PARTICIPATORY INCLUSION IN THE REFUGEE RESettlement process

by

WILLIAM ANDREW McMICHAElt

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1975
Dipl.Ed., The University of British Columbia, 1977
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 1988

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of doctor of education
in
the faculty of graduate studies
(Educational Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
December 2007
© William Andrew McMichael
Abstract

This study explores the disconnection that exists between refugee policy developers and those whom they intend to benefit by bringing the voices of refugees and their supporters into community discussions on policies and practices that directly affect the refugee resettlement experience. The purpose of their involvement was to help ensure that resettlement activities were relevant to their needs. In an effort to make the findings as generalizable as possible, the researcher applied techniques of Participatory Action Research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) within a Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) methodological framework. Community consultations involving a total of 86 refugees, refugee claimants and their supporters in three cities were conducted during the period that Canada was responding to post-9/11 concerns for national security with its first implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Findings from those consultations were triangulated with data from interviews with 29 service providers, government officials and individual refugees, as well as documentary evidence from scholarly research, government publications and mass media sources. Implications for further policy development were then developed from that process. Findings from the research suggest that the potential for unexpected policy outcomes can be reduced if culturally sensitive community consultations, in the preferred language of the community, are incorporated in policy development and implementation processes. These findings can contribute to building local community capacities to increase the effectiveness of resettlement activities and improving their sustainability by inviting those who have the most to benefit take ownership of them.
Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................. ii
List of Tables ........................................................................................................ viii
List of Figures ....................................................................................................... ix
List of Acronyms .................................................................................................... x
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................... xi
Dedication ............................................................................................................... xii

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................. 1

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION .............................................................................. 2
1.2 STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE ................................................................... 4
1.3 RESEARCH SUBJECTS ................................................................................ 7
1.4 REFUGEE STATUS DETERMINATION ..................................................... 12
   1.4.1 Access from Abroad ............................................................................ 14
   1.4.2 Port of Entry Access .......................................................................... 15
   1.4.3 Inland Refugee Claim Process ............................................................. 17
   1.4.4 Pre-Removal Risk Assessment ............................................................. 21
   1.4.5 Humanitarian and Compassionate Exemption ..................................... 22
   1.4.6 Claimants from moratoria countries .................................................. 23
1.5 SUMMARY ..................................................................................................... 24

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW ................................................................... 26

2.1 THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT ............................................................. 26
   2.1.1 Humanitarianism and Compassion .................................................... 28
   2.1.2 Protection and Security ...................................................................... 32
   2.1.3 Legislating Protection ....................................................................... 38
2.2 THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT ............................................................. 43
   2.2.1 Social Considerations ....................................................................... 46
   2.2.2 Cultural Considerations .................................................................... 55
2.3 SUMMARY .................................................................................................... 59
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 THEORETICAL APPROACH

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN
3.2.1 Sources of Evidence
3.2.2 Community Consultations

3.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY
3.3.1 Respondent Validation
3.3.2 Iterative Coding
3.3.3 Limitations of the methodology

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

CHAPTER 4 THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

4.1 PRE AND POST ARRIVAL ORIENTATION
4.1.1 Policy Ideals
4.1.2 Structural Inequalities
4.1.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
4.1.4 Agency

4.2 PERSONAL SECURITY
4.2.1 Policy Ideals
4.2.2 Structural Inequalities
4.2.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
4.2.4 Agency

4.3 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
4.3.1 Policy Ideals
4.3.2 Structural Inequalities
4.3.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
4.3.4 Agency

4.4 ECONOMIC INCLUSION
4.4.1 Policy Ideals
4.4.2 Structural Inequalities
4.4.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
4.4.4 Agency
4.5 SHELTER
4.5.1 Policy Ideals
4.5.2 Structural Inequalities
4.5.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
4.5.4 Agency

4.6 DISCUSSION
4.6.1 Orientation
4.6.2 Personal Security
4.6.3 Educational Opportunity
4.6.4 Economic Inclusion
4.6.5 Shelter

CHAPTER 5 THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

5.1 CULTURAL MAINTENANCE
5.1.1 Policy Ideals
5.1.2 Structural Inequalities
5.1.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
5.1.4 Agency

5.2 FAMILY SUPPORT
5.2.1 Policy Ideals
5.2.2 Structural Inequalities
5.2.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
5.2.4 Agency

5.3 PARTICIPATORY INCLUSION
5.3.1 Policy Ideals
5.3.2 Structural Inequalities
5.3.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes
5.3.4 Agency

5.4 DISCUSSION
5.4.1 Cultural Maintenance
5.4.2 Family Support
5.4.3 Participatory Inclusion
CHAPTER 6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS........................................193

6.1 PRE AND POST ARRIVAL ORIENTATION..........................194
   6.1.1 Improving pre-arrival orientation............................194
   6.1.2 Improving post-arrival orientation...........................195

6.2 PERSONAL SECURITY .............................................196
   6.2.1 Ensuring personal security at points of entry ...............196
   6.2.2 Appealing IRB decisions ......................................197

6.3 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY ......................................197
   6.3.1 Increasing sufficiency of language training ..................197
   6.3.2 Increasing access to job-readiness language training ......198

6.4 ECONOMIC INCLUSION ...........................................199
   6.4.1 Collaborating on workplace training opportunities ........199
   6.4.2 Collaborating on credentialing and accreditation ..........200

6.5 SHELTER ..................................................................200
   6.5.1 Collaborating on affordable housing ..........................200

6.6 CULTURAL MAINTENANCE .........................................201
   6.6.1 Developing community support groups .......................201

6.7 FAMILY SUPPORT ................................................202
   6.7.1 Expediting family reunification ...............................202
   6.7.2 Collaborating on social services ...............................203

6.8 PARTICIPATORY INCLUSION ........................................204
   6.8.1 Building intercultural understanding .......................204
   6.8.2 Investing in settlement services ..............................205

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION...............................................206

7.1 BARRIERS TO INCLUSION........................................207

7.2 PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY ..........................................209

7.3 PRIVATE RESPONSIBILITY ........................................211
List of Tables

Table 1.1 Finalized Claims by Country and Acceptance Rate (%) 2003-2005...... 20
Table 3.1 Consultations and Participants......................................................... 65
Table 3.2 Consultations Participants by Sex, Status and Source Region.............. 66
Table 3.3 Sample Open Coding Analysis Table.................................................. 75
Table 3.4 Sample Axial Coding Analysis Table.................................................. 77
Table 4.1 Data Coding Key............................................................................... 83
Table 5.1 Processing times, Dependants of Refugees......................................... 189
List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Refugee and Refugee Claimant Flow (2000-2005)................................. 11
Figure 1.2. Refugee Status Determination Procedure............................................. 14
Figure 1.3. Months required to finalize applications (2005)................................. 15
Figure 1.4. Countries of Origin for Refugee Claimants (2005)............................. 18
Figure 1.5. IRB Claims (2002-2005).................................................................. 19
Figure 1.6. Acceptance and Abandonment Rates (2005)...................................... 20
Figure 1.7. PRRA Decisions (2003).................................................................... 22
Figure 1.8. Numbers of Claims Rejected, Withdrawn or Declared Abandoned by Moratorium Country (2005)................................................................. 24
Figure 3.1 Community Consultation Teams.......................................................... 70
Figure 4.1. Preconditions for social integration....................................................... 128
Figure 4.2. Proposal for the collaborative development of partnership Arrangements......................................................................................... 134
# List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSA</td>
<td>Canada Border Services Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR</td>
<td>Canadian Council for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIC</td>
<td>Citizenship and Immigration Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H &amp; C</td>
<td>Humanitarian and Compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB</td>
<td>Immigration and Refugee Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRPA</td>
<td>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRPR</td>
<td>Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCASI</td>
<td>Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRRA</td>
<td>Pre-Removal Risk Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPD</td>
<td>Refugee Protection Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAH</td>
<td>Sponsorship Agreement Holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

To the members of the 2001 Ed.D. cohort I am indebted for their unfailing support and good humour. To my committee members, Dr. Donald Fisher, Dr. Bonny Norton and Dr. Kogila Adam-Moodley thank you for helping me when I was lost in the woods and could only see the trees. To my dear wife and children, I say thank you for putting up with all this and I promise not to do it again for a while.
Dedication

To my heroes

William George McMichael
1922-2002

Jeam Baird McMichael
1921-2004

I wish you were here.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1986, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) awarded its Nansen Refugee Award to the people of Canada for the:

...remarkable achievement of individuals, families, voluntary agencies, community and religious organizations, as well as federal, provincial and municipal authorities in helping refugees to integrate successfully into Canadian society and regain human dignity (UNHCR, 1986).

It remains the only instance in which the medal has been awarded to a people, rather than to an individual or organization. Six years after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, however, the compassion apparent in the award is less evident as refugees and refugee claimants have become objects of suspicion for many in the community at large, including some who are responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies that have a profound impact on the quality of their lives. The perceived threat of terrorist attack by the Canadian and American governments in 2001 challenged the government to develop a policy response that tempered its award-winning humanitarianism with concern for the physical safety of Canadian residents. On June 28, 2002, the Canadian government responded by enacting the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), superseding the Immigration Act of 1976. The current research explores the unexpected outcomes resulting from the implementation of the new Act and its Regulations from the perspective of those who know most about what it is like to be refugees: the refugees and refugee claimants themselves.

Over the past 30 years, I have had extensive voluntary involvement in regional and national English as a Second Language professional teacher organizations, national refugee
resettlement initiatives, regional youth drug and alcohol prevention education and local food security initiatives. It has occurred me on many occasions, as well as to various board and committee members with whom I have worked throughout my voluntary career, that we are a relatively small, but well-connected cohort of predominantly white, middle class and highly educated middle-level managers, civil servants, professionals and academics. We all know each other because we turn up repeatedly on different committees and meet at conferences. We are all well intentioned individuals who are committed to improving the lives of marginalized groups in Canadian society, be they ESL learners, at-risk youth, newcomers to Canada or homeless individuals. However, none of us are members of any of these groups. Although we are at best mere proxies for those whose lives we hope to improve, it is we who discuss and make decisions that may directly affect them. For me it has long seemed clear that an important reality check, the voices of those whom we purport to represent, has been missing from our discussions.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

It has also occurred to me on many occasions that government policies and regulations that are intended to help marginalized groups often serve to marginalize them further. For example, current regulations do not fund psychological counselling for victims of torture. The reason for this, according to a prominent service provider \(^1\), is that the great majority of provincial medical plans consider counselling to be more properly the responsibility of medically accredited psychiatrists rather than academically trained psychologists. The result of this practice has been to greatly restrict access to humanitarian

---

\(^1\) Interview, July 17, 2004
support by those refugees most greatly in need of such support – the victims of torture.

Similarly, the decision by the federal government not to establish a Refugee Appeal Division, though mandated to do so by IRPA, has resulted in a situation where there is no practical way of appealing a negative decision, even one made unilaterally by a single Immigration and Refugee Board adjudicator. The intention of the policy, according to the president of a national refugee advocacy organization \(^2\) was to improve the quality of the refugee determination process by expediting the removal of a huge backlog of pending cases. The result has been to leave many failed refugee applicants with no recourse but to “go underground” and live as fugitives in the country where they had sought protection. The efficiency of the determination process was thereby greatly reduced. I have personally witnessed situations where individual newcomers have been forced to wait for more than a year for space in a language training program that was intended to help them integrate into Canadian society. I have also witnessed instances where funding for resettlement programs was transferred from federal to provincial governments that instead used the funding for purposes that were unrelated to resettlement. It has seemed to me that such paradoxical outcomes as these were the result of a disconnect between policy developers and the lived experiences of the people whose interests they intended to protect.

The current research explores the nature of that disconnect and the potential for it to be regenerated through participatory action on the part of refugees and their advocates. The central questions of this research were designed to engage these people in the discussion and resolution of problematical issues they identified:

- How do refugees and their advocates describe the barriers to social inclusion they face during their resettlement in Canada? What actions do

---

\(^2\) Interview, May 27, 2004
they propose might be undertaken by governments and neighbours to
remove those barriers and what are they doing in the meantime to
privately mitigate their negative effects?

The questions were intended to not only explore the perceptions that newcomers have of the resettlement experience but also foster discussion of the ambiguity that surrounds questions of individual and shared responsibility as they pertain to meeting the humanitarian needs of others. Such needs include access to food, shelter, education and medical care that Canadians generally regard as a shared responsibility. There are also less tangible needs for access to employment, cultural maintenance, respect and belongingness, for whom ultimate responsibility is uncertain. The discussions took place at an opportune time for policy input as Canada was wrestling with similar notions of responsibility and accountability as it implemented IRPA and refined its regulations in the years immediately following the 9/11 attacks. No *a priori* theory drove the research process and the result of the study is a set of policy implications adduced from the empirical data collected that I hope will be helpful in the further development of Canadian refugee policy.

1.2 STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE

My decision to conduct research among refugees and refugee claimants is the result of my upbringing, educational practice and volunteer involvement with marginalized groups in Canadian Society. My parents introduced me as a child to Donne’s remonstration that no man is an island, that humans are all part of the main and that the death of one diminishes all. As an adolescent I was enthused by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s notion of the noosphere, an
integrated sphere of transhuman consciousness that he proposed emerges from the interactions of human minds. (Teilhard de Chardin, 1959). Between my second and third years of undergraduate study at university, while traveling westward around the world for a year, full of notions of human interconnectivity, but somewhat directionless in their practical application, I found myself on the banks of the Ganges River at the very site where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated. There I found the practical direction I sought in the epitaph written on his memorial, one known by heart to most Indian children, but not to me. It stated, “Think of the poorest person you have ever seen and ask if your next act will be of any use to him.” I have taken that simple instruction to heart as the moral imperative for my decision to act as a proxy for the subjects of my study, not one of them, but one who acts to improve the quality of their lives by bringing their private voices into public discourse. This imperative continues to drive both my academic teaching at the University of British Columbia and my community education work in the voluntary sector.

I met my first refugees in Canada while teaching a basic literacy course in a local community college more than thirty years ago. The stories my students told me of their journeys to Canada and the uncertain reception they received upon their arrival revealed the existence of social service gaps, most noticeably in the areas of cultural orientation, access to the labour market and housing support. English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers like me at the time often became deeply involved in the lives of our students, seeing them every weekday for months at a time, socializing with them, meeting their families and at all times striving to be useful in helping to improve the quality of their lives. Advocacy on behalf of our students came naturally to us all. For me, ESL teachers have always been front line settlement workers.
In 1990 I was asked to coordinate a public awareness campaign for the TESL Canada Federation, Canada’s national association of ESL teachers. Called the “Part of the Picture Campaign”, it challenged Canadians to become more inclusive in their acceptance of newcomers, by raising awareness of the marginalized status they held in mainstream society despite the many benefits they brought. The campaign was conceived at TESL Canada’s first-ever Learner’s Conference, held concurrently with the organization’s national conference. During my tenure as president of TESL Canada from 1994-1999, the learner’s conferences were a prominent feature of every national conference, providing opportunities for learners from across the country, sponsored by the provincial and territorial affiliates of TESL Canada, to meet each other and discuss issues of mutual concern. These meetings led directly to the development of a set of national proficiency level descriptors, the Canadian Language Benchmarks, that today are used in all English and French language training programs that are funded by the federal government. It was a great privilege for me to see how an idea that began in a Learners Conference grew to become a comprehensive set of national language proficiency indicators.

In April, 2001, as chairman of the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, I prepared a discussion paper entitled “Language and Communication Issues Relating to the Integration of Resettled Refugees” for the International Conference on the Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees, sponsored in Kolmorden, Sweden by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. At the conference, I was very surprised and disheartened to discover that the enthusiasm I had for the potential of resettled refugees to inform refugee policy development was not widely shared. In fact, it was only the Canadian and Australian delegations that saw much value in the inclusive practices that I had seen work so well in
Canada. I realized at that point that my position lacked a comprehensive empirical base of evidence to support it.

An opportunity to develop that base of empirical evidence and to conduct research that would ultimately find its way into the current study arose in June 2001. In 2000 and 2001 I had been helping plan and coordinate a National Settlement Conference in Kingston, Ontario, sponsored by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The primary purpose of that conference was to develop plans for a second conference to be held in Calgary in 2003. Between the conferences, four working groups, struck at the first conference, would prepare discussion documents for sessions they would coordinate at the second conference. My responsibility was to co-chair the Maximizing Settlement Working Group with a government representative. For me it was an excellent opportunity to work with a wide range of service providers, academics and government officials in the development of the empirical base I needed in Sweden. It was at the first conference that the idea for the current study emerged and at the second conference where plans for the community consultations that would become an essential component of the study were finalized. This involvement afforded me with numerous opportunities to engage in dialogue with government officials, sector representatives and conference presenters, and to become increasingly more sensitized to key issues surrounding refugee resettlement.

1.3 RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The subjects of my research are those in Canada and abroad who have:

...reason to fear persecution in his or her country of origin due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group or political opinion.
Protected persons can also be people in Canada who, if they were removed to their home country, would be subjected to a danger of torture, to a risk to their life or to a risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.

(CIC, 2005)

These people are generally referred to as “refugees” of which type the government directly sponsors two classes. “Source Country” refugees are still in their country of citizenship or habitual residence. They may have been detained or imprisoned and are suffering from a denial of the right of freedom of expression, the right of dissent, or the right to engage in trade union activity. Residents of countries designated as “source countries” are permitted to apply directly for resettlement to the Canadian visa office serving that region. Currently, these countries are: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia and Sierra Leone. All other applicants must be referred by a recognised organization such as the UNHCR or a private sponsoring group.

“Convention Refugees Abroad” are people, outside their country of citizenship or habitual residence, who individually comply with Article 1 of the Geneva Refugee Convention (UNHCR, 1951) as one who “by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion” (p.1) is outside his or her own country and cannot, or fears to, return there.

Other people in need of protection are “Country of Asylum” refugees who are outside their country of citizenship or habitual residence and seriously affected by civil war, armed conflict or massive violations of human rights. They are admitted under the terms of the “Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program”, which requires them to be supported in one of four ways by sponsors in Canada. The most widespread method of support comes from
“Sponsorship Agreement Holders”, religious, ethnic, community or service organizations, who have been approved to sponsor refugees. Alternatively, they can be sponsored by “Groups of Five” Canadian citizens or “Community Sponsors”, local groups that must present a comprehensive plan of support to the government before they are approved. A third route is available through the “Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program” in which the government and a Sponsorship Agreement Holder will jointly support a refugee who is deemed to be in greater need of settlement assistance than other applicants because of personal circumstances. Such people include victims of trauma or torture, those who have been in refugee camps for extended periods, those with serious medical conditions, those who have large families and women who are in need of urgent protection. All refugee applicants must pass medical, security and criminality checks. With the exception of women at risk, all must further show that they have the potential to re-establish themselves in Canada. Under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program, organizations, and groups of Canadian citizens or permanent residents may commit to providing assistance in the form of accommodation, clothing, food and settlement assistance for one year from the refugee’s date of arrival.

Still other individuals or families claim refugee protection at a port of entry or while temporarily in Canada. Some bypass the formal routes of entry into Canada, most usually by airplane or, less frequently in recent years, by land from the United States and arrive in the country, where they seek asylum. Sometimes they arrive with sports teams, like the Olympic wrestler Daniel Igali, or as tourists, business people, international students or visiting academics and at other times as stowaways on freighters or as human cargo on rickety boats. These “refugee claimants” must present themselves to an immigration officer for an examination. They are asked to complete an application form and have their picture and
fingerprints taken. They are issued removal orders that do not come into force unless their claim is refused by an immigration officer. Claimants may be in Canada for up to a year while their application for convention refugee status is processed. Once they are found to qualify for classification as a Protected Person, they are considered to be either “Convention Refugees” or “Persons in Need of Protection” and are provided with an application for permanent resident status. They have virtually the same rights as a permanent resident except that they cannot leave the country. If their claim is rejected, they must leave within 37 days. After 37 days the removal order converts to a deportation order at which time they are eligible to be invited for a “Pre Removal Risk Assessment” (PRRA), or submit for an exception under humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

While a claim for refugee protection is being considered, claimants may be able to apply for employment authorization if they are unable to support themselves without public assistance. Minor children of claimants are automatically eligible to attend school; adults may apply for student authorization. Emergency and essential health services are available through the Interim Federal Health Program for claimants who are not covered by provincial health plans.

In recent years (Figure 1.1), the number of refugee claimants who have been conditionally admitted to Canada has fallen dramatically from a peak of 43,745 claimants in 2001 to 18,557 in 2005. The number of refugees appears to have fallen temporarily from 30,094 in 2000 to 25,122 in 2002 then recovered to 35,768 in 2005, the highest level since 1993. For the purposes of statistical analysis, the government often includes claimants in a larger grouping of “humanitarian cases” along with individuals who did not make refugee claims but who were processed under special programs established to handle refugee-like
cases. The humanitarian group cases also include a very small number of other individuals who have been allowed to remain in Canada on humanitarian or compassionate grounds but who have never filed a refugee claim. In 1997 and 1998, 99% of individuals in the humanitarian cases group were refugee claimants. In 1999, the percentage dropped to 79% because the group included more than 7,000 Kosovo refugees, who were not counted as refugee claimants. Since 2000, the percentage has consistently been 98%.

![Graph showing refugee and refugee claimant flow 2000-2005](image)


Taken collectively, Country of Asylum refugees, Source Country refugees, Convention Refugees Abroad and Persons in Need of Protection are officially recognised as “Protected Persons”. For the purposes of this thesis, that term is extended to humanitarian cases,
including failed claimants who are unable to leave Canada because of moratoria placed upon deportations to their home countries. In order to lessen the potential for confusion by over-categorization, and to distinguish them from immigrants, protected persons are referred to as either “refugees” or “refugee claimants”. The distinction between protected person and immigrant derives from the circumstances surrounding an individual’s departure from his or her home country. Put simply, a protected person fears to return to his or her country because of persecution or danger; an immigrant does not.

1.4 REFUGEE STATUS DETERMINATION

The Canadian refugee status determination procedure (Figure 1.2) has three distinct stages: access, hearing and appeal. Access refers to eligibility determination by front-line government officials who determine whether a refugee applicant meets criteria for referral to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) for a refugee status determination hearing. If that determination is positive, the applicant is granted entry to Canada, where he or she proceeds to a hearing conducted by the Refugee Protection Division (RPD) of the IRB. Refugee claimants have the right to one oral hearing before a single member of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) to determine whether they are "persons in need of protection" as defined in section 97 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). Very strong cases can be expedited and may be accepted without the necessity of a full hearing. If the applicant’s claim is accepted, he or she is granted Protected Person status and may apply for permanent residency.

IRPA Provisions for creating a special refugee appeal tribunal have yet to be declared in force. If the claim is rejected the applicant does not have an automatic right to judicial
review of the IRB's decision. He or she must first make a written application for "leave". The great majority of leaves are denied by the Federal Court. No reasons are given. Denials of leave are unappealable. Claims cannot be re-opened by the IRB for new evidence or circumstances.

If rejected claimants have some entirely new evidence of risk upon return to their country of origin, they may apply to CIC for a Pre-removal Risk Assessment (PRRA). The government cannot deport them until such evidence is analyzed. The acceptance rate for PRRA applications is less than five percent and the process can take up to one year to complete. Another route of appeal is to apply to CIC for residence based upon humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) grounds. The filing of such an application and payment of a $500 processing fee, however, does not automatically result in a stay of removal. The process can take more than two years to complete.

A number of failed claimants remain in Canada because the government, recognizing that to return them to their countries would put their lives in danger, has imposed a moratorium on deportations to Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Iraq, Liberia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. They are not permitted to leave Canada, sponsor dependants or attend school and have only emergency access to health care.
Claim made to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) officer

CIC makes decision on eligibility

Eligible

Claim is sent to Refugee Protection Division (RPD) of Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB)

Complete a Personal Information Form within 28 days and give to the IRB

Hearing at the IRB

Claim accepted

Apply for permanent residence

Claim denied

May apply for judicial review

Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (must request within 15 days of receiving PRRA application form)

Accepted

Apply for permanent residence

Rejected

May be removed from Canada

May apply for judicial review

Note: One may apply at any time to stay in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. However, he or she may be removed from Canada while waiting for a decision on the application.

Figure 1.2. Refugee status determination procedure Adapted from Dolin, B. & Young, M (1993). Canada's refugee protection system (Revised October 2002). Ottawa: Law and Government Division.

*The claimant or CIC may ask the Federal Court of Canada for leave (permission) to apply for judicial review of any decision of the Refugee Protection Division.
1.2.1 Access from Abroad

The amount of time that refugees must spend abroad as they wait for approval to enter Canada differs by refugee type (Figure 1.3). In 2006, half of the government-assisted applicants were processed in 7 months and 80% in 15 months. Refugee dependants took longer to process (10 and 20 months, respectively) and privately sponsored refugees took by far the longest time to process (22 and 34 months). The most noticeable change was in this final category. In 2004, the processing times for privately sponsored refugees were 12 and 25 months, respectively. By the end of 2005, substantial backlogs had accumulated for privately sponsored refugees and refugee dependants abroad. At the 2005 rate, it would take over two years for the backlog of privately sponsored refuges and over a year for the refugee dependants to be processed.

![Graph showing months required to finalize applications](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/time-int/menu-perm.html)

Generally speaking, these three classes of refugees are eligible for the same rights and privileges as other Canadian citizens once they arrive in the country. Almost all dependants (96%), most government-assisted (75%) and slightly more than half of the privately sponsored refugees (54%) are approved for permanent residency.

1.2.2 Port of Entry Access

The great majority of refugee claims are made in Ontario (64%) and Quebec (29%) according to preliminary figures released in October 2006. British Columbia accounted for five percent and the rest of the country two percent of the total number of claims. A monthly average of 1,850 claims were made in the January – September, 2006 period, up from 1,635 in 2005 and down from 2,123 in 2004. The majority of claims were made inland (62%). Claims made at border crossings (20%) and at airports (18%) accounted for the rest.

On December 12, 2003, the federal government created the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and transferred to it all immigration enforcement activities from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. These enforcement activities included detention, investigations and removals. Also transferred were Pre-Removal Risk Assessments, even though they were reviews intended to see whether individuals needed Canada’s protection, rather than the reverse. The CBSA reports to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, rather than the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. In the December announcement the federal government declared, “Protecting the interests of immigrants and refugees remains the responsibility of Citizenship and Immigration”. By inference, one might assume that such protection was not the responsibility of the CBSA.

---

3 Personal correspondence with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, October 18, 2006
The CBSA has assumed most if not all of the functions formerly undertaken by CIC at ports of entry. According to its official website, in 2005 it issued 116,624 work, 64,218 student and 9,936 temporary resident permits, landed 202,007 permanent residents, removed 11,845 or denied entry to 94,024 people and processed 12,457 refugee claimants. According to its mission statement, the agency administers legislation that governs the admissibility of people, establishes how people move through our borders, detains people who may post a threat to Canada and removes those who are inadmissible because of their involvement with terrorism, organized crime, war crime or crimes against humanity. (CBSA, 2006)

1.2.3 Inland Refugee Claim Process

Figure 1.4 shows the top ten countries of origin for refugee claimants in 2005, which when taken together account for approximately 54% of all claims finalized by the IRB. Two countries, Mexico (3679 claims) and Colombia (3271) accounted by themselves for more than a quarter of the total number (27,217) of claims processed. A total of 20,786 claims were referred to the IRB in 2005, continuing a downward trend in applications that began in 2001 when there were 44,038 claims made. The acceptance rate however increased to 44% from 40% the previous year.

In 2005, 27,4212 claims were finalized by the Immigration and Refugee Board, of which 12,061 (44%) were positive; 11,846 (44%) were negative; 1,634 (6%) were declared abandoned and 1,671 (6%) withdrew or were otherwise resolved. Figure 1.5 shows that the total number of claims in 2005 continued a steady decline since 2002 when 32,466 were finalized. The number of claims that were referred to the IRB shows a similar decline, from 44,038 in 2002 to 20,786 in 2005. At the end of the year there were 20,552 claims pending
compared to 52,761 at the end of 2002. Given the number of claims finalized in 2005, if the IRB continued at the same rate it should take approximately 9 months to finalize the claims pending.

![Bar chart showing countries of origin for refugee claimants.](image)

Figure 1.4. Countries of origin for refugee claimants. From personal correspondence with Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, March 10, 2006.

The acceptance and abandonment rates vary significantly from region to region (Figure 1.6), with Vancouver continuing to have the lowest acceptance and, not surprisingly, highest abandonment rates in the country. Overall, the acceptance rate rose slightly in 2005. Claims decided at a hearing had a 50% chance of being accepted in 2005 compared to a 45% chance in 2004. The numbers of applicants and acceptance rates for each of the top ten source countries are shown in Table 1.1. Refugees in Canada appear to have a 50-50 chance of having their claims accepted by the IRB, with better chances if they come from Colombia or Sri Lanka or
other countries with high acceptance rates such as Somalia (84%), Iran (75%) and the
Democratic Republic of the Congo (61%). If one comes from Mexico, India, or other such
countries with low acceptance rates as Hungary (13%), Guyana (18%) and Costa Rica (17%),
the chances are not as good. Chances are also better if one applies in Eastern Canada than in
the West. Vancouver is the least promising port of entry.

Figure 1.5. IRB Claims 2002-2005. From personal correspondence with
Figure 1.6. Acceptance and Abandonment Rates 2005. From private correspondence with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, March 12, 2006.

Table 1.1.

Finalized Claims by Country and Acceptance Rate (%) 2003-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. From private correspondence with Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, March 10, 2006
1.2.4 Pre-Removal Risk Assessment

Many claimants who are placed under a removal order are eligible to apply to CIC for a PRRA. However, those whose claims have been denied at their IRB hearing may apply only if new circumstances, such as a change for the worse in country conditions, are present. Furthermore, PRRA is not available to those who are determined to be inadmissible on grounds of security, violating human or international rights or organised criminality or those convicted of a crime in Canada for an offence that is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of at least 10 years. Those who are eligible are notified by CIC that a written application for protection must be submitted within 15 days after receipt of the notification. Assessments consider the consolidated grounds of: risk of persecution; danger of torture; and risk to life or risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment. Although the assessments are normally conducted in writing, oral hearings may be required in certain cases, for example, if the PRRA officer has concerns about a person’s credibility. Applicants benefit from an automatic stay of a removal order until a final decision on the application is made. Those who receive a negative decision must leave Canada. CIC makes the removal arrangements.

Although most individuals who are found by a PRRA Officer to be at risk may apply for permanent resident status, almost all applications are rejected (Figure 1.7). For the period from January 1 to December 31, 2003, only 3.2% of all applicants received a positive assessment. According to figures obtained directly from CIC, but not released publicly, there were 10,560 PRRA applications processed out of which 4,212 applicants either waived or withdrew their rights to an assessment. From the remaining 6,348 applications, there were 200 positive decisions, of which 135 were on Refugee Convention grounds and 65 on other
grounds. A total of 6148 applications were rejected in 2003, of which 98 (1.5%) involved criminality or security.

