

CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES



INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE RIGHTS CONFERENCE 17-19 June 2006, Toronto, Canada Report of the Conference Sessions

September 2006

The Canadian Council for Refugees 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 over 180 organizations involved in refugee sponsorship and protection and in newcomer settlement. The CCR serves the networking, information-exchange and advocacy needs of its membership.

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INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Council for Refugees' International Refugee Rights Conference took place at York University, in Toronto, 17 - 19 June 2006. The Conference gathered 470 participants from all over Canada and from over 30 countries in all five continents, who came with a shared commitment to advocating for refugees and immigrants' human rights.

The goal of the conference was bring together representatives of NGOs committed to refugee protection from around the world, including the Global South, to examine the state of refugee protection and the role being played by NGOs, and to enhance the effectiveness of NGOs in promoting the human rights of refugees.

The conference opened with a plenary to welcome participants and introduced the theme of NGO networking on refugee rights. These sessions closed with a plenary reviewing and making decisions on the deliberations of the conference. Workshop sessions, further plenary sessions, strategizing sessions, meetings of the CCR working groups, and a number of informal caucus sessions completed the schedule. The main themes discussed during the conference included:

- * Detention of asylum seekers
- * Durable solutions (local integration, voluntary repatriation, resettlement)
- * Economic and social rights of refugees
- * Effective protection
- * Gender violence and refugees
- * Interdiction and access to protection
- * Internally displaced persons
- * Refugee determination
- * Settlement and integration of refugees
- * Trafficking in persons

The event emphasized the development of plans for ongoing networking beyond the end of the conference itself, and a large number of specific areas for cross-border sharing to protect the rights of refugees were identified, in addition to an overall plan to facilitate networking between NGOs in different countries.

Comments on the Concluding Plenary session and Action Plans from the International Conference are available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm

OPENING PLENARY SESSION

Speakers: Elizabeth McWeeny, CCR President, Thunder Bay ON
Jahanshah Assadi, UNHCR representative in Canada, Ottawa ON
Judy Wakahiu, Refugee Consortium of Kenya, Kenya (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Abeda Bhamjee, Amnesty International South Africa, South Africa

Moderators: Amy Casipullai, CCR Vice-President, Toronto ON

REPORTS FROM WORKSHOP SESSIONS

1. Welcoming Communities

The Canadian content of this workshop covered research done in Vancouver, Victoria, Kamloops and Prince George regarding welcoming communities. It introduced the Canadian Small Centre strategies. The international speakers included settlement workers from Israel and Ecuador who both presented challenges to settling and integrating refugees and immigrants and responses given by sector in both countries. It was recommended that the CCR and other NGOs continue to engage in dialogue with governments, UNHCR and NGOs on plans to integrate refugees into mainstream society.

Speakers: Mambo Masinda, MOSAIC, Vancouver BC
Jean McRae, Working Group on Small City Centres Strategies, Victoria BC
Leah Biteolin, Jewish Agency for Israel, Israel
Guillermo Rovayo Cueva, Jesuit Refugee Service, Ecuador

Moderators: Sherman Chan, MOSAIC, Vancouver BC and Mila Voihanski, JIAS Canada, Toronto ON

2. Family Reunification Across Borders

The speakers addressed the situation of family separation/reunification in Spain, Iran and Canada. CCR's campaign on Family Reunification was also highlighted. Workshop participants insisted on the need to widen the definition of family for policy purposes and reaffirmed the key role of advocacy in ending family separation.

Speakers: Martha Arroyo, CEAR, Spain
Fatemeh Ashraf, Association for the Protection of Refugee Women and Children, Iran
Sara Austin, World Vision, Canada (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)

Moderators: Sylvain Thibault, Montreal City Mission, Montreal QC and Rob Bray, CCIS, Calgary AB

3. Palestinian Refugees

Workshop participants discussed the the right of return for Palestinians and international law, United Nations resolutions, programmes, and services for Palestine and Palestinian refugees, durable solutions for Palestinian refugees and the mental health impacts in resisting the conflict and living in unresolved refugee situations for Palestinians. By the end of the session, participants developed plans to support the implementation of UN resolutions and international law that are related to Palestine and refugee issues, and that are in place. Participants also agreed to support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction Campaign. A support and coordination network among international non-governmental organizations interested in the Palestinian refugee question was also created.

