

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

The influx of newcomers to Canada is a significant ministry opportunity for churches. While it has been a traditional mission paradigm to support or initiate mission endeavours from Canada to other countries, such immigration trend necessitates a new model of reaching out to immigrants within an in-country framework. Such inflow could not anymore be taken for granted particularly by churches in Toronto in view of the city's substantial share of newcomers it receives every year. Within a ten year timeframe (2001-2010), Toronto receives an average of 99,530 new immigrants annually out of the total provincial count of 124,063 and national total of 246,760.<sup>1</sup> The City is also the focal point for refugee claims. In the same ten year period, the city is a haven for an average of 42,845 refugee claimants annually out of the 65,944 provincial claimants and total national claimants of 103,435.<sup>2</sup> The city also hosts a significant number of international students. Of the total provincial and national count of 70,592 and 187,504, respectively, 39,348 of these students are in Toronto.<sup>3</sup> Temporary workers are also one key sector that should be part of the ministry concern as there are 142,533 workers annually in Canada with 30,367 living in Toronto.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the city welcomes around 212,090 newcomers annually.

These newcomers in Canada face a plethora of challenges in social integration. A survey of the new immigrant difficulties and corollary ranking (see table 1) reveals that finding an adequate job is the most pressing difficulty, followed by language issue, adjustment to weather, support from homeland, adapting to new culture, financial constraint, and recognition of credentials. Considering the needs of all types of newcomers, it is safe to say that most of

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo33b-eng.htm>

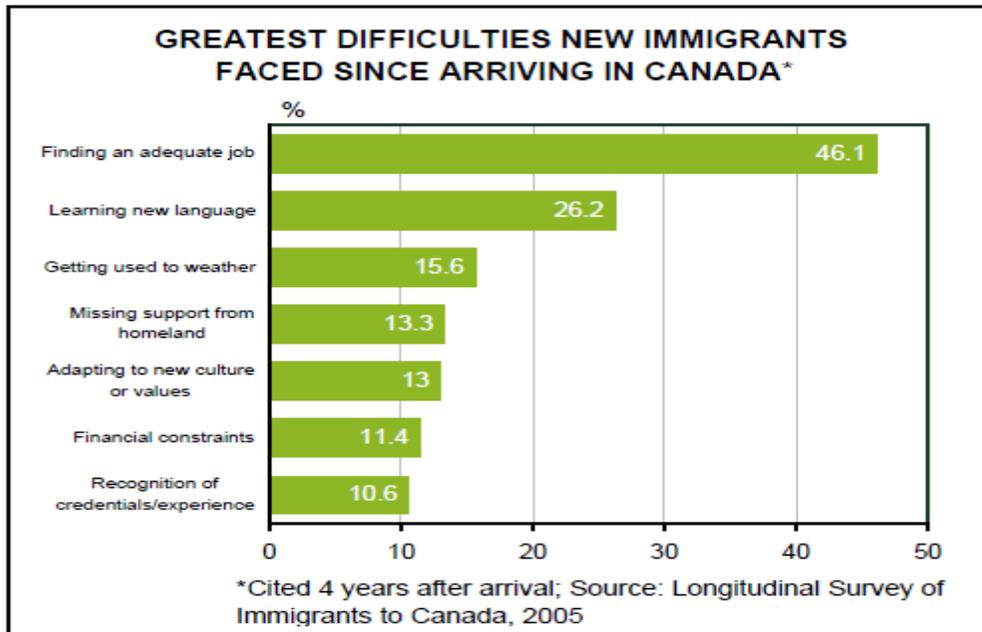
<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010/temporary/28.asp>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010-summary/06.asp>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010/temporary/09.asp>

these difficulties are relevant to all newcomer sectors, except for the matter of job and recognition of credentials which is not an issue among international students.

Table 1  
Difficulties of New Immigrants<sup>5</sup>



While there is significant government support to newcomers through the services of settlement organizations, church ministries for newcomers are essential for the reason that Church in Canada has grown tremendously through new immigrant members as well as the establishment of immigrant churches. As many newcomers come into Canada without the saving knowledge of the Gospel, such influx becomes an avenue for churches to fulfill both commandments to “welcome the strangers” (Matthew 25) and “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28) right within their communities.

The Peoples Church is in the process of establishing a ministry to newcomers. There is a crucial need not only for a comprehensive ministry approach but a systematic and programmatic one to ensure sustainability both within the church structure as well as in the manner of relationships that accrue as a result of such ministry. This would only be possible if

<sup>5</sup> In, Alexander, Craig, et al, Knocking Down Barriers Faced by New Immigrants to Canada: Fitting the Pieces Together, TD Economics, 2012, p.18.

there is no ambiguity in its plan of action. Such ambiguity could be the result of insufficient understanding of the context by which it will initiate such ministry.

A rational approach to programming therefore necessitates understanding of the environmental context where it operates and how this context affects effective ministry. The use of an environmental analysis enables any organization to look at factors influencing its programming. Primarily, the environmental analysis is an evaluation of the possible or probable effects of external forces and conditions on an organization's survival and growth strategies.<sup>6</sup> Churches have to consider the significance of environmental analysis as this provides a venue for determining areas for collaboration and partnerships with both faith-based and non-profit settlement organizations while at the same time limiting isomorphic tendencies among key ministry actors and institutions.

It is within this framework that the Peoples Church envisions to be a key actor in newcomer ministry through the establishment of the Nation Neighbour Hub. The understanding of this milieu in relation to newcomer ministry is imperative in the light of the ubiquitous services that are already being advanced by hundreds of social service organizations that have support from the government. What do faith-based or Christian organizations have to bring to the table in newcomer programs and services? What unmet needs have to be served to avoid duplication of what these institutions are already providing? What are the parameters for engagement?

In this regard, there are three key issues that will be addressed in pursuing an environmental analysis:

- 1) What does the Peoples Church Newcomer ministry contribute to the current programs and services offered to newcomers? How does this differ to those provided by other organizations in general and Christian institutions in particular?;

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/environmental-analysis.html#ixzz2q7aEIU3j>

- 2) What is the degree of collaboration and partnership it can muster to expand its program scope and reach?
- 3) What is the current program environment that would either constrain or promote its goal achievement and program effectiveness?

These queries will serve as the frame of reference in determining actionable steps for a more collaborative newcomer ministry of the Peoples Church and determine plausible framework and plan of action to establish a more integrated and focused Nation Neighbour Hub programming.

### **Objectives**

This environmental analysis is conducted for the purpose of giving a clear picture of the context by which the Peoples Church will initiate its newcomer ministry. This study thereby seeks to determine the extent of the current ministries being undertaken by Christian organizations and churches as well as the nature of these ministry programs.

Specific objectives of the study are the following:

- 1) Identify Christian organizations and churches that provide newcomer ministries, programs, and services;
- 2) Determine the type of services these organizations/churches offer and their service sector;
- 3) Delineate the needs and conditions of newcomers in Toronto as grouped according to Refugee Claimants, New Immigrants, and International Students;
- 4) Assess program and service delivery gaps as well as strengths that will serve as basis for a plan of action for the Nation Neighbour Hub;
- 5) Determine the viability of establishing a partnership with Christian service organizations and define the nature of partnership;

## Research Methodology

The Environmental analysis utilized different data gathering techniques and methodologies to come up with a comprehensive picture of the context by which the Peoples Church newcomer ministry will operate.

Primarily, **internet research** was conducted to give initial listings of churches and Christian organizations that are currently initiating newcomer ministries. The internet research also provided data on the nature of services that these Christian organizations and churches provide. Based on this initial internet research, a census was conducted to determine if churches are initiating newcomer ministries. A full listing of churches was done through the use of the Christian Business and Ministry directory. The use of this directory signifies that not all churches are included in this list. The listing was used to conduct the **phone survey** where three hundred one (301) churches in Toronto were identified and covered. The census survey was used as all churches that are identified as mainline Protestant and Evangelical Churches have been included to give a total perspective of the extent by which churches are serving newcomers.

In order to provide an in-depth analysis of the nature of these services, a Qualitative research approach was further utilized through a **Focus Group Discussion** (FGD) where selected Christian organizations and churches that are delivering newcomer services were invited for such discussion. The FGD is a research technique that seeks to provide answers to a set of questions (see appendix A) where participants have the chance to interact and deliberate on each other's responses to the questions.

As two organizations were not able to attend the FGD, a **Key Informant Interview** (KII) was initiated with the Executive Director of these two organizations. The use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is a process of triangulation that seeks to provide a

comprehensive profile of the study objective that serves in underscoring both the breadth and depth of the phenomenon being studied.<sup>7</sup>

**Data Gathering Procedure**

The study primarily made use of the phone survey where the identified churches in the directory were called. The survey basically asked these churches if they are offering newcomer programs and services, the type of service they offer as well as the sector/group that are the focus of these services.

