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Chair

Mr. David Tilson

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● (0900)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC)): Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. This is the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, meeting number 38, on Thursday, December 3, 2009. The orders of the day, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), are the study of best practices in the settlement services.

There are two issues I'd like to discuss with you before we introduce our guests. First, there are votes at 10:45 and the bells will start ringing at 10:15. We will not come back after the vote because we'd only be here for a few minutes. So I need guidance from the committee on when you'd like to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): I'm not going to take much time. I know we have witnesses here for a specific purpose, Mr. Chair, but I understand the difficulties you face. I submit that we conclude this meeting at 10:30.

The Chair: So 10:30 it is. I have explained to two of the witnesses what has happened.

There are also some motions today from Ms. Chow. There were three of them. She has withdrawn one, and I will ask her if she will agree to put it off until next week.

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): If I've understood correctly, the committee would continue to sit during the first 15 minutes of the bell ringing. Have I understood correctly?

[English]

The Chair: That's what I understand. It's been suggested that instead of ending at 11, the meeting will end at 10:30. The bells will start ringing at 10:15.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: All right. My only concern is what has already happened in the past, when the government whip and the opposition whip agree to proceed to the vote before the 30 minutes are up.

I simply want the parliamentary secretary to give us his assurance that his whip will allow the 30-minute bells to run out.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes.

[English]

The Chair: I know I'm not making any assurance. I'm asking for the guidance of the committee. So if we're all agreed, it will end at 10:30.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Very well.

[English]

The Chair: As I explained to two of you—I haven't explained it to Mr. Tam yet—this meeting normally goes to 11 o'clock. You've now heard that it will go to 10:30 because there are going to be votes in the House. When that happens the committee has to adjourn. So you will each have 10 minutes to make presentations. Then committee members will have rounds.

We have with us today Mr. Bouissoukrane, the Acting Senior Manager of the Calgary Immigrant Education Society. We have Mr. Chan from MOSAIC. He's the Director of Settlement Services. We have Thomas Tam, the Chief Operating Officer of S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

On behalf of the committee, I'd like to welcome you this morning.

We'll start with Mr. Chan, please.

Good morning to you.

● (0905)

Mr. Sherman Chan (Director, Settlement Services, MOSAIC): Good morning to everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chair and the committee, for giving me the opportunity to come here to speak about best practices in settlement services.

I will try to stick to my notes, so it could be more like reading it out. But I'm open to any questions from the committee. My presentation will focus on three areas.

The Chair: There will be questions from the committee, at least I expect there will, after you make your presentations.

Mr. Sherman Chan: Thank you. My presentation will be on the best practices and standards, the integrated service delivery model, and the settlement services sector history and development.

Before I start, I would like to make a summary statement. Best practices in settlement services aim to advance the achievement of the successful settlement and adaptation of new immigrants and refugees to Canada through an integrated service delivery model provided by well-resourced settlement organizations and trained workers.

What is meant by best practices and standards? Best practices are offered in order to enhance efforts at improvement, share information and experience, and encourage discussion and conversation. For us, standards that can be developed from best practices are generally agreed upon minimum norms for programs and services. Best practices constitute an ideal to which an organization or service can strive.

The establishment of best practices and standards for and in settlement services is crucial in providing immigrants and refugees with a supportive environment that assists with their settlement and integration into society. It builds upon the importance of working together to ensure a welcoming and supportive community and service network to accomplish this goal. It also identifies a need or gap in consistent settlement training and practice, and seeks to further develop a number of strategies aimed at building capacity in settlement organizations.

In the context of the shared responsibilities of governments, settlement organizations, and host societies regarding the successful integration of immigrants and refugees, best practices and standards are geared toward ensuring that immigrants and refugees are served according to their needs and rights by qualified workers who have been trained; communities can count on settled and integrated newcomers who are able to contribute to and participate in society to their full potential; in the context of a demanding job, the needs of workers are met and adequate compensation for their work is provided; settlement organizations can improve governance and infrastructure; settlement organizations are adequately resourced to fulfill their mandates and missions; the uniqueness, legitimacy, and value of settlement services in Canada are reaffirmed, widely recognized, and supported; and governments and those who fund are getting better return for their social investments.

Best practices and standards of settlement services also clarify an accountability framework for measuring settlement outcomes, and they include definitions of key results-based management terminology.

Considering the current state of settlement services, a dialogue on best practices and standards will serve to create a commitment to common values and practices, a common vocabulary, and overall greater coherence in the sector. It appears most appropriate for best practices and standards to be adopted on a voluntary basis or used as a tool to gradually enhance the operations of settlement organizations, as well as create a common language and greater consistency in the provision of settlement services.

Concrete recommendations were made within the 2003 second national conference working group IV discussion paper on national settlement service and standards framework, which has been undertaken by federal and provincial governments along with the settlement service sector and relevant organizations. They include establishing immediate, medium-term and long-term outcome indicators of the settlement process for measurement and evaluation; discussing and implementing the training, human resource, and financial implications of establishing minimum core competencies for organizations and settlement workers; identifying common priorities, links, and directions for actions that will lead to increased accountability, greater recognition, and better understanding of settlement services across Canada; and highlighting inter-organiza-

tional collaboration to address the enhancement of the settlement sector's capacity to provide improved settlement services across Canada.

• (0910)

When we talk about the integrated service delivery model, what is meant is that the integrated service delivery model aims to remove the artificial barriers between traditional settlement programs. It aims to provide an opportunity for an innovative, responsive, and holistic approach to helping immigrants and refugees achieve successful settlement and adaptation.

Under an integrated service delivery model, organizations support an immigrant or refugee client as a whole person rather than as simply a person looking for work, a student learning English, or a mother trying to find out how to get her children into school.

Further, every client is assigned a worker who is well versed in the various challenges immigrants and refugees face. That worker assesses the client's needs and offers him or her an array of options—including employment, language, family, and settlement programs and services options—to ease his or her settlement and adaptation into Canadian society. The worker remains with the immigrant or refugee until such time as his or her goals are achieved.

Services are offered across gender and age groups: males and females, singles and families. They also address the needs of children, youth, seniors, and other vulnerable populations. From MOSAIC's experience, it is about organizing our work systematically so that it meets the primary needs of immigrants and refugees.

