

2025-2028



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# COMMUNITY PLAN

BUILDING A WELCOMING,  
INCLUSIVE AND THRIVING  
REGION FOR ALL

Funded by:

Financé par :



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

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## **Land Acknowledgement**

Southwest Saskatchewan is situated within Treaty 4 territory, the traditional and ancestral lands of the Nehiyawak/Cree, Anishinaabe/Saulteaux, Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota peoples, as well as the Métis Nation. This region was also historically used and traversed by the Blackfoot Nations before the impacts of colonialism altered traditional territories and movement patterns.

We acknowledge that these lands were taken through treaties and policies that often failed to uphold the spirit and intent of mutual respect and coexistence. We recognize the enduring presence and resilience of First Nations, and we respect the treaties as living agreements that continue to shape our relationships today.

We also acknowledge the harms and injustices of the past. We are committed to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration to build respectful and equitable communities across Southwest Saskatchewan.

## **Executive Summary**

The 2025-2028 Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership Community Plan is a comprehensive, forward-looking strategy designed to foster the successful integration of immigrants and newcomers into the social, economic, cultural and civic life of communities across Southwest Saskatchewan.

Developed through extensive consultations with regional stakeholders, including community organizations, educational institutions, employers, service providers, and immigrants themselves, generally referred to as community leaders during our 2022 Community Leaders Forum, this plan reflects a shared vision for a more inclusive, resilient, and vibrant region.

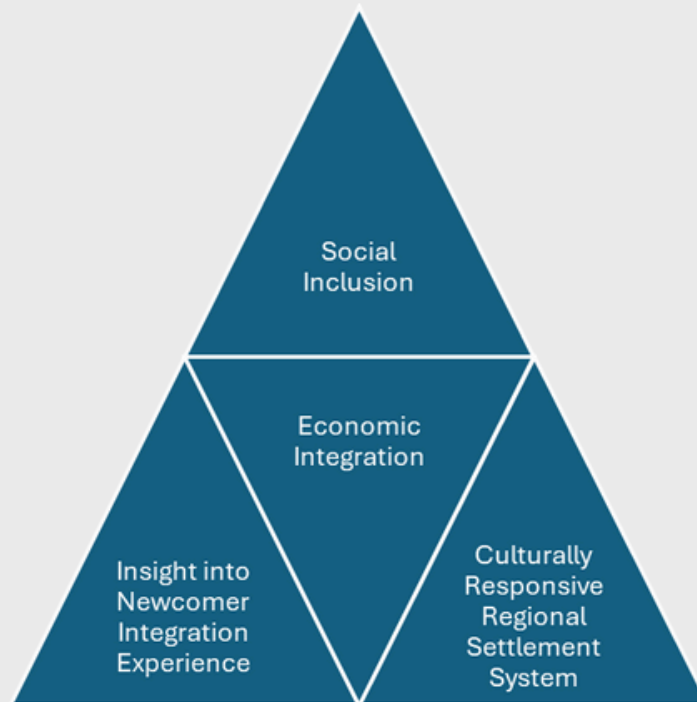
Southwest Saskatchewan is experiencing a growing need for skilled workers and population growth to support its evolving economy, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, manufacturing, and technology. Immigration is a vital tool for addressing labour market demands, revitalizing communities, and sustaining long-term regional prosperity.

However, attracting and retaining newcomers requires more than recruitment- it requires intentional, coordinated efforts to ensure that immigrants are welcomed, supported, and empowered to contribute meaningfully from the moment they arrive.

This Community Plan builds upon the region's existing strength, including strong community networks, a history of hospitality, and established settlement services. At the same time, it acknowledges critical gaps in accessing housing, language training, credential recognition, employment supports and culturally responsive services- challenges that can hinder newcomer success and retention if left unaddressed.

Importantly, this community plan also centres the voices and lived experiences of the Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT), who, during our 2024 meetings, have been instrumental in shaping already identified priorities and further identifying solutions that reflect real-world challenges and aspirations.

