

STRUCTURE

1) Mandate

The SISDC-SIPPC Health of the Sector (HS) working group is a table to bring together Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and representatives of funded settlement organizations under the Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Program. The working group is dedicated to understanding and improving the overall HS, including fortifying organizational retention, recruitment, professional development and mental wellness of employees of IRCC-funded service provider organizations (SPOs).

As the settlement and integration sector continues to evolve, a greater emphasis is being placed on sectoral health to ensure that the essential work within the federal Settlement and Resettlement Assistance programs is successful and sustainable in both the short and long-term. Stewarding a healthy sector will contribute to broad sectoral resilience and longevity.

The HS working group is a joint initiative that includes both SISDC and SIPPC members, and reports directly to the SISDC.

2) Scope

The HS working group is not a decision-making body for the overall administration of federal Settlement and Resettlement Programs or the SIPPC and SISDC. The group will assume a critical role in collecting and analyzing information from IRCC-funded organizations to better understand, identify, and improve organizational health. Through informed decision-making processes, the working group will navigate challenges and opportunities to enhance the resilience of IRCC-funded SPOs and strengthen the overall health of the settlement sector. The group will collaborate closely with and report up to SISDC, with a copy to SIPPC, with key information and ensure that recommendations align with the mandates of both committees.

The scope of work can include, but is not limited to, the following priorities relating to sectoral health:

- Organizational recruitment, retention and professional development
- Managing workload and mental health of staff
- Professionalization of the newcomer-serving sector to create standardization in roles and responsibilities

3) Objectives

Working group members will review the 2021 HS survey results, which include recommendations for the sector and IRCC, to identify and prioritize up to three areas of interest for the group to focus on. Subsequently, the working group co-chairs will seek the approval of SISDC to validate the identified priority areas. Based on the agreed-upon priorities, this working group may develop additional specific and strategic objectives.

All working group objectives will be formulated and finalized in alignment with the scope mentioned above, in addition to IRCC Grant and Contribution Agreement requirements and directions.

Based on the 2021 HS survey results, other specific objectives include:

- Developing a strategic framework for the health of the sector, including defining areas of focus and evaluation metrics to identify baseline capacity, resources, and organizational culture requirements necessary to achieve this vision.
- Identifying, compiling and evaluating best practices, policies and resources related to internal organizational governance, including healthy organizational practices and efforts to enhance recruitment, retention and professional development. Information could be maintained in a central repository that can be accessed by SPOs and their staff.
- Develop recommendations and resources to ensure ongoing understanding of organizational concerns and opportunities for improvement related to the mental health and well-being of SPO staff.
- Explore ways to increase the professionalization of the sector, including reviewing the organizational approaches and practices for SPO staff to attain formal knowledge, expertise and training required to stay up-to-date and offer relevant, high-quality services to newcomers.

ROLES

4) Structure and Membership Rationale

Tenure

The joint SISDC-SIPPC HS working group will be co-chaired by one representative of IRCC and one representative of SISDC, as determined by SISDC co-chairs. It will also include one representative from SIPPC as a member of the working group.

The term of the Sector working group co-chair and working group is limited to three (3) years, aligned with the tenure of SISDC, or until the group completes its work, whichever is earlier.

The National Sector Engagement (NSE) Secretariat will lead the call-out and confirmation of membership for the working group, using an intersectional approach to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion at the individual and organizational levels. In the event that the mandate of the working group extends beyond the three year timeline, the co-chairs will propose an approach to SISDC, including an overview of work yet to be completed.

Membership

Membership will include, but may not be limited to, representation from Directors of policy and operations from IRCC funded (re) settlement organizations, HR professionals from IRCC-funded SPOs and other experts as identified by SISDC co-chairs or working group co-chairs, as well as an IRCC official from Settlement Network. In addition, membership of the SISDC-SIPPC HS working group will include Francophone representation to ensure the perspectives and needs of Francophone funded organizations and the clients they serve are reflected in deliberations. Membership will comprise up to eight (8) nominated representatives, including two (2) co-chairs and one (1) representative from SIPPC. The size may be increased depending on the working group's objectives, subject to SISDC co-chairs' approval. Each member will specify one alternate to cover absences.

