

Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership

Project Evaluation Report April 2023 - March 2024





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1. Introduction

The 2023-24 fiscal year was the third year of the implementation phase of the Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQ LIP) Newcomer Settlement Strategy. All four Action Groups (Access to Current and Relevant Information, Employment and Economic Opportunities for Newcomers, Inclusion and Equity, and Newcomers' Physical and Emotional Health and Wellbeing) have facilitated capacity building sessions, planning sessions, small meetings and resource development virtually and in-person to carry out the strategy and build upon initiatives implemented in the previous reporting period.

The TEQ LIP continued to follow a similar meeting format and Partnership Council, with each Action Group conducting 6 meetings during the reporting period. In addition to key activities, the TEQ LIP continues to use existing communication tools (biweekly e-blast, quarterly newsletter, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and the TEQ LIP website) to share information, and organize annual capacity building and networking events for example, the BRIDGES 2024 Collaboration Forum. The TEQ LIP also contributed to various citywide initiatives with the four quadrant LIPs (Toronto) and the City of Toronto Newcomer Office.

2. About the Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership

The Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are the mechanisms through which Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) supports the development of local partnerships and community-based planning around the needs of newcomers.

The TEQ LIP was initiated in 2012 as an amalgam of four community-based LIPs and covers the geographic area of Scarborough. It is one of four quadrant LIPs in Toronto. It seeks to involve diverse stakeholders in the partnership development process including service provider organizations, levels of government, school boards, professional associations, ethno-cultural organizations, faith-based organizations, the social services sectors, as well as the community at large.

TEQ LIP's Vision

Organizations and stakeholders across Scarborough are working together to build strong, inclusive and welcoming communities supporting newcomers' settlement success by fostering collaboration, partnerships, and equitable participation by all members.

Stated Outcomes of the TEQ LIP:

- To support better coordination and collaboration in the planning and delivery of integration services across multiple sectors, including settlement and language training in local communities;
- 2. To provide a framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable local and regional solutions for the successful social and economic integration for newcomers;
- 3. To strengthen local capacity to integrate newcomers in a manner that fosters improved labor market access, increased social inclusion, and the creation of sustainable welcoming communities for newcomers;
- 4. To achieve improved newcomer outcomes as indicated by increased economic, social, political, and civic participation by newcomers.

As a multi-sectoral partnership at the local community level, stakeholders are engaged in actions that facilitate the integration of newcomers and promote inclusion by working collaboratively.

3. About the 2023-2024 TEQ LIP Evaluation

The TEQ LIP conducts an annual project evaluation that is designed to help assess to what extent the TEQ LIP is effective in achieving its stated outcomes and identifying areas of improvement.

The evaluation aimed to assess the following:

- 1) TEQ LIP's impact on member agencies and changes made by partner organizations as a result of their involvement in TEQ LIP
 - Increase in awareness of newcomers needs, settlement trends, services and gaps
 - b. Use of TEQ LIP resources and information in strategic planning and funding applications
 - Other changes in services delivery or design as a result of information received from TEQ LIP
- 2) TEQ LIP's impact on service coordination and formation of partnerships
 - a. The development of new partnerships, both formal and informal, and how these relationships help organizations achieve their project outcomes

- b. Increase in awareness of other service providers and their programs, and impact on service coordination
- c. Increase in incoming and outgoing referrals
- 3) TEQ LIP's impact on communication and availability of information
 - a. Effectiveness of TEQ LIP communication tools including the website, e-blast, X (formerly Twitter), and publications
 - Effectiveness of TEQ LIP meetings and events as sources of information about newcomer needs, settlement trends, and service gaps.
- 4) Conclusion: TEQ LIP strengths, promising practices and recommendations
 - a. Overview and conclusion on three main evaluation areas
 - b. Recommendations for improvement

Evaluation Process and Tools

The evaluation was carried out using an anonymous online survey of TEQ LIP Action Group members, Partnership Council members, Executive Committee members, Steering Committee members, Scarborough Newcomer Council members, and other stakeholders within the TEQ LIP network. This year's evaluation survey tool was revised and updated by the TEQ LIP team and the survey was conducted between February and March 2024. This evaluation report represents the responses collected from TEQ LIP members.

Evaluation Timeline

The online evaluation survey was carried out in February 2024 till the end of March 2024. It was completed by a total of 36 participants.

