



National Forum on Trafficking Toronto, November 2012



Highlights

On November 28, 2012, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) hosted a National Forum on Trafficking in conjunction with the CCR Fall 2012 Consultation in Toronto. The Forum provided an opportunity for non-governmental organizations to share ideas in assisting trafficked persons in Canada and to develop recommendations on policy priorities.

Approximately 80 individuals participated in the Forum. Participants included NGO representatives, service providers and academics involved in work on trafficking from Alberta,

British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

The Forum was divided into three overarching sessions dedicated to:

- > Sharing experiences, responses and strategies between organizations in order to assist trafficked persons more effectively;
- > Analyzing existing barriers in providing adequate protection to trafficking survivors;
- > Identifying priorities in policy development and discussing strategies to form a national NGO advocacy response.

The needs identified at the Forum can offer useful guidance to both ongoing and future anti-trafficking efforts and policy developments, in order to ensure the rights of trafficked persons are protected in Canada. The Forum discussion was successful in underlining that all levels of government – local, provincial and federal – have an important role to play in improving Canada's protection system as well as trafficked persons' access to it, and should strongly focus on the individual needs of trafficked persons beyond a law enforcement approach.

Among the priorities examined at the Forum, participants identified a need for more provincial leadership and further dialogue at a local and provincial level on the role of the provinces in addressing trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual, labour and other forms of exploitation. Participants also recognized that supporting existing relationships and pursuing new alliances between NGOs, front-line service providers and law enforcement locally and nationally are particularly valuable strategies in strengthening an anti-trafficking network across the country.

The concerns raised at the Forum made ever more apparent that ensuring adequate protection for survivors of trafficking will require that *Canada's National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking* launched in June 6, 2012 (available at: <http://bit.ly/KP4kMb>) and future policies affecting trafficked persons include legal provisions that are guided by and respectful of their human rights and must be inclusive of survivors themselves.

Recommendations

Participants at the Forum developed a series of recommendations as a focus for advocacy and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including law enforcement and immigration agencies, provincial governments and other policy makers, NGOs and service providers. These recommendations identify some of the actions required at local, provincial and federal levels in order to meet the needs of trafficked persons and propose roles for the CCR and the national anti-trafficking network in moving forward.

Awareness-raising

- > Educate through real, on-the-ground stories about trafficking.
- > Use the model of neighbourhood-based projects to educate communities about the reality of trafficking and how to identify it.
- > Develop tools using different media and adapted to various communities (e.g. youth, Aboriginal peoples, newcomers, business, health providers).
- > Promote legal training on Canadian trafficking legislation.
- > Get youth involved and have them reach out through different media.

Services

- > Coordinate existing services provincially – build from what is already out there.
- > Develop local service protocols for trafficked persons.
- > Reorient funding priorities for services to reflect provincial and local needs.
- > Direct funding towards training programs that are carried out for and by direct service providers, beyond a focus on law enforcement.
- > Target specialized training to frontline service providers, concentrating on intervention strategies and on strategies to address the after-care needs of trafficking survivors.

Policy on international cases

- > Create clear criteria and ensure consistent guidelines for issuing Temporary Resident Permits (TRPs). (More information about TRPs is available at: <http://bit.ly/Vkwsdq>.)
- > Ensure the unconditional protection of trafficked persons and their families regardless of legal standing of prosecution.
- > In evaluating applicants for a TRP, take into account forms of coercion beyond the physical.
- > Extend protection to immediate family members of survivors of trafficking in Canada and abroad.
- > Waive fees for TRP and humanitarian and compassionate applications for trafficking survivors and their families.
- > Identify the effects on trafficking survivors of changes to recent immigration and refugee law (Bill C-31 and C-10 in 2012). (CCR comments on both bills are available at: <http://bit.ly/zshz3W> and <http://bit.ly/oWWWvUp> respectively.)
- > Enforce a provincial monitoring system for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) and modify the parameters of the program to offer sector- or province-specific work permits for temporary foreign workers.



CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES
 6839A Drolet #301, Montréal QC, H2S 2T1
 tel. (514) 277-7223, fax (514) 277-1447
 email: info@ccrweb.ca website: ccrweb.ca



Useful CCR resources on trafficking are available at:
trafficking.ca