



CIWA

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

SHAPING THE FUTURE

Strategic Plan 2012-2017

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PART 1: DEVELOPING THE 2012-2017 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Planning Process

CIWA has undergone a major period of growth and expansion in the last 5 years.

The evolution of CIWA's role as a major immigrant serving agency parallels the significant changes in Canadian immigration at the local, provincial and federal levels. The growth of CIWA, combined with external trends in immigration, forms the foundation of CIWA's 2012-2017 Strategic Plan (the "Plan"). This Plan presents CIWA's strategic goals for the future

and provides the framework for a more detailed Business Plan and budget to follow.

CIWA's strategic planning process was launched in January 2011 with a series of in-depth and comprehensive external consultations with key stakeholders, including CIWA's funders, partners and other major Calgary immigrant serving agencies.

The focus of these external consultations was as follows:

- *With funders:* clarification of funding priorities, and CIWA's successes in meeting these expectations
- *With CIWA's partners:* opportunities for ongoing and new collaborations
- *With other major Calgary immigrant serving agencies:* CIWA's distinctive role as an immigrant service provider and innovative means to work together

In parallel with external consultations, internal consultations were conducted with CIWA's senior and middle managers and the Board of Directors (the "Board"). The purpose of these consultations was to gain the unique perspectives of internal decision-makers on CIWA's successes and challenges. The Plan was developed during a review of the consultation results at a Board/Senior Management planning session in April of 2011.

The new Plan outlines how CIWA will respond to the needs of its clients by developing programs and services that address immigration trends and issues. It emphasizes CIWA's ongoing path towards building its capacity and achieving a more sustainable future. Above all, this Plan emphasizes CIWA's dedication to putting its clients first by delivering the most effective strategies to connect immigrants and refugees to their new communities in Calgary.

List of Stakeholder Consultations

Category	Organization	Position	Consultation
CIWA	Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	Executive & Board Directors	Planning Session Focus Groups
		Senior Managers	
		Middle Managers	
Major Calgary Immigrant Serving Agencies	Immigrant Services Calgary	Chief Executive Director	Questionnaire
	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Executive Directors	
	Centre for Newcomers		
	Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth		
	Calgary Immigrant Educational Society		
CIWA Funders	Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Settlement Officers	Interview
	Alberta Employment and Immigration	Consultant, Settlement & Community Support, Integration Program	
	Alberta Child and Youth Services	Policy Analyst	
	United Way of Calgary and Area	Planner, Community Investments & Collaborations	
	City of Calgary Family and Community Support Services	Social Planner	
CIWA Partners	Calgary Catholic School District	Supervisor, ESL	Interview
	Calgary Board of Education	Director, Diversity & Learning Support	
	Alberta Health Services	Manager, Reducing Disparities	
	Alberta Network of Immigrant Women	Executive Directors	
	Jewish Family Services Calgary		
	Making Changes Employment Association of Alberta		

Achievements of the Past Five Years

Increased Client Base

- Tripled the number of clients we serve on an annual basis
- Offered programs and services in 102 community locations
- Started a new Employment Services Department with specific employment focus
- Increased the number of professional programs and services to 38 programs
- Started customized integration programs for senior immigrant women
- Produced a number of specialized program curriculum manuals

Strengthened our Capacity

- Quadrupled our revenues to increase our annual budget to the current amount of \$7,100,000
- More than doubled our office space in downtown Calgary
- Provided 7,988 professional development hours for agency staff
- Contributed 94,606 volunteer hours through 1,591 volunteers
- Achieved full agency capacity in the Human Resources and Information Technology areas
- Implemented a new state of the art Client Case Management System

Expanded Partnerships

- Collaborated with 415 community organizations and corporations
- Increased support for community partners by raising over \$25,000 for the United Way

Increased Visibility Locally, Nationally and Internationally

- Conducted 121 media interviews/promotions of our work
- Produced a book *“Proud Women- a collection of stories”* that is available in all Calgary Public Libraries
- Presented at national and international conferences

Received Recognition as a Leading Immigrant Serving Agency

Nominations	United Way Spirit of Gold Awards
	Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary Inclusive Community Award
	Immigrants of Distinction Organizational Diversity Award
	Volunteer Calgary Leader in Volunteer Engagement
Awards	Government of Canada Citizenship Award
	Literacy Alberta Award of Excellence
	Calgary Board of Education Lighthouse Award
	ConocoPhillips Youth of Distinction Award
	Women of Vision Award
	Calgary Learns Lola Award
Calgary Womens Emergency Shelter Tulip Award	

PART 2: CURRENT SITUATION

Environmental Scan

a) Immigration in Canada¹

The Government of Canada will focus its actions on three major areas of immigration in the next few years: economic immigration, family reunification and refugee support. The federal government plans to maintain high immigration levels to help sustain Canada's economic recovery. Like many other countries with ageing populations and low birth rates, Canada will soon lack sufficient people to keep its work force growing.