Speakers: Terry Rempel, BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, West Bank
Muhammad Jaradat, BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, West Bank
James Kafieh, Lawyer, Ottawa ON
Abdel Hamid Afana, Director of Training and Research, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme and President, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), Gaza (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Hanadi Lubani, Palestinian activist and refugee, Toronto ON

Moderator: Jehad Aliweiwi, CCR Executive Member and Thorncliffe Neighbourhood House, Toronto ON

4. Best Interest of the Child Determination

This workshop focused on the new UNHCR guidelines for the best interest of the child, and on how refugee children (separated or unaccompanied) are handled in the United States and in Egypt. The speakers reviewed whether their best interest is taken into account or not.

It was agreed to develop a contact list from participants in this workshop and others around the world who may want to join. Deborah Isaacs, co-chair of the CCR Working Group on Inland Protection, will coordinate this.

It was also agreed that evaluations should be sent to UNHCR after use of the guidelines in the field.

Speakers: Susan Krehbiel, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, USA
Natalie Lummert, Conference of Catholic Bishops, USA (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Heba Kasseem, Refugee Center for Human Rights, Egypt

Moderator: Carole Dahan, Refugee Law Office, Toronto ON

5. Undocumented Workers

This workshop started with the screening of *Borderless*, a documentary on non-status immigrants in Canada (educational tool). The workshop looked at the Canadian context, including the history of racism in immigration policies, current barriers to status, especially for women and policy proposals. It then looked at the Asian context, including statistics, exploitation by recruitment agencies; violent crackdowns (Malaysia), and trafficking in women.

Workshop participants decided to ask CCR to take action on a policy framework document and issue of municipal franchise. The speaker from Hong Kong discussed efforts to build an international network of undocumented migrants and advocates. Participants interested in this were invited to get in touch and join.

Speakers: Avvy Go, STATUS Campaign, Toronto ON
Ramon Bultron, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, Hong Kong

Moderator: Tanya Chute, KAIROS, Toronto ON

6. Ending Refugee Warehousing

This workshop looked at lessons learned in the international civil society campaign to end refugee warehousing and how these lessons are applied. After introducing the concept of refugee warehousing and its deprivation of refugee rights, panelists from the US, Malaysia and Kenya examined progress in the anti-warehousing campaign. Outcomes of this workshop included action plans to : build the local capacity of indigenous NGOs and civil society to fight for refugee rights; create regional or local coalitions that support refugee rights; raise awareness and educate the public about refugee rights.

Speakers: Lavinia Limón, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, USA
Alice Nah, HAKAM, Malaysia
Judy Wakahiu, Refugee Consortium of Kenya, Kenya (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)

Moderator: Gregory Chen, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, USA

7. The Haitian Refugee Crisis in a Regional Context: 2004 - 2006

This workshop started by introducing the historical and political background of the Haitian refugee crisis. Participants learned about the role of the United States and the work of US NGOs, as well as the role of Canada and the situation here for asylum seekers. The workshop then highlighted the recent situation (2004 – 2006), what happened, where refugees went and the absence of effective mechanisms for protection for refugees who are mixed with much larger migrant population (for example in the Dominican Republic). Speakers identified enforcement measures in the US, Bahamas and other countries that deny protection.

A plan for future networking with key players including NGOs in the region (North America and the Caribbean) was outlined, with the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services as coordinator.

Speakers: Bernadette Passade Cisse, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, USA
Jean-Claude Icart, International Observatory on Racism and Discrimination, Montreal QC

Moderator: Rivka Augenfeld, Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes, Montreal QC

8. Gender Violence and Refugees

The workshop reviewed the history of women's rights and women refugee rights. It addressed the situations in different countries, including Kurds in Turkey, Colombians in Ecuador and refugees in Canada. Participants were offered an overview of what is being done by way of tools and efforts to improve gender protection.

Three major needs were identified. First, to take the intersections of gender and other social factors more into consideration (race, religion, age, etc.). Second, the need to do more education on gender issues and include men in those education endeavours. Third, to look closely at the root causes of gender issues.

