

Indo Canadian
Women's
Association

ANNUAL REPORT, APRIL 1ST 2017-MARCH 31ST 2018

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INDO CANADIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Changing attitudes since 1984!

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INDO-CANADIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Established 34 years ago, ICWA is amongst the few organizations in Edmonton, Canada advocating for the protection of the rights of immigrant women, men and youth alike. Through settlement assistance, skill building community activities and adult education we try to ensure that immigrants are able to feel at home in Canada.

Our approach to preventing violence against women is by raising the status of women through dialogue and community mobilization. An attitude shift about the way women are portrayed and treated is essential and we believe small shifts in attitudes about women can create a large overall impact and raise the status of women in our communities. That is why we are proud to say, ICWA has been changing attitudes since 1984!

Our vision is that all new Canadians will achieve a sense of fulfillment and integration into the Canadian culture and society. Everyone will have an equal opportunity to fully participate in Canadian society.

Our mission is to encourage and promote participation by new Canadians in social, economic, and political life in Canada. We are dedicated to promoting equality, opportunity, and protection of rights for everyone.

Our values are equality, opportunity and protection of rights for everyone.

The Impact of the ICWA

The ICWA has served over 50,000 clients since its inception in 1984, and is one of the very few immigrant serving and social services organizations serving the Millwoods area

ICWA is one of the very few immigrant serving and social services organizations serving the city's region with the largest immigrant and ethnic population. Fifteen full and part-time staff that speak 9 languages, 20 part time volunteers and 30 casual volunteers serve over 3,000 clients annually, in two locations; one on 34th Avenue/95 St. and the other in the Millwoods Welcome Centre for Newcomers.

ICWA is also one of the few organizations in the city's region focused to preventing violence against women by raising the status of women through dialogue and community mobilization. Its aim has been is to shift attitudes about the way women are portrayed and treated in the

Southeast Asian communities and other communities throughout the area. ICWA is proud to say that it has been changing attitudes since 1984!

Programs

The ICWA provides the following programs.

Integration & Settlement

- Needs Assessment & Referrals
- Information and Orientation
- Support Services - Translation

Education Program

- Computer Literacy
- ESL functional literacy
- Senior conversational English
- Citizenship exam preparation

Community Activities

- Youth program
- Women's Program
 - Senior's Program

Project Directory

“Working in Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls”

Outreach

- Organizing conferences and workshops to engage and change attitudes among mainstream service providers, practitioners and professionals

- Collaborating and engaging with mainstream agencies

Celebrations and Special Events



A) Symposium: “Building Empathy and Conquering Apathy” “BECA”



On May 17th and 18th, 2017, Canadians for Civil Society in partnership with ICWA, MacEwan university and NAIT held a symposium Building Empathy Conquering Apathy. The symposium BECA was held on May 17th on International day against homophobia, transphobia and biphobia. It was second event in a three year plan to prevent and raise awareness of human rights violations, such as gender-based violence, discrimination, harassment and bullying at the intersections of gender identity, race, sexual orientation and poverty.

BECA brought together educators, policy makers,

human-rights advocates, academics, non-profit and front-line service workers with the goal of exploring promising approaches to preventing human rights violations, such as empathy-based human-rights education.

The key note speaker was Nicole Sherren , Scientific Director and Senior Program Officer of the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative She designs and delivers professional development opportunities across the health, education, human services and justice sectors. Around 25 speakers participated in the symposium.

Honourable Stephanie McLean, Minister of Services Alberta Status of Women, Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Honourable Rachley Notley Premier of Alberta, Mayor Don Iveson expressed their support in raising awareness about the issues of gender-based violence, human rights violations and focused on empathybased human rights education.

Almost 130 people attended BECA. At the close of the two days, there was an overwhelming consensus that the symposium was an impressive effort, highly successful in creating a space for dialogue, collaboration, and community engagement. **B) Annual General Meeting:**

The Indo-Canadian Women’s Association (ICWA) held its Annual General Meeting on May 27, 2017. Around 40 members, supporters, guests attended the event. Board President Mrs. Ratna Basappa welcomed guests with her cordial opening speech. ICWA Vice president Dr. Zohra Husaini introduced guest speaker Dr.



Reinhild Boehm. She studied anthropology in Europe from where her research took her first to East Africa, and later to an academic career at the University of Alberta, Canada. Dr. Reinhild Boehm shared her own life experiences and calls to empower students' academic and personal growth in a safe environment rich with opportunities for engagement.

The 2016 AGM minutes were presented by Suneets Jobanputra, followed by the President's Report from Mrs. Ratna Basappa who highlighted ICWA's many successful programs and events in 2016-17. Ms. Usha Pawluski, Accountant for ICWA, presented the organization's Financial Report. Special guests Minister Christina Gray, Minister Rod Loyola and councillor Mohinder Banga attended the meeting and congratulated ICWA for electing the new board.

C) Daughter's Day Celebration



On September 9, 2017 Canadian's for
Civil
Society in partnership with Indo
Canadian

Women's Association celebrated Daughter's Day. Daughter's Day is a community initiative to highlight the importance of the daughters in all our lives and also to support the flourishing of communities committed to an end to all discrimination and to stopping human rights abuses against women. The purpose of this event is to recognize women who have been doing

outstanding work by contributing to the community by focusing to end all discrimination and fighting against human rights abuse against women.

The Keynote speaker was Marianne Ryan. Marianne was officially appointed as Alberta's Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner on July 4, 2017. Marianne led a successful career that spanned 35 years, touching the lives of people in Manitoba, BC and AB. This year six honourable women were chosen for the daughter's Day award for their exceptional work. Daughter's Day 2017 was attended by more than 150 people and it also filled with great entertainment.

D) International Day of the Girl Child

ICWA celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child on the 19th of October 2017. This year the format of the event was a round table dialogue among young mothers, of their experiences and perceptions of gender equality and inequality and how it manifests itself in child rearing practices. The areas reviewed included practices related to 1) roles and responsibilities 2) education 3) health 4) nutrition 5) socialization.

The participants looked at the cultural value and belief systems they were brought up in and talked about distinct or subtle differences in how boys and girls are brought up in their communities. The participants shared their thoughts and experiences openly and eagerly. They clearly identified the changes from family to family and determined how they themselves can support and enhance social change. The event drew awareness of and attention to challenges women -young immigrant women with young children face or would likely face in the Canadian social milieu.

As this event holds considerable potential for similar endeavors in the near future, ICWA will continue to work in this direction.



E) Family Violence Prevention Month



On November 6, 2017, to mark the Family Violence Prevention Month, The Indo Canadian Women's Association invited Dr. Samra Zafar from Toronto to address the issue of family violence and talk about her work in this field. Dr. Samra is an International Speaker, Human Rights Activist, Scholar, Author and Entrepreneur.

Dr. Samra in her talk shared her own experiences. Having escaped from an abusive situation herself and having rebuilt her life successfully, she started an organization "Brave Beginnings" with innovative approach to help women who are also leaving similar situations and may not know how to rebuild their lives.

The collective aim of the event was to increase awareness towards violence against women and to recreate a dialogue to lead to a stronger public resolve, hereby taking steps to ensure safety and freedom for the women. More than 40 people including supporters, MLA's, donors, local organizations and volunteers attending the event.

F) Youth Cultural Exchange

Cultural Exchange Program between Indigenous youth and first and second generation immigrant youth was organized on November 25th. This was a collaboration of University of Alberta's (Department of Education) YIWCL (Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership) and ICWA (Indo Canadian Women's Association).



The program was organized in lieu of a callback session of the YIWCL annual camp and ICWA's commemoration of Canada for 150. A mixed group of Indigenous and recent immigrant youth (girls from 12 to 15) spent a full day together learning about each other's cultures, history and ways to celebrate. It was an experience of great learning in a positive and fun filled environment..

The participants learnt why, how and what of treaties and that, as a part of Canada, we are all treaty people. They shared the experiences and struggles of new immigrants in Canada and celebrated our togetherness through the customs, crafts and dances of the sharing cultures. We look forward to more collaborations of a similar nature.

G) Grand Multicultural Celebration

The Indo Canadian Women's Association held its Annual Grand Multicultural Celebration on the evening of December 16, 2017. The event, organized at the ICWA Office was a big success with its more than 30 guests, including members of Legislative Assembly, donors, Local Organizations, ICWA board, staff and members.

The evening was full of group songs, conversations and activities that highlighted the immense value of inter-cultural understanding and community diversity in an inclusive and respectful society.

ICWA, Executive Director Manal Alnajjar acknowledged the arduous work, commitment and dedication of the ICWA board and staff members towards ICWA



H) Community Connection



The Indo Canadian Women's Association invited their members for tea on the evening of February 17, 2018. Board President Ratna Basappa welcomed the members with her cordial opening speech.

Hyma Pandyaram gave an informative presentation on International Security Consortium. The audience responded with enthusiastic applause. The members enjoyed simple refreshments and chatted with fellow members in the Indo-Canadian community before dispersing.

I) International Women's Day



On March 16th, 2018, the Indo Canadian Women's Association held their 34th annual International Women's Day celebration. More than 200 people attended the event. Attendees included community members, advocates, activists, MLAs, community leaders,

professionals and academics who support the work of the ICWA to promote gender justice and end violence against women.