Limitations of the Evaluation

The TEQ LIP program evaluation is conducted annually by TEQ LIP staff, encompassing survey administration, data analysis, and report writing. Due to resource constraints, the evaluation lacks an external perspective, which could provide valuable insights into the project.

The evaluation is limited in scope to measuring the impact on formal TEQ LIP partners and does not completely reflect the perspective of other stakeholders such as informal partners and different event participants. Moreover, the response rate for this evaluation cannot be determined accurately because the survey was distributed to different large groups of TEQ LIP members and partners, the exact number of which cannot be determined at this time.

4. Evaluation Findings

Please note that the percentages presented have been rounded to the nearest whole number, which may result in the total not adding up to 100.

4.1 Respondent Information

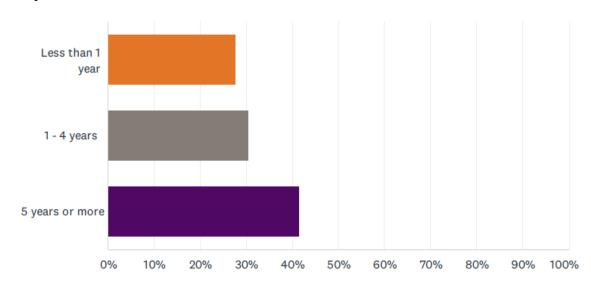


Figure 4.1a Respondents' years of involvement with the TEQ LIP

a) Years of involvement with the TEQ LIP

As seen in **Figure 4.1a**, approximately 31% of respondents in the survey have engaged with the TEQ LIP for a duration spanning from 1 to 4 years, possessing adequate work experience and a level of familiarity with the TEQ LIP. Meanwhile, approximately 42% of respondents have participated in the TEQ LIP for 5 years or more, demonstrating extensive experience and profound knowledge of the TEQ LIP. Additionally, 28% of survey participants are new to TEQ LIP activities.

Please note that the percentages presented have been rounded to the nearest whole number, which may result in the total not adding up to 100.

b) Roles and sector representation at TEQ LIP

The following charts illustrate the diverse sector and role representation of respondents, encompassing frontline staff, management personnel, and representatives from immigrant communities (including local residents or volunteers) across multiple sectors, who have contributed to the survey.

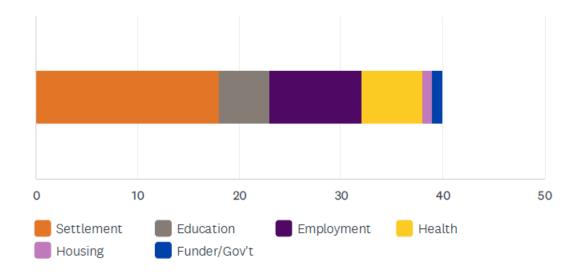


Figure 4.1b Sector representation of respondents

- 53% of survey respondents are managers/directors, 38% are frontline staff, and 9% are comprised of local residents or volunteers. Compared to last year, there is a notable 10% rise in managerial engagement, an 8% decline in frontline staff participation, and a 2% decrease in involvement from local residents or volunteers.
- The majority of survey respondents, 56%, work in the settlement sector, with 28% operating in the employment sector, 18% within the health sector, 16% in the education sector, and 3% both in the housing sector and in the funder/government official sectors. Compared to the previous year's data, there is a notable 15% surge in representation from the employment sector, alongside a 3% increase in representation from the education sector. Conversely, there is a decrease of 3% in representation from both the housing sector and the funder/government official sectors.

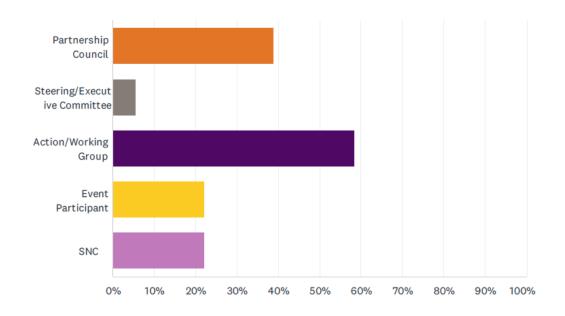


Figure 4.1c Respondents' affiliation with the TEQ LIP

- Most survey respondents, constituting 58%, identify themselves as members of the Action or Working Group within the TEQ LIP, with 39% serving as members of the Partnership Council. Additionally, 22% are event participants, 22% are members of the Scarborough Newcomer Council (SNC). Lastly, 6% are associated with either the Steering or the Executive Committee.
- Compared to last year, there has been a decline of 13% in survey respondents from Action or Working groups, alongside a 5% rise in survey respondents within the Partnership Council. Furthermore, there has been an overall increase in responses from event participants (4%) and SNC members (6%).