At a macro level, it calls on the stakeholders, particularly settlement organizations, government funders, and employers, to work together by breaking existing silos.

I am going to talk to you about the history of the settlement service sector and its development.

The settlement service sector is part of the social service sector that has the specific mandate and expertise to serve immigrants and refugees. Here are some highlights of the history and development of the settlement services sector in Canada.

After the First World War, in 1922, the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society was formed. It was the first settlement organization in Canada. After the Second World War, in the 1940s, CSAI, with their Thursday suppers, and the Manitoba Interfaith Immigrant Council were formed. Then in 1952, there was Italian Immigrant Aid Toronto. In 1961 we had COSTI; in the 1970s, MOSAIC; and in 1978, the Canadian Council for Refugees.

Then, of course, the federal government launched programs. In 1974 there was ISAP, the immigrant settlement and adaptation program; in 1990, the LINC program, language instruction for newcomers; and in 1991, the host program.

The Chair: Mr. Chan, you have one minute.

Mr. Sherman Chan: Thank you.

In short, we see the development of the settlement services sector as a subsector of social services. We request that the current capacity of settlement services be enhanced to achieve the best practices in settlement services, which will help immigrants and refugees.

Thank you.

● (0915)

The Chair: Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Chan.

We'll go to Mr. Bouissoukrane. Thanks for coming.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane (Acting Senior Manager, Calgary Immigrant Educational Society): You're welcome.

Good morning, Mr. Chair and ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Nouredine Bouissoukrane. I come from Calgary. I work for the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society.

First of all, I would like to thank you for inviting me. It's an honour for me to be here.

The Calgary Immigrant Educational Society was established in 1988 by Mr. Salim Sindhu, who has been in the sector for 25 years. He was supposed to be here today, but he sends his regrets due to his pre-arranged commitments, so I'm representing our society here.

Just to build on what my colleague says, first I would like to thank CIAC for welcoming and supporting newcomers to Canada from all over the world.

Second, I don't want to explain the practices. I came with some recommendations from my own experience of one and a half years with newcomers in Calgary.

The first is that we see a lot of soft skills. A lot of new immigrants have a lot of technical skills. However, most of them lack soft skills like business communication, Canadian culture, Canadian corporate culture, and so on. So I would suggest, if it's possible, for the CIAC to come up with programs like soft skills, business communication, how to talk, the way of doing business in Canada, and Canadian culture. I know some of it is already included in LINC programs.

The second is that CIAC has some programs, a lot of proposals, but most of them go year to year, which is really not sustainable. If it's possible to have multi-year funding programs, the employees will feel secure in their job, will perform more, and the outcome will be higher, I believe.

The third is salary. This is my own opinion. The salaries in the agencies serving immigrants—I'm talking about Calgary—are a bit lower than in other sectors, so we have a high turnover in our society. They stay two or three months and then they get better offers, so they leave us.

The fourth is to have more local immigrant services in communities. In Calgary, we have three or four, and all of them offer all those settlement programs, which are employment, language, family, youth, women, and so on. Small and medium ones offer only one or two programs.

For some reason, the big organizations go to settlement programs right away. They submit a proposal and somehow it's accepted. Newcomers usually come to new communities. If we try to build up more small agencies, it would really help newcomers.

The fifth is international students. A lot of international students come to us. They are already here in Canada and they've learned the language; they are already integrated. They know our culture here in Canada, so they ask if it's possible to reduce the time to become a permanent resident. In some provinces it takes them up to 24 months. Is it possible to do something about the timing?

The last recommendation I have is on family reunification. Either the husband or wife comes here, and in some provinces they have to wait between a year and two years. If it's possible, I would recommend doing something about the timing processing for immigration. Family reunification would play a crucial role in performance.

Thank you. I'll be happy to answer questions.

● (0920)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bouissoukrane.

Mr. Tam, you can make your presentation now.

Mr. Thomas Tam (Chief Operating Officer, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.): Good morning. My name is Thomas Tam and I'm the Chief Operating Officer of S.U.C.C.E.S.S., a multicultural social service organization serving new Canadians since 1974. Our mission is to build bridges, harvest diversity, and foster integration through different services and advocacy programs.

Last year, we served over 170,000 clients with diverse cultural backgrounds speaking over 20 different languages, namely Chinese, Punjabi, Korean, Vietnamese, and Farsi. Over half of our clients are new immigrants.

Through our 26 service locations in the greater Vancouver area, the Fraser Valley, northern B.C., and three overseas offices in Seoul, Taipei, and Shanghai, we provide a wide range of services that includes settlement, employment, family and youth, health care, housing, and business development.

It is my pleasure today to present our recommendations for policy and programs of the settlement service in Canada. Drawing from our experience, there are seven major areas.

One is a national policy framework. We find there is a great need for a national standard or policy framework for immigrant settlement programs, similar to what we have in the provision of health care. Both are within the provincial mandate but funded federally. The level of language and skills training for new immigrants is an example of where there is a lack of consistency across provincial jurisdictions.

Second is English training. In eastern Canada I think you call it LINC, but in British Columbia we call it ELSA. We believe that the English language is critical for new immigrants to integrate into Canadian society as well as the local labour market; however, the current level of training in British Columbia is inadequate for them to succeed in the workplace. We recommend an expansion of English training to levels 6 and 7 in order to provide new immigrants with the proper English skills for the workplace. We know levels 6 and 7 have been offered in other provinces, such as Ontario, but not in British Columbia.

Third is employment. The recent expansion of settlement services to include introductory employment services designed to improve and accelerate newcomers' access to in-depth employment services has proven to be a very successful initiative. Further to that, we recommend the government open up an EI training fund for new immigrants, especially for the professional immigrants. They need training supports to get back to their original professions.

We also recommend continuing to fund projects that enhance employers' capacity to hire new immigrants. We have been receiving some project funding from the government to help employers enhance their capacity to understand immigrant culture and how to recruit and retain a diversified labour force.

We also recommend continuing to support partnership projects between immigrant-serving agencies and the industrial sector with courses for internationally trained professionals that allow them to bridge their training abroad with Canadian standards.