Mrs Ratna Basappa, President of the Board of Directors of the ICWA welcomed the participants and thanked them for their continuous support for ICWA's continuing programs to encourage and promote participation by the new Canadians in social, economic and political life in Canada. Honourable Amarjeet Sohi brought greetings from the province. Councillor Banga and Councillor Mike Nickel brought greetings from the City of Edmonton. Manal Alnajjar, Executive director of the ICWA appreciated the ICWA staff for their dedication, commitment and many years of service towards ICWA.

Our Keynote speaker for the evening was Paula Simons, award-winning journalist and passionate advocate for social justice, civil rights, civil society and gender equality. She gave an empowering speech on the role of women and shared her own experiences. The audience then enjoyed the multicultural buffet dinner as well as some traditional Indian performances.

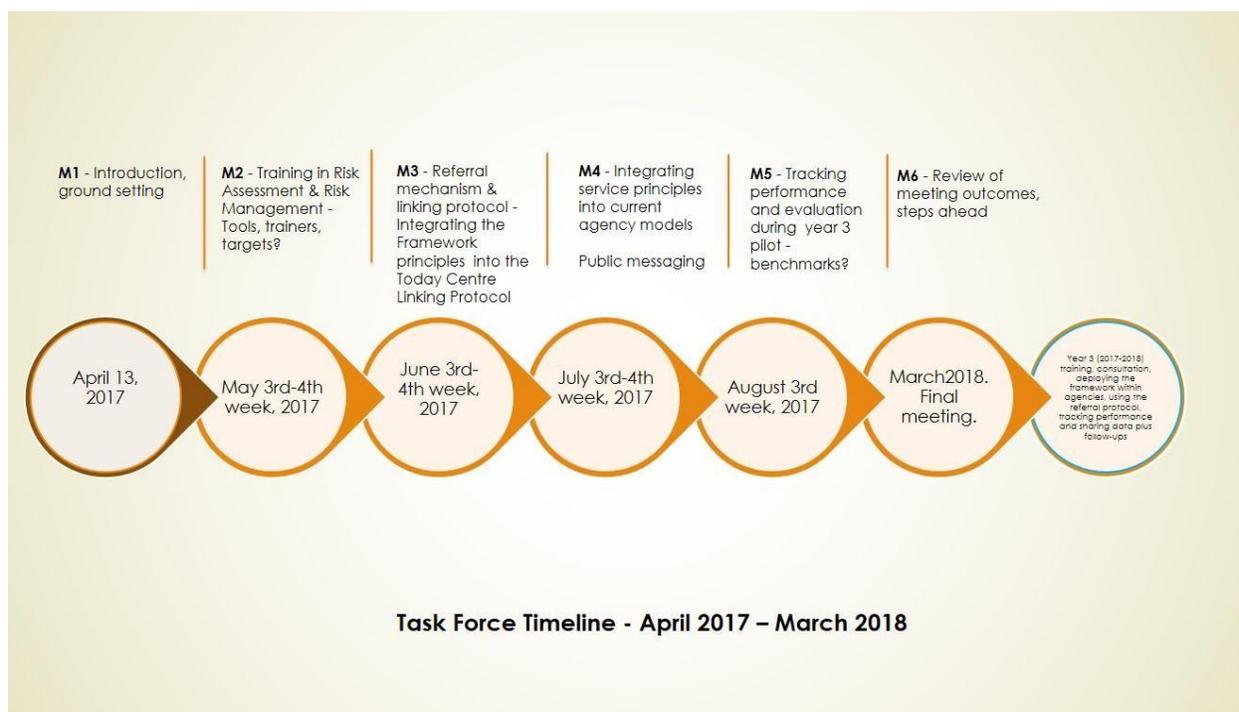


Projects

1) Working in Partnership to End Violence Against Girls and Women

WIP Inter-Agency Task Force - April 2017-March 2018

The Inter-Agency Task Force of the Project Working In Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls AB 15072, funded by Status of Women Canada) was established in March 2017 with the inclusion of Today Center (represented by Leigh Rosales, Program Lead), Pride Center of Edmonton (represented by Kristy Harcourt Education Coordinator and Program Manager), Candora Society (represented by Valerie Cudmore, Executive Director; also Chair of the Ethnocultural Family Violence Committee), Liz John-West (an individual task force advisor; trainer on family violence support at ICWA; program lead in a second stage shelter La Salle of Catholic Social Services) signed on to the task force. The MoUs were discussed and finalized in March 2016. Three one-on-one meetings were held with each of the members. The first group meeting has been held in April 2017. Meetings continued through to and concluded in March 2018.



Refinement of a Service Framework

A model for a pilot service (Bridge to Safety B2S) was prepared and a draft framework was prepared and refined with inputs of task force participants. The Task Force deliberations yielded necessary new tools to support the pilot. the Task Force created

- Guidance document for Client Centred Approach
- Tool of Risk Assessment for Female clients As discussed in the Task Force meetings there were serious gaps in the commonly used risk assessment tool “Danger Assessment for Immigrant Women.” For example, the inattention to (i) the risks and dangers posed by extended family and community in the case of women belonging to racialized/ethnocultural minorities (ii) financial abuse that is pertinent to South Asian women in the form of dowry extortion. In response to these gaps, the Task Force created a risk assessment tool that captures social and cultural realities of the experience of the women who have and continue to approach ICWA for help and support. The risk assessment tool is still being refined through use with help seekers. By June 2018, the tool will be shared with other agencies through venues such as the Ethnocultural Family Violence Committee and the case consultation meetings at the Today Centre. Feedback will be collected and used to create a version that will be disseminated across the formal support network of agencies for consideration, feedback and use where required.

- Tool of Safety Planning
- An Action Map meant for ready reference and information sharing by a service *provider to a survivor over telephone or in person
- Tool of Consent To receive support
- Consent To Share Confidential Information

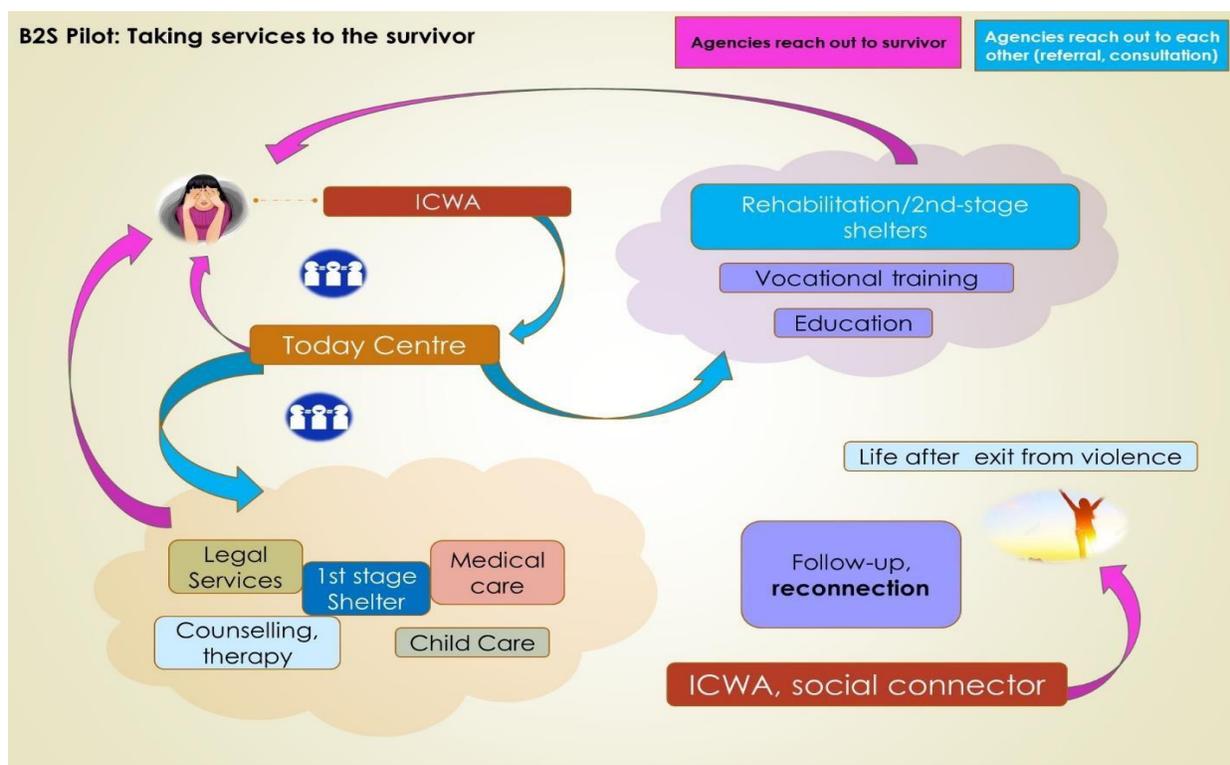
The discussions of the task force also yielded the finding that post-shelter transition services have acute gaps. These gaps and a relevant model of action, called *Critical Time Intervention* are discussed in the blogpost

<https://workinginpartnership.wordpress.com/2017/12/12/critical-time-intervention-a-model-to-enable-transition-to-sustainable-living/> The author shared the CTI model with agencies and collected their inputs on whether and how this model could be put to work in Edmonton. These inputs are integrated as anonymized quotations into the article.