c) TEQ LIP events and meetings attendance

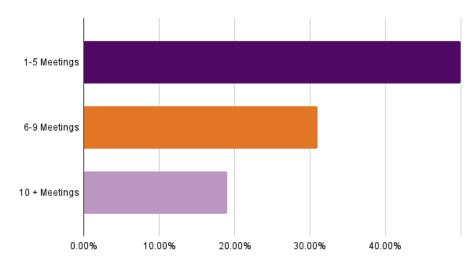


Figure 4.1e Respondents' attendances to TEQ LIP events and workshops

- Of the respondents, 19% report attending more than 10 meetings, 31% attended between 6 and 9 meetings, and 50% attended between 1 and 5 meetings.
 Compared to the previous year, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of responses indicating attendance at more than 6 meetings, reflecting a higher level of overall involvement.
- Aligned with the 2020-2025 strategic plan, several events and workshops were arranged. Consistent with last year, 61% of survey respondents report attending between 0 and 2 events, while 31% attended 3 to 5 events, and 8% attended more than 5 events. Compared to the previous year, there has been a 6% rise in attendance at 3-5 events and a 6% decrease in attendance at more than 5 events.

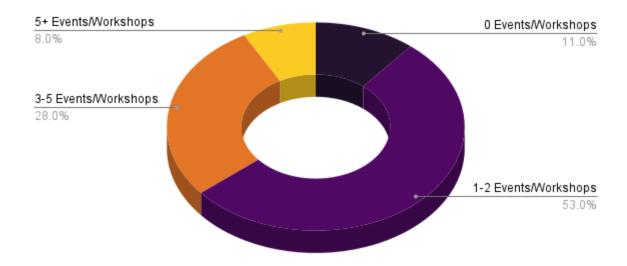


Figure 4.1e Respondents' attendances to TEQ LIP events and workshops

4.2 TEQ LIP: Member Agency Impact and Partner Responses

The TEQ LIP aims to be a source of information in Scarborough such that it impacts service design and strategic planning across service providing organizations. This is achieved through a better understanding of newcomers' needs and gaps in service provision, and providing a wider awareness of other settlement services offered in Scarborough. The TEQ LIP is committed to supporting its members by conducting community research and sharing best practices.

When asked to share specific activities or events that respondents felt benefited their organization, several responses mentioned BRIDGES 2024, TEQ LIP's annual collaboration forum. BRIDGES was appreciated for its value as a good networking event, a place to learn about different topics in the settlement sector, and for being a good platform for information sharing. Responses mentioned that information learned from different activities and events can be used by work respondents and shared with clients.

a) How has the programming, planning, or service delivery of TEQ LIP partner organizations changed in the past year because of their involvement with TEQ LIP?

- 31% stated referrals to other organizations have increased. This is 14% less than the previous reporting period.
- 14% stated that they changed the way a program or service was delivered to make it more accessible to newcomers.
- 31% stated that when they plan new programs or services, they are more likely to take other organizations' services into consideration. This is a 5% increase from the previous year.
- 19% of respondents stated that they have delivered more programs jointly or in partnership with other organizations.

However, it must be noted that 53% of respondents found this question inapplicable to their roles. This may be because they are in a non-managerial role.

"As a frontline worker, I do not have the power to make such changes, access opportunities, and make such decisions as listed above" - Respondent

