

Summary of Metropolis Dissemination Project by East Kootenay Friends of Burma

East Kootenay Friends of Burma is a registered charitable society made up of volunteers committed to the sponsorship and resettlement of refugees to interior B.C. We are a Sponsorship Agreement Holder group with 25 years of experience in the successful rural resettlement of refugees from Burma, Cambodia, Columbia, and Eritrea.

We are extremely grateful to Metropolis B.C. for the funding of this dissemination project which allowed us to share and combine the wisdom gathered from research findings with community experience. Six communities in the East and West Kootenay areas were presented with Metropolis research and discussions were facilitated to compare community experience and interest in immigration.

The interaction facilitated by this particularly unique combination of academic research with first-voice individual experience from the point of view of long-term community residents and from the point of view of recently resettled refugees was the highlight of each of these community discussions. Metropolis funding allowed us to produce a short video depicting experience of rurally resettled refugees and community volunteers in interior B.C.

The results of this dissemination project include; increased community awareness of research available through Metropolis B.C., understanding of the benefits of rural refugee resettlement and immigration to rural communities, increased community volunteerism, development of new community coalitions with the purpose of encouraging rural refugee resettlement, and a therapeutic, welcoming experience for the 12 recently resettled refugees from Burma (Karen hill-tribe) and Columbia (land-mine victims) who participated as volunteers in this project.

This was an extremely worthwhile project with long-term positive potential for community residents and newcomers in the East and West Kootenay areas of interior B.C. Once again, East Kootenay Friends of Burma expresses our gratitude to Metropolis B.C. for the funding which allowed us to facilitate this amazing project.