This plan, as a collaborative effort, is therefore anchored on four strategic goals as shown in the diagram below:



*Four Pillars of the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership Community Plan*

It is evident that this plan not only outlines key goals and actions to support the integration of newcomers, but it also emphasizes the importance of data-driven decision-making, continuous evaluation, and effective collaboration of the Partnership Council (PC) to respond to emerging needs and opportunities.

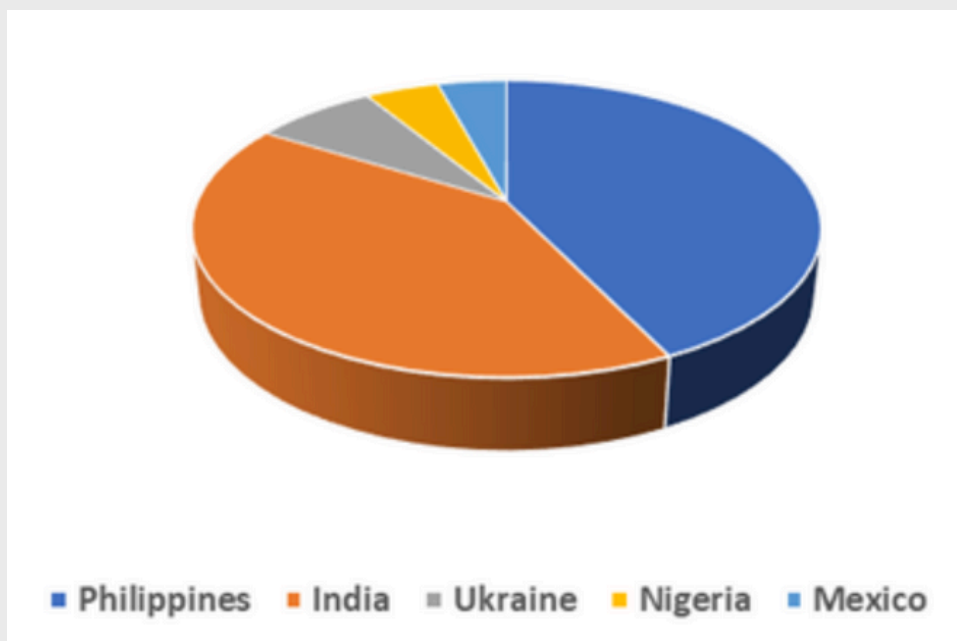
By implementing this Community Plan, Southwest Saskatchewan has the opportunity to become a national model for successful rural and regional immigration.

Because we understand that when newcomers thrive, communities grow stronger, this plan is not just about supporting immigrants- it is about building a more welcoming, inclusive, dynamic, and prosperous future for all residents of Southwest Saskatchewan.

## Introduction

Southwestern Saskatchewan has long been recognized as a region where newcomers are welcomed and valued. With its strong sense of community, affordable living, and growing economy, it continues to attract skilled immigrants from around the world, particularly from the Philippines, India and a host of other countries.

