



**Canadian Council for Refugees Spring 2012 Consultation**  
**“Cents-ible Justice: Affordable solutions for refugees and immigrants”**  
**31 May – 2 June 2012, Fredericton**  
**Conference Report**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Canadian Council for Refugees’ 2012 Spring Consultation was held May 31 – June 2 at the Crowne Plaza Lord Beaverbrook hotel in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Over 250 participants from across Canada attended the Consultation. The staff and volunteers of the Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc. hosted the event wonderfully, ensuring substantial participation by local youth and refugees.

The 2012 Spring Consultation provided an opportunity for training, learning and experience-sharing among people involved in the immigrant and refugee serving sector, refugee protection, and refugee resettlement across Canada. The Consultation devoted a considerable amount of time for presentations, discussions and strategy sessions on Bill C-31, expected to come into force this summer. The passing of this bill will have an enormous effect on refugees and their advocates, as well as settlement workers and sponsors, so it was considered important to dedicate considerable time to this issue, among government and non-governmental representatives.

Thirty sessions were offered during the three days of the consultation, consisting of two plenary sessions, two orientations, three working group meetings, eighteen workshops and training sessions, three caucus sessions, two film screenings and a General Meeting of members. The program included three or four concurrent workshops in any given time period, apart from the times when participants met in plenary. Workshop streams focused on (a) immigrant and refugee settlement and integration, (b) refugee resettlement and overseas protection and (c) inland refugee protection.

The Working Group meetings held during the Consultation gave participants the opportunity to discuss emerging issues and share information, best practices and initiatives with others from across Canada. They also offered an opportunity to prepare resolutions to be presented at the General Meeting, and to develop strategies for action to address issues emerging from the discussion.

Participants’ oral and written evaluations were overall quite positive. Participants especially appreciated the learning opportunity provided by the workshop content, the quality of presentations, and the opportunity to discuss and debate, as well as the networking opportunities offered by the Consultation, which permitted attendees to connect with others doing similar work in other parts of the country.

The success of the Consultation was made possible thanks to the time, dedication, and very efficient work of the local organizing committee (LOC), made up of staff and volunteers from the Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc. The LOC coordinated a team of dynamic and helpful volunteers, who contributed to the very friendly atmosphere and the smooth running of the event. The social event organized the Friday night with music and dance performances by newcomer youth was enjoyed by all who attended.

At this Consultation, the CCR benefited from the in-kind contributions of the Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc., and from the financial support of the Population Division of the New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, as well as the City of Fredericton.

## **II. EMERGING NEEDS AND NEW DIRECTIONS**

Through workshops, caucus sessions, plenaries and the written feedback we received on the Consultation, a number of emerging needs and priorities in the newcomer settlement sector have been identified.

### Newcomer Mental Health

The three workshops on refugee and newcomer mental health were very well attended and received. Front-line service providers who participated in the training workshop found it very useful, and felt that more should be done to explore this important issue and to offer ongoing trainings and improve services. There is also a need for better networking and sharing of best practices from across the country.

### Refugee Health

In the wake of the April announcement of cuts to the Interim Federal Health Program, refugee health was a prominent topic of discussion at all three working group meetings. Resolutions were passed to oppose the cuts, and to work together with the provinces and those who work with affected communities in order to ensure that affected refugees and claimants would not go without important healthcare services.

### Communications and Public Awareness-Raising

There is a general feeling throughout CCR membership that in the face of negative portrayals of newcomers by media and government, the CCR and allies should be focusing on communications strategies, public awareness-raising and working with the media. The Refugee Stories for Change workshop equipped participants with some creative tools for effective communication of the realities of refugees and other newcomers, and many commented on the importance of telling the human stories, as a way of countering the negative messaging.

### Green Settlement Models

This was the first time that a CCR workshop examined ways in which integration programming can highlight ecological practices. While many newcomers may come with their own knowledge of sustainable practices, programs such as CultureLink's cycling program in Toronto and MOSAIC's community gardening initiative in Vancouver show people how they can use such practices in their new communities, while at the same time facilitating their integration. Many participants were very interested in this sort of program and requested that the CCR compile information about such initiatives.