Figure 1.7. PRRA Decisions 2003. From personal correspondence with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, June 20, 2004

1.2.5 Humanitarian and Compassionate (H&C) Exemption

CIC will review failed applications for permanent residence on H&C grounds when the applicant can demonstrate that unusual, undeserved or disproportionate hardship would result if he or she had to leave Canada. A non-refundable processing fee ($550 for adults; $150 for children) is charged and the decision cannot be appealed. Typical cases that have been recognized include situations where a spouse arrives at a port of entry and applies there for an immigrant visa, or marriage breakdowns cause one spouse to withdraw his or her sponsorship prior to the other spouse achieving permanent residency status. A foreign worker
who had been continuously employed in Canada for an extended period and who would have undergone hardship if he were required to apply for immigration abroad was also granted exemption. Family members in Canada can support applications for those who may be unable to support themselves.

According to the official CIC website, the standard time for processing an application for landing is 90 days from the date of mailing to approval in principle, at which time applicants can obtain employment or student authorizations. In cases where applicants are interviewed the process may take an additional six months. After being approved in principle, the applicant may have to wait an additional 12 to 18 months before being granted permanent residency.

1.2.6 Claimants from Moratoria Countries

Under section 230(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR), the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness can from time to time declare a temporary moratorium on removals to countries where there is a generalized risk to the population from war, environmental disaster or other precarious circumstance. Most of those affected by a moratorium are refused refugee claimants who were not granted protected person status because they did not face direct personal risk. They are eligible to apply for permanent residence on H&C grounds; however, even if they have been living in Canada for years, the results are uncertain, the process is lengthy and it is relatively expensive.

The number of people who could be affected by the current moratorium on removals to Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe is slightly over 4000 based upon IRB reports of the numbers of claimants from
those countries whose claims were rejected, withdrawn or declared abandoned (Figure 1.8).

As is evident from those statistics, the current moratorium experience is disproportionately an African one.

![Image of bar chart showing numbers of claims rejected, withdrawn or declared abandoned by moratorium country (2005). From personal correspondence with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, March 15, 2006.]

1.3 SUMMARY

The current chapter has described the circumstances under which the current study was developed, the key questions it investigates, identified the subjects of the study and the regulatory environment within which many refugees and refugee claimants find themselves during their resettlement in Canada and the current practices of key government immigration and security agencies. The potential for Canada to develop a refugee policy in such an environment that does not compromise its Nansen Award-winning commitment to
humanitarianism, is explored in the following chapters. The Literature Review in Chapter 2 first examines some of the sociopolitical themes that emerged in the public discourse on refugee policy during the period surrounding the events of September 11, 2001. It then continues with an exploration of sociocultural outcomes of past and current refugee policies that have been reported in the scholarly literature. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology and design for the study. Chapter 4 reports the sociopolitical findings from the research and Chapter 5 the sociocultural findings. Chapter 6 concludes with a discussion of the findings and their implications for further refugee policy development.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is organized in two sections, each one offering a different perspective on refugee resettlement policy development. The theoretical point of departure for the current study is the notion that public policies are tools that are primarily intended to guide the fair distribution of social resources. This outcome is rendered doubtful, first, by sociopolitical determinants, explored in the first section of the chapter, as individuals interact formally with structures of the host society. The fair distribution of social resources is further jeopardized by sociocultural factors, described in the second section. These factors stem from the complexity and diversity of individual needs as newcomers interact with members of both the host society and the community with whom they share a common history, language and similar ways of understanding the world.

2.1 THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

On June 28, 2002 Canada’s current Immigration Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, became law, promising among other benefits a “…fairer, faster, more effective refugee determination process”. On May 4, 2004 the Canadian government, in its new National Security Policy (NSP), tabled new measures, “… to streamline the refugee determination process to ensure efficient protection for people genuinely in need and the removal of people attempting to abuse our refugee determination system.” (Law, R. 2004). Although the promise of IRPA and its implementation in the NSP appeared on the surface to be compatible, the Canadian Council for Refugees reacted with indignation to the inference
in the latter that Canadians required protection from refugees. It noted on its national website that while the attacks of September 11, 2001 had absolutely nothing to do with refugees, since that date Canada’s refugee policies and refugees themselves had come under attack (CCR, 2004a).

According to the government’s own statistics for 2003, only 2 of 31,837 claimants were found to be ineligible based on security inadmissibility criteria (CCR, 2004a). Furthermore:

It is far more difficult to enter Canada as a refugee than as a visitor. … Sophisticated wrongdoers are extremely unlikely to choose to go through the refugee claim system, which involves fingerprinting, photographing and interviews. Those involved in the September 11 attacks all seem to have entered the U.S. on visitor or business visas. They didn’t make refugee claims. (CCR, 2004c, para.13)

The promise of fairness in the IRPA statement appeared to be missing in the new legislation, resulting in a paradoxical outcome, the unfair characterization of refugees as potential threats to national security.

The following section explores the socio-political determinants that have produced such paradoxical outcomes as the above. The humanitarianism that had characterized much of the public discourse on refugee policy before September 11, 2001 evaporated in the days immediately following as the government undertook a comprehensive revision of its proposed immigration act, this time incorporating new conceptions of protection and security.
2.1.1 Humanitarianism and Compassion

A 1978 amendment to the Immigration Act made it possible for the first time for refugees to apply for admission as immigrants. Refugees had previously been permitted into Canada only by special orders-in-council. Now their future admission would depend less on Canada's political and economic vagaries. In the terminology of Robert Nash (1996), it was an evocation of Canada’s “first moral language”, the background beliefs upon which the country had developed its refugee policies. In essence, it asserts that Canadians believe human beings have unique capacities and abilities that should be cultivated and celebrated for their own sakes. Robert Barsky, a prominent Canadian refugee advocate, declared that this ethic of care had served Canada well in the past:

...studies over the years by federal and provincial agencies have consistently shown that in virtually every respect refugees make for better Canadians than Canadians do, by all the normal criteria of measurement (less likely to go to prison, less likely to be unemployed, more likely to educate their children, and to a higher degree, less inclined to use social services, more likely to employ other Canadians, etc.) (Barsky, 2001, p.85).

Indeed, a large number of prominent Canadians had been refugees of one type or another, including former Governor General Adrianne Clarkson, whose family fled the Japanese army advance on Hong Kong in 1942 and the current Governor General, Michaëlle Jean, whose
family fled the Duvalier regime in Haiti in 1968. This humanistic belief, as opposed to a rationalistic, theistic, intuitive or secular belief, repeatedly found expression as an ethic of care in the government’s official pronouncements concerning refugee resettlement. Nurturing the individual, it believed, not only benefited the individual but also the greater community in which he or she dwelled.

The controversy over landed applications for asylum that first developed in 1999 when Chinese refugees began turning up in rickety boats on remote West Coast beaches was a further evocation of Canada’s moral imperative, an expression of moral outrage at their abuse of its humanitarian policy. A Globe and Mail Newspaper editorial commented at the time, “It seems our desire to be fair threatens to turn us into the world’s patsies, or as Prime Minister Jean Chretien as put it: “We have laws that induce some people to abuse the law” (“Immigration Fairness”, 1999, p. A18). Some Canadians expressed concern that too many refugee claimants, including some who had successfully made it through the determination process, were not really legitimate refugees but individuals looking for a way around tough Canadian immigration regulations. They were viewed as queue-jumpers whose actions were seen as unfair to legitimate asylum seekers.

The argument began to emerge in the national media in the summer of 2000 that a Canada-first position, one that subsumed humanitarian concerns to the economic needs of the host country might be in the best interests of the country. A typical articulation of this

---

4 In addition to the previously mentioned Daniel Igali, (p.9) others include Yousuf Karsh, the photographer, who fled the Armenian genocide in the early 1920s. Thomas Bata, fled the Nazis invasion of Czechoslovakia and brought the family shoemaking business along with him to Canada. Moses Znaimer, a prominent broadcaster, was sponsored from a refugee camp after the end of World War II. Ken Wiwa Jr., a prominent journalist and fellow Nigerian, applied for refugee status in 1998 after his father, Ken Saro-Wiwa was executed by the Nigerian government.
perspective was made by Barbara Amiel, who commented in a feature column in the June 19, 2000 issue of Maclean’s magazine:

A good immigration policy is one designed in the best interests of the host country. The most important impulse behind it must be to first help the host country -- not to help the immigrants or their families, however nice that would be. In Canada, for example, there is a labour shortage at the top and the bottom. We need highly skilled and entrepreneurial immigrants to replace those Canadians who go to the States as well as lots of immigrants who are not just willing but eager to do the jobs Canadians won’t do. The second most important aspect of a sensible immigration policy is to favour immigrants who come from regions or large groups most likely to achieve seamless assimilation into the host country. This should allow immigration from other places but probably not on a large scale. A decent society also makes exceptions and takes in people for humanitarian reasons -- refugees from natural disasters or real evil (Amiel, 2000. p.12).

Amiel’s position was in keeping with the grand narrative of the time in that it acknowledged the moral obligation of accepting refugees for humanitarian reasons, albeit only in exceptional circumstances.

A sense of valuing the individual nevertheless found repeated expression in official government pronouncements and mass media commentary on cultural pluralism right up until the events of September 11, 2001. For example, it was expressed concisely by Rosaline Frith, Director General of the Integration Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada in April 2001. At the closing plenary session of the previously mentioned UNHCR conference in
Kolmorden, Sweden, Ms Frith rose in an attempt to bring closure to a lively discussion on lessons learned from the three-day conference. “Can we all agree on one thing – that refugee integration is a celebration of diversity?” she asked. Enthusiastic applause from the Canadian and Australian delegations followed, but was quickly smothered by the overwhelming silence of the other delegations. Finally, one of the American participants spoke up. “Not really,” was all she said, to applause. Ms Frith and the rest of the Canadian delegation (including this researcher) looked at each other in stunned disbelief. We all became aware that a point of view we held to be axiomatic was perhaps not shared by most of the rest of the world.

In August 2001, an editorial in the Globe and Mail Newspaper admonished Australian Prime Minister to “do the decent thing” and grant entry to a boatload of asylum seekers who had turned up in Australian waters.

There are similarities with the arrival of smuggled Chinese off Canada’s West Coast, but there is an important difference. The West Asians (in Australian waters) are far more likely to be fleeing genuine persecution, giving them a claim to refugee status under international law... Wealthy countries might consider taking more refugees for settlement under United Nations auspices, and they should make sure that humanitarian aid is being provided at levels appropriate to the suffering of innocent peoples... the central principle in dealing with suffering must continue to be compassion (“Memo to John Howard”, 2001, p. A14)

One week exactly before the attacks on New York and Washington, the message remained the same:
It’s hard to see how the issues raised by mass migration and forced displacement can be effectively addressed without taking a fresh look at the state of protection for refugees. A problem with the Afghanistan-to-Australia route in particular is that countries along it … have not ratified the Geneva Convention. It would be good to get them inside the tent – preferably as parties to Geneva, but if not, at least as states willing to formally assume degree of humanitarian responsibility. (“Time for a fresh look”, 2001, p. A16)

2.1.2 Protection and Security

The horrendous events of September 11, 2001 brought into sharp focus the existence of a powerful secular narrative that found support in a newly formed belief among Canadians that, as Don Delillo, the prominent American author described it, the world had changed dramatically for the worse on that day:

Terror’s response is a narrative that has been developing over years, only now becoming inescapable. (The September 11 attack) changes the way we think and act, moment to moment, week to week, for unknown weeks and months to come, and steely years. Our world, parts of our world, have crumbled into theirs, which means we are living in a place of danger and rage (Delillo, 2001, p.34).

It appeared that a humanitarian policy of nurturing the individual could put the greater community in jeopardy. This perception had found expression in Canadian public discourse in the months before September 11, but not anywhere to the extent that it did afterwards, possibly
because in comparison with most of the rest of the world Canada had limited experience with terrorism. Given its largely positive image as a peacekeeper and mediator in international disputes, Canadian diplomats and citizens abroad had rarely been the target of international terrorists. When even the most powerful nation on Earth could not protect itself from terror, Canada seemed much less secure.

On October 12, 2001, Elinor Caplan, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, in direct response to the attacks of September 11, 2001 announced a five-part strategy as part of the Government of Canada's Anti-terrorism Plan (CIC, 2001). She claimed that the strategy was essentially procedural in nature and as a result did not impinge on the basic human rights of refugees. However, the new regulatory tools she announced contained a number of new tools for advancing the safety and security agenda. These included provisions for reducing the number of countries on the exemption list from the pre-September 11 total; preventing those who pose a danger to the public, or may be fleeing Canadian justice or seeking to evade or frustrate international justice, from being allowed to depart voluntarily; specifying factors that officers must consider in making decisions on flight risk and danger to the public; and specifying that previous findings of fact made by other tribunals that a foreign national has been convicted of terrorist acts or war crimes, do not have to be re-established during admissibility hearings. These new regulations served to buttress and refine a number of the key components of the enforcement and control process.

Minister Caplan further signalled a change in the official government position towards refugee protection in a Toronto speech to the Canadian Arab Federation when she said:

---

5 Only two significant domestic terrorist organizations have operated in Canada in recent years: the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ), and Direct Action a small BC-based Anarchist group motivated primarily by concerns over pollution and the danger posed by nuclear weapons.
...(It is) the values we share as Canadians, what we often call the Canadian way, that are at stake in this struggle. And the only way we can continue our pursuit of these values is to take swift action to ensure that we are able to protect our public security and the rights of all Canadians to live in freedom, unafraid for their personal safety (CIC, 2001).

What had been an ethic of care was now a clear expression of concern for public security. Caplan was, however, again articulating a moral imperative widely held among the Canadian public, as evidenced by a sudden increase of mass media interest in immigration policy. Writing shortly after Caplan’s speech in the editorial section of the Globe and Mail, the columnist Margaret Wente reflected on how Canada’s humanitarianism blinded it to abuses of its refugee system:

Somewhere along the line our open-hearted humanitarian refugee system got mugged. The cheaters and the frauds, the racketeers, profiteers and opportunists are in charge now. As for the displaced children of Afghanistan, tough luck. We don’t have any more time or money to help them. (“How the refugee system”, 2001, p. A15)

The media, however, tended to provide more coverage on the negative social impacts of immigration and multiculturalism, highlighting conflicts rather than the successful coalitions that had been formed between immigrant and Canadian-born groups. Refugee claimants were singled out at an early stage as being particularly contemptuous of Canada’s humanistic policy. Martin Collacott, one of the most prominent emeriti of Canada’s ambassadorial corps and an
immigration expert frequently cited by the media, wrote in an October 22, 2001 National Post Newspaper column:

... the revelations at the trial of Ahmed Ressam, convicted for trying to smuggle explosives from Canada into the United States in December, 1999, as well as other court cases have made it clear not only that there are extensive terrorist networks in Canada, but that most, if not all of their members, entered the country as refugee claimants. This was confirmed at the official level when the RCMP told a conference on Oct. 17 that the modus operandi of all international terrorists coming to Canada was first to claim refugee status and then move on to obtain welfare and medical benefits before turning to crime to boost their income (Collacott, 2001, p. A10).

A Vancouver Sun editorial demanded the federal government invoke the "notwithstanding clause" to bypass the Canadian constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The editorial argued that based on mere suspicion of being a "terrorist", refugee claimants should be stripped of their rights to appeal negative decisions and be immediately deported ("Notwithstanding", 2002, p. A18). Peter Bentley, chairman of Canfor Corporation, the country's largest softwood lumber producer stated:

I'm concerned that by letting in people who don't come here through proper channels and get in the back door without identification, instead of being sent back by the airline they came on, that we're creating an unnecessary hazard and expense internally” (Francis, 2001a, p. FP3).
An Ipsos-Reid poll conducted December 18-20, 2001 and published in the December 31, 2001 issue of Maclean’s magazine (“Since Sept.11”, 2001) found that only 23% of Canadians thought that the government had done enough to make sure that immigrants to Canada were properly screened for potential terrorism activities. Sixty-nine percent believed that the Federal government had not done enough in this area and only 5% said that too much has been done to screen immigrants. Pollster Allan Greg, in the same issue, noted:

…virtually none of us believes that the threat of terrorism can be entirely eliminated. Half believe efforts to root out the perpetrators of these acts will continue for at least four years, and fewer than one in four can foresee this war being over in less than a year…What's more, majorities in every province other than Quebec think Canada is likely to become a target of terrorists (Gregg, 2001, p.22).

Those who publicly argued the need for cross-cultural understanding risked harsh condemnation in the early months following the attack. Dr. Sunera Thobani, a UBC Assistant Professor and the former leader of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, endured vicious criticism when she argued that if Canadians wanted to understand the terrible events of September 11, they had to understand the reasons for the raging anger against the U.S. in the Middle East. They would have to walk around in the shoes of the terrorist for a while, so to speak. Her remarks were, according to political commentator Judy Rebick, “…willfully distorted by newspaper columnists and by public figures such as British Columbia Premier Campbell” (Rebick, 2001). Rex Murphy, a columnist with the Globe and Mail Newspaper, protested:
Behind all the interminable chatter of the current crisis, this one idea is paramount: no one has the right to the life of another person, whatever the cause, and those who claim that right and act murderously must be stopped. This is, incidentally, why we the people who make that claim are outlaws. It follows that if civil liberties are at the essence of our way of life, that any readjustment or suspension of them-as consequences of external or internal threat-there should be the fullest debates that circumstances allow among those we have elected to be the custodians of those rights (Murphy, 2001).

Minister Caplan’s contention that immigrants and refugees were vital to Canada’s social, cultural and economic richness was challenged by the media and by opposition parties alike. James Bissett, a former ambassador and Executive Director of the Canadian Immigration Service asked whether it made sense to force only three cities, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver to absorb over 300,000 newcomers each year, especially when each of the cities was experiencing serious problems delivering health and social services, appropriate housing was in short supply and there was growing concern about poverty, traffic congestion and environmental damage. He argued that although the desire of immigrants to have their close family members join them in Canada was understandable, the broadening of the range of relatives eligible to be sponsored was having an adverse impact on the benefits of immigration (Bissett, 2001).

The efficacy of current practice also came under attack. Diane Francis, a columnist with the National Post newspaper articulated the sense of outrage that many Canadians appeared to
feel concerning the abuse of their good intentions, placing blame for the threat to public safety firmly on the shoulders of bureaucrats:

Ottawa should round up the tens of thousands of missing undesirables and shut our borders to immigrants and refugees until we work out a common North American border protection plan. Instead, fundamentalism prevails in Ottawa where the belief resides that this country must allow entry to anyone who says the "R" (refugee) word, even if he steps off a first-class Lufthansa flight from Frankfurt (Francis, 2001b, p. FP3).

In contrast to Amiel’s position, Francis offered no compromise whatsoever, in keeping with the grand narrative of the time in its harsh criticism of Frith’s celebration of diversity. She ridiculed as “fundamentalism” the notion that there was any moral obligation to accept refugees for humanitarian reasons.

2.1.3 Legislating Protection

The response for the government was to develop framework legislation that for the first time incorporated the concept of protection as a policy objective. On June 28, 2002 Canada’s new immigration act, “An Act Respecting Immigration To Canada And The Granting Of Refugee Protection To Persons Who Are Displaced, Persecuted Or In Danger”, or as it has become more widely known, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA),
An ethic of care is evident throughout the Act, beginning with its acknowledgement that:

The objectives of this Act with respect to refugees are to recognize that the refugee program is in the first instance about saving lives and offering protection to the displaced and persecuted (A 3[2a]).

Under Section 112 of the Act, with certain exceptions, claimants can apply to the Minister for protection if they are subject to a removal order that is in force. Section 115 specified how the government would endeavour to protect them from being returned to a dangerous situation:

A protected person or persons...shall not be removed from Canada to a country where they would be at risk of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion or at risk of torture or cruel and unusual treatment or punishment (A 115[1]).

The mechanism provided for the evaluation of such applications, Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA), was new and ensured that no one awaiting removal from Canada who alleged risk would be removed prior to risk assessment. To ensure that people were not sent back to a country where they would be in danger or face risk of persecution, most people placed under a removal order could apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a PRRA (CIC, 2002a). A PRRA Officer would conduct this assessment. PRRA candidates who were eligible for an assessment would be sent an application form and guide. When this was done, their removal order would be stayed.

* The primary source documents for the new Act are the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations. In the text, the annotation “A” refers to the Act and “R” to the Regulations.
The policy basis for PRRA was found in Canada’s international commitment to the principle of non-refoulement, as set out in Article 33 [1] of the 1951 Refugee Convention:

No Contracting State shall expel or return a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (UNHCR, 1951).

Such a commitment requires that risk be reviewed prior to removal. For most applicants a positive determination would result in the granting of protection and subsequently, in the granting of permanent residence. A negative determination would result in removal from Canada.

Another indication of an ethic of care in the new Act was the exemption from inadmissibility based on excessive demand on health and social services. This exemption was extended to the children of a sponsor, including children under guardianship and children who were to be adopted in Canada, as well as children of a sponsor’s spouse, common-law partner, or conjugal partner. Refugee applicants would still be inadmissible if their health condition meant they were likely to be a danger to public health or safety.

Perhaps the biggest concern about the efficacy of Canada’s refugee policy was the problem of systemic abuse by illegitimate refugee applicants. The new Act took measures in Section 31 to address this issue by first establishing the requirement that all non-Canadians living in the country be clearly identifiable as such:

A permanent resident and a protected person shall be provided with a document indicating their status (A 31[1]).
People who received their permanent residence after June 28, 2002 would be issued a 5-year “Maple Leaf card” automatically (R 54 [1]) and the cost would be added into the processing fees. People who were already permanent residents and wanted a card, or people applying later to renew the card, would have to fill in a long questionnaire and pay a fee of $50 per card no later than December 31, 2003 (R 56 [2]; R 58 [3]). They would need to produce the card if they were outside Canada and trying to return because all transporters (e.g. airlines, trains) would be required to ask for the card as proof of permanent residence. Regulations gave Canadian authorities power to issue temporary travel documents to refugees accepted for resettlement if they would not otherwise be able to travel to Canada (CIC, 2002b).

A concern about false or missing identity documents was addressed by the elimination of the Undocumented Protected Person in Canada Class (CIC, 2002b). The Regulations now provided alternate identity requirements to protected persons who applied for permanent resident status but who did not have satisfactory identity documentation because of conditions in their country of origin. As the Canadian Council for Refugees noted:

Many refugees arrive without identity documents because it would be dangerous for them to carry identification while they are fleeing persecution, especially in ethnic conflicts. Others, such as Somalis, come from countries where there is no government left to issue documents. Since 1993 the Canadian government has required Convention Refugees to produce identity documents in order to obtain permanent residence. The effect has been to put thousands of refugees in long-term legal limbo, without permanent residence status and all its accompanying rights. On the other hand, years later no one has been able to produce any
evidence that criminals or security threats have been hiding in this group of refugees. (CCR, 2004c, para. 14)

The Government retained, however, the ability to refuse permanent residence to any applicant who posed a security threat, including protected persons and to also determine the authenticity of documents. Applicants with documents on the following preliminary list, for instance, would not be considered to be source country applicants: Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei or Venda; the All Palestine Government; any passport that was issued by the Government of the United Kingdom and is entitled British Visitor’s Passport and any passport purporting to have been issued by Somalia (R50 [3]).

In order to establish the “fair and efficient procedures that will maintain the integrity of the Canadian refugee protection system, while upholding Canada’s respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all human beings” (A 3 [2e]), the new Act first of all reconfigured the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) into four Divisions, each being a separate tribunal with a unique statutory mandate. The Refugee Protection Division would decide claims for refugee protection made by persons already in Canada. The Refugee Appeal Division would hear appeals from refusals to issue permanent resident visas to refugee applicants. The Immigration Division would conduct hearings with respect to persons alleged to be inadmissible to Canada and hold detention reviews for those detained for immigration reasons. The Immigration Appeal Division would hear appeals from refusals to issue permanent resident visas to sponsor family members, permanent residents, permanent resident visa holders, and other protected persons who are subject to a removal order. In addition, the power of individual IRB members was increased by the consolidation of several steps into a single protection decision (A 170 [a]) and the use of single-member panels (A 171 [c]).
IRB would be responsible for determining not only whether a person was a Convention Refugee but also whether the claimant was a person in need of protection because of a danger of torture and/or a person in need of protection because of a risk to their life or of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment. A person accepted under any of these categories would become a protected person.

2.2 THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

One of the most determined critics of the former policy was an influential former policy-maker. Charles Campbell, a former Immigration Appeal Board vice-chairman, argued that immigration policy had been politicized to the point it was effectively under the control of special interest groups such as political riding associations, ethnic organizations and political parties, whose purposes had little to do with addressing the needs of Canadian society:

Current immigration and refugee policy exhibits contempt for the will of the majority of Canadians. Canadians resent their government’s tolerance of tens of thousands of illegal immigrants; the uncontrolled opportunities for systematic discrimination against the able; and the mismanagement of the process (Campbell, 2000, p.2).

He denounced those whom he deemed to be most responsible for the paradoxical behaviour – the refugee claimants rather than their persecutors or our policy makers. He argued the refugee determination process had been rendered “farcical” through repeated abuse of the process by “fraudulent” applicants. As a result, those who were most in need of protection were not receiving it because their legitimate place in the reception queue had been usurped by “cheaters”. He was particularly disturbed by the “60% of refugee claimants” who arrived
in Canadian airports without passports or other identification, even though they must have had them in their possession in order to board the airplane upon which they arrived. They did so with impunity, he claims, in “full knowledge that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms prevents their immediate detention or expulsion” (Campbell, 2000:207). Because of his position of authority, Campbell’s voice could not be easily ignored and because it was so loud, it effectively drowned out the voices of others, especially those who had the most to lose by a change in policy. The fair distribution of social resources thereby suffered from a lack of public discussion of the needs of those whose voices could not be heard.

When Campbell’s comments were repeated to refugee claimants who participated in the current study, their response was that he did not understand how it was for them. For a variety of reasons related to the turmoil they were fleeing, it was impossible for them to obtain official documents. In some cases, there was no functioning official agency to provide them; in others, such documents were only available to friends of the government. Still others had been forced to leave all of their worldly belongings aside as they fled for their lives. Some were women who had lost their husbands and were unable, because of their gender, to even apply for such documents. Some had used forged documents to escape from danger; however, they did not wish to use them to enter Canada, fearing that doing so would be viewed as a criminal act that would lead to their immediate expulsion. As a result, it seemed prudent to discard the false documents en route and once safely in the country tell the truth about themselves and their circumstances. Any characterization of such people as fraudulent queue jumpers and cheaters seems simplistic and extreme in this context because it did not take into account the sociocultural frames of reference of the refugee claimants.
Mary Jo Leddy, the founder and director of Romero House, a Toronto organization that assists refugees during the initial period of their resettlement considers that when refugees arrive at her door, they are at a border called “Hope”. In a 2004 interview with this researcher, she explained that, “They are very much a faith community in the sense that they are motivated by a sincere faith in the goodness of humanity. It is this faith that has enabled them to survive great difficulties. It has kept them alive” (Leddy, 1997). Integration to a new society, however, can be a traumatic test of faith for many newcomers, as some of their interactions with mainstream community members challenge their faith in humanity, others sustain it and still others encourage the development of new conceptions that are more congruent with those of the host society.

Lal (2001) argues that such challenges result from a divergence between the sociocultural frames of reference within which immigrants and members of the mainstream community live their lives. It can be a painful divergence. In a 1994 Ottawa consultation (CCR, 1998) a group of female Somali refugees described how they felt in the first months after their arrival. One participant exclaimed, “If you come to a country where everyone has only one eye, you have to take out one of your eyes so that you can fit in. Integration is that painful.” Another commented, “People think they know us when they describe what they see of us on the outside - black skin, Somali, veils. How can they think they know us when they have no idea what is happening to us inside?” Still another added, “I came from a place where everyone knows my name, to a place where no one knows me at all. Sometimes I hear people calling my name in the neighbourhood where I live but I find out that it's only the wind.” Israelite et al (1999), working with two Somali community organizations in Toronto, support the view that socio-cultural retention and integration are complementary processes. They
further argue that successful participation in mainstream cultures is concomitant upon social and economic conditions and resettlement policies that support family reunification, access to employment and mobility, supplemental schooling, cultural maintenance and housing.

Norton (2000) offers insights into how the pain of divergence might be alleviated by a better understanding of identity: “…how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5). Identity is of two types: social and cultural. Social identities are the conceptions that individuals have about their relationships with the larger social world as mediated through institutions such as families, schools, workplaces, social services and law courts. Cultural identities are conceptions about the relationships between individuals and members of a group who share a common history, language and similar ways of understanding the world. In the following sections, these two conceptual groupings are considered to be the components of an overall sociocultural frame of reference and are used to categorize research that has been conducted in the sociocultural domain.

2.2.1 Social Considerations

The type of support that immigrants and refugees need through social networks evolves over time as individuals navigate along the bumpy pathways from initial settlement to adaptation to full social integration. However, systemic barriers to their participation in mainstream society abound.

The systemic problems in Vancouver’s refugee support service have been described in detail by Carley (2001). They include chronic deficiencies in the provision of information on services, orientation programs, childcare, legal assistance, mental health support, employment
readiness and job search, housing assistance, interpretation and translation, English language training and advocacy support. Participation by immigrants and refugees in the planning and delivery of support services was notably absent. These deficiencies are echoed in the 2004 Report Card on Language and Settlement Services for Immigrants to Canada (Settlement & Integration Joint Policy and Program Council, 2005). The authors note:

Since 2002, there has been a further erosion of the infrastructure, community capacity and support systems to facilitate the integration of 225,000 immigrants annually. Against a backdrop of eroding core settlement and language supports, the Government of Canada is committed to increasing the numbers of immigrants to 1% of Canada's population. Equally important, immigrants are expected to account for all net labour growth by 2011 and for all net population growth by 2031. Unless the Government of Canada through the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) acts decisively to re-invest in Canada's Immigrant Settlement programs, the current waste of human capital will continue to grow along with increasing economic challenges in this country. (p.1)

The federal government, while committed to increasing the numbers of newcomers, appears less committed to caring for them once they arrive in Canada. Instead, it transfers responsibility for such care to its provincial partners, who are left to determine how best to respond to the needs of individuals. Some provinces have developed comprehensive settlement integration services; others have not. In many cases, newcomers must look to their own resources if they hope to participate in and contribute to the larger community in which
they have come to reside. By default, they look for support within their own ethnocultural communities (if present), as well as from others who share common immigrant or refugee experiences. They rely strongly on family and friends, the kindness of their neighbours and then upon whatever support they can muster in larger communities of interest. The kinds of support they ultimately receive, however, are of uncertain assistance.