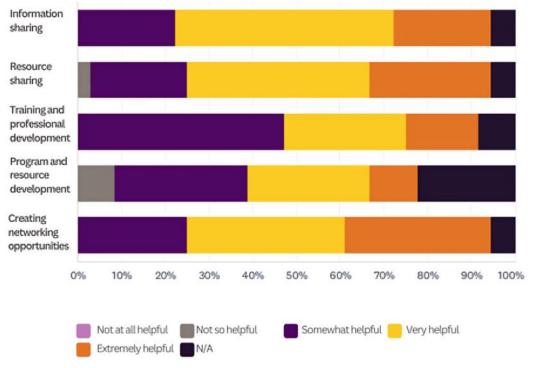


Figure 4.2a TEQ LIP's usefulness in key impact areas

b) TEQ LIP's usefulness in key impact areas

- According to **Figure 4.2a**, 94% of respondents stated that the TEQ LIP was somewhat helpful to extremely helpful in creating networking and collaboration opportunities. This is TEQ LIP's highest scoring impact area.
- 92% of respondents stated that the TEQ LIP was *somewhat helpful* to *extremely helpful* in terms of *information sharing* across different organizations.
- 92% of respondents stated that the TEQ LIP was *somewhat helpful to extremely helpful* in terms of *resource sharing*.
- 70% of respondents stated that TEQ LIP was *somewhat helpful* to *extremely helpful* in terms of *program and resource development*. This includes resources like toolkits, program protocols and project proposals.

Note that 8% of respondents thought the TEQ LIP was *not so helpful* in *program and resource development*, and 22% found *program and resource development* as an irrelevant (not applicable) impact area for their roles.

c) TEQ LIP's activities that have benefited organizations

TEQ LIP collected testimonials from respondents to evaluate the activities that had the most significant impact on them. The most frequently mentioned activities are comprised of the BRIDGES Collaboration Forum, Action Group meetings, and capacity-building and training programs:

"TEQ LIP has been excellent in promoting the capacity building activities with member agencies. Without their support the events would not have succeeded" -Respondent

"Accessibility Council meetings and activities; BRIDGES Forum; information received through TEQ LIP, e.g., e-blast" - Respondent

"Information sharing and discussions have helped understand issues on the ground, the impacts of funding and policies, emerging issues" - Respondent

"The action groups have been helpful in letting our staff meet and network with other service providers. This often leads to sharing of resources, information, program calendars and cross-referrals. The training and professional

development opportunities are also helpful and relevant to our work and the sector at large" - Respondent

"BRIDGES enabled our small agency to be more exposed and network with other agencies" - Respondent

4.3 TEQ LIPs Contribution to Service Coordination and Partnerships

The TEQ LIP aims to improve the settlement sector's ability to serve newcomers by facilitating partnerships, collaboration, and service coordination in Scarborough. This section of the evaluation captures the ways in which service coordination and partnerships were facilitated by TEQ LIP activities and initiatives.

a) TEQ LIP's involvement in building collaboration between organizations

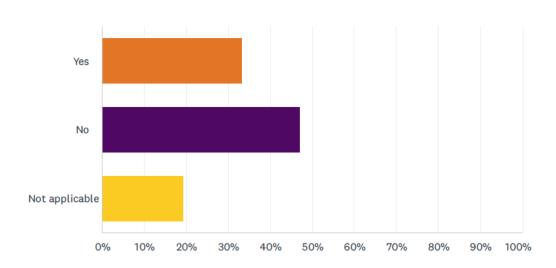


Figure 4.3a Has your organization partnered with another through the TEQ LIP?

- 33% of survey respondents indicated that their organization has partnered with another organization as a result of the TEQ LIP's efforts in facilitating their collaboration. This is comparable to the last period's evaluation (32%).
- 19% offer more programs jointly or in partnership with other organizations as a result of involvement in the TEQ LIP. This has decreased by 7% from the previous evaluation period.

 31% of respondents indicated that they are more likely to take other organizations' services into consideration when planning their own services. This has improved by 5% from the previous evaluation period.

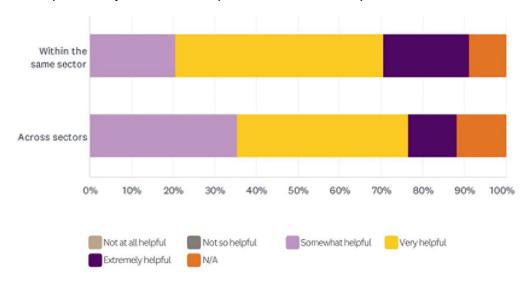


Figure 4.3b How helpful has the TEQ LIP been in relationship-building between organizations within and across sectors?

