

Metropolis BC – MITACS Accelerate Project Descriptions

2011-12

TITLE OF PROJECT: DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE LABOUR ORGANIZING, HIRING AND RECRUITMENT MODELS TO END LABOUR EXPLOITATION OF TEMPORARY MIGRANT FARM WORKERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

PARTNER: CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The Canadian agricultural industry stands out as an emblematic case among high income countries that have long relied on immigrant and migrant labour from poorer, non-white countries to meet its labour needs. State-sponsored programs such as the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) and the Low Skilled Pilot Project (LSPP) have facilitated the legal entry of migrant labour from countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, Caribbean countries, among others. However, the temporary and restricted nature of guest worker contracts have commonly resulted in wide-scale employment violations and entrenched forms of labour exploitation such as substandard working and living conditions, unsafe working conditions, low wages, and no right to social entitlements and benefits. International labour recruiters and sending countries embassies cannot guarantee labour rights protection, fair wages, employment standards, and prevention/protection from illegal recruitment fees. Through a comparative cross-country study between the U.S and Canada, this research seeks to explore transnational labour organizing models for migrant farm workers and outline an alternative not-for-profit hiring hall model to replace existing models that tend to encourage the systemic violation of farmworkers rights. This project once completed will provide a practical model for discussion and input for public policy design among policy makers, labour union representatives, community agencies, researchers, industry and migrant workers advocacy groups.

TITLE OF PROJECT: ECONOMIC OUTCOMES AND RETENTION RATE OF BC PROVINCIAL NOMINEES: COMPARISONS WITH IMMIGRANTS FROM OTHER CLASSES

PARTNER: BC MINISTRY OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

This project will analyze and research explanations for differences in economic outcomes and retention rate between immigration classes, with a special focus on the British Columbia Provincial Nominee Programs. The study will emphasize on comparisons between Provincial Nominees and other economic immigrants, between immigrants from different classes with strong human capital characteristics, and between immigrants in British Columbia and other provinces. The data that will be used is the Longitudinal Immigration Database, which links immigrant landing records to tax information.

In addition to descriptive analysis, this paper will use regression methods to explore explanations for differences in economic outcomes and assimilation rates. Knowing the factors that contribute to the economic advantage or disadvantage of different classes of immigrants could help the Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development design better policies and programs. Such policies or programs would be.

TITLE OF PROJECT: JFSA RESETTLEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE

PARTNER: JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

From 1989 to the present, JFSA has been providing community based Resettlement and Employment Services to immigrants from many parts of the world. The main languages that the services are delivered in are Russian, Hebrew and English. The Resettlement program assists Immigrants in navigating the resettlement, integration, immigration and employment processes. Newcomers are assisted and supported in their adaptation to the Canadian Community. Through the employment services, JFSA prepares clients for opportunities to adjust to the Canadian business culture and meet employer's expectations. The program assists clients in their career exploration and planning process to ensure that all stages of career readiness and preparation are completed. JFSA assists clients with the job readiness process that will lead to meaningful employment. JFSA seeks partnerships where possible with other employment service providers for access to complimentary programs and capacity building. The goal of the internship is to produce a web- based resource as well as a printed document that identifies relevant settlement and employment resources in the Greater Vancouver area. The focus of the internship is to identify, research and establish a direct contact with providers currently delivering varies provincially and federally funded as well as community based services with a purpose of creating a comprehensive library of resources easily accessible to the counsellors as well as to the clients. The intern may also be able to identify gaps in the provincially and federally funded services that are critical for a successful integration of newcomers. In order to expand opportunities for the immigrants as well as the Canadian job seekers it is critical to have an up to date, efficient access to resources. A research-informed resource will also provide an opportunity for direct access to a specific contact person and to ensure long term collaboration. JFSA has been fortunate to have, on a volunteer basis, the advice and mentorship from Dr. Stanley Blank, Ph.D., R. Psych., retired Industrial Psychologist and former UBC Professor. Dr. Blank would be happy to mentor an intern. This would involve being a sounding board for any proposed project, its design, analysis and report of same.

TITLE OF PROJECT: EFFECTIVE ECD/ECE PRINCIPLES FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE CHILDREN: RESEARCHING APPLIED MODELS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

PARTNER: AMSSA

The focus of this project will be in large part the immigrant- and refugee-specific programs funded by the IIB which will soon be ended or revised, although the project will also identify and conduct research into service practices of other early childhood services currently delivered to primarily immigrant and refugee populations. AMSSA is aware that, with the exception of the IIB-funded programs, there are few other examples of early childhood services specifically targeted to newcomer children – although a few have come to our attention through our membership and service partner network. This project will also provide an opportunity to review government and school policies in place that support effective models, and the service needs not currently being met through existing programs.