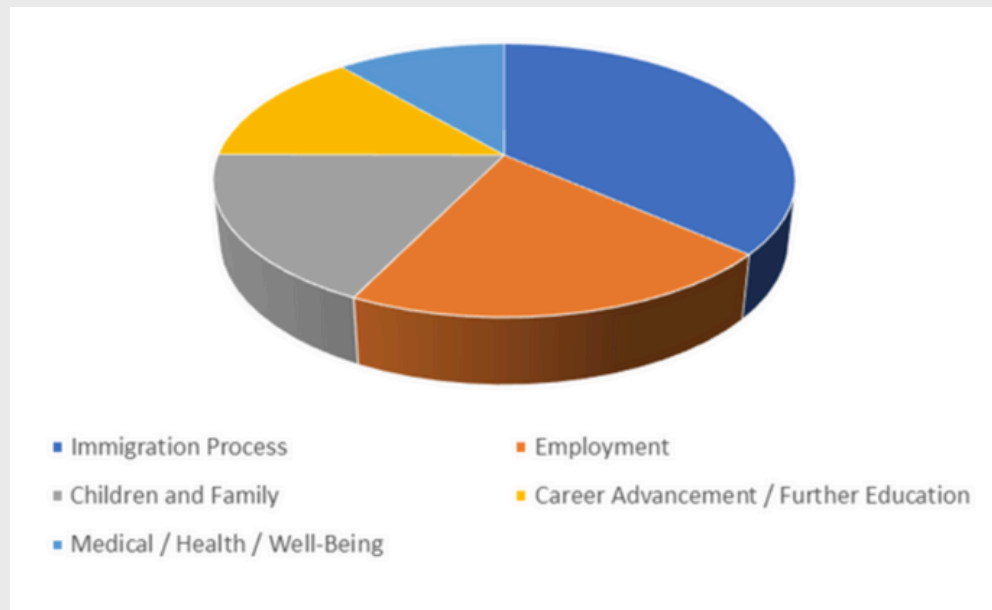
### ***Top 4 Newcomer Source Countries in Southwestern Saskatchewan***



*In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, the Philippines had the highest number of newcomers in the region, followed by India, Ukraine, Nigeria, and Mexico.*

**Source:** Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre Annual Report, 2024-2025, <https://www.newcomerwelcomecentre.com/reports>

## ***Top Service Needs of Immigrants in Southwestern Saskatchewan***



**Source:** Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre Annual Report, 2024-2025, <https://www.newcomerwelcomecentre.com/reports>

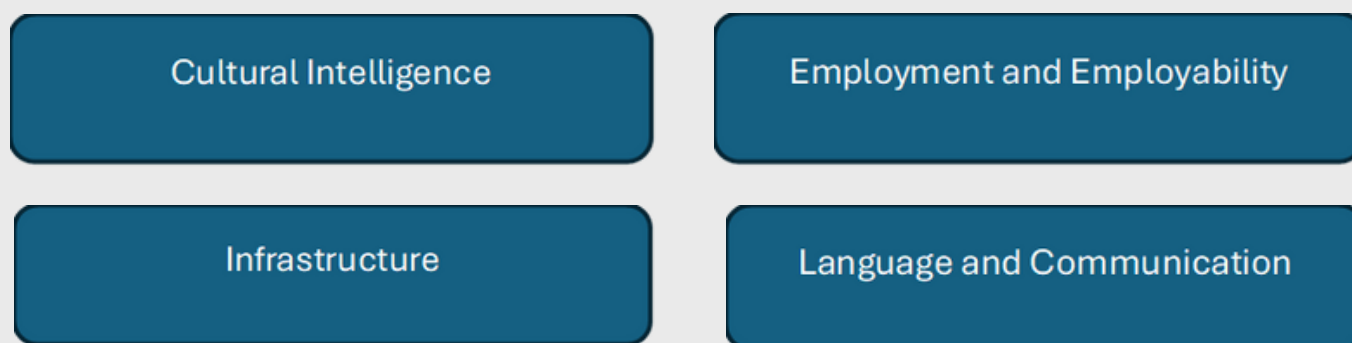
In the pie chart above, immigration process or support is the top need, which reflects high demand for documentation and status resolution. Employment is a major priority, showing a strong desire for economic integration. Family and children's services rank high, indicating family-centred settlement concerns. Career advancement and education follow, and this signals long-term integration goals. Health and well-being are consulted least, possibly due to access barriers or cultural perceptions around seeking medical or mental health assistance.

However, Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP) will lead a coordinated, community-driven effort to foster inclusive systems, strengthen regional collaboration, and strive to remove barriers to newcomer integration to ensure everyone can contribute and succeed.

This plan is grounded in insights from the February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Community Leaders Forum, where 39 stakeholders from government, non-profits, education, business, faith groups, and Indigenous organizations identified shared settlement gaps in the region.

