



Canadian Council for Refugees Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés

Annual Report 2012-2013

Mission Statement

The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) is a non-profit umbrella organization committed to the rights and protection of refugees in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada. The membership is made up of organizations involved in the settlement, sponsorship and protection of refugees and immigrants. The Council serves the networking, information exchange and advocacy needs of its membership.

Executive Committee

President - Loly Rico, Toronto

Vice President - Rivka Auginfeld, Outremont

Treasurer - Jehad Aliweiwi, Toronto

Secretary - Rick Goldman, Montreal

Counsellors - Georges Bahaya, Edmonton; Lisa Bamford De Gante, Fredericton; Huda Bukhari, Toronto; Shauna Jimenez, Calgary; Jim Mair, Winnipeg; Jean McRae, Victoria; Heather Neufeld, Ottawa; Eunice Valenzuela, Kitchener.

Working Group Chairs

Immigration & Settlement - Sherman Chan, Vancouver & Yasmine Dossal, Toronto

Inland Protection - Chantal Tie, Ottawa & Francisco Rico-Martinez, Toronto

Overseas Protection & Sponsorship - Rose Dekker, Burlington & Elizabeth McWeeny, Thunder Bay

Staff

Executive Director - Janet Dench

Office Manager - Guadalupe Macias

Settlement Policy Director - Marisa Berry-Méndez

Communication and Networking

Coordinator - Colleen French

Trafficking Coordinator - Samanta Garcia Fialdini

Youth Coordinator - Chloé Raxlen

Office Assistant - Sonia Adjanohoun / Marie Jeanne Matsogwo

35 Years of Working for Refugees: Message from Loly Rico, President

35 years ago, a small group of organizations got together and started working for the rights of refugees and immigrants. Since that time, the Canadian Council for Refugees has become the voice of refugees – championing their rights in areas including resettlement, refugee protection, and settlement and integration to support refugees in becoming productive members of Canadian society.

In the last year, many policy changes have taken place that are not only less protective, but prevent the full and equitable integration of refugees and immigrants in Canada. Specifically, these include cuts to health coverage, changes in sponsorship rules for spouses, an increase in temporary foreign workers, and limited protection of trafficked persons.

It seems as though Canada is forgetting its humanitarian commitments, and looking at refugees and immigrants as economical investments or short-term commodities. The government is forgetting that to facilitate full integration of diverse newcomer populations, we need to be a welcoming country with the right elements in place, to at the very least meet their basic needs.

The CCR has become the voice of the voiceless. We are the only national voice to fight for the rights of refugees and vulnerable migrants.

35 years later, we are a national umbrella non-profit organization with a membership of 170 agencies. Collectively, we continue to motivate other organizations and agencies to fight for the rights of refugees and vulnerable migrants.

I invite you to join us in our campaign, Proud to Protect Refugees, and be one more voice to protect refugees and immigrants.



CCR members and allies show they are Proud to Protect Refugees at the CCR's Working Group meetings in Toronto in February 2013.

Highlights of Activities 2012 - 2013

For 35 years, the CCR has been working on behalf of refugees, analyzing policies and raising awareness. The past year was busier than ever. Here are some key areas where the CCR has made a difference:

Negotiating major changes to refugee policies

Over the past year, the CCR has played a key role in unpacking the changes to Canada's refugee determination and resettlement programs, helping people to understand the new realities and looking for ways to minimize the negative consequences for refugees. The CCR has consistently looked to safeguard the interests of the most vulnerable refugees.



Showing pride in protecting refugees

'Why are you Proud to Protect Refugees?' was the question that kicked off our long-term campaign to change the conversation about refugees in Canada. Under this banner, the CCR is promoting a positive vision of what we want for refugees and other vulnerable migrants, and of the important contributions they make to our communities.

Evaluating protections for migrant workers

Canada now brings in more temporary migrant workers than permanent residents. This shift towards temporary labour migration has serious human and social implications.