It is estimated that 240,000 - 265,000 new permanent residents will come to Canada in 2011.

As a result, all of Canada's labour force growth will come from immigration within the next five years. Sixty percent (60%) of these immigrants will come through economic streams. The Federal Skilled Worker Program remains a significant portion of the economic category. This program admits a range of workers, including technicians, skilled tradespersons, managers and professionals, who help to supplement the Canadian-born work force. In addition, a higher range of spouses and children will be admitted under the family reunification program. Furthermore, in keeping with recent reforms to Canada's refugee system, Canada has committed to increasing total refugee resettlement by 2,500 individuals from 2011 – 2013.

The Canadian government has identified three strategic outcomes with aligned program activities to achieve long-term results:

- Migration that significantly benefits economic, social and cultural development
 - Selection/processing of permanent and temporary residents
- International recognition of managed migration and protection
 - Selection/processing of refugees
- Successful integration of newcomers into society
 - Citizenship processing and promotion

Percentage of new immigrants by categories:

- ***economic class: 60.5%***
- ***sponsored family members: 28.4%***
- ***refugees: 8.6%***

b) Immigration in Alberta²

Alberta is the fourth largest immigrant-receiving province in Canada. With an average of 25,087 new immigrants annually, immigration to Alberta has been increasing steadily from 2006 to 2010. The number of immigrants arriving in Alberta grew 57.6% over this four-year period. Temporary foreign workers have become an important part of Alberta's workforce, with substantial increases to their numbers in the last few years. It is estimated that Alberta may face a potential shortfall of more than 77,000 workers in the next ten years.

The Alberta government's immigration policy outlines a strategic framework for a more coordinated approach across ministries to address the needs of Alberta's immigrant population.

¹Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration 2010, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and 2010 – 2011 Report on Plans and Priorities, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

²Alberta Immigration Progress Report 2011, Employment and Immigration

The policy features four strategic directions for meeting its goals:

- *Welcoming communities* ... ensure immigrants have opportunities to participate fully in the social, cultural and economic life of the province, without discrimination.
- *Attracting immigrants to Alberta* ... increase the proportion of Canadian immigrants landing in Alberta to 10% of Canadian landings.
- *Living in Alberta* ... ensure immigrants receive the community supports necessary to successfully settle in and adapt to Alberta society.
- *Working in Alberta* ... improve processes to recognize and use immigrants' qualifications and skills gained outside Alberta.

c) Immigration in Calgary³

Calgary is the fourth largest destination city for new immigrants to Canada and the top destination choice of new immigrants to Alberta. The immigrant population, which comprised 24% of Calgary's population in 2006, is expected to increase to 30% of the population in 2031. The Philippines, India and China continue to be the leading source countries for immigrants to Calgary.

The City of Calgary plays a vital role in contributing to the successful integration of immigrants and creating a welcoming community that meets the diverse needs of all Calgarians.

It has identified five strategic initiatives to meet the needs and interests of the immigrant population:

- Economic and social integration
- Intergovernmental relations
- Service access and equity
- Advocacy, communication, public awareness and education
- Special populations

A key goal of Calgary's economic and social integration initiative is to build linkages with immigrant serving agencies to enable immigrants to enter the mainstream as soon as possible.

Challenges for Calgary Immigrant Serving Agencies

Increased Demand for Services without Increased Funding

While federal government funding on immigration increased significantly from 2006 – 2011, the funding has stabilized with no increases to planned funding for 2012 – 2013. Yet, immigration to Alberta will continue to increase steadily over the next ten years. As a result, immigrant serving agencies will be facing an increased demand for programs and services without increased funding support. The lack of additional funding will require agencies to devote time and effort to finding alternative sources of revenues at the same time that they will be strained to capacity to meet client needs.

³Framework and Implementation Plan, Welcoming Community Policy, Community & Neighbourhood Services, 2010

Increased Resettlement and Integration Challenges

Immigrants to Calgary face increasing barriers to successful integration, including the high cost of living, lack of affordable housing, and difficulties in finding meaningful employment. The struggles to find and maintain affordable, appropriate housing result in high levels of precarious housing and increased neighbourhoods of concentrated poverty. Unless the cycle of poverty is broken for many new immigrants, the cycle will continue for their children as they grow up. Similarly, the lack of recognition of foreign credentials and work experience can contribute to deepening levels of poverty, stress and poor physical and mental health for many immigrants.

