

INSTITUTE *for* MEDIA, POLICY *and* CIVIL SOCIETY

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Promoting Settlement Programs in Toronto: A Communication Plan  
Settlement Directorate Ontario Region (SDOR)

*Prepared by IMPACS Communications Centre  
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# Executive Summary

This communication plan analyzes some of the current communication practices implemented by the Settlement Directorate Ontario Region (SDOR) in its efforts to promote settlement services to immigrants. Specifically, the plan assesses the knowledge of settlement services among six immigrant communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). This document outlines a number of strategies and makes a series of recommendations on how to best promote settlement services within these six communities. These strategies and recommendations could be used in a broader communication campaign in the future.

The main question that this plan attempts to answer is: how to increase awareness of settlement programs among immigrants who need settlement services but do not know about them?

To answer this question IMPACS used a number of data gathering and research tools. Among others, IMPACS interviewed community workers and representatives; conducted a literature review; organized and facilitated focus groups; conducted a brand review and visited a number of SDOR sites.

As a result of this research, IMPACS has made a number of recommendations grouped under five strategies. One, SDOR should continue its face-to-face communication efforts within its departments and within the settlement sector. Two, SDOR should invest in reader friendly and language specific collateral material such as posters and brochures. Three, SDOR must continue working in close collaboration with settlement agencies. SDOR must provide the funding and logistical support that would assist agencies in delivering professional promotion and marketing campaigns. SDOR should invest in an advertising campaign that is language specific, on going and that makes extensive use of the ethnic media. And five, SDOR should investigate closer partnerships with other information providers such as 211 Community Information Toronto phone line to promote settlement services.

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# Introduction and overview

In August of 2002, the Settlement Directorate Ontario Region (SDOR) issued a call for proposals for a communication research project focusing on the development of a communications plan to raise the awareness of settlement programs and services in Toronto. IMPACS was hired in October 2002 to carry out this project. The settlement programs funded by SDOR are:

- ❑ **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)**  
This program provides basic language instruction in one of Canada's official languages to adult immigrants as soon as possible after their arrival in Canada so they may acquire the necessary skills to integrate into Canadian society.
- ❑ **Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP)**  
ISAP funds organizations to help immigrants adjust to life in Canada. ISAP programming in Ontario also includes Job Search Workshop (JSW) and Settlement Worker in Schools (SWIS).
- ❑ **HOST Program**  
The HOST Program funds organizations to recruit, train, match and monitor volunteers who help newcomers adapt to Canadian life.
- ❑ **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)**  
RAP provides income support and essential services to refugees and humanitarian cases for which the government has undertaken a financial commitment.

To limit the scope of this project, six communities in the Greater Toronto Area were selected: Colombian, Romanian, Iraqi, Tamil, Sudanese and Chinese. A number of factors contributed to this selection. SDOR wanted to have representation from larger and smaller communities as well as from long-established communities and more recently established ones. SDOR was also concerned with having representation from all the continents that generate immigration to Canada. It is clear that to a large extent this selection is arbitrary; however, this project is a pilot that could be replicated in other communities.

## PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This project stems from the assumption, based on anecdotal and to a certain extent statistical evidence, that newcomers generally do not know about settlement services provided by SDOR.

Although statistics vary, and are incomplete due to a number of factors, it is generally acknowledged by settlement workers that only a fraction of newcomers actually use

settlement services. The percentages of newcomers using settlement services can vary significantly. This may be due to the fact that many settlement agencies do not gather statistical information and the methods of gathering statistics are not standardized across the settlement sector. The research conducted for the development of this communications plan also aimed to:

- ❑ Verify, within the limitations of this project, the above assumption.
- ❑ Develop recommendations to remedy this situation.
- ❑ Design an evaluation mechanism to ensure that the recommendations are actually solving the problem.

## RESEARCH METHODS

IMPACS used the following research methods to carry out the project and to develop this communications plan for SDOR:

1. **Initial consultation with SDOR staff:** the main consultation meeting was held at the OAISIS offices on October 15, 2002. The objective of the meeting was to define the scope of the project. Subsequently, a number of other meetings were held between IMPACS and SDOR staff.
2. **Community interviews:** IMPACS designed a questionnaire as a basis for a general survey of the settlement services and possible communication channels. Twenty individuals were surveyed in one-on-one phone and in-person interviews.
3. **Literature review:** IMPACS reviewed some of the promotional materials currently used by SDOR. Materials selected were either directly produced by SDOR or funded by it. The focus of the review was the *Welcome to Canada* package provided to newcomers at the airport and other points of entry. Other documents were also reviewed: community brochures, the Newcomer Information Centre (NIC) brochure, and the *Alone in Canada* booklet.
4. **Focus groups:** IMPACS conducted six focus groups, one in each of the target communities. The goal of the focus groups was to determine the scope of newcomers' knowledge about settlement programs and to gather ideas about outreach methods. For each of the focus groups a community moderator was hired. IMPACS and the moderators coordinated recruitment of participants and the development of a focus group discussion guide.