### **III. SUMMARY OF THE PLENARIES**

#### **Opening plenary**

The opening plenary of the Fredericton consultation was shorter than usual in order to accommodate a two-hour plenary session focusing on Bill C-31, a critical issue at the time of the consultation (see below).

Participants received a warm welcome from Lisa Bamford of the Multicultural Association of Fredericton, the local host organization, and from Wanda Yamamoto, CCR president. Eric Megarity of the Fredericton City Council, chair of the Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Immigration and the City's representative on the Union of New Brunswick Municipalities Population Committee, welcomed us to the city. He spoke of how the cultural make up of Fredericton and of Canada has evolved in recent years, for the better, thanks to immigration from different parts of the world. Ron Tremblay of the Wolastoq First Nation welcomed the participants to their territory and performed a smudging ceremony.

#### Speakers:

Ron Tremblay, Wolastoq Nation  
Eric Megarity, Fredericton City Council  
Wanda Yamamoto, CCR President

Moderator: Lisa Bamford de Gante, Multicultural Association of Fredericton

#### **Bill C-31: Government Perspectives**

This was a two-part plenary session wherein representatives from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), followed by the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), presented their institution's perspectives and answered questions in regard to Bill C-31.

Despite the presentations, some questions were left unanswered. For example, how will the IRB ensure that vulnerable claimants are identified and benefit from appropriate measures given the very short timelines prescribed in the bill? Also, how will CIC ensure that humanitarian applications will be studied prior to removal given the short timelines?

#### Resource persons:

Peter Hill, Director General, Post-Border Programs, CBSA  
Caitlin Imrie, Director General, Refugee Affairs Branch, CIC

Simon Coakeley, Executive Director, IRB  
Ken Sandhu, Deputy Chairperson, Refugees Protection Division and Deputy Chairperson Designate, Refugee Appeal Division, IRB  
Ginette Grenier, Assistant Deputy Chairperson, Refugee Protection Division Eastern Region, IRB

Moderators: Wanda Yamamoto and Rick Goldman

## **General Meeting**

The Consultation concluded with the CCR General Meeting. Six resolutions were adopted. The resolutions can be found at [ccrweb.ca/en/resolutions-june-2012](http://ccrweb.ca/en/resolutions-june-2012). Action requests from Working Groups to members were also presented.

## **IV. SYNTHESIS OF WORKSHOPS**

Note: a number of presentations from the workshops are available to CCR members online at [ccrweb.ca/en/consultspring2012-presentations](http://ccrweb.ca/en/consultspring2012-presentations).

### **UN Review on the Rights of the Child**

In September the UN will examine Canada's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Workshop participants were able to learn about the role of the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth in advancing the rights of children, including refugee, immigrant and first nations youth. The workshop offered an opportunity to become familiar with the UN examination process, to discuss strategies for involving youth, and to share experiences to ensure that newcomer youth enjoy their rights. Speakers referred to specific issues identified by the UN Committee, gaining from the perspectives of the resource persons.

The question was posed of how youth can promote and mobilize a campaign in the context of the UN examination. A CCR Youth Ambassador spoke about the CCR youth campaign – its demands, actions and activities, as well as resources. The advocates from Ontario and New Brunswick discussed the role of the provincial advocates' offices to nurture and support young advocates in their formative years, as well as the need to include the voices of children in their own advocacy. The UNHCR representative gave an overview of the agency's role with regards to children. Some gaps identified included statelessness, detention and unaccompanied children.

#### **Resource Persons:**

Juliana Andrea Cortes, CCR Youth Ambassador, Edmonton  
Christian Whalen, Child and Youth Advocate for New Brunswick, Fredericton  
Laura Arndt, Ontario Youth Advocate, Toronto  
Denise Otis, UNHCR, Montreal

Moderators: Heather Neufeld and Gloria Nafziger

### **Green Settlement Stories**

This was a creative and interactive workshop that looked at how newcomer settlement programming can advance environmental sustainability and help meet the integration needs of newcomers all at once, as well as strengthening service-providing organizations in the process. The resource persons spoke of the initiatives they work on, namely MOSAIC's partnership with the community gardening group Can You Dig It in Vancouver, and CultureLink's Cycling Outreach Program in Toronto.