Families

A variety of immigrant and refugee-specific circumstances has prompted many newcomers to establish different family roles in the receiving country. As was noted in the previous chapter, it can take years for some families to be reunited. The effects of such long-term separation can lead to the formation of new unions and the dissolution of old ones. Such family reconstitution can have profound effects on lives of men, especially those from cultures in which they enjoy privileges that do not exist in Canada. Menjivar (2000) notes how women approach structural impediments. By forming social support networks, exchanging in-kind resources and seeking assistance from community organizations, they gain crucial sociocultural knowledge. They are empowered by this knowledge to a greater extent than men in many cases and as a result come to speak for their families with a more credible and authoritative voice. Their experience in forming new conceptions of themselves that transcend traditional stereotypes is characterized by Mahtani (2001) as one of moving through paradoxical spaces. The psychologically stressful as well as beneficial aspects of negotiating such paradoxical spaces are examined in Coll and Magnuson’s (1997) U.S. study of refugee children and unaccompanied refugee minors. They note that even though a child’s adjustment to living between the cultures of his or her family and that of the outside
community may be problematical, the child can most times learn to live effectively in both. How and why this happens is not clear. They note there has been little theoretical or empirical research into the mechanisms by which contextual forces influence children and families although such knowledge has obvious relevance to the process of integration. Indeed, as Tonks and Paranjpe note, “We assume that, within a multiculturalist framework, the successful integration of immigrants would involve the incorporation within individual identities a mosaic of selected elements of both the ancestral and mainstream cultures, a form of cultural blending” (Tonks & Paranjpe, 1999)

Neighbours

For many immigrants and refugees in today's metropolitan areas, "neighbourhood" does not retain its traditional importance as a place where social integration occurs. Cultural affinities affect the core values placed on home and neighbourhood as gathering places, and on maintaining spatial proximity to family and close friends (Dowling, 1998). A newcomer’s "community" may be rooted in an extended family that lives close by, or it may be centred around a church that draws members of his or her ethnocultural group from all over the city. The orientation activities of community organizations are helpful for building a sense of connection with the host community. However, refugee participation in these local networks seems to be quite limited. Ley and Smith (1997) report that poverty and precarious employment means that many recent refugees are renters who move frequently, so they may not have a chance to meet their neighbours and become involved in local issues.

Nevertheless, the small gestures and cultural rituals of neighbouring are important ways through which new arrivals come to feel they are accepted, and through which
established residents become accepting of newcomers. Conversely, the absence of such contacts can lead to a sense of being rejected by the rest of society. The neighbourhood, then, remains important for the social integration, or conversely, the social exclusion, of refugees.

Because of suburbanization and the nature of housing markets, the neighbourhoods that refugees live in are often culturally diverse and geographically dispersed. As anyone who has gone looking for “Japan Town”, “Little Italy” or the “Greek Village” in Vancouver knows, for example, the ethnic communities that characterized settlement patterns in earlier generations in our cities have largely become outdated. Instead, as Lo and Wang (1997) report in a study of ethnic Chinese in Toronto, the spatial patterns of settlement of different groups of immigrants and refugees have become more dispersed, with more intra-group variation than existed in previous years. Balakrishnan and Hou (1999) and Ray (1999), suggest these variations may result from a propensity for newcomers to cluster amongst people like themselves. This behaviour, combined with differential costs of housing, has resulted in the emergence of concentrated pockets of ethnic groups, some more powerful or integrated than others, distributed throughout metropolitan areas. Preston and Cox (1999) note that in Toronto and Montreal there is a persistent stratification of employment by gender and birthplace. While most newcomers find work in the manufacturing sector, those from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean are far more likely than Europeans to work in entry-level service sector jobs. In general, such clustering works to limit the quantity and type of interaction between refugees and their mainstream hosts, despite its importance during the early stages of resettlement for labour market entry.

Limited interaction can further lead to intercultural misunderstandings and the emergence in neighbourhoods of discriminatory practices. Kibria (1997) in a study of
bicultural families reports that the dynamics of racism and exclusion of those perceived to be "different" may be operating within the neighbourhood, for example through controls over local information circuits or by the dominance of certain "cultures of parenting". The Canadian Council for Refugees in its "Best Settlement Practices: Settlement Services for Refugees and Immigrants in Canada" (1998) describes how misunderstandings can be propagated in the larger host community:

Institutions, such as schools, hospitals, police, justice systems, media and government departments, all play a key role in either helping or hindering integration by the degree to which they adapt to the diversity of the clients served.... Media attacks on newcomers or xenophobic comments from prominent people are not only very painful for refugees and immigrants but also undermine efforts made to create a welcoming environment (p.32).

A number of studies, including James (2001) and Castagna and Dei (2000) have commented on how social discrimination refers not only to treatment based on such status indicators as “whiteness”, race, gender, age, disability and religion but also to both the systemic denial of basic human rights, and denial of access to one's rightful share of social benefits and resources. Racism and ethnic discrimination places and keeps migrants and visible minorities under social and economic deprivation, as well as having an impact on physical and mental health. The effects can be harsh. The Canadian Task Force on migrant mental health (Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou, & Rummens, 1999) concludes that xenophobic discrimination constitutes a significant social stressor for new refugees and immigrants and is a serious threat to their successful resettlement and good health.

For Hanson and Pratt (1995), the spatial mobility of suburban immigrant and refugee
women and how it varies with social class and length of settlement is an important consideration in terms of planning for the delivery of settlement assistance services. The work of settling and integrating family members is mostly done by immigrant and refugee women. However, geographical dispersion makes the developing and maintenance of a social network consisting of "strong ties" with family and close friends and "weak ties" with institutions and acquaintances somewhat problematical for them (Hiebert & Ley, 2001). For example, "networking" around schooling issues is difficult when the children's parents don't share a physical neighbourhood where they can easily meet. Such networks are obviously very important for material and emotional support and for facilitating access to information about services and jobs. Immigrant and refugee women must learn to get around the city for visits to government agencies, social service providers, education/language training centres, health care institutions etc. They know spatial mobility may be important for enhancing access to job or educational opportunities and give priority to mastering the public transit system and to learning to drive. This "discovery of the city" is a key dimension of developing confidence in a new society as newcomers discover communities of mutual interest.

Communities of Interest

Menjivar (2000) reports that single women in Salvadoran immigrant and refugee communities in San Francisco had great difficulty in establishing beneficial links with males in the community (p. 164). The males, it seems, had different expectations for the females, mostly sexual in nature, than the females did for themselves. This led to a situation where the women were effectively cut off from many forms of access to the outside community. As a result, they developed their own informal networks among themselves and with other women,
including non-Latinos, through community organizations. These networks became very effective at providing support for the women, enabling them to become far more self-sufficient than had been their custom in Salvador. Such linkages increase the heterogeneity of the women’s networks and prove beneficial in helping the women access crucial goods and supplies. Had they relied solely on immediate sources of support they might have been cut off from access to key resources for such transformations in their lives.

Agger (1994) explores the individual experiences of forty female refugees, all of whom were victims of trauma prior to their arrival in Denmark. She characterizes the definitional spaces in which the women she interviewed have lived from childhood to adulthood as “rooms”. For example, there is the Daughter’s Room, where they first began to sense the meaning of being a woman in an androcentric culture; the Father’s Room, where they first experience sexual aggression and the illegitimate transgression of personal boundaries and the Cell, where the ultimate transgression of boundaries, between life and death, becomes the defining moment when the women become refugees.

Perhaps surprisingly, Agger concludes that these experiences can become both liberating and empowering. The defining space in which this can happen is the Veranda, the threshold between what has happened and what is to come, a place of reflection on the journey so far. On the veranda, the women discover the power of solidary relationships, those empathetic, non-neutral, non-foreign relationships that can emerge when people who have had similar experiences meet together to reflect upon them. It is, “a context in which insight and experience can begin to be connected to the healing process of the group.” (p.116). Liberation occurs when the demons of complicity, shame, impurity and ambiguity that have bedeviled the women since their experience in the Cell are made visible, voiced and given name.
Empowerment arises from the growth of insight and understanding that results from the exorcism of these demons by the act of naming them. The women “…can rise and continue the journey-together or each one separately” (p.116).

Pelosi (1997) explores the effects of intercultural communication on the outcome of such reflection. His “room” is the refugee determination hearing in which the social and cultural context in which the IRB functions comes face to face with the Board’s institutional culture, which mirrors the social discourse on refugees. A paradoxical communication gap exists between the principle of cultural receptiveness at the IRB, and that which occurs in the hearing and is evidenced by how individuals ascribe meaning to information in a culturally defined manner. This outcome, he argues is the result of difficulties in applying the international definition of a Convention Refugee to a socially and culturally constructed refugee determination process.

Norton (2000) suggests that by adopting a conception of identity that is understood with reference to the larger and frequently inequitable, social structures which are reproduced in day to day social interaction, we might better understand the reasons for the persistence of such intercultural communication gaps. Her “room” is the second language class. Language teachers, she argues, need to examine their own identities as teachers, researchers, community members and global citizens if they are to achieve greater insight into the complexity of identity (p. 154). She proposes language learners become researchers working collaboratively with other learners and the teacher on research projects involving their local communities. This approach might help learners understand how opportunities to speak are socially structured, how learners might create possibilities for social interaction and how the teacher might gain insight into the learners’ social and cultural identities and investments.
2.2.2 Cultural Considerations

Transitioning from one culture to another can be a complex and stressful undertaking. This is especially true for refugees who, because of their involuntary departure, may have heightened attachments to their country of origin. It is hard to imagine a context in which the unequal power relations between two cultures are more obvious. Arriving full of hope, most immigrants and refugees are eager to acculturate to what they perceive as the mainstream society so they may continue their lives peacefully in Canada. There is no expectation on their part that Canadians have any obligation to reciprocate. Acculturation becomes for them a process of identity reconstruction rather than reaffirmation, and one of constant endeavour to preserve what remains of the cultural doxa that once controlled their daily lives.

Cultural maintenance

Ramos (2001) and Paasche (2001) provide insights into how intergenerational dynamics influence the frames of reference of immigrant and refugee children. Ramos recalls that in response to the question “Where are you from?”, his father, an Ecuadorean refugee replied, “Toronto.” Ramos concluded that this response reflected his father’s keen determination to fit into the sociocultural frame of reference in which he lived, not in the one he had left. Paasche describes how his German roots have become irrelevant to his life in Canada, in part because of his upbringing in a variety of sociocultural contexts, to all of which he had to adapt. The desire of children to fit in with their peers can facilitate their speedy acculturation to Canadian society. Wilkinson (2001) concluded that refugee youth in Edmonton appeared to be quite well integrated. Such traumatic experiences as having spent time in a refugee camp did not
appear to have a lasting negative effect. Most of the youth she interviewed, though starting in a lower grade, were able to catch up with their classmates within a short time and over half were on-track for post-secondary education. Furthermore, the occupational aspirations of the youth were comparable to those of Canadian-born youth. At the same time, a large majority indicated that keeping their heritage culture was important to them, suggesting that their integration was best understood within a multicultural framework. However, Merali (2001) in a study of Hispanic refugee families, also in Edmonton, found that incongruent degrees of acculturation among parents and adolescents had detrimental effects on family cohesion. Her findings indicated parents and adolescents, respectively, underestimated and overestimated the actual level of acculturation disparity in their families. This perceived degree of disparity was found to be positively related to adolescents’ depression scores and negatively related to the depression scores of their parents.

Desai and Subramanian (2000) in their study of South Asian youth in Toronto noted that issues revolving around conflicts between parents and children due to the cultural differences between the country of origin and Canada appeared more often in the female groups. While this phenomenon could well derive from cultural expectations for females to be ‘custodians’ of traditional family values, it might also reflect a fear on the part of parents that the family powers they once had were diminishing. Phan (2000) in his study of academic achievement among the children of Vietnamese refugees in Vancouver reports rather different findings. “The self as narrated by these students orchestrates a dance between and among themselves within a family, a community, and across generations. The students’ achievement is motivated by a debt of love and gratitude to those members of the family and the community to which they belong. Students stated that through their own efforts and the "right attitudes" they
could reach their goals in school and break down the barriers of discrimination. They reported
growing closer and more emotionally dependent on their parents over time. They struggled
more with how to have and maintain satisfying peer relationships without becoming
independent from their parents.”

**Gendered roles**

A number of researchers (Mitchell, 1997; Ong, 1999; Skeldon, 1997) have remarked
on the successful transnational dispersion of contemporary Chinese families to North America
and the apparent flexibility of family units. This strategic use of migration by privileged families, typically more for the accumulation of cultural capital through education than for financial reasons, has resulted in the emergence of single-spouse “astronaut” families in many cities. One spouse, usually the husband, will return to the country of origin while the other remains in the host country.

Both Agger (1994) and Norton (2001) note that while further research on immigrant and refugee women's networks and experience of neighbourhood remains important, the enhancement of social and economic integration opportunities for immigrant women also requires that we conduct studies that are interdisciplinary and truly comparative of gender differences in these dimensions. A number of recent studies have endeavoured to do just this. Isajiw (1999) describes how ethnicity and gender affect the working lives of immigrant and refugee women. For those women from societies in which gender roles are more segregated than is the Canadian norm, the decreased level of hierarchy they find may, at first sight, appear to offer them more individual freedom and independence. However, if their male partners are frustrated in their efforts to secure employment by that same lack of hierarchy,
family relationships may be jeopardized. Lawson (1998) explores how gendered power relations within households influence decisions about where to live. Women's social networks, she notes, tend to be more strongly rooted in family and close friends, whereas men's are more likely to include acquaintances. Men's social ties tend to be more diversified than those of women, giving them access to a broader range of information, which often assists their social and economic mobility. Waters (2001) notes that the emotional costs of a geographically dispersed family unit can be significant. In her examination of astronaut families in Vancouver, she finds the flexibility of family units to be highly gendered. She writes of lone-spouse (typically female) families:

In every case, the woman’s life had been transformed through migration and the astronaut arrangement. There were many examples of the intensification of traditional gender roles, such as the loss of her economic independence and the increased personal undertaking of housework and childcare tasks. In some cases, the transformation indicated oppression, isolation, and a generally negative experience of settlement in Vancouver. Boredom, loneliness and fear were frequently mentioned. Marital relationships came under strain and, in the worst cases, relationships broke down because of an extramarital affair (p.46).

Gradually, the women incorporated their new family roles as mothers and housekeepers, along with their new free time, into a stable social environment that was disrupted most significantly when the husband returned to Vancouver and attempted to reassert his authority.

“ It was at times of his presence that the changes brought about in his absence - both in the practical aspects of the woman’s life and in her attitudes - were starkly realised ” (p.47).
2.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has described how the humanitarian disposition of public discourse on refugees prior to 9/11 changed from one that extolled protection for people in need to one that counselled protection from people who meant to abuse the refugee determination system. Although there was little or no empirical evidence to link the terrorist attack in New York to any failure of Canadian refugee policy, the public mood was apprehensive about national security and there was considerable pressure from the United States government on the Canadian government to adopt similar measures to its own in order to reduce the risk of terrorist attack. Refugees and refugee claimants were easy scapegoats for many people. Unlike citizens and permanent residents, they could be stopped at the border or deported.

In contrast, those who have lived among or studied refugees view them as among the most vulnerable members of society, whose own governments have failed them and who now depend upon the fundamental decency of Canadians to ensure their rights are protected. They are familiar with both the sociopolitical and sociocultural aspects of resettlement: the true nature of the risks of their flight, the peril of their loved ones who remain in diaspora, the unwelcome reception many receive in Canada, the poverty, the lack of access to employment and education, the lack of medical care for victims of torture, the unpredictable nature of the IRB decisions and the lack of appeal for those decisions. Those who know refugees well perceive them as little threat to national security.

Missing from the study so far are perhaps the most credible authorities on the refugee experience: those of the individual survivors. The following chapter describes the methodology used in this study to bring those voices to the public discourse on refugee resettlement.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The current study is an implementation of Participatory Action Research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) within a Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) methodological framework. The primary research activity in the current study falls within the paradigm of *praxis*, rather than *theoria* in that I set out to develop theory from practice by involving those most affected by the practice in its refinement and transformation. I was a practitioner-researcher, rather than neutral participant. I brought a wide range of sensitizing concepts to the project, rather than *a priori* hypotheses. My intention was to help empower a marginalized group by bringing their voices to the public discourse on government policy. In this manner, the participatory research, although substantive in scope, had the potential to “punch over its weight” by bringing those voices into the broader processes of policy development. These aspects of the current study clearly situated it within the domain of participatory action research. The processes by which data was collected and analyzed involved the constant comparison of findings with one another, formation of temporary “working” hypotheses, revision of those hypotheses and ultimately the development through analytic induction of a set of policy implications that were solidly grounded in the lived experiences of the marginalized group. These processes are essential features of the Grounded Theory approach. In the following chapter, I detail how the Participatory Action Research and Grounded Theory were combined in an effort to make the findings as generalizable as possible, and therefore increase their potentially utility for broader policy development purposes.
3.1 THEORETICAL APPROACH

Strauss and Corbin (1999) describe the Grounded Theory approach as a general method of developing theory that has been, “... inductively derived from the phenomenon it represents” (p. 23). The process by which theory is derived is often referred to as the “constant comparison method” because, as they explain, “Theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 158). Through this interplay, data is compared at different levels of abstraction and grouped inductively into statements of relationships between concepts (hypotheses) that are consistent with the data.

The great majority of grounded theory studies in the scholarly literature have been directed at developing substantive rather than general theory. According to Strauss & Corbin (1998), this is due to “…the overwhelming substantive interests of grounded theory researchers rather than the nature of their methodology” (p. 161). Glaser & Strauss (1967) further assert:

A grounded theory that is faithful to the everyday realities of a substantive area is one that had been carefully induced from divers data...Only in this way will the theory be closely related to the daily realities (what is actually going on) of substantive areas, and so be highly applicable to dealing with them. (pp. 238-239)

As such, the approach is a good “fit” for practitioner fields such as nursing, education and social work. The approach is adaptable to a wide variety of purposes, intellectual trends, and contingencies encountered during the research process. For these reasons it was selected as the most appropriate theoretical “fit” for the current study.
Action research as a general methodology has been described as an informal, qualitative, formative, subjective, interpretive, reflective and experiential model of inquiry in which all individuals involved in the study are knowing and contributing participants (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Hopkins, 1993). Participatory Action Research (PAR), a derivative, has roots in the praxis orientations of Antonio Gramsci (1971) and focuses primarily on emancipation and challenging power structures. It is a “systematic collection of information that is designed to bring about social change” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Practitioners marshal evidence or data to expose unjust practices and recommend actions for change. PAR is linked into traditions of citizen’s action and community organizing because by definition the researcher is committed to the cause. Such commitment is a necessary part of being a practitioner or member of a community of practice.

While the purpose of the current research was to help improve the practice of refugee resettlement, it did not focus only on the practices of service providers and policy developers. It focussed also on the capacity of immigrant and refugee communities themselves to address problems systematically and collaboratively. In Freirian (1970) terms, the process required codification of the participants’ day-to-day situations, conscientization of the ironies in their lives and collegiality among peers in the discussion and resolution of problematical issues. The responsibility of the researcher was to implement the method in such a manner as to produce a mutually agreed-upon outcome for all participants. I was committed to the point where the participants were confident enough to continue the process themselves.
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

My role in the current study was as a practitioner-researcher endeavouring first of all to improve my own practice as an advocate for refugees and refugee claimants and also to develop a credible and authoritative body of empirical evidence that would serve to inform the larger practice of refugee resettlement. Jarvis (1999, p.9) argues that such a “crossing of boundaries” between higher education and the professional workplace increases the relevance and usefulness of research for the improvement of policy and practice. As researcher I applied that notion to workplaces in the voluntary sector workplaces that were active in the provision of refugee resettlement services. This approach was consistent with two shared outcomes of the government’s Voluntary Sector Initiative, which were in operation during the study period:

Engagement of Canadians who experience marginalization; and,
Better program delivery and policy decisions within all levels of government and within the voluntary sector (Social Development Canada, 2006).

I endeavoured to connect those two outcomes by engaging marginalized refugees and their supporters in a process that could ultimately lead to more effective resettlement program delivery and policy decisions.

In order to provide a forum in which refugees and their supporters could engage in an open and honest discussion of issues that were of concern to them, I chose a community consultation approach on the basis of its inclusive educational focus, the psychological comfort of peer discussion that it offered and its practical workability. Adapted from the searching conference protocol developed by Trist (1983), the consultations required

---

7 According to the Accord Between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector (2001) the voluntary sector consists of organizations that exist to serve a public benefit, are self-governing, do not distribute any profits to members, and depend to a meaningful degree on volunteers to provide services.
participants to examine their experiences within their wider sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts, with a view to constructing a picture of a desirable future. They were designed to be mechanisms not only for empowering the participants to speak but also for validating the experiences and opinions they shared. Consultations focussed particular attention on the process of imagining how refugees might contribute to improving the resettlement experiences for those who would follow.

3.2.1 Sources of Evidence

Primary data in the current study was obtained from field notes made during interviews and site visits to service providers; reports from community consultations, informal discussions and electronic correspondence with service providers, government officials, refugees and immigrants; and presentations at academic and professional conferences. Field data was collected in small booklets, on audiotape recorders and a Macintosh iPod digital recorder, transferred into a computer database developed using the FileMaker Pro database management system and maintained from January 1, 2003 to December 1, 2004. The database contains field notes, memos to myself and observations made during personal interviews, discussions with consultation coordinators, facilitators and recorders, interviews with service providers and informants from the refugee community, and presentations made by service providers and government officials at voluntary sector conferences and meetings. It also contains links to transcriptions, audiotapes and digital audio recordings of interviews and presentations.

A total of ten community consultations were held in three cities spread across the four western provinces of Canada between January and November 2003 involving a total of 86 participants. Table 3.1 is a list of the consultations and their participants.
Table 3.1 Consultations and Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>January, 2003</td>
<td>5 Asian Female Claimants, 1 Asian Female Refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>5 Latin American Female Claimants, 1 Latin American Female Refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>6 African Male Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>6 European Male Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>6 African Male Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>7 Asian Male Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>7 Asian Female Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>7 African Female Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>March, 2003</td>
<td>5 Asian Male Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 Asian Female Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>November, 2003</td>
<td>6 Latin American Female Refugees, 1 African Male Refugee, 3 Latin American Male Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 European Female Immigrants, 1 African Male Refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 Asian Male Immigrants, 1 Asian Female Immigrant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In the table, the designation "Latin American" refers to Colombia or Mexico; "African" refers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Sudan; "Asian" refers to Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and the People’s Republic of China; and "European" refers to Serbia, Croatia, Albania and Poland. "Claimant" refers to a person who had not obtained refugee status at the time of the interview. The designation "Refugee" refers to a person who is a government or privately sponsored refugee who had attained refugee status and was at the time of the study a permanent resident of Canada. "Immigrant" refers to a person who had immigrated to Canada and was a permanent resident.

A breakdown of participants by sex, status and source region is provided in Table 3.2.
Table 3.2 Consultation Participants by Sex, Status and Source Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Claimant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, a total of 29 semi-structured interviews were conducted during the same period of time with 17 service providers, six government officials and six refugee claimants.

Documentary evidence was obtained from consultation reports prepared by community consultation coordinators, scholarly books and journal articles available from the UBC libraries or from online journal indexes such as JSTOR and Academic Search Premier; relevant newspaper editorialials and articles published during the data collection period; government publications, including relevant bills and regulations, statistics, Hansard extracts, media releases and backgrounders, speeches by government representatives, electronic information resources, orientation handbooks, policy position papers and service manuals; and publications by settlement agencies.

Public attitudes towards government policies, refugees and their resettlement were ascertained from magazine and newspaper reports and features obtained online or from library archives. An electronic list service sponsored by York University’s Centre for Refugee Studies CCRLIST@yorku.ca was a rich source of information on current refugee-related articles in the mass media as well as about actual resettlement issues and practices across Canada. Government attitudes towards resettlement were obtained from publications.
including Bills, Regulations, Journals and Debates (Hansard) obtained online from the parliamentary website at https://www.parl.gc.ca.

Information on current interpretations of legislation, practices and official presentations was obtained from relevant departmental sites. The website of Citizenship and Immigration Canada at http://www.cic.gc.ca was the principal source of information. Other useful sites included those of the Immigration and Refugee Board at http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca, Canadian Border Security Agency at http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca, Department of Justice Canada at http://www.canada.justice.gc.ca and Public Safety Canada at http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca. The Statistics Canada site at http://www.statcan.ca/ was a useful source of refugee census data. Unpublished information was obtained directly by the researcher from the Settlement and Integration Division of CIC. Other sources included publications by non-governmental organizations such as the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Research Resource Division for Refugees at Carleton University, Affiliation of Multicultural Settlement Service Agencies in B.C., Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants.

The scholarly literature available at the time of the study was primarily relevant to the resettlement experiences of refugees during their post arrival adaptation and integration to mainstream society in other countries. There was little if any literature, aside from relatively short opinion papers produced by advocacy groups, on such issues as the effects of the 9/11 attacks on the personal security of inland refugees or claimants. Those attacks had occurred too recently for the literature to develop. Most of the literature was in the form of books and journal articles available from UBC libraries or from online journal indexes such as JSTOR and Academic Search Premier. An excellent source of contemporary research was the Metropolis Project site at http://canada.metropolis.net, a national forum that focuses academic research on
critical policy questions, options and delivery mechanisms. The series of Working Papers produced by the Vancouver Metropolis Site (Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis) at http://riim.metropolis.net/ were of particular assistance in providing quantitative perspectives on the economic aspects of immigrant and refugee experiences in Canada, Australia and the United States.

3.2.2 Community Consultations

Participant Selection

Participants in Consultations 1 through 9 were selected by the consultation coordinators with the assistance of staff members in the organizations that provided the physical setting for each consultation. One criterion was immigration status. In Consultations 1 and 2, ten participants were refugee claimants whose applications for refugee status had not at the time been approved by the IRB. In Consultations 3 through 9, the participants were either refugees who had been sponsored by the government, groups or individuals or refugee claimants whose applications for refugee status had been approved by the IRB. All participants in these consultations were taking part in other programs sponsored by local service providers, programs that were not available to refugee claimants. The second selection criterion was source country. Participants were selected from the source countries that were most evident in local resettlement programs in the 18 months prior to the consultation. Finally, an effort was made to achieve an overall gender balance in the consultations. In total there were 46 female and 40 male participants.

The selection procedure for Consultation 10 differed from that of the other consultations. Participants were recruited electronically by means of a call for participants to local immigrant serving agencies and to all TESL Canada member organizations. There was
representation from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia. Ten participants were refugees and ten were immigrants.

**Consultation Teams**

The roles of the members of the consultation teams are indicated in Figure 3.1. Consultation coordinators were responsible for selecting appropriate people to act as facilitators and recorders in the community consultations. The job of the facilitator was to explain the purpose of the consultation, ensure that all participants understood and agreed to the terms and conditions of their participation, set the atmosphere of the consultation, lead the discussion and ensure that the voices of all participants were heard. The job of the recorder was to take comprehensive notes throughout the consultation, for review and discussion together with the facilitator and coordinator after the consultation. Both facilitators and recorders were required to be competent in English and fluent in the language of the cultural informants who would be participating in the consultation. In two cities, coordinators selected facilitators on the basis of their recognition as leaders within their own communities, skill in group facilitation and English language ability. In the third city, the facilitators and recorders were recommended by a service provider.

By prior agreement between me and the consultation coordinators, their names and the names of all participants in the consultations, the names of the organizations for which they worked and the consultation cities would not be revealed in the final report of the current study. The reason for this was that the identity of participants could be inferred from the nature of their comments if their city of residence was identified.
I was the consultation coordinator for City "A". The consultation coordinators for the other two cities were selected by me on the basis of previous successful collaborations. Both had been refugees to Canada and were employed by a local settlement service provider. I had two face-to-face meetings with the consultation coordinators prior to the community consultations. At the first session we developed a participatory action plan that was workable in each of the consultation sites. In the second meeting we developed the specific questions that would be used to guide discussion in the community consultations (See Appendix A) along with an orientation and training protocol for consultation facilitators and recorders. I provided relevant background information concerning the theoretical approach and research question and provided each with a copy of my UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board approval for presentation to their supervisors and implementation in their own consultations.
Consultation Procedures

Discussions in the first session focused on the expectations that informants had for their resettlement experience in Canada and how those expectations influenced the preparations they made prior to their departure for Canada. Participants were asked what advice they would give to a friend who was planning to come to Canada. The discussion then turned to generalizing the adaptation experience they had to other members of their ethnocultural community and how the government could work to improve the quality of the initial resettlement experience. It concluded with a discussion of how individuals like themselves could do the same. The discussions produced a number of rich descriptions of how divergent image and reality can be, and then challenged the participants to identify the causes of that divergence.

In the second session participants focused on longer-term integration into Canadian society, discussing the roles that governments, immigrants, refugees and citizens might play in helping newcomers from their particular ethnocultural communities integrate into mainstream society. The session then concluded with a discussion of how community capacity building might be developed and sustained using the skills and talents that newcomers bring with them. These discussions produced a large number of strategies for mitigating the negative aspects of the integration experience by involving newcomers in the community development process.

Consultation 10, the final one, was conducted over two days as part of a national English as a Second Language conference. All participants were permanent residents because they were studying English in government-sponsored programs. Such programs are not available to refugee claimants. On the first day of the consultation participants worked first as a large group to explore some of the key issues in settlement and integration that had emerged
from the previous ten consultations, then in smaller groups to discuss ways in which immigrants and refugees might contribute to the formulation and implementation of settlement and integration services. Promising strategies and practices in four areas were explored: building inclusion by bringing citizens and newcomers into the settlement process and keeping them there; building respect by ensuring that settlement services are culturally sensitive and accountable to the communities being served; building capacity by strengthening intra- and intercultural community relationships and building resources by developing and sharing information resources among all community members.

On the morning of the second day of the conference, participants engaged in a lively discussion of the CIC Response to selected recommendations of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, which had recently been made public. Discussion of the recommendations and findings from the previous day led to the development of two proposals for pilot community building projects, one focusing on the provision of enhanced language training and credential matching services to immigrant professionals and the other on profiling the service needs of typical immigrant families over a period of six months. These proposals are described in Chapter 4 (See pages 113, 120).

I was not present at the consultations in City B or City C. Data from those consultations was obtained from comprehensive written reports the consultation coordinators had prepared in collaboration with their facilitators and recorders and through subsequent discussions between me and them to clarify information from the consultations that I did not understand. Final reports by each coordinator were prepared for internal use by their respective organizations. Furthermore, preliminary findings from the consultations were shared with service providers
from across Canada at a national settlement conference in October 2003. Consultation 10 was held the following month in order to assess the fit and workability of the earlier findings.