Bridge to Safety Pilot

The final year of the project (July 2017-July 2018) involves a pilot to provide support to women and girls fleeing family violence. Entitled ‘Bridge to Safety’ this effort involves culturally competent intake and crisis support at ICWA (where women and girls often arrive with their traumatic experiences of family violence) followed by a supported handover (done in the safe space of ICWA location, instead of merely sending the help-seeker onwards) to ethnocultural family violence specialists of the Today Family Violence Help Centre. The Today Centre is a core partner in the project who have the training and resources to serve ethnocultural women and girls after the hand-over (with ICWA remaining a supportive presence to provide language and other help as needed). ICWA and Today Centre have finalized a protocol to enable supported referrals along with confidential information sharing between the two agencies. Since the last May 2017 report to SWC, Indo-Canadian Women’s Association has been receiving crisis calls (14) and in-person visits (10) from women seeking supports against extended/conjugal family violence (encompassing so-called ‘honour-related’ violence, with mental, financial, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects reported as part of the experienced violence and abuse).

Women have been and are being provided with free counselling support and successfully referred to the Today Centre. The pilot is in progress and women will continue to be provided with support and referral (also after the project ends). The counselling and referral are conducted as per the actions and pathways defined in the guidance documents and Pilot and as per the referral protocol signed by the Today Centre and ICWA.



ICWA translations of anti-violence information; website development

To enable the uptake of the services of ethnocultural family violence specialists at the Today Centre, ICWA undertook the translation and editing of Today Centre information rack cards and booklet into Hindi, Punjabi and Arabic. ICWA also provided the design of the Hindi and Punjabi rack cards. The translations have also been checked over at the Family Centre and after edits and amendments will be put into use in appropriate locations in areas of Edmonton where the specific languages are statistically significant.

The project website (blog site) <https://workinginpartnership.wordpress.com> has 39 blogposts (37 in-depth articles; 2 spoken verse pieces related to family violence, support measures and resilience) and has attracted around 1750 hits. The website is being accessed by Edmonton agencies as a resource on varied topics related to the prevention of violence. E.g. The Volunteer Diversity Training manual of the Sexual Assault Center for Edmonton cites ICWA on cultural competency and cultural safety; <https://workinginpartnership.wordpress.com/2017/02/02/93/>) In addition, the content is being used by the Vital Signs Committee of the Edmonton Community Foundation. Amrita Mishra is currently a member of the Committee and is sharing the efforts of WIP and the WIP partners with the Committee.

In partnership with City of Edmonton, which provided in-kind support, ICWA organized a September 20-22 2017 workshop on methods of risk assessment in multi-perpetrator gender

violence and stalking attracted 38 agency representatives from across Alberta. The workshop, co-organized by ICWA and City of Edmonton (in kind support) increased local capacity to grapple with cases of gender violence, drove home the value of collaboration in tackling complex cases, and consolidated the formal support network established during the needs assessment phase of year 1. The workshop was organized to address the widespread gaps in provider understanding about extended and conjugal family violence which are often associated with efforts to shield family name and reputation.

**Sectors Participating in September 2017 Antiviolence Risk
Assessment Training Workshop
(No of registrants=36)**

- Violence prevention, counselling and education (Non profit)
- Violence Prevention (Non profit)
- Trafficking prevention

2) Preventing Elder Abuse Through Knowledge Sharing (PEAKS)

The project Preventing Elder Abuse Through Knowledge Sharing (PEAKS; NHSP- 01430134) achieved its intended results and completed the planned activities within the timeframe of April 2017-March 2018.

PEAKS enabled ICWA to increase its capacity to support seniors' initiatives through:

- Enhanced physical infrastructure which supported delivery of activities, programs and services for seniors
- Development of partnerships/networks to support community activities



The renovation work for the ICWA office was completed by replacing the tired carpet by hard wood. The renovation created a safe and supportive counselling space for seniors experiencing elder abuse. Individual counselling was provided to seniors in the renovated space.

ICWA collaborated with the City of Edmonton, EMCN (provided space at WCI) Centre For Public Legal Education Alberta (CPLEA) and United Way to deliver five 2-hour information sessions on financial abuse, housing standards for seniors, emotional and physical wellness, protection against internet scams, and aspects of healthy relationships. Partners provided

- Knowledge and expertise of volunteer speakers
- Information materials (City of Edmonton, CPLEA, United Way)
- Physical space (e.g. meeting space) (EMCN).

The sessions were held at the Welcome Centre for Immigrants were delivered by experts (themselves seniors) reached a total of 52 seniors, delivered in English and interpreted into Hindi and Punjabi by ICWA staff and volunteers (Rajbir Kharod, Paul Kalsi, Amrita Mishra). The participating seniors were largely low income and geographically, linguistically and socially isolated. They received a range of educational materials, such as pamphlets and brochures related to physical, psychological, and financial abuse experienced by seniors and also were informed about available community supports.

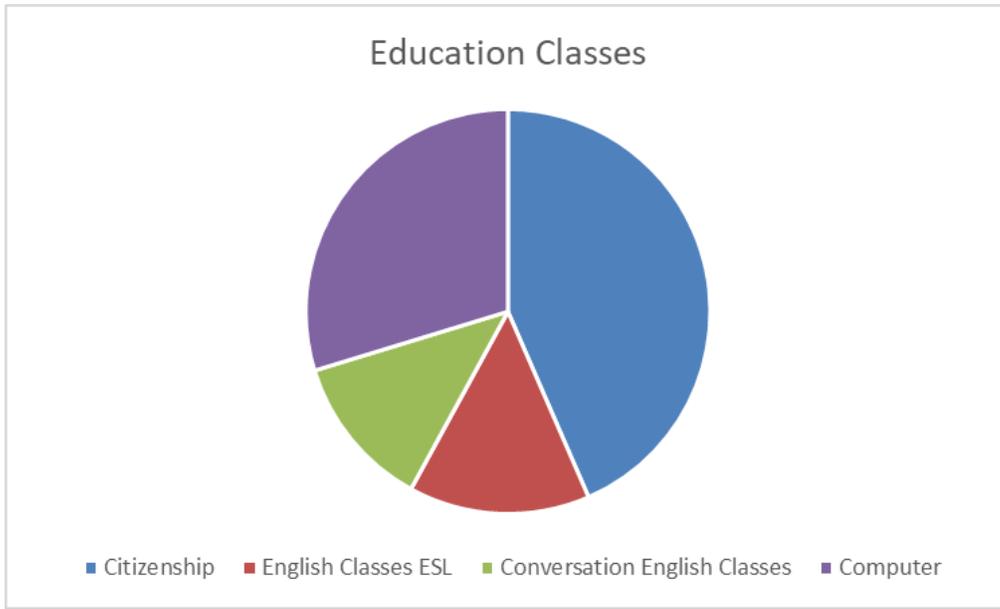
The feedback on the sessions was positive and the seniors expressed a strong desire to receive more information sessions. They also stated the importance of receiving printed information in diverse languages (other than English and French). The challenges experienced were the

difficulty of attracting senior women. This challenge was addressed through the ongoing New Horizons project Senior Women’s Assistance for Social Ties.

Education and Community Programs

Clients Number	
Senior Groups	64
Senior Women	32
Youth	15
Family Violence	36
Citizenship	120
English Classes ESL	40
Conversation English Classes	34
Computer	82
Settlement and outreach	2998
Total	3421

ECALA Program:



A) English as a Second Language (ESL)

Objective: Help students to develop the ability to use oral and written English for daily needs, acquire basic conversation skills and vocabulary, and use simple sentence patterns. Help students adjust to their new cultural setting and utilize their skills to function in the new environment.



The ESL classes create opportunities for the students to interact and express their views about various topics in English. They also get connected and share knowledge which help students to boost their confidence and their social networking. Through these learning opportunities, students are able to make plans for their studies, careers and other future goals. The instructor with the support of the ICWA

management are able to create the positive learning environment where students feel at home and relaxed for more successful achievements. Our class is in high demand due to our teaching methods based on active learning as well as our accessible location at the Welcome

Center for Immigrants. We elicit the feedback of our students in order to choose the times and content that work best for them.

This year, about 40 students have attended our ESL classes (about 60 classes). The members of the highly diverse student body hail from Middleeast, India, Pakistan, Colombia, Somalia, Korea, China, Burundi and Nepal.

Success Story (ESL Program)



My name is Elham and when I came to Canada eight months ago I was very confused and stressed. As a newcomer I was really in need of help to start my new life in a new country, especially in terms of learning the language. All of us know how important language is to communicate. First of all to speak English wasn't easy for me. I was only able to manage a few phrases such as good morning, hello, how are you.

I started asking about facilities that the government offers to newcomers and looked for English classes till one day I met a lady in Milbourne mall where I was with my husband. I told him to ask her about free classes. She guided me to the

Welcome Center for Immigrants and there I started going to the ESL classes with Indo Canadian Women's Association since November 2017 and every Saturday.