There were three The Focus Group Discussions conducted for three sectors—Christian organizations serving new immigrants, those which focus on refugees, and those which serve International Students.

The organizations that were represented in the organization were chosen based mainly on the fact that these are Christian organizations serving newcomers. Originally, the intent was to include all Christian organizations serving newcomers. The following organizations were represented in the FGD and Key Informant Interview:

Table 2  
Christian Organizations Represented in FGD

<b>Settlement Organizations</b>	<b>Refugee Centres</b>	<b>International Student Ministries</b>
Light House Centre	Adam House	Overseas Missionary Fellowship
Salvation Army Immigration and Refugee Services	Matthew House	Ambassadors for Christ
Mennonite New Life Centre	Romero House	World Team
Toronto Harbour Light Ministries	Office of Refugees, ArchDiocese of Toronto	MINT Fellowship
	Christie Refugee Welcome Centre	

The study attempted to include all Christian organizations in the Greater Toronto Area serving all the three sectors but the unavailability of representatives led to the inclusion of only the aforementioned organizations. The FGDs were conducted at the Peoples Church and a

<sup>7</sup> Babbie, Earl. The Practice of Social Research. Cengage Learning, 2011, p. 258.

video recording of the discussion was made. A Documentor was also on hand to take notes and provide transcript of the deliberations.

### **Scope of the study**

The study made an intentional decision to focus only on Christian organizations in view of the main purpose of the newcomer ministry establishment to promote partnerships with these organizations. It has to borne in mind that a crucial to the ministry objectives is increasing volunteer opportunities for the Peoples Church congregation as well as expanding a network where prospective ministry clients will be referred. Thus, the study is thereby for the purpose of delineating the newcomer ministry profile.

The limitation of the list of churches in the Shepherds Guide further stipulates the scope of church coverage as not all churches in the Toronto area were listed. Thus, there could be other churches that initiate newcomer ministries but are not in the directory.

## Chapter 2

### PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION, AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Based on the data collected, the information is collated and organized to come up with findings of the environmental context which the Peoples Church will have to consider in the implementation of the newcomer ministry.

The first portion presents the data on the newcomer ministry initiatives of various churches within the Toronto area. This is followed by presentation and analysis of the results of the Focus Group Discussion conducted to different organizations and churches, as well as interviews conducted to representatives of various ministry groups and fellowships within the Peoples Church. The presentation follows the objectives set.

**OBJECTIVES 1 & 2 - Christian organizations and churches that provide newcomer ministries, programs, and services, and type of Programs and services.**

#### A. CHURCH NEWCOMER MINISTRY

##### i. Churches Doing Newcomer Ministry:

Based on the phone interview conducted to three hundred one churches, the survey showed that there are a total of forty six (46) churches that are engaged in newcomer ministry or 16% of the total surveyed churches. Table 3 shows that newcomer ministries are mostly done formally by non-immigrant churches as seen by the fact that of the forty seven churches, only seven are immigrant churches, which is 15% of the total churches that engage newcomers. It has to be qualified that the focus of the seven immigrant churches is more on engaging their own ethnicity rather than a process of developing a multi-cultural ministry. In a way, it is to help their newcomer members to adapt to the new social context. This is true with regards to the ESL classes of the Chinese churches, and the social support provided by the Iranian church to their newcomer members. In a sense, most immigrant churches are essentially providing newcomer services by virtue of their cultural points of contact for newcomers.

Table 3  
**Ethnicity of Churches**

	Frequency	Percentage
Multi-cultural	39	85
Chinese	4	8.7
Filipino	2	4.3
Iranian	1	2
TOTAL	46	100

Looking at the low percentage of churches that do newcomer ministries, this should not lead to a conclusion that majority of churches do not engage newcomers. In the first instance, a significant number of respondents mentioned that they do initiate ways to welcome newcomers but these are not done in a structured and systematic way. In fact, all churches have significant immigrant population and many these are newcomers in their congregation. Their multi-cultural composition delineates the fact that newcomer engagement is inherent in the ministries of almost all churches as they seek to accommodate the different ethnic groups joining their congregation. There is no basis to conclude, however, that the multi-cultural composition of most churches in Toronto is the result of an intentional ministry engagement to newcomers.

ii. Type of Newcomer Ministry

As to the type of newcomer ministries and programs, majority of the programs are English language classes with thirty three churches offering this type of service. Of the forty seven churches, twelve offer welcoming venues through social gatherings and meal fellowships. There are also twelve churches that offer a more significant support through social assistance where they provide essential settlement support. It is interesting to note that only three mainline Protestant and Evangelical churches offer refugee sponsorship. This low level could be due to the significant resource commitment required to sponsor refugees as well as the need for a more sustained ministry service delivery. One other factor is the demand for a denominational structure to work out a system of sponsorship.

This is basically true with regards to the comprehensive system of sponsorship by the Catholic Church. During the Focus Group Discussion with Refugee organizations, it was expressed by the representative of the Office of Refugees of the (Catholic) ArchDiocese of Toronto that 166 of the total 200 Catholic Churches in the ArchDiocese are engaged in sponsorship. The denominational Office of Refugees creates a lead agency to streamline the whole process of sponsorship.

Table 4  
**Type of Newcomer Ministry**

	Frequency	Percentage
Language instruction	33	53.24
Meals/Fellowships/Social Gathering	12	19
Employment Mentoring	1	1.59
Culture lessons	2	3.17
Social assistance	12	19
Refugee Sponsorship	3	4.76
TOTAL	63	100

The higher total number of types of services is due to the fact that several churches offer multiple ministry platforms.

iii. Newcomer Sector Served

Further breakdown of data according to sector served shows that a higher focus is given to International Students ministry. This also explains the previous findings that majority of the churches deliver English instruction which mostly caters to International Students. A crucial issue presented in Table 5 is the fact that only 31% of the programs cater to new immigrants and the least services that are geared to refugees.

Table 5  
**Newcomer Sector Served**

	Frequency	Percentage
New Immigrants	21	32
Refugees	17	26
International Students	27	42
TOTAL	65	100

The higher number of sectors served than the number of churches is due to the fact that several churches serve multiple sectors.

The data on the limited extent by which Evangelical and Mainline Protestant churches in Toronto serve newcomers generally expresses the fact that a formal newcomer ministry is not a key formal structured ministry priority.

## B. FAITH –BASED ORGANIZATIONS SERVING NEWCOMERS

In order to ascertain the nature of newcomer ministries initiated by key Christian organizations, a qualitative approach using the Focus Group Discussion and Key Informant Interview was conducted focusing on three ministry sectors- new immigrants, refugees, and international students.

While there was the same set of questions posed for the refugee and new immigrant service organizations. There is a need however to conduct separate discussions for the two groups in view of the said sector focus.

### *i. New Immigrant Organizations*

There were four organizations that were represented in the Focus Group Discussion. These include the Salvation Army Immigrant and Refugee Services, Toronto, Harbour Light Ministries, The Light House Centre, and the Mennonite New Life Centre.

The Mennonite New Life Centre is supported by Mennonite churches and serves refugees and new immigrants. Their ministry areas include settlement counseling, language instruction, mental health program, bridge training program for internationally-trained Psychologists and Journalists, and programs for Seniors and Youth.

The Light House Centre mainly serves Vietnamese, Chinese, and Hispanic communities. The Centre has a food bank, settlement counseling for immigrants and refugees, and a neighborhood community development ministry.

The Harbor Light Ministry is a Salvation Army organization which has a bigger ministry coverage including addiction treatment, halfway house, and food bank. Its immigrant ministry includes English instruction, and immigrant settlement services.

The Salvation Army Immigrant and Refugees Services is a department of the territorial headquarters which provide policy to the various Salvation Army churches in the areas of immigrant and refugee settlement.

A discussion with the key Christian Service organizations revealed that the distinctive groups being served vary per organization and depending on their area of service. For the Harbour Light Ministries, majority of newcomers being served are South American, South East Asians, African, and Middle Easterners. Such diversity is due to the fact that they are one of the biggest Christian settlement organizations in Toronto and could thereby serve a much bigger volume of newcomers. The Mennonite Centre has two areas of ministry and thus able to serve the Chinese and African immigrants in Scarborough, and Filipinos and Hispanics in North York. The Light House Centre serves Chinese immigrants in Scarborough, Vietnamese, and Hispanics in Mississauga.

While there are other cultural groups served, there is a higher number of those aforementioned ethnic groups served in view of the predominant immigrant communities present in their areas of ministry.