Speakers: Pilar Riaño Alcalá, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC
Rojbin Tugan, Van Women's Association, Turkey
Alice Edwards, Amnesty International, London, UK (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)

Moderators: Tigist Dafla, CCS, Edmonton AB and Julie Bédard-Mathieu, Refuge Juan Moreno, Montreal QC

9. Torture in the Age of Terror

This workshop included a presentation on the shifting discourse around torture, and the climate of arguing for tolerance for torture post-9/11; a presentation on the work of the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture (Denmark) in combating the spread of torture, as well as working with survivors; and a presentation from the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (Toronto) on their work with survivors. Presentations were followed by an open discussion period in which participants responded to presenters and proposed possible strategies around the challenges facing us in our work with survivors of torture.

A task force was established to prepare a response to the eventual report of the Maher Arar Commission.

A resolution was formulated regarding the possible elimination of the UN Special Rapporteurs on torture and other human rights concerns in the context of negotiations around the newly created UN Human Rights Council. The resolution calls for the mandate of these Rapporteurs to be maintained.

Speakers: John Docherty, RIVO, Montreal QC
Abdel Hamid Afana, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, IRTC, Gaza
Teresa Dremetsikas, CCVT, Toronto ON

Moderator: Michele Millard, Centre for Refugee Studies and CCR Executive, Toronto ON

10. Strengthening Advocacy on Detention around the World

In this workshop, speakers talked about detention in their countries and suggested some ‘positive’ alternatives and best practices. These included: UNHCR follow-up with detainees in Egypt; community detention for families with children in Australia; and NGO supervision and electronic monitoring systems in the USA. Using the International Detention Coalition on Asylum-Seekers, Refugees and Migrants (IDC) for networking was a popular idea. An action plan was developed on the International Detention Coalition so that all conference participants will be sent information and membership applications on the IDC to ensure networking.

Speakers: Alexandra Wisotsky, Human Rights First, USA
Rana Ibrahim, AMERA, Egypt
Azadeh Dastyari, Monash University, Australia

Moderators: Jenny Jeanes, Action réfugiés Montréal, Montréal QC and Anna Gallagher, International Detention Coalition on Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants, Spain

11. Integration: Specialized Programs or Ghettos?

This workshop offered three perspectives. The speaker from Canada presented an experience in Calgary with support to mainstream agencies to serve refugees and with a refugee specialized medical service. The speaker from New Zealand presented the work of the national refugee resettlement organization, with its focus on a holistic, strength-based intervention where specialized services are provided while/by working with mainstream service providers (“there’s room for both”). The Australian speaker presented her organization’s work which includes both refugees and immigrants, trying to break from a “full support” model, with a shift to focus on employment. They promote a whole-life approach to settlement, trying to move away from the welfare model.

Special models and working with mainstream services were seen to go together – a vision of the settlement process is needed. Participants highlighted the need to look at the impact of racism and the legacy of colonialism in such a vision. More work is seen to be needed on specific needs of refugee youth. Also, settlement service providers need to address heterosexism as it affects policy.

Speakers: Rob Bray, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, Calgary AB
Jill Conway, RMS Refugee Resettlement, New Zealand
Stephanie Lagos, Northern Migrant Resource Centre, Australia

Moderator: Ted Richmond, Laidlaw Foundation, Toronto ON

12. Voluntary Repatriation

This workshop discussed failures in the repatriation of Rwandan, Afghan and Panamanian refugees. Speakers focused on the disconnect in the UNHCR approach and contradictions among UNHCR staff worldwide. They emphasised that there are no consistent answers to the same problems and similar issues. Action plans and recommendations from this workshop were to : engage the UNHCR at all levels in defining and developing guidelines for tripartite agreements in voluntary repatriation; for non-governmental organizations to challenge governments and the UNHCR in creating sustainable repatriation at appropriate times; and engage human rights groups worldwide, including UN human rights

mechanisms, to ensure that they incorporate proper and secure procedures in their protection mechanisms for the voluntary repatriation of refugees.

Speakers: Olivia Bueno, International Refugee Rights Initiative, USA (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Fateme Ashraf, Association for Protection of Refugee Women and Children – HAMI, Iran
Fernando Wing, Mesa Nacional de Migrantes y Refugiados de Panama, Panama

Moderator: Ibrahim Absiye, Midaynta Community Services and CCR Executive Member, Toronto ON

13. Forced Returns

(Report currently unavailable)

Speakers: Olivia Bueno, International Refugee Rights Initiative, USA
Eva Maria Rodriguez Diaz, former Regional Coordinator of ‘Valle del Cauca’, former Assistant of the National Director, Jesuit Refugee Service, Colombia
Alice Nah, HAKAM, Malaysia
Kate Gauthier, A Just Australia, Australia

Moderator: Francisco Rico-Martinez, FCJ Refugee Centre, Toronto ON

14. Erosion of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

This workshop looked at Canada’s compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural (ESC) Rights when it comes to refugees’ rights. It also highlighted the challenges to ensure implementation of ESC rights in the context of developing countries. Panelists discussed different means to fight for ESC rights in addition to legal means.