2010-2011

REFUGEE SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN METRO VANCOUVER

PARTNER: IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC

The primary goal of this internship is to produce a web based resource as well as a printed document using a series of GIS maps and statistical highlights to identify neighbourhood settlement patterns of government assisted refugees (GARs) in Metro Vancouver from January 2005 to December 2009. While there are statistics available on the number of refugees that have settled in BC through BC Stats, Statistics Canada and CIC Facts and Figures, there is no systematic analysis/research on the neighbourhood based settlement patterns of specific refugee populations. In addition to providing general statistical information on refugee arrival and settlement patterns in Metro Vancouver, this research seeks to identify and analyze the neighbourhood settlement patterns of refugees from 3-4 source countries (e.g. Sudan, Afghanistan, Myanmar, etc). Information will be presented on an annual basis, as well as over a five year period. What communities are arriving? Where are they settling? Has this pattern changed over time? Does the settlement pattern vary for different source countries? This project, once completed, will be an invaluable resource to social planners, healthcare providers, community agencies, libraries, etc and hopefully spark discussion on the needs of certain newcomer populations within specific neighbourhoods.

BUILDING A SERVICE MODEL FOR A SUCCESSFUL ADJUSTMENT OF REFUGEE YOUTH (PART 2)

PARTNER: MOSAIC

The new internship is to continue the work of an existing MITACS Internship which intends to build a service model for a successful adjustment of refugee youth through a systematic multi-method evaluation of a demonstration project, FreeRunning, delivered by MOSAIC. A total of forty youth have been recruited to this Project from September 2009 to June 2010. This internship offers a third-party evidence-based assessment of the effectiveness of this Project. In this second internship, the focus will be two-fold. First, the Intern will collect data at the termination phase of the Project. The study will employ a triangulated mixed-method approach which includes focus group interviews with youth participants; personal and/or telephone survey of participants who complete the Project three months after the completion; and personal interview of stakeholders who are involved in the program process. The second focus is to analysis the data and to finish the final report which will include a conceptually articulated service model for refugee youth based on the data collected.

NURSE MIGRATION FROM THE PHILIPPINES TO BRITISH COLUMBIA AND WESTERN CANADA.

PARTNER: HEALTHMATCH BC

This internship is conceived as a central part of an ongoing doctoral dissertation project examining the ethics of recruitment, migration and settlement of internationally educated nurses from the Philippines into British Columbia and Canada's Western provinces. The intern will analyze how a not-for-profit public recruitment agency, Health Match BC, conducts ethical recruitment on the ground and will be the organization's consultant in planning for an ethical recruitment drive for nurses in the Philippines for the province of BC.

PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION OF TALKING INTERSECTIONS/BUILDING CONNECTIONS

PARTNER: QMUNITY/RAINBOW REFUGEE

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) migrants represent a growing, but under recognized component of Vancouver's newcomer population. Service organizations and community groups serving British Columbia's LGBT communities (QMunity, LEGIT, Rainbow Refugee) are collaborating with settlement organizations to conduct knowledge exchange workshops. The Talking Intersections/Building Connections project, funded through Welcome BC, involves LGBT newcomers and service providers from a range of organizations in knowledge exchange workshops. The workshops are designed to promote dialogue and networking that will enhance individual workers' competencies, and organizational capacities to provide settlement support inclusive of LGBT newcomers. As a MITACS intern I will conduct an evaluation of the process and outcomes of Talking Intersections/Building Connections project. The evaluation will be conducted using a participatory approach, and a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. The goals of the evaluation are to critically reflect on the process for future learning, and assess the changes in individual competencies and organizational capacities.

DEVELOPING A DESCRIPTIVE FRAMEWORK: INTEGRATING YOUTH-ORIENTED SERVICES AT SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

PARTNER: S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

This project proposes a descriptive framework for guiding universal prevention and intervention services that support the development of youths in British Columbia. A comprehensive model is needed to support cohesive, effective, and sustainable public services. A research-informed model will provide organizations, like Sustainable Employment Network Inc., a good visual framework for reviewing and planning their services and programs in the long run. We take an open-ended and "bottom-up" approach to develop a descriptive model that builds upon observations and in collaboration with administrators from the agency. Our goals are to project the complex processes of youth development and enable integrated practices that foster competency for youths and families from diverse cultural backgrounds.