The ethnicity of the cultural groups being served also determines the type of ministry programs being delivered. Among the agencies serving the Chinese immigrants, English instruction, cooking classes, and parenting skills are the most common programs. The respondents mentioned that the needs of most Chinese and Asian newcomers are language facility as well as adjustment to the generational gap as most of them are (grand)parents being brought by their children to take care of their grandchildren.

In the case of Hispanics, there is focus on income-generating skills as majority are non-status immigrants and could not access regular government services and are also in dire need

of access to economic opportunities. As they could not access government services, they are comfortable being served by Christian organizations which have no compunction in serving non-status immigrants.

*ii. Refugee Service Organizations*

As mentioned, a separate data collection was done for the refugee centers in view of their focused clientele. Also, the study included the Catholic Church through the Office of Refugees of the ArchDiocese of Toronto in view of their substantial refugee sponsorship program and existing center/shelter.

There were four refugee service organizations represented during the FGDs and one was covered through Key Informant Interview. These include Adam House, Matthew House, Romero House, ArchDiocese of Toronto Office of Refugees, and Christie Refugee Welcome Centre. All provide shelter services and one provides refugee sponsorship through their churches. All in all, these shelter organizations can accommodate around 120 refugees in a given time, and usually provide these shelter services for a period of three to six months.

In the course of providing shelter, the shelter organizations also assists the refugee claimants in accessing settlement services such as housing, health, and legal services. Of all the refugee housing organizations, only Adam House has a direct mission initiative through the conduct of regular Bible studies and church sponsorship of special event dinners. Churches and other Christian organizations, such as Liebenzell, are encouraged to regularly engage residents and establish relationship. For the rest, the mission component is indirect and done through acts of compassion in such areas as provision of safe housing and a caring housing atmosphere.

A special mention has to be made with the service of the Office of Refugees of the ArchDiocese of Toronto as it has a model for refugee support that is church-based. In this regard, the Office directs the churches in sponsoring refugees. The churches then create a small refugee ministry teams that will look into the housing and settlement needs of their

sponsored refugees. This has bearing on the ministry initiative of the Peoples Church as this model is similar to the strategy of the Nation Neighbour Hub.

The newcomers served by the centers come from countries that have clear political, economic, and social disruptions. Each organization has no specific and definite country focus in terms of client composition. Suffice it to say that most refugee claimants come from South and Central America, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, and from some countries in Asia, particularly North Korea.

While there are a minuscule number coming from Designated Countries of Origin, majority come from societies that are experiencing upheavals and present threat to life and liberty.

*iii. International Students Ministries*

Four organizations were represented in the discussion on International Student Ministry. These include the World Team, Ambassadors for Christ, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, MINT/SIM fellowship, and SOCEM.

Aside from these organizations, there are still other Christian agencies that have not been able to participate but have significant IS ministries. These include the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Power to Change, Navigators, International Student Ministry Canada, and Association of Christian Ministries, Inc. Follow-up meetings with these organizations will be made to ascertain ministry collaborations and partnerships.

There is variety in the ministry platforms of the organizations. For the World Team, they make use of the church planting model where they gather international students in certain locations and provide them with a place for fellowship. Those who are led into Christ are then disciplined and trained to gain skills in church planting. The idea is that these students return to their respective countries to do church planting. The Ambassadors for Christ follows the IVCF model where an evangelism presence is established in campuses and students are reached out through social activities and English instruction. The OMF follows the same model as that

of the Ambassadors for Christ where a presence is established in campuses and students are given a place for social gathering and English instruction. Aside from these, the gathering place also acts as a venue for dinner gatherings, and discussion platform on cultural matters and mental health issues.

A consequent program identified by the ministry is to reach out to the wives of international students as they have lots of time for engagement. A Bible Study, fellowship opportunity, and discussion engagements are then provided for these wives.

The ministry of Toh See Kiat, the lead person for the MINT fellowship involves not only the Peoples Church but done in conjunction with other churches and organization. Currently, this includes support from SIM and two other churches. The ministry model adopts three modalities. Primarily, the church-based approach makes use of gathering students who are attending the Peoples church to discuss and make reflections on the Sunday sermon. The second modality is through a house model where International students gather in a house and there provided with a family support structure. Within this house model, a weekly dinner, English instruction, and social activities are provided. The third modality is through the establishment of a gathering place in the downtown area which acts as a walk-in centre for international students where they could have free coffee, internet access, and English instruction.

An additional ministry area for the MINT at the Peoples Church is the continuation of ministry support to International Students who have graduated and are working on a transient basis.

Another group that was involved in the discussion is the Southern Ontario Cooperative of ESL Ministries (SOCEM). SOCEM is an informal association of churches the provide ESL ministry and a significant number of attendees to its church-based ESL programs are international students.

### **OBJECTIVE 3 - Needs and Conditions of Newcomers**

#### ***New Immigrants***

The interview also revealed key issues affecting the integration of immigrants to Toronto in terms of unmet needs. The respondents were in agreement that a key area that needs to be given attention is health services. This is true particularly with non-status immigrants as they have limited access to health services and usually rely on only a few medical services that do not require financial charges. What is worst is that while they could go to doctors for a fee, it is only in the level of diagnosis and not treatment due to its high cost. One area of health that is affecting new immigrants is mental health as many are suffering from depression due to the impact of adjustment to the new social condition. It was mentioned that there is cultural constructs involved in mental health as there is an element of stigma among cultural communities of new immigrants when it comes to mental health. In this regard, they do not access mental health services due to the shame attached to it.

Another unmet need for new immigrants is in the area of legal rights. These rights issues concern, health, housing and employment rights. Among women new immigrants, there are many cases of domestic violence. For both status and non-status immigrants, many are not also aware of their tenant rights and are thereby prone to exploitation in terms of high rent. In terms of employment, many new immigrants in general could not work immediately within their field of profession and thereby work in the manufacturing and service sectors. Furthermore, being new immigrants, they are not yet aware of their employment rights and many are exploited when it comes to minimum wage and other employment matters.

For most new immigrants also, a crucial unmet need in this area is lack of access to employment. One respondent said that many clients come to them and say that they do not want charity but meaningful employment. And the few job opportunities that they could find are not safe. All the organizations agree that a high level of unemployment is among the youth sector as they don't have sufficient professional skills and training.

It was mentioned that there is a need for awareness among employers and companies that Canadian experience should not be one factor in employment as the Ontario Human Rights Code stipulated that requiring such experience is a form of discrimination. Thus, settlement agencies have to develop ways that this issue will be part of the continuous discussion. One respondent mentioned that most new immigrant professionals are just working in volunteer status just to gain Canadian experience. She said that it's so sad to see so many highly skilled professionals with amazing resumes working in the faith-based organizations as volunteers just to get Canadian experience and the possibility of accessing future employment opportunities within the organizations.

One other key finding of the study is the cultural issue surrounding employment. In this regard, it was expressed that employers need cultural intelligence. Employers have to recognize that each culture has a different way of doing things and it is in the understanding of these differences that racism will be avoided in the workplace as well as of giving work opportunities to new immigrants. Furthermore, the challenges inherent in adjusting to such cultural differences resulted to a significant number of employers that are not good in creating diverse workforce, and thus limited job opportunities for new immigrants.

### ***Refugees***

The FGD and Interview presented key ministry opportunities for the Peoples Church, particularly in terms of the determination of the most pressing needs of refugees. The Director of Matthew House sees the need for support of the refugees after they leave the house. Such needs include looking for affordable housing as well as support for community integration. She mentioned that there is a pressing need to help and assist them in accessing basic services like going to the library, shopping, and myriad of settlement needs. She mentioned about an old program they initiated before in partnership with a Catholic church, Becoming Neighbour, where refugees are linked with church volunteers to provide such one-on-one support and engagement.

Another area is health as the new law limited health services to refugees. Thus, the Director of Romero House suggested for churches to create church-based clinics that would be offered free of charge. It is to be pointed out however that the Federal government is reinstating the health program starting this January 2014. Health access then should not be a primordial concern for refugees. A sub-area in health that was further pointed out is mental health as many refugees suffer from situational depression as well as trauma. Thus, counseling and emotional support is a key area of ministry that was forwarded by the group. A free or affordable counseling access was suggested as one focus for churches to consider in view of the inaccessibility of most counseling services to refugees in terms of cost and limitations in access to the health care system.

The legal needs of the refugees are also a critical area to be addressed as many refugees are being insincerely represented by some lawyers leading to rejection of their application for refugee status. Thus, a church-based ministry of Christian lawyers could provide assistance to the claimants.

In identifying these needs, the participants see a crucial opportunity for churches to connect with refugees in terms of helping them find affordable housing, access to free health services, as well as employment connections. They also see the importance of having church volunteers who speak the language of refugees that will help them in feeling a sense of belongingness as they adjust to the life in Canada. These volunteers could also help them in their transition by having support from someone who has the same cultural roots.

