs and local needs. As a result they tend to respond proactively and in a timely manner to unique and changing local needs.

In short, respondents described the BC model as over time meeting more of the settlement needs of immigrants, with programming increasingly also tending to the ‘hosts’ of immigrants in communities and workplaces, and tailoring with regional and labour market needs in mind. They reported that a combination of increased funding, interest on the part of officials in local knowledge, and less distance between the government, immigrants, and service providers allowed the BC model to work.

## Concluding Remarks

The WelcomeBC strategic framework represents the culmination of the evolution of the BC model, flowing from pilots, evaluations, and strategic decisions made during 2005-2009 era. This section has reviewed the architecture of the settlement programs, as well as how they vary in each of the major lines of business. It also shared the views of respondents about the key ways in which settlement programs in BC have evolved over the last few years, generally congruent and aligned with goals and conditions of funding from the Government as Canada,<sup>5</sup> as well as what allowed those ambitions and changes to be successfully realized.

The next few sections explore these developments in more detail, exploring distinctive features of the BC model and administrative style. Section 5 considers how BC moved to a new procurement and contracting system for service providers. Section 6 delves into the government-service provider relationship and how the government approached developing the capabilities in the sector. Section 7

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<sup>5</sup> See CIC and JTST-BC, “Program/Policy Alignment” in *Settlement Transition Update* (March 2013).

considers the extent to which the BC government set strategic directions for settlement programs and how coordination worked across ministries. Section 8 examines how the BC approach to reporting and evaluation evolved, creating tensions between CIC and BC officials. Section 9 steps back to reflect on how the formal Canada-BC Agreements shaped the relationship between governments and their officials.

## 5. Procurement and Contract Governance

BC has a long history of delivering government services through third parties. This practice was well established when the first Canada-BC Immigration Agreement was signed in 1998. Interestingly, issues that challenged good contract management and administration for the BC government in the 1980's persist to this day. The Report of the Task Force on Contract Management (April, 1990) included recommendations for the policy environment (government wide contracting policies; ministry specific guidelines that provide flexibility to manage the services being contracted; systems to support contract management and accountability) and for people (training for contract managers, ensuring individual ministries involved in extensive contracting develop supports for their contract managers).

In 2001, as part of its Core Services Review, the BC Government completed a review of the Procurement and Contract Management system. This review led to the development of a new core policy to govern procurement. It is guided by the principles of fair and open public sector procurement: competition, demand aggregation, value for money, transparency and accountability. The key elements of the core policy include:

- Procurement of goods and services must be done in an open, transparent and competitive manner, unless certain strict conditions exist that allow direct awards;
- Contracts must be based on clear deliverables (outputs and outcomes);
- Procurement processes must comply with applicable trade agreements such as the Agreement on Internal Trade;
- Procurement processes must comply with contract law, including the notions of Contract A and Contract B; and
- All procurement opportunities should be posted to BCBid

This contracting environment guided the procurement used for immigrant settlement services in BC.

### Evolution of Settlement Services Procurement

The Immigrant Integration and Multiculturalism Branch sought to gradually transition to compliance with the new Core Policy on Procurement. In 2003, a small number of settlement services were procured competitively to introduce the new policy to service providers. However, the majority of services were grant-based, linked to an application process. In 2005, the Branch required all programs to be procured for the first time in compliance with the core policy. The principal procurement instruments used were RFPs. The resulting contracts (transfers under agreement) were for three-year terms.

Funding for settlement services increased significantly between 2005 and 2008. When the three-year agreements from the 2005 procurements expired and to accommodate the major increase in funding, the Branch procured services with a mix of RFPs and direct awards. The direct awards were reserved for demonstration projects and pilots to test new programming. Contracts were written for one-year terms, and renewed annually subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funding.

In 2009/10 the Branch conducted a review of the 2008 process, including direct feedback from service providers and best practice recommendations from the Government Non Profit Initiative (GNPI). The result of the review was a new process for settlement services development that integrated program and procurement planning.

A new integrated planning process developed by the Immigrant Integration and Multiculturalism Branch was intended to coordinate all program development and procurement activities. Activities undertaken included:

- Needs assessments and resulting funding allocations
- Identification of appropriate solicitation methods (Request for Information, Request for Expressions of Interest, Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Direct Award) that meet the expected outcomes. Factors considered include economy, unique regional needs, continuity of services, levels of interest and the principles of openness, transparency and competition.
- Consultations including surveys to obtain feedback on past procurements, face to face and over-the-phone meetings to share new programming ideas and formal, structured face-to-face consultation/information sessions for feedback and for buy-in.
- Identification of procurement best practices and standards including:
  - Longer term (up to 5 years) agreements if appropriate
  - Post a draft RFP to receive feedback and make adjustments as appropriate followed by a minimum posting period of 6 weeks for final RFP
  - Provide procurement training/orientation prior to a large solicitation process
  - Build in a transition period between award and start of service – at least 3 months
  - Evaluation team formed and given orientation before the close of RFP posting
  - Individual evaluations completed and consensus reached within one month
  - Debriefs offered to any interested proponents.
- Contracts were developed that focused clearly on outputs and outcomes and allowed for flexibility to respond to changing client needs and changes in service demands.

Beginning in 2010 the Branch procured immigrant settlement services based on the new integrated planning process.

### **Experiences and Perceptions of Procurement Process Evolution**

The initial introduction of the RFP process to the sector, procuring for everything at once, was highly disruptive. Most agree that it was “too much”. Introducing competition into the settlement service sector was also disruptive as it “dislocated” existing relationships amongst providers.

As all the players gained more experience in the new procurement processes, there was more comfort with and support and capacity for responding to RFPs. Many respondents indicated that while there was a steep learning curve, SPOs had to get quite good at it, which allowed them to become more professional, better at reporting, and more business-like, regardless of how competent they already were at service delivery.

There were “forced marriages” required in some bids and direct awards that generated cooperation amongst entities that may have previously competed. This went some way to repairing some of the dislocations that had resulted from earlier procurement processes.

The BC Bid site is seen as an enabler of a fair and open process, allowing clear communication with the sector on all aspects of the solicitation process including a Q and A function that supports a transparent interchange between government and SPOs.

Respondents also indicated support for the front-end planning supported by draft RFPs. It allows for input on program design, priorities and regional funding allocations. While not all suggestions were adopted by the BC government, it allows for a conversation on what might work best.

Respondents have also indicated support for the different solicitation instruments such as Notices of Intent, Requests for Information, Requests for Expressions of Interest and Requests for Qualifications. Using these different instruments maintains the open and transparent principles while allowing for flexibility. Not all contract opportunities are suited to an RFP.

While most respondents are generally supportive of the procurement process now it remains that a few find the processes too complicated and onerous. Several mentioned the expense of responding to RFPs.

Most respondents indicated support for the contract structures, noting the clarity about what needs to be delivered and what will be measured and evaluated. The contracts also allow SPOs flexibility in how they will deliver services, leaving operational decisions to the managers in the delivery organizations. One individual said that discussions with contract managers from the ministry are focused where they should be on the programming and service delivery, not on the contract.

Direct awards were a source of frustration for various players. Some SPOs were particularly frustrated with the direct award of SWIS contracts to School districts, seeing it as a betrayal of the principle of openness. Other SPOs have sub-contracted with school districts and are satisfied with the arrangement. Additionally the federal government had issues with the direct funding to the public post secondary institutions for ELT, particularly with respect to accountability. The efforts of the BC government to respond to these concerns and increase levels of accountability and transparency are reviewed later in Section 8 of this report.

## **Concluding Remarks**

BC's long history of delivering government services through third parties and its evolving procurement policy environment led to a substantive change in how immigrant settlement services were delivered from 1998 to 2013.

Competitive procurement processes, providing procurement training to SPOs, engaging service delivery organizations in program planning and design as part of the solicitation process and encouraging collaboration amongst SPOs have all contributed to realizing the current WelcomeBC model.

The transfers under agreement (contracts) that result from competitive processes include administrative and financial monitoring but most of the attention of government contract managers and the delivery organizations was focused on contract performance with respect to outputs and client outcomes.

## 6. Government-Sector Relationships and Sector Development

An important feature of the BC model was its consultative nature and government support of sector development. This support was widely appreciated by respondents from the sector.

The BC settlement services sector has different key players: English language training providers, community based settlement service organizations, school boards, and skills training agencies. In BC each of these key players have been organized either through umbrella organizations such as ELSA Net and AMSSA or advisory committee such as Skills Connect Advisory Committee. Respondents unanimously agreed that these umbrella organizations and advisory committees have provided a platform for the sector internally to enhance the exchange of information and to build collaboration among its members. Externally many respondents see them as effective vehicles to enhance the communication between the sub-sector and the government. More importantly, in many critical situations, they helped organize its members to express and advocate common policy and program concerns to the government such as the provision of child-minding service for ELSA students and the increase in ELSA level training provided by non-higher education providers.

For 15 years, an important feature of the BC model for providing settlement services is not only its reliance on non-government service providers, but also its active nurturing and engagement of SPOs and their staff. What follows reviews different elements of how BC has supported and worked with SPOs: supporting professional development and professionalization, building capacity in provider associations, engaging associations and SPOs on new initiatives, and designing a gateway web site to support both immigrants and service providers.

### Supporting Professional Development and Professionalization

Before the re-alignment of funding in 1998, the BC government supported the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of BC (AMSSA) to organize the first training conference for immigrant settlement workers in 1989. Similar conferences were sporadically organized by the BC government in 2000 and 2006. These conferences provided the opportunities for workers of the sector to share their experience and discuss their needs and priorities.

In October and November 2006, BC government conducted a sectoral training survey in collaboration with the sector. The results led to the *BCSAP Training Framework* and developing a coordinated competency-based in-service training and professional development system for BC's settlement sector. A Sectoral Training Advisory Committee was established with representatives from the BC government and sector service providers. The committee has not only identified the infrastructure requirements and administration of the framework but also coordinated and provided advice on training modules such as Guided Pathway online training module and a webinar event on explaining settlement service to non-settlement agencies.

The *BCSAP Training Framework* was connected with the *Occupational Competencies Framework for Staff Providing Services to Immigrant and Multicultural Populations* that was developed in 2008. The Competencies Framework was part of the work of the Corbin Commission in the early 1990's. The Corbin Commission developed occupational competencies in six subgroups of the social services, including settlement services.

Based on the Competence Framework, an *English Language Development and Settlement Service Worker Complete Competency Dictionary* was generated in 2011. Settlement and English language development service providers use the Dictionary to inform planning and implementation of training initiatives for the sector. In the Dictionary, 30 common competencies are identified and role specific competencies for management, settlement support, childcare provision, English language instruction, job search and career planning, volunteer coordination, and administration support. Funding has been allocated to SPOs to provide relevant and appropriate professional training to their staff.