After two months I found myself changing and improving my language I started practicing listening and speaking more. Then after a while I learned lots of things like how to use all tenses of grammar, I found all what I need to improve my language in the conversational class, for example, passive and active voice, Conditional types, use of different tenses, adjective, adverb, vocabulary, Gerund, infinitives, Pronoun, pronunciation and lots of new vocabulary. Every week I am learning something new and also our teacher is always ready to give us advice about education, libraries, Importance of language in life in Canada.

Moreover, attending this class really helped me a lot in my speaking, listening, writing and reading. I could get a good score in the CLBA test. I am so happy now and I am still going to this class every Saturday. Even when I meet newcomers who need help I tell them my story with this class and how we built communication and friendship between students. For me it was a good experience as I have friends while I am studying. This was also very important to avoid loneliness and stress.

Finally, I would like to thank this organization and our teacher for all that they offered to me and for their support. Today I am comfortable with English and I am not scared of the language. I am more confident as I am volunteering with another organization to learn more about the Canadian system. Finally, I found a job because of the success that I gained from these classes.

B) English Conversational Classes



Objective: Provide students with English language skills to ensure smooth transition and settlement for newcomers and allow them to seek employment, remain social and become active members in their communities.

Our Adult Literacy class language Learners are funded by ECALA. Conversational skills are enhanced in these courses with an emphasis on speaking, grammar and

comprehension. The friendly, supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere of these courses allows students to strengthen their reading and writing skills.

This year, about 34 students have attended our conversational classes (about 110 classes). The members of the highly diverse student body hail from Middleeast, India, Pakistan, Somalia, Korea, Chile and China.

Success Story (Conversational Class)

Mercedes Lagos, a Chilean Canadian who immigrated to Canada 9 years ago, enrolled in the ESL conversation classes run by the Indo Canadian Women Association and funded by ECALA. Her first day as a participant in the class was a difficult one, but one that was the beginning of an incredible and heart-warming journey. Over the course of this one year, she has been a dedicated and regular participant who eventually metamorphosed from a shy individual who was very conscious of her language impediment to a confident Canadian who openly shared her life's journey with her peers amid laughter and tears.

A survivor of cancer, Mercedes had spent countless days in treatment and solitude. She was fortunate to be surrounded by her supportive family and friends who walked her through this difficult journey. Upon achieving remission, she found herself to be a dated Canadian who still needs to assimilate. Her friends and family were all of speakers of Spanish and her language impediment barred her from expanding her social circle to include members who spoke English. Upon the insistence of a friend who herself was a participant of the English classes, Mercedes decided to give the classes a try. "During her first class, the timid and shy Mercedes was literally taught the very basic two letter words and the rudimentary greetings and questions" the Conversational English Instructor said.

Mercedes, through her dedication, hard work, and regular attendance excelled in her classes and was a pleasure to teach. She, along with her peers, was encouraged to speak up, not worrying about mistakes. With this confidence, came ease and, therewith, natural learning. The friendly environment of the class turned class fellows to friends. Together they learned about the Canadian culture, greeting each other, making small talk, speaking about basic daily activities, going shopping, ordering coffee, making a doctor's appointment, learning lifeskills, sharing family stories, and laughing and crying together.

After every class, Mercedes put her skills into practical use. The excitement with which she told her instructor about asking her son to watch her as she ordered coffee by herself brought tremendous joy to her instructor. The happiness she exuded when she updated her instructor and classmates about making and subsequently rescheduling an appointment for a car maintenance by herself for the first time, or scheduling an appointment for her dog, something that she had always delegated to her husband, was happiness beyond words. These simple acts that people can take for granted were the very foundation of her independence. She slowly but surely expanded her social circle, welcoming people of other dialects. She began to befriend her Ukrainian neighbor who she conversed with in English.

A few weeks ago, she happily announced to her instructor that she got accepted for a job from which she was previously rejected on the basis of lack of the ability to communicate in English. Watching Mercedes grow into a confident and independent woman only over the course of one year has been exceptionally rewarding. Mercedes said “I used to struggle with answering the very basic questions in English and now I am confident woman who can communicate emotions and I entered the Canadian workforce which is an extremely satisfying experience”.

C) Citizenship Preparation Class

Objective: to aid immigrants to complete their Citizenship Exams. We teach the voting process, Canadian history, symbols and basic government processes and geography. We educate students on duties of citizens and on constitutional rights and guarantees in the Charter of rights and freedoms.



Our Citizenship preparation Class is instructed by Paul Kalsi, who provides students with essential information to fully understand their rights, responsibilities and values as Canadian citizens. The Class caters to people from multiple walks of life. The instructor spends considerable time ensuring that his students get the best possible experience with unique study material and efficient instruction. In

total, this class served 148 students, 57% were women. This class had a 93% success rate. The students were of diverse backgrounds - Argentinian, Portuguese, Indonesian, Cuban, Fijian, Moroccan, Sudanese, Egyptian, Finnish, Tanzanian, Chinese, Russian, Australian, Bolivian, Pakistani and Indian.

C) Computer Class

Objective: to aid students to advance their careers. Typing and basic computer skills help to ensure immigrants will receive higher positions and therefore achieve greater economic status. They also aid seniors to access information on their own and communicate via email.

Our Computer Literacy classes, instructed by Jaya Saxena, are offered at two levels: basic and intermediate. These classes are attractive to the adult population because they enhance employability. The classes equip our students with the confidence to apply to higher positions and advance in their careers. With the skills acquired from our classes, students are better able to integrate into the Canadian work environment. An improved socio-economic status gives our students independence. The ICWA gratefully acknowledges the funding of the 'Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association' for successfully running these classes.



There were 12 courses in total of which 7 were for Basic and 5 for Intermediate computer classes. The sessions included 48 adults who gained basic knowledge and 34 who opted for intermediate level. Women numbered 98% of the students. Most students hailed from India. Others were from Nepal, Philippines, Puerto Rico, China and Pakistan.

Settlement Services Program

The Settlement and Outreach services of Indo-Canadian Women's Association are essential to our Vision, that all new Canadians will achieve a sense of fulfillment and integration into the Canadian culture and society. Everyone will have an equal opportunity to fully participate in the Canadian society.

The purpose of these services is in alignment with the organization's Mission, to encourage and promote participation by new Canadians in social, economic, and political life in Canada. In seeking this we partner with the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers at the Welcome Centre for Immigrants, funded by Immigrant Refugee and Citizenship Canada, where clients can receive, settlement, employment, mental health as well as other specialised services in a confidential setting.

The ICWA Settlement and Outreach team is dedicated to promoting equality, opportunity and protection of rights for everyone and strives to meet the diverse settlement needs of

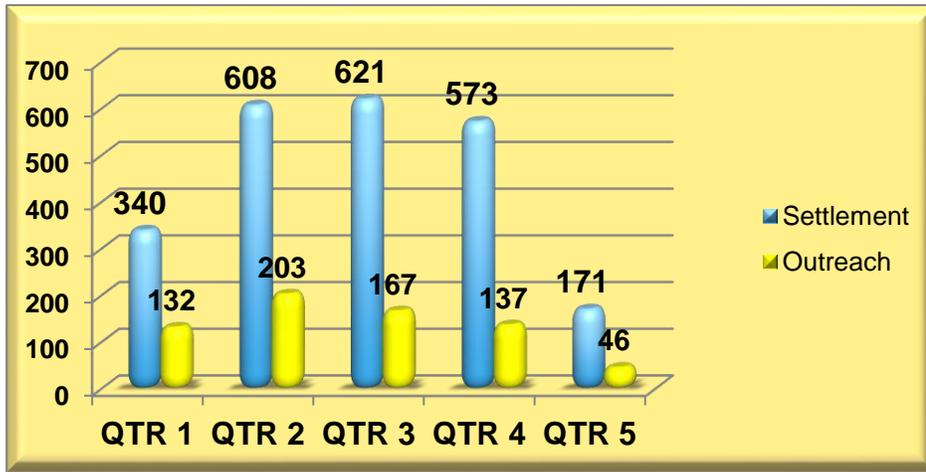
newcomers in Edmonton by offering a wide spectrum of accessible and appropriate and culturally sensitive settlement services.

Settlement Services are designed to welcome newcomers to the community and provide them with the necessary resources to settle and integrate into Canadian society. The service model is unique in the sense that clients remain in control and learn to identify relevant sources of information in the community, learn to extract this information in a timely manner and use it effectively to make informed decisions. They learn about their rights and responsibilities as new Canadian residents, learn to navigate the system and receive effective referrals for employment and career support and resources that would support them in their journey of settlement. Settlement Counselors not only convey valuable information to newcomers at a single forum, but also offer them with an opportunity to mingle and network with other immigrants from different parts of the world. These programs offered by ICWA provide participants with valuable exposure and experience of the diversity that marks Canadian society.

The Newcomer Settlement Orientation program lays a strong foundation for a settlement plan for newcomers built upon in one-on-one sessions or family sessions. Clients are asked to think about and discuss their reasons for choosing Canada as their new home. This is followed by a discussion of their expectations of life in Canada. Finally, they are asked to keep both these elements in mind while charting out their goals to keep a clear focus and eliminate undue stress.