Participants discussed their thoughts on environmental issues, and how engaging in environmental initiatives also permits newcomers to also be doing physical activities and getting

involved in their community, which can be a source of empowerment. The point was raised that many newcomers bring their own sustainable practices to Canada, and it is important to build on these within green integration programs.

Resource persons:

Cinthia Pagé, Can You Dig It, Vancouver

Kristin Schwartz, CultureLink Cycling Outreach Program, Toronto

Moderator: Sherman Chan

### **Bill C-31: What Now?**

The government identified June 29<sup>th</sup> as the deadline for the adoption of Bill C-31. Following on the morning plenary session on the bill, this workshop provided an opportunity to take stock of its principal elements, where things stand, what happens next, and the implications for refugees and for the CCR.

Several ideas came out of the workshop, including:

- Developing education programs and information sheets that set out the consequences of certain actions to include when filing inland applications, including the withdrawal of claims (no voluntary departure eligibility)
- Developing a strategy to face the increase in non-status people and people seeking sanctuary as they wait out the one-year Pre-removal Risk Assessment period and the Humanitarian & Compassionate grounds ban
- Document multiple impacts on clients by keeping in touch with old clients and collecting their stories, to use their stories to show the inequities
- Push the IRB for increased flexibility and understanding wherever they have discretion
- Push the IRB for clear guidelines on the impact of timelines on vulnerable claimants
- Work with legal aid to ensure fastest possible timelines and to help applicants prepare Basis of Claim documents

Resource person:

Francisco Rico-Martinez, FCJ Refugee Centre, Toronto

Moderators: Chantal Tie and Rivka Augenfeld

### **Bridging the Gap: Addressing intergenerational challenges in newcomer families**

The processes of migration, settlement and resettlement introduce stressors that can have huge impacts on the family unit. Participants at this workshop heard from service providers from different regions of Canada who offer programs for youth, parents and families with the objective of mitigating some of these stresses. Presenters in this workshop discussed the family-oriented service models their organizations provide, as well as the challenges they face.

The OCASI presenter, a youth himself, discussed the dilemmas that many newcomer youth face during their settlement process – namely the split or double identities they develop which split them between their home life and their outside life, with peers at school and elsewhere. The

presenter from Fredericton discussed the difficulties that newcomer parents can face as a result of inter-generational and inter-cultural misunderstandings and clashes. The effects of Bill C-31 were flagged for future attention, as more parents with children may be pushed into living without status underground.

Resource persons:

Athanase Mutana, Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council, Winnipeg  
Jai Sahak, Ontario Council for Agencies Serving Immigrants, Toronto  
Odette Dusabemaria, Multicultural Association of Fredericton

Moderators: Louise Dionne and Joanne Owuor Larocque

### **Privacy Issues and Refugees**

This workshop addressed privacy concerns of refugees as they access the refugee determination process in Canada and interact with different agencies including: CIC, CBSA, the IRB, provincial authorities (including health and welfare) and local services (including banking).

Some of the concerns raised in this workshop included:

- Problems with refugee claims documents being copied by other agents
- Online files vulnerable to exploitation – need for additional security – username and password
- Breach of privacy concerns: review of law and cases, e.g. the “most wanted” list, discussion of Ocean Lady passengers in the media, and availability of information from Federal Court decisions
- Remedies: confidentiality motions to federal court

It was suggested that the CCR Legal Affairs Committee consider tips for lawyers regarding requests in motions for privacy, and that support from CARL be sought.

Resource persons:

Andrew Brouwer, lawyer, Toronto  
Jennifer Harnum, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa  
Najib Raie, MOSAIC, Vancouver

Moderator: Gloria Nafziger and Carlos Idibouo

### **Overcoming Systemic Discrimination in Overseas Practices**

This workshop explored how “neutral” policies in overseas processing can have discriminatory impacts, how lack of transparency and accountability impacts particularly vulnerable populations, and the role that Canadian and overseas advocates can play in bringing accountability to the overseas protection system.