### **Supporting Networks of Service Providers**

Under the BC model, service provider organizations (SPOs) are funded to build capacity in the sector support as a whole. Here we review the two major associations – AMSSA and ELSA NET – which have received and provide support, and then consider smaller consortia that have emerged.

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of BC (AMSSA), a 35-year old umbrella organization of close to eighty non-profit agencies providing immigrant settlement and multicultural services in BC. AMSSA's mission is to facilitate collaborative leadership, knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement to support member agencies. It creates networking opportunities, disseminates information to members, provides professional development and helps build the organizational capacity of its member organizations. AMSSA established the Immigration and Integration Coordinating Committee (IICC) as a platform for settlement serving agencies to share and discuss challenges, issues, solutions and resources. A Steering Committee was also established for IICC. The Committee is comprised of representatives from different regions who meet regularly to determine priorities, develop strategic actions, and represent SPOs collectively in communication with government representatives.

AMSSA pre-dated the 1998 agreement, and has autonomy, even though it has received different kinds of funding from government. AMSSA grew significantly as a result of the Canada-BC investments of the 2000s and has formed committees to deal with provincial and federal initiatives.

AMSSA publishes the *Cultures West* magazine that focuses on topics in the areas of migration, immigrant settlement and integration, or diversity, and includes features, articles, stories and member achievements. Recently AMSSA has delivered professional development for the sector by conducting webinar seminars and developing a web-based research database connected to multicultural health publications, Metropolis BC working papers and other materials. It has taken an active role in promoting access to culturally appropriate health information and services for members of BC multi-ethnic, largely immigrant, communities by organizing an annual Vancouver Diversity Health Fair, publishing multicultural health guides, and promoting healthy living resources. AMSSA developed and maintains the Settlement Net website, which provides links to frontline service provision, research, media and professional development information to SPOs.

ELSA NET, or English Language Services for Adults Network, is a non-profit society comprised of English Language Service Providers, including non-profit organizations, community colleges, and for-profit entities. Initiated by a group of community stakeholders in 1992, ELSA Net has received funding from BC since 2000. As a unique organization in Canada,<sup>6</sup> its mission is to empower its members, throughout British Columbia, to help their clients achieve language and resettlement goals by providing leadership,

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<sup>6</sup> MEALO was recently launched in Manitoba.

communication networks, and resources. Currently, ELSA Net represents 37 service providers in 47 locations and 700 instructors, support staff and child care workers etc. Its functions are summarized as “providing support to settlement language in the classroom and ensuring instructors have access to valuable training and a strong community of practice. It is also about working with our funders on constructive policy development and informing them of gaps and needs in services as they arise; working with stakeholders to ensure appropriate referrals and access to vital community information through curriculum and other resources; working with ELSA child minding programs, licensing bodies, and child-support agencies to ensure children are able to access the best possible early learning environments; and working with program administrators and staff to ensure data collection processes are consistent and well-supported”. (ELSA Net: Contributions to the Settlement Language Sector, 2012). ELSA was more substantially funded by the province, and is less autonomous from government, receiving staff support and sharing minutes of meetings with BC officials.

Some small, informal consortia have formed in order to engage the BC government on delivering programs and services to newcomers. For instance, the Skills Connect for Immigrant Program has a network of services providers including Back in Motion, MOSAIC, ISSofBC, Douglas College, and Association of Service Providers for the Employability and Career Training (ASPECT) and Training Innovations Inc. Together with the BC government, they formed an Advisory Committee which meets regularly for performance evaluation, continuous quality improvement, and development and dissemination of best practices. The Settlement Workers in School (SWIS) program has also brought many participating school boards, albeit informally, together to express their concerns and interests to the BC government.

### **Sector Engagement and Consultation**

In 1998 the responsible ministry (Public Safety and Solicitor General) in the BC government (the Branch) conducted a provincial-wide consultation with the sector to plan and prepare for the implementation of settlement programs. Since then, ongoing consultation with the sector through the umbrella organizations and in different regions has become a common practice. A special unit responsible for sectoral relationships was established to ensure regular contact with service providers.

The Branch has actively engaged and consulted the sector in design and delivery of new programs such as the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program, Guided Pathways approach, Settlement Workers in School, and professional training. Province wide sectoral meetings were held to explain and implement new policies and programs. The Branch has actively engaged the sector. Through consultation meetings and special committees the sector can directly and/or indirectly influence the development of new initiatives. One example is the Skills Connect funding formula. The sector proposed a case-based funding formula which is more appropriate for the service. Other examples of active consultation include the Training Advisory Committee that helped develop *the BCSAP Training Framework* and *English Language Development and Settlement Service Worker Complete Competency Dictionary*, and the Advisory Committee for the Welcoming and Inclusive Community and Workplace initiative.

The Branch also organized training programs to prepare service providers to launch new initiatives. For instance, a three-day training program was designed and offered to almost all new SWIS workers. To prepare settlement service workers to deliver Guided Pathway service, an online learning module was designed and delivered. As well, the Branch has hosted two BC Settlement Services Conferences.

### **Sectoral adjustment and influence on new funding measures**

The sector had to significantly adapt when the procurement system was implemented over 2003 to 2005. One result was the formation of consortia among major settlement service organizations. Under the consortium model, several major SPOs in the Lower Mainland coordinated among themselves and worked collaboratively to bid for service contracts in the Request for Proposal process. An implicit division of labour among the SPOs has been formed at least in the Lower Mainland. Similar collaborative models were adopted by the sector to bid for other new initiatives such as Skills Connect and Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program. However, as reflected by some respondents from the sector, the consortium model has led to a two-tier system in the sector: the lead agencies are generally large SPOs, and the subcontracted agencies are smaller, ethnic based SPOs. As a result, many smaller SPOs (in both English Language and settlement services) were excluded and some even closed due to the procurement system. BC officials noted however, that ethno-specific organizations were not previously eligible for settlement funding in BC, and some were able to become sub-contractors under the consortium model (e.g. through the Early Years program).

The outcome-based logic model of WelcomeBC framework introduced a new accountability system. The sector has gradually adopted an ongoing program monitoring and evaluation system. Many SPOs, particularly larger organizations, have collaborated with former Metropolis BC researchers to conduct program evaluation and need assessments. To respond to the BCSAP Training Framework, SPOs were funded to formulate and organize their own in-service training programs.

Working with other providers had effects on the sector. When the school boards introduced the Settlement Workers in School (SWIS) program, they offered a higher salary scale for the SWIS workers, attracting many experienced workers from the major community-based SPOs. This caused major concern within the sector. To minimize the discrepancies of salary scales, the salary of settlement service workers in community organizations was later adjusted in the procurement. This helped retain experienced workers in the sector.

### **Support for Sector Gateway Web Resource: WelcomeBC**

Under the WelcomeBC strategic framework, an award-winning one-stop online resource website for newcomers, immigrants serving agencies, and welcoming communities was created in 2007. The WelcomeBC.ca provides online access to reliable, client-focused information on settlement and immigration services to encourage immigration to BC and to help newcomers better adapt to life in their new communities. Clients and settlement service agencies can obtain up-to-date information on living, working and settling in BC through the immigration portal, foreign-language micro-sites, and mobile and social media channels.

The following features were developed as resources for settlement agencies' staff to assist newcomers' settlement and integration (BC Settlement and Adaptation Program Formative Evaluation, Final Report (2010-2011):

1. Enhanced regional content, with an innovative cost-of-living calculator designed to provide prospective immigrants and newcomers with information on key decision-making criteria, including salaries, wages and housing costs throughout BC;
2. Updated BC Newcomers' Guide and video series, available in 11 languages;

3. Branded WelcomeBC YouTube channel, featuring success stories and multilingual Newcomers' Guide videos;
4. A comprehensive Work in BC section featuring enhanced labour market content and resources designed to help newcomers attach to the labour market;
5. An "Ask the Expert" feature that assisted more than 20,000 clients;
6. Interactive settlement services map and fully integrated mobile channel;
7. WelcomeBC foreign-language content to reach new markets by translating targeted content into Hindi, Traditional Chinese, Farsi, Portuguese, Russian and Japanese; and
8. Online marketing campaigns designed to promote awareness of WelcomeBC's settlement services.

The website, including its use of social media, is an example of government adapting to people's increasing use of technology to get their information.

### Concluding Remarks

As many respondents agreed, the procurement system had also coincidentally led to a major system change in the BC settlement service sector. One sector respondent observed that the settlement service sector became more sophisticated and mature due to the procurement system. Another respondent suggested that SPOs had to become more professional and business-like with their proposals and internal reporting systems in order to win RFPs and, if they won, to negotiate and report.

The first procurement in 2003/4 presented some new challenges to the sector. There were some major regroupings of service providers in different regions. In the second procurement, service providers quickly learned to work together to collaborate to minimize unhealthy competition. A few major consortia led by major SPOs were formed particularly in the Lower Mainland. The complexity and human and financial demand of the RFP process are beyond the capacity and resource of many smaller organizations. Even large SPOs have gone through a steep learning curve and invested heavily to become more professional and sophisticated in articulating their budget and program plan to meet the complex administrative and financial requirements of the RFP.

Some respondents believed that the last two RFPs produced a two-tier system, less favourable to small and particularly ethno-specific organizations. We were told that in the English language training sector close to one-third of the former providers were closed down.<sup>77\*</sup> On one hand, some respondents felt that the consortium model has improved the trust and communication within the sector. On the other hand, many commented that inter-agency collaboration at the service level, even within consortia, was

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<sup>7</sup> BC's Immigration and Integration Branch staff indicate that there was no trend for which types of SPOs held primary or secondary contracts under the consortium model, nor which types were excluded from contracting roles. Their view is that different kinds of SPOs lost and gained contracting roles in BC's settlement tendering processes, including public institutions and larger multi-service community-based organizations. They point out that large organizations became lead contractors for other large organizations (e.g. MOSAIC for ISS of BC and SUCCESS in Vancouver; OPTIONS for DIVERSEcity and PICS in Surrey), and small organizations became lead contractors for other small organizations (e.g. South Vancouver Neighbourhood House for other neighbourhood houses). Ethno-specific organizations were not previously eligible for settlement funding in BC, and some were able to become sub-contractors under the consortium model (e.g. through the Early Years program).

largely superficial. Inter-agency collaboration has mainly been limited at the program administrative level. In day-to-day service, collaboration among agencies (such as service user referral) has been scattered.

Respondents generally agree that the BC settlement service system has become more professionalized in the last 15 years. Many respondents point to the significant efforts of the BC government to enhance the service quality by providing funding and leadership in development the BC Training Framework and the Competence Dictionary. The BC RFPs included professional development in the budget item for service provider organizations to support their staff either to attend conferences and training programs and/or to organize customized training program for their staff.