Speakers: Sadikh Niass, Rencontre africaine pour la défense des droits de l’homme, Sénégal
Ana Marie Siscar, Community and Family Services International, Philippines
Chantal Tie, South Ottawa Community Legal Services, Ottawa ON

Moderator: Ibrahim Absiye, Midaynta Community Services and CCR Executive, Toronto ON

15. Promoting Rights and Interests in Local Integration

The context of local integration has legal, economic and social elements. Greg Lyndon linked local integration to article 34 of the Refugee Convention and spoke to challenges and inhibitions to local integration in Canada. Hwang Pill-Kyu spoke about the situation in Korea where the number of asylum seekers is increasing. Korea is developing a local integration regime but it is in very early phases. Amy Slaughter offered examples of why local integration models may or may not be successful. She used a case study of Benin and Burkina Faso.

Exchanges allowed to expand ideas and make suggestions for possible actions. It was proposed to support capacity-building for small local NGOs involved in local integration; to advocate for development funding contingent on refugee rights including local integration; to advocate for “demonstration projects” and exchanges of good practices.

Speakers: Greg Lyndon, Barrister and Solicitor, Toronto ON
Pill-Kyu Hwang, Korean Public Interest Lawyers Group
Amy Slaughter, Episcopal Migration Ministries, USA

Moderator: Elizabeth McWeeny, CCR President and DOORS to New Life, Thunder Bay ON

16. Refugee Rights in the Age of ‘Security’

This workshop focused on security procedures in South Africa, Canada and at the border between Colombia and Ecuador. In particular, the challenges of protection in the Colombian-Ecuador border region and US complicity through the ‘Plan Colombia’ operation were discussed. *Principles on Anti-Terrorism and Human Rights* are being developed by workshop participants. This is statement of principles which can be used globally by human rights advocates when challenging the anti-terrorism measures of States. It will be distributed once finalized.

Speakers: Abeda Bhamjee, Amnesty International, South Africa
Guillermo Rovayo Cueva, Jesuit Refugee Service, Ecuador
Sharryn Aiken, law professor, Queen’s University, Kingston ON

Moderator: Gloria Nafziger, Amnesty International Canada, Toronto ON
Victor Porter, CCR Executive Member and MOSAIC, Vancouver BC

17. Assisting Trafficked Persons to Achieve Dignity

Robin Pike outlined the support plan to protect and care for trafficked persons in British Columbia. Farida Akhtar outlined her work with victims of trafficking in Bangladesh and the South Asia Court of Women.

The workshop suggested that the CCR committee against trafficking should: network nationally and internationally regarding organ trade; coordinate resources (so that groups new to work against trafficking can get direction and orientation); coordinate/elaborate principles of training/ awareness regarding human trafficking issues; consider a definition of human trafficking or trafficked persons that is broader than existing (accepted) definition found in Palermo Protocol; participate in outreach/building links with First Nations regarding trafficking; updating on key issues.

Other decisions/requests included: to renew campaign for legislation to protect and care for victims of trafficking; to draft a statement regarding guidelines; to advocate for NGO participation and collaboration in drafting and implementing legislation to protect victims.

Speakers: Farida Akhtar, UBINIG, Bangladesh
Robin Pike, Office of the Solicitor General and Public Safety, British Columbia, Victoria BC (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)

Moderator: Simbo Conteh, Inter-Church Refugee Project, Abbotsford BC

18. What can YOUTH Do? Youth Networking for Refugee Rights

The first part of the workshop included short presentations by each of the resource people on their experiences working with refugee youth. They spoke about how their programs engaged youth, and gave some specific examples. Part two of the workshop was more interactive, with workshop participants splitting into smaller groups for a role-play exercise as members of fictional NGOs given the task of taking action on fictional scenarios. An emphasis was put on how groups can work together to promote increased awareness, and to achieve critical mass in youth advocacy for youth refugee rights.