Fourth is self-employment and business start-up supports. Sixteen per cent of new immigrants are in the business class, and there is a significant number of skilled immigrants who want to start their own initiatives and be self-employed as an alternative career development path. They receive very little support from the mainstream settlement programs at this time.

In 1995, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. opened the first business and economic development centre in Vancouver, aiming to foster economic integration between local business communities and new immigrants. However, we never received any mainstream funding from the settlement funding framework until 2002, when we received funding from Western Economic Diversification Canada to support our two most popular programs, Business Links for New Immigrants and the Gateway to Asia project. However, the funding will end by next March, and we are told that Western Economic Diversification will no longer support these projects.

● (0925)

Our recommendation is that the settlement funding framework should expand to provide self-employment and business start-up support for new immigrants. Business also enhances the local economy, especially in the smaller communities. This would include

counseling and training on how to start a new business, English language training in the business sector, business mentoring, access to the local business community network, and the matching of business owners ready to retire with newly arrived business immigrants. This is important for the succession strategy for our business community.

Fifth is regional immigration. Most new immigrants are concentrated in three Canadian urban centres—Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. The dispersion of new immigrants among smaller nearby communities may provide them with new employment and business opportunities. It would also provide smaller communities with new economic resources. This is a win-win situation for both the new immigrants and the host communities.

In partnership with the energy sector and the B.C. government, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. in 2008 established the first outreach office in Fort St. John in the North Peace region. The office assists new immigrants in Vancouver with finding employment and relocation. S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has also been working with other regional economic development agencies in the Okanagan, Nanaimo, Winnipeg, and Saskatoon in formulating strategies to attract new immigrants.

We recommend that the government continue to support initiatives encouraging new immigrants to relocate to smaller communities. We also recommend that the government encourage partnerships between smaller industrialized communities and immigrant-serving agencies in urban centres.

Sixth is foreign workers and international students. Within the current settlement funding framework, we cannot provide settlement services to temporary foreign workers and international students. In the past several years, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has used its own resources to provide urgent support and assistance to these two target groups.

We recommend providing more settlement services to temporary foreign workers and foreign students attending tertiary educational institutions, given that it is probable that these individuals may become landed immigrants through the new Canadian experience class category.

Seventh is pre-landing services. Thanks to the funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is providing pre-landing services at Seoul, Korea, and Taipei, Taiwan. In April of this year, supported by the private sector, we also opened an office in Shanghai serving prospective business immigrants from China.

We recommend that the government continue to provide more opportunities, in addition to direct funding, to settlement service organizations with pre-landing services in countries that are a major source of immigrants. Government funding bodies should allow service providers to solicit private sector funding and to run fees-for-service training courses for prospective immigrants.

• (0930)

The Chair: Perhaps you could wind up, Mr. Tam, please. Thank you.

Mr. Thomas Tam: This is the last point. We also recommend that the government encourage Canadian educational institutions to work with local NGOs to develop curriculums for skill shortages in top immigrant source countries such as China and the Philippines.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, sir.

Colleagues, for those of you who are late, the committee has agreed that notwithstanding that the bells will ring at 10:15, this meeting will end at 10:30.

Ms. Chow, I'm going to ask you to consent to putting your motions off until next week.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): That's fine.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Mendes, you have the floor.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chan, Mr. Bouissoukrane, and Mr. Tam, thank you very much for being here.

First, I hear myself through your words. I spent 15 years in an NGO settlement agency, so I share your concerns and your reasons for offering us so many recommendations. But one of the reasons we invited you was to hear about what have been successes throughout Canada in the settlement agencies, so that we could perhaps share among the different agencies better ways of using the funding that is there and the strategies we have to better settle newcomers.

I don't know if you're aware, but in fact I am from Quebec and we do have a totally different funding system. The Quebec government is totally responsible for the settlement programs. I heard your concerns about staff turnover because you can't necessarily pay the better salaries and keep them. You spend the time training them—and it requires a lot of specialized training to offer services to newcomers—and then you lose them very quickly, as soon as they can get a better job with a better salary. That has always been a concern of mine, and I totally agree with you.

I will share with you one best practice in Quebec. Mr. Tam mentioned it a bit, with the private sector being able to support some of the NGOs. The Government of Quebec has allowed settlement organizations to offer for pay—they are being paid to do this—services that are also provided by the Government of Quebec.

I'll give you an example: licence bureaus, for car and driver's licences. The organization to which I have belonged for many years is the *mandataire*. They are given a mandate from the Government

of Quebec to operate an office where licences and licence plates are renewed, and for each transaction the organization is paid *x* amount of money.

That has become through the years—it has now been 15 years—their main source of stable financing, meaning they can pay their salaries from there, and then everything else that the Government of Quebec provides for services is directed to the services only and not necessarily to salary.

I don't know if this is possible in other provinces, but I'd like to hear you on the subject. Do you think it could be something that would help you in maintaining the quality of staff that you need to provide the services? They do gain the experience and the best practices.

Perhaps, Mr. Bouissoukrane, you could start with that, since you mentioned it.

The Chair: Go ahead, sir, if you can. No comment?

Mr. Tam?

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: In Calgary, I don't believe we have such a program, but I have to do some investigation on it.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes: No, I'm asking if you think it would help you.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: Oh, for sure it would.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes: I'm asking whether you think it would help to have partnerships with, in this case, not necessarily the private sector, but the government providing the organization with another way of financing its services, and also—this goes perhaps to Mr. Tam's question—of training them, training newcomers into positions and into professions that they can apply afterwards in mainstream society, because that is part of the cycle of training that is offered.

• (0935)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Tam.

Mr. Thomas Tam: I think in B.C. also the settlement program is solely in the hands of the provincial government, although the money is federal. We would be very happy to see the government open up that opportunity. I think we have to be very creative in terms of getting more resources for public services now, especially for the pre-landing service, where we are serving prospective immigrants and we would like to see them pay for some of the services before they come to Canada, particularly in the area of training.