The two BC Settlement Service Conferences have received positive feedback from the respondents. However, many people commented it could have been organized more often. While appreciating the increased support of professional development, some SPO respondents noted that BC nevertheless lacks a training system to support a long-term professionalization of the settlement service.

## 7. Government Direction and Coordination Across Ministries

The three CBCIAs spanned several changes in the politics and machinery of government in BC. Responsibility for immigrant services, including labour market programs was in several ministries and moved from time to time as ministry mandates changed. Change in government prompted the Core Review Process resulting in changes to programs and the new approach to procurement.

Amidst of all this change, responsibility for immigrant settlement services remained relatively stable, allowing “the Branch” to develop and implement strategic approaches, based on the intent of the Agreements, and to provide continuity in programs and service delivery. This stability also allowed the Branch to build a base of expertise and experience in settlement programming that encouraged innovation, including working with other ministries and agencies across government to provide more integrated immigrant services.

### Cross-Ministry Coordination

BC invested considerable effort in building relationships across ministries within BC to better support the settlement and integration of newcomers. These partnerships took on a broad range of forms:

1. Capacity-building initiatives with other ministries to better support newcomers (e.g. working with Ministry of Children and Family Development on improving the ability of their staff to address trauma related to migration and refugee issues)
2. Cooperation on embedded programs (e.g. Settlement Workers in Schools with the Ministry of Education and School Districts; Urban Library Partnership with Libraries)
3. Specialized programs leveraging resources from other Ministries (e.g. the Public Legal Education for Immigrants program)
4. Coordination of efforts (e.g. the Community Adult Literacy Program from Ministry of Advanced Education and the English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program).
5. Partnerships, at a Ministry or Regional Authority level on programs that crossed mandates (e.g. the Early Years project with Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Health and United Way)
6. Information sharing and informing program design of other ministries (e.g. Ministry of Social Development).
7. Working to build bridges between programs (e.g. working with Vancouver Community College on building an ESL credential to support newcomers to transition to post-secondary and to the labour market with a recognized credential).
8. Working with ministries to address policy and regulatory issues (e.g. Ministry of Health on childminding regulations)
9. Coordinating with multicultural programs

Given the broad scope of the WelcomeBC programs, and the emphasis on the two-way street model of integration, it is not surprising that cross-ministry partnerships took on such a variety of forms. The next section will outline what respondents felt about the cross-ministry partnerships.

## Looking Back on Cross-Ministry Work: Respondent Perspectives

All BC government respondents, most sector respondents and some federal respondents, identified the ability to coordinate locally and build partnerships with other ministries as a key strength of the BC delivery system. Some federal respondents wondered if the cross-ministry work was simply other ministries undertaking work in exchange for settlement dollars.

This work was not without its challenges. BC government respondents wished they had done more, and could identify specific challenges in working with other ministries. A prime example involved implementing the new Employment Program of BC through the Ministry of Social Development. The sector had raised concerns, and while the Branch did alter the new model a bit many in the sector still believe that the new model will create challenges for immigrant labour market attachment. As well, concerns were raised by federal counterparts about ensuring accountability for funds flowing to other ministries even though most of this funding was accompanied by an MOU with reporting requirements and accountability mechanisms.

However, one long-term cross-ministry funding arrangement was identified as problematic for the sector and the federal government: the funding managed through the Ministry of Advanced Education for the post-secondary ESL programs. Federal respondents were worried about insufficient accountability for a significant proportion of the federal settlement funding transferred (approximately \$17m) and the charging of extra fees. This became a focus of the 2010 Agreement negotiations. BC developed an approach sufficient to meet federal accountability needs by ensuring that all post-secondary ESL in BC was tuition-free (April 2, 2012), including the allocation of provincial funding to support learners not eligible under the Agreement, improving data systems to capture those students eligible for federal funding, and regular audit and evaluation of the programs.

## Connection to BC Government Priorities

While the BC administration and expansion of the settlement programming was seen as effective in building BC-specific responses and in building cross-ministry linkages, respondents were less clear about the extent to which settlement programs were reflected in, or influenced by, broader BC government direction. Cabinet approved and signed all three of the Agreements, and in 2009, the WelcomeBC Business and Investment Plan was signed off by Cabinet. However, the general sense was that there was minimal direction given at a corporate/political level to the file.

For the most part, BC respondents believed that the approach taken to administration was defined primarily by the Branch, using the backbone of the Agreements. Ministers didn't have to take proposals and reports through the usual Treasury Board processes since funds came from other sources. The areas mentioned as having been influenced by broader BC government policy directions were:

- the move to align with labour-market strategies;
- the priority given to services and supports for the regions; and
- some cross-ministry initiatives.

However, choices about how to design and implement those directions were driven by the Branch. Lean resources within the BC government and top government priorities meant that public servants looked for connections and leveraging opportunities.

Two reasons for this were suggested. First, BC had made a relatively small investment of its own in terms of outlays, which meant that the program had limited financial visibility in the budgetary process and therefore little direction from ministers. Second, the Agreement provided sufficient direction about how to use funds, and so for the most part, the Branch was shielded from too much political influence.

Respondents identified that this was both a good thing and a challenge. On the one hand, there was considerable opportunity to pursue programs and policies under the broad mandate of the WelcomeBC framework and the Agreement without undue political interference. However, there were also challenges due to not being highly visible on the political radar when it came to trying to influence other actors, or get additional funding from the province.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This section reviewed the many coordination initiatives which have arisen across ministries, agencies, regional districts, and school districts in BC in order to further immigration settlement programming. This was seen as a strength of the BC model, but also a challenging endeavour, as has been noted with horizontal governance initiatives in most jurisdictions. Generally, this was seen more as a bottom-up as opposed to top-down, politically-driven process, particularly since the government did not invest much in the way of additional resources to match the federal funding. BC's lean public sector environment creates incentives for stove-pipe focus, but also for leveraging opportunities.

## 8. Evaluation: Investments and Approaches

During the mid-2000s, evaluation and reporting on settlement programs proved to be perhaps the most important source of tension between the BC and Canadian governments. Interestingly, both levels of government had strong commitments to the evaluation function and both clearly had an outcomes orientation. However, they emphasized different facets of the evaluation enterprise because of their different responsibilities, data-tracking systems, and they operated within different results reporting systems.

This section begins by reviewing how the BC approach to evaluation evolved during the 2000s, reaching a new threshold with in-house capacity developed later in the decade. Then it considers, in turn, the views of BC service providers and CIC representatives on how the BC government approached evaluation.

### **The BC Experience: From Contracting to Building Internal Evaluation Capacity**

BC's evaluation processes evolved considerably over time. During the 1998-2005 era, when programs were fairly stable, some evaluations were done. However, due to the stability of the programming, those evaluations had relatively little impact on the program. With the signing of the 2004 agreement, and the beginning of the increase in funding, the evaluation function increased in importance. The Branch, after consulting with the sector, developed an overall client outcomes survey to address the major program areas (language, settlement, community connections). The survey was undertaken twice more, in 2007 and 2010.

As the pilots rolled out during 2005-2009, the Branch engaged external contractors to undertake evaluations of the new initiatives. While some direction was given to methodology from the Branch (through the Program Design and Evaluation Analyst positions), evaluation methodology was often determined by the hired consultants. These external evaluations varied in usefulness depending on the methodology and approach used by the consultant. However, they provided some important evaluation information with regards to the new initiatives.

In 2009, the Branch's stance on evaluation changed, in the context of increased funding from the Government of Canada, program reviews in the BC government, and the drive in the Branch to pilot and build new settlement programs. Rather than rely primarily on external contractors, the branch developed an 'in-house' evaluation team consisting of a senior evaluator and two program evaluation analysts. Increasing BC's internal strength in evaluation was undertaken for three purposes:

1. To think more strategically about evaluation and how it can inform decisions and investments
2. To improve consistency of the evaluations
3. To embed evaluation and evaluation data systems into the program design and contract management processes.

Evaluators were assigned to portfolios of programs, and became members of the teams tasked with the Program Review and Redesign process. The evaluators played a crucial role in bringing information out of the existing evaluations/datasets, and undertaking additional evaluations of the pilots in order to inform the program design process. In order to support the implementation of the new evaluation model, the team also developed advisory groups with sector representatives.

In this context, it was not surprising that BC's evaluation approach emphasized formative and process evaluations because the government was building programs – officials sought information on how well the programs were designed and performing in order to learn and create ongoing programming. This did not mean disinterest in data and assessments on outcomes, which were captured with other methods such as survey and service reports. BC officials believed that summative outcome evaluations would not have much value when pilots and programs were in early implementation phases and needed time to be fully implemented and mature. BC respondents identified that BC was planning to build a more comprehensive summative strategic evaluation framework for when the program review and re-procurement was completed.

While the approach to more targeted evaluation did change over time, the Branch did continue to collect and analyze data at the output level through contract and program monitoring, and at the overall outcome level for the major program lines through the Client Outcomes Survey. These were helpful in assessing the reach and impact of the programs, as well as inform program design and funding levels.

### **Views on BC's Evaluation Approach from Service Providers**

Respondents indicated that the modified evaluation approach was very useful in informing program design and funding decisions. Two key examples of this were:

1. *The Step Ahead evaluation.* This used a pre/post comparative control model to evaluate the benefits of a case management approach for highly vulnerable families. It informed the decision to implement case management in the ongoing Vulnerable Immigrant Populations program and the Guided Pathways component of the Settlement and Integration Program.
2. *The WICWP evaluation.* While WICWP also included various program level measures, the evaluation process was also done in order to support primary research into the key drivers of a newcomers sense of belonging and choosing to stay in BC, by working with BC Stats on developing a structural equation model. This research helped to directly inform program decisions moving forward.

The sector had mixed feelings about the evaluation process. Over time, they became more aware of, and agreed with, the importance of evaluation. Moreover, their partnership in the development of the outcomes and logic models went a long way to building faith in the evaluation processes, and they appreciated the collaborative, evidence-based approach. However, there were some minor challenges with the sector: evaluations were seen as activities that took away from the 'real work' or as not capturing the work appropriately (e.g. methodological disagreements).

### **CIC Perspectives on the BC Approach to Evaluation**

BC's approach to evaluation was a source of frustration for CIC officials and the Government of Canada. The concerns were less about the quality of BCs' evaluations in BC but arose more because of different styles and contexts for the respective evaluation functions, and concern on the part of Canadian officials about BC's willingness to share evaluation findings as required in the Canada-BC Agreement.