3.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The qualitative approach of the current study resulted in the articulation of multiple perspectives on the research question. I viewed these as complementary, rather than competing perspectives and incorporated contradictory data elements in the development of working hypotheses rather than treat them as “outliers” in the data set. In order to achieve results that were generalizable to some extent, I applied two main strategies to help increase internal and external validity: respondent validation and iterative coding.

3.3.1 Respondent validation

Internal validity was maximized primarily from the participation, in their native language, of cultural informants who had shared the experience of refugee resettlement in Canada. All consultations were conducted in the preferred language of the cultural informants. In the cases where all informants were of the same gender, the facilitator and recorder were the same gender as the informants. As a result, their voices were perhaps the most authoritative and credible of all voices in the study because no other participants knew better than they did how it felt to be resettled. In order to reduce the potential invalidating effects of romanticized or fanciful recollections, respondent validation was incorporated in the consultation design. Cultural informants were first of all asked repeatedly to indicate how generalizable they felt their experiences and opinions were to other members of their ethnocultural community. Secondly, they were encouraged to reflect upon what they had said.
Each consultation was conducted in two sessions, with time between for participants to reflect upon what had happened in the first session. At the beginning of the second session, the consultation facilitators would check for clarification, if necessary, and ensure that all participants were in general agreement about what had happened in the first session. At the end of the second session, the same process was repeated. Thirdly, immediately following the consultation, the facilitator and recorder met to reflect on the event and where necessary clarify and amplify the notes. Finally the facilitator, recorder and coordinator met to discuss the event and prepare the final set of notes. This final stage of the respondent validation process required the facilitator and recorder to describe the event in such a way that non participants could clearly understand what had occurred. In total the data was examined and corroborated on four different occasions.

3.3.2 Iterative coding

Data from consultations in the three cities was combined with data from other primary and secondary sources and subjected to a three-stage iterative coding process. Texts were first analyzed through a process of open coding in which initial categories of information contained in the texts were identified. Table 3.3 illustrates how open coding was used to analyze the following speech sample, transcribed from a conversation between the researcher and a consultation facilitator on January 26, 2004 after a consultation in City “A.”

At the moment you are refugee claimant your life becomes completely different from before. You become from a human being to a number, a file, and your life becomes like dependent. Unless you are very lucky, you are unable to make a plan that you can follow to make a new life and
restart again. How can you make a plan if you don’t know if you should leave tomorrow or one year more or two or what? (LAFC (R) 01)

Table 3.3 Sample open coding analysis table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18/03/03</th>
<th>City A: (LAFI [F] 01)</th>
<th>Logical/Sem</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>At the moment you are (become) refugee claimant,</td>
<td>Cause 1</td>
<td>Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>your life becomes completely different from before.</td>
<td>Effect 1.1</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>you become from a human being to a number a file.</td>
<td>Effect 1.2</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>and your life becomes like a dependent</td>
<td>Effect 1.3</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unless you are (If you are not) very lucky,</td>
<td>Cause 2</td>
<td>Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>you are unable to make a plan that you can follow</td>
<td>Effect 2.1</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>to make a new life and restart again</td>
<td>Effect 2.2</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>How can you make a plan</td>
<td>Effect 3.1</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>if you don’t know if you should leave tomorrow or one year more or two or what?</td>
<td>Cause 3</td>
<td>Choice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The coding scheme used to identify sources for spoken information is presented in Chapter 4, Table 4.1

The first line of the table indicates the date of the utterance and its location in City “A”, that the speaker originally comes from a Latin American country (LA) and is a female (F) immigrant (I). The notation [F] indicates her role in the research project was as a consultation facilitator. Utterances were represented as meaningful logical (Logical/Semantic) fragments of language from which causal relationships could be inferred. The processes evident in the utterances are indicated in the last column. In the body of the table the utterances are listed in the order in which they occurred. Noun and verb phrases were highlighted to facilitate the
A large number of loosely defined categories emerged in this process, which gradually reduced in size as they became more clearly defined during the triangulation of data that occurs in the second stage of the coding process, axial coding.

Axial coding involved triangulating causal relationships, their consequences and strategies for mitigating those consequences in all of the data that had been collected up to a particular date. Table 3.4 illustrates how the process of transformation identified in Table 3.3 emerged in other contexts and settings. The first column identifies the data source. The process taking place, as identified in open coding, is in Column 2. The sociopolitical or sociocultural context in which the transformation took place is indicated in Column 3 and the immediate setting in which it occurred in Column 4. In this example, the transformation process in Table 3.3 is corroborated by similar transformations reported by four other informants and in the findings of one researcher. This triangulation of data served to shed light on the process of transformation. In the example it appears to be an experience during the initial stages of resettlement that has negative effects on feelings of personal security, inclusion and social orientation.
Table 3.4 Sample axial coding analysis table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Process: Transformation</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LAFI [F] 01</td>
<td>your life becomes completely different from before, you become from a human being to a number a file and your life becomes like a dependent...</td>
<td>Sociopolitical</td>
<td>Initial Resettlement Personal Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Waters, 2001, p.2)</td>
<td>In every case, the woman's life had been transformed through migration...In some cases, the transformation indicated oppression, isolation, and a generally negative experience of settlement. Boredom, loneliness and fear were frequently mentioned.</td>
<td>Sociocultural</td>
<td>Initial Resettlement Participatory Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASFC 02</td>
<td>I didn't know anything. Most of the time I was lost. I didn't know where to buy things I needed or anything about the transit system, streets or addresses but I didn't want to cause any trouble because I was a refugee claimant.</td>
<td>Sociopolitical</td>
<td>Initial Resettlement Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFR [R] 02</td>
<td>her entire body was disabled. She can't do anything, she feels like her hands are tied</td>
<td>Sociopolitical</td>
<td>Initial Resettlement Personal Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFR 03</td>
<td>I felt segregated. People in authority were made aware of my problems despite the fact that I was not given the opportunity to speak to the appropriate person. Along with my family, I faced more problems after my complaint was made to authorities.</td>
<td>Sociopolitical</td>
<td>Adaptation Access to Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third stage of data analysis, selective coding, involved grouping processes, contexts and settings by the number of times they occurred in the data set into thicker descriptions of the varied experiences of the study group and how participants dealt with the challenges they faced. The results of that analysis are evident in the organization of the findings in Chapters 4 and 5 into sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts that are then grouped into four policy areas: the refugee resettlement policy ideals as espoused by the policy developers; structural inequalities in the policies and regulations as identified by participants in the study; paradoxical outcomes of the policies that resulted from those structural inequalities and other factors; and “agency” the manner in which the participants responded or hoped to respond to the paradoxical outcomes they described.

3.3.3 Limitations of the methodology

Readers are cautioned to note that the experiences of the refugee cohorts in the current study may or may not be the same as those who arrived in Canada at earlier or later points in time. The source countries from which refugees arrive vary over time, and result in compositional differences between landing cohorts. The sociopolitical contexts in which they find themselves upon arrival in Canada also vary from cohort to cohort. For the study participants, the implementation of the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in 2002 amidst repercussions from the September 11, 2001 attack may have had particular consequences for them. The successes and challenges faced by the study group are nonetheless helpful for increasing general understanding of the challenges facing refugee resettlement in Canada.
3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research in cross-cultural settings requires researchers to infuse their research with respect for human dignity, a principal that, "...aspires to protecting the multiple and interdependent interests of the person -- from bodily to psychological to cultural integrity." (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, 1999). Fundamental to this obligation are the duties for the researcher to respect different worldviews and to ensure these worldviews are incorporated into the research methodology. In an effort to realize this obligation and in accordance with the requirements of UBC’s Behavioural Ethics Review Board and with the guidelines developed by Robert Winter (1987) the following principles were applied in the current study:

- Relevant persons, committees and authorities were consulted, and that the ethical and methodological principles guiding the work were accepted in advance by all.
- All participants were allowed to influence the research process, and the wishes of those who did not participate were respected.
- The development of the research remained visible and open to suggestions from others.
- Permission was obtained before making observations or examining documents produced for other purposes.
- The researcher accepted responsibility for maintaining confidentiality.

All cultural informants in all consultations were advised in their native language that their participation was strictly voluntary, that they would be reimbursed for travel expenses and that childcare would be provided if necessary. In addition they were advised that their anonymity would be guaranteed by the use of participant codes, that the recorder would erase any written
or recorded comment made by a participant upon demand and that they could discontinue their participation at any time for any reason. Each group was offered a choice of tape-recording their sessions or not. All participants either signed a subject agreement or recorded their consent on audiotape.

Funding was provided by a grant from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to cover the travel and meal expenses of cultural informants and honoraria for peer facilitators and recorders. In all cities, daycare facilities and meals were provided. The service provider that hosted the community consultation in each city received a stipend of $750 to use as it saw fit to cover its expenses. By mutual agreement among the coordinators and principal investigator, the coordinators, who were employees of the service provider, and researcher would receive no compensation. Honoraria were to be provided to facilitators ($200), and recorders ($100) in each city. In one city, at the request of the service provider, informants were also provided with an honorarium of $50 in order to cover their personal travel expenses. Participants in the final consultation were selected by service providers across the country on the basis of their non-employment by the service provider and their ability to represent their ethnocultural community in a national forum. Their travel expenses to the consultation venue were covered by their sponsoring organizations and accommodation expenses were covered by the conference organizers.

As an indicator of the success of the research process in establishing an open and respectful environment for discussion of their concerns, participants in all consultations expressed satisfaction with the process and enthusiasm for continuing involvement in discussions on issues of concern. Many indicated that it was the first time that they had ever been involved in such discussions.
CHAPTER 4: THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

Every immigrant group will treat others as they’ve been treated. If you treat people with justice they will understand what justice means. That will create civil society. But if you beat people down, then they do it to the next person. You mostly teach what citizenship is by example. (Mary Jo Leddy, June 3, 2004)

The following chapter reports the findings of research conducted among settlement service providers, government officials, immigrants and refugees. Both the etic perspectives of consultation facilitators, settlement service providers and government officials and the emic perspectives of immigrants and refugees that were voiced in the community consultations are included. The findings are presented within their sociopolitical context where individuals interact formally with structures of mainstream Canadian society such as government agencies, schools, non-governmental organizations, settlement service providers and law courts.

The first point of contact with these structures for most immigrants and refugees occurs during the pre-arrival period when they apply for entry to the country from outside the country. For others it occurs at their point of entry into the country, and for still others it occurs while they are in the country illegally. Once admitted, most newcomers enter the settlement phase of their immigration and their sociopolitical involvements expand considerably. Citizenship and Immigration Canada does not provide settlement services directly to newcomers. Rather, the Department contracts with, and provides funding to, immigrant-serving organizations and other community-based agencies, often referred to as service provider organizations (SPO).
Four policy “lenses” frame the presentation of the findings. First, in presenting areas of main concern that were addressed by participants in the study, the policy ideals, or underlying "one-size-fits-all" assumptions about the collective benefits of society that the current immigration policy attempts to promote are identified. These assumptions are drawn from public statements by government officials and documents produced by the federal government in 2003 and 2004 that are related to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Second, the existing structural inequalities within which the current immigration policies are implemented are examined in order to examine how the ideal images portrayed by the policies capture the lived experiences of immigrants and refugees. These structural inequalities emerged from discussion with consultation participants, interviews with service providers and findings reported in scholarly articles. Third, the paradoxical outcomes of policies identified by participants that have emerged since their implementation are presented. These outcomes explore the dynamics of power contained within the structural inequalities in Canadian society.

The final policy lens is agency, which in the context of this study means “the will to resist (that) is empirically present in everyday lives of oppressed groups” (Pinar et al, 1996). The testimony of consultation participants and service providers illustrates how they have privately resisted, challenged, or otherwise appropriated policies in order to mitigate the negative impact of the paradoxical outcomes. Five main issues of sociopolitical concern emerged from the community consultations: pre and post Arrival Orientation, personal security, educational opportunity, economic inclusion and shelter.

As described in the previous chapter, the identity of interviewees, consultation participants and locations of the consultations have been coded in order to maintain the
confidentiality of the discussions. Table 4.1 is the key to the coding system used in this chapter to indicate the sources of spoken data.

Table 4.1. Data Coding Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AF Africa</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C Claimant [C] Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS Asia</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>R Refugee [F] Facilitator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU Europe</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Immigrant [R] Recorder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA Latin America</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Citizen [S] Service Provider</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA North America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For example, two service providers who were female immigrants from Latin America would be coded as LAFI [S] 01 and LAFI [S] 02.

4.1 PRE- AND POST ARRIVAL ORIENTATION

In all community consultations the first question for discussion concerned the access of participants to realistic and sufficient information about the challenges they would face when adapting to life in Canada, both prior to and after arrival. Topics that emerged in the consultation included the nature of relevant information on individual rights and responsibilities, sources for financial, medical and cultural adaptation assistance, language training, family support and access to government office and agencies. The importance of providing orientation materials in the first language of the newcomers emerged in all consultations.
4.1.1 Policy Ideals

The federal government has indicated a desire is to improve the quality of both pre-arrival and post-arrival orientation services. In its 2003 review of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (SCCI, 2003) recommended Canada expand and enhance the Canadian Orientation Abroad Program (COA) and make it available to all classes of immigrants. The purpose of the program is intended to provide pre-arrival information to newcomers and facilitate the exchange of information between visa officers overseas and settlement workers in Canada in order to ensure that overseas officers are aware of the settlement challenges in particular regions of the country. The committee noted that it should also provide information that would assist settlement agencies in planning for their future clients' needs.

Concerns were expressed (in public consultations) about the availability of pre-arrival programs and their content. Some settlement agencies indicated that many of their clients arrive with “serious gaps” in the information they have been given about Canada. For example, many do not appear to understand our country’s size and think that a bus ride from St. John’s to Vancouver will take a couple of hours. Similarly, settlement workers often have little information about the newcomers before they arrive at their door. It would greatly facilitate their program planning if they had some sort of forewarning of the needs they are to be called upon to address.
In the current practice the program operates in countries that produce a high volume of immigrants and refugees in locations that are determined in consultation with the Canadian missions. New locations may come on stream and others may be discontinued, depending on the greatest need and the resources available. For example, the International Organization for Migration has delivered COA sessions on behalf of CIC in Vietnam, Kenya and the Balkans. Sessions have also been provided in Egypt, Djibouti, Tanzania and Ethiopia. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC, 2003) claimed that such services were available in source countries where there were high numbers of refugees and immigrants. Services were provided first of all to government-assisted refugees, then independent immigrants and finally to family members.

In December 2004, CIC was examining what it called more “cost-efficient approaches” to providing both pre- and post-arrival information that would be accessible to a larger number of immigrants and refugees. In partnership with Industry Canada and Human Resources Development Canada, it was developing a strategy for an Internet portal intended to provide on-line information and services to prospective immigrants, new permanent residents and settlement agencies. This initiative has led recently to the development of website “clusters” that organize information for specific audiences by topic rather than organization. In particular, the “Going to Canada” cluster (http://www.goingtocanada.gc.ca) provides comprehensive pre- and post arrival information for those who are planning to live and work in Canada. In addition, through its Voluntary Sector Initiative Settlement Project (CIC, 2003), CIC has been exploring new means of improving information sharing with the settlement sector via umbrella and national organizations.
4.1.2 Structural Inequalities

Findings support the observations in Chapter 2 by Carley (2001), and the authors of the 2004 Report Card on Language and Settlement Services for Immigrants to Canada (Settlement & Integration Joint Policy and Program Council, 2005), that chronic deficiencies persist in the provision of information on services, orientation programs, employment readiness and job search, interpretation and translation and English language training. Only one group of participants reported that it felt well informed about Canadian society prior to its arrival. The coordinator of the consultation commented:

(They) came to Canada under private sponsorship programs, which creates a whole different set of expectations of the host society and individual responsibility. The vast majority of this group was well informed about Canadian social and legal institutions. They also knew different institutions’ roles and their functions in the community. They knew where to go and how to go about finding certain jobs in the community. (AFMR [C] 01)

Their experience was not generally shared by other newcomers in the study. One participant in Consultation 9 was very unhappy with the orientation she had received. According to the consultation recorder:

No one explained to her family what will happen, when the family will start going for English training. They are confused and lost. They have no one to ask or inquire due to language barriers and being new in the community. The people that they know are going through their own
problems. It would have been nice if someone had informed them about various things. They feel totally lost (ASFR [R] 02).

One participant in Consultation 8 commented that by the time information was disseminated in the pre-arrival program about employment programs, it was no longer useful:

The women who gave us the orientation in Egypt told us the truth. She told us that life in Canada is very difficult and she told us also that if we were working we would be able to live but if we weren’t we would not be able to live. When we arrived here we find everything the same as she told us. However we learn it so late after we had the visas, we didn’t expect that while our papers were processing (AFFR 01).  

Another commented, “...we don’t know what we must do and what we mustn’t do...the refugee is tired and exhausted and he needs some one to take his hand” (AFMR 05).

A service provider bemoaned the lack of current and accurate pre-arrival information on qualifications and credentials for specific occupations in Canada.

An easy and effective change would be to distribute pamphlets listing the Web sites of professional regulating bodies, immigrant-serving agencies and educational institutions in Canada. (Refugees and immigrants) could tap into them for information about licensing requirements in particular professions (ASMI [S] 01).

He further called for an expansion of the Canadian Orientation Abroad program to include occupation-specific post-arrival information sessions.

---

8 As much as possible in this thesis, the exact words spoken by participants are used in the text. In some cases the sentences are ungrammatical. Words that were strongly emphasized by the speaker are underlined.
Participants from Consultation 3 spoke of their disappointment with the post-arrival orientation provided to them. According to the consultation facilitator, the primary concern was that the settlement workers were over worked and did not have time to spend with the newly arrived refugees. Furthermore, the workers were from other ethno-cultural communities and did not understand the unique needs of the community. As a result, community leaders who were not compensated for their time and who were already “overspent” were called upon for assistance in settlement repeatedly by the newly arrived refugees (ASMR [F] 01)

Although the new web clusters appear to be efficient mechanisms for distributing orientation information, they are accessible only to those who have Internet access and the computer literacy skills to take full advantage of the resources. Furthermore, there is no online provision of orientation information in languages other than English or French. One needs sufficient language ability to comprehend such complicated writing as:

Canada offers refugee protection to people in Canada who fear of persecution or who may be at risk of torture or cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, and are unwilling or unable to return to their home country.

Or its equivalent in French:

Le Canada offre une protection aux personnes se trouvant au Canada qui craignent la persécution ainsi qu’aux personnes qui risquent d’être torturées ou de faire l’objet de peines ou traitements cruels et inusités s’ils retournent dans leur pays d’origine ou encore qui ne veulent ou ne peuvent pas y retourner.  

One participant commented, “I would personally advise my friends to learn some English before coming to Canada in order to find your way” (ASFR 03).

4.1.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

Prior to their arrival in Canada the great majority of participants were enthusiastic about their prospects. Participants from Consultation 4 spoke unanimously in saying that coming to Canada was seen as, “a glorious dream full of high expectations” and opportunity to have well furnished houses or apartments (and) backyards for their kids to play” (EUMR [F] 01). One participant from an African consultation in response to the question “Did you think your life would change a lot?” answered, “We thought our life would change a lot and we would have a better life” (AFMR 09). The members of Consultation 8 imagined Canadians were nice, friendly and open-minded. They also thought Canada was great for human rights, freedom of religion and speech. They further stated that they had an image of Canada as country for people with equal educational and job opportunities. Further, they had an image of Canada as a safe place for children. They thought that English was easy to learn and that they would be eating “lots of hamburger, hot dogs, salads, pasta, and potatoes” (AFFR [R] 01).

The post-arrival image of Canada for most participants in Consultation 8 was less enthusiastic. According to the facilitator:

Everybody thought their lives would change in terms of ideas and opinion. One member of this group stated that change is inevitable when one moves from one culture to another culture, and the rest of the group agreed. They expected that there would be a different job market. They had thought that there would be job security like that in their country
where jobs are for life. After their arrival they found that there is little job security in Canada (AFFR [F] 01).

One participant commented:

Before I arrive to Canada, I had great expectations. I expected that life is easy, I imagined that I could easily find a job, I expected to find a lot of opportunities and to find all doors open. However, when I arrived here, I didn’t find it as I expected, on the contrary, life is more difficult, the change is negative (AFFR 04).

Some comments were quite emotional. Participants in Consultation 4 expressed anger at what they felt had been deliberate misinformation given to them prior to departure. According to the consultation facilitator some members were upset because they had been led to believe that they would be given the opportunity to work as an apprentice in their field in order to upgrade their skill, however, that opportunity has not been made available to them. A participant in Consultation 2 emphasized, “Life in Diaspora is painful and it is the same here. Life here is war!” Clearly this was not what she, or many of the other participants, had expected. “People come here thinking this will be heaven,” she noted wistfully (ASFR 03).

The facilitator in Consultation 2 described what she perceived as the root cause of such post arrival disaffection for some of the claimants she had worked with:

At the moment you are refugee claimant... you become from a human being to a number, a file and your life becomes like a dependent ... you are unable to make a plan that you can follow to make a new life and restart again. How can you make a plan if you don’t know if you should leave tomorrow or one year more or two or what? (LAFI [F] 01)
A participant in Consultation 7 explained,

Most of us have been through very tense situations throughout our lives and faced many difficulties in our country that make us very sensitive. Our feelings can get hurt very easily (ASMR 08).

Another participant in the same consultation cited an example of how feelings can be hurt:

They send a letter to my work and tell the manager that I have a loan and that I have to pay... This is something between CIC and me why do they send a letter to my work? (AFFR 06)

The facilitator for Consultation 2 reported in response to a question about whether the immigrants may be unhappy because they view themselves as being “trapped” in Canada:

When I think of these women that they want to go back even if they have to start working again in their country, I think it is, because they want to leave (but) they can’t leave. Or if they want to leave, they have to leave just by themselves and leave their children here, even though the children’s roots are here (LAFR [F] 01).

A service provider commented that many of the refugees she sees arrive in Canada under traumatic circumstances. Through it all they have maintained a fundamental choice, to live, and their safe arrival attests to their keen ability to survive. However, the euphoria of survival can be quickly deflated when the refugee comes face to face with the reality of surviving in Canada.

At the beginning there is a lot of imagination around Canada and often times (newcomers) believe in this country more than I do and for some of
them after they go through the system they get beaten down and that is one of the saddest things we see (because) to me the greatest thing that people bring is hope and belief in the decency of a country and when you knock that out of them something is lost to the country - something very important (NAFX [S] 01).

This was a common phenomenon among her refugee clients she noted. Their pre-arrival impressions did not include the many sociocultural, economic and psychological miseries they had experienced and were still experiencing after their arrival in Canada.

Although some viewed the primary responsibility for pre-arrival orientation as resting with the individual, it was also clear that the lack of detailed information was not entirely their failure at due diligence but also that of the Canadian government. One participant raised the point that newcomers would benefit from timely first-language orientations about their rights and what to expect from people or the Government of Canada:

This should start overseas just before their arrival, and within Canada shortly after the arrival because most the newcomers do not speak English, so it is very hard for them to express themselves (ASMR 09).

In Consultation 1 all participants agreed that many things had surprised them when they arrived in Canada, that nobody had informed them about life in Canada before arriving and that they had received wrong answers to their queries (ASFI [F] 01). One participant recalled:

I thought after I came to Canada that everything would be going okay for me. I could find a job and go to English class. But, I just got one month of English, and I was astonished about that. I thought the government would
help us a lot. Now I get from government just $500. That’s not enough for
everything and I can’t continue my education (ASFC 05).

A participant in Consultation 7 noted:

We didn’t know how long we could go to school, and how to getting
student finance support. We didn’t know on time the changes about our
rights to bring somebody else to join family here, so we figured it out after
the opportunity has been gone (ASMR 01).

All participants in Consultation 4 agreed that many things had surprised them because of
unavailable or incorrect pre-arrival information. The lack of first language information was
seen as the primary reason for this. For example, some claimed that they did not know they
had to repay the costs of transportation to Canada within the first year after arrival. One
participant exclaimed,

They told us in the embassy that the paper we are going to sign on is a
confess from us to pay back the full amount of the tickets loan, but nobody
told us that this will be as soon as we arrive (EUMR 05).

Another said, “I don’t like to have loans therefore, I pay for the ticket loan monthly, but I
don’t leave anything for my family” He added, “They advise us to save money for children to
study at the university, but how?” (EUMR 04).

As a result of their post arrival experiences, the majority of participants in the
consultations agreed that in their own orientation for a friend they would tell him or her to
think carefully about coming to Canada. “I would advise him not to come here unless he didn’t
have a university degree, so he could study in Canada while waiting for the citizenship and
then he could look for a job” (ASMR 06). Another participant said, “I would say to my friend
come to Canada, but don’t come with big expectations. Come and try your luck and accept the reality” (ASMR 14). Still another, reflecting on the circumstances of a friend who was living in Canada with her children but whose husband was still in a camp stated, “I advise a woman to be married when she come to Canada” (AFFR 05). Another summed up her advice to a friend with the assertion “Even the simplest aspects of one’s life are problematical” (LAFR 01).

4.1.4 Agency

Despite the labour-intensive nature of providing the kinds of post-arrival orientation many individuals require, participants in the majority of consultations expressed a desire to take the lead in this process and suggested a wide variety of supports they could provide. One participant explained, “We know exactly their needs and feelings, and by explaining carefully to them those ideas we will make their life easier” (EUMR [F] 01). “Almost all of us went through the same difficulties after the arrival” said another “We know how is it like to be home sick, missing the family; being frustrated with not knowing enough language…the emotional support is an important factor of integrating into the society” (ASMR 08)

The recognition that orientation begins with oneself was mentioned by participants in Consultations 6 and 9. Most of the participants in Consultation 6 said that they would try their best to adjust to Canadian society and adapt in order to make the resettlement process easier. “I will try hard to learn more about the Canadian culture, heritage and the requirements of life in Canada,” said one member (ASMR 10). Participants in Consultation 9 reported that newcomers, due to language and cultural barriers, were often unable to voice their concerns if they were not receiving the relevant resettlement services or treatment. “We need answers for a lot of questions, we need to know the rules to follow it but we don’t know the language,” said
one participant (AFFR 04). Members of Consultation 9 agreed that they should try to improve themselves, learn English and find jobs so that they could be of service to others. One member commented that if she knew English she could help others. For example, she would teach them English informally, take them around the city, and help them get to their social and medical appointments (ASFR 14).

The role of the ethnocultural community was seen primarily to act as volunteers for the resettlement-providing agencies and for the newcomers. Many of the participants expressed their willingness to help other newcomers adapt and integrate. One participant offered to inform newcomers about the problems he had endured so they would not fall into the same difficulties. He added, “If you don’t find someone to orient you, you will not know anything,” (AFMR 06). Another volunteered to conduct a feasibility study if he could find institutional support for his research. “Nobody can give real assistance without an institution,” he said (AFMR 03). A participant in Consultation 10 suggested the group organize childcare support for its members so that individual mothers would be able to take advantage of settlement training programs. (LAFR 04). A female participant said simply, “I would visit him or her to provide a feeling of support.” (AFFR 02). One participant even volunteered his wife.

We could give advice to the newcomers to help them understand Canadian society...about laws and justice systems and help them with the social and financial integration in Canada. Also, we could help the newcomers to obtain drivers’ licenses. We could be a great resource for translation on different occasions such as medical and social appointments (ASMR 14).
Participants in Consultation 10 all expressed their support for involvement of those who had “been through the system” with the service providers in order to ensure that relevant and appropriate orientation programs are developed. One participant commented “I think really involving people in what happens, not just inviting them to a party, but asking them to organize the party, is very important” (LAFR 04). A volunteer in a local refugee housing program agreed:

Our alumni are a fundamental part of our community here. That’s what keeps it sustainable. People are quite different. Some just want to become invisible. But there are some who were very active and they want to be involved. It is very important for them to find a way to continue their commitment. When (the alumni) come and meet the new people there is a connection and made and (the alumni) see that there is something to do here, worth my while to work on and to stay connected to. So it has a life of its own and it rebirths itself as each family moves out and sees a reason for staying connected (NAFX 01).

4.2 PERSONAL SECURITY

Personal security refers to practices that aim to provide social protection to refugees after their arrival in Canada by developing and maintaining open channels for communication with government offices, refugee serving agencies and sponsors, access to resettlement programs, counselling services and equitable dispute resolution processes. The insufficiency or absence of these and similar practices is a barrier to resettlement.
4.2.1 Policy Ideals

The government frequently proclaims its mission to welcome people who are afraid of returning to their home country (CIC 2002c), and its intention to maintain this commitment. (CIC, 2002a; CIC, 2002b; CIC, 2003). Protection is conferred when the Immigration and refugee Board determines a person is a Convention refugee or person in need of protection (see Chapter 1). Such people are considered to be those whose removal to their country of nationality or former habitual residence would subject them to the possibility of torture, risk to life, or risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment. (CIC, 2002c) The mission extends the notion of protection to the protection of refugees both in Canada and abroad (CIC, 2002b). At the 2004 Canadian Council for Refugees Spring Consultation, Jean Guy Fleury, Chairman of the IRB at the time, stated the position of the government in very clear terms:

Without effective and fair protection systems in place, refugees and internally displaced peoples would have nowhere else to turn. This is fundamental to Canadian values and will guide any evolution of policy development. We know that fairness and quality decisions are of central importance to Canadians and to our stakeholders. To them, and to you, we offer our commitment that we will always balance administrative efficiency with fairness... Our decision-makers have a responsibility to make well-reasoned and fair decisions – and those decisions have a profound impact on the lives of refugee claimants....

---

10 Excerpted from Speech of May 28, 2004, Montreal PQ
In addition, it extends the notion of protection to include refugee claimants who are in medical need by providing financial support through the Interim Federal (IFH) program for the urgent and essential health needs of those who cannot pay for the service themselves (CIC, 1998).

The government has further indicated its desire to increase the overall levels of protection it provides by easing eligibility restrictions. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Right of Landing Fee (ROLF) was eliminated in February 2000 for Convention refugees and members of the Humanitarian Designated Classes. Two years later, in response to a 2002 recommendation by the House Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration that the IRPA clause 136(1)(g) which requires a refugee overseas to demonstrate an ability to become "economically established" be changed to an ability to become "established", the government agreed to remove the word “economically” in order to relax the criteria used to assess successful establishment (CIC, 2002a). It has also increasingly established a practice of basing eligibility for specific supports and services on the assessed needs of individual refugees rather than on the length of time the services have been received (CIC, 2003).

CIC is aware that special mental health problems need to be addressed for certain newcomers to the country. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (SCCI, 2003) recommended that settlement programming and client needs assessments should be sensitive to mental health issues and, in particular, the needs of refugees and other newcomers with stress-related disorders. In response the government noted that as part of the settlement services it provided through the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), trained service providers referred immigrants and refugees with mental health issues to general practitioners, who in turn referred them to specialists or appropriate clinics. CIC also provides funding to the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT), a non-profit
charitable organization in Toronto. The centre coordinates referrals with doctors and psychiatrists, provides language training for newcomers, and delivers an art therapy program. Taken in combination, the pronouncements and actions of the government suggest that it takes very seriously its responsibility to provide for the personal security of refugees.