Higher Needs of Refugees

As an immigrant population with individualized needs, refugees require the provision of a complex variety of services through a long-term approach. Refugees are affected by increased physical and mental health issues as well as the trauma from violence. Essential agency capacities to work with refugees include specialized knowledge and skills in assessment and referral, crisis intervention, case management and communication with distressed children.

CIWA's Strengths

In consultations with CIWA stakeholders, Board and staff, the following strengths were identified as unique to CIWA, and as major advantages in responding to immigration challenges.

Focus on Immigrant and Refugee Women

CIWA's focus on immigrant and refugee women was seen by all stakeholders as one of the major elements of CIWA's unique role within the immigrant sector. Its focus on immigrant women however extends far beyond the provision of services and emphasizes the support and empowerment of women across cultures. By offering a safe place for women, CIWA demonstrates a commitment to helping immigrant women gain control of all areas of their lives.

A Holistic Approach to Service Delivery

The ability to focus on families rather than individuals as the 'unit of analysis' is cited as one of the strategic capacities that is unique to the immigrant serving sector.⁴ While CIWA concentrates on immigrant and refugee women, its programs and services involve the whole family. Its holistic support for the family involves an inter-generational approach that includes the nurturing of children, skill-building for youth and access to community supports for seniors.

Cultural Competencies

CIWA values the importance of culture in the delivery of services to all segments of the organization. Cultural competency is practiced at all levels of the organization, i.e. policy; governance (Board); administration; workforce (staff/volunteers) and consumers (clients). Diversity and cultural competency is reflected in the Board, staff, volunteers, clients and cultural competency policies.

***Other organizations rely on them
[CIWA] ... look to them for cultural
competency.***

⁴Reconfiguring Settlement and Integration: A Service Provider Strategy for Innovation and Results, Meyer Burstein, Canadian Immigrant Sector Alliance, 2010.

Currently, CIWA's Board Members and staff speak 49 different languages while volunteers provide interpretation and translation services in 40 languages. Volunteers enhance CIWA's cultural competency by providing first language, face-to-face support to staff and clients as well as ensuring that CIWA's resources and communication materials effectively reach the greater immigrant community. The cultural sensitivity of the staff and volunteers provides a specialized knowledge and understanding of their clients and the ability to offer services within a safe, non-threatening environment.

CIWA's focus on cultural competency is demonstrated through the following examples of organizational policies and practices:

- *Organizational Structure* ... CIWA incorporates language, race, ethnicity, customs, family structures and community dynamics in developing managements and service delivery strategies.
- *Policy and Decision-Making* ... culturally diverse people in the community are consulted to identify key diversity issues.
- *Service Delivery* ... barriers preventing culturally diverse people from having access to services are identified and removed. CIWA projects evolve from assessments made to determine the needs of the immigrant community, to implement services that will minimize or completely remove those barriers.
- *Community Relations* ... CIWA collaborates with culturally diverse individuals, groups and organizations, as well as utilizes the cultural expertise of community leaders in planning and delivering services.
- *Communication* ... CIWA attempts to serve its clients in their first language in order to effectively remove barriers in communication. Brochures are translated and uploaded on the webpage in such languages as Punjabi, Mandarin, Spanish and Arabic.

CIWA has managed its growth better than any other Calgary immigrant serving agency

Meeting Funder Priorities

Government funders have a variety of criteria for selecting an immigrant serving agency for funding, including their own government's immigration strategies, expected targets, and agency efficiency and value. CIWA is highly regarded by government funders for credibility and transparency in working with government representatives and agencies.

CIWA's specific strengths as noted by funders include:

- Expertise in addressing current community needs
- Always meeting funders expectations and targets
- Capacity to do the work
- Positive program design and outcomes
- Responding quickly to changing funder priorities
- Innovative, skilled leadership team

Strong Partnerships and Collaboration

CIWA has developed strong partnerships and collaboration with other major Calgary immigrant serving agencies as well as diverse educational, health and social service agencies. These agencies have a specialized knowledge of CIWA's growth within the immigrant sector.