CIC officials were concerned because the BC government did not have away to track how unique clients moved around the sector and did not have data to undertake summative, sector-wide evaluations of the outcomes and performance of system. There were differences in understanding between the two levels of government about what "outcome" meant, with the CIC officials working within Ottawa's Treasury Board of Canada policy on Management, Resources and Results Structures (MRRS) and a governance

environment steadily increasing pressures on ministers and departments to develop sector outcome reporting and accounts of performance by means of strategic reviews and evaluations, all in the context of tighter resources (not unlike what BC went through just a few years earlier). CIC therefore had not only more of a summative approach to evaluation but also looked for evaluations assessing outcomes at a higher-level of analysis, and saw BC has generally focused on performance management of specific aspects of the settlement program rather than the entire settlement system. Moreover, CIC was not aware of any audit undertaken by the BC government on settlement programs, and felt that BC seemed slow in scoping out an audit.

So, while BC shifted its approach to evaluation in the late 2000s, CIC officials believed it was misaligned with the Government of Canada's evaluation and reporting needs, and saw it as emerging from a different evaluation culture, one focused more on dealing with program design and delivery. Adding to the frustration of CIC officials, not only were these evaluations not summative, sector-wide evaluation reports, but they emerged as working documents that were not readily available to CIC. Finally, a key federal concern was BC's difficulty in clearly articulating a strong and consistent outcomes story for the entire settlement envelope.

For their part, BC officials recognized that CIC evaluations were undertaken for a different purpose and with a different approach than in BC, and were acutely aware of the critical link between the outcomes and the program if outcomes are to be improved. However, BC's focus was on understanding whether programs have been implemented as intended and how they could be improved, and emphasized more formative and process evaluations for specific reasons and to support specific decision-making processes. They were reluctant to share formative and process evaluations with CIC colleagues when they were not summative evaluations, and were geared to informing the design and management of programs and initiatives. However, BC respondents identified that the intention was always there within the WelcomeBC framework to develop a broader, system-level strategic evaluation framework. After BC's program review and program build in the settlement domain, and following discussions with CIC counterparts, BC developed a plan to move back to a more formal process of summative evaluation, which was reflected in the 2010 Canada-BC agreement and subsequent implementation plans.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Since 2009 BC focused evaluation efforts to improve the efficacy of settlement programs and service delivery. This is not surprising given the pilot programs and new service delivery approaches being implemented at the time. Early learning from the pilots, understanding what was working and wasn't working, informed mid-course corrections for program managers.

## 9. Governance: The Agreements and the Canada-BC Relationship

Most of this report focused on the views of federal and BC government respondents, as well as those of service providers, about the design and delivery of settlement programs. In this section we consider the sources of authority for transferring federal funds for delivering programs in BC, and some of the higher-level governance dynamics and relationships between the two levels of government.

We begin with reflections on the Agreements as frameworks for re-aligning settlement programs, then consider the ebb and flow of the Canada-BC relationship over fifteen years, and itemize key issues and irritants between the two levels of governments. We conclude with observations about the qualities inherent in re-aligned arrangements.

### The Agreements in Retrospect: Scope and Oversight

Section 2, as well as Annexes 3 and 4, set out the Agreements negotiated by the Canadian and BC governments. Our interviews did not identify any significant issues with the Agreements. Our sense is that respondents presumed that the Agreements succeeded in enabling the transfer of authority and funding to the BC government to deliver immigration settlement and integration programs in the province. They identified visions and principles which guided how BC sought to deliver programs tailored for immigrants arriving and settling in its jurisdiction, and provided sufficient scope to explore how to improve the design and delivery of services and information over the course of several Agreements. On the other hand, they required reporting on the status, mix and performance of programs, although, as we discuss below, the Canadian and BC governments did have differing views on how what information should be shared, but this was reasonably addressed in the context of the 2010 Agreement.

Our view is that the three Agreements succeeded because they allocated authority by means of what essentially were administrative agreements: they enabled flexibility and innovation by officials for achieving the goals underpinning the Agreements, buffered the allocated funds from efforts to divert them to other purposes and too much political interference, and yet required sufficient accountability to the Government of Canada and within the BC government. Although not explicitly negotiated, the Agreements so structured also created an administrative focal point inside the BC government, which engendered increased horizontal or cross-ministry coordination, agreements, and accountability.

### Fifteen Years: Managing the Canada-BC Relationship

In reviewing the performance of agreements, there is a tendency to focus on the language of the agreements per se, not the evolving priorities of the respective (and successive) elected governments which were parties to those agreements at both levels of government. Section 2 noted that in the late 1990s the respective governments had different interests which drove them to come to an agreement to re-align settlement programs. But there were significant shifts in the complexions and priorities of governments from mandate to mandate from 1998-2013: we just have to think of the arrival of the Campbell government in BC with its New Era mandate in 2001 and the effect of the sponsorship scandal in Ottawa, which greatly tightened up how grants and contributions were administered, as well as reporting and accountability processes more generally, for the federal government. More recently, both governments have undertaken strategic reviews of programs in the wake of the pressures that the Global Financial Crisis, faltering economies and declining resource prices have exerted on federal and provincial budgets.

Overall, BC and federal government respondents felt there was a good relationship between the two orders of government. The relationship was seen as ebbing and flowing slightly depending on the personalities at the table. Government of Canada officials were perplexed about the numerous re-organizations of the BC machinery-of-government, which moved the Branch with the lead responsibility to different ministries, which led to federal concerns about the gaps created in the awareness of the new home ministries to manage communications and liaise with CIC, and whether such re-organization diverted the Branch away from coordinating delivering programs (such concerns did not arise from BC official nor the BC service providers; however, it was noted that the change of Ministry and Minister led to challenges in sustaining momentum on longer-term strategy). However, in recent years, the relationships between the Canadian and BC had been good, and BC was seen as a key partner and leader at the Federal-Provincial-Territorial tables, on policy to research topics, and developing National Settlement Outcomes.

### **Acknowledging Issues and Irritants**

Despite administrative Agreements which served the Canadian and BC governments well and enabled funding to flow for intended purposes, leading to an expansion, experimentation and broadening of settlement programming, there were some concerns which arose about design and reporting. These were as follows:

- *Reporting concerns.* Federal officials noted concerns had been raised about how complete the reporting was to the federal government as required under the terms of the Agreement. They indicated that at times BC did not provide timely and sufficient information. BC respondents acknowledge this, but framed it differently: while recognizing that were occasional challenges in meeting reporting timelines, they felt at times information that was provided was insufficiently recognized at CIC, or sometimes CIC complained about a lack of information when BC officials felt that they had provided the information or CIC had not requested the information but it was available. Here we simply note this friction; we were not asked to unearth details and make determinations, but many of the concerns were addressed in the 2010 Agreement.
- *Propriety of public post-secondary ESL funding.* This initiative created issues within BC's community of providers (see Section 6, this report), but also with federal government representatives. CIC respondents expressed concern over the precision of accountability mechanisms for the funding, the question of whether students were being charged fees and whether it was in line with the spirit and requirements of the agreement. BC respondents also noted this was a major issue in the BC-CIC relationship. Explicit language was negotiated to deal with this issue in the 2010 Agreement (see Annex 3), and BC developed and implemented an action plan to address the issue in 2011/12.
- *Engagement and acknowledging Government of Canada contributions.* CIC officials felt that the BC government did not always provide them with notice of upcoming announcements or give the Government of Canada sufficient credit for funding the settlement programs which were delivered by BC. Relatedly, CIC officials believed that more systematic effort could have been made to engage and involve CIC's BC regional office in discussions with the settlement sector. It was felt this could be attributable less to Branch officials and more the larger ministries to which the immigration settlement programs were moved, where corporate communications officials were less familiar with the administrative funding arrangements for the programs.
- *Serving non-eligible clients.* CIC officials were disconcerted about the extent to which the pilots and programs delivered BC provided services to non-eligible clients. CIC officials noted that

some BC contracts allowed Canadian citizens to access up to 30% of the programming, and they sought better tracking of recipients and accountability in this regard. BC respondents noted that while they recognized this was a concern, BC had provided information to CIC regarding these clients, and that the percentages were calculated to ensure that the services provided were aligned to BC's contributions (e.g. the 30% only applied in some cases, which tended to be small contracts in smaller regional centres).

- *BC's accumulation of deferred funding.* From 2006-09, federal funding for settlement programs in BC nearly tripled, with the BC government accumulating approximately \$80 m in deferred funding. Some BC respondents noted that deferred funding was to be expected precisely because of the rapid increase in funding, and because of the time required for undertaking proper consultation, strategic planning, program design and procurement – all to ensure good use of the funds. The WelcomeBC Business and Investment Plan contained a financial model for spending down deferred funds while achieving a sustainable level of programming by 2015/16. Nevertheless, the federal government maintained the funds were not invested quickly enough.
- *BC's small investment in settlement programs.* This emerged as an issue in the BC-CIC relationship for two reasons. First, there were concerns from the federal government over whether there was sufficient provincial funding to cover federally ineligible clients and activities. BC respondents recognized CIC's concern, but felt that BC's contribution was sufficient. The second concern was more general: while not required by the Agreement, federal government and some BC respondents believed the BC government was not investing enough to complement the flow of federal funding. Some BC respondents noted that the challenge in asking for additional funds from the BC government given the size of the federal contribution and, in recent years, the substantial pot of deferred federal funding.

Any decade-long agreement between two orders of government involving a one-way flow of resources is bound to surface issues over time. Our sense is that relations between the two governments and their respective departmental and ministry officials were professional and collegial, not acrimonious. In part they reflected different styles of administration and different perceptions of the challenges. These issues were raised and discussed when negotiating the 2010 Agreement, and dealt with by altering program designs and delivery, providing more detailed reporting, and changing the language in the Agreement.

### **Concluding Remarks on Governance**

Our interviews indicated that the Canada-BC agreements framed a good relationship between the two governments. However, aside from reporting to CIC, participating in federal/provincial/territorial meetings pertaining to immigration and settlement, and engaging in episodic negotiation over the three Agreements, most of the "governance" action for BC involved dealing with service providers and ministries at the provincial level. The Agreements, however, served as a useful guide and compass for BC officials, who reported regularly to authorities within the BC government and, of course, to CIC counterparts. There were issues and irritants, but as noted, it would be surprising if several such matters did not arise over a fifteen-year period.

The BC government expended the funds it received for settlement programs in often innovative ways, consistent with the terms of the Agreements, and did so in a distinctly BC manner, responding to the profile, needs and settlement patterns of immigrants to the province, and to its geography and labour-market needs, but with little overt skewing for other purposes by the government. Although there were shifts in the priorities of the respective governments over the years, and several tensions which we have

identified earlier in this section, the Agreements and the manner in which funds were transferred buffered the settlement programs from day-to-day politically-driven micro-management. Government of Canada funding did increase significantly during the 2000s, which usually leavens most government-to-government relationships.