- According to Figure 4.3b, 91% of respondents indicate that the TEQ LIP was somewhat to extremely helpful in creating opportunities for collaboration between organizations within the same sector.
- 88% of respondents indicate that the TEQ LIP was somewhat to extremely helpful in creating opportunities for collaboration between organizations in different sectors.
- 31% of respondents indicated that referrals to other organizations have increased, which is a 14% decrease from the previous reporting period.

b) TEQ LIP's involvement in helping coordinate newcomer services

- 92% of respondents indicated that the TEQ LIP's role in improving awareness of services was somewhat helpful to extremely helpful.
- 92% of respondents indicated that the TEQ LIP was *somewhat helpful* to extremely helpful in improving services for newcomers in general.
- 75% of respondents indicated that the TEQ LIP was very helpful to extremely helpful in impacting policies.
- 92% of respondents indicated that the TEQ LIP was very helpful to extremely helpful in improving collaboration to better serve newcomers across newcomer serving organizations

 78% of respondents indicated that the TEQ LIP was somewhat helpful to extremely helpful in improving capacity of non-settlement organizations to respond to newcomers.

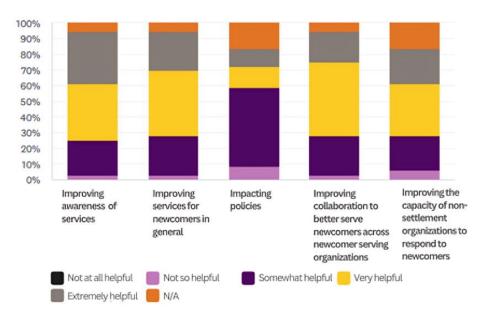


Figure 4.3c How well has the TEQ LIP helped coordinate services for newcomers across newcomer serving and non-settlement organizations?

BRIDGES Collaboration Forum

The annual BRIDGES Forum provides a venue for service providers from across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to discuss innovative strategies and ideas to support newcomers through a time of unprecedented socioeconomic challenges and uncertainty. It includes diverse speakers, thought leaders, and trailblazing thinkers who discuss new approaches to designing, delivering, and developing partnerships to meet the changing and emerging needs in the settlement sector. This year's BRIDGES Forum took place on February 7, 2024 at the Centennial College Event Centre. It welcomed approximately 170 individuals representing newcomer-serving organizations across Scarborough. The theme for this year's event was "Innovating Service Design, Delivery, and Partnerships to Support Newcomers in a Challenging Socioeconomic Landscape".

The Forum was well-attended, and participants shared valuable feedback. In general, 54% of participants shared that the overall organization of the Forum was *excellent*, while 33% indicated that it was *very good*. Notably, 64% of respondents shared that they were *very likely* to apply ideas learned at the Forum in their work. Participants shared that the Forum provided a good place to network and discuss shared challenges

in the sector. This is reflected in 57% of respondents sharing that the Forum *helped a lot* in having a better understanding of building partnerships among different organizations.

When asked what they liked most about the event, respondents shared:

"The selected topics were very accurate, up to date with the current situation of the sector." - Respondent

"I enjoyed hearing the stories and experiences of peers and experts." Respondent

"Excellent speakers, relevant sessions that clearly linked back to the event's theme." - Respondent

4.4 TEQ LIP's Impact on Communication and Information Sharing, and Effectiveness of TEQ LIP Communication Tools

The TEQ LIP provides information to partners on emerging trends related to newcomer settlement, services in the community, service gaps, and opportunities for service alignment. It also provides partners with opportunities to share their information and network with others working in Scarborough. A variety of tools are used to disseminate information. These include:

- Bi-weekly e-blast
- Quarterly newsletter
- TEQ LIP website
- In-person updates from TEQ LIP staff (at events or workshops)
- Partner information sharing in meetings
- Social media X (formerly Twitter) or Facebook

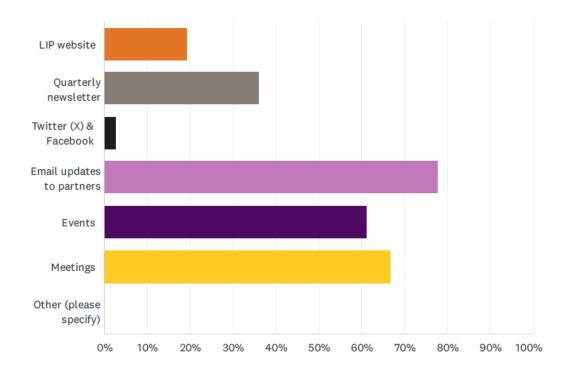


Figure 4.4a Preferred mode of accessing TEQ LIP resources

When respondents were asked about their preferred method for accessing TEQ LIP resources, the top three preferences emerged as shown in **Figure 4.4a**:

- 78% favored email updates
- 67% opted for meetings (including Partnership Council, Steering Committee, Newcomer Council, and Action Group meetings)
- 61% indicated events (such as workshops, trainings, and conferences)

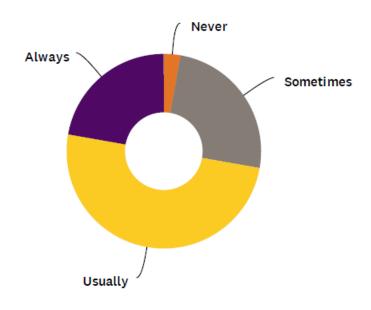


Figure 4.4b. How often do respondents share TEQ LIP resources?