For context, the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP) hosted its first community forum, where leaders of community organizations that support the settlement of newcomers met to discuss persistent challenges that hinder full integration, belonging and long-term success. It was discovered that despite their qualifications, experience, and strong desire to contribute, many newcomers face systemic barriers that hinder their ability to thrive. These challenges are not isolated; they are interconnected, shaping the daily realities of immigrant families and affecting the region's capacity to build truly inclusive and resilient communities.

In alignment with the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP) settlement strategy, a regional settlement strategy planning workshop was held on October 19, 2022. Participants reviewed the barriers to successful newcomer integration that had been identified during the February Community Forum and selected four key priorities as essential to achieving the full integration and successful settlement in the region. The four priorities are:



Each priority has been assigned to a dedicated working group tasked with developing targeted goals and concrete action plans to address the needs of immigrants. These working groups are actively advancing initiatives informed by community input and aligned with the long-term vision of building inclusive, resilient communities across southwestern Saskatchewan.



This Community Plan reflects the following principles:

- Integration is a shared responsibility across sectors.
- Success is measured not just by services provided, but by whether newcomers feel they belong.
- True integration occurs when newcomers are seen as full, contributing members of the community.
- Solutions must be practical, action-oriented, and co-developed with all stakeholders – including newcomers.

This plan is not a static document, but a living roadmap for action. By working together with partners, the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership can build a region where everyone, regardless of where they come from, has the opportunity to belong, contribute, and thrive.

## **Core Values**

The Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP) Community Plan 2025-2030 is built on a strong foundation of shared values that reflect our collective commitment to creating welcoming, inclusive, and thriving communities. The core values- **Inclusion, Collaboration, Respect, Empowerment, and Innovation**- are not just words on a page; they are guiding principles that shape how we work, who we serve, and the kind of future we are building together. They reflect the voices of community leaders, service providers, Indigenous partners, employers, and most importantly, newcomers. As we set out to achieve our goals, these values serve as our compass.

### **Inclusion: Everyone Belongs**

We believe that every individual has a place in Southwest Saskatchewan. Inclusion means more than just being present- it means being welcomed, seen, heard and valued. It means ensuring that newcomers have equitable access to housing, employment, education, healthcare, and opportunities to participate in civic and cultural life. We recognize that true inclusion happens when people feel they belong- when they can raise their families, share their traditions, and contribute their talents without fear of discrimination or marginalization. This value drives our efforts to remove systemic barriers and create communities where diversity is not only accepted but celebrated.

### **Collaboration: We Achieve More Together**

No single organization or sector can support successful newcomer integration alone. Real change happens when government, non-profits, businesses, educational institutions, Indigenous communities, and residents come together with a shared purpose. The Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership was established on the belief that collective action creates stronger outcomes. Through the Partnership Council (PC), Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT), and Working Groups (WGS), we foster meaningful partnerships that align resources, expertise, and vision. By working side by side, we amplify our impacts, avoid duplication, and build a coordinated regional response that meets the complex needs of newcomers and the communities that welcome them.

### **Respect: We Honour Diverse Cultures, Experiences, and Perspectives**

Respect is the cornerstone of healthy, multiculturally diverse communities. We recognize that newcomers bring rich cultural heritage, professional expertise, and lived experiences that enrich our region.

At the same time, we honour the original stewards of this land- the First Nations and Métis peoples- whose traditions, knowledge, and resilience continue to shape our region. Respect means listening deeply, learning from one another, and challenging assumptions. It means creating spaces where all voices are treated with dignity and where cultural differences are not just tolerated but remembered as assets. This value guides our commitment to cultural safety, anti-racism, and reconciliation.

### **Empowerment: We Support Newcomers and Communities to Lead Change**

Empowerment means ensuring that newcomers are not just recipients of services, but active agents in shaping their futures and their communities. The Immigrant Advisory Table exemplifies this value- immigrants leading conversations, sharing their insight, and co-developing solutions. We believe that when people are given the tools, opportunities, and platforms to lead, innovation and sustainability follow. Empowerment also extends to long-term residents and local organizations- we all grow when we share power, build leadership, and create pathways for meaningful participation.