Even in terms of the services in Canada, I think a lot of private companies would like to sponsor or work with us to help new immigrants to settle and to get better service. I think success requires advocating for more creative funding resource development strategies.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes: And creative opportunities for newcomers to train and to enter the job market, I believe

Mr. Thomas Tam: And as we have been doing for our business and economic development centre...we haven't received any money from the settlement funding, so we rely on fees, private sponsorship, and some project funding from other departments of the Government of Canada.

The Chair: Mr. Chan has a comment.

Mr. Sherman Chan: I think it's a good idea to bring in private funding. In Vancouver, where MOSAIC is, we partner with our sister settlement organizations. We form consortiums. We standardize our wages, and then we can collectively talk to governments to negotiate a wage that the government feels comfortable supporting. In terms of the salary range, in comparison even to social workers or mainstream organizations, there's still a way to go. But how we work is to form consortiums. We set our own standards. And we look at training opportunities for staff that are not only necessary but also in terms of retention, to give them the opportunity for training, and hopefully they will stay.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here.

Although I do not personally know your organizations, I know that in my riding there are similar organizations that do wonderful work to help new Quebecers settle.

That said, under an agreement signed with the federal government, this matter is the Quebec government's responsibility, as it manages settlement funds. I'd like to ask a broader question.

In my opinion, one of the main factors in integration remains employment, above and beyond cultural differences and language. When people find work, they are more quickly integrated within society. When they do not, they stay home and it is much more difficult for them.

I'd like to ask you a question about a Bloc Québécois proposal that you may already have considered. If you have not, I would ask for your opinions on it. The proposal has to do with the idea of establishing the use of anonymous CVs for agencies falling under the federal government's jurisdiction.

I will quickly give you an overview of this proposal and then I would invite all three of you to quickly give us your opinion on it. The problem is that even though people may arrive with all the required skills, it can be difficult for some individuals who have a foreign-sounding name to get an interview for a job in a given company, because a selection is being made. Sometimes, there is a bias which, although not always intentional, means that when employers look at CVs and see a foreign-sounding name, they do not give applicants the opportunity to get to the interview stage and to show what they are worth.

Our proposal is the following. In the hiring process, there is a point when a company's human resource department receives the CVs and hands them to a recruiter. This individual looks at people's

skills and decides who to call in for an interview. A study by the *Journal de Montréal* was eloquent on this point. The same CV, with the same skill set, was sent out but one carried the name Jean Tremblay whereas the other was Ahmad Mohammed. Well, Jean Tremblay was called to several interviews, whereas Ahmad Mohammed was only called to two.

To avoid this happening, we were wondering whether it would be possible, at this stage alone, to have CVs handed in without any identifying information such as a person's name, gender, age, etc. You would only find a person's skill set on the CV. And then, the individual could be called to an interview based on skills alone. The rest of the process, obviously, would no longer be anonymous. Once the person arrives at the interview, you see who they are.

We have held consultations in Quebec. We've received positive responses. It is not a magic bullet, but we believe it could help improve things.

Do you think this type of procedure could help immigrants integrate and that it could help change the mind-set of employers?

• (0940)

[English]

The Chair: I'll bet Mr. Bouissoukrane has a comment on this.

Mr. Noureddine Bouissoukrane: Thank you very much for your question. In the beginning of my presentation I mentioned the soft skills. Right now, I work a lot in settlement services. I help newcomers with their résumés. I get a lot of résumés with their pictures. That is number one.

Number two, in answer to your question, Canada doesn't pay the specialist. Most newcomers have their general résumés, and their résumé says "engineer" and that's it. In Canada, as I have learned myself, it has to be either civil, mechanical, or electrical engineer, and then under that there is always some specification of what you bring.

A lot of newcomers, to the best of my knowledge, have the competency but they don't know how to express it in those two pages. When you say "engineer" in Canada, it doesn't mean a lot. You have to say what category of engineer and what kinds of duties you have been doing back home. If it just says engineer, *enseignant*, doctor, etc., it wouldn't help.

We get a lot of people coming to us saying they have applied 70 times, 100 times, and didn't get any response. My first intervention is on those soft skills. We have to teach them what Canadian corporations are expecting from people, from newcomers.

As I said, they have the technical competencies, and that is why they come to Canada. They have the competencies and the technical qualifications. The soft skills help them to sell themselves through the résumé and cover letter. That is what's most important. We know this leads to the interview.

Name, gender, and country I don't think are important at this time, because when people see your résumé they want to know if you can do the job.

The Chair: Mr. Chan, you had your hand up.

Mr. Sherman Chan: I think it's an innovative idea that we should try. In the process, I would suggest that we add into it a part for mentorship for those people who get selected, because what many immigrants are lacking is the Canadian experience. They could have a mentor who can really inform them about Canadian culture, about how to develop a social network, and help them build their social capital. I think that's important.

We have seen so many pilots happening in Canada, from B.C. to Quebec to Newfoundland. We need some places where we can really centralize or have people to have a dialogue on the lessons learned from the pilots. I think the government should support all those dialogues between provinces. For example, even right after this presentation I am going to the Canadian Council for Refugees consultation in Windsor, Ontario. That is an opportunity to learn from each other, about what they do and what they have done.

The Chair: Thank you. We'll move to Ms. Chow.

I'm sorry, Mr. Tam, we've run out of time. Maybe we'll get you in the next round.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I'll ask Mr. Tam some questions.

The trade between China and Canada is very low from our part. We don't export much to China. You talked about how 60% of your immigrants are business class, or they want to start their own businesses, or be self-employed, etc. I would imagine that they would have the knowledge of how to do exports to China.

Is this service available for any kind of business person, not necessarily from China, who wants to do more export trading with China, for example? How would they connect with the new immigrants who you serve? How do we collectively break down the silo, the fact that you are doing settlement services, not self-employment or not exports, teaching people how to export? How do we make that kind of connection? Do you have some advice on what can be done?

• (0945)

The Chair: Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Thomas Tam: I love that question because that's what we've been advocating for. That's why I mentioned that in 1995 we set up our own business and economic development centre with the settlement funding. The purpose of the centre is to help new immigrants connect with local business people.