The resource person discussed how cases for resettlement are identified overseas and looked in particular at some of the problem areas:

- multiple decision-makers, some of whom are not subject to Canadian law

- limited appeal
- lack of transparency and accountability
- inadequate training
- prejudice
- corruption
- lack of communication between policy-makers and frontline staff
- lack of representation and
- “cherry-picking” by countries

Participants broke into three groups to discuss problems and solutions, then came back together and listed additional problem areas and suggestions for dealing with them. The recommended action items were taken to the OPS working group.

Resource person:  
Paulina Wyrzykowski, St. Christopher House, Toronto

Moderators: Jennifer Mpungu and Ellen Woolaver

### **Syria: Impacts of the conflict on refugee protection**

The current crisis in Syria has sent thousands seeking refuge while also affecting refugees inside of Syria. This workshop explored the Syrian conflict and its impact on international protection of refugees. Resource persons gave an overview of the situation in Syria since March 2011, which has been characterized by violence, repression and torture. This was followed by discussion on the plight of refugees in Syria and the challenges in providing protection to these refugees. It was hoped that the Arms Trade Treaty to be negotiated in July 2012 will curb the flow of arms to the Assad military and security apparatus.

Resource persons:  
Michael Casasola, UNHCR  
Gloria Nafziger, Amnesty International

Moderator: Fikre Tsehai

### **Rocking the Boat and Creating Change: An Advocacy Training Workshop**

This was a training workshop that provided participants with information, ideas and strategies for advocating and influencing change. Presenters shared their knowledge about different advocacy tools and strategies that can be used to better organize for change. Some of the “basics” of advocacy campaigns they shared were:

- Identifying and analyzing: research (including tools like access-to-information requests)
- Choosing one or two specific objectives
- Considering primary and secondary audiences and the different roles that they play
- Messaging for each specific audience: vocabulary, timing and the type of media used
- Questions to consider when choosing a spokesperson or spokespeople



- Using a variety of campaign tools, but making sure that they all fit into an overall campaign plan
- The importance of working with partners and allies
- Campaigning for one: how to be a refugee ambassador

With each point, the presenters offered examples of past and current campaigns in the content of refugee and newcomer rights in Canada.

Some participants raised concerns over government rules that seem to restrict the advocacy activities of charitable organizations. The suggestion was put forward that the CCR should consider offering a workshop at the next CCR Consultation in Toronto that focuses on Revenue Canada regulations regarding advocacy activities, and other similar questions.

Resource persons:

Andrew Brouwer, Refugee Law Office, Toronto

Colleen French, CCR Communication and Networking Coordinator, Montreal

Moderator: Heather Neufeld

### **Settlement in Small Francophone Centres: Major Issues on Arrival**

This interactive workshop looked at the common challenges faced by small francophone centres outside Quebec in offering settlement services to newcomers, and presented affordable solutions. Issues especially present in rural areas such as employability, transportation and education were discussed.

The presenter from Alberta made a comparison of the challenges faced in three small cities: Fort McMurray, Brooks and Grande Prairie, looking at the barriers to housing, employment, transport, education and health, and highlighting some solutions being used there. The presenter from Fredericton described the approach of her organization with respect to clients, and the speaker from P.E.I addressed the situation in her province, addressing additional challenges faced in rural areas where there are few people and it is thus difficult to form groups to collaborate on solutions. The specific issue of integrating Acadian culture and identity into settlement initiatives is also important in the Maritimes. Some of the emerging issues that were raised during the workshop include:

- How to collaborate with other francophone agencies to face common challenges
  - Certain provinces now have a francophone network with an immigration working group to facilitate this
  - Others have begun to make links with francophone centres and schools
- Intercultural training helps the whole community to become aware of challenges and advantage and brings newcomers and non-newcomers closer in understanding
- Difficulties for youth arriving in secondary school to complete their diplomas

Some positive strategies for facing challenges included settlement workers in schools and “career agents” (pedagogical counsellors for recently arrived newcomers). Also, an example given of a best practice to confront the challenge of youth settling into high school was that in Edmundston,

youth who arrive during the school year don't receive a report card for the first year (which could be discouraging given adaptation difficulties) – they simply get an evaluation to identify which grade they should be in the following year.