For each of the focus groups, 10 participants were recruited. The groups were designed according to the following criteria:

- ❑ Gender balance: most of the groups had 5 women and 5 men
- ❑ Age: the age range of the participants was between 17 and 65 +.

- ❑ Class of immigrants: individuals from family as well as from the professional (independent) classes were invited.
- ❑ Length in Canada: recent immigrants (few weeks to few months) and more established immigrants (one year or more) participated in the focus groups.

Each of the groups received an orientation about SDOR settlement services.

5. **Discussions with community moderators:** each of the individuals hired had a broad knowledge of their community. IMPACS therefore organized informal discussions with each of them to further understand their respective communities and to complement the focus group and community interview findings.
6. **Professional surveys:** discussions on methodology and communication planning took place within the IMPACS communications team in Toronto and Vancouver.
7. **Brand review:** IMPACS reviewed the overall brand of settlement services as presented by SDOR. This was done through specific questions during the community survey and focus groups. Also, the literature review was a key element in analyzing the settlement brand.
8. **Community mapping:** to determine target audiences and the scope of the communication plan, IMPACS mapped the geographic distribution of the six target communities in the GTA area.
9. **Ethnic media survey:** it soon became apparent that the best communication channels are the various ethnic media outlets. Therefore, IMPACS developed a template for a selected number of outlets. The templates outline the scope and geographic range of the outlets.
10. **Costing:** IMPACS also researched advertising costs in ethnic and mainstream (METRO) media.
11. **Census 2001 review:** to put this research into context, IMPACS reviewed some of the latest data provided by the 2001 census. However, because the data has only been partially released, further research may need to be done.
12. **Settlement research:** IMPACS reviewed some of the existing research on settlement services. See Appendix 6.
13. **Visit to Pearson International Airport:** the goal of this visit was to analyze the Immigration Reception and Information Services (IRIS) program operated by Malton Neighbourhood Services. IMPACS also reviewed a 1997 report conducted by Consulting and Audit Canada; this report provided a detailed look at two major Ports of Entry: Toronto and Vancouver.

14. **Assessment of outreach capacity at the Newcomer Information Centre (NIC):** IMPACS visited NIC twice. The First time, we interviewed one of the staff; the second time, we took a closer look at NIC's promotional displays. IMPACS also reviewed NIC's outreach plan and settlement worker's job description. IMPACS also reviewed NIC's promotional material.
15. **Assessment of the effectiveness of the 211 Community Connection:** the objective was to establish whether or not it would be possible to develop a partnership between the 211 community hotline and settlement services.
16. **Review of settlement.org web site:** IMPACS reviewed the effectiveness of settlement.org, as a major provider of information, in disseminating settlement-related information. IMPACS met with OCASI staff twice and conducted an assessment of the site.
17. **Other research:** IMPACS also reviewed other initiatives such as the partnership between settlement.org, canadainfonet.org and World Education Services (WES).

## LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT

As will be discussed in the next section, the goal of this project was to determine what are the most appropriate methods to communicate the existence of settlement services to newcomer communities.

Due to practical as well as financial reasons, the project only surveyed six communities in the Greater Toronto Area. The surveys done in each of the communities are broadly representative, but not exhaustive.

Each community is incredibly diverse in terms of language, socio-economics, religious practices, politics, demographics and other indicators. This presented obvious research difficulties, especially in terms of organizing focus groups. IMPACS worked very closely with community moderators to brief them about the goals and objectives of the focus groups and making sure that settlement programs were understood. However, the reliance on an intermediary – because of the language barrier – represents an added challenge and undoubtedly affected information gathering during the session and the analysis of the focus groups' findings.

For example, given the fact that we could only organize one focus group per community the representative sample was very small. Ideally, it would have been appropriate to hold 5 to 8 focus groups in each community to get a representative sample of somewhere between 50 to 80 individuals. Having very heterogeneous groups created group-dynamics challenges that may have altered some of the findings. In addition, even in the best circumstances of total random selection of participants for focus groups the margin of error could be as high as 40%. The outcomes, therefore, of focus groups are best

understood as describing themes, or general impressions, and further work may need to be done to test new approaches by SDOR.

This project could only serve as an initial assessment of communication channels between the communities surveyed and SDOR settlement programs. Although many similarities between the six communities exist, it may not be appropriate to generalize these findings to other communities living in the GTA without conducting a more exhaustive research.

Settlement in this project strictly means the services outlined on page 2. Settlement is not used in its broader sense: securing a job, finding new friends and creating new relationships, and fully participating in the social, political, cultural and economic life of Canada.