Perhaps this leads to another obvious point, but an important one nevertheless: the 1998, 2004 and 2010 Agreements provided a framework for administrative devolution of service delivery, not partnership arrangements involving co-delivery of complementary services. The agreements sought to move responsibility for the delivery of settlement programs to the BC government, which had envisioned better coordination at that level of governance, believing that the critical challenges, programs and providers which needed to be aligned were best tackled at the provincial level. And, not surprisingly, a primarily administrative re-alignment served to provide authority to BC officials who had more scope to administer and experiment with the delivery of settlement services consistent with the aims of the Agreements. As we discuss in Section 11, the conclusion to this report, there is scope for inter-governmental collaboration once the transition to federally-delivered programs has been effected.

## 10. Pulling it Together: Observations, Explanations, Questions

This report has covered a lot of ground; here we provide a high-level summary of the findings but also seek to make connections across the areas we have focused on and offer explanations for some of the successes, issues and tensions we have identified.

We begin by providing a stylized snapshot of the mix, posture, and character of BC's WelcomeBC settlement programs. Then we explore how BC managed to arrive at this approach to programming, and identify some of the enablers which allowed the system to progress and be managed in the way it was. We then identify several practices and capacities which seem to be critical features and underpinnings of the BC model, and draw out the implications as "go-forward" questions for governments and stakeholders to consider as the settlement programs for BC move into a new governance context.

### The Mix and State of BC's Settlement Programs

Sections 2, 3 and 4 set out in detail the evolving mix of BC's settlement programs, which are currently grouped into three areas: English Language Development; Settlement and Inclusive Communities; and Labour Market Programs. Rather than re-visit those descriptions, here we want to identify important features of those programs, the service-provider network, and the funding profile.

Under the Welcome BC banner, BC's settlement programs are focused not only on immigrants but also the community and work environments in which immigrants adjust and hopefully prosper and integrate, with the programs targeted to different segments of the immigration population. The programs vary on a regional basis, reflecting BC's regional realities with urban communities of vastly different scales, and its labour-market strategies. The settlement programs were primarily federally-funded and the federal proportion increased over time; the provincial contributions were largely stable and federal contributions increased substantially during the mid-2000s. BC made considerable effort to align and coordinate the settlement programs with other BC programs material to the process and different phases of settlement for different categories of immigrants. A primary motivator for BC to enter into the 1988 Agreement was to pursue the goal of better integration of settlement and other programs; arguably it has made great strides in doing so, using engaging with service providers, procurement strategies, web technology, internal administrative agreements, etc., leading to an award-winning mix of services. Whether BC has increased coordination or achieved integration would be an interesting debate – BC government and service-provider respondents would no doubt argue that integration remains a goal, but this aspiration has guided strategizing, the design of programs and pilots, and funding models for more than a decade.

The introduction of the procurement model in 2003, with its full roll-out in 2005, led to upheaval and a shake-out among service providers in BC, even though increased federal funding ultimately increased the number of providers. Our respondents indicated that the new approach led to more sophistication and professionalization in the sector, and more transparency and fairness. SPOs which developed the capabilities to bid and report on RFPs were well-positioned to be successful in the next rounds. Looking back, the process has favoured larger SPOs (which have grown), and smaller SPOs focused on specific client groups often join them for larger RFPs. The procurement model created incentives to compete and cooperate, particularly in the Lower Mainland, since SPOs have competed on RFPs or engaged in forced marriages for bids or direct awards, and then taken part in sector-development and engagement initiatives. SPOs are more familiar with needs assessments and evaluation, tracking the BC government's growing effort in this area, which has led to better oversight by government because of richer feedback

loops. The sector is represented by two established associations – AMSSA and ELSA NET – which have been engaged by the government, and SPOs participate in assorted national and provincial committees.

Finally, since 1998 there have been several upward shifts in the levels of federal government funding under successive Agreements and formulas, which fuelled expansion in BC government programming. However, the reality is that the BC government invested proportionately less of its own funds to complement federal outlays – we heard that it was hard for officials to justify increasing provincial funding given the scale of federal funding and other provincial government priorities.

### **How Did BC Get There? Administrative Style and Pre-Conditions**

We have provided accounts of the inception and evolution of BC’s settlement programs flowing from the three re-alignment Agreements with the Government of Canada. As noted early in Section 2, the BC government knew generally what it wanted to achieve early on with immigrant settlement programs, namely more integration and tailoring of programs at the provincial level, and we have provided an overview of the current mix of settlement programs. Here we draw out what might be called BC’s “administrative style” in implementing, reforming, and redesigning the settlement programs it grew and delivered since 1998. Some key features of the BC perspective and approach are:

- **engagement** with service-provider community, a relationship deepened and expanded as BC transformed its public sector in the early 2000s and as federal funding significantly increased during the mid-2000s;
- **experimental**, relying on successive pilots with federal funding, and using reviews and stock-takes to build in new design features, which culminated in current BC model;
- **community-oriented**, both with respect to a broader conception of immigrant experience in communities and workplaces, but also understanding that different communities had very different needs and required the tailoring of funding and program models to match; and
- **holistic** in how it viewed the experience and pathways of immigrants, including not only where they landed but also settled in a big province, and how skill and language facility was built over time and transitioned into full economic and social integration.

But along with these perspectives and approach were some crucial enabling factors. Indeed, generally we can say that the BC government’s initiatives were administratively led, with guidance and approval sought from ministers. The administrative leadership was the product of two crucial intersecting factors:

- **the Canada-BC agreements had insulating qualities**, they essentially constituted administrative delegations that put authority in the hands of BC officials, creating room and flexibility to use funds in innovative and tailored ways, but consistent with the goals of the Canada-BC agreements, which ensured the funds could not be diverted for other purposes; and
- **an administrative focal point with low staff turnover**, which allowed for building trust and developing on-the-ground knowledge of regional needs and capabilities, as well as fostering sector relationships and information-sharing. This in turn allowed for closer oversight of service contracts, adjustments, and more focus on specific outcomes and outputs (as opposed to inputs and activity-based accountability), along with a more integrated perspective when doing so.

Finally, it is worth reiterating that all of this was made possible because of increased federal funding.

With the Government of Canada taking back responsibility for the delivery of settlement programs, there will inevitably be a shift in administrative style because CIC will have its own priorities and repertoires, but many facets of the BC approach remain salient for ensuring future success. This suggests several questions to consider: *How will CIC handle engaging SPOs and their associations in a BC context? Can a holistic perspective on immigrant needs and experience be maintained at a finer-grained level, one that appreciates BC's regional and labour-market needs? How might collaboration with relevant provincial programs to CIC's settlement programs be accomplished? What will be the strategies for recruiting knowledgeable staff and ensuring low turnover in anticipation of expanded delivery responsibilities and managing SPOs as networks? Finally, given that significant budget pressures will certainly be at play at the federal level in 2014 and beyond, an intriguing question is what would BC have done if the 2010 Agreement had been renewed but federal program funding was to be reduced by a significant amount?*

### **Dealing with Threshold Shifts in Delivering Settlement Programs**

As we look back over the 1998, 2004 and 2010 Agreements, we are struck that they engendered and provided a framework within which several threshold shifts were made in settlement/integration programming in BC. After receiving the delegated authorities in the late 1990s, the first significant shift involved the outcome of the Core Services Review, and the adoption of a new procurement regime in BC. The second shift flowed from increased federal funding, leading to experimentation with pilot projects, the roll-out of the WelcomeBC programming, and increased use of evaluations. The third shift took place as a result of the 2009 strategic review of BC's settlement programming, in anticipation of the 2010 Agreement.

These were significant shifts, and distinct in their own ways – however, in each case the BC government engaged service providers in the upstream and downstream of the initiatives, securing perspectives and feedback along the way. Not all of the ideas and views were accepted, but officials were certainly better informed as a result and such engagement did lead to better designs and delivery models. BC officials were well aware of local conditions and the track records of providers when designing programs and assessing RFPs, and what levels of effort were required in different regions and client segments. For their part, the service providers demonstrated considerable resilience, adaptability and flexibility over the years, and one can say that there developed considerable trust between the sector and BC officials, recognizing that this trust was tested at times. The key observation here is that the BC model was very much a two-way street.

BC's service providers are now readying themselves for a new administrative regime spearheaded by CIC informed by the priorities of a different government and animated by a different procurement system (according to respondents, BC's approach has been more focused on outputs and outcomes, rather than assiduous monitoring and reporting on inputs and activities associated with the Government of Canada's approach). Several questions emerge: *How will this shift to administrative delivery and oversight by the Government of Canada be handled? What plans are there for engaging BC's service provider sector and government officials to ensure some tailoring of federal settlement programs in BC? Will CIC bring an integrated view to how it delivers and procures services for settlement in recognition of BC's regional diversity as well as the horizontal linkages among settlement programs and with cognate (related but not typically thought of as settlement) programs?*

## Developing the Sector

As noted above, one of the features of the BC model has been the BC government and SPOs treating one another as partners and this went beyond simply engaging SPO representatives on new policy and administrative plans. A key theme was the BC government's actions in working with the sector to professionalize and build its capacity in organizations and among staff working for the service delivery providers comprising the sector. This led to competency frameworks of different kinds, professional development, and training.

Here it is worth recalling that AMSSA existed well before the 1998 re-alignment agreement, and ELSANet was established during the 2000s as a complementary association of providers. The BC government directly and indirectly supported further development of these networks, ensuring they could bring a strong voice to vet and reflect on initiatives. They were engaged in the shift to procurement, identifying pilot projects, developing a competency framework (and specific ones for certain occupations), the development and use of web site portals, etc. This led to increased professionalization across SPOs and the sector, and presumably more confidence on the part of government about what skills to look for in SPOs when issuing RFPs and direct awards, and improved oversight. Moreover, the WelcomeBC web portal and programming branding was useful not only for clients but also providers – it created a brand for the sector, making it look more integrated and promoting exploration of more ways to coordinate and even integrate services and providers at the provincial, regional and local levels. In short, the sector is in a fundamentally different place than it was fifteen years ago.

As the Government of Canada prepares to take on responsibility for delivering settlement programs in BC and western Canada, BC's SPO community finds itself at a crossroads again, facing uncertainty similar in scope to when BC started shifting to its procurement model in 2003. The rules of the funding game will be shifting dramatically again, with different administrative priorities in RFPs and reporting. Many SPOs are familiar with federal requirements as part of their mix, but the real issues concern the philosophy guiding them and whether the Government of Canada is open to dialogue and engagement about how to proceed. This leads to questions like: *What sort of engagement will CIC and Government of Canada seek with these networks? Has the sector in BC achieved a level of professional maturity so that it does not need much in the way of nurturing and support from government? Or does it need to remain a priority, and how should this be fostered and resourced?*

## Fostering Coordination and Integration across Government

An important element of the BC model since 1998 has been its efforts to increase coordination and integration across existing and new settlement programs. Sometimes this involved nudging colleagues in other ministries and agencies, and at other times, partnership agreements with ministries and agencies providing other services relevant to settlement and integration. Section 7 of this report provided examples of such arrangements.