During consultations, these stakeholders described CIWA's successes in evolving as an immigrant-service agency:

- Expansion in quality of services
- Expansion in programming, especially in the employment area
- Tuned in to the needs of the community
- Very perceptive to the needs of women
- Greater visibility
- Increased professionalism and credibility
- Ongoing development of new and unique programs

Decentralized Services

A 'place-based' ability to channel services to neighbourhoods and to promote 'bridging' between mainstream and newcomer communities is another strategic capacity of immigrant serving agencies⁵. Through strong partnerships, CIWA is able to offer community-based programs in 102 locations throughout Calgary. These programs are planned and delivered through collaborations with community leaders and organizations which utilize their cultural expertise.

In addition to one-time community events, CIWA's community-based programs include:

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)

- LINC offers free English instruction for immigrant and refugee women who are permanent residents. The program also provides senior-specific language classes at beginner and intermediate levels.
- Offered at CIWA's downtown offices and the Calgary Jiang Zhe Shanghai Association

Cross-Cultural Parenting Program (CCPP)

- CCPP is a unique cross-cultural parent education program that assists immigrant and refugee parents facing the added challenge of parenting in a new country and culture.
- Offered in 11 locations

Youth Program

- This program provides group and individual support to address the needs and concerns of culturally diverse women between the ages of 10-19 years. It also provides the opportunity for youth to be engaged in their community.
- Offered in 19 schools and Calgary Housing complexes

Pebbles in the Sand

- This program is designed for immigrant and refugee women with 0-7 years of education and little-to-no literacy skills in their mother tongue. The program addresses: English language skills, literacy/family literacy, life skills, health, education, parenting and access to community resources.
- Offered in 8 locations

⁵ *Reconfiguring Settlement and Integration: A Service Provider Strategy for Innovation and Results*, Meyer Burstein, Canadian Immigrant Sector Alliance, 2010.

Small Multicultural Immigrants Learning Early Strategies (SMILES) Childcare

- SMILES Childcare is offered for children aged 6 months to 6 years, and is free of charge for parents participating in CIWA programs. It incorporates a school-readiness component to help children integrate into the Canadian school system.
- Offered in 6 locations

Engaging Immigrant Seniors

- This project offers senior immigrant women over the age of 50 the opportunity to engage in the community.
- Offered in 5 locations

Family Conflict Program

- This program provides professional, culturally sensitive counselling and support groups for immigrant/refugee women and their families who are experiencing transition challenges, relationship problems, abuse and trauma.
- Offered in 6 locations

New Friends and Neighbourhood Groups (NFNG)

- NFNG offers a chance for immigrant women to make friends, build community support and learn from each other.
- Offered in 16 community locations

PART 3: THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Strategic Plan for 2012-2017

a) New Mandate

Vision

Empower immigrant women. Enrich Canadian society.

Mission

To engage and integrate immigrant women and their families in the community.

Values

- Equality
- Empathy
- Innovation
- Collaboration

CIWA's new Vision and Mission statements emphasize its commitment to empowering immigrant women and their families to play an integral and vibrant role in their communities. Engagement of immigrants at the local and community level results in an enriched Canadian society. Our new mandate highlights CIWA's innovative approach to offering programs and services that meet the changing needs of our clients. We base our approach on working collaboratively with community leaders and allied organizations to achieve our goals.

b) Strategic Goals and Priorities for 2012-2017

GOAL 1: DEVELOP RELEVANT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT REFLECT IMMIGRATION TRENDS AND CLIENT NEEDS

Priorities

- Low literacy/mid-skilled immigrants and refugees
- Equitable employment support
- Cost-effective partnerships

GOAL 2: ENHANCE CIWA'S RELEVANCE IN THE COMMUNITY

Priorities

- Public awareness
- Diversified funding sources

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN CIWA'S CAPACITY

Priorities

- Staff training and retention
- Improved communication
- Succession planning

CIWA's new Strategic Goals expand on its strengths, address current challenges facing immigrant serving agencies and provide a proactive response to immigration trends and issues.

In *Goal 1*, CIWA is strengthening its focus on its most vulnerable clients: refugees and low literacy/mid-skilled immigrants who face the greatest barriers to successful integration. In addition to expanding innovative programs and services for these client groups, CIWA will extend the scope of its employment support to ensure that these clients have equitable opportunities to find meaningful employment.

Goal 2 highlights CIWA's proactive response to the challenge of increased demand for services without increased government funding. Through marketing strategies that demonstrate CIWA's essential role, and fund development strategies that result in alternative sources of revenues, CIWA will be able to build on its current position as a leading immigrant serving agency.

The ability of a non-profit organization to strengthen and expand its client services is directly related to its internal capacity to meet these needs. With *Goal 3*, CIWA emphasizes a focus on the ongoing professional development and mentoring of staff in order to ensure a more sustainable future for the agency as it moves the new Strategic Plan forward.