### ***International Students***

The discussion revealed major issues affecting international students particularly in the issue of social adjustment. The most basic need of international students is in the area of adjustment to the Canadian context. In this regard, simple matters of accessing health care, banking, and cheap food are crucial. The representative from Ambassadors for Christ mentioned that many students need help even just in activating a credit card. A significant

adjustment issue for them is in the area of weather where many come to Toronto without recognizing the winter condition. Thus, many come with only light clothes and thereby unprepared for the cold weather conditions.

Another major point in the discussion on the needs of the students is mental health issue. It was revealed that many of them are suffering from loneliness having left their families and familiar places and are thrown in a foreign culture. There is thereby a great need for a ministry model that seeks to provide a safe, supportive, and family atmosphere where friendship and social support is nurtured.

One other factor that affects mental health of international students is the crash of their self-confidence due to incongruence of the academic system, particularly those who are in the undergraduate and graduate level academic settings. As most of these students come from an academic context where rote learning is more practiced and that many of them are high academic achievers, their exposure to a system where critical thinking and reading are the primary modes of learning makes the students lose their self-confidence. While these could be cases of situational depression, two representatives mentioned of cases of psychosis among some students.

The impact of transition on mental health of students is also related to their countries of origin. In countries where there is a certain degree of social repression, their experience of the Canadian context where there is a high degree of social freedom results to problems with drug and alcohol abuse. One participant mentioned that he has witnessed some students from these countries who are into binge drinking as this is the first time that they have the freedom to drink.

The type of educational exposure, either undergraduate, English instruction, or graduate degree, has bearing on the type of mental or emotional issues affecting them. While undergraduate or those coming to Canada for English instruction are experiencing cases of loneliness as well as adjustment needs, those in the graduate and post graduate programs

who came with their families are experiencing domestic conflicts such as abuse and assault. For students coming for English exposure, the main emotional challenge is with regards to homestays where they are provided with food and accommodation. In this regard, there are many cases where students are not served adequate food, or food that is not geared to their culture. A participant stated that International students find it strange to be served salad as it is raw vegetable for them.

Definitely, key needs for International Students are on social and mental health issues. Recommendations of the participants are thereby directed to these matters. Primarily, they were in agreement that friendship is a significant ministry service as this provides for both assistance requirements as well as social and emotional support. The house model is further seen as a viable approach as this creates a family atmosphere where the sense of isolation is moderated.

Inputs in understanding the cultural context are also considered essential, both for students as well as churches. In this regard, information for international students about the Canadian culture and geographic context would be helpful in mitigating the effects of transition. At the same time, there is also a need for churches who serve international students to be cognizant of their cultures. One simple ministry opportunity is to allow students to have an experience of being inside a Canadian house. It is also important for churches to be aware of food requirements such as serving halal food or those with no pork.

While majority of the organizations provide ministry services in the area of friendship and social support, there is still a significant unmet need for a significant portion of international students on mental health. Establishing or strengthening emotional and social support initiatives will play a key role in mitigating situational depression so as not to lead to more serious mental health problems. Furthermore, simple cultural cues that would help them adapt to the Canadian context are important ministry opportunities that is not usually present in the ministry models of most Christian organizations. This is particularly true with regards to the

need for cultural sensitivity. A participant delineated cases where students are double-booked to attend church events as it is culturally impolite to say no in their cultures. A cultural dialogue has to be in the main agenda for a church-based International Student Ministry.

#### **OBJECTIVE 4 –Gaps and Strengths in Program and Service Delivery**

##### ***New Immigrant Services***

The determination of the unmet needs of the new immigrants led to a discussion of the gaps in the program and service delivery of Christian Settlement organizations. Almost all organizations agree that it is the lack of funding that affects the type of services that they offer. For majority of the organizations, there is lack of personnel in key program areas particularly in terms of the need for more settlement workers. For the Mennonite New Life Centre, they need their French Language program and Seniors Program to be manned by paid personnel.

The Light House Centre representative mentioned that such lack of funding presents a challenge on the need for more space. In this case, only key selected programs are offered in view of such lack of space. One area that they would like to work on would be on youth employment services in the light of high unemployment rate among this young people.

In the case of the Salvation Army Harbor Light Ministries, they have to refer other clients to partner organizations in view of the inability to provide a specific service. The representative of the organization stated that most of their clients are women but they do not have child care facilities. They recognize however that the Salvation Army doesn't have extensive programs for new immigrants.

All the organizations recognized that it is an issue for them to have more women as clients but only few males in the staff. Such gaps in program and service delivery led all the organizations to focus on their core strength rather than continuously worry about gaps. Thus for the Mennonite New Life Centre, they focus on their mental health program as their strength area. This is particularly important for the organization as they have a bridging program to train culturally-competent internationally-trained mental health professionals. In the case of the Light

House Centre, they consider their youth services through camps and counseling as their most significant contribution.

And for the Harbor Light Ministries, they have an extensive network system thus enabling them to establish a significant referral system. Among the organizations, they also have a diverse set of programs and services for new immigrants in terms of housing and settlement assistance. Such extensiveness enabled them to offer services in many neighborhoods through the presence of their churches. Unlike the other organizations, the Harbor Light Ministries have significant funding source from churches and corporations thus enabling them to have such extensive programs. It is interesting however to mention that while the Salvation Army has an extensive program funded by the government, their immigrant services are purely funded by church support and thus explains the gaps in new immigrant services that they provide. All organizations also stated that they have excellent language (ESL) programs.

The contribution of the Christian settlement organization is also to be highlighted in view of their nature. Primarily, the organizations believe that since their funding is not dependent on the government, they are able to implement programs and services much faster than most secular settlement service organizations. In fact, it was highlighted that they don't have to deal with red tape thus enabling them to focus their programs on needs of the immigrant sector rather than on the requirements of the government. For these organizations, they consider their work as a ministry rather than service. Thus, they could focus on needs rather than government priorities.

Furthermore, Christian organizations tend to focus on outcome than output which is the case of government-funded organizations. In this regard, Christian organizations are more nimble and efficient in their programming. Thus, while the goals might not be different for both types of organizations, Christian organizations are more person-focused and approach human development from a holistic perspective.

In the latter, the government set priorities of what they want done and the attention of these organizations is thereby to fulfill what the government requires. This tendency to focus on numbers and output tend to lose sight of the values that underscore the program and service delivery in the first place, and that is to be client-based focus. For the Christian organizations, being faith-based enables them to operate based on Christian values where concern for individuals become paramount. For them this is critical as this defines the manner that their staff acts towards their clients. While some of these organizations became community-based and are receiving government funding, their Christian roots continue to permeate in the passion that the staff exhibit to their work as well as the compassion they show to their clients.

### ***Refugee Services***

The identification of the unmet needs of the refugees being served by the selected organizations also delineated program areas that could not be addressed by these organizations. It is evident that those needs are beyond what they can provide and therefore has to be worked out in conjunction with other organizations. It is for this reason that they mentioned the necessity for churches to play a role in meeting these needs.

Thus, they mentioned that one key gap in their service delivery is in helping the refugees find suitable and affordable housing after their brief stay in the refugee shelters. They also identified the fact that only a few hundred refugees can be supported in a given time. Thus, a significant number of refugees are on their own with limited access to support services. This is also a reason that many end up living in city shelters or being exploited.

The organizations also mentioned that those who transfer to the community after a brief stay could not be directly supported anymore. It is for this reason that a stronger role for churches to support them in their community integration has been identified.

For the participants, the Christian nature of the organizations serves as a strength factor in service delivery. Primarily, they see Christian agencies as able to provide a sense of

community where love and care are the primary motivating factor for service. This is translated into the work attitude of the staff where they consider their work as a calling—an act that is done in God's service.

They were also in agreement in seeing their service delivery as a holistic approach where the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs are met. Due to this perspective, they are more concerned about the impact of their work on the refugees rather than just the output where the latter is predominant in most government-funded programs.

### ***International Students Ministries***

The determination of needs of this sector reveals key areas that have not been given much ministry attention by most Christian organizations. It has to be noticed that most IS ministries focus on evangelism and discipleship. While it might be true that several organizations establish a fellowship venue where students gather and thereby provide social support, there is a need to establish or strengthen ministry areas that are crucial to their integration and adjustment.

The participants mentioned social and cultural teachings on food, access to banking and health care, and weather adaptation as gaps in their ministry. The discussion also revealed that there is no professional mental health services provided to students. Again, it has to be mentioned that most organizations are in a way providing mental health support through the establishment of a caring environment. The need however is to have a more comprehensive program that addresses this issue. Such program needs to cater to the specific student characteristics in terms of undergraduate, graduate, or English proficiency academic goals, and country/region of origin.