### **Innovation: We Adapt and Improve Through Shared Learning and Action**

The landscape of immigration and integration is constantly evolving. To meet emerging challenges and opportunities, we must be forward-thinking and adaptable. Innovation means being open to new ideas, piloting creative solutions, and using data and lived experiences to inform our work. It means learning from what works, sharing best practices across communities, and continuously improving our programs and systems. Whether it's expanding virtual language training, launching a regional awareness campaign, or embarking on community outreach. Or developing culturally responsive healthcare services, innovation ensures our efforts remain relevant, effective, and impactful.

Together, these core values form the ethical and operational heart of the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnerships Community Plan. They reflect who we are, who we engage, and the future we are committed to building- one where everyone matters.

## **The Structure and Governance of the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP)**

The Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP) is the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) for Southwest Saskatchewan. The SSIP not only enhance the region's capacity to attract and retain immigrants but also promotes long-term prosperity and resilience for the entire region.

### **The Partnership Council (PC)**

The Partnership Council (PC) functions as the leadership body of the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), playing a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction and overseeing the coordination of all activities and programs. As an advisory body with significant influence, the PC is tasked with fostering collaboration among various stakeholders to ensure that the region remains an attractive, inclusive, and welcoming destination for immigrants.

The Council serves as a central hub for sharing critical information, best practices, and innovative strategies with member organizations, ensuring alignment and synergy across initiatives aimed at enhancing immigrant integration and community well-being.

By leveraging the expertise and diverse perspectives of its members, the Council ensures that decisions are informed, equitable, and reflective of the needs of both newcomers and the broader community. Council members are drawn from a wide range of sectors, each contributing unique insights and capabilities to the strategic plans. Membership includes:

- City of Swift Current
- Community Futures Southwest
- Canadian Mental Health Association, Swift Current
- Government of Canada- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
- Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Immigration and Career Training (ICT)
- Grand Coteau Heritage and Cultural Centre
- Great Plains College

- Immigrant Advisory Table
- Kiwanis Club of Swift Current
- Nekaneet First Nation
- Service d'accueil et d'inclusion Francophone SK
- Southwest District for Culture, Recreation and Sport
- Southwest Multicultural Association
- Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre
- Swift Current & District Chamber of Commerce
- Town of Gull Lake
- Town of Maple Creek
- Village of Frontier
- Village of Hazlet

### **The Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT)**

The IAT guides the Council's day-to-day decision-making process, ensuring newcomer perspectives inform the work of the Council and its working groups. IAT members are immigrants living in Swift Current and the surrounding areas, bringing first-hand or lived experience to their roles. The Table also conducts outreach and information-sharing activities.

## **Working Groups (WGs)**

These working groups were established as a result of the Regional Settlement Strategy Planning conducted by the Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership (SSIP) in October 2022. They were created to address the top four priorities identified to remove barriers to newcomer integration in the southwest region. The Working groups include:

- Employment /Employability
- Infrastructure
- Cultural Intelligence
- Language and Communication

Each group operates according to a developed action plan.

## **Program Funder**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) funds the program and oversees the national local immigration partnership (LIP) programming.

## **Contribution Agreement Holder**

The Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre holds the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Contribution Agreement, providing support for the LIP coordinator and overseeing reporting and day-to-day financial decisions.

## **LIP Coordinator**

The Southwest Immigration Partnership Coordinator supports the Partnership Council, the Immigrant Advisory Table and all Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership groups and activities, including:

- Consultations and research
- Project management
- Meeting organizations
- Coordination between groups.

This structure ensures a comprehensive approach to supporting newcomers and fostering welcoming communities in Southwest Saskatchewan.

## **2025-2030 Local Immigration Community Plan**

### **GOAL 1: SOCIAL INCLUSION**

#### **Objective:**

Southwest Saskatchewan is poised to foster a welcoming, inclusive, and equitable region where all individuals, including newcomers- regardless of background, identity, or circumstances feel valued, respected, and empowered to fully participate in community life.