Resource persons:

Ida Kamariza, Association canadienne française de l'Alberta, Edmonton

Madeleine Whalen, MCAF, Fredericton

Nancy Clement, Association pour nouveaux arrivants au Canada de l'Î.-P.-É., Charlottetown

Moderators: Rivka Augenfeld and Louise St-Laurent

### **Detention and Removal of People with Mental Health Issues**

This workshop considered the intersections between detention and deportations from Canada, and mental health issues. Resource persons looked at three main issues: Convention Refugees and the opinion process required to carry out removals to countries of persecution, including risk assessment and Humanitarian and Compassionate applications; the treatment of removals on the basis of criminality, when there are underlying mental health issues; and the practical barriers present in representing incarcerated people with mental health issues.

A central point discussed by presenters and participants was criminality stemming from mental health problems and its associated problems and solutions, namely:

- Detention and/or loss of status for different categories of migrants as a result of criminality
- Strategies that can be used to prevent this criminality leading to a detention or deportation situation
- What recourse is available to contest detention or deportation orders

A three part resolution on mental health and detention was carried forth from this workshop and adopted at the General Meeting. It can be viewed [here](#).

Resource persons:

Chantal Tie, South Ottawa Community Legal Services, Ottawa

Jordan Pachciarz-Cohen, Refugee Law Office, Toronto

Moderators: Debbie Hill-Corrigan and Rick Goldman

### **Re-empowering Strategies: A community mental health development model**

This session provided participants with an opportunity to learn about the community service model at the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture. Participants were able to gain an understanding of the special mental health needs of refugees fleeing violence in their home countries. The workshop also addressed the role of social and cultural identity and the importance of social networks in the therapy of refugees who are survivors of torture and war.

The first presenter gave a personal account of his own migration experience, as a refugee who faced torture and persecution in Rwanda. He talked about settling in Canada and realizing that

the trauma he had lived through had created mental health issues for him, as well as the difficulties he faced in accessing mental health support.

The presenter from the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture discussed her organization's model of service delivery to assist survivors of torture. She looked at strategies that had been tried unsuccessfully as well as the best practices that have been carried over to their current model. This model focuses on individual, family and social support. They try to create a safe space with a feeling of a village. Doors are kept locked to reinforce the sense of security, and there is no sign on the door. The Centre involves various specialists including doctors, counsellors and psychiatrists, and different types of activities such as support groups, recreation, language instruction, a bridging program, employment support, snacks, breakfast, music lessons, transportation and life skills programs. They count on a large team of volunteers.

Some of the key points of CCVT's approach include:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Trust building
- Listening, not hearing
- Holistic approach
- Don't confront, but probe
- Focus on symptoms and here and now until the client is stronger and healthier
- Talk to the client, not the translator
- Mental health work needs to be guided by the client
- Allow client to express what they want and leave out the rest
- Avoid assumptions
- Be aware of own prejudices
- Recognize limitations of one's ability to help
- Combine sensitivity with knowledge and skills

Other topics addressed included managing burnout, helping clients to understand/relate to mental health, fundraising, the importance of having translators who understand mental health and cultural differences. It was suggested that at the next Consultation there should be a workshop to share best practices of various models, as well as a caucus session to understand issue of mental health and wellness. Another idea coming out of the workshop was to develop an inventory of resources on mental health.

Resource persons:

Huda Bukhari, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Toronto  
Boniface Dukuzemungu, Fredericton

Moderators: Yasmine Dossal and Nancy French

### **Access to Services and Benefits: Challenges faced by refugee claimants**

This workshop looked at the challenges faced by refugee claimants trying to access post-secondary education and the Interim Federal Health Program, among others, and issues related to the funding cuts to settlement agencies.