| Report Card Migrant workers and the Federal Government | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Elimination of TRAP cases and regulations | In April 2011 the federal government implemented changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) that led to greater migrant workers' choice and dependence on their employer. It also gave employers more power to discipline and penalize their workers. Changes to the program have been implemented in a way that has increased the risk of exploitation for workers. The federal government needs to eliminate all TRAP elements in a targeted and timely manner. |
| The wage and working conditions | Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) is responsible for assessing employer compliance with labour laws, while the governing provinces of their contract, have limited their own capacity. HRSDC does not follow up to ensure compliance with labour laws. |
| Protection from unemployment penalties | The CCR has been active in raising awareness to human trafficking and recruitment through the enforcement of WorkSafe's law against employer recruitment practices. The federal government should address these issues in cooperation with the provinces and states of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. |
| Ensuring decent housing | The federal government has not developed any strategy to address the problem related to housing for migrant workers, neither immigration accommodations and exclusive rent. |
| Access to permanent residence | The federal government offers a permanent residence (PR) within the high skilled streams of the TFWP with the exception of Care in Community. The federal government has also put into a new program: "open to all" who can be used to recruit immigrants and refugees. The program is being implemented in a way that is not in line with the program's objectives. |
| Access to benefits | Migrant workers pay into the same employment insurance and health (OHIP) in Canada, and are entitled to receive benefits under their respective province. However, they are not eligible to receive benefits in their home country. This is due to their temporary status. The federal government needs to ensure that migrant workers have access to the same benefits as Canadian citizens. |
| Access to education | Migrant workers generally have access to many of the same services as Canadian workers, but their access is often limited. The federal government needs to ensure that migrant workers have access to the same services as Canadian citizens. |
| Information sharing and transparency | The federal government does not systematically share information with provincial governments and other stakeholders. The federal government needs to ensure that migrant workers have access to the same information as Canadian citizens. |
| Access to settlement and support services | Law in migration is an area for further targeted settlement services, but other migrant workers are not receiving the same level of support. The federal government needs to ensure that migrant workers have access to the same services as Canadian citizens. |
| Family unity | Temporary foreign workers in the high skilled streams may bring their families with open work permits, but not those in the low skilled streams. |

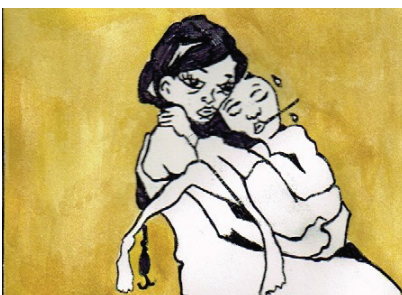
Our new series of report cards examines the approaches of the provincial and federal governments to protect the rights of migrant workers in the "low-skilled" streams of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. The report cards are designed to be used in discussions with decision-makers and in raising public awareness.

Working to put families first

In response to declining priority given to family reunification by the government, the CCR worked to highlight the importance of keeping families together and, where policies have changed, to provide accurate information to community workers. The CCR was also able to contribute to reuniting some separated children with their parents in Canada, through a special collaboration with CIC.

Turning to the courts

The CCR was very active in the courts in the past year. Of particular note was the Supreme Court decision in Ezokola, which corrects a trend in Canadian courts that led to refugees being excluded from protection, based on "guilt by association". The CCR was an intervener in this case.



Fighting for healthcare

A year has passed since cuts to refugee healthcare took effect. The CCR has joined other organizations in documenting the impacts of these cuts on refugees and their families. We are calling for adequate healthcare for all who reside in Canada.

Highlights of Activities 2012 - 2013

Leading discussions on trafficking

With support from the Canadian Women's Foundation, the CCR raised new questions and recommendations in a report on temporary resident permits for trafficked persons. We hosted discussions, updated resources and explored links between trafficking and labour exploitation.



Growing with the CCR Youth Network

It has been a success-packed year for the CCR Youth Network, which is increasingly making its mark within the CCR. We hosted a second annual Youth Action Gathering in Edmonton attended by some 70 participants. Thanks to our Youth Ambassadors, we have made our mark and our voices heard in more than communities across Canada.



Forging links internationally

Recognizing that policies implemented in Canada often have deep connections with what is happening in other countries, the CCR last year increased its international networking. We have been sharing ideas and exploring common strategies with NGO colleagues in other countries.

Acting as a communications hub

Getting involved in refugee rights in Canada is easier than ever through the CCR's webinars, online virtual meetings and a variety of online newsletters, alongside our biannual Consultations and the CCR's national listserve (CCRLIST).

The CCR plays a key role in the dialogue with government officials at Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Canada Border Services Agency and the Immigration and Refugee Board. CCR members are often asked to represent Canadian NGO views on the international stage.



Did you know... ?

CCR resources, commentaries and news are posted on:



Facebook
facebook.com/
ccrweb



Twitter
@ccrweb



YouTube
youtube.com/
ccrwebvideos

To participate in a CCR webinar:

Find out about upcoming sessions and register online at:
ccrweb.ca/en/webinars

To receive regular updates from the CCR:

Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter, the CCR Chronicle:
ccrweb.ca/en/chronicle

To become a CCR member:

For more information, visit Join the CCR at: ccrweb.ca/en/join

Canadian Council for Refugees
Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés

Temporary Resident Permits: Limits to protection for trafficked persons

In May 2008, the Canadian government issued guidelines for temporary resident permits (TRPs) for trafficked non-citizens. This represented an important step towards recognition of the protection needs of trafficked persons, and TRPs remain the main avenue to protection offered under Canada's immigration legislation. However, experience has shown that, even with the TRPs, there are continuing gaps in access to protection and rights for trafficked persons.

Granted by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), a TRP offers trafficked persons:

- A "reflection period" of 180 days, during which they may remain in Canada;
- Access to health care through the Interim Federal Health (IFHP) Program, including medical and social counselling during this time; and
- The right to apply for a work permit.