Participants noted that there is a strong need to take youth programs to where youth are, recognizing that holding meetings in a traditional manner may not result in optimal youth attendance/involvement. Getting youth involved means valuing their concerns, and valuing their leadership abilities and creativity. Appropriate and effective youth programming will be dependent on specific variables such as location. Youth programming should respond to the specific needs of the youth in question.

This workshop was part of a strategy to get a CCR Youth Network started. The strategy included an orientation session the day before the workshop, and a Youth Caucus the day after the workshop. The CCR office, together with youth leaders across the country, is supporting concrete, ongoing networking (exchange of ideas, sharing best practices, raising concerns relevant for youth) among youth advocates to take this nascent CCR Youth Network further.

Speakers: Joyce Tlou, National Consortium for Refugee Affairs, South Africa
Francisco Fernando Granados, Environmental Youth Alliance, Vancouver BC
Taro Hashimoto, Catholic Social Services, Edmonton AB
Amina Yassin-Omar, Somali Youth Association of Toronto, Toronto ON

Moderator: Alika Hendricks, CCR volunteer, Montreal QC

Plenary: Bringing and Anti-Oppression Analysis to Refugee Rights Work

This plenary session brought together four speakers who are experts in combatting different forms of oppression: gender-based oppression, racism, homophobia and heterosexism, and oppression in public opinion. Presenters offered analysis and examples of how these forms of oppression affect refugees and immigrants and highlighted the links between one form of oppression and other forms.

Speakers: Nora Angeles, Barbara Shlifer Commemorative Clinic, Toronto ON
Sangeeta Subramanian, Maytree Foundation, Toronto ON
Seta Hadeshian, Middle East Council of Churches, Lebanon (her text was presented in her absence - presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Karl Flecker, Canadian Labour Congress, Toronto ON (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)

Moderator : Kemi Jacobs, Toronto Community Housing, Toronto ON

19. Internally Displaced Persons – Regional Differences and Developments

This workshop covered both the global trends with respect to IDPs and issues related to the specific contexts of Colombia, DRC and Russia (particularly Chechnya). The discussion of global trends looked at the international legal framework, institutional arrangements (e.g. UN lead agency approach) and some general political considerations. Country-specific reports covered various issues, including the causes and perpetrators of displacement, government actions with respect to IDPs, legal issues.

The main focus of discussion was the IDP situation in Turkey, a country where the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement have been incorporated into law, but where there is still a significant gap between legal principles and the on-the-ground reality of IDPs in the country.

Speakers: Roberta Cohen, Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, USA (presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Oscar Benavides, Mencoldes, Colombia
Margarita Petrosyan, Memorial, Russia
Georges Kapiamba, Association africaine de défense des Droits de l'homme (ASADHO), Democratic Republic of Congo

Moderator: Mike Weickert, World Vision Canada, Toronto ON

20. Global Perspectives on Interdiction

After a historical and conceptual overview of interdiction, speakers in this workshop session provided regional perspectives on interdiction practices in Bulgaria, Hong Kong and Malaysia, and actions they have taken to address protection concerns. During discussion period audience members also discussed interdiction practices and issues in their regions, including in particular Australia and the US. Discussion of action items to address interdiction concern was deferred to the caucus session.

Speakers: François Crépeau, Professor of International Law, Université de Montréal, Montréal QC
(presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Alice Nah, HAKAM, Malaysia
Iliana Savova, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, Bulgaria
Raquel Amador, Christian Aid, Hong Kong

Moderators: Andrew Brouwer, Lawyer, Toronto ON and Caroline Boudreau, Inter-Pares, Ottawa ON

21. Professionalization of Settlement

This workshop looked at initiatives in three countries to enhance the occupational competencies and service standards in the area of settlement of refugees and immigrants. Speakers from Australia and New Zealand offered analysis and shared experiences as they have promoted professionalization in their respective organizations. The pan-Canadian Task Force on Professionalization in the Settlement Sector introduced its work, referring to history of these issues in the sector, joint voluntary-governmental work in the area, next steps to ensure a national strategy for training and accreditation.