The organizations identified their capacity to create a social support system through regular fellowships where they provide a loving and family atmosphere as their key strength. This ministry also address the mental and emotional health issues of the international students as they are provided with counseling and emotional support.

## **OBJECTIVE 5- Areas of Partnership**

### ***New Immigrants Ministry***

In offering a suggestion for partnership, all the organizations are amenable to collaboration. The areas that could be points for partnership include the need for volunteers in the aspects of interpretation, helping clients to navigate the city, health care, and friendship.

A significant activity is the development of a friendly visitor program and clients are partnered with a volunteer to help them become familiar with the city and assist them in their language skills, providing inputs on child care, determining resources in the community, and helping the person feel at home in the neighborhood.

It is suggested also that the Peoples Church could establish a Volunteer Bank that could serve in various areas, particularly in interpretation. Currently, there is a significant need for Spanish Interpreters to help Hispanic new immigrants learn the English language.

The organization representatives would also like to access the employment component of the Nation Neighbor Hub where new immigrants are provided with paid internships as well as employment networking opportunities. In the case of the Mennonite New Life Centre, they have a significant bridging program for internationally-trained professionals. The representative suggested for a possibility of accessing internship opportunities with the broadcasting arm of the Peoples Church.

An important area that the organizations would like to establish partnership with is in transitional housing as there is a pressing demand for housing among immigrants. The representatives would also like to work on collaboration among Christian organizations as this could lead to the meeting of gaps in services as well as unmet needs through a system of partnership where each group brings its respective strengths to the table thus multiplying the benefits and increasing the level of quality of services.

### ***Refugee Ministry***

The participants identified areas for collaboration and partnership. One area that they are interested in is supporting refugees in getting employment opportunities as soon as they are granted work permits. Any work leads that help them gain income are considered crucial for their integration. The participants also identified the need for refugee claimants to have access to affordable housing. Most refugee claimants don't have any work background which prevents them to be granted rental access. Thus, the participants suggested for identification of Christian landlords who could provide such housing access. One example mentioned was a landlord who made it his mission to house only refugees and at a more affordable rental cost.

One significant suggestion for partnership is the need for more volunteers from the Peoples church who would provide support including conversational language instruction, friendship, and helping them integrate into the community.

It was further mentioned that the involvement of volunteers should lead to their acquisition of skills in refugee ministry. For this reason, there was a suggestion among the participants that volunteers need to be trained in engaging with refugees, particularly in learning of their vulnerabilities as well as needs.

### ***International Students Ministry***

The dialogue with the represented organizations provided an opportunity for determination of areas of collaboration and partnerships in international student ministry.

As the ministry requires intensive use of information, the group suggested for a sharing of information and materials resources. This is seen as facilitating the availability of materials where each organization doesn't need to independently collect information but rely on such network. The necessity for this sharing is seen in relation to the need to provide sufficient materials to students regarding understanding cultural nuances and context. A corollary area in this regard is to have collaboration in initiating seminars or orientation on cultural differences.

SOCEM made a specific suggestion to all the represented organizations that they could plug-in to their (SOCEM) website whatever information or activity they would like to promote.

Furthermore, the group identified job information and access as crucial to international students as they transition from being students to transient workers/permanent residents. Thus, collaboration could be done in providing sessions in job interview skills, referral on available job opportunities, and even the determination of possible employers at the Peoples Church who could provide connections if not jobs.

It was also suggested that church members could open their homes for visit by international students just for the latter to see what a Canadian home looks like as part of their cultural exposure. The members of the church could also be part of the homestay program where they provide paid accommodation to international students.

## Chapter 3

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study seeks to delineate the environmental context by which the Peoples Church will initiate its newcomer ministry. This thereby seeks to determine the extent of the current ministries being undertaken by Christian organizations and churches as well as the nature of these ministry programs. Both internal and external contexts are being looked into.

This chapter presents a summary of findings, as well as delineation of conclusions and recommendations.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are the following:

- 1) Identify Christian organizations and churches that provide newcomer ministries, programs, and services;
- 2) Determine the type of services these organizations/churches offer and their service sector;
- 3) Delineate the needs and conditions of newcomers in Toronto as grouped according to Refugee Claimants, New Immigrants, and International Students;
- 4) Assess program and service delivery gaps as well as strengths that will serve as basis for a plan of action for the Nation Neighbour Hub;
- 5) Determine the viability of establishing a partnership with Christian service organizations and define the nature of partnership;

#### **Methodology**

The study makes use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to come up with relevant findings. In particular, a phone survey was conducted to more than three hundred churches in Toronto to determine if these are engaging in newcomer ministries as well as the type of programs they provide.

A qualitative approach using Focus Group Discussion and Key Informant Interview was also conducted to gain in-depth information regarding the nature of ministry programs initiated by faith-based organizations in three areas: new immigrants, refugees, and international students.

The qualitative approach also delineated the nature of these ministry programs and services, gaps, strengths, and possible areas of collaboration and partnership.

### **Summary of Findings**

The following findings are revealed in the study:

#### **a. Objectives 1 & 2- Organizations doing Newcomer Ministry and Type of Services**

##### **i. Church-based Ministries**

- Of the three hundred on churches in Toronto that had been surveyed, forty five or 15% of the total have newcomer ministries.
- Majority of these church-based newcomer ministries are language (English) instruction.
- Some churches have more comprehensive programs including food bank, dinner, socialization and fellowship, and provision of basic necessities (e.g., kitchen utensils, furniture, winter jackets)

##### **ii. Faith-based Organizations**

###### **a) New Immigrant Ministries**

- The study was able to identify the Light House Centre, Harbor Light Ministries, and the Mennonite New Life Centre as established Christian organizations serving new immigrants.
- These organizations provide settlement counseling and services, language instruction, mental health services, cooking lessons, parenting skills, advocacy, and bridge training program for internationally-trained professionals.

- Each organization seems to have a regionally-focused client base with the Light House Centre having more Chinese, Vietnamese and Hispanic clients. The Mennonite New Life Centre tends to focus on Filipinos, Hispanics, and Chinese.
- All of these organizations also serve refugees and have strong record in advocating for refugee rights.

#### b) Refugee Ministries

- There are a couple of faith-based organizations serving refugee claimants in Toronto. These include Adam House, Matthew House, Romero House, Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, and FCJ Refugee Welcome Centre.
- All of these organizations focus on shelter as their key ministry program.
- All these shelters could provide housing to around a total of 120 refugees in any given time from three to six months period.
- The Catholic Church in Toronto has the largest refugee sponsorship program using a church-based approach with one hundred sixty six churches regularly sponsoring refugees.
- These Catholic churches form a refugee ministry team with five members that hosts and ministers to each of the sponsored refugee.

#### c) International Student Ministries

- The following faith-based organization that had been part of the FGC serve international students: World Team, Ambassadors for Christ, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, MINT/SIM fellowship, and SOCEM.
- Other organizations include the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Power to Change, Navigators, International Student Ministry Canada, and Association of Christian Ministries, Inc.

- These organizations mainly focus on evangelism and discipleship through campus-based gatherings.
- Some organizations, including the MINT fellowship, SIM, OMF, and World Team utilize house-based ministries that provide dinner fellowship, socialization, and counseling.

**b. Objective 3- Needs and Conditions of Newcomers**

i. New Immigrants

- Many immigrants could not access work immediately within their professional field. Most work in low paying manufacturing and service sectors. So they need access to jobs and meaningful employment.
- Many new immigrants experience situational depression caused by adjustment to new condition.
- New immigrants need information on tenant rights due to exploitation as seen by high rent and lack of capacity to complain about rental conditions.
- Significant cases of work exploitation are happening among new immigrants. Orientations and inputs on employment rights is an essential ministry.
- There is a problem with cultural insensitivity inside workplaces leading to racism.
- There are significant cases of domestic abuse and violence against women.

ii. Refugees

- Refugees have limited access to health services in view of the new limits set by the new law on health care for refugees.
- A significant number of refugees being served are suffering from situational depression and trauma.
- A more compassionate legal representation is needed by refugees as many are served by insincere lawyers leading to rejection in application.
- After refugees get out of the shelter, they need access to affordable housing.

- A crucial need of refugees is access to employment connection after they are granted their work permit.
- There is a need for volunteers in the church who speak their language or understand their culture.

iii. International Students

- International students need access to information and assistance in accessing health care, banking, and essential integration requirements.
- A clear challenge for international students is adjustment to Canadian culture and environmental condition.
- The students have critical need for social support to counter effect of loneliness and isolation.
- There is thereby a need for mental health support as adjustment is causing mental health issues brought about by adjustment to new culture and new academic setting.