4.2.2 Structural Inequalities

Once in Canada, refugee claimants remain ineligible to receive support for many settlement services because the government considers their genuine need for protection has not been established. (CIC, 2003). Even when support is provided, it is often insufficient. For example, one service provider (NAFX [S] 01) noted that the government provides financial support for traumatized refugee claimants; however, it is only for services provided by general practitioners. Services provided by psychologists are not eligible because they are not covered by all provincial insurance plans. The government argues it would be discriminatory towards other Canadians if access to psychological treatment were provided to one group but not another. Participants in Consultation 10 reported they felt it “unfair for services to be completely unavailable for refugee claimants, especially because the eligibility determination process can be very lengthy” (NAMX [F] 01).

Service providers in two provinces expressed frustration with the federal government in their efforts to provide a minimal safety net for refugees and claimants. Two providers commented on the negative attitude some officials appeared to hold towards claimants. One, a former claimant herself commented:

The process begins from a negative assumption. Refugee claimants are not given a proper chance to make their case. There are no translation
services. They are not seen by anyone before filling out their Personal Information Form (ASFR [S] 02).

The other used the same phrasing:

The intake workers are often beginning from a negative assumption... (They) make very high stakes decisions including whether or not a claimant has any hope of making a claim. If a claimant is from the wrong country, as determined by the intake worker, they have no hope (NAFX [S] 02).

A shelter provider stated:

The current system is chaotic. Claimants have been moved off the edge of anything firm - not knowing where they are going to end up. Since 9/11 many come to (my agency) after having being held on no charge in a cell at the airport and then in a regular prison cell downtown. Any suspicion of security threat or flight from justice is sufficient grounds for detention. (Detention) has a traumatic effect on identity. It is dehumanizing and there is always the possibility of physical danger (NAMX [S] 04).

His agency maintains a small number of “out of the cold” respite rooms for claimants who find themselves sleeping “in the rough” after being freed from detention. To add to the providers’ frustration, the government maintains tight control on the information it releases on border decisions. For example the precise numbers for claimants who are refused at the point of entry are hard to determine by those outside government. One service provider reported that she realizes entry has been refused or a claimant detained “…only if a claimant has a relative
waiting for him or her in Canada and that relative reports the claimant did not arrive” (LAFX [S] 01).

Once permission to apply for permanent residency is granted, refugees have six months to make the application and then wait for a decision to be made. The waiting period, which can be very long, is a time of great anxiety for some claimants. One service provider reported in the summer of 2004:

Files are being pulled by “Border Security” and people are being reinterviewed. Some convention refugees are still waiting after five years for permanent residency. Many people are being deported after 5, 6 or 7 years in Canada. They are ignored for years and then asked to leave in 3 weeks (LAFR [S] 01).

Occasionally there were extensions, for example, granted for families with children in school but this was by no means a certainty (AFFX (S) 01).

Participants in Consultation 8 also expressed frustration in their dealings with officials and noted that some workers at government agencies appeared to be too busy to be able to provide much security assistance. The Consultation 8 facilitator reported:

Several complaints were discussed in the group regarding unprofessional behavior and lack of outcomes to their complaints…They concluded with (a) proverb that is translated as, ‘to whom one should complaint if the judge himself is the enemy (ASMR [F] 01).

One participant in the consultation stated that an immigration officer had advised him not to ask for more funds because what was given to him was sufficient. The officer admonished him,
Canadian taxpayers are not even aware that the Canadian government is spending this kind of money on people. If the taxpayers found this out, they would be very upset that their money is given away in such a manner (ASMR 03).

For other refugees, provinces appeared to differ on the provision of protection. For example, two participants in Consultation 5 stated that their resettlement experience was different from others because when they came to Canada they arrived in a different province from the one in which they currently lived. Speaking for both, one reported:

Our settlement experience in Canada has been different because the sponsorship program was not well organised, and we didn’t get proper help, so many times we felt lost and alone compared to our friends in other provinces (AFMR 16).

Participants in one city reported being treated with insensitivity and prejudice on more than a few occasions. The consultation coordinator reported:

All communities confirmed that there is a measurable degree of racism and discrimination. The majority of the participants confirmed during the consultations that they have experienced discrimination on various occasions, either by the settlement employees at the service agency or government offices, by the landlords and by potential employers. They stated that they were treated with a lack of sensitivity, felt judged and mistreated by some settlement staff members on different occasions (AFMR [C] 01).
A common concern expressed in Consultations 5, 7 and 8 and was that because settlement workers often appeared to be overworked, newcomers had to rely upon similarly overworked volunteer community members for assistance.

4.2.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

Perhaps the most paradoxical outcome for a policy that purports to provide personal security to vulnerable members of the community has been the emergence in Canada of an “invisible underclass” of people without citizenship, recognised documents or other legal status. These people are nevertheless living here, sometimes for years, as they try to establish lives. Vulnerable to exploitation in the workforce, they are mostly poor and living in anxious insecurity.

Many are rejected refugee claimants who have gone ‘underground’, because they fear returning home. The researcher personally knows of five female claimants who responded in this manner when threatened. One day four former participants in Consultation Group 1 mysteriously disappeared after learning about the deportation of a mutual acquaintance. The circumstances of her deportation upset them greatly. She had been instructed to meet on a Friday at a government office to discuss the rejection of her Pre Removal Risk Assessment application. Without any discussion, she was immediately taken into custody and placed in a holding cell, where she spent the weekend until a direct flight out of Canada was available. In the meantime, a group of supporters made arrangements to free her as she was being escorted to the airplane that would take her away. They grabbed her from her escort, hustled her into a waiting car, and fled. The escape was short-lived. She was recaptured, summarily deported and is now living under house arrest in her home country. When a consultation facilitator, by
chance, encountered one of the consultation participants, she learned she had changed her name and appearance and in fact was known by several different names by different people. One consultation recorder for this study, whose PRRA application was rejected, also chose to disappear and has apparently sought shelter in another city.

Some consultation participants reported that they had felt “acute loneliness” or a sense of “being abandoned,” or being “invisible” at various times during their resettlement. As the following account by a young Asian female refugee claimant illustrates, this feeling of abandonment can emerge as early as at the moment of entry:

When I arrived I didn’t have any place to go...Of course as a woman I cannot just go and look for a place. The way how I was brought up it wouldn’t give me that chance because we were always protected with the family and I never been out of my family for a day. It was Sunday afternoon. So I talked to this immigration official and he said he couldn’t contact any shelters, anything because it was Sunday and it was late. So he told me basically just look for somebody. And it was really hard. Just imagine you come to a place where you don’t have anyone. I was forced to leave my country and I wasn’t prepared where to stay, where to go.... So I started to walk the platform at the airport and I met a Somalian girl and we talked, you know I just want a place for tonight cause I can’t go anywhere. Sunday everything is taken, they are closed. Can you take me for a day? And she took me. She took me somewhere I think, just with her family but I am just going with her and I don’t know where. Maybe she
can be a good person, or she could be a different kind of people. I just trusted her - I had no choice- I just went with her (AFFR 08).

Her final words were echoed by those of a participant in a different consultation who cautioned, “At the beginning, you need to be very careful about the kind of people you relate with. Sometimes people from your own country take advantage of the people who just came” (LAFC 05). Her experience was similar to others, though not all had the same happy resolution. The facilitator for Consultation 2 reported a similar encounter with a government employee, this time at a hospital:

Sometimes (the refugees) say they don’t worth anything, worthless, because they been called just like this. Even one woman when she was applying for her visa, what happened was she was pregnant and she wanted a doctor to speak with her and nobody realized she was pregnant and she was 6 or 7 months of pregnancy and nobody gave her information about job or … so she went to the hospital and nurse asked for her papers and she says well I don’t have it because they didn’t tell me so the (admitting counter person) said we can’t keep you … because you don’t have this special ticket or paper…. So she went back and asked for this paper and they said why do you need this paper and she said, “Well because I am pregnant.” I mean that is something that people realize! So it is not just that you are invisible, it is more than that (LAFI [F] 01).
The need for proper care provision for those with mental health challenges, especially for female refugees who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder was emphasized by one participant, a trained psychologist:

Women need psychological assessment. It doesn’t mean they have to see psychologist or psychiatrist. They do have to say something, something very sacred actually. They never say something they have a pain deep inside…They have a real deep problem. They are in pain but they cannot say it like “I am sick I am sick”. They cannot say that. They need some kind of special counselling- friendly, very sensitive way. Maybe they can speak out and they can get the necessary help. Otherwise we are misdiagnosis them (LAFR 06).

This is especially true in cases where torture had been involved. One service provider commented:

All the studies say that most of the care-worker types, the professionals, tend to perceive needs in terms of what their skills can fulfill – if you are social worker specializing in addictions, you go into a thing and see everything as addiction because that is what you can respond to. (However) first of all, all of us have to begin to say we know very little about torture. We really don’t. A lot of the traditional psychology isn’t built. I have seen social workers say, “Oh we’ll come in and we’ll hold office hours and counsel all these people with torture, and…. ” Well, most people do not want to talk about torture… if you come like a bulldozer and set up your office hours because that is what you are trained to do, it is
quite violent actually. You just don’t know when people are ready and if you push them around you are really just adding to the violence. We (need to) wait until they are ready and they come in on their own. That’s when we can start to do something (NAMX [S] 01).

4.2.4 Agency

The most common response on the part of service providers to the ineligibility of refugee claimants was to provide the service anyway. One service provider reported that nobody was refused access to any of the services of the agency. Most agencies have established parallel services for claimants that they offer on a pro bono basis using volunteer teachers. Faith communities in particular have been prominent in providing services to those who have sought protection, including providing physical asylum in church buildings. This practice was condemned by then-minister Judy Sgro in a May, 2004 interview with the Canadian Press:

We cannot ignore the realities of terrorism or international smuggling networks which so deeply affect each of us and have such a profound influence on lives of everyone around the world. Canadians need to remain compassionate and fair. And we need to become more vigilant and ensure we effectively deter abuse. This is the balance that Canada needs to better achieve in its refugee program…It's a very difficult issue to deal with and, frankly, if we start using the churches as the back door to enter Canada, we're going to have huge problems. The protection of our country and of
Canadians has to be the No. 1 concern. And people shouldn't be allowed to hide anywhere (Bronskill, 2004).

The Minster explained the government wanted to continue assisting refugees and at the same time "diminish the abuse of the system."

One participant described how she took matters into her own hands when her personal safety was threatened. Fleeing an abusive spouse she “stole” her children and escaped to a refugee camp in a neighbouring country where the family spent more than one year. Her brother had preceded her in the camp and had made it to Canada by claiming he had a sister waiting for him there. She had at that time not even made it into the camp. Though wary of her claims because of the actions of her brother, the Canadian officials ultimately allowed her to proceed to Toronto, where she lived for some time until acquiring permanent residency. She decided at some point to move to Vancouver with two of the children and to let the others know if it was a good place for them to live. It was not particularly inviting. Her hairdressing credentials from her home country were not accepted in Vancouver, so she worked under the table while collecting welfare. She enrolled herself in a hairdressing school, obtained her certification and got a job in a nearby salon. She is looking forward to going off welfare (ASFR 19).

The suggestion came forward from participants in Consultation 4 for funding to be provided by the federal government to identify individuals in their own ethno-cultural community who could work as settlement workers. One participant described the reason for this as “quite simple”. If workers were from other ethno-cultural communities they did not understand the unique needs of the community. He stated that a social worker from his home country or a country within the same region understands the issues of his or her own people,
thereby cutting down on the mistrust and misunderstanding between the newcomer and the settlement worker and the perceived lack of concern shown to them by social workers (EUMR [F] 01).

4.3 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Educational opportunity refers to the recognition and valuing of individual competencies and provision of access to programs, services and opportunities for personal development. Such programs and services should be relevant to the needs of newcomer individuals and their families and provided for as long as those needs remain.

4.3.1 Policy Ideals

In the 2002 Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session of the 37th Parliament of Canada, the Government committed to working with “Canada’s largest cities to develop targeted strategies to reduce the barriers faced by new immigrants in settling into the social and economic life of their new communities. It will introduce targeted measures to help children of recent immigrants to learn French and English, so that they can realize the opportunities that brought their parents to this country” (Government of Canada, 2002).

Funding for English or French language training for immigrants and government-sponsored refugees is provided by the federal government through settlement and integration service agreements it has established with provincial and governments. Based upon local consultations between officials from federal agencies and their provincial counterparts, individual provinces may choose to allocate resources to language and skill training according
to the needs they perceive. The intention of the government has been “...to maintain a certain amount of flexibility in the system to help ensure that programs can be adapted to local needs” (CIC, 2003). Further, the government in its 2003 budget allocated $5 million per year toward the development of cost-sharing projects involving provinces, territories, municipalities, employers, educational institutions, community organizations and service providers to provide higher levels of language training, including labour market specific language training for adult immigrants.

CIC also supports the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) initiative. This initiative facilitates the integration of newcomer children into Canadian schools. Through this initiative, settlement workers operate in schools with high numbers of immigrant children, providing services to the parents, the children and to the school system. SWIS workers act as cultural brokers and facilitators between students, parents and the schools. For example, SWIS workers orient parents and children to school rules, teacher expectations and grade placement processes; refer children to appropriate agencies in cases of domestic violence; act as intermediaries between parents and teachers; and provide general information about Canadian society, culture and climate.

4.3.2 Structural Inequalities

A number of structural inequalities related to the accessibility, relevance and sufficiency of educational opportunities were identified by service providers and participants in the consultations. Access is problematical because under the current system, newcomers do not qualify for language training support until they have acquired permanent resident status, a process that can take from many months to years. Participants in Consultation 9 expressed their
surprise at this requirement. One said, “I expected that I will start to learn English immediately. Language is a big problem!” (ASMR 17). Another elaborated, “We can’t even answer the phone, they teach us only one sentence, ‘sorry I don’t know English’!!” (ASFR 12). One who was still waiting for permanent residency declared, “I have been here for six months approximately and I do know nothing about English!” (ASMR 16). Another said, I feel bored from staying at home, I expected to join English language classes immediately after my arrival to Canada. I never imagined that I will live in Canada therefore; I didn’t pay much attention to English classes at school. My sister did pay attention to English during school and now she is doing fine (ASFC 04).

All participants in Consultation 9 agreed that assessing communicative proficiency was essential for successful integration into mainstream society. The consultation coordinator reported:

Everybody agreed that language is the basic barrier between the newcomer and the Canadian society. The main request of these newcomers from the Canadian government is to provide language assessment to the refugee directly after his/her arrival to Canada. They expected to get involved in English language classes within the first month of his/her arrival to overcome the language barrier as soon as possible (AFMR [C] 01).

This position was shared by all five of the language training service providers who took part in this study.

In the best scenario, the discretionary allocation of resources by provinces and territories helps ensure programs are adapted to local needs. However the approach
presupposes that appropriate and accurate needs assessments have been conducted by local service providers. One participant in Consultation complained that this does not always happen:

They told us that you have to go to ESL even though you hold English degree from (my home country). They say that (my home country) teaches British English; while in ESL they teach Canadian English. What is the difference? (AFFR 01)

The facilitator for Consultation 8 reported that financial need was a barrier to all of the participants:

... everybody agreed that they expected the government to cover all the school curriculums for all Canadians. However, they were surprised that they need to pay for the school curriculums (AFFR [F] 01).

A participant in Consultation 9 reported:

My daughter registered for a class in cooking at school and they ask her to pay $25. We don’t have the money, but we have to cut it from our living expenses and give it to her, we can’t say no for her (ASFR 17).

A participant in Consultation 2 reported:

We heard that the university study is expensive and we need to save money for our children to use it when they join the university, but nobody told us about the schools. There isn’t enough information about schools system in Canada (LAFR 01).
Another indicated that educational guidance would be very helpful. “I want to finish the high school but I didn’t get acceptance at high school, I don’t know what to do, I need a guide” (ASMR 15).

Some participants in Consultation 3 commented that there was a poor connection between the school system and ethnic families. As a result parents were left not understanding what is happening in regards to the education of their child. The suggestion from one participant in Consultation 3 was that, “schools need to increase funding for cultural liaisons” (ASMR 02). The facilitator of the consultation (ASMR [F] 01) reported that he was employed for 20 hours a month by the public school system as a liaison, but that this was insufficient. “A student expulsion hearing can take four hours itself, “ he said. A language training provider (EUFi [R] 01) expressed frustration that federal funding for most providers was made on the basis of one-year contracts. This practice affected the number of students her school could accept. “We are always worried the funding will be cut and that affects our planning greatly,” she said.

Participants in all three cities commented on what they perceived as overly long and complicated processes for recognizing credentials and prior learning. One participant commented:

It doesn’t matter how much training you have in your country - we are very clear that we need to be training again. But why do we have to start from zero? It seems that everything you had before, you don’t have here anymore (LAFR 06).

As a result, according to the Consultation 2 facilitator, they felt both helpless and frustrated, trapped by their dependence upon government support though eager to become self-sufficient
In general, participants in the majority of consultations recognized that some re-training might be necessary, but some were distressed by how their skills were undervalued. Relevancy was problematical for both participants and service providers. Particular importance was attached to workplace-related language competency. This need was expressed most strongly in Consultation 6. One participant commented:

It would be helpful if newcomers could take some short-term courses that could teach them some skills to help them get better employment. I wish there were some ways of bridging peoples' background, education and jobs (ASMR 11).

Another said, “We need intensive English language classes (but) we need also a job, through work one can learn the language, have friends and integrate with the society” (AFMR 09). A third participant commented on the need to,

...establish ‘links to employment’ classes so we can use the skills we brought to Canada rather than work in service jobs. Not using our skills causes us to be depressed and feel hopeless (ASMR 07).

The majority of participants in the consultation felt language-training programs would be far more relevant to their needs if they provided more instruction in the area of job search strategies and practices in order, “…to have language and job training incorporated together so we can learn new technologies” (AFMR 06).

The restriction of eligibility for professional certification emerged as a common area of concern in most of the consultations. Some participants in Consultation 10 described how many newcomers arrive in Canada with unrealistic expectations, based upon advice they received in their country during the pre-immigration period, of employment in Canada. A
consultation recorder (ASFI [R] 02) reported that they felt credential assessment should be
done before arrival and "realistic appraisals of potential employability should be provided by
the Canadian government." They further argued that if Canada was serious about admitting
more newcomers, it "should take steps to help ensure that appropriate policies and mechanisms
are in place to help them enter the labour force."

In the experience of some participants in Consultation 5, the process of obtaining
accreditation and licensure seemed to be so weighed down by informational and procedural
barriers that it would take many years to complete. They reported they would not have come to
Canada if they had had any idea of how hard it would be for them to get a job (AFMR [F] 02).

Foreign academic and professional credentials were reportedly undervalued in many
situations and at times implied the existence of a double standard. One service provider
(NAMX [S] 02) reported one such standard appears to exist in the recognition of South African
credentials by one provincial medical association but not those from well-regarded colleges in
India and Pakistan, even though those credentials were fully accepted in England. Similarly, a
participant commented that while CIC had developed a point system for the assessment of
eligibility for coming to Canada, the same process did not seem to be recognised at the
provincial level (EUMR 03).

Participants in Consultation 10 noted that difficulties in obtaining a driving license
contributed to a lack of mobility in areas not well served by public transportation. The major
barrier for many was the learner's handbook and written driving test, which were available
only in English (ASFX [F] 02). One participant argued the handbook should be translated into
different languages and be available free of cost through service providers so newcomers
would not have to wait until they had sufficient English before they could drive. "The language
of driving” he said, “is universal. Many of us had licenses in our own countries” (ASMR 07). A service provider added that the driver license exams should also be available in different languages to help enhance the prospects for self-sufficiency that increased mobility would provide (LAFX [S] 02).

The insufficiency of language training emerged as an issue in most of the consultations, particularly in discussion of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada programs funded by CIC. The recorder for Consultation 7 reported:

This was the common problem among the group and all the participants had the same desire to see some changes in the rules and regulations of the LINC program because some graduate from LINC 1, some from LINC 3 and some stay for three years. This is confusing for them and they want to know what these decisions are based on (ASFR[R] 01).

A participant in Consultation 6 agreed:

The government of Canada should bring some changes in the rules and regulations of the LINC program. Some people graduated from LINC level one or two just because they completed their 1,000 hours. The fact is that everyone doesn’t have the same learning ability. How can a person who barely speaks, reads or writes English integrate into society (ASMR 09).

According to one of the recorders in Consultation 10 (EUFI [R] 01), a prominent LINC expert, in one province students whose proficiency is assessed at Level 1 of the Canadian Language
Benchmarks\textsuperscript{11} (Initial Basic Proficiency) often exhaust their hours before reaching Canadian Language Benchmark Level 3 (Adequate Basic Proficiency). Students assessed at Level 1 are able to understand a very limited number of common individual words and simple phrases in a predictable context and on everyday personal topics. They can follow greetings and simple instructions that depend on gestures and other contextual clues but struggle to understand other instructions. They need extensive assistance such as speech modification, explanation, demonstration, and translation. Students at Level 3 understand key words, formulaic phrases and most short sentences in simple predictable conversations on topics of immediate personal relevance, and when spoken slowly and with frequent repetitions. They can follow questions related to personal experience and an expanded range of common daily instructions, positive and negative commands and requests related to the immediate context. They still need assistance with speech modification, explanation, and demonstration (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2000, p. 22). Service providers in two cities reported that their provinces provided support only up to Level 5 (Initial Intermediate Proficiency), where a learner can:

...participate with some effort in routine social conversations and can talk about needs and familiar topics of personal relevance. Grammar and pronunciation errors are frequent at this level and sometimes impede communication (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2000:63).

The majority of language training providers in this study expressed a desire for language training up to Level 8 (Fluent Intermediate Proficiency), at which the learner can:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{11}The Canadian Language Benchmarks, developed by CIC, are a 12-level descriptive scale of communicative proficiency in English as a Second Language. They are used in all federally-sponsored English and French language training courses. The complete list of descriptors is available from http://www.language.ca
\end{flushright}
...communicate effectively in most daily practical and social situations, and in familiar routine work situations., can provide descriptions, opinions and explanations and use a variety of sentence structures, including embedded/report structures, and an expanded inventory of concrete, idiomatic and conceptual language (Pawlakowska-Smith, 2000, p. 54).

4.3.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

It appears self-evident that a sound language training policy should enhance the prospects for refugees to prosper by promoting their opportunities to succeed. Facilitators in all three cities reported that newcomers considered language proficiency to be an essential component of successful integration because of its importance as a determinant of occupational status and mobility. Newcomers who lacked proficiency in English or French, one reported, “...often found themselves trapped in a cycle of dependency on social assistance” (AFMR [F] 02). One participant, when asked what he would advise a friend who planned to immigrate to Canada replied, “I would say don’t come unless you hold a degree that could be qualified in Canada and unless your English language is very good” (LAFC 04). Other participants reiterated the importance of post secondary education, stating in one form or another that only qualified personnel were advised to come to Canada.

Unfortunately, the types of structural inequalities described in the previous section can result in outcomes that serve to hinder success. The group facilitator for Consultation 3 reported:

People with professional and vocational training thought that they would be able to get jobs in their fields after they learned English. Others
responded that they thought that they would receive job training after they
learn English and would be able to secure employment after their job
training. Job markets are different here. Their formal education and
training are not formally recognised here in Canada. (One participant)
asked why can’t he work in construction field after he learns English; he
was an independent contractor in (his home country) for over twenty
years. Why can’t he use his training and over twenty years of work
experience (ASMR [F] 01)

A service provider observed the irony of the government’s encouraging professionals to come to jobs
that do not exist.

It is a sad truth that Canada has the most highly educated janitorial staff in
the world. Canada is depriving other countries of their highly educated
professionals, but we are not utilizing the education or experience of these
individuals. Is it really necessary for us to collect highly educated
professionals from around the world just to form a highly educated group
of janitors in our country? (AFMX [S] 01)

He attributed this state of affairs to a lack of communication between government, employers
and professional standards organizations.

One participant Consultation 3 reported that the first refugees from his ethno-cultural
community arrived in 1991. This included families and children. Twelve years later there was
not one individual who had graduated from university and only two had completed high
school. The reason for this, according to him was a lack of structural support from the
community; a situation he felt had improved over the years.
There was no community organization in the early years or for the new refugees (but now) if they are not overstretched, community will support refugees from our community who arrive to Canada (ASMR 05).

Another participant, a journalist who applied for refugee status while covering an athletic event in Canada (ASMR 04) described how he had hoped to be able to serve an apprenticeship in Canada as a journalist. In reality, no such apprenticeship programs were available where he lived and his only recourse was to return to school and start from the beginning. This was an overwhelming challenge for him given his age and his desire to sponsor his wife and children to come to Canada. He is currently working as a security guard and living with another family in order to save the money needed to sponsor his family.

The Consultation 2 facilitator commented on the psychological stress many felt because of their inability to find work or to take part in appropriate training programs:

... we were talking about how good it will be if you are valued for your skills and you could start taking a course before training. I think we are all of us who are work close with this problem that we have to or we need to be active or we need to have training because in our countries the training is very different. So it doesn’t matter how many training you have in your country we are very clear that we need to be training again. But how, why do people feeling always because everything that you have, before, you don’t have here anymore and you have to start from zero, so all the things that you have it doesn’t work here. It is like telling you that yes you are a person, you could be here a person, but let’s see what kind of person you are (LAFC [F] 01).
A participant in the consultation described the frustration she and others like her felt:

We want to study during the day and work in the evening even for one hour; emptiness is killing us! (However,) we don’t study, we don’t work and our nerves are about to break. This affects the children badly (LAFR06).

Participants in all consultations noted the waiting period for government-sponsored language training programs needed to be reduced in order to allow newcomers to complete language classes before their resettlement assistance ran out. Some participants had taken the language assessment and joined the LINC program after two months of their arrival date. However, others in the same city had been waiting for 4 to 6 months to join the program. One Latin American group stated that because of a lack of childcare space, some individuals have to wait up to three months to begin classes. They noted that this disadvantaged women more than men and recommended that the issue be examined with a view to improving the situation (LAFC [R] 01).

The essential job readiness role of language training in English or French was also noted by a majority of participants in the consultations, who expressed their view that government-sponsored language training programs should also provide more classes in the area of job search techniques. One participant stated:

Expansion of the English language program is essential as well as the reestablishment of links to employment classes so we can use the skills that we brought with us from our home country. (Government-sponsored) programs are inadequate to prepare us for employment (ASMR 02).

The complex sociolinguistic knowledge that native speakers of English and French employ to develop resumes, complete applications, write letters of inquiry and meet potential employers
is often inaccessible to newcomers. Furthermore, the process of job seeking itself, as conducted in Canada with its multiple application forms, follow-up telephone calls, uncertainties and disappointments, was unknown in many source countries.

### 4.3.4 Agency

Participants in Consultation 4 recommended the introduction of specific language training for professionals that would provide skills relevant to individual vocational needs. The group facilitator (EUMR [F] 01) reported that the level of frustration experienced by educated people was at a record high, adding to the strain of learning a new culture or language. This meant participants could not work in their areas of specialty. The group proposed it approach relevant bodies about entering into mentorship programs with foreign trained people, suggesting these programs could be offered in the work place and in the evenings to accommodate shift workers.

One service provider (ASMI [S] 01) responded to concerns about financial sustainability, accountability and local consultation by looking at new ways of providing language training based upon the expressed social needs of the learners. His agency received no additional funding from any source to implement any of these activities which now include field trips to different facilities and organizations, computer assisted language learning, community gardening sessions, monthly dialogues with a cultural relations police officer and a public health nurse, cooking and nutrition classes and frequent community celebrations. In cooperation with the provincial government, it provides written testing for Learners Driving Licenses. The organization also offered citizenship classes and assistance completing applications free of charge. The organization has established a Bridging Team comprised of
staff, volunteers and other community members. The role of this team is to provide training to other volunteers. The program coordinator also organizes an event each month in order to bring hosts and clients together. Through these actions the service provider has moved from being an organization providing a variety of settlement services to one that approaches settlement as a respectful, community-based practice in which newcomers are encouraged to voice their concerns and assume agency in the settlement process.

4.4 ECONOMIC INCLUSION

Economic inclusion refers to access by newcomers to economic opportunities and provision of adequate income, through government-sponsored loans and other subsidies, for basic food, housing, childcare and personal development needs. Without adequate access and support, newcomers, especially refugees, may find themselves unable to participate meaningfully in society.

4.4.1 Policy Ideals

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (SCCI, 2003) challenged the government to provide greater support and assistance to foreign-trained workers through loan and internship programs and the establishment of an office to facilitate professional and trade assessments and accreditation. In its response, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC, 2003) noted that it had instituted a number of improvements in this regard including the introduction of more flexibility in the regulation of loans used to assist permanent residents to become established in Canada. It further replied that Human Resources
Development Canada (HRDC), working with CIC and other public and private agencies across the country, was developing initiatives continuing to support the development of equitable and transparent foreign credential recognition processes. The 2003 federal budget allocated $13 million over two years in order to address this particular issue.

4.4.2 Structural Inequalities

Participants stated repeatedly that they had no desire to continue to be dependent upon the government for financial support however, many had been experiencing great difficulty in generating sufficient income to participate in mainstream society. One participant commented:

It is very hard for you because of what you expect, it is not what you thought. Your dignity and self-esteem just go down, down when you start working at very low scale. In the moment when you really need to have hope (LAFC 03).

A participant in Consultation 8 commented:

We don’t want to be heavy burden on the government. We want to work and become independent. The available cleaning jobs pay the minimum wages, $6.50 or $7 per hour which means $650 to $700 per month, and the fixed expenses of rent, power, telephone, gas, etc exceeds the double of this amount...The journey of the refugee is unusual one so he can’t bring any work experience papers or any educational certificates which he might have, there should be professional work experience assessment to the refugees (ASMR 06).
Another participant in the same consultation stated simply, “The government should help you find a job after one year instead of sending you to the social assistance or welfare” (AFFR 05).

Participants in other consultations described how the cost of living in the first year came as a surprise to them. Compared to life in a refugee camp, according to one participant, “Life (in Canada) is very expensive, in Diaspora if you earned $10 per day, you will pay $2 for heat and $8 will cover all of your expenses and the houses are offered by the UN” (ASMR 07). Another commented that his change in circumstances was a change for the worse:

I used to work in Diaspora now I am stuck 24 hours at home. I expected to learn English immediately upon my arrival, to go to vocational training and then find a job - am I going to stay at home for one year without work? According to the government salary I had $5 to $6 per day, I spend them on the bus tickets, I need work (ASMR 03).

