

Settlement Service Coordination Provision Plan in Response to the Earthquake in Haiti

Given the impact of the January 12th earthquake on Haiti, CIC expects to see an influx of Haitian immigrants who will arrive in Canada mainly as sponsored members of Haitian families. These immigrants will fall into the categories of spouses, children and parents sponsored by families already living in Ontario and will be eligible for settlement services. Immigration Programs has already confirmed the existence of 96 applications in the processing system. At this time, the Minister has indicated that the processing of applications might take between several weeks and two to three months. More applications are likely to be received over the next few months and the time of arrival of these immigrants is most probably going to stretch over a period of time.

Ontario has a sizeable population of Haitians, with the largest community in Ottawa and a smaller number residing in the Greater Toronto Area. The Department will look at ensuring that services are available in all of the six Ontario target receiving cities, as identified by the *Strategic Plan to Foster Official Languages Minority Communities (Strategic Plan)*. They include, London, Hamilton, Windsor, Toronto, Ottawa and Sudbury.

Ontario Region's Service Provision Strategy

The Regional strategy to provide services to the influx of clients of Haitian backgrounds will include a series of measures ensuring the availability of adequate services in French. CIC's strategy will be aligned to the requirements of the Strategic Plan and will support Francophone settlement agencies and/or agencies with French or Creole-speaking staff in playing the main settlement service provision role for this target clientele. The Department will also aim at providing integrated French-language services mainly through Francophone agencies, as well as bilingual agencies who have existing French and Creole-speaking staff. We will ask that these service providers also facilitate referrals to agencies that are not funded by CIC, but that can offer additional services focusing on health, education, and other priority areas.

The structures currently in place for the coordination of French language settlement services in Ontario will play a key role in identifying the needs of the target clientele as well as rallying partners to ensure adequate service provision.

As such,

1. The existing three Coordination Networks of Francophone Immigration will be coordinating, in collaboration with CIC, the efforts of various partners to ensure that Settlement and other services are offered to these clients in an integrated manner, for each one of the geographic areas they cover (Northern (Contact Interculturel francophone de Sudbury), South-Central (Centre de santé communautaire de Hamilton-Niagara), and Eastern Ontario (Conseil économique et social d'Ottawa-Carleton). The main Network coordinator for this initiative will be Saint-Phard Désir, Coordinator for the Network of Eastern Ontario.

2. CIC will work closely with agencies providing services to these clients to ensure that they are adequately resourced to serve these Francophone clients, as per the requirements of the Strategic Plan. To that end, CIC will require that service providers report on the number of clients of Haitian background served in their monthly reports. **We ask that each office communicate these numbers to Irena Nikolova, from the regional office (Settlement Programs) on a monthly basis.** Agencies will also be asked to maintain close contact with the Haitian community leaders and organizations in order to do the most successful outreach to clients. The francophone network coordinators will be asked to develop lists of these contacts.
3. CIC offices (including settlement officers dealing with agencies) will need to have adequate information to ensure consistency in responding to inquiries concerning adoptions, sponsorships and any other relevant topics. CIC offices need to ensure that enquiries are tracked as requested and that specific responses are provided to inquiries regarding Haiti. These inquiries need to be treated on a priority basis.
4. Information materials will be created, so that CIC staff is prepared to respond if approached by community groups and/or MPs.
5. CIC will also work closely with Service providers to ensure that cultural profiles of the Haitian community are developed and shared. Suggestions for programming appropriate to the needs of this client group will also be considered, where necessary.

In **Ottawa**, the following main agencies will be directly involved in providing direct settlement services: the *Centre Économique et Social d'Ottawa-Carleton (CÉSOC)* and the *Catholic Immigration Center. L'Organisme communautaire des services aux immigrants d'Ottawa (OCISO)* will play a specific role in providing provide services within the framework of the SWIS program. La *Cité collégiale* and *CÉPEO* will be offering French Language training services.

In **Toronto**, the *Centre francophone de Toronto* will be the main agency providing settlement services and legal aid. The *Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)* will play a specific role in offering itinerant culturally appropriate crisis counselling where necessary. CAMH will be expected to develop partnerships with other organizations in order to ensure adequate support in this area.

In **Hamilton**, the *Centre de santé communautaire de Hamilton-Niagara* will be the main agency providing settlement services and legal aid.

In **London**, the *ACFO London Sarnia* will be the main service provider.

In **Sudbury**, the *Contact interculturel Francophone de Sudbury* will be the main service provider.

In **Windsor**, the *Collège Boréal* will be the main service provider.

The *Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions (COPA)* will be supporting CIC with the coordination of the French SWIS program and will also be involved in creating materials for distribution to clients, as well as a strategy for referring children to francophone schools.

The assessment centers in all target cities will be involved in the process of assessing clients for LINC and ELT programs.

A list of Francophone and bilingual Service providers for the Region, and their contact information, is attached.