Speakers: Jill Conway, RMS Refugee Resettlement, New Zealand
Margaret Piper, Specialist in refugee and asylum seeker issues, Australia
Roberto Jovel, CCR, Montreal QC

Moderators: Mila Voihanski, JIAS, Toronto ON and Sherman Chan, MOSAIC, Vancouver BC

22. Protecting the Rights of Stateless Persons

This workshop identified several situations of statelessness, including: Rohingyas in Southeast Asia, Bidoons in Kuwait, Palestinians, and stateless people in the Philippines. In these contexts, conventions relating to statelessness and possible legal remedies were examined. The political and discriminatory roots of statelessness were discussed, as was the detention of stateless people. Outcomes and recommendations of the workshop were: to use the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* to assist children who are stateless; to urge the UNHCR and the UNCHR to assume responsibility for stateless people; and to encourage states to sign the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness. Participants left the workshop with a greater understanding of the issues of statelessness and the extent of the problem and a greater awareness of the need to use legal instruments to respond to the consequences of statelessness.

Speakers: Maureen Lynch, Refugees International, USA
Ana Marie Siscar, Community and Family Services International (CFSI), Philippines
Muhammad Jaradat, Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights,
West Bank
Julia Harrington, Open Society Institute, USA

Moderator: Glynis Williams, Action réfugiés Montréal, Montréal QC

23. Religious Traditions and How They Perceive Immigrants

This workshop covered the theological/scriptural basis for the Christian's call to welcome the stranger, the Christian/Muslim dynamics in working with Christian refugees in Egypt, and the historical roots in Islam that favour a welcoming attitude toward the stranger. An open discussion among participants followed regarding working with Muslim refugees in Canada, and questions around why the institutions of Islam (mosques, etc...) are little inclined to offer the kind of direct services traditionally offered by churches. Mobilizing the Muslim communities could be a theme for future workshops.

Speakers: Martin Bellerose, Pontificia Universidad Javierana, Colombia
Jehad Aliweiwi, Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office and CCR Executive, Toronto ON
Heba Kasseem, Refugee Center for Human Rights, Egypt

Moderator: John Docherty, RIVO and CCR Executive, Montreal QC

24. Mental Health and Cultural Diversity

This workshop promoted an approach to mental health that avoids medicalization and favours community-based perspectives. An academic-community research project currently in its initial stages was introduced. An NGO-based approach for the over 6 and under 13 group of refugee/immigrant children was also shared and discussed, as well as the approach currently being used by a team of counselors in Norway.

Speakers: Tamam McCallum, Turtle House Art/Play Centre, Toronto ON
Joanna Ochocka, Centre for Research on Education and Human Services, Kitchener ON
Gwynyth Overland, Psychosocial Team for Refugees, Norway

Moderator: Debbie Douglas, OCASI, Toronto ON

Presentation by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Hon. Monte Solberg

The text of the Minister's presentation to participants at the CCR International Conference on Refugee Rights and the 10th Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration is available online at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/press/speech-2006/iasfm.html>

25. Pathways to Gender Justice – CCR's Gender-based Approach to Settlement Project

A brief overview of the Gender-based Approach to Settlement Project was given. The animators and participants explored three themes in this workshop: gender, power dynamics and intersections.

1. To initiate the conversation about gender, the animators invited participants into an activity aimed at recognizing gender expressions. We asked the questions: How do we take up space in public? When seated, do we cross our legs or leave them open? Are our hands folded on our lap or our arms stretched out across the chair-back beside us? Do we sit up tall or slouch down? Who tends towards one way or another? Which gender(s) take up more public space? Which ones take up less space? What can we learn from our observations about the relationship between genders?
2. The activity and discussion about power dynamics was situated in the settlement and immigration context in Canada. The plenary group participated in a dramatization of a "Welcome to Canada" orientation. Three groups were formed and assigned their gender: male, female, other. Each group was given different orientation information about what they could expect of their new life in Canadian society. The distribution of power and roles in society were made explicitly inequitable across gender, race, class, age, ability, religion, etc, in order to stimulate conversation about participants' lived experiences of power dynamics in the settlement sector.

3. The second activity and discussion flowed into a conversation about intersections between various aspects of identity and forms of discrimination. How do we experience these intersections in our day to day lives? What does this mean for service providers, policy makers, organizations, and communities serving immigrant and refugee settlement needs? In what practical ways can we apply an intersectional gender-based approach to settlement in Canada?