This posture, of course, extended beyond working across bureaucratic boundaries: BC has evinced an abiding commitment to developing an integrated perspective of services for different kinds of recipients, but also over the various phases of settlement, recognizing that the mix would change. Moreover, the aspiration of integration moved beyond a worldview and was realized in the architecture and supports for WelcomeBC, a portal epitomizing a holistic perspective. Planning in the upstream, and then implementing this branding and its web presence, certainly engendered more thinking along those lines.

Typically this drive for integration did not emerge from direct political intervention; for the most part it came from BC settlement officials who had a pragmatic vision for these services. Indeed, ministers did not engage in as deep a way with these programs because they did not have to deal with the normal budgeting and reporting process associated with other programs (this had a downside too). However, when the funding increased in the mid-2000s the Branch was directed to take a cross-ministry approach. Generally, because of the tight budgetary environment in BC, officials had considerable incentive to ensure that settlement and integration programs were aligned with emerging BC government priorities, particularly with a very lean public service.

In short, there is arguably a palpable expectation held by BC immigrant communities, service providers, and officials that integrating services is a worthwhile goal, particularly with respect to the regions and communities where immigrants settle, as opposed to disembarking. Several questions arise: *Will this goal be shared by the Government of Canada? What discussions and transition planning will proceed with the BC government and providers about different ways to achieve integration? Can and should the WelcomeBC brand be maintained? What can BC do if it wants to retain or encourage an integrated approach to settlement services consistent with its economic and social development priorities?*

### **Striking a Good Balance with Evaluation**

An important theme in the BC story concerns how evaluation grew in importance, particularly after the 2004 Agreement, but also emerged as a point of contention with the CIC officials. The interest in evaluation increased with the expansion, growth and experimentation with programs in BC, partly driven by BC's own requirements for more evaluation and strategic reviews in an increasingly resource-constrained environment, and partly shaped by Ottawa's focus on increased accountability and expanded reporting requirements since the mid-2000s following the sponsorship scandal.

Where the settlement programs were concerned, BC increased its use of evaluation and developed a better in-house capacity as federal funding expanded in the 2005-2009 era, supporting numerous pilot projects. These evaluations were undertaken more for formative purposes, to foster learning and inform the design of new programs in light of experience. CIC, as a funder of delegated authorities and services, naturally sought evaluations more for summative purposes, to demonstrate to its government and central agencies that it was getting value-for-money and compliance with the Agreements and other strictures. There can be no doubt that BC commissioned an impressive number of evaluations, and we note that larger SPOs also started to commission such studies, but it was the availability and timeliness of sharing findings with CIC which became a key point of contention.

Rather than pick sides, we simply note that these differences were resolved informally and by means of the 2010 Agreement, which required a regular cycle of audits and evaluation, and they reflected different interests and needs – such tensions are a well-known feature of evaluation and audits wherever they take place, often manifested in the same organization! The key go-forward questions that emerge here are these: *What balance should the Government of Canada strike between formative and summative evaluation in light of the services it will provide? To what extent should it work with and engage the BC government and service provider networks to help design evaluations of services delivered for immigrants in BC? What should be the key principles and criteria which animate such evaluations? Will they reflect systems, user, and integrated perspectives on judging the focus and quality of services?*

## **Governance, Administration, and the Canada-BC Relationship**

Over fifteen years, the federal administrative delegation of responsibility for immigration programs to BC led to elaboration of an innovative set of settlement and integration services. These achievements were secured despite the ebb and flow of successive governments at the federal and provincial levels, with different priorities and interests. Here we consider the role of the Agreements but also the working relationships between federal and BC officials that made things work.

Our sense is that the Agreements were never a source of contention. Rather, they provided good guidance: delineating mutual interests, goals, and reporting requirements. In our view their key feature was that they were not too confining and prescriptive, thereby allowing flexibility and innovation. This largely obtained because it was an administrative re-alignment agreement, which meant most authority was effectively delegated to provincial officials, which led to less political interference. However, there was a price: there was less political commitment by the BC government to providing additional funding as the agreements ran their course, and to defending the programs when the federal government made its announcement in 2012 to take back responsibility for the programs.

The relationship between federal and provincial officials withstood shifts in governments and respective policy and administrative priorities. They dealt with issues as they arose, which were reasonably dealt with through changes in practices and in the formal Agreements governing the delegation authorities and transfer of funds. The unilateral announcement in the 2012 federal Budget stands an exception to this practice, but BC respondents understood the federal prerogative in the Agreements and knew that the Government of Canada had its own priorities with respect to managing federal-provincial relations across the country as well as dealing with budget pressures, as did the BC government in the early and late 2000s, which would lead to exploring alternative service delivery arrangements.

What disappoints BC officials and service providers is that no program-based rationale was ever offered for transferring responsibilities back to the federal level, and valuable practices, lessons, considerable staff expertise, and government-sector relationships might be lost as a result of the transition. Further attenuating the situation is that BC has been in election mode, with the government in tight fiscal circumstances, making it difficult to secure attention and find funding to aggressively match federally-funded settlement programs or induce certain kinds of programming. Presumably, however, there will remain a mutual interest in ensuring that settlement programs work well with BC's labour-market, economic development, and regional strategies.

These observations lead to several questions: *Can a functional equivalent to the low-turnover expertise of BC Branch officials be manufactured in the new CIC delivery model? Will CIC develop strategies for systems, practices, and engagement with SPOs to develop a finer-grained sense of BC immigrant and regional needs and the performance of federally-delivered programs in a BC context? Are there plans for discussions during the transition phase, and with constrained budgets, about how to deliver integrated settlement services with a lower threshold of funding?*

## **Concluding Remarks**

Rather than reiterate the current architecture of settlement programs delivered in BC – which have been described in varying degrees of detail in Sections 2, 3 and 4 – this section has instead described the administrative style employed by BC to develop and elaborate the mix of programs and explored some of the pre-conditions and capacities essential to their success, while acknowledging that gaps remain

and sustainability stood as an important issue even before the Government of Canada announced that it would reclaim responsibility for delivering the programs in its 2012 Budget.

This section also identified several “going-forward” questions about some of the practices and capacities which seem to be critical features and underpinnings of the BC model which has emerged, particularly since both governments may have common interests in ensuring integration, capable and responsive providers, and efficient and effective programming in the future. The next and final section of this report takes this line of thinking further, looking to key lessons and opportunities for re-engagement and co-production in the future between the Governments of BC and Canada.

## 11. Concluding: Reflections and Looking Forward

This section considers what lessons the BC experience with delivering federally-funded immigration and settlement programs provides to the Canadian and BC governments as they move forward with the new distribution of responsibilities. We begin by considering the achievements of the BC government having designed, delivered and monitored settlement programs for fifteen years. Then we outline what we see as the main lessons to be learned from the BC experience which should be factored into the design of provincially-focused and national settlement programs. We conclude with some ideas about when the two governments might re-engage on the matter of settlement programs, once the dust has settled with respect to the different transitions underway at each level of government.

### Overall Experience in BC with Settlement Programs

The evolution of programming and service delivery for immigrants in BC under the three CBCIAs has been transformational. In many ways BC “owned” the responsibility and intended to deliver on the agreements, building an integrated, community-based system of services for immigrants. BC took advantage of its long-standing experience in consultation, procurement, building relationships with the sector and accommodating the urban/rural divide in BC. They also built important linkages with other provincial agencies and ministries to better integrate services for immigrants.

Guiding by the three Agreements, BC worked closely with SPOs to create a flexible, client centred delivery system. Many lessons informed how the service delivery system has come to be managed in 2013. The province recognized the sector as experts on programming and service delivery, and engaged them in planning and priority-setting for settlement services in BC. The province and SPOs were partners in designing programming that addressed differences of immigrant settlement services needs and demand in the communities in BC. They also created agreements that allowed SPOs flexibility to respond to changes in the service delivery environment and in client demand. Under the agreements, SPOs were able to build capacity within individual organizations and across the sector as a whole. Over time, working with its partners, BC consolidated an array of programs into an integrated system known as Welcome BC, focused on client-centred services in communities where the services are delivered, and on supporting communities, governments and sectors to be more welcoming and inclusive.

Over time BC built a culture of evaluation and accountability, responding to the requirements identified in the 2004 and 2010 CBCIAs. The large number of evaluations and reports undertaken, mainly since 2006, provides evidence of this culture. However, the culture of accountability was hampered by a lack of technology to collect and report on client outcomes in the service delivery system. Some individual programs, like ELSA and Skills Connect had data systems to support them, but there was no system to consolidate the data of client-specific and system-wide outputs and outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

Accountability for funding remained an issue for all parties through the three Agreements. The decision by the province in 1998 to provide direct funding via the CRF to the public post-secondary system and to maintain that arrangement through the subsequent two agreements coloured the relationships between federal and provincial officials and between provincial officials and SPOs. As well, the management of funding on a year over year basis, particularly after the increases starting in 2006, has

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<sup>8</sup> BC was about to embark on developing a system to capture client specific data for the other settlement programs with the build to start in 2012. BC would have put such systems in place if the agreement had not been cancelled.

been challenging. While the funding supported program innovation and capacity building, the time required to design, secure approval and implement the new programming resulted in the accumulation of a surplus early on which had to be used in subsequent years for eligible programming.

Another point highlighted by several respondents is the province's perceived step back from providing funding and policy guidance in the areas of provincial jurisdiction for immigrants. Some are concerned about the service and program gaps this will leave when the 2010 CBCIA ends in 2014.

### **Lessons Learned from the BC Experience**

In reflecting on BC's experience in designing and delivering immigration settlement programs under three successive Canada-BC Agreements, and given the current array of programs proceeding under the Welcome BC banner, several lessons should be considered by the Government of Canada as it takes back responsibility for programs in this area.

#### *1. Keep the service delivery networks professional and stable*

The BC model has been praised as a "consultative model". Respondents from both BC government and the sectors feel that the BC model has generated a collaborative work culture in the sector through ongoing genuine exchange of ideas and sharing of information. Many sectoral respondents hope that this collaborative work culture will be respected and supported under the new regime. To make this collaboration work will also require a strong sectoral system, including organizing components such as AMSSA and ELSA Net, which can bring the SPOs together including school districts and public post secondary institutions. Most respondents agree that the existing BC sectoral system should be kept intact.

Settlement service has traditionally been positioned as a low-skilled and low-paid social service delivered by former immigrants. This degraded perception of settlement service has caused low morale and high turnover in the sector. With the support of the BC government, the sector has gradually professionalized its staff. It is important to continue this process of professionalizing the settlement services sector and those who work in it.