The resources and updates disseminated by TEQ LIP across its platforms to partners and other interested parties hold significant value when distributed extensively. We assessed the frequency with which respondents share these resources, as depicted in **Figure 4.4b**. Fifty percent of respondents *usually* share TEQ LIP resources within their networks, while an additional 22% *always* share them.

Most respondents (94%) shared that they value networking and information sharing opportunities facilitated by TEQ LIP. When asked how helpful the TEQ LIP is to participants' organizations for information sharing, 50% of respondents found it *very helpful*, and 22% found it *extremely helpful*. In terms of resource sharing, 42% of participants responded that the LIP is *very helpful* and 22% found it *extremely helpful*.

When asked about partnerships facilitated by the TEQ LIP, participants shared that TEQ LIP meetings have allowed them to create meaningful collaboration opportunities.

"Through my participation in TEQ meetings I have been able to partner with other member organizations to plan events and build capacity" - Respondent

"Partnered with another organization who refers clients to our services that they do not offer" - Respondent

Electronic Communication and Social Media

The TEQ LIP e-blast continues to be widely distributed with 430 subscribers. There were 26 new subscribers in the current evaluation period, and 31 recipients that unsubscribed or were removed by the system automatically.

The TEQ LIP website continues to be rated as a useful tool. The TEQ LIP website saw approximately 7000 page views in the May 2023 to April 2024 reporting period.

Conclusion: TEQ LIP Strengths and Recommendations for Improvement

As shown in **Figure 4.5**, when asked "How satisfied are you with your LIP?", 78% of respondents indicated that they were *somewhat satisfied* to *very sat very satisfied*. Notably, 14% of respondents indicated they were *very dissatisfied* with their LIP in this year's evaluation, an increase from last year's 3%.

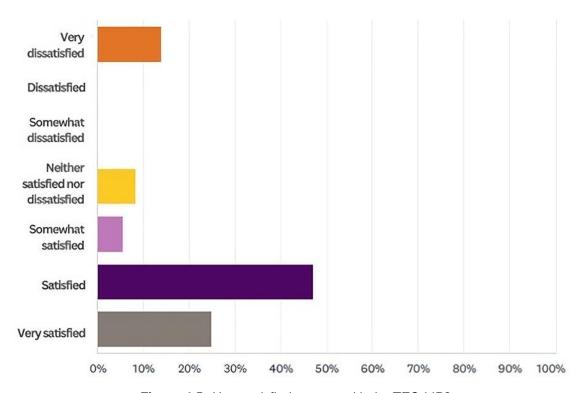


Figure 4.5. How satisfied are you with the TEQ LIP?

Overview and Conclusions on Three Main Areas of Evaluation

1. TEQ LIP's impact on member agencies and changes made by partner organizations because of involvement in the TEQ LIP

Approximately 69% of respondents indicated that the LIP is somewhat helpful to extremely helpful in program and resource development for service providers. Partners value the TEQ LIP as a source of information for newcomer needs and trends. They use this information in understanding newcomer demographic data in their catchment area, the complexity of newcomer issues in marginalized communities (i.e. LGBTQ+, seniors, individuals with disability, etc.), and existing services.

There is still a lot of opportunity for improvement in terms of the TEQ LIP's impact on member agencies. Only 31% of respondents agreed that when they plan new programs or services, they are more likely to take other organizations' services into consideration, while approximately 19% shared that more programs are delivered jointly or in partnership with other organizations. For possible solutions to enhance collaboration among member agencies, it is recommended to implement targeted awareness campaigns of the various services member agencies offer, for more effective utilization of services when planning new programs.

2. TEQ LIP's impact on service coordination and formation of partnerships

A consistent theme in survey responses is that partners value the TEQ LIP for opportunities to meet other newcomer service providers in Scarborough, learn about their services, and form working relationships. Respondents expressed appreciation for opportunities related to knowledge mobilization and capacity-building on diverse topics. Additionally, they acknowledged TEQ LIP's initiatives in enhancing access to services for under-serviced minority groups through collaborative efforts.