DELIVERY OF IMMIGRANT SERVICES IN SMALLER URBAN CENTRES & REMOTE/RURAL AREAS

PARTNER: SOUTH OKANAGAN IMMIGRANT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Immigration is changing Canada. Yet the successful integration of new immigrants is a task rife with challenges. My research will focus on the delivery of services in smaller urban communities as well rural and remote centres, with a specific focus on the South-Okanagan-Similkameen, a region in the southern interior of British Columbia. My research will “learn from the front-line” about the full range of services that have been developed to reach and serve diverse immigrant populations with an eye towards improving services. This research is important and urgent for several reasons. The regional population is among the oldest in the province. Experts predict that the share of seniors in the region will increase because of its attractiveness as a retirement destination. This puts the region at the leading edge of a “silver tsunami” that might soon alter Canadian society. More practically, it means that the region will have a higher demand for younger workers -- and by extension, immigrants – capable of filling the various jobs needed to sustain and support an aging population.

2009-2010

MEETING THE NEEDS OF AFRICAN REFUGEE YOUTH IN METRO VANCOUVER

PARTNERS: UMOJA OPERATION COMPASSION SOCIETY AND THE CENTRE OF INTEGRATION FOR AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS

The proposed research will look at the participation in youth programs of African refugee youth aged 13-21 who live in Metro Vancouver. The range of 13-21 has been chosen to encompass students from the time they enter high school up to and including their entrance into the labour market and/or post-secondary education. “Refugee” refers to people who came to Canada during their lifetime as Government Assisted Refugees, Privately Sponsored Refugees, Landed in Canada Refugees, or as Refugee Claimants. The main purpose of the research is to identify how services can best be coordinated to close the service gap and improve the participation of African refugee youth in programs that serve their needs, thereby enhancing their integration and settlement outcomes. Salient questions informing the research include: What kinds of youth programs are currently offered by mainstream organisations and immigrant serving agencies? What, if any, barriers do these organisations perceive in accessing, attracting and retaining

African refugee youth, and what do successful programs (best practices) look like? What barriers do African refugee youth face in accessing existing youth programs provided by mainstream organizations? What is the nature and extent of African refugee youths' participation in specific linguistic, religious or cultural youth programs? Further, from the perspectives of youth, what kinds of programs do they feel would meet their interests and needs? Finally, what types of activities would parents like to see their youth participating in?

EVALUATING INTERNATIONAL RECRUITERS IN THE CONTEXT OF TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

PARTNER: LABOUR MARKET AND IMMIGRATION DIVISION, MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND LABOUR

Levels of temporary migration to Canada have increased steadily and continue to do so, because temporary foreign workers (TFWs) are seen as one solution to labour shortages in certain sectors. Private international labour brokers play an integral role in recruiting workers and facilitating TFW migration, and this project will examine the characteristics and role of these agencies operating in British Columbia. Through a series of interviews with employers, industry association representatives, foreign workers who migrated through an agency, and with labour brokers/recruiters across a range of industries and sectors, including construction, tourism/hospitality, and retail/service, the intern will sketch out the regulatory context of these agencies and construct a “profile” of recruiters operating in B.C. This research project will compile information to assist employers in more effectively identifying “legitimate” recruiters and accessing the TFW program, with the primary objective being the development of a list of indicators of reputable agencies. This will ultimately help to ensure a more successful migration experience for both businesses and the migrant foreign workers they employ.

TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE: ASSESSMENT OF VANCOUVER’S COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR IMMIGRANTS

PARTNER: S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

This research is concerned with the ways in which the mental health counselling and support services providers in Vancouver are functioning. It aims to explore the possibilities of the implementation of a multicultural approach to mental health counselling and support services for the different immigrant groups in the Vancouver region. The specific questions that this research is concerned with are: (1) What mental health counselling and support services are available in Vancouver (primarily geared towards immigrant population)?; (2) How are the current services provided by these organizations working? Are there any blindspots and gaps in the services provided? If yes, how can they be best addressed?; and (3) What has to be changed in order for these organization (including the partner organization S.U.C.C.E.S.S.) to better adopt a multicultural model for counselling and support services? Though S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is not currently accredited for mental health counselling, it would like to explore the possibility of developing mental health counselling and support services for the multicultural population based on S.U.C.C.E.S.S.’s current capacity, experience and reputation in the community. This research will provide invaluable information to assess the feasibility of providing mental health counselling- externally by accessing service provision in the field and perception of professionals/ experts about service need/gap/market; and internally S.U.C.C.E.S.S.’s existing counsellors’ readiness for accreditation.