Settlement Practitioners Outreach, reach out to immigrants and community members and service providers in the Mill woods and vicinity, providing information about Settlement services and resources, developing connections and collaborations, spreading awareness, and advocating for immigrants. In the last year, ICWA outreach team established a strong and unique partnership with the Mill woods Town Centre, where a kiosk is now successfully operating as an information unit for community members. Another collaboration was developed with Service Canada where regular presence ensures smooth client referrals. We have monthly information sessions in the Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre and Mill woods Public Health Centre as well. These are a few mentions in a wonderful and long list of partnerships and collaborations where we are working together with other service providers to support immigrants in the community.

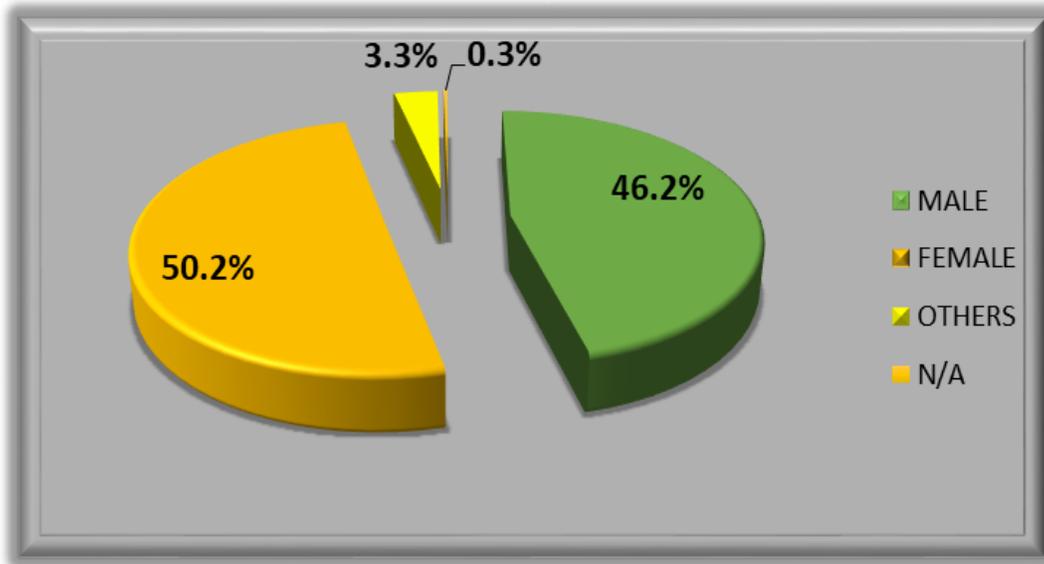
The ICWA Team comprises of a Settlement Team Leader, a Project Coordinator, who are both trained Settlement Counselors, 2 full time Settlement Counselors and 3 Settlement Practitioners Outreach, one of whom is also a fully trained and practicing Settlement Counselor.



#	ACTIVITY	ANNUAL EXPECTATION	YR 1 RESULTS 2017-2018
1	Needs Assessment & Referrals - One on One	720 Individual Sessions	1469
2	Information and Orientation - One on One	1080 individual Sessions	2136
		720 clients	1469
3	Information and Orientation - One on One - Outreach	240 individual sessions	685
		240 clients	685
4	Information & Orientation - Group (WCI & Community)	24 Group Sessions	74
		240 Clients	724
5	Information & Orientation - Outreach Presentations	500 Presentations	2100
		500 Clients	2100

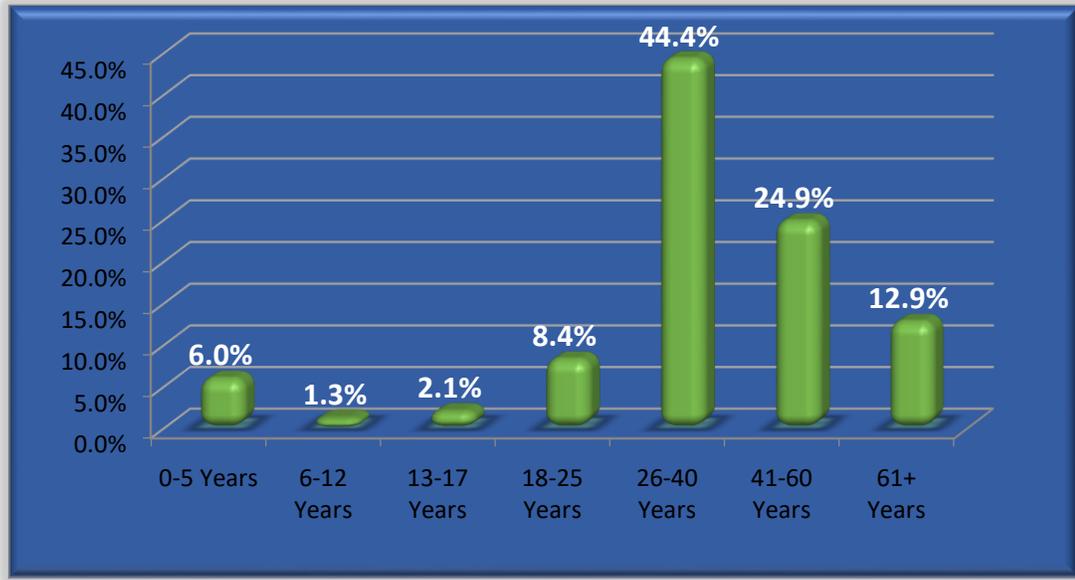
6	Support Services - Translation	50 Interpretation Sessions	188
		50 Clients	188

Clients By Gender



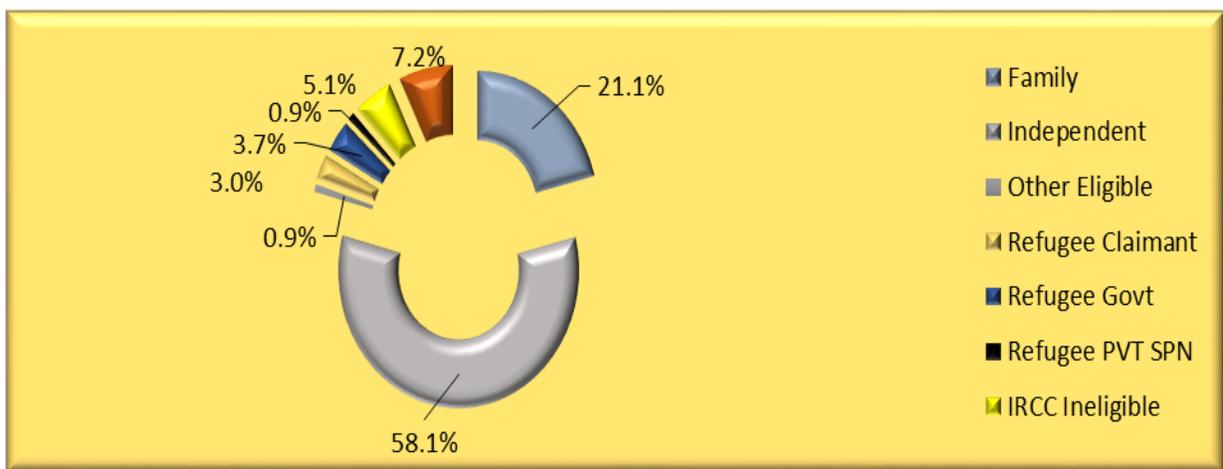
ICWA is proud to support clients from all genders providing equal opportunity and access to services and settlement resources. The figure demonstrates a gender balance among clientele. While ICWA stands with the progress of women and girls in the community, we strongly believe that a healthy community supports all genders by spreading awareness and supporting access to resources.

Clients By Age



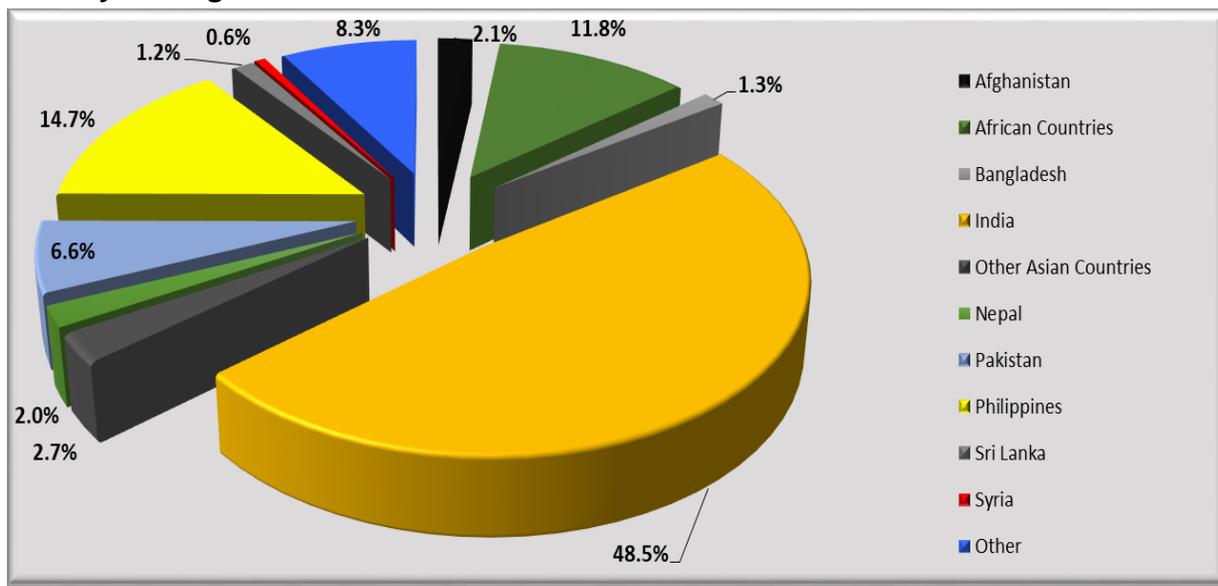
The majority of our clients are between the ages of 26 and 40 years, followed by middle age and senior clientele. Senior Citizens not only have access to mainstream services but are also approached by the Outreach Team to ensure they are aware of resources in the community and do not fall prey to isolation. Some minors also receive services with their parents, such as support at school, citizenship, sports referrals, etc. but very few of these numbers are actually recorded, mostly the adults are registered.