These challenges were looked at through regional lenses: access to educational institutions and post-secondary school in Ontario; the implications for settlement funding cuts on service provision and access for BC; and access to legal and settlement services in Halifax.

Resource persons:

Loly Rico, FCJ Refugee Centre, Toronto

Jean McRae, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

Julie Chamagne, Halifax Refugee Clinic

Gillian Zubizarreta, Halifax Refugee Clinic

Moderators: Heberto Reyes and Rita Acosta

### **Refugee Stories for Change**

What makes an effective story for change when it comes to refugee issues in Canada? What makes the difference between a basic story and a story that will create change? This interactive workshop looked at how to effectively engage refugee voices to influence public opinion.

First, the presenters looked at some basic principles about storytelling for advocacy purposes, including challenges like consent and anonymity. They then examined some examples of advocacy videos featuring the stories of refugees and immigrants. These included *The Cost of Separation* and the CCR campaign for speedy family reunification, as well as *WelcoMe* and the MCAF campaign to debunk myths about newcomer youth. After watching the two film clips, workshop participants were given worksheets and asked to evaluate the two films based on the principles the participants had just heard about. Participants felt that both films were too long for video advocacy purposes, making it difficult to understand the full scope of the stories from the clips alone. However they felt that the films were effective in showcasing the stories for the audiences that they were hoping to reach.

Finally, workshop participants in small groups were asked to think about a current issue of their choosing affecting refugees. They were asked to break the issue down for advocacy purposes and to come up with ideas to ensure that refugee and immigrant voices are used to move forward key messages in their advocacy/storytelling plan. Many of the participants were eager to learn about refugee storytelling projects happening in different communities across Canada. The CCR is embarking on a project to create a web-based space to share both refugee and newcomers stories, as well as strategies and projects that other groups across Canada have found to be successful.

Resource persons:

Colleen French, Canadian Council for Refugees, Montreal

Madeleine Whalen, Multicultural Association of Fredericton

Moderator: Eunice Valenzuela

### **Today's Challenges for Sponsors and Resettled Refugees**

This workshop explored the principal challenges facing sponsors and resettled refugees today, considering recent announcements and changes in sponsorship and refugee policy, as well as

strategies toward solutions. The presenters looked at the challenges and impacts that recently announced caps will create, as well as the challenges of keeping sponsorship groups engaged despite recent cutbacks in numbers. The anticipated difficulties of the increased financial burden for sponsors as a result of the federal government's cuts to the Interim Federal Health Program were also discussed.

There was a good level of participation, with representatives of government, the settlement sector and sponsorship agreement holders present, and the discussion was productive, with a strong sense of solidarity among sponsors.

Resource persons:

Fikre Tsehai, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Vancouver

Paulette Johnson, Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton

Moderator: Yvette Bourque and Rivka Augenfeld

### **Root Causes of Forced Displacement: CCR strategies for advocacy**

Democracy movements in the Middle East have resulted in large-scale displacements of civilians, resource development and agricultural projects supported by western interests have displaced many people from their land and ethnic conflicts have created winners and losers, and with them refugee flows, on every continent. How can CCR's advocacy for the displaced address the causal factors and demand accountability from those responsible? This workshop explored the CCR's role in addressing root causes in our international advocacy.

The Moderator set the context by summarizing a previous workshop on displacement from mining development at the 2011 Fall Consultation. There was a short presentation on root cause analysis. The UNHCR's Representative in Canada, Furio De Angelis, spoke to the nature of displacement and the various levels of complexity that provide impetus to massive forced displacement. He also presented perspectives on five issues that will need to be addressed in the future in order to avoid massive forced displacement. Gloria Nafziger, of Amnesty International, presented on the causes of forced displacement relating to various international conventions and agreements. She also provided analysis on the situations in Colombia, Mexico, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, North Africa and the Niger delta. Finally, a video from Amnesty International was viewed, promoting the need for the international Arms Trade Treaty. After the presentations, small groups formed to look at two case studies with a view to developing an advocacy strategy for the CCR. The case studies were on Syria and on Mining and Resource Development.