# Defining success

During the initial meeting on October 15, 2002, SDOR staff identified the following statement as an indicator of success in their communications plan: **increase awareness of settlement programs among immigrants who need settlement services but do not know about them.**

# Situational analysis

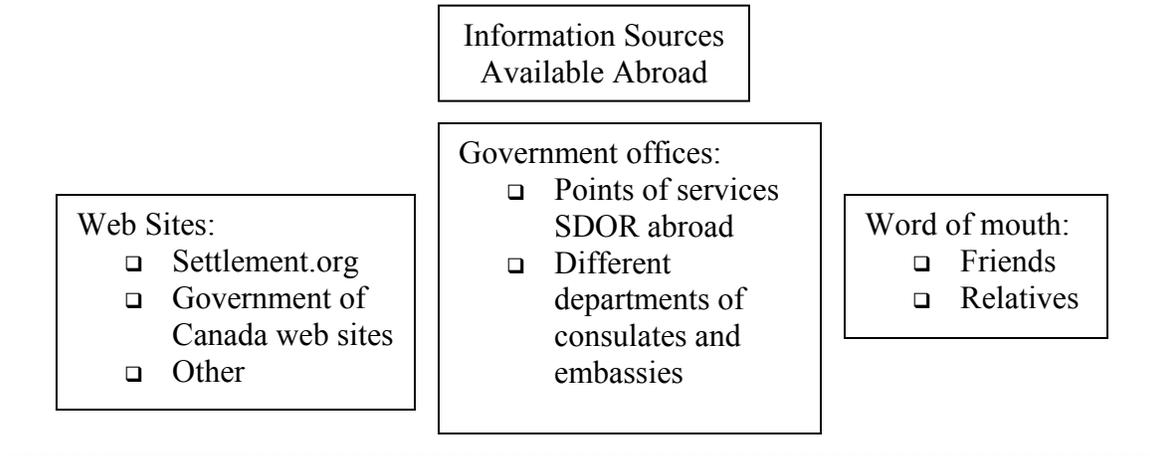
## EXISTING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Focus group discussions, interviews with community members and meetings with SDOR staff show that newcomers to Canada may receive information regarding settlement services from a variety of channels:

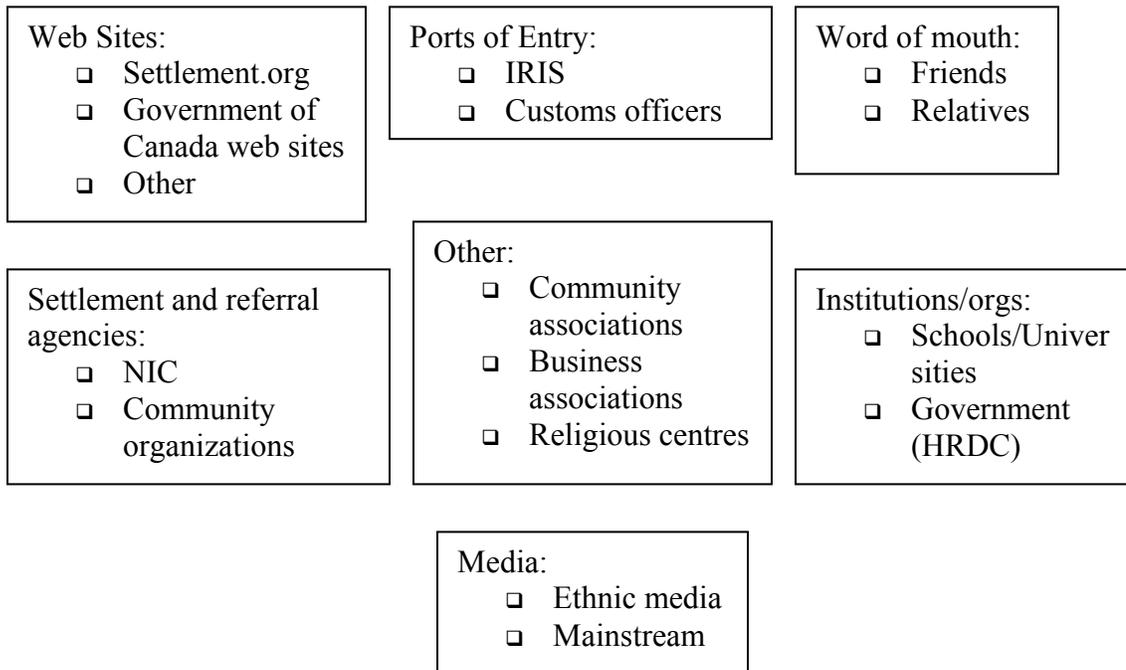
- ❑ While still abroad, these channels may include the Internet, offices of the Canadian government as well as friends and relatives living in Canada, or returned from Canada.
- ❑ Once a person has been accepted for immigration to Canada, his or her first point of contact with settlement information is usually at the airports or border crossings (Ports of Entry). At the Pearson International Airport, Malton Neighbourhood Services operates two information booths (Kiosks), one at Terminal I; the other at Terminal III. This project is funded by SDOR. Settlement workers welcome newcomers and hand out an information package available in English and French. The Kiosks are open everyday from 1:30 pm to 10:30 pm (Terminal I) and from 2:00 pm to 11:00 pm (Terminal III). In case of an arrival time outside of the opening hours, information packages are kept with customs officers.
- ❑ Once outside of the airport, newcomers are left to their own devices to find out about settlement services. Often, they are received by friends or relatives who will share their own experiences of settling in Canada and direct them to settlement services familiar to them.
- ❑ After a few days of their arrival, newcomers may find out about settlement services from a number of sources: the Internet, settlement agencies, community organizations, places of worship, schools, media, etc... However, the most important sources of information are friends and relatives or other community members.