**c. Objective 4- Gaps and Strengths in Service Delivery**

**Gaps**

i. New Immigrant Services

- There is lack of funding that affects the type of services that faith-based organizations offer.
- Due to lack of funds, there is lack of personnel in key program areas particularly in terms of the need for more settlement workers.
- For the Mennonite New Life Centre, they need their French Language program and Seniors Program to be manned by paid personnel.
- Majority of their clients are women but they do not have child care facilities and that they have few males in the staff.

## ii. Refugee Services

- The organizations need to assist refugees find suitable and affordable housing after their brief stay in the refugee shelters.
- Only a few hundred refugees can be supported in a given time by all the Christian shelters in a given time. There is therefore limited capacity to house refugee claimants in the context of a Christian environment.
- There is limited engagement with refugees who leave the shelter and transfer to the community.

## iii. International Student Ministries

- Most ministry organizations focus on evangelism and discipleship. Thus, there is a need to establish or strengthen ministry areas that are crucial to their integration and adjustment such as creation of mental health support, and settlement assistance.
- Most organizations still focus on English instruction as its central means to reach out to students.
- There is a need for a more comprehensive program of action that addresses settlement needs of international students.

## **Strengths**

### i. New Immigrant Services

- For the Mennonite New Life Centre, their mental health program is their area of strength.
- Harbor Light Ministries has an extensive network system through their churches thus enabling them to establish a significant referral system.
- All organizations stated that they have excellent language (ESL) programs.

- All organizations believe that since their funding is not dependent on the government, they are able to implement programs and services much faster than most secular settlement service organizations.

ii. Refugee Services

- The Christian nature of the organizations serves as a strength factor in service delivery.
- Christian agencies are able to provide a sense of community where love and care are the primary motivating factor for service.
- This is translated into the work attitude of the staff where they consider their work as a calling—an act that is done in God’s service.
- Christian agencies see their service delivery as a holistic approach where the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs are met.
- Due to this perspective, they are more concerned about the impact of their work on the refugees rather than just the output where the latter is predominant in most government-funded programs.

iii. International Students Ministries

- The organizations identified their capacity to create a social support system through regular fellowships where they provide a loving and family atmosphere.
- These ministries also partly address the mental and emotional health issues of the international students as they are provided with counseling and emotional support.

**d. Objective 5- Areas of Partnership**

i. New Immigrant Ministry

- Christian organizations identified the need for church volunteers who could provide help in interpretation, and helping clients to navigate the city, health care, and friendship.

- Another area of collaboration is the development of a friendly visitor program where clients are partnered with a volunteer to help them become familiar with the city and assist them in their language skills, providing inputs on child care, determining resources in the community, and helping the person feel at home in the neighborhood.
- A key suggestion is for Peoples Church to establish a Volunteer Bank that could serve in various areas, particularly in interpretation. Currently, there is a significant need for Spanish Interpreters to help Hispanic new immigrants learn the English language.
- The Christian organizations suggested that their clients could have access to the employment component of the Nation Neighbor Hub where new immigrants are provided with paid internships as well as employment networking opportunities.

ii. Refugee Ministry

- The organizations suggested for Peoples church to create employment opportunities. Any work leads that would help them gain income are crucial for integration.
- The Peoples Church can help identify Christian landlords who could provide affordable housing access.
- There is a need for more volunteers from the Peoples church who would provide support including conversational language instruction, friendship, and helping them integrate into the community.

iii. International Students Ministry

- A significant area of collaboration is in the sharing of information and materials resources. This will facilitate the availability of materials where each organization doesn't need to independently collect information but rely on such network.
- Organizations and the Peoples church could collaborate in initiating seminars or orientation to international students about Canadian culture and context.

- Other collaborative seminars are in the areas of job interview skills, referral on available job opportunities.
- It was suggested that the Peoples Church could determine possible employers who could provide connections if not jobs.
- Church members could also open their homes for international students to experience a Canadian home as part of their cultural understanding. This is expressed by one of the representatives of a faith-based organization during the FGD that some International students say with regret that they have never entered in a Canadian home and experience what a Canadian home looks like.

## **Conclusions**

The following conclusions are arrived at in this study:

### ***Church and Faith-based Organizations' Newcomer Programs and Services***

- Only a few churches have comprehensive newcomer program. As most provide only ESL, this shows that churches are more concerned about developing a point of contact rather than point of engagement and relationship.
- In spite of the number of newcomers coming to Toronto annually, the low number of churches engaging in intentional or structured newcomer ministry suggests that multiculturalism and the entry of immigrant newcomers to the congregation are seen as natural phenomena that takes place without any need for strategy.
- As immigrant churches target only newcomers that belong to their ethnic background, this does not bode well with the contextual adjustment of newcomers in terms of exposure to the broader mainstream Canadian culture.
- There are a few faith-based organizations providing newcomer programs and services. These faith-based organizations view themselves as offering distinct programming than secular agencies.

- Such conclusion is relevant to the statements of the representatives of these organizations that Christian agencies provide services beyond the matter of output but focus on outcome as well as providing these services with compassion and kindness as this newcomer service delivery is seen as a ministry.
- There is a reality that Christian settlement organizations receiving government support tend to function as secular organizations and are wary of any activities that have “religious” undertones. This is basically true with Romero House, Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, and FCJ Refugee Centre. The Mennonite New Life Centre also tends to water down their faith roots due to such government funding although they recognize these roots and are willing to discuss the nature of partnership.
- The faith-based organizations that maintain their religious roots have a strong spiritual component to their service and program delivery and see these as a ministry and calling.

#### ***Needs and Conditions of Newcomers***

- The range of settlement needs of newcomers could not be totally met by organizations as significant areas of these needs could only be served through a one-on-one ministry support. A broader collaborative network and referral system is also relevant to answer these needs.
- The focus of refugee organizations on shelter tends to show limited settlement and integration support as well as individual engagement with refugees. This is understandable as they have no dedicated staff whose role is on the integration and settlement component. There is even no structured follow-through after these residents leave the shelter.
- In both issues mentioned above, there is thereby a need for strategic partnership with churches to provide such individual-level ministry and support. This is revealed in all

Focus Groups Discussions that even the matter of assisting the individual newcomer in accessing health care and financial services are already relevant and meaningful ministry service.

- The support of churches to settlement organizations is a venue not only for the provision of support in integration and settlement but also on key socio-emotional care. In all FGDs to all three types of organizations, the psychological and emotional impact of transferring into another cultural and geographic context is the most evident area of newcomer need that has to be addressed.

### ***Gaps and Strengths in Service Delivery***

- There is evident lack of one-on-one support for individual newcomers among most settlement organizations. While these services are provided per individual, there is evidently less relational component.
- There is a crucial need for both parties to work in collaboration as this addresses the gaps that both sectors have. Churches can provide such individual connection as their strength and faith-based organizations are definitely effective in social service delivery.
- The strengths of the faith-based organizations are crucial points of strengthening any church-based ministry as these are program areas for referral or of enabling a church-based newcomer ministry to tap external resources.
- Any church-based newcomer ministry has to focus on one-on-one settlement engagement until the time that a church seeks to build an organizational entity with its own staff for newcomer ministry such as the New Canadian Friendship Centre in Calgary where a church established a facility for such purpose.
- The process of interface and leveraging between faith-based organizations and the Church is reflective of Seashore and Yuchtman's concept of external extraction where

an organization can gain resources through strategic partnership.<sup>8</sup> The model of Seashore and Yuchtman on organizational effectiveness requires the organization to identify institutions in its environment where it could garner resources through leveraging and collaboration.

- Such conclusion necessitates the church to establish and strengthen a system of partnerships and collaborations with selected Christian and non-profit organizations to expand its program reach.

### ***Areas of Partnership***

- The most viable partner organizations for newcomer ministry that would welcome partnership with the Peoples Church include Adam House and Matthew House for refugee shelters; Mennonite New Life Centre, Light House Centre, and Harbour Light Ministries for Settlement Organizations; and, OMF, Ambassadors for Christ, SOCEM, and World Team for International Student Ministry.
- There is a need to demarcate and have clarity on what program and service areas that could be provided by faith-based organizations and that of the church/es. This clarity would ensure that there would be no duplication of programs and at the same would further lead to collaboration and leveraging.
- The positive response of majority of the faith-based organizations to the possibility of collaboration is evident of the value that these organizations see in creating such partnership with churches.
- The extent of collaboration will be determined in the areas where gaps in programs and services are addressed by each other's strengths. This fact bodes well with the

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<sup>8</sup> Seashore, S. E., & Yuchtman, E. (1967). "Factorial Analysis of Organizational Performance." Administrative Science Quarterly, 12, 377-395; also in, "Sowa, Jessica E., Selden, Sally C., Sandfort, Jody, R.," No Longer Unmeasurable? A Multidimensional Integrated Model of Non-profit Organizational Effectiveness," Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, vol. 33, no. 4, December 2004, 711-728.

objective of the Peoples Church newcomer ministry to work in close collaboration with faith-based organizations to expand its ministry reach.