Immigration Category



Independent immigrants remain the highest served segment of clients in alignment with the government’s immigration policies, followed by the family class immigrants. Approximately 5% of the clients come from Refugee backgrounds. The Settlement & Outreach Services are funded by IRCC for Permanent Residents, however an increasing percentage of clients from ineligible categories requires some advocacy, efforts for which have been initiated

Country Of Origin



In accordance to the demographics of Mill woods area, Immigrants from India constitute the largest segment of the clientele receiving Settlement and Outreach Services at the Welcome Centre for Immigrants, followed by other Asian countries. However, the clientele from Philippines is at 14.5%, most of these clients speak English well enough to communicate, since its one of the official languages of Philippines. However in future, ICWA might have to look into including counsellors that speak Filipino languages in the Settlement Team. Clients from all over Africa make up approximately 12% of the demographics at WCI, which is another indication of the languages that could be added to our current portfolio.

In light of the figure depicted above, ICWA is well equipped to provide culturally sensitive settlement and outreach services to the clients at the WCI in a variety of Asian languages.

Community Volunteer Mentorship Program

In an effort to truly support immigrants to call Canada home, it is mandatory to spread awareness about the challenges faced by them in the community. It is also essential to train Canadians from immigrant backgrounds to support others in the community in a culturally sensitive manner. At ICWA we are more focused on spreading the knowledge and empowering as many people as we can. The community volunteer mentorship program is one such initiative where students and community members are trained to learn about and resolve issues faced by new immigrants. These individuals can thus go back to community and support others. This is also an orientation with a multicultural workplace and strong work experience for newer Canadians. Despite the small team, this year, we were able to train 10 volunteers and students from the community, who gained valuable work experience and credentials, and were able to support their community in a more meaningful way. 4 of these were able to find jobs as a result of this experience, while 4 went back to complete their education and 2 are still volunteering with us to build their skill sets while taking up paid freelance projects.

Success Story (Settlement Program)



Sharef Sharf and his wife Chouli Raja, parents of 5 young children, are Syrian Refugees in Canada, sponsored by the Canadian Government to escape the atrocities of war in Syria. Sharef is working full time to support his family but they are struggling with low income and limited English language skills. Chouli is caring for their 9 month old baby and 4 older children, all less than 18 years of age.

Sharef and Chouli came to visit the ICWA Settlement Counselor to seek clarification of a letter they had recently received from CRA. When the couple with their nine months old baby entered the room, the counselor who welcomed them, could see they were extremely worried, but the little one gave him a sweet and innocent smile that can't be expressed in mere words.

With his wife in tears, Sharef explained that she was distressed about a letter from CRA, which a community member had explained to them was asking for proof of residency for the family since January 2016, otherwise they would have to return all the CCB payments made to them for their 5 children since then. They feared the government had asked for too many documents that they wouldn't be able to produce. And they didn't have the money to return the CCB amount. Their distress knew no bounds. That's when a friend referred them to the Welcome Centre for Immigrants for assistance.

When the ICWA Settlement Counselor understood the reason for their anxiety, he comforted them and explained that they had misinterpreted the letter; they would not need to pay anything to CRA, and had nothing to worry about. The counselor explained the contents of the letter to both of them simply and created a precise list of documents they could provide to CRA. The letter from CRA requested information for the family's residency, children's schooling and residency with parents since January 2016. They were given a number of options to choose from to prove this, including their landlords' letter providing complete residency information, school enrolment records for their four children and day care/ doctor appointments for their little one.

The Counselor wrote notes for their landlord, school administration and the baby's pediatrician explaining documents required from each. Sharef wrote in his own words on the back of each note for his own understanding. The Counselor explained to them that CRA writes such letters to many families to verify residency. When Sharef communicated this to Chouli, in Arabic she calmed down a bit and even Sharef's face seemed a little hopeful.

The Counselor advised Sharef to collect and bring all documents for review, however, he couldn't take time off from work and offered to send the documents himself as instructed. So, the counselor made a copy of the letter that CRA sent to him, and suggested he send all original letters from the landlord, doctor and schools along with the original letter from CRA. He was reminded to keep a copy of all letters for his record.

The clients left thanking the counselor, but their faces clearly reflected some lingering doubt, this was because of the stress that they had endured, and it was hard for them to accept that this could actually be so simple. The counselor tried to clarify the situation further and told them to keep him updated.

In the first week of March, the ICWA counselor received a phone call in the early morning at around 8:45 am. It was Sharef Sharf. His bold and confident voice clearly indicated good news! Yes, he received another letter from CRA and he did not need to pay anything! To ensure that there was no further misinterpretation, the counselor asked to see the letter, which the client then forwarded to him. It was a relief to see that the documents the client sent to CRA, were accepted as relevant proof.

"Thank you so much HARI for such a great help. I have promised now that I would directly come to WELCOME CENTRE FOR IMMIGRANTS if I have any confusing and scaring issue!"

Success Story (Settlement Program)



Diwakar Sharma is a Nepali by birth; before he came to Canada in 2014 as a foreign worker, he was working in Dubai. Approved for Permanent Residence in 2017, he was excited about his new status in Canada; he could now invite his wife and 4-year old son to join him in Canada. He wanted to learn all about his rights and benefits also needed support with managing his finances before his family joined him; he was concerned about job insecurity.

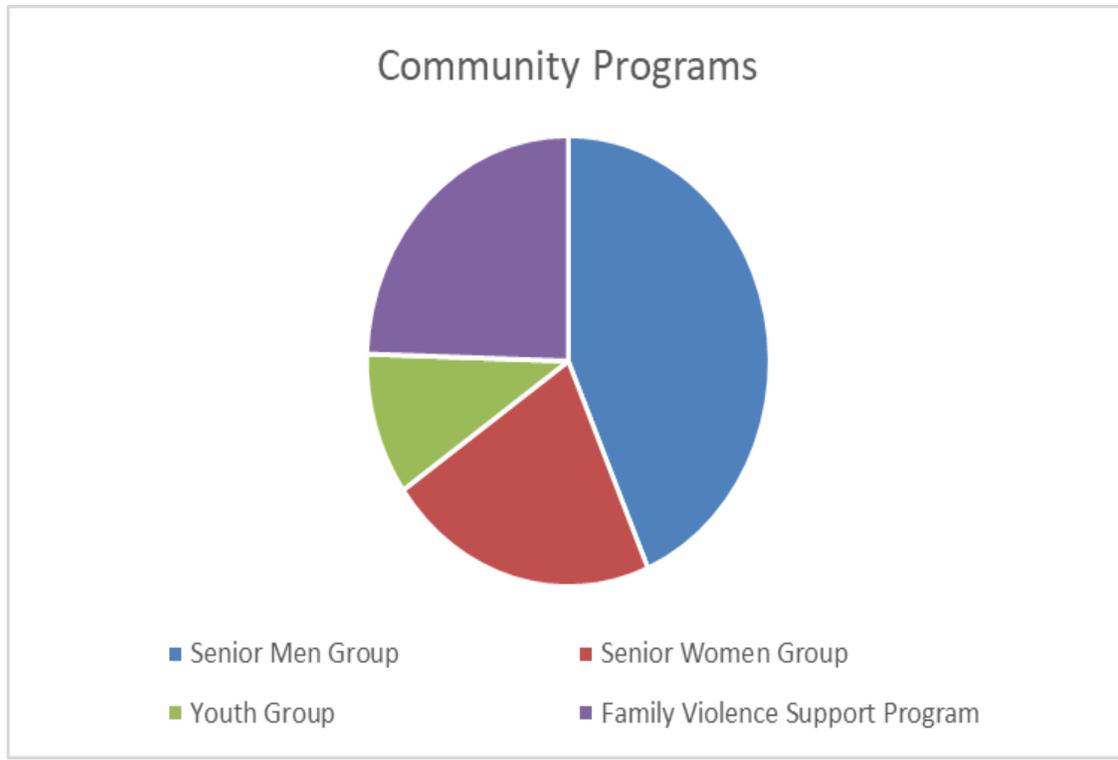
At the Welcome Centre for Immigrants, Diwakar received orientation about settlement resources, his rights and responsibilities and the benefits available to him and those that would be extended to his family upon arrival. He was ecstatic to see how much support was available to new immigrants and he had no idea about any of these before he met with the ICWA Settlement Counselor!