Closing remarks included a brief video with scenes from the local meetings held across Canada for the purpose of informing the GBAS project outcomes.

Input provided by participants in this workshop will be applied to the development of a resource tool scheduled for distribution across Canada and internationally (via website) in autumn 2006. This resource tool is intended to assist organizations working with refugees and immigrants to assess their policies and practices with regards to intersectional gender-based analysis.

Facilitators : Bibigi Haile, GBAS project steering committee, Montreal QC
Helene Moussa, GBAS project steering committee, Toronto ON
Julie Lassonde, GBAS project steering committee, Victoria BC
Julie Mooney, CCR staff, Coordinator of GBAS project, Toronto ON
Loly Rico, GBAS project steering committee, Toronto ON

26. Combatting Negative Public Opinion / Promoting Positive Attitudes

This workshop looked at how civil society structures the discourse regarding migrants – and what negative messages, challenges, barriers are dominant – in South Africa, Canada, Senegal and Australia. From sensationalist media to an emphasis on economic and physical security and political cynicism, participants found they faced many challenges in common. Panelists then presented actions and campaigns that have worked well in these contexts.

Notes from all speakers and breakout groups will be synthesized and reproduced for distribution among upcoming communications network (electronic), including everyone that attended the workshop and beyond. Participants were extremely enthusiastic about future information sharing, providing each other with existing models, tips, warnings and ways to use and translate successes regarding media and public relations.

Speakers: Joyce Tlou, National Consortium for Refugee Affairs, South Africa
Chris Pullenayegem, Citizens for Public Justice, Toronto ON
Sadikh Niass, Rencontre africaine pour la défense des droits de l'homme, Sénégal

Moderator: Heather Lash, FCJ Refugee Centre, Toronto ON

27. Refugee Determination – Global Differences

This workshop focused on different models of Refugee Status Determination (RSD), with each speaker giving an overview of procedures used in his or her country, with an emphasis on process and gender considerations. The right to and availability of counsel was also discussed. Workshop participants agreed to develop a process of matching organizations with international experience with local and nationally-focused organizations to help with training and advocacy. Other suggestions included working with Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Watch on the provision of legal counsel to claimants.

Speakers: Peter Showler, former chairperson, Immigration and Refugee Board; author *Refugee Sandwich*, Ottawa ON
Abeda Bhanjee, Amnesty International – South Africa
Rana Ibrahim, AMERA, Egypt
Pill-Kyu Hwang, Korean Public Interest Lawyers Group GONG-GAM, South Korea

Judy Wakahiu, Refugee Consortium of Kenya, Kenya
(presentation available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Anat Ben-Dor, Refugee Rights Clinic, Tel-Aviv University, Israel
Kate Gauthier, A Just Australia, Australia

Moderator: Nick Summers, Refuge Immigrant Advisory Council (RIAC) and CCR Past President,
St. John's NF

28. NGO Involvement in Resettlement Activities and Policy

This workshop presented resettlement program perspectives from Canada, United States, Australia, Europe and Kenya, with a focus on the NGO role. Involvement in selection, referral, and case preparation were very well covered. The goal of networking was well met during the workshop and will be further promoted by way of a new listserv.

Speakers: Anne Mwangi-Wambugu, HIAS Refugee Trust of Kenya, Kenya
Margaret Piper, Specialist in refugee and asylum seeker issues, Australia
Mitzi Schroeder, Director of Policy, Jesuit Refugee Service, United States
Elizabeth McWeeny, DOORS to New Life and CCR President, Thunder Bay ON
Fiona Silva, Caritasverband für Hamburg e.V., Raphaels-Werk e.V., Germany

Moderator: Gilbert Iyamuremye, Diocese of London Refugee Office, London ON

29. Building Hospitable Communities (in Spanish)

(Report currently unavailable)

Speakers: Rosita Milesi, Instituto de Migracion y Derechos Humanos, Brazil (presentation available
online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Fernando Wing, Mesa Nacional de Migrantes y Refugiados de Panamá (presentation
available online at www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)
Oscar Benavides, Mencoldes, Colombia (presentation available online at
www.web.ca/ccr/intconf.htm)

Moderators: Eugenia Cappellaro, Centre for Spanish-speaking Peoples, Toronto ON and Victor Porter,
CCR Executive member and MOSAIC, Vancouver BC

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- Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D)
- Business Improvement Association

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