Following the 180-day period, an immigration officer may extend the permit depending on the circumstances of the individual case.

Despite the introduction of TRP guidelines, trafficked persons continue to fall through the cracks. This paper examines these shortcomings, which may be summarized as follows:

- Access to TRPs is limited in practice, and their rights are restricted;
- When trafficked persons do receive TRPs, their rights are restricted;
- Options for receiving permanent protection are limited;
- Trafficked persons continue to be detained and deported.

A further concern is that guidelines do not have the force of law and may be changed or dropped as easily as they are adopted. The lack of a clear and permanent policy on offering protection to trafficked persons has led to gaps in protection and is often interpreted quite narrowly.

Without an approach that is consistently sensitive to the unique realities of trafficked persons, it has been challenging to extend protection to people in the full range of trafficking situations.

The recent closing of many local CIC offices has also reduced the further resources and expertise available to us in recognizing, serving, trafficked persons and to survivors of trafficking themselves.

Barriers to Access to the TRP

Discretion and Inconsistency

In some cases, immigration officers have expressed reluctance to issue TRPs to trafficked persons.

The guidelines offered by the TRP Manual give discretion to individual officers, which appears to be used inconsistently across the country.

There is little consistency across regions concerning who should be granted an interview with CIC, or who should be identified as trafficked and issued a TRP.

• There have been significant delays in obtaining a TRP, sometimes taking several weeks. The nature of the trauma and abuse suffered by a survivor of trafficking, as well as the need to provide for themselves, makes this delay a hardship on trafficked persons.

• Trafficked persons may need to register their status through other means, including using their status for international and environmental protection and care services in their home country.

The guidelines are inconsistent into Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Operational Health of a Temporary Resident Permit, to go <http://cic.gc.ca/imm/immres/comman/operat/eng.asp>

From the CCR Treasurer: Jehad Aliweiwi

As the CCR turns 35 this year, it is a good time to reflect on the strides we have made and setbacks we have faced with refugees and refugee rights in Canada.

It is also an opportunity for the CCR's members, friends and wider community to think about sustaining the CCR financially, both now and in the years to come.

There are many ways to help the CCR to bring down walls of injustice and to build a more welcoming home for refugees and newcomers to Canada.

Here are some suggestions to prepare the ground for our future work:

- > Become a Friend of the CCR, a monthly sustaining donor
- > Include the CCR in your will, contribute to the CCR Endowment Fund
- > Invite a group or an organization you're involved with to make a special donation to the CCR to commemorate 35 years of working with refugees and immigrants

The Canadian Council for Refugees is a non-profit charitable organization. Business number: 11883 0470RR 0001. Donations are tax-deductible.

November 2013

HIGHLIGHTS OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Statement of operations for the year ending August 31, 2013

| REVENUE | 2013 (\$) | 2012 (\$) |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Grants | | |
| Government | 31,192 | 34,883 |
| Others grants | 25,000 | 15,001 |
| Donations | 251,360 | 214,537 |
| Endowment fund contribution | 10,000 | |
| Interest | 1,671 | 1,714 |
| Publications | 6,777 | 393 |
| Membership fees | 71,445 | 53,316 |
| Fundraising events | 6,644 | 2,989 |
| Conference registrations | 70,905 | 55,786 |
| Total | 474,994 | 378,619 |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Salaries | 251,523 | 220,278 |
| Conference expenses | 52,983 | 70,543 |
| Executive committee | 10,633 | 10,160 |
| Working groups expenses | 23,003 | 22,555 |
| Networking and public education | 26,754 | 25,395 |
| Administrative expenses | 59,903 | 52,535 |
| Fundraising | 21,452 | 19,838 |
| Total | 446,251 | 421,304 |

EXCESS (SHORTFALL) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES

| | |
|--------|---------|
| 28,743 | -42,685 |
|--------|---------|

Statement of changes in net assets

| 2013 | 2012 |
|------|------|
|------|------|

NET ASSETS UNRESTRICTED

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Balance at beginning of year | 66,104 | 108,789 |
| Excess (shortfall) of revenues over expenses | 28,743 | -42,685 |
| Balance at end of year | 94,847 | 66,104 |

NET ASSETS RESTRICTED EXTERNALLY (Endowment Fund)

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Balance at beginning of year | 999,580 | |
| Contribution received as an endowment | | 1,000,000 |
| Transfer to operations | -10,000 | |
| Gain/loss of investment | 65,853 | -420 |
| Balance at end of year | 1,055,433 | 999,580 |

Balance sheet August 31, 2013

| 2013 | 2012 |
|------|------|
|------|------|

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Assets | 1,303,016 | 1,202,377 |
| Liabilities | 132,736 | 116,693 |
| Net assets | | |
| Externally restricted (note 8) | 1,055,433 | 999,580 |
| Internally restricted (note 7) | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Unrestricted | 94,847 | 66,104 |
| Total net assets | 1,170,280 | 1,085,684 |

Copies of full audited statements including notes are available from the CCR office.



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