The following chart summarizes the different possible points of contact between newcomers and settlement services.

Chart 1



Information Sources Available in Canada



## IMMIGRATION PATTERNS

The data now available from Census 2001 shows that:

1. Toronto's population is in excess of 4,600,000 and has grown by 9.8% since the last census in 1996.
2. The majority of people living in Toronto are foreign-born.
3. At least one quarter of people living in Toronto immigrated into the city between 1991 and 2001.
4. Toronto is the largest metropolitan area in Canada, and continues to be the largest recipient of immigrants.
5. At least 40 percent of Torontonians listed languages other than English and French as their first language.

These preliminary statistics clearly show that the demand on the settlement sector will continue to increase, and also suggest that services from settlement agencies may increasingly need to be delivered in other than Canada's two official languages.

## SPECIFIC COMMUNITY DATA

- The **Colombian** community is relatively new to GTA and relatively small. The exact numbers are not available and Statistics Canada lumps all individuals from Latin America in one category. According to the most recent data available from 2001 census, the Latin American population in Toronto is estimated at 54,350. Some community members estimate the Colombian population to be around 10,000.
- The 2001 census puts the size of the **Romanian** community at some 20,000. Because of its size there isn't a well-defined commercial or cultural hub in the city for the Romanian community. Also, there isn't any formal Romanian organizations or associations.
- As with the Latin American grouping, the **Iraqi** community is lumped together under the Arab category. According to this grouping, the 2001 census puts the Arab population of Toronto at 22,335.
- Toronto's South Asian population, of which **Tamils** are a part, is put at 253,920 by census 2001. It is estimated that more than 70,000 of those are Tamil.

- ❑ No statistics are available about the **Sudanese** community. However, community members estimate the Sudanese population at about 10,000. One must also take into account that some Sudanese may list their origin as being Arabic.
- ❑ Statistics Canada 2001 census shows the total population of **Chinese** sub-group in Canada as surpassing 1 million mark for the first time. They make up 3.5 per cent of the country's population and 26 per cent of the visible-minority population. Of these Chinese, nearly 34 per cent (with a total of 409,500) lived in Greater Toronto.

## **THE SETTLEMENT SECTOR**

In many cases, community settlement agencies and especially ethno-specific service providers have seen their budgets cut in recent years. Although outreach and publicity is part of many settlement workers' job descriptions, there is generally little allocated to the actual design, production and distribution of promotional materials. This lack of resources often results in materials that are inconsistent, scarce or unappealing. Interviews with community leaders and settlement workers indicate that there are good reasons for leaving promotion and publicity in the hands of settlement agencies. They know their clients and their communities very well and are able to reach out to them in cost-effective ways. However, a more coordinated communication and marketing planning may be needed to further promote settlement services.

## **REVIEW OF CURRENT COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES**

### Information provided abroad by the Government of Canada:

Most of the information provided to potential immigrants to Canada is immigration related and not settlement related. Officers dealing with applications are administrators and meet with applicants only on rare occasions. When such meetings take place, discussion revolves around specific points of the application. If settlement issues are discussed, such as language or job opportunities, it is at the discretion of the officer who may or may not be informed of settlement programs.

SDOR actively participates in the training of visa officers. However, training sessions only manage to reach a small number of these officers. Recently, SDOR organized a visit to the Newcomer Information Centre for a group of 14 officers.

Information may also exist at Canadian embassies and consulates abroad. Again, information supplied to these centres in form of brochures is not always maintained or readily available. Some pamphlets, such as those promoting the settlement.org website are made available; however, this assumes that prospective immigrants have easy access to computers in their home countries. This may not be the case in many countries.

Although this communication plan does not deal with outreaching to refugees, it is important to make the following point. Couple of refugees in one of the focus groups described how they received settlement information during an orientation session before their departure to Canada. In this particular focus group, these two individuals were the most informed about settlement services. Informing immigrants about settlement services before they come to Canada in this type of orientation sessions would seem to be a very effective way to share information about settlement.

SDOR currently conducts similar information sessions through the International Organization for Migration (IOM). However, these sessions are voluntary and there are no statistics about the number of immigrants attending these sessions.

### Newcomer Information Centre (NIC):

NIC is a relatively new SDOR initiative (the first NIC opened in October 2001). Currently, two Centres provide settlement and settlement referral services. One Centre is located in Toronto; the other is in Mississauga with a satellite unit in Brampton. Both centres were established within existing LINC assessment centres in order to be easily accessible to immigrants coming for language assessment. This is a good example of a piggybacking promotional strategy.

Services are provided in English, French and other languages. The Centre also hosts a reference library and a wall-display resource centre. Information on other settlement agencies is available through brochures and through settlement workers.