In 2002 we received funding from Western Economic Diversification Canada so we could launch the famous Gateway to Asia project. Within this project we helped to recruit and train about 1,000 Asian traders. They are new Canadians, but they are very experienced in trading. They had businesses in China or in Asia before. We train them with a developed database, and then we help them connect with Canadian manufacturers. And we give seminars to Canadian companies on how to do business with China as well as Chinese business immigrants.

We organize "East meets West" business networking luncheons. We help them get together, and we provide translation, support. We provide presentations so that they can meet and talk about different partnerships, including exporting Canadian products to China, and also explore investment opportunities here. A lot of new immigrants

are looking for investment opportunities within the local business community.

In the past three years we've been helping our members, just our members, to export over \$20 million in Canadian products back to China and Korea. So this is a very famous project, and this project was named one of the best practised by the Asia Pacific Foundation last year.

But unfortunately this funding will end by next March. Again, WD has not managed to provide settlement money to new immigrants. That's why we've been advocating for the government to expand the funding framework to support business immigrants as well as skilled immigrants who want to be self-employed.

Half of our clients at our business centre are in the skilled immigrant category. So we are not only serving business immigrants, we are also serving ordinary immigrants. They want to go for the self-employment alternative. The job market is tough, and self-employment is a driving force for our local economy. So the government should look at how to help new immigrants become self-employed as another driving force for our local economy.

Ms. Olivia Chow: One of the problems I've heard about is that because of the silos, you can't get EI funding. You are doing employment services. You want to expand the capacity for employers. We've heard that it's really important to give new immigrants the first job.

Are there programs that you know of, in the services you have delivered, that work really well and that allow employers, especially small businesses or medium-sized businesses—the banks would have their human resources department—to understand why it's beneficial to hire new immigrants? They don't have that kind of capacity. Are there any best practices from S.U.C.C.E.S.S. that you have seen? When you talk about enhancing employers' capacity, what do you mean? Can you expand on that too?

• (0950)

Mr. Thomas Tam: We have two simple projects I want to share with you. One recently got project funding to develop a website on diversity so that all the business people from small and medium-sized enterprises can get onto the website, and through the website they will have the tools to assess their company's capacity to recruit and retain a diversified labour force as well as the tools for how to interview new immigrants and how to look for the source of an immigrant labour force. This is particularly for SMEs in Canada.

The second project is a bigger one. In 2007, we worked with an energy company called Spectra Energy in Fort St. John. We worked with them, and we jointly organized some training courses for Asian engineers in Vancouver. So our clients receive six months of training in Vancouver and then they are sent to Fort St. John in northern B.C. to have some practical experience with Spectra Energy. After a three- or four-month practicum, the energy company decides if they want to hire these engineers at a lower level, if not at an engineer level then maybe at a technician or a technical entry level.

For three years we've been working very successfully, helping internationally trained engineers to get first access to their own profession. So this is another example of what we have been doing.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Tam.

Mr. Chan, perhaps we'll come back to you in the next round. We're out of time.

Ms. Grewal.

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, gentlemen, for taking time to come here today.

I would especially like to welcome Mr. Thomas Tam and Mr. Sherman Chan because they are from my home province of B.C. I've been to the organization S.U.C.C.E.S.S. a couple of times to make a funding announcement, and then we had a round table with the Prime Minister as well, and we have attended your events also. You are doing an excellent job in that community.

My question to you today is whether you can tell us how you go about teaching new Canadians English. Any one of you can answer.

The Chair: Anyone can jump in here.

Mr. Tam has his hand up. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Thomas Tam: There are two ways that new immigrants can receive language training. The first one, of course, is through a government-funded program called ELSA, which is English language training for adults. It's a free program, but the limitation is that it only goes to level 4 or 5. That's up to everyday English. It's not up to the level that's usually needed for the workplace, which is supposedly level 6 or 7.

The second way they can receive language training is through our fee-paying services. We have English training for people who want to start a business. We have training to reduce their accents if they want to specialize in certain aspects of training, but in this aspect they may have to pay for their training.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Chan.

Mr. Sherman Chan: Thomas talked more about the formal way. I can talk about some informal ways that we can help.

First, we have a really new way to forge ahead now. It's called the Internet café for seniors. Seniors come and learn how to use the Internet, to communicate, especially in their homes. They see many of their family members using the Internet and playing with the computer, so they want to be part of that and learn through the Internet and the computer. Through that they also learn English. That's one way we support them.

The other way is through conversation clubs. There are volunteers who set up conversation clubs or groups. They learn by talking. They learn by eating. They learn by going out to the community, and it becomes more natural. Many immigrants like it.

The Chair: Mr. Bouissoukrane, you had a comment?

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: In Calgary we have two ways for newcomers to learn English. The first one is under CIC funding. It's called the LINC program, language instruction for newcomers. We have one assessment centre in Calgary. All newcomers go there to be tested and after that they refer them to any one of the 10 LINC-providing agencies in Calgary.

The second one we call the drop-in ESL. Our society is the pioneer of this program. Immigrants drop in. It's free of charge. It's funded by the Government of Alberta, and it's taught by volunteers, by Canadians. So it means you can come any day, any time, in the morning, in the afternoon or in the evening, and it's free of charge. You pay nothing.

• (0955)

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Could you please also tell us about the Canadian language benchmark system?

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: For our society, we have benchmarks from one to six. When newcomers come here, they have to go to the assessment centre for newcomers to be tested. They would be tested in four areas of language: writing, reading, listening, and speaking. If the newcomer has a 2, 2, and 2, it automatically goes to level 2.

In Calgary, we have the centre. Each city's CIC has one centre or a main centre and there are specialists for these students in the four areas. If he's good in English, he may go to level 4, 5 or 6, and it goes on. After level 6 or 7, they can go to colleges or universities. At level 1 or 2, they still have to learn more English.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: I see.

Do any of you want to comment on that?

The Chair: It appears not.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mr. Chair, do I have some more time left?

The Chair: You have two minutes.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Then I'll pass my time to Mr. Dykstra.

The Chair: Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Thank you.

One of the reasons that all three of you have been invited here is because there is a level of confidence in the quality of the services that you obviously provide as service deliverers for us. It's fair to assume that not every service-providing agency actually does the same quality of work as the organizations you represent.