Members are expected to represent the views of a constituency of organizations, including from small organizations and rural, northern and remote communities. Consideration will be given to ensuring working group membership reflects the specific needs, interests and experiences of diverse Sector members and stakeholders, while also ensuring participation from partners with relevant subject matter expertise (i.e. HR professionals).

5) Co-Chair and Member Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Co-Chairs

In collaboration with SISDC co-chairs, working group co-chairs are responsible for:

- i) finalizing a workplan with immediate to short-term strategic objectives that align with priorities of the SISDC.
- ii) leading in the implementation and tracking of progress according to work plan milestones;
- iii) setting and following the agenda for working group meetings in alignment with the work plan;
- iv) ensuring the interests and experiences of various and diverse populations are considered in deliberations, including, for example, women, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous people, linguistic minorities, sexual orientation and gender diverse groups including 2SLGBTQI+, remote, rural and northern communities;
- v) providing working group updates, in writing, on the implementation of the work plan at quarterly SISDC and SIPPC meetings; and
- vi) After the inaugural year of establishing the working group, co-chairs will submit a report on the group's findings and recommendations to the SISDC. Reporting frequency will be established in the work plan.

Member Responsibilities

Working group members will fairly represent the diverse voices of government and non-government settlement and integration colleagues.

Working group members will demonstrate a commitment to the success of the group by consistently attending meetings, participating in discussions, providing meaningful contributions to support the deliverables laid out in the work plan and working collegially. If a member is unable to fulfil their responsibility, the SISDC co-chairs may ask them to step down from the working group. When a position becomes vacant, a call for participation will be advertised.

PROCESS

6) Meetings

Meeting Frequency

Working Group co-chairs will decide the appropriate meeting schedule in alignment with the work plan and deliverables, in consultation with working group members. Meetings will be held virtually.

Budget

Subject to Departmental approvals and in accordance with the Treasury Board (TB) guidelines, IRCC will fund logistical support where applicable (including securing a location, hospitality and interpretation service costs if needed for meetings) for SISDC working groups. SISDC co-chairs to determine if an annual in-person working group meeting is deemed necessary.

IRCC currently funds the NSE Secretariat through Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Serving Agencies of BC (AMSSA) to coordinate and support the sector to fully participate in the SIPPC and SISDC and the working groups, including canvassing members on their views and other sector-based analyses of issues, to coordinate the costs associated with Sector participation (including travel, accommodation and incidental costs, where applicable), and to liaise and coordinate with the SIFA Secretariat at IRCC.

National Sector Engagement (NSE) Secretariat

The secretariat and coordination function to the SIPPC and SISDC working groups will be provided by the NSE Secretariat. The NSE Secretariat will convene SISDC-SIPPC HS working group meetings and provide organizational, analytical and technical support to the co-chairs of this working group. The NSE Secretariat will make arrangements for interpretation services, as required. In accordance with TB guidelines, the NSE Secretariat will coordinate the meeting location/hospitality, if working group co-chairs or members are asked to attend an annual in-person meeting.

In support of SISDC and SIPPC co-chairs, the NSE Secretariat will organize and disseminate all SISDC-SIPPC HS working group meeting agendas, documents, minutes and other relevant materials to meeting participants, SISDC, SIPPC and SIFA Secretariat in a timely manner.

Settlement, Integration and Francophone Affairs (SIFA) Secretariat Function

The monitoring and tracking function to the SISDC working groups will be provided by Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, IRCC. The SIFA Secretariat will track work plans, outputs and outcomes, identify opportunities for alignment between working groups, and flag challenges and risks. Secretariat functions are provided in Annex A of the SISDC and SIPPC terms of reference.

Renewal of Terms of Reference

At the end of the working group's mandate, and as determined in the workplan, the SIFA Secretariat will review the Terms of Reference for the joint SISDC-SIPPC Health of the Sector working group, in consultation with SISDC, and adopt any changes at that time.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Agendas, key documents and other material will be made available in both official languages (OL). The working group is expected to support conducting in-person and virtual meetings in both official languages.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members are committed to ensure that discussions about program and operational priorities do not provide an advantage with respect to funding any SIPPC or SISDC working group member, as per the "Conflict of Interest Guidelines" document presented in Annex B of the SISDC Terms of Reference.

DATE OF ADOPTION

July 18, 2024.