- There is a challenge on the possibility of partnership with Romero House and FCJ welcome Centre in view of their wariness in engaging with Evangelical organizations. This challenge is compounded by their financial support from the government that severely limits their engagement with a religious organization. This even true with regards to the Christie Refugee Welcome Centre in view of such government support.
- The positive response of the Mennonite New Life Centre (which is receiving substantial government funding and is also already a community-based rather than faith-based entity) for a formal partnership with the Peoples church is a model for follow-up with these organizations to establish such collaboration.

### **Recommendations**

The continuous influx of newcomers require churches to be more strategic in welcoming newcomers as well as design ministry programs that are reflective of this welcoming and relationship-building.

The determination of the programs and services of churches and faith-based organizations in Toronto, as well as the delineation of their gaps and strengths, present significant newcomer ministry opportunity for the Peoples Church as it would enable for a more focused, convergent, and collaborative form of ministry. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are hereby presented that defines the scope and parameters of the Nation Neighbour Hub Newcomer ministry.

A system of collaboration and resource-sharing needs to be developed where churches share ministry models and strategies. The system of collaboration among churches doing newcomer ministries have to lead to advocacy and development of awareness-building initiatives to churches in Toronto on the need to minister to newcomers. Crucial to this process

of awareness-building is to establish multi-cultural or newcomer ministry fora and conferences that delineates the extent and condition of newcomers.

The Peoples Church can spearhead the formation of a formal multi-cultural or newcomer ministry network composed of churches and faith-based settlement organizations in the city that will act as the vehicle for such advocacy, awareness-building, and resource-sharing.

The process of identification of like-minded churches and faith-based settlement organizations should enable the Peoples Church to define a ministry model and strategic initiative that will serve as an avant-garde newcomer ministry.

A church-based ministry of the Peoples Church to newcomers has to focus on a one-on-one engagement. Walking with the newcomer in their journey for adjustment, integration and settlement is the most meaningful ministry that the church can offer for it immediately addresses the issue of the sense of isolation and loneliness that newcomers experience in living in a foreign culture.

This process of walking with each newcomer necessitates the determination of his/her settlement needs through a documentation process so as to ensure that this assistance are tailored to each individual rather than have a one-size-fits-all ministry provision. A checklist of these individual needs has to be developed and discussed with each newcomer.

Walking with the newcomer entails a significant number of volunteers from the Peoples Church. There is thereby a need for continuous invitation to create a volunteer bank or volunteer database to enable for a one-on-one assistance and support to serve in various ministry capacities. This volunteer bank could also be a database of translators who could serve in various translation opportunities as well as communication with newcomers in their native languages. The volunteer bank should include their record of skills set and ministry interests. These volunteers also need to be trained in the dynamics and system of newcomer ministry as well as trainings in cultural sensitivity as well as refugee and immigrant ministry.

The study revealed specific ministry areas that the Peoples Church could initiate for the concretization of its newcomer ministry. These ministry areas, strategies and activities have to cater to each of the different newcomer sectors.

### *New Immigrants*

- Provide access to legal in the areas of employment and housing rights.
- Establish a specialized women's ministry for abused women and victims of domestic abuse.
- Establish a church-based employment support through creation of internship opportunities, employment mentoring, and skills training.
- Create a structure to the Business as Missions program where a system of employment support is provided such as identification of professionals in the church who could provide professional mentoring, internship opportunities, and professional linkages.
- Form Professionals ministry teams such as legal cluster, health professionals cluster, etc. to assist newcomers in linking with professionals within their field.
- Invite church members to open up their homes for newcomers through invitation to dinner or sharing of meal.
- Initiate city familiarization trips with a volunteer guide as orientation in banking system, restaurants and grocery stores, health care system, and police and emergency access.
- Orient new immigrants on Canadian environmental, social, and cultural contexts.
- Initiate cultural exposure through accompaniment in parks, museums, and places of interests.
- Provide socio-emotional support through invitation to fellowships and group gatherings.
- Establish a residential facility for the provision of temporary housing during the first four weeks of new immigrant arrival.

- Determine the possibility for church members to open up their homes for the provision of such temporary housing.
- Assist the new immigrants in their community integration through the Life Groups and Cultural Fellowships.

#### *Refugee claimants*

- Provide familiarization trips on banking, health care access, and Police and emergency facilities.
- Identify and document basic needs of refugee claimants and post this on the website for congregation to respond.
- Provide access to mental health counseling similar to the ministry provided to church members through benevolence fund support.
- Create an emotional support system to address situational depression through linkage with the Stephens Ministry.
- Establish church socialization activities and fellowships as part of socio-emotional support.
- Form a legal cluster or pool church-based lawyers who are well-versed on immigration or refugee law that could provide legal support or legal referrals.
- Establish of a list or databank of refugee-accessible and affordable housing, and Christian landlords.
- Orient refugee claimants on Canadian environmental, social, and cultural contexts.
- Form a Health Ministry Cluster that could provide free or affordable health access.
- Provide language instruction through individual conversation by linking each refugee claimants with a volunteer.
- Form a translator database that will serve in helping refugee claimants converse in their language and provide any translation help.

- Link refugee claimants with Life Groups and Cultural Fellowships after their period of stay in the refugee centres for the purpose of community integration and continued socio-emotional support.

### *International Students*

- Initiate a one-on-one or group support for familiarization of the banking, health care, and cheap foods location.
- Conduct orientation to students on weather condition, clothing and cultural context.
- Create a family atmosphere ministry similar to the house model of the MINT Fellowship to address situational depression.
- Establish an orientation event and seminar for the congregation on the Homestay program.
- Provide socio-emotional support through invitation to fellowships and group gatherings.
- Expand the International Student Ministry to include Transient Workers in view of the transition of many international students to working in Canada as well as to establish a ministry for temporary workers in the city.

### *General Provisions*

In the light of these specific initiatives, the Church has to make its ministries, worship place, and worship services culturally-sensitive and inclusive to newcomers. This could include such simple acts of putting up church signs in different languages, serving culturally-sensitive foods during fellowships, and identifying newcomers in the congregation. The identification and welcoming of newcomers immediately upon the first few weeks of attendance will make them experience connection.

It is also imperative for the church to develop strong professional ministry teams that would assist newcomers in their employment, legal, and mental needs. The formation of professional ministry teams such as employment cluster, legal cluster, mental health cluster,

and medical cluster that could offer either free or affordable access to newcomers will be a significant contribution of the church that is totally distinct from any other social service organizations.

The Peoples Church needs to have a refugee sponsorship program as one of its essential newcomer ministries. In this regard, the process of refugee sponsorship has to be studied in terms of its financial and administrative implications. A partnership with the Office of Refugees of the Catholic ArchDiocese of Toronto has to be worked out also as it has already a workable program. Furthermore, the ministry model that the ArchDiocese has utilized of forming a team of five individuals per one refugee is a good model to emulate and studied.

A follow up communication and dialogue has to be made with several organizations listed in the original plan for inclusion in the planned partnership so that these will become part of the structured partnership. These include: the Catholic Cross-Cultural Services for new immigrant support; FCJ Welcome Centre for Refugee Ministry; and, Power to Change, Navigators, International Student Ministry Canada, and Association of Christian Ministries, Inc. for International Student Ministry.