BC Immigration and Integration Branch staff observed that other ministries, levels of government, businesses, academics, and employers sought BC settlement service provider expertise. Examples include the Mayor of Vancouver's Working Group on Immigration (developing municipal policy and practice), the BC Ministry of Social Development (developing a new provincial employment program), the BC Ministry of Health (improving immigrant access to health information), banks (developing immigrant-specific financial products), and major employers such as Safeway and Home Depot (hiring and maintaining immigrant employees).

One of the major advantages of the procurement system is the multi-year funding stability and flexibility that allows SPOs to better plan for its service development. It also allows SPOs to provide more stable employment and more systematic training for staff. Additionally, these agreements have allowed SPOs to develop and improve their "back office" functions such as organizational and employee development, accountability systems and analytical capacity.

## 2. *Provide flexible and responsive programming*

The BC model has been recognized as highly flexible and responsive to special and local needs. Among all the respondents, there is a strong consensus that the flexibility and responsiveness of the BC model should be embraced by the new generic service model in at least three different areas:

- It should broaden the settlement service from an individual adult-based focus to a holistic approach that covers the special needs of different members of the immigrant's family.
- It should better connect the needs of settlement and integration. Economically, it needs to better integrate settlement and labour market needs of working age immigrants. Socially, it needs to support communities to build capacity to receive, retain and integrate newcomers. It is suggested by many respondents that it is critical to recognize the importance of building citizenship and social cohesion as a part of settlement and integration programming.
- Regional planning and support of alternative programs are imperative to support smaller urban centres and rural BC to attract and retain newcomers. A consultative approach is recommended to ensure that regional differences are better reflected in resource allocation and programming.

While a flexible, integrated, holistic approach tailored to the needs of different communities or regions may seem like a more expensive approach towards providing programs, it can be seen as better leveraging the full range of programs across and beyond the settlement domain in a tight fiscal environment.

## 3. *Continue to support evidence-informed practice*

In general, respondents from different constituencies expressed appreciation for the ongoing program evaluation and monitoring efforts undertaken by the BC government. Generally, these have been seen as collaborative rather than top-down. We note that BC government respondents found the formative evaluations of pilots to be particularly useful in informing the re-profiling of BC's program architecture as part of its strategic review in 2009, also informing the 2010 Canada-BC Agreement.

Likewise, some of the larger SPOs in British Columbia have started to commission their own evaluations and needs assessments. Most respondents recommend continuation of a collaborative, evidence-informed approach.

## 4. *Maintain an integrated, systems approach to settlement services*

A vision for providing integrated services for settlement animated BC's interest in negotiating the 1998 Agreement, with these ideas tested, elaborated and refined in BC programming. Using integration and systems perspectives emerged from engaging SPOs as a community in the upstream and downstream of new initiatives, and adopting new technology such as the WelcomeBC portal which offered integration to clients, communities, and providers alike across services and within regions and local communities. But such initiatives feed on themselves: integration language and discussion inevitably led to more thinking, strategizing, and programming along these lines.

The citizen-centered service-delivery movement is still relevant and gathering steam, not only with ever more technological possibilities, but also because of the priority now attached to obtaining value-for-money and efficiency in tight fiscal environments. Integration and systems perspectives are not simply about providing an integrated experience for clients, but rather, also ensuring that the benefits of outlays and investments by federal and provincial governments in different program areas are fully levered and realized over the longer term.

### *5. Establish and maintain key relationships*

Respondents were clear that relationship-building is critical. Relationships with SPOs were key from the outset; it is unlikely BC would have signed the first CBCIA in 1998 without its existing relationship with the sector, and the existing working relationship between provincial and federal officials. Establishing and tending relationships amongst the stakeholders over the three CBCIAs was central to BC's success.

The nature of immigrant settlement programming means that many players have a piece of the puzzle as well as 'skin in the game'. Strong relationships allow for frank, constructive, and imaginative conversations with those players, generating useful information, which will be central to CIC's success.

### **Final Remarks: Looking Forward and Re-Engagement**

The BC approach to designing and delivering settlement programs with federal funding has been holistic, integrative, experimental, and relied heavily on engagement. The network of service providers have been expanded and moved to a different threshold of professionalism and integration. An overarching lesson from the BC experience revolves around its vision about integration, developing a fine-grained, on-the-ground view of client and provider needs on a regional basis within the province, and getting value-for-money by integrating services and programs.

Although the decision has been made to return primary responsibility for delivering and coordinating settlement and integration programs to CIC, it would seem prudent to continue considering how to integrate and tailor programs for immigrants based on not only where they land but also settle, and to think holistically and engage providers and provincial ministries about the range of pertinent federal and provincial programs for increasing the chances of successful integration of immigrants at different phases of the settlement process.

We realize that in the short term the focus of the Government of Canada will be on developing new administrative structures and repertoires for delivering settlement programs to BC, a major transition by any standard. For its part, the BC government will be winding down its programming for settlement services and reallocating staff accordingly, and preparing for an election, followed by the normal transition phase with a new government taking stock of the provincial economy and budget, and identifying how to move forward with its priorities.

We anticipate that in the medium term the time will be ripe for re-engagement on the immigration and settlement file once both governments have moved through these concurrent transitions. Ultimately this is about ensuring that the benefits of outlays and investments by both federal and provincial governments in different program areas are fully levered and the desired outcomes are realized over the longer term. The shared goal should be to achieve desired settlement outcomes to improve economic and social development in Canada and for the unique needs of BC's diverse economic regions.

## **12. Annexes**

**1 – Interviewees**

**2 – References and Key Documents**

**2(A) – Evaluation Reports**

**3 – 1998 Canada-British Columbia Agreement for Co-operation on Immigration**

**4 – Key Features of the 2004 and 2010 Canada-British Columbia Agreements for Co-operation on Immigration**

## Annex 1 – Interviewees

The following individuals agreed to speak to us, in person or by telephone:

- Shannon Baskerville, Assistant Deputy Minister, Labour Market Programs, BC government
- Alison Bledsoe, United Way
- Rob Boldt, CIC, BC Region and former Director, Performance Management, WelcomeBC
- Sherman Chan, MOSAIC
- Tung Chan, former CEO, SUCCESS
- Vicki Chiu, Manager, Settlement and Welcoming Communities, WelcomeBC
- Alison Dudley, Director, Sector Relations, WelcomeBC
- Chris Friesen, Director of Settlement Services, Immigrant Serving Society of BC
- Meharoona Ghani, former EmbraceBC
- Charan Gill, PICS
- Manpreet Grewal, Manager, Multicultural and Immigrant Services Department, Abbotsford Community Services
- Dale Hunter, Vancouver Community College
- Cathy Hunter (Stigant), former Executive Director, BC government
- Tom Jensen, former ADM, Immigration and Multiculturalism, BC government
- Thomas Kwadzovia, former Manager, Procurement and Contracting, WelcomeBC
- Karen Larcombe, Neighbourhood House consortium
- Brenda Lohrenz, ELSANet
- Patrick Mackenzie, CIC, BC Region
- Jean McRae, Executive Director, Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria
- Lynn Moran and Wendy McCulloch, AMSSA
- Brent Mulhall, Back in Motion
- Aileen Murphy, City Planner, Surrey
- Kelly Pollack, Immigrant Employers Council of BC
- Ben Pollard, former Director, Program Management and Evaluation, WelcomeBC
- Catherine Poole, Director, Policy, Planning & Evaluation Branch, Immigrant Integration Branch
- Stephen Rumpel, Director, Adult Education and Skills Development, Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology
- Hilde Schlossar, Executive Director, Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society
- Jean Seguin, Director, Labour Market Access and Client-centred Policy, NHQ, CIC, Ottawa
- Lucy Swib, Director, Procurement and Regional Operations
- Deborah Tunis, Director General, NHQ – Integration, CIC, Ottawa
- Jacqueline Van Dyk, Libraries, Min of Education (Libraries/Settlement partnerships)
- Bill Walters, former Director, WelcomeBC
- Tim Welsh, Former AMSSA
- Baldwin Wong, City Planner, Vancouver
- Jerry Wu, SWIS – Vancouver School Board
- Deb Zehr, former Executive Director, WelcomeBC

## Annex 2 – References and Key Documents

Canada-BC Immigration Agreement - all iterations.

Evaluations of the WelcomeBC Programs and/or elements of the program (see Annex 2A)

WelcomeBC Annual Reports

History, Milestones and Drivers Document – Government of BC to provide framework and key documents to research team

Procurement Documents (2004-2012)

Sample Contracts, with an emphasis on Deliverables

Strategic Plans and Service Plans

Cross-Ministry MOUs and external Partnership MOUs

Welcoming Communities Survey

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2010 BC Settlement and Adaptation Program Outcomes and Client Satisfaction Survey, Stream 1 – Information and Support Services. BC Stats. August 2010

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2010 BC Settlement and Adaptation Program Outcomes and Client Satisfaction Survey, Stream 2 – Community Bridging Services- Youth Services. BC Stats. August 2010

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BC Settlement and Adaptation Program Formative Evaluation. Final Report. Focus Consultants. March 2007

Building Welcoming and Inclusive Neighbourhoods, Evaluation Report. Nota Bene Consulting Group. April 2009

Communicating at Work: A Skills Development Course for Licensed Internationally Educated Health Professionals Pilot Project Final Report. Vancouver Coastal Health. August 2010,

Community Experiences in British Columbia: The Recent Immigrants & Visible Minority Perspective, BC Stats. January 6, 2012

Critical Incident Response Model: Small Scale Outcome Evaluation Report. Elevate Consulting. March 2008

Demonstration Projects to Support Older Immigrant Youth and Young Adults, Interim Formative Evaluation Report – A Synopsis of Eleven Demonstration Projects. Nota Bene Consulting Group. April 2010.

Demonstration Projects for Older Immigrant Youth and Young Adults, Year One final Evaluation Report. Nota Bene Consulting Group. August 2010.