Diwakar received guidance on his sponsorship application for his wife and child and is now waiting for the processing to complete before they can join him. Meanwhile he was also concerned about his job status, employed now, he could be laid off any time, how would he provide for his family?

The ICWA Settlement Counselor referred Diwakar to employment and career support provided by EMCN at WCI for support with finding another, more secure position and orientated him with the Employment insurance benefits in the unfortunate event of a lay off and explained the application process. Diwakar could not believe he would have so much support available!

“I can’t believe that the government provides such resources and benefits, thank God I came to see you at WCI!”

Community Programs



A) Youth Development Program

Objective: provide young immigrants a platform where they can discuss their problems, look for solutions and engage in various activities.



The Indo Canadian Women's Association (ICWA) has been running its Youth Development Program since 2006. This program was developed to integrate young people into the Multicultural communities of Canada. It assists young people by providing them with a platform to discuss their issues and concerns in regards to dislocation from their home country into Canadian society.

We aim at helping these youth function as productive citizens of Canada. Most of our activities emphasize the roles of youth in civic, education, global citizenship and leadership.

The Youth Summer Leadership Program ran many activities over the 2017 summer, including an anti-oppression training, movie screening, and a picnic. Participants also got the chance to learn from facilitators from different organizations, such as the Pride Centre of Edmonton and the Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton. 12 youth were recruited.

B) Seniors Program

Objective: to make seniors self-reliant, healthy and secure.

Seniors are often house bound due to language and mobility challenges. They find it hard to learn winter sports and have little desire to go for a walk or any exercise. Consequently, most remain isolated, especially in the long winter months, and feel bored, sad and depressed. Community based supportive counselling helps to alleviate these problems. Each meeting is attended by 25-30 men who discuss various issues. During the sessions, attendees are informed about recreational activities available to them in the city, and to



supports such as Alberta Seniors Benefit. The total number of seniors attended our seniors sessions is 50. The topics discussed in seniors group sessions have included:

- Income tax returns filling for seniors. Free filling
- Senior's benefit from Alberta government
- Canada pension plan. (CPP)
- Old age security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement

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Affordable housing for low income person

- General sale tax refund .(GST)
- Special need assistance programme for seniors
- Leisure access program pass
- Long term care for seniors
- Stress management for seniors
- Survival benefits for seniors
- Banking special benefit for seniors
- Property management for senior in Canada
- Elder abuse in Canada
- Entertainment for seniors
- Volunteer work for seniors
- Change and social behaviour settlement in Canada □ Keeping Healthy relationship with your partner.

C) Women's Wellness Program:

Objective: To promote wellness, community dialogue and improve social connections amongst women, in particular, those who are newcomers.



Many women suffer from social, linguistic, economic and sponsorship-related isolation as well as dependency on their husbands, adult children and children-in-law. Many immigrant women are also isolated by lack of access to transport, by language barriers (inability to converse in English and French) and by cultural norms that subtly or more directly discourage women's participation in community and public activities.

Through Women's Wellness Program that was conducted for three months, ICWA provided safe spaces for 12 women to form new friendships, to access natural supports, to exchange life experiences and skills, and to engage in communal activities that strengthen their knowledge and sense of connection to the Edmonton community.

Ten sessions have been led and facilitated by ICWA Board Member Papiya Das. The sessions taught participants how to make the best use of their mental and physical health. In addition, participants learnt how to build on cultural values and experiences to stay healthy. Sessions included how to overcome negative thinking and build on personal strengths. Supportive

individual counselling were delivered to all participants. The topics discussed in group sessions have included:

- Anger, causes of anger, how to deal with anger and natural remedies for anger relief
- Stress relief through Yoga
- Depression, causes of depression and natural remedies of depression
- Laughter, benefits of laughter
- Employment
- Healthy breathing habits
- Improving self-esteem , assertive skills and a problem solving strategy
- How to stay healthy, proper exercise, healthy diet, good sleep habits.

Other activities

Domestic Violence

ICWA has handled 40 cases of women facing domestic violence. Our team provided critical, informational, confidential and emotional support to women fleeing violence. These referral services help women to rebuild their lives after escaping violence. ICWA provides resources for women seeking safety from violence in the following ways:

- Conducts needs assessment / intake of the women fleeing domestic violence and perform ongoing periodic evaluation.
- Provides emotional support to women who are fleeing violence through active listening and respecting the women's choices and decisions.
- Refer them to Emergency Women shelters and other specialized agencies
- Housing support services
- Assist women in getting Alberta Works financial benefits
- Provides help in accessing additional support such as legal advice and counselling.
- Help them to improve their safety and build their confidence
- Provides help in translation in Punjabi, Hindi and Arabic languages
- Provides them up to date information of relevant community resources

Partnerships, Trainings, conferences and presentations

A) Diverse Voices for Change Initiative

ICWA had a partnership with the City of Edmonton in the national Diverse Voices for Change Initiative. Besides Edmonton, participating municipalities include Halifax, London, Sioux Lookout and Montreal. For Edmonton, this initiative is championed by Councilor Esslinger with staff support from Multicultural Relations, Indigenous Relations, the Women's Initiative as well as members from the Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton. The purpose is to establish stronger partnerships between municipalities and community organizations to build larger networks of women who can be enlisted to support municipal governments and shared goals or projects. Another objective is to provide municipalities with expertise and tools in areas of

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inclusive consultation, participatory processes, policy development, gender and anti-racism training, and leadership development and research.

On Feb 16, 2018, the ICWA ED, Manal Alnajjar, Project Director, Dr. Amrita Mishra, Project Coordinator, Tripat Kaur and Settlement Team Leader, Saima Tanwir attended the Women's Symposium organised by the WAVE Committee of the City of Edmonton, to applaud and promote leadership among women. This was a rich session, facilitated and attended by women who are high achievers in different walks of life from a variety of professions and backgrounds.

B) Launch of Senior Report:

In the context of unprecedented growth in senior population in Canada, Indo-Canadian Women's Association organized a seminar and community discussion on Nov 16, 2016, with the purpose to identify and reflect on challenges faced by seniors in daily living.

The findings of this seminar were documented in a report, authored by Dr. Zohra Husaini (ICWA) and Yavar Hameed (Hameed Law) in

May 2017 [Insert the link for seminar](#). A community session was organized on July 21st, 2017 to present the findings of this report to various stakeholders in the community.



Dr. Zohra Husaini provided an overview of the seminar organized in Nov 2016, acknowledged partners. It was a success in terms of attendance as well as issues highlighted. Issues were voices by seniors themselves also noted by a government of AB advocate and cited hope for the future.

Mohinder Banga, City Councilor for Ward 12 appreciated the contributions of seniors in the community during their peek days as well as after reaching seniority. Dr. Amrita Mishra presented the report to the audience with the focus on Background, aims & principles, planning and organization, findings and steps ahead. The presentation concluded with an inspiring and empowering video.

After presentation of the report, floor was opened for a Q&A session from community members and a discussion ensued.

C) Presentation to Calgary Counselling Centre, RCMP and Calgary Police Service

On January 10, 2018 Amrita Mishra, project director "Working in Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls" presented ICWA work against extended/conjugal family violence (aka so-called honour violence) to Calgary's Shame-Honor Based Violence (SHBV) Committee,

which involves consultations amongst RCMP, Calgary and Edmonton Police, and the Calgary Counselling Centre. Amrita's 50 minute talk covered the project's (I) aims, concepts and perspectives, (II) findings of the 2016 needs assessment (link <https://tinyurl.com/ycbfxbdh>), and (III) collaborative development and implementation of a responsive and competent referral system and service model. The talk was well-received and the ICWA findings and steps were validated by service providers in the audience. The SHBV's own needs assessment cites the ICWA needs assessment and describes patterns of violence and systemic gaps similar to those detected in Edmonton.

D) Minister Hussein and Minister Sohi's Visit to ICWA Office



The ICWA was also proud to host a round table meeting with the Honourable Ahmed D. Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship on Monday, March 12, 2018. The Minister highlighted the significance of ICWA's role in providing support to new immigrants and victims of domestic violence and discussed important updates in the upcoming budget. The was also an opportunity for ICWA and partners to advocate the concerns and issues of new

immigrants, to which the Minister was very responsive and assured that his team would look into these further and take necessary measures for support.

Honourable Amarjeet Sohi Minister of Infrastructure and Communities visited the IndoCanadian Women's Association on March 08, 2018 and met with the Board, staff and community partners and appreciated the work and contribution of the organization in the community. He received updates about various projects about the organization, and was very pro-active in offering support and mediation where the organization was facing system deadlocks when supporting the community and assured complete cooperation in future as well. This was an extremely encouraging visit where ICWA was able to highlight concerns of community members.

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E) Resource Fair



- On Jan 27, 2018, WCI and ICWA participated in the Resource Fair hosted by MLA Christina Gray at Mill Woods Seniors and Multicultural Center. More than 30 organizations/ agencies had the opportunity to showcase their resources and services to the community members. It was a one-stop shop to learn about the additional resources provided by various agencies in Edmonton. More than 200 people came to learn about the services provide by Government of Alberta, non -profits and other community service agencies.

Edmonton Women’s Initiative planned an exciting, informative and interesting program to help celebrate girls and women and International Women’s Day on March 8, 2018 at City hall. ICWA got the opportunity to participate in the resource fair to showcase their resources and services to the community members and other organizations.