PARTNER: ASIA PACIFIC FOUNDATION OF CANADA

This joint project undertaken by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and Simon Fraser University's School of Communication continues the foundation's ongoing Canadians Abroad project (<http://www.canadiansabroad.ca>) with a special focus on Canadian diasporic media, that is Canadian owned and operated media, printed, broadcasted, or published online or offline in English, French or in any other third languages, and directed to overseas Canadians. The foundation's earlier study (Zhang, 2007) finds that overseas Canadians are important assets for global Canada, specifically in their contribution to Canada's foreign relations with their country of residence. In response to this, this study focuses on Canadian diasporic media as one way to foster the political, economic, and cultural links of overseas Canadians to Canada, guided by the following questions: (1) What are the roles of Canadian diasporic media in promoting Canada and connecting overseas Canadians to Canada?; and (2) How can Canada utilize these diasporic media to enhance their attachment to Canada? This research involves (1) mapping of Canadian diasporic media in twelve destinations in Asia, Europe, and North America and (2) interviews with media stakeholders and audiences. The findings of this research provide background information on existence and significance of Canadian diasporic media and help our stakeholders to develop media strategies to enhance the attachment of overseas Canadians to Canada.

2008-2009

AMSSA INDEX

PARTNER: THE AFFILIATION OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES AND SERVICE AGENCIES OF BC (AMSSA)

This internship with AMSSA, an affiliation of agencies providing immigrant settlement and multicultural services to communities, will survey and analyze all types of services for immigrants already being offered by AMSSA's member agencies across BC through their broad-ranging service funder relationships. Generally speaking, each BC immigrant-serving agency holds a small number of "core" BC Ministry of Attorney General Settlement and Adaptation Program service contracts which allow for a basic range of information and referral, volunteer matching and ESL services. However, in addition to their core settlement services, AMSSA's member agencies have developed service relationships with other federal, provincial, municipal and private funders to deliver additional immigrant services in areas including health, seniors, youth, employment, family counselling, domestic violence, and community capacity development. The purpose of this research is to 'learn from the front-line' about the full range of services that have historically been developed at the community level to meet particular newcomer needs.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? REVIEWING AND UPDATING SUCCESS'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP MILLENNIUM PROJECT IN ITS 10TH YEAR

PARTNER: S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is one of the largest immigration and social service agencies in BC. This project is designed to provide S.U.C.C.E.S.S. with three useful end-products; two consolidated and updated program of operations guides for the Host Program and the Youth Leadership Millennium Project (YLMP), and an evaluative research-based report providing feedback from YLMP graduates. Using participant focused evaluation, the intern will establish the goals for YLMP held by all those involved in the program. Questions and goals generated in this group will be the standards on which the research questions are based, and then evaluated. The intern will be conducting face-to-face and telephone interviews with YLMP graduates (aged 15-35) with a representative 10% of the total population of graduates. The research will provide three useful tools for the organization and will add to the body of research on integration and leadership programming for first and second-generation immigrant youth.

REGIONAL ADVANTAGE AND INNOVATION IN EAST ASIA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE REVERSE BRAIN DRAIN WHICH IS TRANSFORMING THE REGION'S HIGH-TECH SECTOR INTO TECHNOLOGY LEADERS

PARTNER: ASIA PACIFIC FOUNDATION OF CANADA

This project will research the reverse brain-drain of Taiwan's, China's and India's high-tech sector. It will investigate the highly-skilled returnee's impact on the country's high-tech sector and analyze if their return contributed to their country's success in innovation and leadership in the high-tech sector. Lastly, the project will look into the implications of this return migration on Canada and what Canada can do to maintain ties with returning immigrants to their home country.

EMPLOYMENT AND BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AMONG RECENTLY ARRIVED GOVERNMENT-ASSISTED REFUGEES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

PARTNER: IMMIGRATION POLICY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS DEPT, BC MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

This research seeks to examine how GARs, who arrived in 2004 or later, are faring in BC, particularly with respect to employment outcomes. As a starting point, this research seeks to ascertain what services and programs are available, and from whom (e.g., federal program? provincial?). Are there gaps or duplication in services and programs for refugees, and if so, how may these services best be provided? In light of the changing profile of refugee populations, questions of employability and barriers to employment come to the fore, especially for multi-barriered individuals. As such, consideration must be given to the degree to which post-IRPA GARs have been successful in accessing employment. What are the barriers (e.g., life skills issues, language, and foreign credential recognition) that preclude obtaining employment? Do linkages exist between the changing refugee population post-IRPA and employment and settlement outcomes of these newcomers? Are there strategies that can be directed at high-needs GARs to facilitate educational opportunities that lead to attachments to the labour force?