One participant remarked, “The first year is very tough and we came here wearing the only clothes we have, we don’t have money in our bank accounts, if we do have we could easily pass this tough period” (EUMR 05). According to the facilitator for Consultation 9 (ASMR [F] 02):

They all talked about the difficulties they faced before arriving in Canada. As refugees, their lives weren’t easy and they left their families and country looking for a good life. However, they discovered they have to struggle to survive. The salaries are very low compared to the expenses needed and most of the salary goes to fixed expenses such as rent, telephone bills, power bills, gas and etc.
Furthermore, the allowance provided by the government was insufficient for their needs, especially for larger families and for any money they earned to supplement the allowance the same amount was deducted from the allowances.

The great majority of claimants, in the experience of one service provider (NAMX [S] 02), were living far below the poverty line. In some cases, the difficulties could be linked directly to government practices that are not working effectively. For example, one service provider noted that processing delays in some cases led to financial difficulties and caused particular difficulty for youth who were unable to apply for colleges and universities because their SIN cards began with “9” indicating they were temporary residents (LAFX [F] 01). Another reported that in his province the government provides a food allowance up until the point a claimant’s case for refugee status is heard, but it is a loan that must be repaid (ASMX [S] 01). Once refugee status has been determined the food allowance is provided as a grant.

Still another service provider reported that Resettlement Assistance Program support was not provided for individuals to participate in many types of employment training opportunities, thus making them inaccessible (ASMX [S] 01). As noted in Chapter 1, achieving permanent residency requires the payment of significant fees, including a right of landing fee as well as the documentation of good health and securing of acceptable identity documents. In addition, there are legal and translation fees that must be assumed. For example, according to one service provider (LAFR [S] 01), it typically costs $500 for a lawyer to accompany a claimant to an IRB hearing. A lawyer must be present even though, at the discretion of the adjudicator, he or she may or may not be permitted to take part. In 2004 her provincial government unilaterally removed all legal aid support and translation services that had been
previously available for refugee claimants and also restricted the number of hours for which immigration lawyers would be reimbursed to a maximum of eight hours per case.

Some participants felt the three-year time limit for repayment of the transportation loan the government charged for bringing them to Canada should be extended because they were unable to find jobs that provided enough salary for them to make all the payments. One participant (LAFC 04) reported that language, cultural and economic barriers compounded with systemic barriers had created in her an enormous amount of fear of the unknown and uncertainty for the future. Having learned that she would have to pay back the transportation loan that she was issued by the immigration office overseas, she was very apprehensive. She did not have a job and she was not sure if she would be able to get a job" to help her family become self-sufficient and pay back the transportation loan” (LAFC 04).

4.4.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

The central importance of employment to social integration emerged as a theme in the all of the consultations. Figure 4.1 is a poster developed by participants in Consultation 10 to illustrate their perception that employment is a basic right that is essential for financial and psychological security and ultimately successful integration into mainstream society. One participant further expressed the importance of employment to family life:

If there is good payment job, there is comfortable life for children, there is more opportunities for entertainment (but, without it,) the children lives are confined between home and school...We can’t dream of visiting another provinces in Canada because of lack of money (AFMR 16).
A number of participants referred to a “Catch-22 situation”, where one needed Canadian experience to obtain work but was prevented from obtaining it. A participant in Consultation 4 asked:

How can start to looking for a job, Canadian experience and Canadian credentials and that, and they say okay making volunteer work is a good place to start and then get the language. Even the voluntary work is given to people who is expect to be hired in the future so sometimes it is very hard to find even to make a volunteer work (EUMR 02).

Figure 4.1. Preconditions for social integration. Poster prepared by participants of Consultation 10, November 15, 2003.
A participant in Consultation 8 commented:

You spend half your life studying and you go to the university, but when you arrive in Canada nobody recognizes it. You apply for a job and go to the interview, then they say to you, ‘you don’t have Canadian experience.’ Then they offer you a job in cleaning. How am I going to gain Canadian experience to work in a bank from cleaning experience?

(AFFR 03)

This lack of recognition of prior learning and experience by employers was noted in most of the consultations. The facilitator for Consultation 4 reported:

... some members of the educated group (are) feeling angry about their circumstances. They believed that they would be given the opportunity to work as an apprentice in their field in order to upgrade their skill, however, that opportunity has not been made available to them (EUMR [F] 01).

A participant in Consultation 8 commented:

In your country you are well evaluated, but here you find yourself in Space. If you hold a degree, you expect to find a job either in your field or in a relative field. However, you should put your degree aside and go to school again or work in a marginal job. They bring us in as new workers!

(AFFR 06)

Another participant in the same consultation complained that he had worked very hard to get his degree during a very difficult time in (his home country). Now he felt that all those years had been wasted because he could not find a job even remotely related to his profession. The
Consultation 6 recorder (ASMR [R] 03) reported that all participants thought they would get jobs in their professions, because they were told that having an educational background was a factor in their selection to come to Canada. “This is not the reality,” reported one participant. “Never mind getting a job in the profession. It is hard to find a job that is at least relevant to what a person is trained for” (ASMR 11)

Participants in Consultations 3 and 4 spoke of the expectations placed on them by family members remaining in their homeland to earn enough income not only for themselves but also to send back to care and provide for the remaining family. The facilitator for Consultation 3 reported:

Remaining family members believed (financial support) would be possible and expected the transfers. However, in all cases, the current income of the newcomers was barely sufficient to meet their own physical and material needs, let alone the needs of their family back home. The majority of the participants reported that they were burdened by financial responsibilities for the immediate family members who were not able to escape as they did (ASMR [F] 01).

One participant noted:

We need work because we send money to our families back home. They are living under war. If we earn $500 we send $200 to our families and live on the rest of the money and pay taxes (ASMR 01).

The facilitator for Consultation 4 described the psychological effect of this failure to meet expectations:
The expectation upon newcomers to Canada by their remaining family to obtain wealth and provide for those back home was described by many participants. Also mentioned was the shame that accompanies the inability to live up to this expectation, and the difficulty to return home and face those who have placed such expectations upon them. Within this context, another source of shame for newcomers is the fact that they must rely upon social assistance to provide for themselves. (One participant) placed this in the context of the same desire to contribute to the economy of the country for which this individual feel indebted to, rather than draw upon the contributions of others (EUMR [F] 01).

4.4.4 Agency

Participants in all consultations offered suggestions on how their financial concerns might be addressed. Lack of employment was their biggest concern. It seemed very clear to some that employers turned them away because did not have appropriate Canadian experience. The disheartening effect of such summary dismissal threatened both the financial and psychological stability of the applicants. One service provider who originally arrived in Canada as a government-sponsored refugee from Africa, described how she had worked around the “Canadian experience” barriers she encountered when confronted by a problem concerning access to training:

I was told by Immigration officer “you will do well, you will do great, you will do part-time jobs when you go to university” so when I came to Canada I thought I would do secretary job. I had a one-year scholarship
from the government, so when I arrived me and my sister because of the fact that I was accepted we switched our ages. I was 17 at the time and she was 19. And I was the one who was accepted so I switched my age when we filled the application and took my sister's age so that I would be able to put her on the application. And luckily I was able to do that. Yeah, it's wrong but I had to do what I have to do to survive (ASFR [S] 01).

Another participant applied a similar approach after a number of unsuccessful attempts at obtaining job interviews:

I attended a workshop that was done by (an immigrant woman) who gave me one advice. She said, "In here you need a functional resume." I say, "What is a functional resume"? She told me it is a bunch of lies. "You have to lie to get a job." I said, "But how could I lie? This is against everything—my religion, my upbringing." She said, "No, no, no. You are in Canada. You have to survive." So every time I saw a job posting what I do is I take everything that is in the job posting and I put it in my resume. Guess what. I got a job (AFFR 08).

Such behaviour on the part of refugees was perfectly rational behaviour according to some service providers. One prominent resettlement service provider, herself a former claimant, noted "Of course they're all lies. We all had false papers. I mean, the doors were shut to us. Get real!" (ASFX [S] 04).

The facilitator for Consultation 4 reported that the group proposed the federal government meet with provincial regulatory bodies to develop a "straightforward standard set of regulatory mechanisms for accreditation of foreign professionals in order to ensure the
protection of the public, newcomers, government and professional associations” (EUMR [F] 01). Some participants in City C expressed their wish for their local business communities to work with municipal and provincial governments as well as service providers in order to recruit skilled refugee and immigrant professionals (AFMR [C] 01). One participant volunteered:

I am a professional and I have been working for more than 20 years, I don’t have any work experience certificates to show my qualifications, but I am willing to work voluntary for six months to show my qualifications (AFMR 16).

Another participant noted everyone would benefit from such an arrangement because: “When an immigrant or refugee becomes gainfully employed they pay their taxes to Canada not to their homeland” (AFMR 05).

One service provider in City A proposed her agency endeavour to collaborate with the local business community in the development of employment sponsorship opportunities in order to help newcomers obtain work experience that employers would deem valuable (LAFX [S] 01). Another reported how his agency had often referred claimants to local employers who would undertake to mentor the newcomers. In one instance a claimant who had been hired as a bakery driver came up with the idea of attaching a “healthy lifestyle” tag on the bakery products. Sales of the products immediately increased (NAMX [S] 04). Consultation group 4 participants voiced their desire to establish micro-enterprises within the community to retail products produced by their communities. They noted that with common goals, there was the opportunity for collaboration between different cultural communities and proposed that a sponsoring agency such as a community centre or neighbourhood house be financially
compensated by the federal or provincial government for providing space in which individuals and communities might lease booths (EUMR [F] 01).

Figure 4.2. Proposal for Development of Partnership Arrangements. Poster developed by participants in Consultation 10, November 15, 2003.

After Consultation 10 had considered a number of options from the other consultations participants developed a pilot collaboration that involved public, private, labour and voluntary and private sectors and professional organizations (Figure 4.2). The project called for the collaborative development of partnership arrangements between local businesses and newcomer professionals, mediated by local service providers and subsidized by municipal and provincial government grants. Immigrants who had established themselves in the community
would be asked to volunteer their time in the development of the mentorship community, thereby acting as sociolinguistic and cultural informants for the newcomers. Those who participated in the program would then be expected to do the same for new arrivals, the principal long-term goal of the process being self-sustainability.

Presentation of the project to representatives of a number of provincial government agencies who were attending an adjacent professional conference attracted considerable attention. This resulted in the development of an actual pilot project along very similar guidelines in a large central Canadian city.

4.5 SHELTER

Access to shelter is the provision of affordable housing for refugees that will enable them to maintain their living space at the end of government sponsorship, rather than forcing them at this stage to deal with the disruption of moving from subsidized to market-priced housing.

4.5.1 Policy Ideals

A person accepted for immigration to Canada may be eligible for financial assistance to help cover expenses such as housing rentals. This assistance is provided in different ways to those whom the government accepts as refugees. Through funding to non-governmental organizations, the government provides Convention Refugees Abroad and members of the Source Country Class refugees (government-assisted refugees) with financial support and essential services in the form of accommodation, clothing, food and resettlement assistance for
up to one year from the date of arrival in Canada, or until they are able to support themselves, whichever happens first.

Convention Refugees Abroad and members of both the Country of Asylum and Source Country Classes whose resettlement in Canada is supported by groups of individuals or organizations in Canada (Privately sponsored refugees) are assisted by their sponsors in finding suitable housing. Sponsors are also expected to will also provide families with basic financial support (e.g., for lodging and food) and care for up to 12 months, or until they become self-sufficient, whichever comes first. A single sponsored refugee may keep up to a maximum of $1000 for personal use and a couple may keep up to $2000 plus $500 for each additional family member, with the balance of their funds being allocated towards the cost of their settlement and the repayment of their transportation loan.

While a claim for refugee protection is being considered, claimants may have access to such services as essential healthcare, employment and student authorization, but are not eligible for direct housing support. In some cases, the federal government in cooperation with provincial and municipal governments works to provide support for refugee housing. For example in late 2004, Toronto’s Romero House received $400,000 from the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI), administered by the City of Toronto, to renovate and extend its existing two-storey building and create nine housing units for refugee claimants who have experienced homelessness. The City of Toronto, in partnership with the Government of Ontario, provides ongoing funding through rent supplements and the Homeless Initiative Fund to assist tenants to keep their housing.

In its review of IRPA, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (SCCI, 2003) suggested that one remedy to the housing problem would be for the
government to examine further incentives to encourage newcomers to settle in areas of low immigration, such as waiving or refunding the Right of Landing Fee for immigrants who settle in these regions, the use of tax credits, and loan programs. The cost of housing in these regions would conceivably be lower in these regions as well. In its response, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC, 2003) stated that it would use funds allocated in the federal budget of 2003 to work with the provinces and territories and their communities to facilitate the entry of newcomers to Canada under pilot projects. All provinces and territories and their communities, including the private and voluntary sectors, were ultimately responsible for supporting the capacity of smaller centres to attract and retain newcomers through the creation of welcoming conditions.

4.5.2 Structural Inequalities

A common concern that emerged in the majority of community consultations was the inadequacy of government shelter and living allowances for newcomers. In many cases, especially with larger families, the Resettlement Assistance Program allowance for accommodation was inconsistent with the reality of market prices. Many refugees found that they had no recourse but to reassign money that was needed for food and/or clothing to pay the rent. One participant commented:

...for a family of six the shelter allowance is only $500 whereas the minimum rent for a house, which accommodates a family of six is over $650 and we have to pay the difference from our food allowance (ASMR 07).
Another concurred, “the government needs to study the market. They give me $500 for rent while I pay $750, this extra money is cut from the children needs” (AFMR 06).

Participants in Consultation 8 were particularly critical of the housing support they received from their local service provider:

The reception house isn’t clean and it is full of ghosts! There is not enough furniture. There are three beds for a five persons family....They host you for a week then they throw you out even though you didn’t find a house...they want you to accept whatever they bring to you, even if you didn’t like it! (AFFR 03)

They give us two spoons, two dishes, two pots two et cetera. It is not acceptable in our culture to furnish with the minimum (AFFR 06).

They take you to (the grocery store) and if you ask them to go again they say that your right to ask is finished. They give you the minimum in everything, the money and even the furniture and they tie you into their choice (AFFR 05).

The Consultation 6 facilitator identified two problematical issues that needed to be addressed.

They recommended:

...housing be provided in areas that could serve the immediate needs of newcomers, with access to buses, shopping areas, schools and clinics. Furthermore, it was not in the best interest of clients to be in areas that housed large populations of refugees. If the idea were to integrate the clients into Canadian society, living in an “immigrant” populated housing area would not prove to be helpful (ASMR [F] 01).
In the words of one participant, “As much as possible, government housing policies should address the human needs of individuals” (ASMR 10).

Housing became especially problematical for many refugees at the end of government sponsorship. A common sentiment was shared among participants in Consultation 5, according to the consultation facilitator:

The group felt that it did not receive a “good foundation” upon arriving in Canada. Many stated that upon arriving in Canada they were housed in apartments for the term of their sponsorship that they could not afford at the end of their sponsorship. This resulted in a difficult transition to independence as the sponsorship term ended. To illustrate how they felt one participant compared the government to a breastfeeding mother...In Canada a mother weans her child within months, while in Africa they are breastfed for two years. The message to the government from this analogy is not to wean its “children” before their time (AFMR [F] 02).

According to participants in Consultation 3, the disruption caused by their being forced to relocate to market housing, they felt, also disrupted their integration into the labour force and their ability to become self-sustaining (EUMR [C] 01).

4.5.2 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

Homelessness among refugee claimants was reported as a problem by service providers in two cities. During an interview with a settlement service provider at a suburban refugee shelter, one claimant arrived, unannounced, to inquire about a place to stay. He had been living on the street for the past six weeks. The service provider commented at the time that many of
the shelter’s male residents had spent time living under bridges and in city parks immediately following their arrival in Canada. Housing did not appear to be as problematical for female refugees in his opinion; possibly due to the fact there were fewer of them arriving unaccompanied (NAMX [S] 01).

In general, the response from participants was that the issue of shelter was beyond their resolution without help. In Consultation 2 the notion emerged that government was ultimately responsible for the housing problems they encountered. The consultation facilitator commented:

They seemed to think that the government had some magical power to solve all their problems. This could be stemming from the lack of adequate information they received about various community resources that they cannot utilize due to the language barriers. Also another contributing factor could be the misleading information that they received overseas, which shaped their perception of ideal life in Canada: family, house, respectable job and a car (LAFR [F] 01).

There seemed little an individual or small group could do to improve the current situation. Instead, participants focussed on the responsibility of government to develop better shelter programs.

4.5.3 Agency

Toronto’s Romero House was cited repeatedly by service providers as being an exemplary facility. It consists of four houses for which the provincial government provided a down payment of $5000 and agreed to act as guarantors for a 35-year mortgage. For a
relatively small amount of money the government saved itself the expense of running the houses itself and ensured that much of the social support money it provided to individuals would return to the public sector, rather than the private sector, in the form of mortgage payments. The houses are administered by a non-profit organization that is funded almost entirely by private donations.

The Salisbury Community Society operates five houses in the same neighbourhood of East Vancouver, each owned outright by the society and funded for the most part by the local faith community. It provides secure single housekeeping units for refugee claimants who find themselves facing homelessness because of their inability to obtain work while awaiting the determination of their refugee claims. It also provides “out of the cold” respite rooms for those claimants who are living outdoors. Most of the claimants are single males who are supported for a 3-month period. After that period they typically move out to apartments that they share with others whom they have met during their stay. The society actively refers claimants to local service providers and business people in a continuing effort to develop micro-enterprises, providing interest-free loans to claimants when necessary to help develop such enterprises. A local bakery, for example, purchases labels for its products from an enterprise developed by claimants.

4.6 DISCUSSION

Findings suggest that a refugee’s sense of personal security is contingent upon the degree to which he or she has been provided with accurate information about Canada prior to arrival, the personal security provided during the period of initial adaptation, educational opportunities,
especially in the area of language training, economic inclusion and access to shelter that is appropriate to their needs.

4.6.1 Orientation

The importance of pre-arrival orientation to help newcomers develop realistic expectations about resettlement was voiced repeatedly in the regret expressed by many government sponsored refugee participants in their decision to come to Canada. None expressed satisfaction with the quality of their pre-arrival orientation. Although many viewed this as a personal failure at self-education, others clearly felt the unavailability of detailed information was not their failure but that of the Canadian government. Such orientation, they said, should be sure to include information about individual rights and responsibilities, sources for financial, medical and cultural adaptation assistance, language training, family support and access to agencies that would help them integrate into their new surroundings and, most importantly, find employment. Of particular importance to those refugee claimants in the consultations was their lack of knowledge about the Canadian refugee determination process. Many did not realize that they needed to make a refugee claim when they reached the border of Canada, and that if they did not they would have to make an "inland claim" and wait up to six months for their eligibility papers to be processed. Furthermore, they did not understand that without eligibility papers, claimants could not access welfare or health coverage, were ineligible to work and could not enroll their children in school. It would be particularly helpful, most noted, if such information was provided in the first language of the newcomers.

Participants in the majority of consultations agreed that those who had been through "the system" could be valuable sociocultural resources for newcomers in the post arrival
period. Some argued the vital importance of their working collaboratively with settlement service providers in the development and implementation of orientation programs. Some expressed their willingness to act as volunteer cultural guides who could apply their special knowledge of the needs of their own ethnocultural communities to make life in Canada easier for newcomers from those communities.

Since 2003, when the government recommended expansion and enhancement of the Canadian Orientation Abroad Program in order to facilitate access by all classes of immigrants, there appears to have been little improvement in the quality of orientation. At the time of writing, for example, pre-arrival orientation was available at only a few refugee-processing posts overseas and there were no reception programs at major airports or Canada/US border crossings to ensure that newcomers received accurate information and assistance upon arrival. While the intention of the government was once to improve the pre-arrival and post-arrival orientation experience, it has moved rather slowly to realize that goal.

4.6.2 Personal Security

In order to realize personal security, newcomers need enough money to provide adequate food and shelter for their families, access to community health, legal and social services, the comfort of family and friends around them and most importantly, the reassurance that they will not be forced to leave. Achieving personal security is a process that occurs in stages involving a range of local, regional and national policy areas. As such it requires a level of collaboration and cooperation among public, private and voluntary sectors that does not yet appear to exist.
Personal security has been compromised by a number of national policies that negatively affect the lives of refugees from the time of their entry into Canada and continue even after they become naturalized. Foremost among them is the manner in which refugee status is determined at ports of entry. Although the government does not provide statistics on the number of claimants who are refused entry, service providers have noted repeatedly that it has become exceedingly difficult for refugee claimants to find asylum in Canada since the government implemented the National Security Policy on April 27, 2004. The primary purpose of the Act was “…to improve the screening of immigrants, refugee claimants and visitors and to enhance the capacity to detain and remove anyone posing a risk to Canada (in order to) better identify individuals posing a threat to Canada while facilitating the flow of those who do not.” (Government of Canada, 2004 , p.41). Under the regulations of the new Act, front line refugee determination was removed from the jurisdiction of CIC and placed within the mandate of a new enforcement agency, the Canada Border Service Agency, in a newly created Ministry of Public Safety. This appears to signal that the government has begun to view claimants as potential threats rather than as objects of humanitarian concern. Protecting refugees seems unlikely to be a priority within such a structure because of the inherent conflict in asking an agency that is mandated to remove people to also protect them.

Further compounding the difficulties facing refugee claimants has been the implementation on December 29, 2004 of the Canada-U.S.A. Safe Third Country Agreement. This agreement was intended to provide “protection to genuine refugees” by managing “…in an orderly manner refugee claims by people crossing our shared border” (CIC, 2004). Most claimants now arrive in Canada by air, whereas in previous years they arrived by land because under the agreement, claimants accessing Canada by land from the United States are not
eligible for an IRB hearing unless they qualify for special consideration. They can only request asylum in the United States. However, the agreement does not apply to those who arrive in Canada by air, unless they are in transit after being removed by the U.S. Because the land borders have been effectively closed, the number of claims made by refugees in Canada has decreased dramatically since implementation of the agreement.

Amnesty International has expressed deep concern about the potential risk to claimants that can result from the Safe Third Country Agreement, citing a number of failures of US asylum practices to adhere to international law, respect internationally agreed-upon procedures used in determining refugee status, and appropriately apply the Convention Refugee definition. For example, with respect to the principle of non-refoulement, the US government has consistently maintained that the principle is not binding outside its territorial jurisdiction. As a result, refugees who were intercepted in international waters, as were many Haitian refugees in the mid 1990s, have been customarily returned to their countries of origin. (Amnesty International, 2002). In addition, some claimants that would normally be accepted in Canada could be refused if forced to apply in the US because the two countries interpret the refugee definition differently. According to the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR, 2003) for example, women who were fleeing gender-based persecution were more likely to be granted protection if they are allowed to make their claim in Canada.

Although Section 110 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act contains provisions for the creation of a Refugee Appeal Division, one still does not exist. Refugee claimants whose applications for refugee status have been refused still have no right to an independent appeal of the decision, other than an application to the Federal Court to review the technical legal aspects of the decision. The government has nonetheless implemented the IRPA-
mandated reduction in Immigration and Refugee Board members acting as judges on each claim from two to one. Janet Bagnall, an editorial writer and columnist for the Montreal Gazette commented:

The appeals mechanism was the trade-off for allowing the government to drop the number of (IRB) board members hearing cases from two to one. (That) the appeals division has yet to be implemented ... increasingly seems a deliberate oversight (Bagnall, 2004).

The absence of an appeal process has resulted in a state of affairs in which one board member acting unilaterally can make potentially life and death decisions concerning a refugee claimant’s admissibility.

When claimants are heard by a single IRB member, not only has the discretionary power of that member increased dramatically, but so too has his or her responsibility to be judicious. The latter can be a daunting challenge for one working alone in circumstances where the framework legislation and regulations lack clarity. For example, the IRPA has no clear definition of “terrorist” to guide an adjudicator, but instead relies upon his or her determination of “reasonable grounds to believe” that the claimant has or will engage in terrorism. The Canadian Council for Refugees in a submission to the UN Human Rights Committee notes:

The facts alleged (such as that the person is a member of an organization and that the organization has engaged in terrorism) need not be established as a fact. All that is required for a finding of inadmissibility is that there be “reasonable grounds to believe” that the particular grounds for inadmissibility “have occurred, are occurring or may occur” some day in the future (CCR, 2005: 10).
The sharing of perspectives on such value-laden concepts as “reasonableness” that is possible in a collaborative adjudication is simply not present when decisions are made unilaterally.

The absence of an appeal process also makes it problematical for the refugee determination system to correct errors that may from time to time occur. Some very questionable determinations have resulted. For example, the application of an Ethiopian woman who had been tortured and jailed for political activity was rejected because the IRB found her story implausible because, “...she had no visible scars or medical records” to substantiate her claim (Bagnall, 2004). The government’s response, rather than to reinstate the two-person board or establish an appeal mechanism, was to announce “...strengthened criteria for individuals being considered for appointment to the board and an increased role for parliamentarians in the nomination process” (Government of Canada, 2004, p.45). It seems clear that in its efforts to establish a more efficient refugee determination process, the government is prepared to risk the disrepute that such arbitrary decisions can bring.

In an effort to reduce the delay in hearing cases, the federal government claims to have been endeavouring to increase the number of appointments to the IRB in recent months, and move to a merit-based process. However, at the time of writing it had failed to respond in a timely manner, with the result that the refugee determination process was gradually being paralyzed.

4.6.3 Educational Opportunity

Although there was general agreement that language classes should start as soon as possible after the refugee arrives, federally funded language training was only available once permanent resident status had been achieved, at which point applicants typically faced an
additional waiting period until appropriate classes started. This is problematical for some participants because their resettlement assistance ran out before they had completed their language training.

The government’s cost-sharing initiatives with provinces, municipalities and the voluntary sector to help ensure that programs could be adapted to local needs have had mixed results. Discrepancies persist at all levels of governance in the provision of childcare, waiting periods and numbers of classes. Advanced level training is still unavailable in most provinces and the need for labour market specific language training continues to be of great urgency. Participants in one consultation noted that the language needs of different groups varied considerably. For example, the higher-level proficiency needs of individuals seeking admission to a university or accreditation of their professional training in Canada are not necessarily those of individuals seeking employment in the hospitality or service sectors.

One promising initiative in cross-disciplinary collaboration has been the development of the Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN) an English language assessment tool for the nursing profession that uses task-based evaluation to evaluate proficiency in speaking, listening, reading speaking and writing as they pertain to the practice of nursing. The speaking assessment includes two role plays in which the candidate is asked to interact with the "patient" (one of the assessors) by asking questions to obtain information, and to give instructions and offer explanations. In addition, the candidate will be asked to answer questions to demonstrate their ability to narrate, describe, summarize, synthesize, state and support opinion, and advise. For the listening assessment, there are five video scenarios (in various settings including hospital, home, clinic, and medical office) and four audio scenarios (phone
calls and shift-to-shift reports). Scenarios include interactions between nurses and patients, family members, and other professionals. The reading assessment includes various formats such as charts, patient notes, manuals, and information texts related to health issues followed by short answer and multiple choice questions. The writing assessment includes form-filling in which the candidate views a video scenario and fills in a form based on that scenario and report writing (20 minutes) where the candidate writes a narrative report based on information provided. Feedback on strengths and weaknesses in writing is provided on the score report that is mailed to the candidate (CCLB, 2004).

Results from the CELBAN are reported as Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) the national standard used in Canada for describing, measuring and recognizing the second language proficiency of adult immigrants. The CLB are a task-based descriptive scale of communicative proficiency in English expressed as benchmarks or reference points. They cover four skill areas: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and use real life language tasks to assess language proficiency. They are useful for helping individuals to understand their language proficiency level and what language level is required for the workplace. They also help individuals identify and describe their language training needs in order to find appropriate and targeted training and set goals for language training best suited to their desired occupation (CCLB, 2001). An Occupational Language Analysis (OLA) describes common language requirements for an occupation according to tasks identified in is Essential Skills Profile developed by Human Resources and Development Canada (NRDC). An OLA identifies the Canadian Language Benchmarks levels required to perform tasks related to specific jobs as defined in the
Essential Skills Profiles and additional information found in the National Occupational Standards.

As such, the OLAs serve as bridges between the CLB and Essential Skills resource materials produced by HRDC that help internationally-educated workers better understand job-specific requirements and the levels of language proficiency that are necessary to meet those requirements. They also help language training professionals use the Essential Skills resources to better understand job specific competencies and tasks, and develop more targeted workplace related language training programs. Employers, government and sector councils are similarly helped to better identify the language skills required for success in the workplace.

Task-based tools like the CELBAN offer an alternative language proficiency assessment tool to standardized tools like the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and International English Language Testing System (IELTS), which purposefully separate language from the sociolinguistic context in which it is used. They offer a common ground for assessing context-rich language use such as exists within the real world of work. As such they permit employers to include such tasks as they might expect employees to undertake as part of the language proficiency assessment.

4.6.4 Economic Inclusion

Meaningful employment emerged in the community consultations as a crucial requirement for successful adaptation and integration into Canadian society. However, because of their inability to obtain such employment, many refugees are left vulnerable to the wide variety of stresses that accompany financial insecurity. A large number are chronically
underemployed, even though in some cases they were assured by government officials before their arrival that their prospects for employment in Canada were good. While maintaining one of the highest per-capita rates of immigration in the world, the government appears to be having difficulty in collaborating effectively with potential employers.

The financial security that results from employment provides the foundation for newcomers to maintain their physical presence in the host community. Almost every participant who commented on their need for employment also expressed their strong desire to contribute, through taxes, to Canadian society. None expressed any desire to live on welfare. They were eager to work to build a solid foundation upon which they could support their families both in Canada and back home. However, many participants reported that access to employment was often problematical for reasons that had little to do with labour market conditions. For example, some reported that because they were not eligible for Employment Insurance, they were unable to access market-specific training opportunities that would both complement and supplement the training they brought with them. Others reported that they had great difficulty practicing their professions because of credentialing restrictions imposed by professional regulatory agencies. These are classic "no-win" situations in which an outcome that would clearly serve both the interests of the newcomer and the host society is impossible to attain because of regulatory barriers. Eager to participate, newcomers instead find themselves unable to further their dreams of integration. The challenge for policy developers is to change this "no-win" situation into one that is "win-win".

Access to meaningful employment is and has long been a key challenge for newcomers. The fact that many refugees and immigrants are seriously underemployed means not only a loss for the individuals, but also a loss for the Canadian economy and society.
Ironically, although Canada recognizes that immigration is good for the country (it has the highest per-capita rate of immigration in the world), the country has not adapted its employment sector to take account of what immigrants can contribute. Too often immigrants, even those selected precisely for their professional skills, find that their skills are not recognised and used once in Canada. One participant commented that while CIC had developed a point system for the assessment of eligibility for coming to Canada, the same process did not seem to be recognised at a provincial level. This seems partly because Canadian employers have difficulty understanding what foreign-acquired diplomas and experience represent in Canadian terms. It is also partly because of protectionist attitudes among professional associations. All consultations shared a perception that although the government may wish to encourage highly educated and skilled workers it had failed to properly take into account employment practices in the industry, commerce and service sectors.