- Indo Canadian Women’s Association and Canadians for civil society celebrated Daughter’s Day on September 9, 2017 at the City hall. ICWA also participated in the resource fair to connect with the other community organizations in the city.
- On May 17th, 2017, Indo Canadian Women’s Association participated in the Resource Fair at the Symposium “Building Empathy, Conquering Apathy” held at MacEwan University on International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

D) Community Events and Workshops

- On Mar 05 & 06, Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Shazia Ambreen and Settlement Team Leader, Saima Tanwir, attended the 2018 Alberta Healthy Communities Symposium organised by Communities ChooseWell and Alberta Health Services Alberta Cancer Prevention Legacy Fund, aimed at developing and fostering healthy and inclusive communities.
- On Feb 21, 2018, Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Biya Babu attended a webinar on “Respectful Workplace” organised by ACHIEVE, discussing strategies to maintain a healthy workplace environment.
- On Feb 22, 2018, Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Shazia Ambreen represented ICWA at the Edmonton Global Talent Conference a networking event organised by the Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council.

- On Jan 09, 2018, Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Biya Babu attended an information session organised by Caregivers Alberta at the WCI for smooth referral of clients.
- On November 16 and 17, 2017, Manal Alnajjar Executive Director and Tripat Kaur, Project Coordinator attended 17th Annual Diverse Voices Family Violence Conference. The conference covered many aspects of family violence, including the sharing of personal stories.
- November 7, the Executive Director Manal Alnajjar attended Research Action Day that was organized by the Edmonton Local Immigration Partnership (ELIP) - the City of Edmonton.

Training Courses attended by Settlement Team

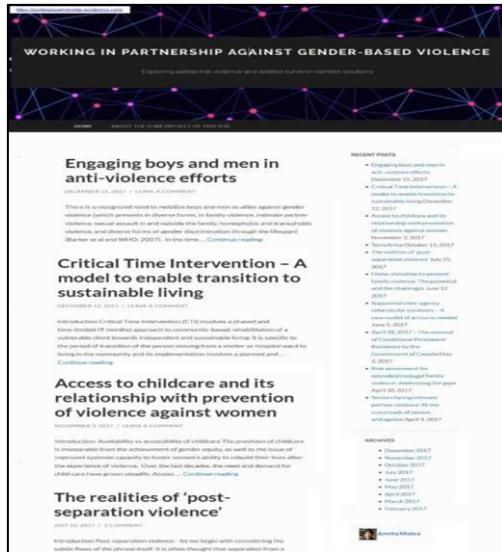
- On Mar 30 and 31, 2017, Outreach Worker Shazia Ambreen attended training course on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder conducted by McGill University.
- On Mar 16, 2018, the ICWA Settlement and Outreach team attended a presentation by the EMCN team on the Rainbow Refuge, a support and welcome network for LGBTQ Refugees. Funded by IRCC, this program aims to support LGBTQ refugee claimants in a safe environment.
- On Mar 07, 2018, Settlement Team Leader, Saima Tanwir, attended a webinar on “Criminal inadmissibility” organised by Canadian Council for Refugees, to understand the concept and consequences of inadmissibility for non-citizens. This was a highly informative session in terms of supporting clients who may be facing such challenges.
- On Mar 05, 2018, Settlement Counselor, Farah Fatima participated in a webinar, “Dealing with difficult people” organised by Achieve, Centre for Leadership & Workplace Performance to support conflict resolution in the workplace.
- On Mar 01, 2018, Settlement Team Leader, Saima Tanwir, attended webinar organised by Charity Village to better support the Settlement and Outreach Team on “How to give feedback that drives engagement and performance”
- On Mar 2, 2018, Settlement Counselor, Farah Fatima participated in an online training, “Active Listening” organised by NAIT, AB, as refresher for supportive listening skills and better needs assessment of clients.
- Feb. 08, 2018, Settlement Team Leader, Saima Tanwir, attended webinar organised by Charity Village and: “Inspire your staff to reach their full potential”

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- On Jan 19, 2018, the ICWA Settlement and Outreach team attended a presentation by Refugee Sponsorship Training Program coordinator, a program funded by IRCC and aimed at educating community members on the process for refugee sponsorship.
- On Jan 25, 2018, Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Biya Babu attended a training on Stress Management at NAIT. The session focused on self reflection and stress management strategies.
- On Nov 24, 2017, the ICWA Settlement Staff participated in the EMCN Staff day to strengthen the current partnership model and also learn about other EMCN services for improved client support. Information about ICWA Services and partnership was also provided to participants on the occasion.
- Nov 21 to Dec 12, 2017 Settlement Counselor Hari Rijal and Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Shazia Ambreen attended an online AAISA training “Basic Counselling Skills in Cross Cultural Context”. This was an extremely useful training session in development and fine tuning of Settlement Skills for the staff when supporting new immigrants to Canada from diverse backgrounds.

- On Nov 10, 2017 the ICWA Settlement Staff participated in a training session conducted by ACT Alberta relating to Human Trafficking, an informative session providing counselors with tools and resources to assess and better support any new immigrants who may be victims of trafficking.
- On Nov 01, 2017, Settlement Practitioner Outreach, Biya Babu attended a training organized by Edmonton Stantec, “Developing Cultural Dexterity in Your Organization”, a session aimed at promoting and accepting diverse cultures at the workplace.
- On Oct 26 & 27, 2017, ICWA Settlement Staff participated in EMCN peer training to refresh and update Settlement concepts and resources and learn from each other’s experiences in a team environment.
- On Oct 13, 2017, Settlement Counselor Hari Rijal was invited by Action for Healthy Communities (AHC) to act as a panelist in an information session for newcomer Nepali community. This was also an opportunity for him to present the Settlement services at WCI and other ICWA services to the members of the Nepali community and AHC staff.

Publicity, Promotion, and Networking



The website <https://workinginpartnership.wordpress.com/> aims to create a community of practice for all who aim to support survivors of gender violence (encompassing family violence). The site has 39 articles, combining video, pictures and text, with topics that range the spectrum of anti-violence practice - prevention, early and late intervention, rehabilitation, and community education. The posts aim to foster dialogue, debate and awareness of the global prevalence of gender violence by sharing excerpts of interviews with anti-violence service specialists, related commentary and analysis, and relevant web links.

- Amrita Mishra authored an article on the implications of “The removal of Conditional Permanent Residence by the Government of Canada” (on April 28, 2017) published in the Mill Woods Mosaic on May 15, 2017. In brief, the article commented that the 2012 imposition of CPR kept immigrant spouses and partners from disclosing abuse due to fear that they would be deported if they left their abusive spouse during the first two years of entering Canada as a sponsored spouse or partner. Thus, the removal of CPR removed one significant official barrier to help seeking by abused spouses and partners. It sends positive messages about where Canada stands on the rights of immigrant women to live lives of safety and parity. The article can be read here:

<https://workinginpartnership.wordpress.com/2017/05/02/april-28-2017-the-removal-of-conditional-permanent-residence-by-the-government-of-canada/>



Administration and Governance

The Board of Directors

The Indo-Canadian Women’s Association is managed by a volunteer board that looks after its finance, governance and policy-making. All members of the Board and the invited members at large are dedicated women with expertise and distinction in various walks of life. They dedicate their valuable time and services in many different ways.

ICWA BOARD MEMBERS

Ratna Basappa	President	
Dr. Zohra Husani		Vice President
Jagjeet Bhardwaj	Treasurer	
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Miriam Thomas		Director
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Dr. Rashmi Jyoti	Director	
Mita Das	Director	

ICWA STAFF

Manal Alnajjar Executive Director

Dr. Amrita Mishra Project Director

Tripat Kaur Office & Project Coordinator

Saima Tanwir Settlement Team Leader

Farah Fatima Settlement Counselor

Hari Rijal Settlement Counselor

Shazia Ambreen Settlement Practitioner Outreach

Rajbir Kharod Settlement Practitioner Outreach

Biya Babu Settlement Practitioner Outreach

Paul Kalsi Outreach Worker—Citizenship Instructor

Jaya Saxena Computer Instructor

Chouaib El Bouhali ESL Instructor

Tulin Sadouzai Seniors English Conversational Instructor

Alka Thakur Seniors Project Facilitator

Acknowledgements

Partners:

- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN)
- City of Edmonton

- John Humphrey Centre For Peace & Human Rights Rotary Club of Edmonton South
- Today Family Violence Help Centre
- YWCA Edmonton
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW; Edmonton Chapter)
- Mill Woods Seniors Activity Center (MWSAC)
- SAHAARA- A Community Centre
- Hameed law

Sponsors

The Indo Canadian Women's Association would like to express its gratitude to the following sponsors for their generous donations.

- James Brown & Associates
- Rotary Club of Edmonton South
- Servus Credit Union
- Singhmar Family
- SAHAARA- A Community Centre

ICWA Funders

The ICWA especially thanks the following agencies and organizations for their continuous support for our projects and programs:

- Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Status of Women Canada
- AGLC Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
- Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association

- Edmonton Community Foundation
- City of Edmonton
- New Horizons for Seniors Program- Service Canada
- Employment and Social development- Service Canada
- Aabhaar