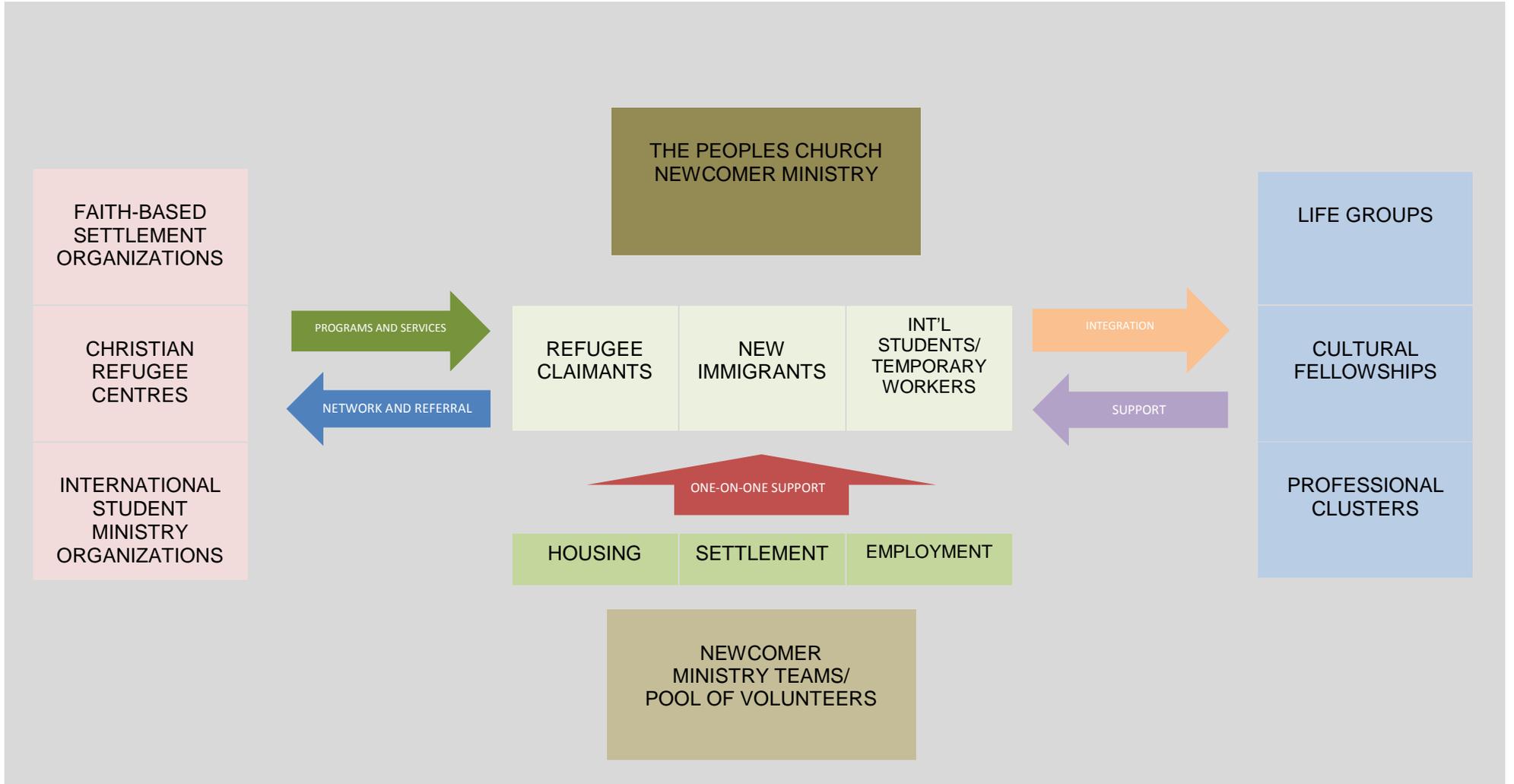
A structured partnership between the identified organizations that cater to the three newcomer sectors and the Peoples Church has to be pursued. Such partnership should define the areas of services each sector will focus on. This structured process goes beyond a referral system but a matter where the attainment of convergence in service delivery to common clients can be done. The partnership will enable newcomer clients of the Peoples Church to access specialized services of the identified partner organizations such as mental health counseling of the Mennonite New Life Centre as well as their employment support through the bridge-training program for internationally trained professionals, and the skills training program of the Light House Centre, just to name a few.

There is a need for churches to support faith-based organizations so that they would not lose their outcome-oriented and holistic approach to service delivery. Reliance on

government funding tends to dilute such view of service delivery as a ministry and calling. Funding support for these organizations has to be considered by the Peoples Church as part of its contribution to improving or sustaining programs and services of these faith-based organizations.

The partnership process delineates the newcomer ministry of the Peoples Church as a two-pronged approach where there is the broader network of specialized services provided by partner organizations and the Peoples Church provision of an individualized support by a pool of ministry volunteers. A summative analysis of the programs, services, and ministry initiatives fall within the purview of three key areas: housing, settlement/hosting, and employment. Figure 1 summarizes the scope of the newcomer ministry and specifies institutional relationships both within and outside the Peoples Church.

Figure 1  
 NATION NEIGHBOUR HUB  
 OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK



# APPENDICES

Appendix 1  
**List of Churches with Newcomer Ministries**

<b>Church</b>	<b>Type of Ministry</b>	<b>Service Sector</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>
Agincourt Pentecostal church	ESL	New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Advent Lutheran Church	ESL, Canadian Culture classes, Refugee Sponsorship	New Immigrants, Refugees	Multi-cultural
Bridlegrove Bible Chapel	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Calvary Church Toronto	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Calvary Logos Baptist Church	ESL, Meal	New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Church on the Rock	Fellowship, Furniture provision, assist in finding housing	New Immigrants (Iranian)	Iranian
Christ the Redeemer Anglican Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Commonwealth Avenue Baptist Church	Special events dinner	Refugees	Filipino
Chinese Gospel Church	ESL	International Students, New Immigrants	Chinese
Don Valley Bible Chapel	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church	Refugee Sponsorship	Refugees	Multi-cultural
First Alliance Church	Lunch, games, ESL	International Students; New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Farmer Memorial Baptist Church	Social support, Materials Assistance	New immigrants	Multi-cultural
Gracepoint Church	ESL, Family services	New immigrants	Multi-cultural
Grace Toronto Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Global Kingdom Ministries	ESL (Done by an external person)	International Students	Multi-cultural
Hallelujah Fellowship Baptist Church	Social assistance, materials provision, group integration	New immigrants	Filipino
Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church	Assistance in documentation and paperworks	New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Immanuel Baptist Church	ESL, dinner, socials,	International Students, New immigrants	Multi-cultural

Knox Presbyterian Church	ESL, dinner	International Students	Multi-cultural
Keele Street Christian Church	Social assistance	Refugees, New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Midland Park Baptist Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Milliken Chinese Community Church	ESL	International Students	Chinese
Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church	ESL	New immigrants	Multi-cultural
Oakwood Baptist Church	ESL	Refugees, New Immigrants, International Students	Multi-cultural
Redeemer Chinese Evangelical Free Church	ESL	International Students	Chinese
Toronto Alliance Church	ESL	International Students, Refugees, New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Toronto Ling Liang Church	ESL	International Students	Chinese
The Church of the Ascension Don Mills	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Walmer Road Baptist Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Rendezvous Church	Social Assistance, special dinners	Refugees	Multi-cultural
Runnymede Community Church	Social assistance, fellowship, Shelter support	Refugees	Multi-cultural
St. Anne's Anglican Church	Monthly Community dinner	Refugees	Multi-cultural
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Salvation Army North Toronto Community church	English Conversational Classes	New Immigrants	Multi-cultural
Saint John's Presbyterian Church	Weekly Dinner ESL, Conversational English	Refugees, New Immigrants, International Students	Multi-cultural
St. Paul's Anglican Bloor	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
St. Paul's Bloor Street	ESL	Refugees, New Immigrants, International Students	Multi-cultural

The Stone Church	Dinner twice a month	Refugees, New Immigrants, International Students	Multi-cultural
Toronto Evangel Missionary Church	After school study for children and help with paper work	Refugees, New Immigrants,	Multi-cultural
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church	ESL and Refugee Sponsorship	International Students, New Immigrants, Refugees	Multi-cultural
Wellpring Christian Fellowship	Social Assistance	Refugees	Multi-cultural
Wesley Chapel Free Methodist Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Willowdale Pentecostal Church	Social support	Refugees	Multi-cultural
West Toronto Baptist Church	ESL	International Students	Multi-cultural
Westminster Chapel	ESL, Foodbank	Refugees, International Students	Multi-cultural
Bridletown Park Church	Employment Mentoring	New Immigrants	Multi-cultural

Appendix 2  
**Focus Group Discussion Guide Question**

- 1) What is the general demographic profile of newcomers being served?
  
- 2) What are their most pressing needs? Can you identify any unmet needs of this sector when it comes to effective integration to Canadian society?
  
- 3) What government policies hinder effective ministry to newcomers?
  
- 4) What do you think are the gaps in program and service delivery of Christian organizations that need to be addressed? What are the challenges that your organization met in serving newcomers?
  
- 5) What are the strengths and best practices of your organization in terms of program and service delivery to newcomers?
  
- 6) As Christian organizations, what can we bring into the table when it comes to newcomer services?
  
- 7) In what ways can the Peoples Church partner with your organization in providing support to newcomers?
  
- 8) Can you mention specific ways by which volunteers from Peoples church participate in serving newcomers/clients?
  
- 9) What are specific things you expect of a partnership among Christian organizations to address program gaps, unmet needs of newcomers, and expand current services?