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Social Cohesion and Radicalization

Canada

Ongoing Engagement with CCRS

- In previous meetings, we asked CCRS members:
  - What is the appropriate role for the Multiculturalism Program in countering radicalization?
  - Are traditional Government objectives (civic participation, anti-racism/cross-cultural understanding, inclusive institutions) enough to address radicalization, or are radicalization-specific initiatives required?
  - Are there any specific initiatives that we should consider?

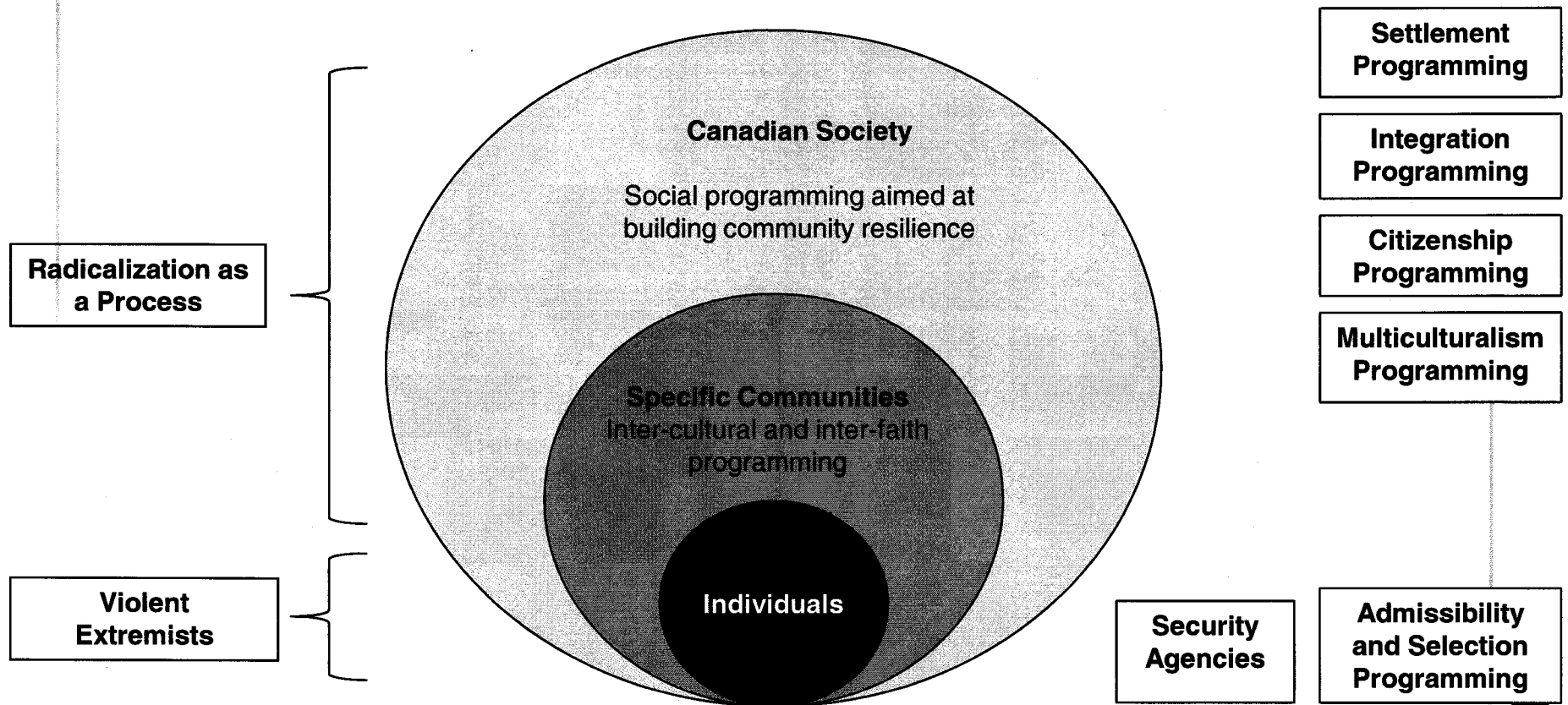 We also presented some very early examples of projects that helped to address this issue

- As part of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), we have continued to consider the role of Multiculturalism Program and the broader department in mitigating radicalization.

- Today's goal is to present this work and to validate findings from a recent Roundtable discussion hosted by CIC entitled *"Social Cohesion: Addressing radicalization by building strong communities."*

Federal Responses to Radicalization

- Various departments in the Government of Canada are involved in mitigating activities. Many of these designed to build community resilience through support and prevention programming.

	Security Initiatives	Social Initiatives
Other Government Departments	▪ Intelligence ▪ Criminal Investigations ▪ Community Outreach ▪ Enforcement, e.g. policing ▪ Incarceration	▪ Engagement (e.g. CCRS) ▪ Religious Services Programming (CSC) ▪ Identity programming (PCH) ▪ Research
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	**Safety and Security Programming** ▪ Admissibility and Selection	**Integrated Society Programming** ▪ General integration approach and programming (Settlement, Integration, Citizenship) ▪ Multiculturalism programming

How CIC Contributes to Addressing Radicalization

Radicalization as a Process

Violent Extremists

Canadian Society

Social programming aimed at building community resilience

Specific Communities
inter-cultural and inter-faith programming

Individuals

Settlement Programming

Integration Programming

Citizenship Programming

Multiculturalism Programming

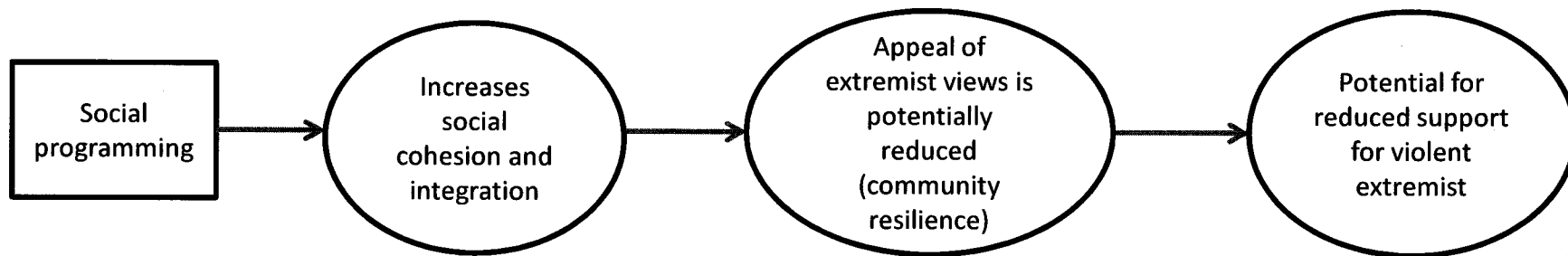**Security Agencies**

Admissibility and Selection Programming

Current Approach

- Overall Canadian approach to building an integrated society (Settlement, Integration, Citizenship, Multiculturalism) reduces potential compared to other countries.

- Within CIC, new objectives for Multiculturalism Program are an additional instrument for strengthening social cohesion:

  - Build inter-cultural and inter-faith understanding

  - Foster civic memory and pride, and respect for core democratic values

- By focusing its programming on communities that we know are not as resilient to radicalization, Multiculturalism Program could potentially do more to address this issue.

> "...building bridges between communities, helping people, the beginning of real economic equality of opportunity, and at the same time, in a sense indirectly, combating marginal forces of radicalization"
>
> – Minister Kenney, March 2009

| Social programming | → | Increases social cohesion and integration | → | Appeal of extremist views is potentially reduced (community resilience) | → | Potential for reduced support for violent extremist |

Religion and the Radicalization Dynamic

- Religion has emerged in public policy discourse and receives significant coverage in Canadian media
  - Religious views on range of social issues
  - Reasonable accommodation issues
  - Increased religious diversity, and increased populations, results in more "spirited" debate (Annex 1)

- In addition there are real and perceived concerns that religion is linked to radicalization and violent extremism.

- Challenges related to religion for policymakers at all levels of government
  - Underdeveloped inter-faith understanding and interaction (Annex 2)
  - Reasonable accommodation – defining "reasonable"
  - Social policy role in addressing radicalization and violent extremism

- Asking ourselves if addressing issues of religion broadly (e.g. through interfaith initiatives), go some way to addressing concerns about social cohesion and radicalization?

Multiculturalism Projects Addressing Radicalization

Community	Organization	Program	Objectives
Muslim (Youth)	Canadian Council of Muslim Women	MY CANADA	Understanding of rule of law, Canadian identity, dealing with local challenges and how to prevent radicalization.
Somali	The Canadian Somali Congress and the Canadian International Peace Project	Somali - Jewish Canadian Mentorship Project	Long-term community cohesion and cadre of young Somali-Canadian professionals able assume leadership roles and contribute to Canadian society
Somali	Somali-Canadian Cultural Society of Edmonton	Reducing Barriers for Somali at Risk Youth within their Community and School System	Gain awareness, knowledge and skills for civic engagement; identify and take action toward resolving issues affecting their communities; and wider participation civil society.
South Asian (Sinhalese, Tamil, etc.)	The Mosaic Institute for Harnessing Diversity	South-Asian Global Citizenship Project	Participant engagement in community service projects supporting ethno-cultural groups beyond their own communities. Sharing this model with other communities and cross cultural bridging initiatives.

Multiculturalism Projects Addressing Radicalization

Community	Organization	Program	Objectives
Youth	Canadian Centre for Diversity	Diversity is Youth Peer Leaders	Build a network of skilled and trained young leaders focused on preventing & responding to conflicts; provide a community of support within to reinforce social cohesion & inclusion, while strengthening community.
Youth (ethno-cultural)	Leave out ViolencE, British Columbia	The Prism Project	Reduce violence in the lives of youth; youth find meaningful employment & complete high school; & increased awareness violence associated with culture & race.
Youth (Indo-Canadian)	Surrey School District, British Columbia	Surrey Appreciates Multi-Ethnicity (SAME)	Develop knowledge, self-confidence, cultural pride, leadership & decision making skills needed for cross-cultural relationships. Build bridges and social cohesion among the diverse ethno-cultural communities.

Roundtable Discussion on Social Cohesion

- CIC recently hosted a Roundtable discussion entitled *"Social Cohesion: Addressing radicalization by building strong communities"* with community representatives (Muslim, Sikh, Somali, Tamil) engaged in mitigating radicalization that leads to violent extremism, and subject area experts.

- Participants were asked to focus on the following questions:
  - What do you think of as radicalization that is detrimental to social cohesion?
  - What do you think the federal government could do to support communities in their concerns regarding radicalization?
  - What are the challenges and risks involved in this kind of work?
  - What are practical examples of initiatives that could be undertaken to address this issue?
  - How do we demonstrate effectiveness?

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Some of What the Roundtable Told Us (1 of 2)

- Ensure funded programs support Canadian values (e.g. democracy, rule of law, gender equality, and active tolerance)

- Launch a national dialogue on the meaning of citizenship and Canadian values

- Focus on youth and help focus their idealism

- Build a nuanced understanding of intra-community dynamics

- Governments need to better connect and normalize relations with citizens

- Support capacity building for community organizations

Risks
- Making particular communities feel targeted.

- Loss of credibility if program partners are perceived as voice of government.

- Supporting organizations that do not represent or fully engage women and youth.

- Indirectly contributing to radicalization by funding intolerant groups.

- Combining social programming and anti-radicalization strategies.

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Interventions Depend on Challenges Facing Communities

Community	Challenges	Potential Initiatives
Muslim	• Hesitation to talk to law enforcement about intra-community security concerns • Feeling faith is not respected and under attack • Differences of interpretation/opinion within faith groups	• Effective outreach programs to build trust • Additional efforts to reflect diversity among law enforcement agencies • Intercultural and interfaith bridge building for all Canadians (contact theory)
Somali	• War trauma, poverty, un/underemployment, single parent families, language skills, educational outcomes, housing, gender and intergenerational conflicts, racism and discrimination, low civic participation • Lack of awareness among community organizations of how to successfully apply for support from government	• Capacity building for community organizations • Tutorials on Grants and Contribution applications • Foreign credential recognition initiatives • Mentorship programs for youth • Additional efforts to reflect diversity among law enforcement agencies • Anti-racism programming
Tamil and Sinhalese	• Imported conflict is driving radicalization within community	• Identification of common values and citizenship programming (intercultural programming) • Opportunities for youth to interact with decision makers (e.g. DFAIT) • Inter-cultural understanding with Sinhalese
Sikh	• Imported conflict • Intergenerational conflicts	• Creative programming focusing on at-risk youth through school systems

- Build more intercultural connections

- Support initiatives/programming that help communities find ways to develop social capital

- Build communities that are more resilient to violent extremism (e.g. gang activity, drug trafficking).

- Pluralism does not come easy. It has to be nurtured and adapted over time.

Making Canada Safe

- Targeting behaviours not communities

- Communities capable of challenging destructive narrative

- Canadians knowing each other better

Clearly link CIC role in addressing radicalization to a broader strategy that strengthens social cohesion

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Questions

- Given your knowledge and experiences, do these findings from the roundtable discussion resonate?

- Based on the examples provided, do you believe that the types of projects that CIC is currently funding will address radicalization and strengthen social cohesion?

- Going forward, how else should CIC support communities at risk of radicalization that leads to violent extremism?

Discussion

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Annex 1 - Religious Diversity Projections 2001-2031

No religion

Jewish

Buddhist

Sikh

Hindu

Muslim

Christianity

■ 2031 Projection
(% of population)

■ 2001 Census
(% of population)

0   20   40   60   80   100

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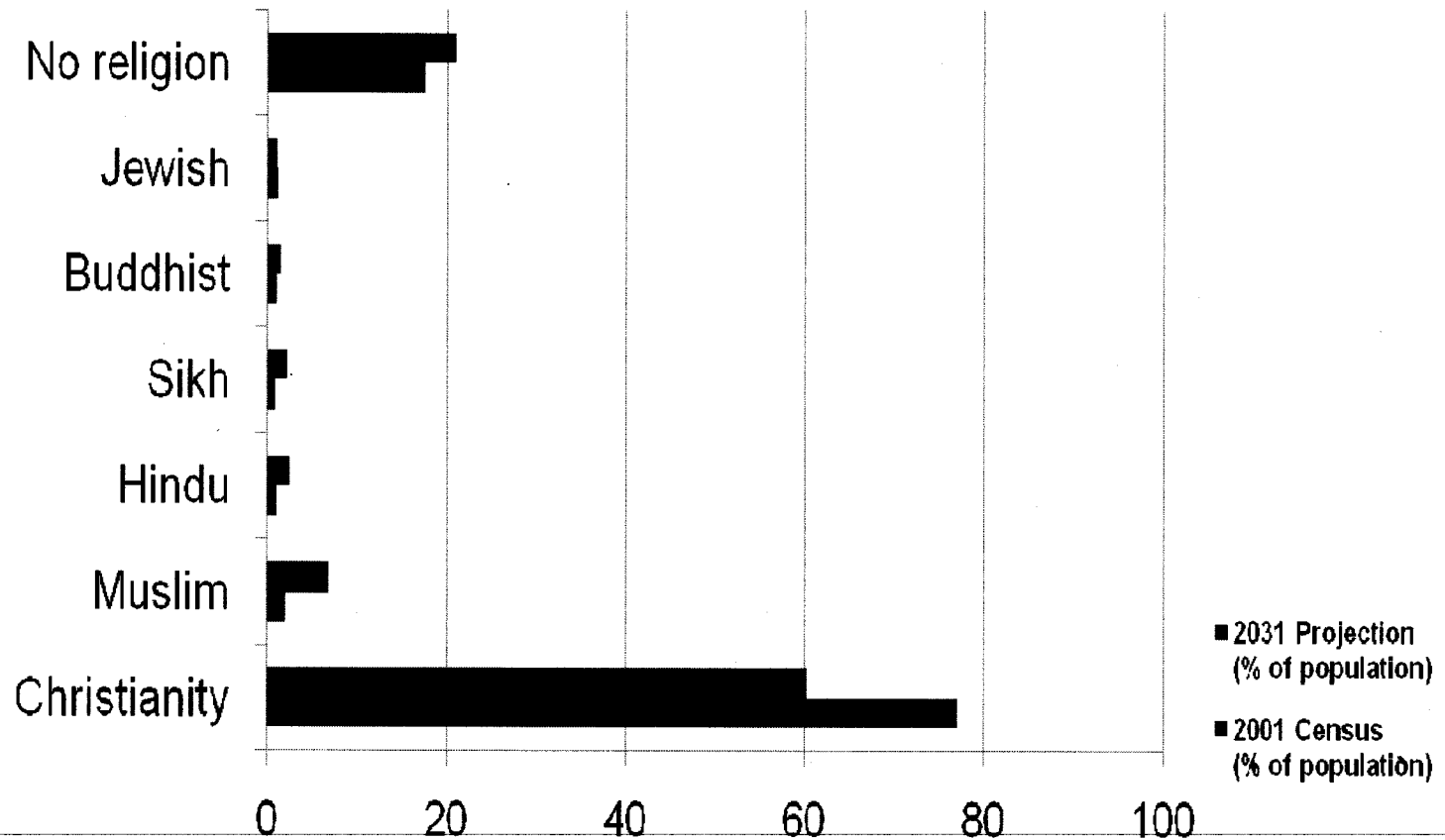
Annex 2 - Inter-Faith Understanding

Favourability Rating of Major Faiths – Angus Reid Poll 2009
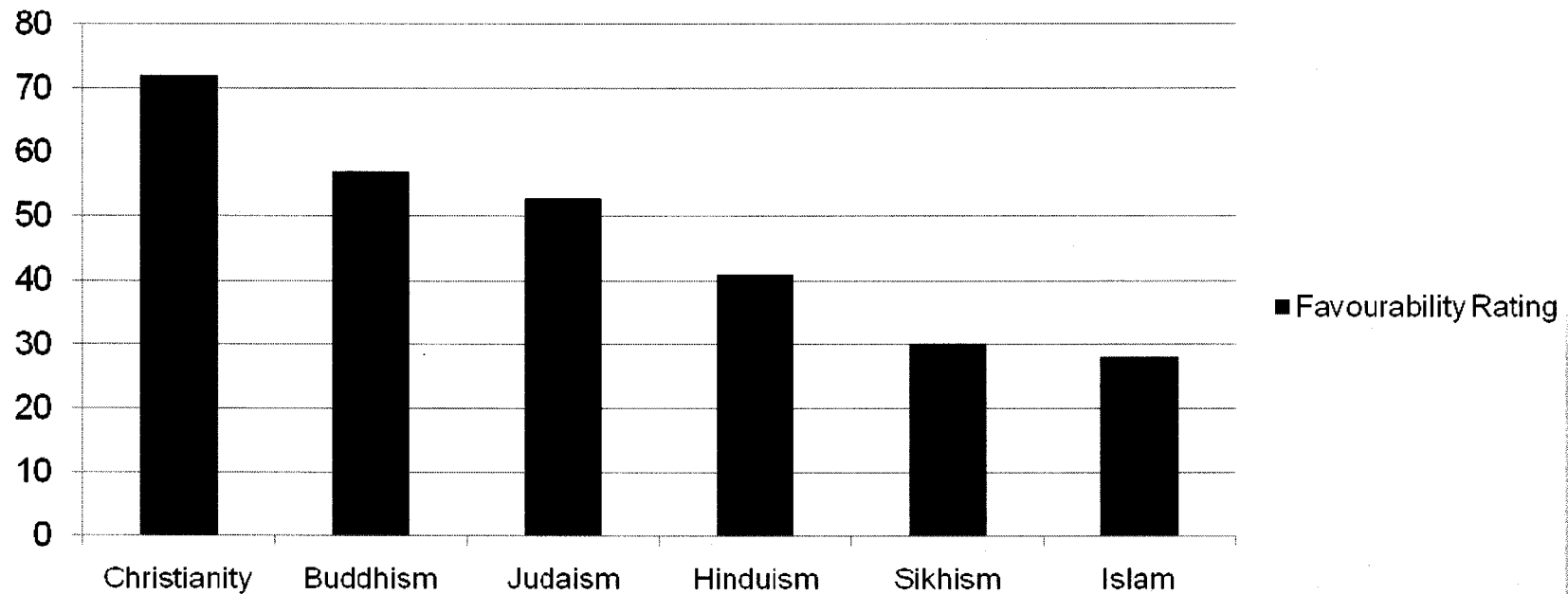
- Low levels of inter-faith understanding (often intersects with intercultural understanding) can result in racism and discrimination, social exclusion, and marginalization. This, in turn, can undermine integration and social cohesion.

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