The brochures promoting NIC is in English, French and other languages. Settlement workers at NIC (seven staff at the Toronto location) are responsible, along with client intake, for outreach and publicity. The NIC 2002-2003 outreach plan includes activities such as:

- ❑ Direct mail (distribution of flyers, brochures and posters)
- ❑ Information session and NIC open house events
- ❑ NIC website
- ❑ Partnership with settmenet.org via electronic mail
- ❑ Media advertising
- ❑ Community outreach (presentations about NIC made in the community)
- ❑ Community linkages (participate in committees and reference groups)

At the time of this research, NIC had conducted one advertising run in the ethnic media. Ads were placed in *World Journal Newspaper* (Mandarin), *Faptu' Divers* (Romanian) and *Shahravand Newspaper* (Persian/Farsi).

### Settlement.org:

Settlement.org is a SDOR sponsored website operating from the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). The goal of the website is to provide potential

immigrants with information about immigrating and settling in Ontario. The site also targets newcomers once they have arrived in Canada.

The site is very rich with a vast amount of information on all aspects of the immigration and settlement experience. The site includes information on housing, education, foreign-trained professionals, legal assistance, recreation, health, language and literacy, among other issues.

Recently, OCASI ran 500 horizontal panel ads about settlement.org in TTC buses, streetcars and subway trains. The campaign was six weeks long. Tracking the usage of settlement.org indicates that most of the hits on the site are from within Canada (less than 20% from overseas) and most of the questions sent to the site are about immigration not settlement.

Although OCASI has sent some settlement.org brochures overseas and to foreign embassies in Canada and have distributed brochures through the IRIS project at the airport, a more sustained promotional campaign needs to be put into place.

### Immigrant Reception and Information Services (IRIS):

The review done by Consulting and Audit Canada in 1997 of the services provided by the IRIS project at Pearson International Airport (Terminals I and II) is very detailed and thorough. Our own visit to the site corroborates many of the conclusions made by the 1997 report.

The staff involved in welcoming newcomers at each of the sites outlines in a two minutes presentation the essential information contained in the information package. The information package includes:

- ❑ Social Insurance Number application form
- ❑ GST credit application form
- ❑ NIC brochure
- ❑ Job Search Workshop brochure
- ❑ Settlement.org flyer
- ❑ Child tax benefit application form
- ❑ *Canada Cultural Profile* booklet (15 pages, full size)
- ❑ *Welcome to Canada* booklet (46 pages, half size plus inserts)
- ❑ Inserts include three booklets: *Key Information Sources*, *Finding Help in Your Community*, *Language Training*.

The 1997 report suggests that the issue of multi-lingual services may be an issue of the past because Canada is selecting immigrants based on their knowledge of English and/or French (p.36).

This may be true of the independent class of immigrants but is not true for those who are sponsored by their families. Focus group discussions indicate that even those who arrive

as independent immigrants find it sometimes difficult to speak or read English or French and would favour information in their own languages.

# Target audiences

As noted in the introduction, six communities in the Greater Toronto Area targeted for this communication plan and research: the Colombian, Romanian, Iraqi, Tamil, Sudanese and Chinese communities.

One focus group was conducted in each of these six communities to gather information about individuals' knowledge of settlement services and to get input into the best ways to promote settlement services. In addition, IMPACS conducted twenty interviews with different community representatives. Finally, IMPACS conducted informal interviews with the moderators who helped with the different focus groups.

## FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

While more detailed summaries of each of the focus groups are found in the appendixes, here are some general observations:

- ❑ Out of the total 60 focus group participants, a very small number knew about settlement services and most, if not all, of the participants appreciated the information shared during the session and were surprised by what is available to them, and what they weren't aware of.
- ❑ LINC was the most known of the settlement services funded by SDOR. This comes as no surprise since one of the first preoccupations of newcomers is to learn one of Canada's official languages.
- ❑ Virtually none of the participants had heard of NIC or settlement.org and a very small number knew about the 211 Community Information Toronto phone line.
- ❑ All participants expressed the desire to have information on settlement in their own language rather than solely in English or French.
- ❑ Most of the participants stressed that community media, especially the press, is the best way to get information to the community. Also, participants felt it would be useful to have posters and brochures in community-specific places such as markets, places of worship, etc...
- ❑ Except for a couple of refugees who participated in one of the focus groups, no participant knew about settlement services prior to their arrival to Canada. The better knowledge of refugees is due in part to the different processes that they undergo.

- For many focus group participants, settlement services were equated with immigration needs (getting a student or visitor visa, sponsoring a family member, etc...).

# Messaging

The development of specific messages is beyond the scope of this communications plan. In order to undertake this task the following needs to be taken into account:

## MESSAGE CRITERIA:

- ❑ Develop preliminary messages based on the review of existing literature and main stakeholders.
- ❑ Conduct focus groups with targeted communities to test these messages.
- ❑ Make necessary adjustments.
- ❑ Design new promotional material, including the rewriting of existing literature to ensure consistency of messages.