- Early Childhood Refugee Pilot. First Interim Evaluation Report. Carol Munro, M.A.; Evaluation Consultant. March 2010
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- Evaluation of the Court Information Program for Immigrants. Final Report. Catherine Tait Consulting. March 2011
- Evaluation of the Immigrant PLEI Consortium (IPC) Project. Final Report. Focus Consultants. February 2011
- Evaluation of the Law Related English Language Services for Adults Project. Final Report. Catherine Tait Consulting. February 2011
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- Evaluation of the Professional Communication for Internationally Educated Health Professionals Course. Final Report. Ference Weicker and Co. Ltd. April 2011
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### **Annex 3 – 1998 Canada-BC Agreement for Co-operation on Immigration**

- [Please click here for link to Electronic Version of \*Agreement for Canada-British Columbia Co-operation on Immigration\*, original signed May 19, 1998.](#)

## Annex 4 – Key Features of 2004 and 2010 Canada-BC Agreements for Co-operation on Immigration

Section	2004 Agreement	2010 Agreement
<b>Shared vision and principles</b>	<p>Recognize importance of facilitating immigrant/refugee settlement/integration and that both levels of government have a role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) integration requires commitment of newcomers</li> <li>b) ability to communicate in one of Canada’s official languages is key</li> <li>c) newcomers’ contributions to economic/social fabric of Canada are valued: it is important for newcomers to become economically self-sufficient; it is important for communities in Canada to help to ensure newcomers have opportunities to participate in economic/social life</li> <li>d) important to share with newcomers the principles, traditions and values that are inherent in Canadian society</li> <li>e) services will be aimed at newcomers becoming self-sufficient and priority is those facing significant barriers to integration and deemed most in need within the community</li> <li>f) services across the country will be flexible, responsive and reasonably comparable</li> </ul>	<p>Recognize importance of facilitating immigrant/refugee settlement/integration, <b>which includes building and supporting welcoming and inclusive communities</b>, and that both levels of government have a role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• integration requires commitment of newcomers</li> <li>• ability to communicate in one of Canada’s official languages is key</li> <li>• economic self-sufficiency and participation in the social/political/cultural dimensions of life in Canada are important for successful settlement/integration and <b>important contributions are recognized/valued by host communities</b></li> <li>• <b>labour market integration of Immigrants and Refugees is key to achieving economic self-sufficiency and key in supporting Canada’s future economic development</b></li> <li>• those facing significant barriers to successful settlement /integration and who are deemed most in need within the community, are a priority</li> <li>• <b>communities and workplaces that are welcoming and inclusive are integral to successful settlement/integration</b></li> <li>• settlement/integration services should be flexible and <b>responsive to individual/community needs</b> with outcomes being reasonably comparable across Canada</li> <li>• <b>working together to ensure accountability for federally funded settlement/integration services, including reporting on outcomes is of high importance to both orders of government to support responsive, efficient and effective settlement/integration services</b></li> <li>• <b>coordination and communication between Canada and BC are key to successful delivery of programs when responsibilities of the two orders of government intersect or are shared</b></li> </ul>

Section	2004 Agreement	2010 Agreement
<b>Canada's Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide on-going funding to BC to support design, administration and delivery of settlement and integration services</li> <li>• Ensure services for specified humanitarian groups resettled from abroad are provided</li> <li>• Provide settlement/integration services at the national level including: port of entry info services; info and advice to assist in planning/delivery of services on matters such as immigration trends, research findings and relevant federal policies; facilitate exchange of info on best practices; effective/cost efficient orientation overseas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to section 6.0 of this Annex, provide ongoing funding to BC to support design, administration, delivery, performance measurement and evaluation of settlement/integration services</li> <li>• Ensure services for Convention refugees abroad and humanitarian-protected persons abroad are provided</li> <li>• Provide settlement/integration services at federal level including: port of entry info services; info and advice to assist in planning and delivery of settlement/integration services on matters such as immigration trends, research findings and relevant federal policies; orientation overseas</li> <li>• <b>Establish and chair multilateral working group for development of an accountability framework to include comparable outcomes; multilateral planning process and ongoing performance measurement and reporting strategy</b></li> </ul>

Section	2004 Agreement	2010 Agreement
<b>BC's Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC will design, administer and deliver settlement/integration services to immigrants and refugees residing in BC in accordance with the shared principles outlined in this Annex.</li> <li>• BC will ensure that there is regular community involvement in identifying existing/emerging settlement/integration needs and in setting priorities for the provision of services through a process that: is representative of affected communities; draws on a balance of settlement and mainstream service providers, immigrant sectoral supports and client perspectives; draws on info about immigration/integration trends, best practices, research results; is at arm's length from specific funding decisions that may be perceived as conflict of interest situations</li> <li>• BC will administer the funds transferred under this annex in a way that: is responsive to community priorities; ensures that a broad range of service providers are eligible for funding, with service quality and cost effectiveness as key considerations; recognizes the needs and concerns for the immigrant sectoral supports to provide professional development and support services for program delivery changes; and acknowledges federal funding contributions.</li> <li>• BC will take into account the official languages needs of newcomers in developing program priorities for settlement/integration services</li> <li>• In delivering its settlement/integration services BC will actively offer its services in either official language where this is a significant demand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC will design, administer and deliver settlement/integration services in accordance with the terms of this Annex.</li> <li>• BC will work cooperatively with other stakeholders to ensure their involvement in identifying existing/emerging settlement/integration needs and in setting priorities for provision of the services through a process that: takes into consideration interest of affected communities including Minority Official language Communities; draws on consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including settlement and mainstream service providers, umbrella organizations and clients, and invites Canada's participation in these consultations to the fullest extent possible; draws on information about immigration/integration trends, best practices and research results; is at arm's length from specific funding decisions that may be perceived as conflict of interest situations.</li> <li>• BC will administer the funds transferred under this Annex in a way that: ensure that a broad range of service providers are eligible for funding, with service quality and cost effectiveness as key considerations; acknowledges federal funding contributions; <b>ensures that federally-funded settlement/integration will not be offered for profit, and that Eligible Clients do not pay user fees for federally-funded services.</b></li> <li>• <b>BC will ensure that all ministries involved in delivering federally funded settlement and integration services meet the reporting requirements set out in this Annex.</b></li> <li>• BC will agree to take into account the needs of the Minority Official Language Communities and Eligible Clients when developing program priorities</li> <li>• In delivering settlement/integration services, BC will actively offer its services in either of Canada's official language where there is significant demand</li> <li>• BC will provide a service plan and annual report as outlined in section 7.4 of this Annex.</li> <li>• <b>BC will participate in the multilateral working group on accountability that will develop a national accountability framework and include where reasonable and to the fullest extent possible, elements of the national accountability framework in BC's accountability framework in order to report on comparable outcomes.</b></li> </ul>

Section	2004 Agreement	2010 Agreement
<b>Shared Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<p>Canada and BC agree to work together and with other provinces and territories to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• define what constitutes reasonably comparable settlement services;</li> <li>• establish and implement common measures and indicators of results to serve accountability and evaluation needs;</li> <li>• enable the availability of effective orientation abroad for potential immigrants and refugees on settlement/integration challenges in Canada;</li> <li>• develop and distribute orientation materials in Canada in partnership with stakeholders;</li> <li>• improve Canadians' understanding of the impact of immigration and promote an understanding of integration as embodied in the shared principles;</li> <li>• define and pursue, with other stakeholders, appropriate research and evaluation projects that will improve understanding of the settlement/integration process and help people make informed decisions on the best use of public funds to facilitate this process</li> </ul>	<p>Canada and BC agree to work together and with other provinces and territories to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• define what constitutes reasonably comparable settlement services;</li> <li>• use efforts to provide services that are reasonably comparable across Canada;</li> <li>• enable the availability of effective orientation abroad for potential immigrants and refugees on settlement/integration challenges in Canada;</li> <li>• develop and distribute orientation materials in Canada in partnership with stakeholders;</li> <li>• coordinate overseas activities and work to address the implications for services delivered</li> <li>• define and pursue, with other stakeholders, appropriate research and evaluation projects that will improve understanding of the settlement/integration process and help people make informed decisions on the best use of public funds to facilitate this process</li> <li>• improve Canadians' understanding of the impact of immigration and promote an understanding of integration as embodied in Section 2.1(a) of this Annex</li> <li>• <b>within a multilateral forum, identify priority areas for funding under the Innovation Fund and share, for information purposes, the list of projects chosen for funding under the IF and ensure a coordinated approach is taken to complement existing programs/services and avoid overlap/duplication</b></li> </ul>

Section	2004 Agreement	2010 Agreement
<p><b>Financial Arrangements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2004-2005, BC will receive <b>\$36,435,407</b> in funding to support the design, administration and delivery of settlement and integration services</li> <li>• Canada and BC agree to review the annual administrative funding to BC for settlement/integration services. To maintain a stable infrastructure, administration and staffing: Canada and BC agree to complete the first round of negotiations under this section in order to implement a new admin funding arrangement by July 1, 2004; the current annual funding of <b>\$1.2 million</b> for administration will continue until a new arrangement has been agreed upon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the 2009-2010 fiscal year, BC will receive <b>\$120,729,982</b> in funding to support the design, administration, delivery, <b>performance measurement and evaluation</b> of the settlement and integration services. This amount includes funding to support activities related to an immigration portal, enhanced language training and welcoming communities initiatives. BC will also receive <b>\$7,325,155</b> for administration in 2009-10.</li> </ul>

Section	2004 Agreement	2010 Agreement
<b>Accountability and Reporting (2004) &amp; Program Integrity (2010)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC will provide Canada with an annual service plan, for the coming fiscal year as per Appendix 1 of this Annex, by April 30 of each year</li> <li>• BC will provide Canada with an annual report for the period covered by the previous fiscal year, as per Appendix 2 of this Annex, by July 15 of each year on the funds transferred by Canada under this annex</li> <li>• BC will develop an accountability framework for the purpose of reporting to British Columbians on the outcomes of the settle programs it delivers</li> <li>• BC will inform Canada in writing of any reductions in their own level of spending on settlement services</li> <li>• BC will follow their normal annual audit practices to ensure probity, taking into consideration federal guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC will provide Canada by May 31 of each year with an annual <b>three year service plan</b> which includes the elements outlined in Appendix 1: Annual Service Plan of this Annex</li> <li>• <b>BC is committed to evaluating all federally funded settlement/integration services in British Columbia, including programs, projects and initiatives, and will inform Canada of all evaluations planned and of evaluation results in annual service plans and reports to CIC. For all programs and their components BC will complete evaluations of these services on a 5-year cycle.</b></li> <li>• <b>As set out in section 6.0, this Annex transfers administration funding to BC. One of the intended uses of this funding is evaluation.</b></li> <li>• BC will provide Canada with an annual report for the period covered by the previous fiscal year by August 31<sup>st</sup> of each year on the funds transferred by Canada under this Annex <b>and the results achieved.</b></li> <li>• <b>The annual report will demonstrate that 100% of the funds provided under this Annex were used in a way consistent with the shared principles and spent exclusively on the design, administration, delivery, performance measurement and evaluation of settlement/ integration as per the terms of this Annex.</b></li> <li>• <b>BC will continue to use a results-based management approach to the design, admin and delivery of its programs for the purposes of probity and accountability</b></li> <li>• <b>To ensure appropriate accountability, it is necessary to have an effective financial and program control environment; therefore, BC will: implement an internal audit strategy that addresses all areas of higher risk and significance, that will enable it to demonstrate due diligence has been exercised, that it is consistent with generally accepted accounting principles and auditing standards and that provides that audit results are shared with Canada within 6 months of the audit's completion and in accordance with section 10.4 of the General Provisions of this Agreement provide access to all relevant information. documentation and data.</b></li> </ul>