This can be achieved through a shared community-driven vision of successful integration of newcomers across Southwest Saskatchewan by respectfully engaging diverse stakeholders- including newcomers, Indigenous communities, long-term residents, service providers, employers, educators and municipal governments to show commitment to social inclusion across the region.

#### **Strategic Actions:**

##### **1. Create Inclusive and Welcoming Communities**

- Coordination of activities and programming across communities to ensure that:
- Newcomers feel valued, safe, and connected
- They access quality employment, housing, education, and healthcare.
- They participate in community life, including volunteering, cultural events and leadership.
- Immigrants' successes in all areas are recognized and celebrated.
- Develop indicators for retention rates, employment quality, community participation and sense of belonging.

##### **2. Launch a Regional Awareness Campaign**

- Create a public campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of immigration and encourage widespread community buy-in.
- Use storytelling and data to communicate the value of diversity and the benefits of integration to the broader public.
- Highlight the success of newcomers and inclusive employers.

## GOAL 2: ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

### **Objective:**

Systematically address the most pressing barriers to economic participation identified through the 2022 community forum, specifically language access, employment opportunities, affordable and accessible housing, reliable transportation, and foreign credential recognition- by developing coordinated, cross-sectoral strategies that remove systemic obstacles and create equitable pathways to economic success.

For example, limited public transportation between rural communities and major service centers presents a significant barrier to newcomer integration. This affects access to employment, healthcare, language training, and social services.

By dismantling these interconnected barriers, the region will unlock the full potential of its diverse population, increase labour force participation, meet employer demands, stimulate innovations, and lay the foundation for sustained regional economic prosperity.

### **Strategic Actions:**

#### **1. Employment, Employability and Credential Recognition**

- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce in the southwest region to create “Newcomer-Friendly Employer” certification.
- Advocate for a Mentorship and Shadowing Program connecting skilled newcomers with professionals in their field.
- Provide Employer Education Workshops on inclusive hiring and cultural competence.
- The Employment and Employability Working Group will prioritize actions related to these strategic actions.
- Address credential recognition and skill underutilization through partnerships with local employers and regulatory bodies.
- Support entrepreneurship and small business development among immigrants.

#### **2. Language and Communication**

- Promote bilingual signage and multilingual community information in communities that need them.



- Expand access to flexible, workplace-integrated language training.
- While workplace-integrated language training supports employment goals, there remains a need for foundational and community-based language programs to support overall integration. Expanding access to English as a Subsequent Language (ESL) classes can improve confidence, safety, and participation in daily life.
- The constituted Language and Communication Working Group will further explore gaps in language and communication in the region and proffer solutions.
- Provide translation and interpretation services where necessary, especially in healthcare and education settings.
- Enhance and maintain an online SSIP website with information about services and programs, events, projects, and more.
- Collaborate with formal and informal networks to share updates and resources indirectly with newcomers.

### **3. Housing and Transportation**

- Advocate for coordinated transportation solutions such as subsidized transit or community ride programs.
- Advocate for transportation vouchers and mobile or virtual language classes for rural areas.
- Develop a Newcomer Mobility Guide on how to get a driver's licence, use public transit and access vehicle support.
- Collaborate with municipalities and landlords to enhance affordability and quality of housing for newcomers.
- The Infrastructure Working Group will focus on advancing and implementing these actions.
- Provide orientation materials on transit options and advocate for improved services where needed.

### **4. Cultural Intelligence**

- Promote community events
- Support intercultural exchange programs, such as cultural storytelling, and school partnerships.
- Encourage service clubs to include newcomer engagement in their annual plans and outreach activities.
- Building on its existing mandate, the Cultural Intelligence Working Group will lead the delivery of intercultural programs that promote dialogue, celebrate diversity, and strengthen connections between newcomers, Indigenous peoples and longstanding residents.

