



Canadian Council for Refugees Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés

Annual Report 2010-2011

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 - Wanda Yamamoto, Winnipeg

Past President - Elizabeth McWeeny, Thunder Bay

Vice-President - Loly Rico, Toronto

Treasurer - Yasmine Dossal, Toronto

Secretary - Rick Goldman, Montreal

Counsellors - Monica Abdelkader, London; Rivka Augenfeld, Outremont; Georges Bahaya, Edmonton; Deborah Isaacs, Vancouver; Gloria Nafziger, Toronto; Heather Neufeld, Ottawa; Freddy Wangabo, Fredericton; Eunice Valenzuela, Kitchener.

Working Group Chairs

Immigration & Settlement - Sherman Chan, Vancouver & Debbie Douglas, Toronto

Inland Protection - Debbie Hill-Corrigan, Toronto & Chantal Tie, Ottawa

Overseas Protection & Sponsorship - Jennifer Mpungu, Vancouver & Rose Dekker, Burlington

Staff

Executive Director - Janet Dench

Office Manager - Guadalupe Macias

Settlement Policy Director - Marisa Berry-Méndez

Communication and Networking Coordinator - Colleen French

Youth Coordinator - Cynthia Beaudry

Office Assistant - Pascaline Dabiré / Marie-Louise Konan

From Wanda Yamamoto, CCR President

At a recent meeting here in Winnipeg, I had the pleasure of meeting a former refugee claimant who is now on staff at an organization, giving to the community and helping others, as he was once helped.

This is the kind of successful human story that the CCR has been highlighting as part of the 'What we want for refugees' campaign. The public needs to hear refugees' personal stories and about their contributions in our communities – and we must empower them to speak out.

It is also crucial that a wide diversity of Canadian voices are heard saying "we want refugees to be treated fairly". The CCR campaign is based on the conviction that refugees – and how we treat them – matter to all Canadians. So we have been working hard to encourage others to speak up in support of refugees.

Other important CCR actions have given many refugees in Canada and their families reason to hope. Many children have been reunited with their parents in part thanks to the CCR's interventions. Some Eritrean refugees in Cairo have now been accepted for resettlement to Canada – this wouldn't have happened without the CCR's leadership.

The CCR also responds to other vulnerable migrants – such as Temporary Foreign Workers, who are easily exploited – playing an important role in networking groups across the country.

We are facing many obstacles, but we also have reason to hope. In working together with encouragement and support we can overcome the challenges. By continuing our work to protect refugee and immigrant rights, by welcoming newly arrived families and by championing fairer policies for refugees in Ottawa, we are paving a smoother way for refugees yet to arrive in Canada.



Wanda Yamamoto takes part in the CCR's 'What we want for refugees in Canada' campaign.

Highlights of Activities 2010 - 2011

- > **What we want for refugees in Canada** - This year, we started a campaign to speak out in favour of what we want for refugees in Canada: a system that is fair and independent and one that is affordable for all and treats refugees honourably. This campaign aims to win public support for refugees, at a time when we are hearing more hostility towards refugees.

We have been encouraging CCR members and allies to put forward the human faces and stories of refugees. We have produced materials and suggestions for how people can do this every day, at work or school and in conversations with friends, family, colleagues, neighbours and members of the general public.

- > **Refugees in Cairo: A victory for fairness** - The future is looking a little brighter for some refugees in Cairo thanks to our work on unfair refusals. We drew the government's attention to a pattern of serious errors made at the Cairo visa office in refusing applicants for refugee resettlement. In the end it took a ruling from the Federal Court in order to win a new interview for the refugees. The Federal Court chided the government for not taking more seriously the complaint of a "reputable organization" such as the CCR.

Given our longstanding concerns about the quality of refugee decision-making overseas, this ruling is a reason to celebrate.



Richard's story was featured in our report *DNA Testing: A barrier to speedy family reunification*.

- > **Acting for speedy family reunification** - In 2011, our campaign for speedy family reunification has taken on new dimensions. Long delays in processing for refugees and refugee families at the Nairobi visa office have sounded alarm bells. Refugees in Africa routinely wait years for sponsorship applications to be processed – now twice the global average if their application is processed through Nairobi. By focusing on individual stories and the multiple and profound impacts of family separation, and together with our many allies across the country, we have strengthened calls to Members of Parliament and other decision-makers to treat African refugees and their families fairly.

Demands for DNA testing are one of the major hurdles that refugee families have to overcome during the process for family reunification.

Thanks to a generous donor, we have been able to assist several families to pass through this process and to document many cases of separated families in the report *DNA Tests: A barrier to speedy family reunification*. With compelling evidence like this, the government must act.

- > **Emerging issues, new partnerships, innovative tools** - In the past year, we have continued to lead the way in identifying emerging immigration issues and in bringing diverse groups together to respond. We play a key role in analyzing policies, promoting dialogue and producing resources for campaigning for change. For example, we took the lead in pointing out the negative impact on women of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's proposal of "conditional" permanent residence for some sponsored spouses. Many women's groups joined us in opposing this move. By acting together to stop this step backwards in Canadian immigration policy, we have widened our circle of allies, forged new partnerships and created innovative outreach tools.