What we're also looking for, as much as the positive side and what are the best practices, is what would you suggest are some of the services that we should not be providing, are not very well served, or are not, in a way, both from a funding perspective, on the one hand, but probably more importantly from an actual results-based focus...? What are some of the practices that we should consider not funding or that we should consider revisiting because they just aren't working anymore?

The Chair: Anyone? Mr. Tam.

Mr. Thomas Tam: In fact, we have been working with the provincial government very closely in evaluating the programs and services we've been providing. On an annual basis, and also every contract term, we have had a very comprehensive discussion and done an evaluation with the funders, the partners, and also with the centre.

I think we are running a very good evaluation and monitoring process at this moment. Whenever we think we have to improve in terms of our service delivery, we've been very quick and efficient to do that.

I think what we are doing is very efficient and effective. I don't think there should be some further improvement or further expansion of the framework.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Tam. That concludes the first round of questioning.

Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Vaughan, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to express to the interveners my gratitude for their presentations, some of which I unfortunately missed. I want to let you in on something we do in this committee. We are motivated largely by our desire to bring about positive change to the lives of new Canadians. We use the means, whether financial or otherwise, to achieve that.

I want to give you a unique opportunity to perhaps go through and contribute and experience what we as members of Parliament experience. After we hear what you and other panellists have to say, we often write reports. This is a unique opportunity, because I'm going to ask you to summarize what your three best practices would be from your organization and your experience in the field so that we may benefit from the wisdom you've acquired over the many years that you have, I'm sure, successfully helped immigrants adjust to the new Canadian realities.

That's what we need to do. After we listen to everybody, we summarize, and then we have to agree as to what are in fact the best practices. If you would like your organization to be represented in the best practices of the best practices, this is your chance.

Go ahead.

• (1000)

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes: Mr. Chair, could I find out why the bells are still ringing?

The Chair: I don't know. We're going to ignore them.

Mr. Tam.

Mr. Thomas Tam: I would like to emphasize what I was talking about during my presentation.

The first one of course is the business and economic integration program, which now is not funded by the settlement funding framework. We see its success over the country as one of the best practices. It's not only serving new immigrants, it's serving the local communities, the local economies. This is a very important demonstration that new immigrants can be contributing members to our society, through their participation in business and economic activities.

The second one I would like to emphasize is our pre-landing services in overseas offices. Again, when they are already here, a lot of new immigrants don't have the time, money, and energy to be retrained or go through a lot of steps to get back to their own professions.

We see this as a very good opportunity to help them before they come to Canada, especially in the two areas of Seoul, Korea, and Taipei, Taiwan. We also have had a very good experience in working with prospective business immigrants in Shanghai, through our office there.

The pre-landing service should be a top priority for the government to consider continuing and expanding. We will save a lot of money and enhance the effectiveness of the settlement process. Prospective immigrants will be more willing to receive training, to listen to us, and to learn English in their own countries. The pre-landing service is a very cost-effective program amongst all existing programs.

The third one, of course, is the partnership with industry sectors. We have found it very successful to work with industry sectors, such as energy and environment, so we can develop joint training programs to bridge the gap between the foreign training qualifications and the Canadian working experience requirements. This is another area we would like you to include in your report.

The Chair: Mr. Tam, we've run out of time.

Do I have consent from the committee to allow the other two to comment? Silence?

Okay, Mr. Bouissoukrane.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: For our agency, the best practice remains teaching newcomers how to learn a language, either French or English. They came here at level 1, or below level 1, and you can see the progress; by the end of the year, they manage to speak either French or English very well. For our society, that's the best practice, the first best practice being English.

Number two is to continue supporting the employment training. Once they learn English they need to get a job, so training them for employment remains very, very important.

The third one, I will say again, is the soft skills.

The fourth one is to develop a kind of cooperation/collaboration among immigrant service agencies all over Canada with agencies like CIC.

• (1005)

The Chair: Mr. Chan.

Mr. Sherman Chan: For MOSAIC, there are three best practices. One is a consortium that we formed with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and ISS of B.C., in Vancouver, Burnaby, and New Westminster. We formed a consortium to provide all the settlement services in the three cities. That consortium can help in terms of standardized wages, in terms of training staff, in terms of service delivery and planning, and also in terms of data collection and reporting to our provincial government. So it's working really well, and we talk and work together and we share together. I think that's one of the best practices I've seen. Agencies forget about competition but really work together to address equally immigrants and refugees in Vancouver, Burnaby, and New Westminster.

The second one I would say is our ability to relate policy, research, and programming. We worked with the School of Social Work at the University of B.C. to pilot a project with refugee youth. They are at risk because they are not in school, nor are they at work. So we work with researchers, and we hire a youth outreach team. We work with them where they are and group them together to provide life skills, soft skills, and English-language training to help them to integrate or reintegrate into society.

The third one is not a program in particular, but it is the organizational structure that we see as being important as a best practice. We are working on accreditation, looking at our governance, looking at our management structure, and also looking at policy development. It's really creating a strong and competent organization in order to provide service. I think that is also important.

In addition, we have good connections across Canada with many organizations with which we share best practices. That is important as well.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Chan.

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I will get back to the issue of the anonymous CV, because Mr. Tam did not get an opportunity to answer during the last round. At the stage where candidates are selected for interviews, only information relating to the individual's skills would be included, not a person's name, age, gender, photo. In fact, there is a host of other data like that that is not included in a CV, which you pointed out.

Do you think this would be an interesting solution here in Canada?

[English]

Mr. Thomas Tam: We support the principle that all immigrants should be given equal opportunity in job interviews. We would support running some pilot projects in certain cities or regions to see

the effectiveness of it and also the acceptance from the business owners.

But from our observations, there are three main challenges the new immigrants are facing in seeking jobs. One of course is the workplace English; the second one is the Canadian local experience; and the third one is the qualification recognition. So we have to work hand in hand with these three challenges when we deal with equal opportunity.