## GOAL 3: INSIGHTS INTO NEWCOMER INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

### **Objective:**

Systematically gather, document, and amplify the lived experiences of newcomers- including immigrants, refugees, international students, and temporary workers across Southwest Saskatchewan to build a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the challenges, successes, and evolving needs associated with integration.

Through storytelling, community dialogues, research, and participatory engagement, this objective seeks to humanize the newcomer experience, challenge misconceptions, and foster empathy among service providers, employers, educators, policymakers, and longstanding residents.

The insights gained will be used to inform the design of more responsive, culturally competent programs and policies, improve service delivery, and strengthen social cohesion across the region.

### **Strategic Actions:**

- Conduct regular consultation and listening sessions with immigrant and refugee communities.
- Partner with local post-secondary institutions or research bodies to collect and analyze regional data on integration trends.
- Ensure representation of ethnocultural organizations in planning and decision-making processes.
- Use feedback to shape more inclusive and effective policies and services.

## GOAL 4: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE REGIONAL SETTLEMENT SYSTEM

### **Objective:**

Transform the regional settlement system into one that is proactively inclusive, culturally responsive, and person-centred by embedding equity, cultural safety, and trauma-informed practices across all services and institutions. This involves aligning government agencies, non-profits, healthcare providers, and community groups around shared standards of cultural competence.

The goal is to ensure that newcomers - regardless of language, ethnicity, gender, religion, or background - receive timely, respectful and tailored support that meets their unique needs.

By acknowledging and respecting the tenets of multiculturalism, the region will eliminate systemic barriers, improve service navigation, and create a seamless, dignified settlement experience that fosters belonging, self-sufficiency, and long-term success.

### **Strategic Actions:**

#### 1. Regional Capacity and Collaboration

- Promote collaboration through regular working group meetings focused on infrastructure, employment and employability, cultural intelligence, and language and communication, and ensure diversity in their composition.
- Improve coordination between Swift Current and rural communities to ensure equitable access to services.
- Provide capacity-building training for service providers to improve intercultural communication and trauma-informed practices.
- Launch a regional outreach program to build stronger collaborations with municipal governments and institutions.
- Organize multi-level stakeholders' forums to align immigration goals with economic development, education, and infrastructure planning.
- Create a Community Engagement Strategy to ensure continuous dialogue with diverse populations.

#### 2. Indigenous-Newcomer Relations

- Facilitate knowledge-sharing between Indigenous communities and newcomers
- Work with Indigenous communities to dispel common misconceptions.
- Co-host events that honour both Indigenous and newcomer cultures

### 3. Healthcare System

- Ensure access to culturally safe and linguistically appropriate health services
- Provide orientation sessions on the local healthcare system, including mental health resources.

## **Conclusion**

The 2025-2030 Southwest Saskatchewan Immigration Partnership Community Plan represents a collective commitment to building a more inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable future for all residents. By embracing immigration as a cornerstone of regional vitality and longevity, this plan affirms that the success of newcomers is not separate from community well-being- it is central to it.

Through meaningful collaboration among governments, service providers, employment, educational institutions, Indigenous communities and immigrants, we have identified a clear path forward- one grounded in equity, dignity, and shared responsibility. The goals and actions outlined in this plan are not just about settling newcomers; they are about empowering individuals, strengthening local economies, enriching life, and ensuring that every person in Southwest Saskatchewan has the opportunity to thrive.

Implementation will require ongoing commitment, flexibility, and accountability. But as stated before, with the strong foundation of community leadership, regional resilience, and a shared vision for inclusion, Southwest Saskatchewan is well-positioned to become a national model for rural and regional immigration success.

As we move forward, let this plan serve not only as a roadmap but as a living promise - to welcome with compassion, to support with intention, and to grow together in partnership. Together, we are not just planning for population growth; we are cultivating belonging, connection, and hope for generations to come.

Welcome is just the beginning. The future of Southwest Saskatchewan is being built side by side, community by community, together.



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