Based on the focus groups' conclusions, message development should also take into account the following:

- ❑ Messages should be language specific. Despite translation costs, the focus groups and our own analyses confirm that impact will be enormously increased if communication materials are: 1. In the language of each target group (e.g. Tamil), and 2. Distributed in places where members of that target group tend to congregate or where they seek information (e.g. Mosques).
- ❑ Messages should lead with values and benefits to a particular target audience. They should clearly identify the services offered (instead of highlighting generic services such as ISAP, the message should indicate the types of services offered under ISAP).
- ❑ Messages should be consistent, jargon-free and express simple ideas that are of value to the target audience (e.g. Job search information, learning English, etc...). Our research found that the number one priority for newcomers is finding a job and learning the language.

IMPACS analysed the NIC placement ad and SDOR's *Welcome to Canada Booklet*:

## COMMENTS ON NIC'S PLACEMENT ADS:

Almost universally, when newcomers think about settlement they think about job opportunities. Getting a job is priority one for newcomers.

The quarter page ad that has been used by NIC in the various newspapers has the following text:

YMCA Newcomer Information Centre and NIC logo  
(YMCA logo is also placed in the top-right corner)

Are you a newcomer to Canada?  
We offer: information and referral services for your settlement needs,  
free access to computers, Internet, fax and photocopier  
Our goal is to help newcomers to make a smooth transition into Canada  
Address  
No appointment necessary.  
Please drop by  
Hours of operation  
Canada logo United Way logo

IMPACS was told by NIC staff that many people who visit the Centre ask: “how do I get a job in Canada?” or “can you help me get a job in Canada?” However, NIC can only refer people to Job Search Workshops at other community agencies or to Human Resources and Development Canada (HRDC).

From the perspective of a newcomer, the text in this display advertisement can either be seen as irrelevant or misleading. This is not to say that NIC does not provide valuable and needed information and services. It does mean that what NIC provides must be more clearly spelled out. It has to be clear for the reader of the ad what NIC can and cannot do.

### **COMMENTS ON THE *WELCOME TO CANADA* BOOKLET**

The *Welcome to Canada* booklet is the main piece of information given to newcomers at Ports of Entry. It covers many useful areas of life in Canada and is free. Unfortunately, it is very text-heavy. The booklet is a 46-page document with no visuals. It is also only available in the two official languages. The booklet also contains three inserts mentioned above (*Key Information Sources*, *Finding Help in Your Community*, *Language Training*). None of the inserts contain visuals.

The booklet covers basic information such as how to use public phones as well as more complex issues like finding housing and a job. Although the information may well be useful, the layout of the booklet is not reader friendly. The goal of the booklet and the entire package is to get people started. It should therefore include only the bare minimum of information. The question that should be asked in developing content for this package should be “what do I need in my first two weeks?” This may be summarised this way:

- Papers and identity
- Banking and Canadian money
- Housing
- Public transit and taxis
- Emergency
- Medical information
- Getting a phone
- Job search

- ❑ Workers' rights
- ❑ Anti-discrimination laws
- ❑ Where to find more information

This list may not be complete but it covers the essentials. For everything else people will ask friends and relatives, as the most common information channel is word-of-mouth. They will ask a friend how or where to buy a car; they will not consult the guide to Canada.

Emphasis in the package should be put on how to find additional and reliable information quickly. Again, this could be done in a simplified way and in a more reader-friendly fashion.

# Strategies and recommendations

To carry out the communications plan, IMPACS proposes the following five strategies. In order to carry out these strategies, each has a number of recommendations attached to them. These strategies and recommendations are based on the various research methods conducted during this project.

## **STRATEGY 1: FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION**

**Recommendation 1:** SDOR should continue its training of visa officers and should increase as much as possible visits to NIC. Although their primary responsibility is immigration, it is important that they are aware of settlement programs.

**Recommendation 2:** SDOR should consider holding more orientation sessions similar to those held with refugees to Canada in some countries. The key to good communications is to repeat the message as many times as possible. Holding sessions abroad in major centres of newcomer departure will provide a jumpstart to the newcomers' settlement process. Once at the Port of Entry, an information package will reinforce the message. It would be also useful to start gathering statistics from IOM about how many immigrants attend their sessions.

**Recommendation 3:** SDOR staff should communicate its objectives and initiatives to settlement agencies across the Greater Toronto Area through meetings and other gatherings.

**Recommendation 4:** Continue using LINC classes as a communication channel for newcomers.

## **STRATEGY 2: DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF COLLATERAL MATERIAL**

**Recommendation 5:** Embassies and consulates should have brochures and pamphlets promoting settlement services. These materials should be accessible and in the local language. Staff should be encouraged to become familiar with this information as well.

**Recommendation 6:** Rewrite the text of NIC's placement ad to better reflect the specific services provided by NIC. Initial messages should be developed, tested in focus groups and revised accordingly.