Thank you.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: Just to add to what my colleagues have said, in our agencies what we do... Reasonably, it will be the same for natives and for newcomers, but for a lot of newcomers we do encourage them to do two things. The first thing is to have some Canadian education, which is true, just to upgrade their education. The second is to volunteer. The more volunteer work you have in your résumé, it will give you more chances. It means you have learned the Canadian way of doing business. So the first thing we do is to encourage them to take any Canadian programs so that they will be more aware of how it works here in Canada, and the second is to volunteer.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I understand, and I find that what you are doing with job-seeking immigrants is interesting. However, my view is that there remains some discrimination, not necessarily out of racism, but often, it is unconscious discrimination on the part of a number of employers. For instance, when you look at the CV of an individual who has an engineering degree from the Abu Ghraib University, for instance, hasty judgments can sometimes be made preventing the individual from getting at least to the interview stage and showing what they're worth.

Earlier on, I gave you an example of what had been done in Quebec: identical CVs were sent out where only the name had been changed, but the results were completely different. Is this situation specific to Montreal or is this the reality elsewhere in Canada?

• (1010)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Chan.

Mr. Sherman Chan: Through Metropolis BC and colleges, we have seen similar research in Toronto and Vancouver. As I mentioned earlier, new immigrants succeed if they are given opportunities by employers to get Canadian experience and receive some kind of mentoring. It also gives the employer the opportunity to really see how the immigrants are working.

The Chair: You have about a minute, so make it quick.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: In Quebec there have been some discussions as to whether immigrants should be encouraged to settle in large urban centres or in the regions. Do you believe that it is easier for immigrants to settle in urban centres or in the regions?

[English]

Mr. Thomas Tam: We've been advocating for regional immigration strategies. We believe that new immigrants should be exposed to different types of opportunities in both urban centres and smaller communities around them. But at the moment, because of a lack of information and support in some areas, most new immigrants prefer to settle in urban centres where they can find support and services. That's why we advocate for new strategies to provide more support and effective services in outlying areas to attract and retain new immigrants.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Tan.

Mr. Young.

Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, gentlemen, for coming such a great distance here today to advise us on these matters. You're the ones who do the work on the front lines, where it's most important. So we appreciate your taking the time to come here today.

Ms. Mendes pointed out that Quebec manages their own settlement services through an agreement with the Government of Canada. I think it's important to note as well that the Government of Canada provides Quebec with funds to do that. In fact this year it was given \$226 million, and that will go to \$234 million next year. There are also agreements with Manitoba and British Columbia. Some of the money you are able to use in British Columbia—about \$22.9 million—comes from the federal government as well. We're pretty proud of that, so I thought I'd put it on the record.

Recently Minister Kenney introduced a pilot project to provide language training vouchers to encourage newcomers to use language training programs funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. They would allow Canadians to learn an official language at a settlement agency of their choice.

I wonder if you could each, starting with Mr. Tam, comment on what value that pilot project might add.

Mr. Thomas Tam: I would like to echo that we thank the Government of Canada for the funding support to British Columbia through the Canada-B.C. agreement.

As to the language vouchers, at this moment we have some reservations about the effectiveness of this system. We see there are a lot of other measures to encourage new immigrants to attend language training. The voucher system might create a lot of competition among service providers. It might also have some negative effects if the clients exchange their vouchers for other benefits.

● (1015)

Mr. Terence Young: Have you seen any evidence of that, or is it just a concern you have?

Mr. Thomas Tam: It's just a concern.

Mr. Terence Young: Thank you.

Mr. Bouissoukrane.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: The honourable Mr. Kenney came to our agency three or four months ago. He went to classes for

students and really made it clear that he wanted new Canadians to speak either French or English.

Mr. Terence Young: So do you think that's a good program?

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: It's a very good program.

Mr. Terence Young: Thank you.

Mr. Chan, do you have any comments on that program?

Mr. Sherman Chan: We also have concerns, because especially in B.C. we haven't seen it; the pilot project is not in B.C. The voucher could create agency instability because it is really based on a fee for service. It's not really providing good infrastructure for agencies.

Mr. Terence Young: But Mr. Chan, why do you think that at this time a lot of newcomers to Canada don't seek language classes?

Mr. Sherman Chan: People are coming here with different language skills. Some of them are skilled immigrants, some of them are family class, and I think our English language system is geared towards the lower end, those people who need survival English. They come to us. Because of that, if you look at the percentage, I would say we have a good percentage of immigrants who meet the admission requirement and get the language training.

Mr. Terence Young: What I'm thinking of is when I grew up in Toronto, my background is English and Irish, but I went to a school with people from all over Europe—Polish, Ukrainian, Greek, Italian, etc., and I don't think there were language training classes then for adults. They would have to seek them out on their own. They were quite limited. But even now, when the classes are available, relatively few people in some areas pursue the English training. Is that because they are busy taking care of children at home, or is it because they're working full time? What are the roadblocks to that?

We'll start with Mr. Chan, please.

Mr. Sherman Chan: Yes, for some people it may be because they're looking after their children at home or because they are working right away because they need money. However, as I say, when we look at the funding sources, when we look at the number of students we can take, many agencies meet that funding requirement. It doesn't mean that if the government allocated more money for language training, agencies could not fill up the spaces.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Young. Your time has expired.

To inform the members, I've been told there will be no bells, but we still have to go and vote, so we'll leave at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to continue on that line. Mr. Chan, could you very quickly conclude your comments? I think Mr. Young was certainly on to something here and I want to get your response, because it sounds to me that this isn't just about investing a ton of money and solving a problem. This is about identifying ways to continue to build on the successes that we have.

Mr. Sherman Chan: Yes, I would say that I would still have some doubt about the voucher, unless we see a good result from the pilot project. From an agency perspective, we do have students who are on waiting lists to come to our service, so that means if we need more resources, we can still provide this.

The Chair: Mr. Bouissoukrane had his hand up, Mr. Dykstra.

You're on, Mr. Bouissoukrane.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: Taking care of kids doesn't prevent newcomers from taking English. When newcomers study English, we have programs funded by CIC called child minding, so we do take care of the children at the same time. I don't believe taking care of children is a problem that prevents newcomers from coming to study English because we have a kind of day care under CIC. So while parents are learning English, their children are taken care of by the same agency.

Mr. Terence Young: What I want to discover is, if other agencies offered classes at different times of the day, or on weekends, or in different locations that were more convenient to those families, would that be beneficial?