A common concern expressed in the consultations was that the credentials of internationally trained professionals and trades people were not being valued in the ways they had been led to believe they would be. One service provider commented that it was a sad truth but Canada had the most highly education janitorial staff in the world. A number of participants reported that they would not have come to Canada if they had had any idea of how hard it would be for them to get a job. They felt as much of the credential recognition as possible should be done before arrival and realistic appraisals of potential employability should be provided by the Canadian government. They further argued that if Canada was serious about admitting more newcomers, it should take steps to help ensure that appropriate policies and mechanisms are in place to help them enter the labour force.
A frequent suggestion in the consultations was for settlement service providers to help mitigate regulatory barriers at the local level by first operating on an individual case-by-case basis. For example, providers could offer outreach to local employers that would provide them with specific information about skilled newcomers in the community. Funding for any needed staff resources to provide the service could be applied for within the parameters of normal operating grants. Public acknowledgment of employers who are open to newcomers, particularly through the ethnic mass media and agency networks would help increase the general level of knowledge about employment opportunities for newcomers as well as provide the employer with welcome publicity. This approach, described in the previous chapter, has worked well at Romero House in Toronto.

One consultation suggested the establishment of collaborative micro-enterprises within the local community as a base from which sustainable interactions with the host community could be fostered. For example a weekly marketplace might be established in which local newcomers such as artisans, caterers, technicians, repair persons, alternative health practitioners and training providers would have an opportunity to market their goods and services. A community organization or agency, perhaps, could take responsibility for leasing or providing space at a nominal fee while individuals would lease booths within the space. The sponsoring agency itself could benefit from the opportunity for presentations and distribution of materials in multiple languages that promote the goals of the agency. The impetus for regulatory change would conceivably grow as repeated local initiatives such as these brought more and more newcomers into direct engagement with the host community.
4.6.5 Shelter

The primary housing concern raised by government-sponsored refugees in the consultations was that space was not affordable at the end of government sponsorship. The government provides Convention Refugees Abroad and members of the Source Country Class refugees with financial support and essential services in the form of accommodation, clothing, food and resettlement assistance for up to one year from the date of arrival in Canada, or until they are able to support themselves, whichever happens first. The unavailability of affordable housing at the end of government sponsorship, however, severely disrupts the ability of refugees to become self-sustaining. Many participants remarked that they had been housed in apartments for the term of their sponsorship that they could not afford at the end of their sponsorship. The situation was much worse for refugee claimants. Some had access to such services, as essential healthcare, employment and student authorization, depending on where they lived, but none were eligible for direct housing support while their claim for refugee protection was being considered. One service provider commented that many of his male clients had arrived at his agency after spending considerable time living in shelters or on the street. Only the privately sponsored refugees who had been assisted by their sponsors in finding suitable housing appeared remotely content with their circumstances.

In 2003 the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration proposed that the government encourage newcomers to settle in areas of low immigration, by waiving or refunding the Right of Landing Fee for immigrants who settle in these regions, the use of tax credits, and loan programs. To date there has been little action on this proposal.
CHAPTER 5: THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

I want to start my life from zero here in my new country of Canada
but I don’t find anybody to tell me where is the zero to start from!
We are isolated from the world! (ASMR 17)

The sociocultural context is the one in which individuals interact with the individuals and members of both the host community and the group with whom they share a common history, language and similar ways of understanding the world. As was the case in the sociopolitical domain, the fair distribution of social resources is further jeopardized by sociocultural factors stemming from the complexity and diversity of individual needs. Three main issues of sociocultural concern emerged from community consultations and interviews: cultural maintenance, family roles, and participatory inclusion. They are discussed in the following chapter.

5.1 CULTURAL MAINTENANCE

Cultural maintenance refers to the extent that one's cultural identity and characteristics are considered to be worth maintaining by both the newcomer and the host community. A mutual accommodation of cultural differences is essential for successful integration. Newcomers must be prepared to conform to the basic values of the larger community and that group, in turn, must be prepared to accommodate their cultural needs. If there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance, marginalization results.
5.1.1 Policy Ideals

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1985) is the government’s clearest articulation of its commitment to cultural maintenance. Its stated purposes include recognizing and acknowledging the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage; ensuring all individuals receive equal treatment and equal protection under the law, while respecting and valuing their diversity; fostering the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and promoting the reflection and the evolving expressions of those cultures; preserving and enhancing the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada. All of these purposes are clearly prerequisite to mutual accommodation.

5.1.2 Structural Inequalities

A common observation in one city was that existing cultural “platforms” were not sufficient to allow communities to introduce themselves to Canadians and begin to engage in public discussions on community issues. Meeting space was a major concern for marginalized communities, according to participants in Consultation 3. Many were frustrated by the costs of leasing building space and the unavailability of community space because of heavy demand by other community groups (ASMR [F] 01). Participants in Consultation 5, described how a participation fee prevented their joining in a local celebration of multiculturalism. Their hope had been that participation would help raise their cultural profile and provide encouragement for collaborative group action (AFMR [F] 02).
Another concern was mentioned by participants who felt that the small representation of their group in their host communities led to a scarcity of established ethnic cultural organizations and businesses. Participants in Consultation 5 noted that the lack of ethnic grocery stores for some cultural communities sometimes contributed to a sense of cultural isolation as they were forced to go without some of their traditional spices and foods and, ultimately, for the sake of better social and emotional support network, to move to larger cities where there were established cultural communities (AFMR [F] 02).

The movement to larger cities for integration support was also referred to by participants in Consultation 4 who discussed their perception that Canadian employers often preferred to hire members of their own cultural community, whatever it happened to be. Finding employment in larger centres was easier because of this tendency, where there were more employers from Europe who might be able to help them out (EUMR [F] 01). As a result newcomers moved away from smaller centres and the vitality and sustainability of their culture in those places was diminished.

The public school system was identified as a barrier to cultural maintenance in Consultation 4. Participants reported that because there was a poor connection between the school system and ethnic families, parents were left not understanding what was happening with regards to the education of their children and unable to assess what the children learned at school. As a result they were fearful that the children were learning things that ran counter to their own customs and values but were unable to intervene because they did not know what was going on (EUMR [C] 01).
5.1.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

All consultations agreed the future was promising for the children, but that it was still “mysterious, unclear and black” (AFFR 01) to the adults. One participant commented, “The difficulty is in the adults’ lives, they find it difficult to learn and adapt, they need help. The experience is going to be successful for the children but for the adults it is the unknown” (ASMR 03). Another said,

The children join schools, they have future here, they learn the language very easily, they will finish school then work for the government. But now they have many needs and we can’t fulfill their needs (AFFR 02).

However, for some participants, the possibility existed that by adapting so easily to their new culture and language, children would lose their connection to their birth culture.

A participant in consultation 9 spoke about the freedom that youth in Canadian society experience, and the resulting fear of refugee parents that they would lose control of their children as they come to expect and demand these same freedoms (ASFR 09). The physical safety of children emerged in Consultation 2, which identified high school activities of drug and alcohol use and prostitution as being a great concern. Although their children appeared to be doing well, the parents’ concern was that peer pressure would draw them to dangerous activities (LAFC [R] 01).

Some Consultation 6 participants expressed their concerns about raising their children in Canada. One said, “Raising children is very difficult, you can’t punish your children by soft beating, it is a real problem”. She added, “we were raised in a different way, if we punish a child it is a way to discipline him/her not to hurt him/her” (AFFR 05). Another stressed the importance of resolving family problems within the community:
When there is a problem with a teenager, the first thing that (some providers) do is to call Social Work instead of gathering the teenager with the family and try to solve the problem... They should help the people solve their problems within their community (AFFR 03).

Still another explained why this was a particular problem in Canada:

If you have family matters with children at home it is open at school. If a child open his mouth he/she is gone! The social work take the opinion of the children not the opinion of the family. The social work interfere between the family and the kids, especially the immigrant kids, the first thing the kids learn is to call 911! They give the children the freedom in very early and dangerous age! The law is in the children side (AFFR 01).

Yet another said, “I should be free in the way I raise my children. I have traditions and customs I want to teach them to my children. I don’t want to be forced to follow the traditions and customs here” (AFFR 06).

5.1.4 Agency

The challenge of securing a physical location in which a community could meet to plan for its needs and fundraise but lacking funds to do so was clearly identified in the consultations. One group was meeting on weekends at a local immigrant serving agency and they considered to be a good use of the resource (AFMR 03). Participants in Consultation 4 proposed the government lease inexpensive space in high vacancy areas, staff it with a community development officer and volunteer cultural representative and provide meeting rooms and office resources in that space for small ethno-cultural communities. The ultimate
goal for the communities would be to achieve self-sufficiency, and be able to contribute to operational costs as they became more and more integrated (EUMR [F] 01). Some participants in Consultation 3 described their efforts to develop a cultural and heritage school to serve children from their ethnocultural community, while at the same time providing English language training for adults. This project was deemed successful by other participants because it was a partnership between the ethno-cultural community, a community agency and the provincial government (ASMR [F] 01).

Consultation 4 members were very clear about the key prerequisites for successful maintainence of their cultural community. They identified strong leadership, collaboration and cooperation with community agencies, advice from community leaders who have “been through these steps in community integration before us” and government funding (EUMR [F] 01). Consultation 7 participants suggested the need for churches to be an ongoing resource, as they constitute a group of “grateful people who can give back to community” (ASFR [F] 01). A participant from Consultation 4 concurred stating that refugees who have been sponsored by a local church “..have greater potential than refugees sponsored by the government “ (EUMR 05). Consultation 8 members suggested that a particular ethnocultural community first of all, among its members, explore issues of concern and potential roles for those members in addressing those concerns. Leaders would emerge from this process who could then approach appropriate community agencies in order to collaborate with them on the resolution of the issues (AFFR [F] 01). One participant suggested that in the future the government might consider granting seed money to the community to help enable their participation. The community, in turn, would undertake to organize itself in inclusive ways that would build its capacity for both cultural maintenance and integration (AFFR 04).
The necessity to be culturally sensitive in the development of programs, especially with regard to religious belief was emphasized by one service provider.

As a working team we emphasize that we are a Christian community. We have morning prayers together. We have a monthly mass together. We have a number of people who join us.

However, we are very very careful not to engage in anything that resembles conversion. Once you get to know people, (you understand that) many have suffered because of religious persecution, whether they are Jews in Uzbekistan or Muslims or Buddhists or Christians, evangelicals. Many of them have suffered because of religious conflict. So, one of the first things we say is we have absolute respect for every religion and encourage (newcomers) to form relationships with local mosques, temples, churches.

She added with a laugh, “Our only problem is that sometimes we get these evangelical Christians who want to convert everybody - we have to be quite strict on demanding that people respect each other” (NAFX [S] 01).

Participants in Consultation 9 discussed the development of a formal ethnocultural community group. They stated that the formation of the community would help volunteers become involved in culturally sensitive resettlement of newcomers. Participants offered to share some resettlement duties with the service providing agencies by assisting in the orientation of newcomers to living in Canada, in terms of shopping, going to appointments and socialization. They also discussed the need to create a committee that would assist
newcomers overcome some of the barriers encountered in terms of access to settlement and other social, legal and financial services (ASMR [F] 02). Participants in Consultation 6 stated that building an organized association would be beneficial in many ways. One participant said:

The association will not only be beneficial to resolve our internal problems, but to help us organize our cultural events, to teach our children about important events of culture and religion (ASMR 10).

Consultation 3 participants reported one ethnic community in its city that had been particularly successful in organizing itself by first establishing organizations and businesses that in turn mainly recruited members of its own cultural community. This practice had resolved problems around unemployment and also provided social and emotional support network system for the newcomers. In the opinion of the group, newcomers who settled in an area where their ethnic group had already established a significant community, experienced lower levels of distress, and were much less likely to suffer from mental health issues and isolation compared to those who did not have an established ethnic community available to them. The psychosocial support provided to newcomers was particularly crucial during the early phases of resettlement (ASMR [F] 01).

Participants in most consultations noted the importance of the role of members of the same ethnocultural community in the cultural maintenance process. They suggested a wide variety of supports, ranging from a drive through the city to introductions to friends. “The most important thing is help to him or her to find a job if (the community member) had found one!” said one participant (ASMR 04). The help provided by community members would be culturally appropriate for particular individuals. One summarized, “There should be a
community organization, everybody should be one hand, the one who precedes help those who
follow” (ASMR 07).

5.2 FAMILY SUPPORT

Family support refers to the assistance provided to families that will help them function
independently in the presence of language, cultural and systemic barriers, unemployment,
financial hardship and inadequate housing and absence of an established cultural support
network. Although the type of support needed varies greatly among families, depending upon
whether the family has been fully reunited, its success in adapting to the new culture and its
economic circumstances, the primary recipients of family support are most often children and
their caregivers.

5.2.1 Policy Ideals

Canada has ratified a number of international agreements that pertain to the protection of
the family. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “The family is the natural and
fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State”
(UDHR, art. 16(3)). The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
states that “[t]he widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family,
which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, particularly for its establishment
and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children” (Art. 10(1)). The
Convention on the Rights of the Child states that, “a child shall not be separated from his or her
parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review
determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child.” (Art 9(1)). It further states that “… applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner” (Art 10(1)).

5.2.2 Structural Inequalities

Family reunification was the most problematic family support issue identified in Consultations 3, 5 and 7. One participant noted, “We all left our families and loved ones, I left my country 7 years ago, I want to see my sister, I need help in issuing her a visa to visit me” (LAFR 01). Another expressed his concern about a son in law saying, “I don’t want to send my daughter back to her husband in Diaspora and I don’t know how long it is going to take to bring her husband to Canada” (AFMR 04). A woman who had left her husband in a refugee camp described how in addition to the lengthy application processing time required and the anxious uncertainty surrounding that process, she faced a cultural dilemma that caused her much distress.

I want to bring my husband but they say to me that I should be working. In my culture men should work but women are not supposed to work. This is not accepted in my culture (so) how could I sponsor him while I am not working? (ASFR 02).

She added, “My relative in Sweden could bring her husband in few months, I didn’t imagine that it is going to be very difficult to bring my husband to Canada!”

A major structural barrier to family reunification, according to one provider (LAFR [S] 01), is the Low Income Cut Off (LICO) requirement imposed on family class sponsors. A
sponsor must make a certain income within the year preceding a sponsorship application; otherwise, the application will not be approved. For example, a couple with two children would have to have earned a minimum of $46,031 in order to qualify to sponsor two parents, grandparents or siblings for whom they would then be financially responsible for a further ten years. Sponsors of spouses and dependent children are exempted from LICO requirements unless they are obtaining social assistance (unless it is due to a disability), in which case they are not allowed to sponsor.

5.2.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

The general insufficiency of family support emerged as an issue of concern in all three cities. The facilitator for Consultation 6 commented:

Resettlement issues, cries for help from the loved ones that are left behind and financial hardship along with many other personal and social barriers, create a sense of hopelessness and frustration. We should keep in mind that when Canada brings one person to the country, many other people related to that particular newcomer also benefit (ASMR [F] 03).

A number of participants, predominantly women, expressed a sense of isolation that resulted primarily from the loss of their support network. For example, finding adequate childcare, because of the lack of a support network, was noted as being very difficult. One mother reported, “I can’t go anywhere without my children, I can’t leave them alone at home, and I can’t afford hiring a babysitter” (AFFR 03). She added, “back home there are relatives or neighbours who can take care of children for some time”. As a result, as another participant reported, their responsibilities to their children prevented them from taking advantage of community resources.
that could potentially help their integration (AFFR 05). For some families the experience of resettlement caused enormous tension between parents that in different circumstances could have conceivably been mitigated by the company of their friends and family. However, they faced their troubles alone because there was nowhere they felt they could go for support. It was a personal problem. One participant’s testimony was particularly touching:

   The hardest part when I arrive to Canada we grow apart with my husband. And I was thinking that when I get in Canada I’ll be happy ever after. And what have we done? We grow so apart. I owe to Canada so much – my freedom, my safety, my children are okay. But I lost my marriage. It is so hard because sometimes we don’t share the things with any counselor because it’s your private life. And it’s difficult because you don’t know what to do. How you can say that you are not happy with your husband? When you lost your man. He’s not there. And if you don’t get the right help, it’s gonna happen like me. You know that’s why we divorce...We need to have some counselling as a couple as a wife and a husband but keep our roots because Canadian society is very free. We need to keep our tradition as a family because we are very family oriented. I am not telling that Canada has not values but you know, when you are alone you feel free and I saw that in my marriage. He was a single man again. And maybe it is just me but you know what? It was very different, was shocking experience being alone with the children – no French, no English, just Spanish. How you can share with your son all your worry, your frustration with somebody you don’t know without family (ASFR 02).
Another participant reported that her family had suffered through “many hardships and psychological stresses” because assistance was unavailable in her city, at least to them. The family’s concerns were dismissed without any investigation, she stated, suggesting that her family’s lack of language was held against them:

Everything seemed fine at the beginning, but later on I noticed I was treated differently. I felt segregated. People in authority were made aware of my problems despite the fact that I was not given the opportunity to speak to the appropriate person. Along with my family, I faced more problems after my complaint was made to authorities. That was disappointing in a free country such as Canada, that a woman cannot be heard (AFFR 03).

Her only recourse, she felt, was to surrender herself and her family to “God who is fair and merciful”

The gendered nature of interpersonal challenges that resulted from social upheaval in Central Asia during the past two decades was reported at length. Consultation 7. According to the consultation coordinator:

Many women lack formal professional education due to a patriarchal social structure in which women’s education was not valued or encouraged. The pattern had been changing, but political disruption caused educational opportunities to be greatly reduced and even eliminated as a result of family safety relocations. Furthermore, various fundamentalist religious groups that rose to power enforced restrictive laws on the appearance of women in public places, with the result that
many women lacked even the most basic training and education that would make them employable in the Canadian job market (AFMR [C] 01).

The consultation facilitator elaborated:

Women’s rights became the central targets by different religious groups during their struggle for power. Women became house prisoners and were excluded from appearing in public without being escorted by male family members. Women in violation of the imposed gender segregating laws were punished physically in public. Women (who had) suffered directly or indirectly from the war and those who were safe from war suffered suffocation, helplessness and powerless for their sisters who were going through constant violations (ASFR [F] 01).

Almost none of the women participants in Consultation 1 had ever worked in their lives. Their families supported them. When one participant was asked why she came to Canada, she said,

I heard Canada it’s the country of woman, of woman. Of woman, yeah. And everything exists for woman. Now I hear and I can see men and women it’s not different (ASFC 04).

A facilitator from the same country laughed in reply, “We heard about Canada. Canada is country for three types of the people – women, children and seniors. Not for the men” (ASFR [F] 02). They had little or no conception of the processes or pressures of entering the job market and were completely unfamiliar with the pressures of the job market.
Participants in Consultation 6 expressed great frustration with their inability to support families as they had within the patriarchal social structures of their home country. The consultation facilitator commented:

In (their home culture) males are the sole breadwinners in the family, although during the two decades of war this changed for some families due to the loss of the male members of the family in the war. The mainstream perception (among the consultation participants) remains the same. It is very hard to accept that they cannot do anything quickly to provide for their families. They are very upset by their inability to function independently in the presence of language, cultural and systematic barriers, unemployment, financial hardships, inadequate housing and lack of a sufficient support system from the cultural community in the absence of an established cultural organization (ASMR [F] 03).

Furthermore, almost all of the participants in the consultation had needy family members, relatives and friends overseas who had little comprehension of how the participants’ roles had changed in Canada. The participants felt an enormous sense of responsibility towards their loved ones, because in their culture they must provide support for family members, relatives and friends.

5.2.4 Agency

Consultation 8 participants suggested that resettlement programs and services needed to be developed especially for women that provided essential information, skills and training to adapt and survive in the new country. For example, information on family violence and
child abuse needed to be provided in detail to the newcomers and should include the legal consequences of violations. In addition, they suggested the need for language training that incorporated life skills training, parenting and skills training in order to help them build self-confidence and independence (AFMR [C] 01). One provider (AFFI [S] 01) reported the establishment of a support group for single newcomers at her agency in order to promote a feeling of belongingness. The group takes part in a wide range of activities including cooking and sewing classes, organizational tours and computer classes. The same agency also works closely with the cultural relations department of the local police office, which provides information to newcomers on legal rights and processes. In return the agency makes presentations to police offers on issues of mutual concern.

At the time of writing, a coalition of service providers, anti-poverty groups and immigrant and refugee advocacy groups was working together with a Toronto legal clinic to launch a Charter of Rights challenge that would repeal the provisions in the IRPA requiring sponsors to meet the LICO requirement. Funded by a national non-profit program that was set up to provide assistance to what it considers important cases with the potential of advancing language and equality rights, the coalition was actively seeking immigrants and refugees who could act as plaintiffs or share their experiences in the form of affidavits. Individuals who participated in the challenge were being offered $550 to initiate a sponsorship application if they were unable to afford to pay the fee themselves.

Participants in Consultation 7 remarked on the comparative ease of integration into Canadian society if friends and family were living nearby. The consultation facilitator (ASFR [F] 01) described how proximity to family members benefited both the newcomers and the host. In the source country, she noted, seniors typically lived in an extended family with their
children’s families. Children provided support for their seniors. All of the seniors in her consultation either lived with their children in Canada or their children provided support for them, which greatly reduced their need for outside help. As a result, she said, they were happy and they didn’t pose much of a burden on the Canadian taxpayer. In fact the general response of seniors in that particular consultation was that Canada was, “...a wonderful country, everything is available here, and it is like coming to heaven” A grandmother in another consultation summed up, “I would advise other seniors who are planning to come to Canada to go to the cities where you have family or relatives. Because until I learned some rules and regulation I certainly needed my family around me” (ASFI 03).

5.3 PARTICIPATORY INCLUSION

Participatory inclusion refers to empowerment, freedom of choice, opportunities to contribute to community, access to programs and services, and involvement in decision-making. The practice of participatory inclusion fosters respect, recognition and belongingness by valuing equally the contributions of women, men and families to society, recognizing cultural differences and valuing diversity. The absence of participatory inclusion results in marginalization, lack of choice, denial of access to community services and exclusion from decision-making processes.

5.3.1 Policy Ideals

CIC views participatory inclusion as an essential component of integration. Through local service providers it funds the Host program, an initiative that aims to...
newcomers to their local community by introducing them to neighbours who volunteer to help them in their daily lives. It includes the following statements as shared principles in various service agreements it signs with provinces:\(^2\):

- Integration is a two way process, which involves commitment on the part of newcomers to adapt to life in Canada and on the part of Canadians to adapt to new people and cultures.
- Newcomers’ contributions to the economic and social fabric of Canada are valued: it is important for newcomers...to participate in the social dimensions of life in Canada; and it is important for members of communities in Canada to help to ensure that newcomers have opportunities to participate in and contribute to the economic and social life of Canada.
- It is important to share with newcomers the principles, traditions and values that are inherent in Canadian society such as freedom, equality and participatory democracy.

Furthermore, CIC announced that it would provide funds in its 2003 Budget to work with the provinces and territories and their communities to facilitate the entry of newcomers into mainstream Canadian life. Under its “small centres strategy” it would involve government, private and voluntary sectors in developing the capacity of smaller centres “to attract and retain newcomers through the availability of employment opportunities, the existence of educational opportunities and the creation of welcoming conditions” (CIC, 2003).

---

These actions are consistent with recommendations of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (SCCI, 2003) that Canada facilitate the active involvement of members of the local community in the settlement and integration process and also encourage settlement agencies to develop or augment programs directed at immigrant children and their families, and provide the necessary funding to do so.

5.3.2 Structural Inequalities

Participants in Consultation 10 were unconvinced the government plans to attract newcomers to smaller centres would be successful unless there were jobs attached:

Delegates felt that people would move wherever they wanted to live at the soonest possible opportunity so any incentive policy would be doomed to failure. That being said, the promise of employment would be strong incentive for most immigrants to live almost anywhere. Given the choice of living in a nice place or getting a good job, every delegate chose the job (ASFX [F] 02).

Residents of smaller cities seemed unfriendly, according to a number of participants. In Consultation 6, one participant, referring to the smaller city in which she lived declared, “The people are not open, they feel that the more immigrant come the more they interfere in their lives... the more refugees, the more troubles” (AFFR 08). Another participant added “Nobody help you to gain Canadian experience instead they send you to a care home for seniors” (ASFC 05). Still another commented,

The people here are helpful, they help you in the bus, in the shops, they ask you if you need help. The society is excellent, no problems, they try
to help you even if your language is bad... However, neighbours don’t know each other. In my country when a new neighbour arrives everybody rush to meet him/her, but here nobody cares. I saw my neighbour by accident after 6 months” (ASMR 11).

One participant in Consultation 9 noted that it had been six months since he and his wife first moved into their present home and they still had not met their neighbours. They had seen them daily but passed each other without talking. “In (my home country) neighbours are the first to find out if anything happens to your family, but here 911 is the only friend” (ASMR 14).

Some participants felt that they were the victims of discrimination. A participant in Consultation 7 commented on her interactions with a service provider:

Everything seemed fine at the beginning, but later on I noticed I was treated differently. I felt segregated. People in authority were made aware of my problems despite the fact that I was not given the opportunity to speak to the appropriate person. Along with my family, I faced more problems after my complaint was made to authorities. That was disappointing in a free country such as Canada, that a woman cannot be heard (AFFR 08).

A member of the Consultation 8 group commented on a similar experience with a government office:

I came with a group of families, they all (have) their citizenship (now) and I am still waiting, is that because I am a Muslim and they aren’t? I acted the same as these people act, so why this discrimination? There is nobody to help me and I don’t know to whom to talk (AFFR 04).
A participant in Consultation 9 reported on his job search:

When I apply for a job, I go to the interview then they told me that I am overqualified and that they don’t have future openings. In some cases the interviewer meet me for less than one minute and give his/her refusal, I’ve experienced racism and discrimination in many cases (ASMR 14).

Another participant in the same consultation said, “I noticed some differences in the way I was treated because of my appearance. Although the services were similar, but I am talking about my experiences after the few months of my arrival” (ASMR 17).

The facilitator for Consultation 7 summarized a discussion the group had concerning the roles of service providers in facilitating inclusion by female newcomers. She cautioned:

We need to be particularly sensitive to the issues of women who come from oppressive backgrounds, remember they came to Canada with hope and desires to have better lives. We do not want to create situations through neglect or poor settlement practices that would force women to feel that their voices are still not being heard. We want to assure them that they are heard and that we here to assist them. Simple gestures of kindness in the settlement practices could make resettlement process a lot easier for women and their families. Integration and adjustment to a new society can be affected by the ways in which the employees deliver services, which have a major impact on newcomers’ ability and mobility (ASFR [F] 01).

All participants in the consultation had faced similar types of challenges with language, housing, employment, adaptation and adjustment in their city, she reported. Taken collectively,
these challenges constituted an enormous structural barrier to their participation in Canadian life.

5.3.3 Paradoxical Policy Outcomes

Although there were many factors that made for different experiences in the resettlement process, the majority of female participants spoke of being lost, alone and disempowered during their resettlement experience. One participant reported,

I didn’t know anything. Most of the time I was lost. I didn’t know where to buy things I needed or anything about the transit system, streets or addresses but I didn’t want to cause any trouble because I was a refugee claimant. After three months I had learned some of the things I had to know but after three years here I am still afraid of many things (ASFC 02).

The Consultation 8 recorder reported that one participant felt as though “her entire body was disabled. She can’t do anything, she feels like her hands are tied” (AFFR [R] 02). A Consultation 2 participant described in detail the plight of older female refugee claimants. Most of her problems stemmed from her lack of English, she said.

For example if any notice in the mailbox I have to pick up every time, every morning I didn’t know anything about that because I can’t read, I can’t understand. It’s something is going to happen I have no idea about that. If I’m gonna go to doctor or specialist I’m always shaking because I can’t say anything in English and I can’t tell doctor anything about my problem. I have to find someone and with me go to the doctor and translate for me. If there is any places like club for translating or teaching
anything about Canada, living in Canada for integrated for orientate its really good for many people like me they have no any idea about that (ASFC 02).

A participant in Consultation 7 expressed great unhappiness with the lack of support she was receiving from local service providers. According to the facilitator, no one had explained to her family what would happen to them in the first few months following their arrival. “They had no idea when the family could start going for English training. They felt confused and lost, with no one to ask or inquire due to language barriers and being new in the community. Many of the refugees that the family knew were having similar problems” (ASFR [F] 01).

Making social connections between newcomers neighbours was problematic on both sides. When the Consultation 1 recorder intervened in a discussion with her observation that some providers in her city offered opportunities for newcomers to meet their neighbours, one participant replied that this strategy was ineffective for people in her own ethnocultural community. People from her community, she noted

(work) as an individual. Group working is not really important. I think that’s something that is from our country, maybe, but individually is really strong. It is different from here. Maybe we don’t trust us (ASFI [R] 01).

On the other hand, a service provider (NAFX [S] 01). described how the resistance can come from the neighbours themselves as she described some of the difficulties she encountered in establishing a community housing program:

I think most people would say (our organization) has made this a neighbourhood. But it takes a long time and that’s what the community organizing books don’t tell you. It’s like you have a plan you do this, you
do this and it’ll be fine. It’s not that way. It doesn’t work because people feel manipulated. It’s only just being together, shoveling walks and having street parties – it takes a lot of time.

When we first moved in, after about a year or so, we wanted to renovate our garage in order to make it more accessible for crafts and such, and the neighbours organized to stop it and went down to City Hall. But it has taken us, after that bad incident (there have been) a lot of little things. It’s taken us about 10 years for people to really consider us an asset.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for her was to convince the community residents that intercultural integration was a goal worth pursuing:

The local challenge is for them to see (refugees) as an asset in this neighbourhood and not as a problem and I think that has happened, but you can never take it for granted. It’s a win-win. The better the neighbourhood is, the better is it for us. But it is better for everybody.

Like, we have some elderly people in the neighbourhood who for different reasons can’t get meals on wheels and we’re the ones who kind of look after them. Everybody wins. If it is a good neighbourhood, we win, everybody wins (NAFX [S] 01).

One participant stated that she did not know any Canadians, “... so it would be nice if there were any kind of interaction between her and some Canadian families” (ASFC 04).

Some participants in each consultation indicated that they felt they were being judged by Canadians and that cultural differences sometimes created distances between Canadians and newcomers. One participant, sensing that this was the case for her suggested a Canadian friend
could help her to learn about such things as Canadian child rearing practices, which are culturally very different from her own:

Some Canadians don’t necessarily approve of the ways we are used to raising children...Canadian friends could be great help in solving these problems by teaching (us) child-rearing practices that are customary here in Canada (AFFR 02).

Another participant in the same consultation said Canadians could help greatly by simply greeting and asking about newcomers’ welfare (AFFR 06).

