



Fall 2023 Consultation overview

List of workshops

- June 16, 2023
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A. Overseas Protection and Resettlement

- **Equity in responses to emergencies: How do we turn public attention into broader support for refugees?**

There has been an increased awareness of forced displacement in the general population which has inspired more people to respond and for the Canadian government to dedicate significant resources to resettlement and other responses. While this is good, it can seem like resources are diverted from supporting other, often protracted situations of forced displaced. What does it mean to take these dire situations that command public attention seriously, while at the same time making sure that other situations that do not garner broad attention and resources have a significant response? How can we effectively advocate for equity in access to durable solutions in a world where forced displacement is on the rise?

- **Resettlement 101: Fundamentals of refugee resettlement in Canada**

Canada is a global leader in resettlement and the public has more access to direct engagement in providing settlement and selection than any other country. However, it can be an extremely complicated and constantly changing place to get involved and remain active. This workshop will provide some of the basic information about resettlement in Canada and touch on some of the current issues and advocacy questions.

- **Decade of People African Descent: Colonialism and Forced Displacement**

The UN has declared 2015-2024 the [Decade of People of African Descent](#). To mark this, the African Refugee Network (ARN) along with the OPR WG are partnering to look at colonialism. This is part of the OPRs ongoing commitment to looking at the root causes of forced migration. Colonialism has deep roots in many places around the world and certainly in Africa. While colonialism has many negative impacts over the centuries it has certainly contributed to forced migration both internally and outside of the continent of Africa. We want to look at the impact colonialism has had on forced migration of Africans, how colonialism continues today, and explore how we can address the impacts of colonialism.

B. Inland Protection

- **More than a Roof over Their head: The vital need for wrap around supports for newly arrived refugee claimants**

Many newly arrived refugee claimants experience inadequate shelter and support upon arrival in Canada. Consequently there is a risk of them failing their refugee hearing and or failing to thrive in Canada if they do not receive the settlement supports they need from organizations that have expertise in navigating the refugee claim process (e.g. legal aid, finding a lawyer, submitting a claim, preparing for their IRB hearing, applying for social assistance, securing a work permit, finding a job, finding longer term housing, etc...). This session will highlight effective models and best practices for organizations providing shelter and wrap around supports for newly arrived refugee claimants across the country, as well discuss how these can be scaled up across the country.

- **Unsettling our borders: the expansion of the STCA and Canada's colonial project**

Implications of the March 2023 expansion of the STCA for refugee claimants, how we see it playing out in practice and how this recent policy is a continuation of a concerning history of colonialism that is built upon racist and exclusionary practices.

(may include whatever is relevant following decision of the Supreme Court).

- **The impact of technological advances in government systems on access to protection**

Over the past few years, technology has played an increasing role in refugee determination in Canada, in particular online portals for front-end processing of refugee claims. This workshop will address the consequences of this increased reliance on technology and will explore best practices to overcome barriers and strategies to address other challenges. The goal is to reflect on the implications of the extended use of technology and its impact.

(Includes portal issues, digital everything, virtual hearings at IRB)

C. Immigration and Settlement

- **Solidarity Across Communities: Coming Together to Build Advocacy**

Reasons for migration are complex and often result from imperial and colonial forces creating forced displacement and habitat destruction. Many Indigenous people are migrants to Canada and share similar experiences with Indigenous communities on Turtle Island. While recognizing

the specific needs of those communities, this workshop aims to explore common issues and systemic advocacy strategies built on solidarity and mutual respect.

- **How to navigate the world of Registered Immigrant Consultants (RIC) and Registered International Student Consultants**

The challenging landscape of representation for Canadian immigration is continually changing. In 2019, The College Act was passed which formalized the regulatory body for Immigration Consultants. This workshop is also an opportunity to explore how to collect input on abuses (especially in light of the case of international students being defrauded by licenced consultants), how we can protect and regularise the settlement sector, and what complaint mechanisms are available to safeguard from abuses.

- **Migrant workers in rural and remote areas, access to basic services and working with the community**

The purpose of this workshop is to discuss how northern and remote communities can support migrant workers. Northern and remote communities are attracting migrants in greater numbers through programs like the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, agricultural programs, the international student stream, and traditional LMIA-based programs.

Migrant workers have distinct legal needs that service providers in northern and remote communities may not have local resources to respond to. This gap in access to legal advice and representation can make already vulnerable workers more vulnerable. It can also mean that the communities lose members they have worked hard to attract.

Through the workshop, we hope to build a network of Northern and rural service providers and begin a conversation about serving migrants' needs in smaller, less resourced locations.

D. Youth Network

- **Turning our differences into strengths: the future of young newcomers and refugees**

Youth are often underrepresented in decision-making, government relations, and development of policies that impact young newcomers and refugees. This workshop will focus on the intersection between the need for youth representation in accessible services, decision-making processes, and advocacy with how the barriers of current immigration policies will affect the future of youth newcomers and the coming generations.

E. Workshops organized by the Executive Committee

- **Tools for collective advocacy for grassroots organizations and frontline workers (Training workshop)**

Collective advocacy is a powerful tool for effecting change; however, it can be challenging to know what strategies to use to achieve the desired impact. The workshop will explore how grassroots organisations and frontline workers can better collaborate on both regional and national issues, as well as share experiences and strategies. It will also focus on exploring the role of CCR consultations and membership in advocacy, in particular given the profusion of academic conferences focused on migration and refugees.

- **Gender-based violence (Government representative workshop)**

The federal government has introduced in the past years a strategy to address Gender-based violence (GBV) which includes specific initiatives for several federal departments and agencies, including IRCC. In this workshop, representatives from IRCC, CBSA and the IRB will talk about GBV as an umbrella term that is both guiding and permeating the way that concepts are applied in the refugee claim process.

- **The refugee process (Public education workshop)**

In recent years the refugee claim process has undergone significant changes. This educational workshop will explore the most recent developments and offer a space to share resources and information between participants.

- **Anti-racism, Intersectionality and coloniality (Anti-oppression workshop)**

In keeping with the theme of the consultation, this workshop will explore themes of the power of the collective and advocating for systemic change through the lens of anti-racism, intersectionality and coloniality. Through these critical frameworks the workshop will consider the ways in which systemic discrimination in refugees and migration policies manifests as a result of Canada's history of racism and settler colonialism.

- **Trauma-Informed approaches to work**

This workshop will focus on approaches and practical tools for those working with different groups of refugees or vulnerable migrants. There will be a particular focus on mental health.

F. Joint workshop (all Working Groups)

- **OPR:** Broadening the definition of family (LGBTQI + Specific cultural context).

- **I&S:** : Unsettling the definition of family – implications for family definitions for different migration.
- **IP:** mentioned a review of the definition of family