**Recommendation 7:** The layout of the information package *Welcome to Canada* should be revised to make it more attractive, and more accessible. More colour and visuals will make the package more accessible and usable, and in particular, if the booklet is not

available in languages other than English and French, a graphic focus for the material will help overcome some of the language barriers. The text of the package should be simplified to reflect immediate needs. Other formats should also be explored such as post-card size information inserts.

**Recommendation 8:** The revised *Welcome to Canada* package should be available in languages other than English and French.

**Recommendation 9:** *Welcome to Canada* should emphasize how to find additional information quickly. Few phone numbers and addresses may be more effective than lengthy listings.

**Recommendation 10:** Create language and community specific posters. Use community spaces such as markets and places of worship to place these posters. Our research shows that other venues such as TTC platforms, trains and buses are also excellent communication channels. The TTC poster ad campaign should concentrate on specific subway stations and bus routes with high concentration of the target audiences.

**Note:** There is a clear need for the development of a strong brand for the settlement services offered by SDOR. All promotional material advertising these services should be consistent in overall look, placement of logo, key messaging, etc. This should be clearly communicated to and shared with settlement agencies.

### **STRATEGY 3: WORK CLOSELY WITH SETTLEMENT AGENCIES**

It is essential that more funding be available to settlement agencies for marketing and promotion. There is a need to ensure that funds are available not only for the positions responsible for marketing but also for all the hard costs associated with the production and distribution of promotional materials. Funds should be available for the development of marketing campaigns including message development and testing of the messages.

SDOR should provide logistical support for promotional campaigns driven by community agencies. This could take the form of training workshops in materials production, design and marketing. SDOR could also provide agencies with design templates for the production of flyers, brochures, posters and other promotional materials. This will ensure visual consistency among programs and will contribute towards the building of a distinct brand for government settlement services.

**Recommendation 11:** A broad discussion on promotional strategies and collaboration between the settlement sector and SDOR should take place. This could be done, for example, at one of the settlement conferences.

**Recommendation 12:** While it is important that settlement agencies remain one of the primary channels for promoting settlement services, SDOR should coordinate overall

outreach campaigns by providing resources, templates and training to community groups and other organizations working with newcomers.

**Recommendation 13:** More resources, allocated specifically for advertising, should be made available to organizations such as OCASI in order to continue the promotion of settlement.org. The recent OCASI initiative of TTC advertising should continue with the support of SDOR. SDOR should allocate resources to develop and implement a larger-scale advertising campaign for settlement.org.

#### **STRATEGY 4: ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN**

**Recommendation 14:** Since NIC is one of the strongest SDOR settlement initiatives, resources have to be made available for a sustained multilingual print advertising campaign.

**Recommendation 15:** The advertising campaign should focus on all ethnic media, especially the community newspapers and magazines.

**Recommendation 16:** The advertising campaign should also consider using the TTC advertising system as one of the primary communication channels.

**Recommendation 17:** Advertising can be placed in METRO, the free Toronto morning paper.

#### **STRATEGY 5: PIGGYBACK ON EXISTING INITIATIVES**

As part of this research, IMPACS initiated discussion with the 211 Community Information Toronto phone line. The goal of the initial discussion was to explore the possibility of a partnership between SDOR and 211. Currently the 24-hour call centre provides information on a vast variety of community services in many languages. The centre is also designed to target specific populations. For example, there are separate lines for victims of domestic violence and youth living on the street. These services are promoted separately, with their own phone numbers, as the Victim Support Line and StreetLine. A similar set-up could be established for settlement services.

**Recommendation 18:** Fully explore the possibility of establishing a settlement hotline tied to the 211 call centre. The phone number used might be that of NIC that would be redirected to 211 after hours, or potentially, it could be a completely new and separate phone line. In either case, this initiative should be tied into the overall branding and promotional campaign of SDOR settlement services.

# Evaluation

IMPACS and SDOR staff has had a number of discussions regarding the evaluation process of this communications plan. It is clear that at this time, no additional funds are available to increase the capacity of settlement services in general. For this reason, quantitative measurements such as an increase in LINC or JSW registrations may not be an appropriate evaluation method.

The following evaluation methods take into account this financial constraint. It is also based on the assumption that an increase in awareness among the target audiences about settlement services will inevitably increase pressure on settlement services. This in turn might provide support for new sources of funding for these services.

## EVALUATION METHODS

- ❑ SDOR needs to harmonize the process of communication and information gathering across the settlement sector. This must be done in full collaboration with the sector to ensure buy-in. For example, all intake questionnaires should have questions about where the newcomer found a brochure or other promotional material and if the newcomer found the information useful.
- ❑ To some degree, an increase in awareness of newcomer services could also be measured by the frequency of requests for reprints of promotional material.
- ❑ In the case of settlement.org, OCASI could enhance its website tracking tools to help measure the effectiveness of this communication plan.
- ❑ If SDOR decides to partner with 211 Community Information Toronto, measuring call volume is a simple method to evaluate the response to the communication plan.
- ❑ LINC and JSW providers can start tracking responses to standard questions pertaining to other settlement programs.
- ❑ Finally, an increase in demand for LINC, JSW and other programs will be a significant indicator of the success of this initiative. For example, SDOR could set a goal of a 20% increase in demand for LINC or JSW as an evaluation benchmark.