Mr. Bouissoukrane.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: We do offer English classes on weekends, in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening. So if they're working, if newcomers are working full time, they can always study English part time.

• (1020)

Mr. Terence Young: Thank you.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I actually think we're on to something here. I know this will sound partisan, but it's not an attempt to be partisan. There are investments that have been made over the last number of years with respect to settlement services, with respect to foreign credentials, the \$50 million dedicated to expediting those foreign credentials over the next couple of years in terms of being able to do it even before an individual comes here to Canada.

We've made the investments, and I know all three of you in your opening comments said you need more money to deliver services. We are in a situation where there isn't going to be a whole lot more money over the next two to three years, in terms of additional revenue within the budget, so what we're really looking for here, and we're spending a great deal of the committee's time searching this out, is how do we enhance services? Find us a way to do that within the current capacity of the funds we have to offer you.

We're not the budget committee. We're not the finance committee. You didn't come here to plead for more money, because we can't give it to you, but what we really want to find out is if we're going to deliver these services, what are the aspects that we're funding that are

not doing anything to enhance what you're delivering? And how do we move that money to make sure that you can deliver services, as you've explained this morning—I can certainly find a couple of examples from each of you—and how can we do it better?

The Chair: Mr. Chan.

Mr. Sherman Chan: First of all, I still think that, yes, it's important to share best practices, giving organizations ways to learn from each other right now, because Canada is so big. We need opportunities for people to come together to share that. The second is about partnership and consortium building. It's a way that we can standardize our service; it's a way that we can economize. I mentioned the example of the MOSAIC consortium in Vancouver, Burnaby, and New Westminster.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I guess what I would ask—and maybe this isn't something that can be simply done here at the table—is that you take away the suggestion, go back, look at your budgets, look at the services you deliver. We certainly, in writing, will take back what you say. You're saying, look, you're putting funds here, they're not being utilized the way they should. You're not getting the bang for your dollar. You're not getting the investment, the return on it that you believe we should. That's what this committee will be able to use a great deal in terms of making recommendations to the minister for change and wise investment.

The Chair: Mr. Tam.

Mr. Thomas Tam: I would like to assure the committee that Canada is a model for the world in receiving and welcoming new immigrants. We are rated the best country by the United Nations in welcoming and receiving new immigrants. We also believe that new immigrants have already paid back to the country what we have invested for them. So it's a win-win situation. We help the new immigrants, and once they become contributing members to our society they become a great asset to Canada. So we all benefit from this settlement funding framework.

I know we always have budget constraints, and that's why we have been advocating for creative funding sources. We've been working hard with the private sector, the private sponsorships, to partner with us in different kinds of training for new immigrants, different kinds of services. What we need is for the government to be more flexible in the funding formulas so that we are allowed to be more flexible in terms of seeking new and different funding sources, including private sponsorship.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Tam.

Mr. Bevilacqua, please.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As we all know, one of the major concerns of the committee is the fact that new immigrants are overrepresented in the unemployment rates, in the poverty rates, and in the under-employment rates of the country, thereby not maximizing the human resources potential of our country. It's in our national interest to provide immigrants with the tools required to bring about the type of change that will make them even more productive in our society. You can go home and think about that, because I think in many ways that embodies one of the major objectives of this committee.

I do want to go back to a point that was raised by Mr. Dykstra, if I can piggy-back on his thoughts. It has to do with the ability to streamline operations and to turn a dollar into two. That's possible. I've seen that kind of alchemy before. It comes down to this. Above and beyond your best practice, I want to hear from you. Give me one example of where you were able to perform that magic. In other words, where did your organization reprofile, reinvent itself, to the point of maximizing the dollar value that you have in your possession? I know these are difficult times, not only for the government and our country—as you know, we are faced with a deficit situation—but sometimes investing can turn that dollar into two.

Can you give me just a couple of examples so that when we write the report we can cite you as three organizations that have been able to creatively bring about that type of transformation?

• (1025)

The Chair: Mr. Tam.

Mr. Thomas Tam: I think we have more than a couple of examples. I would like to mention just a couple here because of the time constraint.

The one I would quote is the project at Fort St. John. We have four full-time staff working there, helping to attract and retain professional immigrants in Vancouver to go to northern B.C. to work for the energy sector. This project is jointly funded by the B.C. government and by the companies in the energy sector, as well as supported by S.U.C.C.E.S.S.'s own resources.

In that case, it's \$1 for \$3, not \$1 for \$2. The province is only one of the three sponsors of this project. We are very pleased to inform you that a lot of new immigrants went to Fort St. John to get full-time employment, to settle there, and to have happy families there. This is a very good example of partnership with the private sector. We are also using our own resources.

We have 8,000 volunteers helping us on different aspects. This is also the use of community resources.

I think I've used too much time.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua wants to ask another question.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I want the answers from the next two.

The Chair: Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Sherman Chan: I have two examples. One is the social enterprise MOSAIC has been doing for the past 20 years, interpretation and translation. It's targeting corporations because governments and many corporations have to have their materials translated. We are using many translators to do that. Every year it brings in at least \$3 million to subsidize other programs.

The other example we have is that we are working with City Credit Union to have a micro loan program that is helping new immigrants learn financial literacy, how to write a small business loan, and then get a business started. It's a pilot sponsorship agreement with Vancity. We have seen many success stories. One of our students got the best small business award because of that.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Bouissoukrane, you have the last word, if you want it.

Mr. Nouredine Bouissoukrane: Our agency from Calgary has been in the business for 22 years. The only program funded by CIC so far is language instruction.

I can give you another example. There is drop-in ESL funded by the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta and filled by Canadian volunteers. We don't spend money on that.

For CIC, we only have the English language. We are trying to utilize it to the max.

The Chair: Thank you, gentlemen, for coming.

Ms. Olivia Chow: A point of order.

I don't think we're having a vote, are we, at 10:45?

• (1030)

The Chair: We appear to be having a vote.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, just on a—

The Chair: It appears the NDP is up to tricks again.

Could we have some order?

Gentlemen, I want to thank you for coming and giving us your thoughts. They will be noted in our report.

Thank you kindly, sirs.

This meeting is adjourned until Tuesday.

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