Respondents rate the TEQ LIP very highly in terms of its helpfulness in building relationships with other organizations within the same sector and across sectors. Approximately 33% of respondents indicated that they have formed a partnership with another organization as a result of their involvement with the TEQ LIP. Additionally, approximately 31% of respondents have reported an increase in referrals to other organizations.

3. TEQ LIP's Impact on Communication and Availability of Information

The TEQ LIP has continued to reliably share information with a variety of tools and methods – the biweekly e-blast, TEQ LIP website, X (formerly Twitter), newsletter, and information sharing and updates in Action Groups and Partnership Council Meetings.

This year's evaluation highlights the importance of email updates (which includes the biweekly e-blast), meetings, and events (workshops, the BRIDGES Forum etc.), as the top three modes of communicating with our partners. The TEQ LIP website, quarterly newsletter, and Twitter and Facebook accounts remain underutilized sources of information.

The biweekly e-blast has 430 subscribers at the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, compared to 426 in the previous reporting period at the end of the fiscal year. While the number of subscribers has fluctuated on a monthly basis, the total number has not increased significantly over the last fiscal year.

Overall, 94% of respondents valued networking and information sharing opportunities orchestrated by the TEQ LIP, which most likely occur at organized events like workshops and the BRIDGES Collaboration Forum. Networking and information sharing were two of TEQ LIP's highest scoring impact area across key impact areas that included resource sharing, training and development, and program and policy development. Respondents also shared many experiences with TEQ LIP-led collaboration opportunities which helped them make contacts and share information with other organizations.

Recommendations

Feedback from respondents informed three key areas for recommendations. These include:

1. Enhancing Information Sharing Across Channels

The LIP could further diversify its communication channels proactively to broaden its audience reach. Particularly, the absence on platforms like LinkedIn, X, and Facebook limits potential outreach.

- It is recommended that we conduct audience satisfaction tests to assess current communication methods, and explore the feasibility of utilizing other modes of communication to expand audience engagement.
- It is recommended that we increase the frequency of updates on underutilized platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and the TEQ LIP website to ensure maximum accessibility, engagement and reach.

2. Proactive Response to Emerging Trends in the Settlement Sector

The LIP could strengthen its proactive communication of upcoming trends and needs in immigration, policies, funding, etc. so service providing organizations can be better prepared for upcoming changes in the sector.

"Share more information on policy and immigration trends, help us be on top of developments in immigration/settlement; coordinate responses; continue capacity-building, especially around new trends, virtual delivery, Al in service delivery" – Respondent

- It is recommended that we foster stronger ties with government, funders, policy centers, and leading agencies to stay informed about emerging needs.
- It is recommended that we share pertinent information with the TEQ LIP service provider network to enable proactive preparation.

3. Strengthening Collaborative and Innovative Initiatives between Partner Organizations

As suggested by survey feedback, the TEQ LIP could provide more support for collaborative initiatives. 47% of respondents noted a lack of facilitation of partnerships with other organizations through the TEQ LIP itself. Moreover, there is a 14% drop in respondents indicating increased referrals to other organizations through the TEQ LIP.

"Keep ensuring the planning includes integrating the unique needs of member organizations. Increase opportunities for meaningful networking and opportunities to share ideas and strengthen partnerships among members" - Respondent

- It is recommended that we foster increased interaction among attendees in action group meetings, workshops, and events.
- It is encouraged to facilitate joint events, resource development, and shared spaces to enhance partnerships and cooperation.
- Finally, it is recommended that the TEQ LIP expand stakeholder involvement by inviting a diverse array of stakeholders to TEQ LIP activities, which includes strengthening outreach efforts with Indigenous-led and Francophone-serving organizations for more innovative partnerships.

Acknowledgements

The TEQ LIP expresses sincere appreciation to our esteemed community partners, dedicated members of the Action Groups, participants of the Partnership Council, Steering Committee, and the Scarborough Newcomer Council for their invaluable participation in completing the online evaluation survey. Your commitment and contributions have played a vital role in facilitating this evaluation process. Your insights are deeply valued as they enable us to comprehensively assess the impact of the TEQ LIP project on our partners and the community, while identifying areas for improvement. We thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration.