## SURVEY: LANGUAGE & LITERACY ON THE NORTH SHORE

In March/April 2020, an online survey exploring language & literacy services & learning needs on the North Shore was conducted with community service providers. The survey was created by staff from Capilano University's Literacy Outreach program with support from the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP)'s Access to Information & Services Working Group. The focus of the survey was to collect information about existing programs, services, and tools that support people of all ages in our community facing barriers related to literacy or language. A total of **23 responses** were received. The full summary of the data and the participant responses is presented in this report.

1. Which organization / agency / business do you work for?

- BC Association of Community Response Networks
- Capilano Community Services Society
- Capilano University
- District of West Vancouver
- Dutch Family Services North Shore
- North Shore Community Resources
- North Shore Multicultural Society
- North Vancouver Chamber
- North Vancouver City Library
- North Vancouver District Public Library
- North Vancouver Recreation and Culture
- NS Table Matters Network
- Settlement Services
- Silver Harbour Seniors' Activity Centre
- West Vancouver Community Centre
- West Vancouver Memorial Library

2. Does your workplace encounter people who face barriers accessing your services (specifically those with low literacy skills or English language learners)?
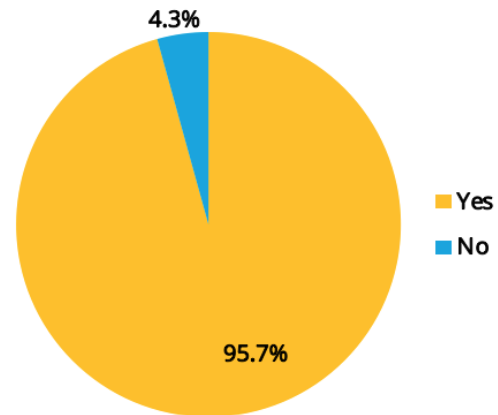
3. Are you familiar with the concept of a literacy audit? (A literacy audit is an assessment to help understand clients' struggles with literacy in their daily lives. Literacy audits provide suggestions for improving customer service to the general public, and help you and your colleagues to write and speak in plain or clear language with clients.)
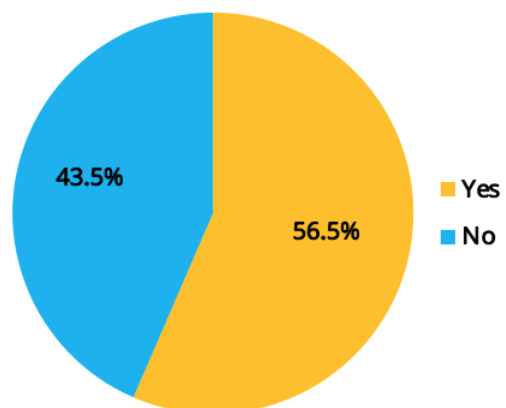
4. Have you had a literacy audit done in your workplace within the last 5 years?


- Yes
- No
- Unsure

4.3%
43.5%
52.2%
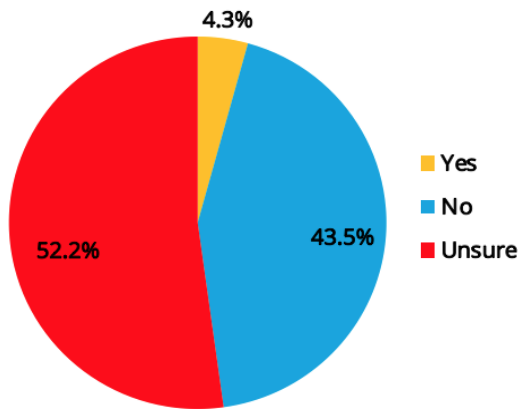
## 5. Are you familiar with the principles of Clear Language and Design?

(Clear Language and Design is an approach to writing and placement of written material so readers can understand information quickly & easily. It is intended to create clear meaning without sacrificing content.)

30.4%
69.9%

- Yes
- No
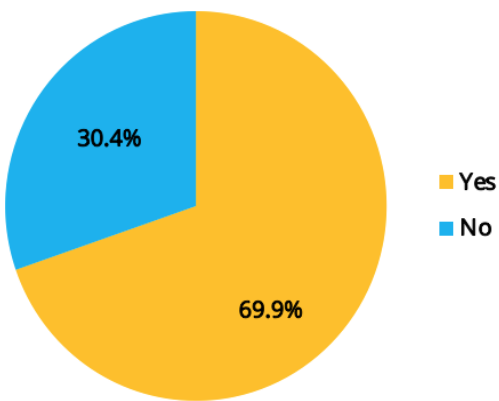
6. Do you apply Clear Language and Design (CLAD) in your workplace?

45.5%
54.5%

- Yes
- No
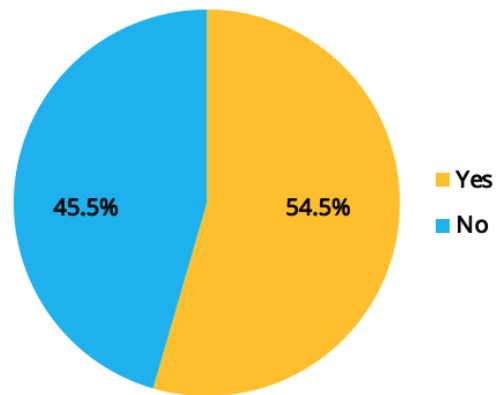
7. Do you have staff who speak different languages?

4.5%
95.5%

- Yes
- No
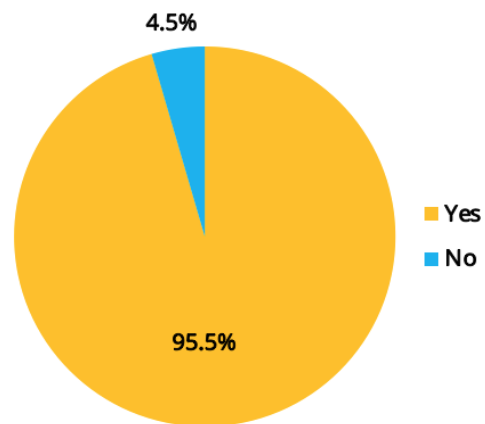
8. If yes, what percentage of staff speak more than one language?

| Percentage	Organizations
85-100%	4
45-85%	3
5-45%	12
<5%	3
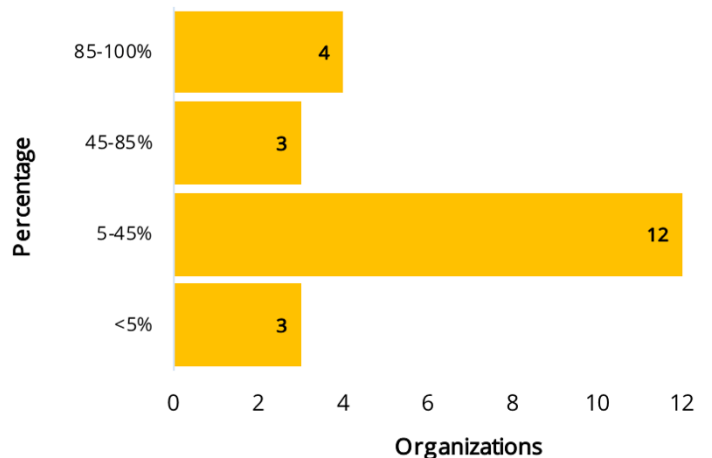
9. If yes, which languages are spoken by the staff?

The top 11 most spoken languages identified by survey respondents, in descending order, were:

1. Farsi
2. French
3. Mandarin
4. Spanish
5. German
6. Tagalog
7. Korean
8. Hindi
9. Japanese
10. Italian
11. Cantonese

Other spoken languages included: Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Dutch, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Kurdish, Malay, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Slovakian, South-African, Turkish, and Urdu.
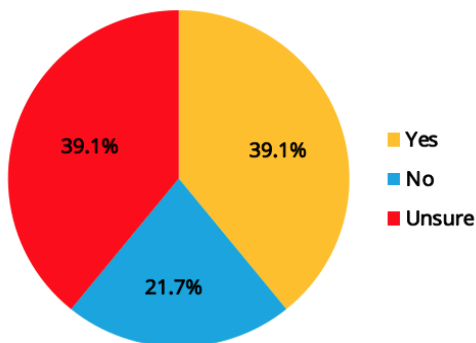
10. Do you use translation and/or interpretation services in your workplace?

47.8% Yes
52.2% No
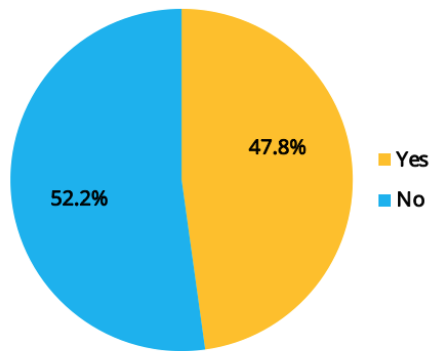
12. Are your printed and online materials available in different languages?

43.5%
56.5% Yes
No
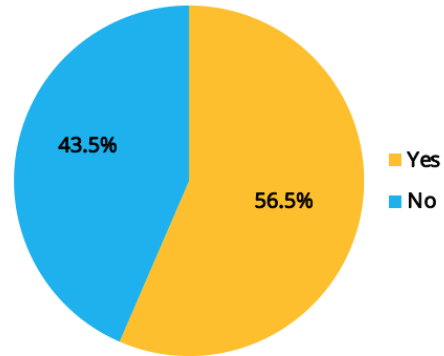
11. Do your staff use Google Translate, or a similar tool, when working with community members?
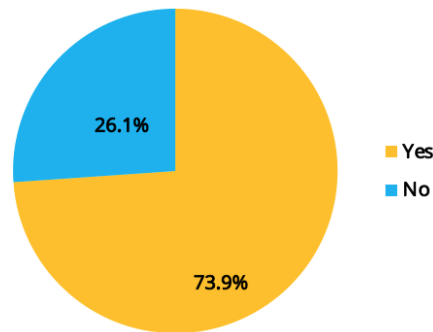

39.1% Yes
39.1%
21.7% No
Unsure

13. Are there any other tools or strategies used by your workplace that support your work with community members facing barriers (e.g. technology, online programming, referrals, etc)? Please explain.

- **Using apps or devices**
  - Language apps like Mango and DuoLingo.
  - Try to find on-demand translation services - more professional than Google Translate.
  - We provide technology to members of the community from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds--including socioeconomic barriers, language barriers, and others.
  - We use translation tools including Google Translate and resources like picture dictionaries wherever possible.
  - We are looking at deploying translation devices but their capacity for Farsi is not great. We are waiting to see if this improves before purchasing the devices.
  - Testing WeChat to connect with Chinese speaking volunteers and Telegram for Farsi.

- **Diverse staffing (and volunteers)**
  - Staff with multiple language capacities.
  - Settlement workers who speak various languages.
  - Having staff members who are speak a range of languages as their first language.
  - Set up a welcome desk and facility tours with volunteers with foreign language skills.
  - We get help from other individuals who can help within our groups.
  - Staff with lived experience
  - Staff trained in working with barriers

- **External referrals**
  - Work with North Shore Multicultural Society; extensive referral system.
  - We refer our customers to agencies such as NSMS who specialize in their specific needs.
  - Refer patrons to NSMS & other services if appropriate.
  - We refer enquiries to a line that provides services in multiple languages (Seniors First).

- **Translation services**
  - Having translation services for written signage.
  - Workshops and 1-1 service provided in first languages.
  - Some workshops have been delivered with a translator present.
  - Interpreters always ready to jump in.

- **Brochures in other languages**
  - Information and reader's advisory services to members of the community from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds--including socioeconomic barriers, language barriers.
  - Keep a collection of materials in other languages.
  - One of our brochures is available in about 6 different languages.
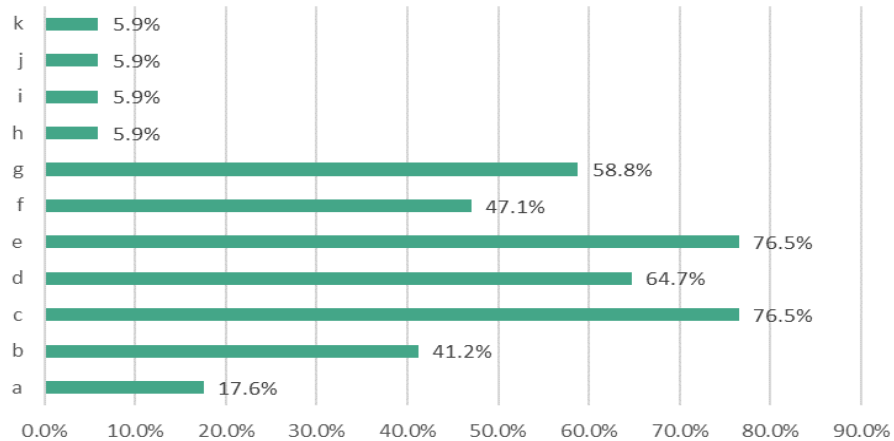 - Create pictorial signage

- **English programs**
  - English classes for newcomers.
  - English Language Learning programs, citizenship prep, employment workshops.

- **Other Tools & Strategies**
  - Food asset map
  - Create buddy program to connect a newcomer and a long-term resident

15 responses total were collected for this statement - answers categorized into multiple themes.

14. Do you offer specific language-based or literacy-based programs or services?

Yes 73.9%
No 26.1%

15. If you answered "yes", please select all that apply from the following.

Category	Percentage
k	5.9%
j	5.9%
i	5.9%
h	5.9%
g	58.8%
f	47.1%
e	76.5%
d	64.7%
c	76.5%
b	41.2%
a	17.6%

a) Basic reading, writing, math, or oral communication (NOT including English language learning)
b) Technology programming (computers, tablets, phones, and other technology)
c) English language learning (reading, writing, math, and/or oral communication)
d) Health programming
e) Family programming
f) Workplace training
g) Civic and settlement programming
h) Legal Services

i) Community workshop for newcomers (sometimes with translators)
j) Literacy support that includes health literacy, financial literacy and other topics
k) Counselling, Parent Support

16. Please identify the primary community members targeted by your program(s) or service(s).
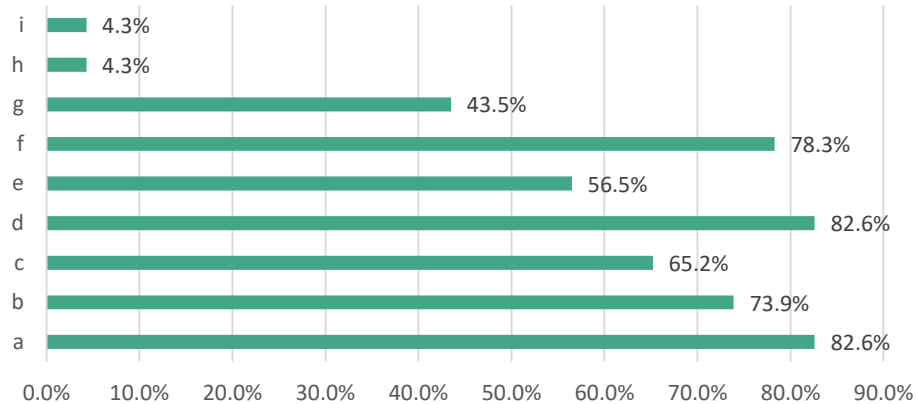
a) Adults
b) Children
c) Youth
d) Seniors
e) Indigenous / First Nation
f) Newcomers / Immigrants
g) Special interest groups (eg. people with developmental disabilities and/or mental illnesses)
h) Businesses & non-profits
i) Networks of organizations and community members interested in community food security

17. Overall, to what degree do you think your target community members are accessing your services? (1 = limited, 5 = fully)
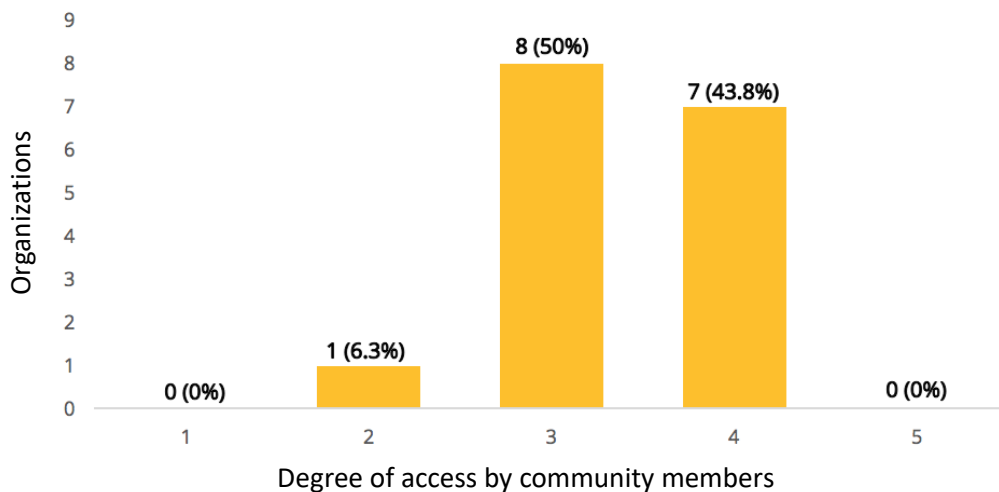
18. Do you work with any partner organizations or networks (e.g. NSIIP, North Shore Homelessness Task Group)? If so, please list here.

- Capilano University
- CDI
- Child Care Communities
- CNV
- Dementia Friendly Task Force
- First Nations
- FSNS
- IEC-BC
- Interagency
- Keep Well
- Libraries
- Lookout Shelter
- Mental Health
- Municipalities
- New To BC
- North Van Arts
- NS Homelessness Task Group
- NS Neighbourhood House
- NSCR
- NSHTF
- NSIIP
- NSMC
- NSMS
- NSNH
- NSWC
- NV Library
- NV Rec
- NVD
- NVD Library
- NVSD
- Parkgate
- RCMP
- Seniors Organizations
- SFU
- St. John Church
- UBC
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- WorkBC
- WV District
- WV Library
- WV Seniors Outreach
- WVSD
- Youth Tables
- YWCA

19. Have you identified any gaps in your programs / services for community members facing barriers related to literacy and language? If so, please describe.

- Tools & materials
  - A lack of staff, particularly at the front desk, who can speak second languages like Mandarin, Farsi, etc... leads to a lack of understanding of settlement (learning new languages and cultural skills) and giving unwelcoming impression/reputation.
  - A lack of diversity in board & committee members may be another gap in having different perspectives and connections with newcomers in the community.
  - Not sure if our materials have been developed with a Clear Language lens.
  - Service gaps for newcomers who speak the languages, such as Spanish or Russian as their first language.
  - We serve people regardless of their immigrant status, but technically, we are only supposed to serve Canadian Citizens, PR, and refugees in most.

- o Funding requirements often exclude Work Permit, TFW, International Student, Refugee Claimant, Visitor clients.
- o Gap in funding for language training for temporary resident holders (refugee claimants, study and work permit holders).

- **Communication and signage**
  - o Multilingual signage and communication.
  - o When they are trying to learn about programs and services offered.
  - o Not all of our written materials have been translated. Our workshops are delivered mainly in English.
  - o Not all legal or official documents for participating in our agency programs are provided in clients' first languages.
  - o Yes, there is a gap for Chinese speaking seniors.

- **Program Planning**
  - o Programming for people who are true beginners in learning English.
  - o We'd like to develop/partner to offer more programming for English Language Learning for seniors, and for parents and their school aged children.
  - o We'd like to offer more seniors focused English language programming, and programming for ELL children and families.
  - o Senior-focused ESL (conversational, with socializing) at an intermediate level.
  - o There is a gap between the highest LINC level and the lowest English for Academic Purposes level at Cap U. There's also a gap for ELL with special needs (including mental health issues).

- **Community participation**
  - o The Persian community does not participate at the level of their involvement in the business community.

- **Other gaps & challenges**
  - o Not at this time. However, we anticipate this will change when we expand our programs and services in spring 2021 (when we move to the new Lions Gate Community Centre), and we will undertake further work in this area at that time.
  - o We do referrals as needed to other community partners.
  - o Likely so but don't have details without internal consultation.

19 responses total were collected for this statement - answers categorized into multiple themes.

20. Do you have any additional comments, questions, or concerns related to this survey?

- Our printed materials are translated into simplified and traditional Chinese and Korean. We have not been able to add this to our website as yet. We are planning a needs assessment next year to prepare for program expansion; we will approach this work with an increased EDI lens.
- I would really like to enhance food literacy on the NS.

21. Would you be interested in participating in a forum about language, literacy, and learning needs on the North Shore?

4.4%

21.7%

73.9%

- Yes
- No
- Maybe