Violence against Non-status, Refugee and Immigrant Women



The CCR has taken the lead in developing web-based resources like the campaign opposing violence against women.

Highlights of Activities 2010 - 2011

Speak Up!



Speak Up! grants offer funding to develop creative public education and advocacy tools.

> **The CCR Youth Network grows, but Canada still has work to do** - Thanks to its dedicated members, the Youth Network continues to thrive nationally and in local communities. Through Speak Up! projects and grants, local groups have developed resources to debunk myths about refugee and immigrant youth. Local Youth Network representatives, now Ambassadors, are hard at work on issues affecting refugee and immigrant youth. Their message?: Canada still has work to do when it comes to respecting refugee and immigrant children and youth rights.

> **Focusing on new dimensions of human trafficking** - A disturbing trend of trafficked migrant workers made headlines this past summer. While the cases in the media may only be the tip of the iceberg, our members and allies are stepping forward and reaching out. At the CCR, we have been pushing for measures that protect people who have been trafficked, but much more is needed. Over the past year, we have developed an online collection of resources. We are proud to continue to lead efforts to bring anti-trafficking activists together from across Canada in conferences, by phone and online to develop practical and policy strategies to advance the protection of trafficked persons.



**Protecting
trafficked persons
in Canada**



CCR members have been speaking out against Bill C-4, which aims to stop human smuggling, but would treat many refugees unfairly.

> **Tackling changes to the way Canada treats refugee claimants** - We have spent much of the past year focused on the way that Canada treats refugee claimants, and in particular preparing for upcoming reforms to Canada's refugee determination system. We have been leading and supporting CCR members in speaking out against legislation that aims to stop human smuggling, but that would treat many refugees unfairly. The CCR's face-to-face and online discussion spaces have enabled our members to exchange information on these critical issues and empowered us to take action. Where necessary, our Legal Affairs Committee raises our voice in the courts, as we did in the case of Josette Rosenzweig, a child forcibly returned to her country despite having refugee status in Canada. Thanks to the sustained efforts of CCR members and allies, we have geared up to assist refugee claimants in a new refugee system, seen Josette's safe return to Canada and stalled unfair government bills.

> **CCR Consultations: More relevant than ever** - Participants at the CCR's Consultations in Calgary and Hamilton emphasized the continuing value of these national conferences for improving settlement services to refugees and immigrants, learning new approaches from colleagues across the country and energizing their own efforts to make a difference in the lives of newcomers in their communities. We held workshops focusing on current issues such as the economic exploitation of migrant workers and a changing narrative on refugees and immigrants. Participants appreciated these opportunities to discuss issues and develop concrete action plans for local and national action.



From the CCR Executive Committee: Yasmine Dossal

When I talk to colleagues about the Canadian Council for Refugees' work, I'm often asked why I am involved and why my organization, COSTI Immigrant Services, is a member. What do we get out of our membership? My answer: more than I ever thought possible!

Through the CCR, we:

- > Access learning opportunities at national conferences, meetings and online.
- > Receive up-to-date information on changes to Canada's immigration system.
- > Learn about emerging issues that affect our day-to-day work with newcomers, and how national concerns impact our local work.
- > Easily access resources responding to questions that refugees and immigrants bring to me and my colleagues.

In the past year, we have seen many changes in the political landscape, in attitudes towards refugees and immigrants, and changes in funding for our organizations. Now, more than ever, is the time to join the CCR and to play an important role in efforts to uphold refugee and immigrant rights in Canada.

Please consider:

- > Becoming a CCR member with your organization or group

Visit *Join the CCR*:

ccrweb.ca/en/join

- > Receiving information updates from the CCR

Subscribe to our newsletter:

ccrweb.ca/en/chronicle

- > Making a financial contribution

Make a donation or become a *Friend of the CCR*, a monthly donor:

ccrweb.ca/en/donate

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

Highlights from audited financial statements for year ended August 31, 2011

	2011	2010
Revenue	\$	\$
Federal grants	101,329	138,716
Provincial and municipal grants	17,113	22,971
Other Grant	4,500	7,100
Foundations	108,019	89,496
Donations	101,628	91,359
Membership fees	62,603	62,880
Conferences	59,096	53,477
Events fundraising	6,488	150
Publications	737	809
Interest	2,269	2,488
Total	<u>463,782</u>	<u>469,446</u>
Charges		
Program salaries	218,899	209,421
Administration	51,326	54,164
Conference expenses	82,742	110,092
Executive committee	8,140	12,785
Working group expenses	15,653	18,257
Fundraising	20,051	25,822
Networking and public education	42,129	65,416
Total	<u>438,940</u>	<u>495,957</u>
Excess (Deficit) of revenue over charges	24,842	-26,511
Assets		
Cash at bank	128,394	89,110
Investments, at cost	45,237	50,000
Accounts receivable	5,780	9,351
Grants receivable	45,147	45,184
Prepaid expenses	4,277	587
Total	<u>228,835</u>	<u>194,232</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts and charges payable	21,237	27,257
Deferred grants and contributions	78,809	63,028
Total	<u>100,046</u>	<u>90,285</u>
Net assets		
Restricted fund	20,000	20,000
Unrestricted fund	108,789	83,947
Total	<u>128,789</u>	<u>103,947</u>

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

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