**Note:** The resources allocated to a promotional campaign aimed at increasing newcomers' awareness of available settlement services must be proportionate to the resources available to accommodate the expectations generated by such a campaign.

# Rollout plan

What follows is an outline of a rollout plan for this communications plan. The final rollout plan will need to be adjusted to reflect budget and specific priorities:

- Communicate the objectives of the communication plan to the settlement sector and ensure buy-in:
  - Summarise the findings and share with community agencies at conferences and other meetings.
  - SDOR may want to think about establishing a joint SDOR-Community working group to work on a joint communication approach.
  
- Work with settlement agencies on a full promotional campaign. This is a key element of the rollout plan and one that may be the most difficult to coordinate. However, the discussions and interviews we had with services providers show that this approach could be very effective. We recommend breaking down this item into the following more manageable pieces:
  - Reach an agreement on the different materials to be used in the communication strategy (e.g. posters, brochures, etc...).
  - Agree on standardized templates to promote settlement services.
  - Discuss with agencies involved the most with the target populations the scope of the promotional campaign. Determine benchmarks and evaluation tools.
  - Establish clear roles for agencies and SDOR in promotion and marketing of settlement services.
  - If possible, provide financial support to agencies. Otherwise, focus on providing training in the areas of promotion, marketing and design.
  
- Develop monitoring mechanisms with settlement agencies to track the success of the communication campaign:
  - Agree on an intake form with the following questions: Where did you find out about this service (e.g. LINC)? Did you find the information useful? Did the service provided to you reflect what you read in the brochure, poster, etc...?
  - Establish a system of gathering this information in a central place. Analyse the data on an on-going basis in order to adjust the communication strategies.
  
- Rewrite and redesign promotional materials and test copy and messages in focus groups. Focus groups should be conducted within specific communities as well as with settlement service providers. Translate materials into different languages:

- Rewrite materials. In the case of the *Welcome to Canada* booklet and inserts this process may take anywhere between 4 to 6 weeks. This includes couple of drafts and editing.
  - Design of the new booklet may take also anywhere between 4 to 6 weeks (again, with revisions and editing).
  - Developing messages. This is a demanding and a lengthy (at least 5 weeks) process that typically includes:
    - A brainstorming session(s) with different stakeholders (community members, newcomers, services providers, SDOR staff, etc...)
    - Developing a message or a number of messages based on these initial sessions.
    - Testing of messages in focus groups using specific target audiences.
- Design print ads for community newspapers based on new copy. Select the most appropriate papers and run a sustained advertising campaign. A number of production steps need to be taken into account:
- Design poster (4 weeks)
  - Select suppliers (mainly printers). Printing may take anywhere between 10 to 15 days depending on the size of the print job.
  - Determine the size of the print job and agree on distribution points
- Expand the advertising campaign to include TTC ads and ads in the *METRO* newspaper:
- Redesign poster to fit specific space (e.g. inside TTC trains and the sides of buses).
  - Decide on specific subway stations and bus routes.
  - Determine the size of the ad campaign.
  - Redesign poster to fit *METRO* and decide on the size of the ad campaign.
- Develop a partnership with 211 Community Information Toronto. As this consolidates, continue the advertising campaign. This may take anywhere between 1 to 6 months depending on the resources available and other priorities:
- Meet with 211 Community Information Toronto and build on the initial contact established by IMPACS. Discuss options in more detail and set-up an implementation time-line.
  - From our discussion with 211 staff, the integration of settlement info line into the current 211-phone structure will need:
    - Financial support from SDOR.

- Training of 211 staff in settlement.
- Allocate funds to promote settlement.org through OCASI based on this agency's recent advertising campaign in the TTC:
  - Discuss with OCASI an overall marketing campaign and determine resources.
  - Establish marketing and evaluation benchmarks.

# Critical Path

This six-month critical path is only to serve as a guideline for a more detailed breakdown once priorities and resources have been determined. Also, it only reflects the item in the rollout plan, which in our view, should be implemented as soon as possible. A more detailed critical path would reflect all the recommendations in the strategy section of this document.

Action item/weeks	1,2	3,4	5,6	7,8	9,10	11,12	13,14	15,16	17,18	19,20	20,21	21,22	22,23
Discuss the communication strategy with agencies and agree on a collaboration framework.	█	█	█										
Develop messages for posters, print ads, <i>Welcome to Canada</i> booklet and brochures.				█	█	█							
Rewrite and redesign <i>Welcome to Canada</i> booklet.							█	█	█	█			
Design print ads.							█	█	█	█			
Design ads for TTC.							█	█	█	█			
Print posters and brochures.							█	█	█	█			
Determine distribution points for posters and brochures.					█	█							
Develop a marketing strategy for settlement.org with OCASI.	█	█	█	█									
Develop a partnership with 211 Community Information Toronto.	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█