There was considerable interest in having a further workshop on resource development but with a view to developing partnerships with NGOs who work on this as their priority. The exchange could be two-way, with the NGO partners also becoming sensitized to refugee issues. There was also interest in doing far more joint workshops between the Inland Protection and Overseas Protection and Sponsorship working groups because there are elements that are common to both sectors that we need to become informed about.

Resource persons:

Furio De Angelis, UNHCR, Ottawa

Gloria Nafziger, Amnesty International, Toronto

Moderators: Rose Dekker and Liz McWeeny

## **Mental Health Challenges across Sectors: Refugees, Refugee Claimants and Immigrants**

This workshop examined different mental health-related issues faced by refugees, refugee claimants and immigrants, looking at commonalities and differences across the groups. Innovative approaches and best practices across the different provinces were identified and shared.

Ljiljana Kalaba discussed a Fredericton project that was funded by Canada Post to enhance access to and delivery of culturally-sensitive mental health and addiction services to immigrants and refugees. The program provided mental health therapists and cultural and linguistic interpreters with training in order to support the delivery of services for newcomers affected by depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress. David Woodbury gave his own perspective, as a practitioner on best practices with victims of trauma and violence. He emphasized respect and the importance of creating a safe therapeutic space. Ezat Mossallanejad described his organization's approach. Wendy Carty led an interactive exercise with workshop participants that was a great success, and then gave a short version of her organization's approach. The workshop concluded with discussion and examples of innovative projects and approaches to mental health across the country that were shared by the session participants.

Resource persons:

David Woodbury, RIVO, Montreal

Ljiljana Kalaba, Multicultural Association of Fredericton

Ezat Mossallanejad, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Toronto

Wendy Carty, The Iris Center for Mindfulness, Peace And Healing, Fredericton

Moderators: Huda Bukhari and Rivka Augenfeld

## **CCR Youth Network Video Shoot**

CCR Youth Network participants at the Consultation from across Canada created a music video to encourage youth to get involved in their communities and in the network and to speak up for refugee and (im)migrant rights in Canada. They met in the hotel for presentations by Battle of the Arts and then travelled to the Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc. for the music video shoot.

The workshop started with Battle of the Arts presentation on how to use arts to get youth involved and steer change in our communities. The youth were then split into groups to prepare skits about using the arts as a medium to pass information to an audience, using examples from Battle of the Arts. The video was shot in various locations in Fredericton, ending up in the parking lot at the Multicultural Cultural Association of Fredericton.

The youth were encouraged to create their own steps to fit the theme of the Youth Network song. All the youth participants that attended the Consultation in Fredericton were involved in making the video.

Resource persons:

Karen Casey, Battle of the Arts, Saint-John

Madeleine Whalen and Katee Mitchell, Battle of the Arts, Fredericton

Facilitator: Saa Andrew Gbongbor

## V. PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS

Participant evaluations of the Consultation were overall very positive, although there were a few constructive suggestions on how to make future Consultations better. Most often cited as the most outstanding aspects of the Consultation were the workshop content and presentations, the networking opportunity offered by the social event and the camaraderie of the atmosphere. Several people mentioned feeling motivated by connecting with their colleagues from across the country, and being inspired by the feeling of being surrounded by others with shared values of refugee and newcomer rights. Several respondents mentioned how smoothly run and well-organized the event was, as well as the excellent facilities, and the efforts to ensure bilingualism. The diversity of participation, including significant youth presence, was also cited as a positive. Several people said they felt that attending the Consultation would be helpful for them in their work.

While most of the feedback was good, there were also some useful suggestions for improvement. Several people would have liked to have more break-out groups for discussion during the sessions. One respondent flagged the importance of having an anti-oppression workshop and suggested there be one at the next Consultation. There was also a request for stronger moderating skills, as in certain sessions speakers went over their allotted time, and there was no time left at the end for discussion. As usual, several respondents mentioned they would like meals and snacks to be included in the conference registration fee: unfortunately this is impossible due to lack of funds.