The role of government in supporting the Host Program was cited by many as being very important for helping newcomers in their transition to Canadian living. In this program local volunteers help newcomers get used to living in Canada in areas such as banking shopping and finding major services in the area, enrolling in local schools, operating household appliances and using public transit. The need for such support as provided by the Host program was great according to one participant who said, “It is very important to have the host family during the early days of arrival to Canada, we had someday when we didn’t know from where to bring bread” (AFFP 04).

The expectations of many refugees had been for the host family to tutor them in language, guide them in the city, help them pay their bills and find employment. That is to say, the expectations of the refugees were greater than those of the program developers.

This was particularly noticeable in Consultation 8. One participant declared, “It is a bad experience, I saw my host family only once and it was so disappointing. She brought to me thirty year old things, I told her to take them, and I don’t need them” (AFFR 08). Another said, “I only met them once” (AFFR 06). A third stated that there was no match between the host
family and the immigrant family. She said, “They provided a single women to be a host family for a six persons family. She came with a sports car with one chair available while there are two parents and four kids” (AFFR 03). Furthermore, the facilitator added, “(the host) wanted to go out with the husband alone, and the wife got jealous” (AFFR [F] 01). Still another reported, “We know a friend who get divorced because of the host family, the man from the host family teaches the wife about the Canadian law, and teach her not to obey her husband, then he had affairs with her and the family was destroyed” (AFFR 07).

Some participants expressed appreciation for the efforts of their hosts on their behalf. One female participant said, “I used to exchange visits with my host family and they even introduced me to their friends” (ASFR 10). However most of the other participants did not share this positive experience with their host families. One participant expressed frustration with the language barrier she encountered with her host and the constraints on the type of support that the host could provide. She reported, “(The local service provider) told us don’t ask the host family for any services, besides we need an interpreter to talk with the host family we don’t understand them” (AFFR 06). Commenting on the ineffectiveness of many host families to live up to the expectations of the refugees, one Asian participant said:

They guide us to the ear of the camel out of its whole body! They are very nice people but they don’t understand us and we don’t understand them and they don’t know what we need. We can’t oblige them to do anything for us, the service they can provide depend on the individual himself, we need governmental employed host family (ASFC 04).

It seemed to many participants that the goodwill of the host volunteers was not enough. The volunteers needed help themselves, on how to help refugees. In the words of a Consultation 5
participant, "The host family is a very beautiful idea, but it should be activated and developed to perform well" (AFMR 06).

5.3.4 Agency

Those refugees who were privately sponsored, many by church groups, described the positive contribution of faith communities to building a sense of inclusion by offering comfort and reassurance to those in need. The organized support of similarly minded people helped them to keep that faith alive. One service provider noted that many of those who had experienced trauma had relied upon their own faith in order to survive and continued to do so during their resettlement:

(Faith) is absolutely central because there is way too much suffering, too many problems that people couldn’t stick at it for long. There is too much suffering among the people themselves - you have to have some kind of vision that is more than just success or something (NAMX [S] 04).

Two privately sponsored participants in Consultation 10 reported that from their perspective they did not appear as likely to suffer the sorts of cultural, financial, participatory or relational distress that they heard from other refugees (ASFI [R] 02). A participant in a different consultation described church groups as humanitarian, alive and willing to assist in times of emergency (ASMR 05).

Participants in Consultation 10 suggested educational resources could be provided to individuals and groups that sponsor refugees. This would help them explain sponsorship as not only a single act of humanitarianism but also a long-term investment in an individual and the community in which he or she lives. Developing a mentorship program within an ethno-
cultural community was another strategy discussed to address cultural maintenance and integration concerns (NAMX [C] 01). In Consultation 4, a participant recounted the story of an individual from his homeland, a sponsored refugee to Canada twenty years ago, who did just that. After achieving academic and professional success in Canada he devoted himself to providing mentorship and financial support to other young refugees from his community (EUMR [F] 01). Another participant in the same consultation said that their community understood the value of investing in individuals and actively sought out this type of individual investment within their community (EUMR 03).

A volunteer at a refugee housing project (NAFX [S] 02) described how newcomers and neighbours have come to engage with one another on the street where both lived:

There’s been a lot of connections made with neighbours along that particular street, not just the next door neighbours but along the whole street and that now has a life of its own. Some of the women have worked cooking and cleaning in the houses around the neighbourhood. We have a women’s group, conversation practice groups and job finding clubs that spring up informally from time to time. One of the neighbours on the street is a contractor and he has hired (refugees) for years and years. And people on the street when need a small task done in the house will ask us (our organization) if we have somebody that can help them. Those kind of exchanges. Shovelling snow, cutting lawns, painting porches, things like that. Which build community. There are no goods exchanged
The turning point in the relationship building that has occurred on the street happened when one of the neighbours suggested a street party,” as more like a preventative thing where people would really get to know each another” in 1997. It was a great success:

The first street party was just such a turning point in terms of the neighbourhood. It really was great. The neighbours invited the refugees for meals, they’d supply clothing, have given us cars, jobs. Like, we don’t have a employment counsellors, we just have neighbours to get people jobs.

A participant Consultation 9 had a similar idea. She suggested that she could help a local service provider, “make a Newcomers Welcome Party and invite all the community to meet with newcomers” in place of its current practice of segregating newcomers upon arrival (AFFR 09).

Consultation 8 participants offered a number of suggestions for Canadians who wanted to help newcomers, including participating in educational cultural events in order to learn about different cultural practices, helping newcomers work towards achieving equal opportunities and becoming involved as host families during the early adaptation period of resettlement in order to prevent the feeling of isolation that so many newcomers felt (ASMR [F] 01)

Participants in Consultation 7 cities agreed that strong community networks helped guide refugees in all aspects of integration with Canadian society and most importantly, helped keep their spirits up. One female commented,

Everybody wants to go to (a different city from the one in which she lived) where there is a lot of (people from her country). The network
makes it easier for one to find his or her way in the new life. (ASFR 02).

However, in the opinion of her group, such a network could not function well without government support, because the community lacked financial resources and important procedural knowledge (ASFR [F] 01). The great majority of participants Consultation 10 agreed that if the government supported a community organization in their city that served to both guide and advocate for refugees, they would happily volunteer their time and effort to ensure its continued survival. They suggested they could add credibility to the organization’s advocacy work by assisting in the preparation of materials and participating in public meetings. They would share responsibilities with the organization to help educate newcomers about various resources that are available for them, to register for health coverage, social insurance and other government programs and to navigate the transportation system of the city. They would “teach them about the cultural shock that they will go through” during the resettlement process in Canada and generally help them “adjust and adapt to the new Canadian lifestyle” (NAFX [R] 02). They agreed with the notion that integration is a two-way process and were eager to commit their own talents and resources to the process, but were seldom asked to do so (ASFX [F] 02).

Members in all consultations expressed the need for members of the immigrant and refugees community to become involved with service providers and funders. This practice would help raise the profile of the community in the resettlement process, as well as prove helpful for the development of local programs that met their needs. Consultation 9 participants, in particular, suggested a wide variety of services they would be willing to volunteer including sharing responsibilities with local providers to help newcomers register for health coverage and
social insurance cards, orienting them to the city’s transportation system and giving them a foreshadowing of the cultural shocks that await them and helping them adapt to their new Canadian lifestyle. In addition they stated that they intended to become involved in the immigrant and resettlement services on a volunteer basis in order to assure satisfactory services for all. They suggested that they participate in the community consultations on immigration policies and changes, act as liaisons between the management and individuals who had particular problems, advocate against unfair treatment to appropriate government agencies and open lines of communication between their community and the service provider (ASMR [F] 02).

A participant in another consultation volunteered to interpret for those from her country in their dialect, rather than continue the current practice of relying upon speakers who spoke a different dialect of the same language. She cautioned, however, “The interpreter should swear not to show up newcomers families’ secrets. He or she should be like a doctor, keep secrets” (AFFR 01). By taking an active part in resettlement and participating in the policy making process, participants across all consultations felt they could help ensure better resettlement services for all.

5.4 DISCUSSION

This chapter has so far explored the perspectives of consultation facilitators, settlement service providers and government officials and those of immigrants and refugees that were voiced in the community consultations. The disconnection between policy ideals and their regulatory applications as evidenced by the Paradoxical Policy Outcomes of those policies is
strikingly evident. The response of refugees to those outcomes suggest ways in which policies may be reworked in order to be viable. A discussion of the findings is presented in the following section.

It is clear from the consultations that new communities emerge in the face of adversity, at the local level, where most people go to school, raise families, work, join associations, attend religious ceremonies and otherwise live out their lives. They do this by forming networks with others that are based on common values and interests. In the formation of such networks, be they based on friendship, kinship or workplace, there exists a potential for collective participation, empowerment and emancipation.

5.4.1 Cultural Maintenance

Discussions in the consultations generally support the contention of Tonks and Paranjpe (1999) that successful integration involves the blending within individuals of selected elements of both the ancestral and mainstream cultures. This appears most clearly to occur in children, who most times are able to live effectively in both. The maintenance of heritage culture among adults is a much more complicated undertaking over which individuals may or may not have much choice about the extent to which they maintain their ancestral culture, or the extent to which they adopt mainstream Canadian culture. Two factors especially influence cultural maintenance: changes in family roles and discrimination from the host society. One of the most troublesome challenges to cultural maintenance that refugee and immigrant participants alike reported was the change in family roles that occurred for many after their arrival in Canada. As Menjivar (2000) reported, women appeared quicker to adapt to their new circumstances than men because they formed support networks among themselves and more readily sought
assistance from service providers than men did. This resulted in their gaining crucial sociocultural knowledge that empowered them to speak for their families with a more credible and authoritative voice than men. In many cases this was a complete role reversal from what had been the practice in their home countries and it had a profound effect on their lives.

One motivation for retaining the heritage culture, including living in close proximity to members of one's own group, could be a form of social support in response to the stress caused by discrimination from the host society. This is especially true for newcomers who are having trouble finding opportunities to participate fully in Canadian culture. Dion (1992) argues that one important response to the stress associated with discrimination is the strengthening of in-group identification. One's own group can provide the social support needed to cope with the rejection associated with discrimination. For newcomers this would take the form of heightened identification with the heritage culture. Alternatively, discrimination could have the opposite effect by motivating some newcomers to divest themselves of any traces of the ancestral culture in order to avoid becoming a frequent target.

### 5.4.2 Family Support

In the Objectives and Application section of IRPA, the objectives of the Act with respect to refugees are “to support the self-sufficiency and the social and economic well-being of refugees by facilitating reunification with their family members in Canada (IRPA 3(2)f ). Canada has ratified a number of international agreements that pertain to the protection of the family, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
Nevertheless, family reunification was identified in three consultations as a serious problem. A major structural barrier to reunification, according to a number of service providers in the consultations, is the Low Income Cut Off (LICO) requirement that IRPA imposes on family class sponsors. For many refugee families, that cut off point is too high. For example, a couple with two children would have to have earned a minimum gross income of $48,341 in the year preceding their sponsorship application in order to qualify to sponsor two parents, grandparents or siblings for whom they would then be financially responsible for a further ten years. A number of participants in the consultations expressed concerns that the impact of LICO was especially hard on women because of the greater number of sociocultural difficulties they faced, as compared to men. A participant who had left her husband in a refugee camp, for example, described how in addition to the lengthy application processing time required and the anxious uncertainty surrounding that process, she faced a cultural dilemma that caused her much distress. "I should be working," she said, "but in my culture women are not supposed to work, (so) how could I sponsor him?" The structural barrier created by LICO is further strengthened by IRPA regulations that stipulate if the sponsor is on social assistance, or if the dependant is likely to receive social assistance, the dependant is inadmissible (IRPA Reg. 133(1)(k); (IRPA section 39). This has the unintended effect of penalizing children for the economic situation of their parents. Another regulation stipulates that if the sponsor is unable to repay social assistance for a previously sponsored family member he or she is prohibited from further sponsorship (IRPA Regulation 133 (1)(g) and (h)). In other words, the government is facilitating the collection of a debt by denying a human right.

Table 5.1

Processing Times, Dependants of Refugees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of months to process 50% of cases</td>
<td># of months to process 80% of cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa and Middle East</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia Pacific</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Hemisphere</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data retrieved October 15, 2004 from CIC website: http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/times-int/index.html

The government has had difficulty in processing family reunification requests in a timely manner. Table 5.1 illustrates how visa office processing times for applications by refugee’s family members abroad, while improving since July 2003, are still significant. This processing time is calculated from the moment at which a completed application is received at the visa post. In order to estimate the total amount of time required to achieve reunification, the visa processing time must be added to the length of time families have already spent apart prior to the applicant’s arrival in Canada, the time required for the applicant to achieve permanent residency, the application to be processed in Canada and forwarded to the appropriate visa office, processed again, sent to the family and finally completed when the family arrives in Canada. In many cases, the entire process can take more than five years to complete. One participant reported having tried for seven years to reunite with her sister.
Another barrier to family reunification is the requirement by sponsors and family members to provide identity documents deemed satisfactory at the discretion of an immigration officer. This practice is particularly problematical for refugees who have never possessed official identity documents or whose documents were lost during their flight to safety. In some cases, also at the discretion of an overseas visa officer, DNA testing may be required to prove relationships. Not only does their expense, which according to one service provider can exceed $900, constitute a significant barrier, such tests can also result in the exclusion of legitimate non-biological family relationships.

A further barrier results from the definition of "family member" in Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations 1(3) and 176(1) as the spouse or dependent child of a protected person. If the protected person is under 18 years of age, family class sponsorship, the avenue for most family reunification under IRPA, is not available. As a result, the child's parents and siblings are not recognised as family members and the child has no legal way to be reunited with them. The situation has arisen in a number of cases in Canada in which children have been granted protected person status, but their parent has been refused such status. Perhaps the most notorious recent example was that of Song Dae Ri, a North Korean defector who was ordered to be deported after an IRB member decided that, because he had been a government bureaucrat, he was a war criminal. His wife, who had willingly returned earlier to North Korea, was executed there. Their child, who had been granted convention refugee status in Canada, would have been left alone in Canada if his father had been deported. A subsequent 16-page PRRA report determined that Mr. Ri was at grave risk and he was subsequently not deported.

Although there appears to be protection of families available from the humanitarian and compassionate considerations in section 25 of IRPA, such protection is normally provided at the
discretion of overseas visa officers. That is to say, front-line staff who may or may not have had experience in the interpretation and application of human rights legislation or regulations are responsible for making some very high stakes decisions. This is unfair to both officer and applicant.

5.4.3 Participatory Inclusion

Creating and maintaining active human relationships through associations and groups is clearly an important feature of strong communities. People construct their own communities, their sense of community captured by their perception of community boundaries, or as Cohen (2000) describes, their “symbolic constructions of community”. Two consultations noted that strong community networks helped refugees develop their own conceptions of community and most importantly, helped keep their spirits up. All groups stated that they would voluntarily work to ensure the survival of community organizations that helped refugees adjust and adapt to a new Canadian lifestyle. A participant in one consultation described how a sponsored refugee who had achieved academic and professional success in Canada, in return, became involved in improving the lives of other young refugees from his community. However, in discussions of how to increase the level of engagement by newcomers with the host society, there was less agreement. Some participants felt they were continuously being judged by Canadians. Others argued that Canadians had many opportunities to meet newcomers but chose not to do so. For example, Canadians could participate in multicultural events, advocate for the equal rights of newcomers or act as cultural hosts during the adaptation period. Still another participant suggested that a local service provider, by segregating newcomers upon arrival, was creating a social barrier that need not exist. She suggested that a better practice would be for
the organization to host a welcome party for the newcomers and invite all the community to meet with them. Integration to a new society was a challenge to their faith in humanity for many newcomers. Some challenged the values of the mainstream community while others encouraged the development of new conceptions that were more in keeping with those of the host society.

Meeting space was a major issue for all groups. One group reported meeting on weekends at a local immigrant serving agency; however, other groups were limited in their options due to the cost of leasing building space and the demand other community facilities had upon available space. The suggestion was made in one consultation that if the municipal governments provided assistance in leasing space, such as in a high vacancy shopping mall and providing meeting rooms and office resources, small ethno-cultural communities would have a valuable asset for community development. Staffing the space with a community development worker, perhaps seconded from a service provider, would meet a need for agency personnel support. The primary goal for communities accessing this space would be to become increasingly self-sufficient in their own community development, and ultimately able to cover the costs of sustaining that development.
CHAPTER 6: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this research was to contribute to improving the quality of the refugee resettlement experience by bringing the voices of refugees and their supporters into a discussion on policies that directly affect that experience. The approach was based upon the premise that successful social policies must effectively respond to the needs of those whom they most intend to benefit. When this does not happen, paradoxical policy outcomes occur. In order to mitigate the potential for paradox, it is essential that the needs be credibly and authoritatively expressed by those most familiar with them. Thus for a discussion of policies affecting refugees, having spent considerable time in discussion with non-refugee service providers and government officials, I turned for advice from possibly the most credible and authoritative voices of all on the topic, the refugees themselves. The central research questions were:

How do refugees and their advocates describe the barriers to social inclusion they face during their resettlement in Canada? What actions do they propose might be undertaken by governments and neighbours to remove those barriers and what are they doing in the meantime to privately mitigate their negative effects?

In the current study, I adopted the role of practitioner-researcher, rather than neutral participant because I hoped to bring these voices into the broader processes of policy development in which I was involved. In an effort to make my findings as generalizable as possible, I conducted Participatory Action Research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) within a Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) methodological framework and organized
community consultations involving a total of 86 refugees, refugee claimants and their supporters in three cities. Findings from those consultations were triangulated with data from interviews with 29 service providers, government officials and individual refugees, as well as documentary evidence from scholarly research, government publications and mass media sources. Implications for further policy development were then developed from that process.

Findings from the research could potentially contribute to increasing the effectiveness of resettlement activities for refugees and refugee claimants by encouraging community-based resettlement activities. They might also contribute to building local community capacities by developing the abilities of refugees and their supporters to manage and negotiate resettlement and community development activities. Finally, the research findings might help to secure the sustainability of such activities as immigrants and refugees take responsibility for their continuation. In the following chapter 14 implications for further policy development and some of the key findings upon which they are based are presented in the same categories and sequence of sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts that were used in Chapters 4 and 5.

6.1 PRE AND POST ARRIVAL ORIENTATION

6.1 improving pre-arrival orientation

Participants in the consultations voiced general dissatisfaction with the quality of the orientation they received prior to their arrival in Canada. They reported that orientation information provided in their source countries was often missing, misleading or incomplete, especially that pertaining to human rights in Canada and occupation-specific labour market information. In addition to information about Canadian lifestyles, they also desired information about the education, legal and justice systems. They further wanted to know what types of health, educational and economic and housing support for which they would be
eligible and the conditions under which the support would be provided. The importance of
providing orientation materials in the first language of the newcomers emerged in all
consultations. The government’s efforts to develop a comprehensive web clusters are an
important step towards improving the quality of orientation, but the portal remains accessible
only to those who have a relatively high level of language proficiency and computer literacy.

The lack of knowledge reported by participants was consistent with the findings of
Carley (2001) who noted deficiencies in the provision of information on services, orientation
programs, childcare, legal assistance, mental health support, employment readiness and job
search, housing assistance, interpretation and translation, English language training and
advocacy support.

6.1.2 Improving post-arrival orientation

Participants in the majority of consultations indicated that post arrival orientation
was an area where they could apply what they had learned in Canada to improve the
resettlement experience for newcomers. They wanted to take the lead because they could
fit the orientation precisely to the needs of those from similar ethnocultural backgrounds.
One service provider spoke enthusiastically about how the active support of her
organization’s “alumni” was essential to sustain the activities of the organization.

During the immediate post-arrival period, there is a need for improved
cooperation between federal and provincial agencies in order to help facilitate access by
refugees to settlement agencies and immigrant-serving organisations that are active in the
regions they plan to settle. Support for newcomer networking initiatives and such
collaborative endeavours as the development of joint service delivery arrangements
would be helpful and appropriate. Such support services should be provided for at least one year and provide immediate access to the social services provided to nationals

6.2 PERSONAL SECURITY

6.2.1 Ensuring personal security at points of entry

Some consultation participants described how arriving in the country with little money little English and no information about how to find shelter and safety, they felt extremely vulnerable. There were no reception programs at major airports or Canada/US border crossings to ensure that newly arrived sponsored refugees received accurate information and assistance. Alone and needing help, some depended on strangers for information. They spoke angrily of their feelings of vulnerability to criminal activity and their unfair treatment at the hands of agency staff and government officials. The availability of a reception program at the point of entry could have reduced their distress.

The personal safety of refugees and refugee claimants at points of entry should take into consideration the fact that, due to Canada’s participation in the Safe Third Country Agreement, the number of refugee claims made at land borders has been decreasing dramatically. According to a service provider, this phenomenon may perhaps suggest that the border is becoming less secure than in the past, when claimants presented themselves, were interviewed and given a security check before being admitted to Canada. It seems obvious that government attempts to make it more difficult to enter the country will exacerbate the problems faced by refugees in obtaining documents that prove their legitimacy and furthermore will fuel the increases in such criminal activity related to transporting and exploiting refugees that has been seen in recent years along the
USA-Mexico border. The number of irregular crossings could be in fact, be increasing because claimants assume they will be refouled and would rather take their chances with a smuggler.

6.2.3 Appealing IRB decisions

This issue was of particular concern to the refugee claimants in the consultations, only one of whom remains in Canada. The others have either been deported or gone underground due to a failed or abandoned application for Pre Removal Risk Assessment. The reality for these individuals is that for people like them who cannot afford costly court appeals there is no practical appeal of a negative IRB decision. At a time when non-refoulement is uncertain and the border appears to be closing, refugees could be denied a right as basic as a review of a life-and-death decision

The federal government should reconsider establishing the Refugee Appeal Division mandated by IRPA because the current system is dysfunctional. Some claimants are left to the mercy of ill-prepared lawyers and unscrupulous consultants because there is no program that ensures they receive competent representation at their hearings. The Federal Court has been plagued by denials of appeals that result in judicial reviews, then requests for special dispensation from the minister, then risk assessment, then requests for a stay of removal, all of which are very time-consuming and expensive.

6.3 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

6.3.1. Increasing sufficiency of language training
Participants reported that language needs were different for different groups and that as much as possible the language training should recognize this fact. Higher levels of language training were seen as very desirable by some delegates but as irrelevant by others. To them it was not the level but the content that was important. The need for employment-based language and culture training was considered to be of greatest urgency. One delegate pointed out that even though regions may have a certain amount of flexibility to ensure programs can be adapted to local needs, they did not often exercise that flexibility.

Policies need to be developed that are flexible in response to the changing needs of the refugee learners and the characteristics of the region in which they resettle. Federal government funding currently provides support for generalized language training but many participants in the consultations suggested that it needs to be extended to more specific language training for the workplace because finding employment is clearly one of the most fundamental aspects of successful settlement and integration. The investment in language instruction for newcomers should be increased to ensure they have access to sufficient training to enable them to participate fully in Canadian society.

### 6.3.2 Increasing access to job-readiness language training

Participants noted that language is an essential tool for integration and that training or retraining is needed by many newcomers in their field of study or professions, which they are often unable to obtain due to the high cost factor. Provision of employment and skills training for the newcomers is essential.

Funding needs to be provided for language training programs that are specifically geared towards finding employment. Expansion of the language-training program is
necessary to accommodate the variety of language needs of learners and employers and maximize the contributions of the skills that newcomers bring with them. The Canadian Language Benchmarks approach appears to offer a framework for the development of programs that incorporate occupation-specific language content and a means for assessing specific language proficiencies. Funding in the form of training subsidies, grants or low interest loans, needs be available to support those refugees who are living in poverty.

6.4 ECONOMIC INCLUSION

6.4.1 Collaborating on workplace training opportunities

The central importance of employment as a precondition for the financial and psychological security that leads to successful integration was stated repeatedly in the consultations. There is a need for transition to employment programs that are based upon careful consideration of the special challenges facing refugees. Most importantly they should be exempted from the Employment Insurance eligibility requirement that prevents their access to many training opportunities. Specialized job development and counselling initiatives should be encouraged in order to facilitate entry into the job market.

Building the capacity of employers to assist in the transition process by offering, for example, wage subsidies and/or tax incentives in return for one-year non-renewable refugee placements, could be helpful. Similarly helpful could be providing incentives for the development of workplace language training opportunities. Such initiatives as these would allow refugees to gain the Canadian experience so often demanded by employers while simultaneously addressing some of the most urgent challenges facing them in their initial efforts to support themselves.
6.4.2 Collaborating on credentialing and accreditation

Participants in some consultations identified credential recognition and accreditation as a very important issue for immigrant professionals, especially because many arrive in Canada with an unrealistic expectation, based upon advice they received during in their country the pre-immigration period, of employment in Canada. As much of the credential recognition as possible should be done prior to arrival and realistic appraisals of a potential immigrant’s employability must be provided by the Canadian government.

Collaborative partnerships between public, private, labour and voluntary sectors need to be expanded in order to respond to the variety of employment needs that emerge over time. In order to accomplish this goal, efforts first need to be made to reduce the systemic barriers that work to prevent such collaborations from developing, most notably between government departments and professional standards associations, business associations and employer groups. Once done, those groups can begin to expedite the development of cooperative training programs, internships, apprenticeships, public education initiatives, employer recognition programs, credential recognition and other regulatory procedures and micro-enterprises that build upon the assets that refugees bring to the communities in which they have resettled.

6.5 SHELTER

6.5.1 Collaborating on affordable housing

There is a need for greater efforts to help ensure that housing is affordable and that refugees are able to maintain their living space at the end of their sponsorship, rather than having to deal with the disruption of finding new living space. Multi-year support
from municipal and provincial governments for community initiatives such as Toronto’s Romero House and Vancouver’s Salisbury Community Society appears to be a promising short-term approach that could be expanded and extended in length of service provision. Encouragement through subsidies or other incentives for landlords to upgrade substandard housing would improve the quality of housing. The development by municipal and provincial governments of accessible regional housing registries that contain information on non-profit and subsidized housing as well as temporary shelters and respite rooms would also be helpful.

Housing issues need to be addressed not only by newcomers but also by the host community through reflective, comprehensive, inclusive and collaborative policy approaches. There is a need for greater coordination and sharing of information between government agencies and community service providers and integration of services where possible. As much as possible, there should be involvement of refugees and immigrants in the planning and implementation of housing strategies, preparation of orientation materials, support services for recent arrivals and concurrent program evaluation. There should also be efforts to improve awareness among landlords, housing managers and service providers of the sociocultural needs of newcomers and encouragement of exemplary practices in responding to those needs.

6.6 CULTURAL MAINTENANCE

6.6.1 Developing community support groups

A common observation in one city was that there were insufficient cultural “platforms” to allow communities to begin to engage in public discussions with their
neighbours on community issues. Others felt that the formation of a formal ethnocultural community group was a prerequisite for reaching that goal; however meeting space was problematical due to cost and demand by other community groups. One possible solution was suggested by participants was that the government lease inexpensive space in high vacancy areas, staff it with a community development officer and volunteer cultural representative and provide meeting rooms and office resources in that space for small ethno-cultural communities.

Findings from the consultations suggest a number of opportunities for helping newcomers develop a feeling of belongingness in their new communities. For example, involving newcomers more effectively in the community development process would help ensure that policy outcomes are both sustainable and relevant to their needs. One strategy might be to establish procedures that require the full involvement of permanent residents, newcomers and service providers in the development of supports such as host community orientation, completion of official forms and applications, employment transition, language training and job search techniques. Funding should be provided to help providers establish developer positions in their organizations that can both initiate and coordinate the community process.

6.7 FAMILY SUPPORT

6.7.1 Expediting family reunification

Canada’s current family reunification practices are having the paradoxical effect of harming rather than protecting many refugee families. There is a need to consider ways to expedite the reunification of families who are in dangerous circumstances, including the
removal of the IRPA requirements for sponsors to meet LICO eligibility levels and not be receiving social assistance and for sponsored dependents to be unlikely to seek social assistance. The current policy has the effect of restricting rather than supporting protected persons in their efforts to reunite with the families they have been forced to leave behind. In addition, the definitions of family member in IRPA Regulations 176(1) and 1(3) should be amended to permit dependent refugee children to include their parents and siblings, upon whom they depend for their emotional security, in their applications for permanent residence in Canada. There is a need to designate specially trained IRB members who possess highly developed intercultural communication skills and a demonstrated ability to communicate with children to adjudicate children’s claims.

6.7.2. Collaborating on social services

The general insufficiency of family support was an issue of concern in all consultations. Families who were dealing with interpersonal difficulties caused by their transition into a new culture reported that there were no places they could go for counselling. When their families broke apart, their chances of retaining vestiges of their ancestral cultures diminished greatly. There is a need for support by the government for the development of transition support programs at the community level where families can receive comprehensive assistance from a variety of service providers.

There is a need for the development of social service partnerships among education, health, employment, housing, finance, faith community and voluntary sector service providers. Volunteering and mentoring opportunities in these service areas that partner newcomers with “alumni” appear to be excellent vehicles for promoting
intercultural understanding among community members. Jointly developed public education initiatives on relevant issues of concern such as family violence, mental health care, personal safety and intercultural adaptation would also serve to help bridge the gap between newcomer and the host society.

6.8 PARTICIPATORY INCLUSION

6.8.1 Building intercultural understanding

Consultations in two cities reported instances of perceived discrimination against newcomers either by service providers, government officials, landlords or potential employers. Participants reported that within the settlement services there appeared to be an element of discrimination. Some indicated that they had experienced discrimination they thought was based solely on their appearance by resettlement staff who appeared inadequately trained in intercultural sensitivity. Others reported receiving different treatment that resulted in their feeling isolated. Some newcomers seemed to consider themselves targets for discriminatory attacks. Instead of becoming neighbours, their neighbours were making them strangers.

There is a need for the federal government to financially support community education efforts that focus on the benefits of intercultural understanding and the need to support marginalized members of the community, especially in the tense and fearful environment that has emerged following the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Community agencies which strive to become places where strangers become neighbours, not vice-versa, should be identified and supported as models for other agencies. Good examples of such agencies are Romero House and Kimbrace House.
are Romero House and Kimbrace House.

6.8.2. Investing in settlement service provision

Participants noted in all cities that the services provided by their local agencies were less than satisfactory and that at times the providers themselves appeared to be overworked and exhausted. Some providers in their comments appear to feel as marginalized as the people they serve. Although working conditions in the sector vary widely by agency in type and quality, they are generally perceived by providers to be inferior to conditions at the same levels in other social service sectors. Community-based non-governmental programs are especially hampered by limited funding and government-imposed constraints on the design and delivery of settlement services. These conditions make it exceedingly difficult for them to respond to the needs of their clients in ways that are as inclusive and sustainable as they could be.

The level of investment in settlement services needs to be raised with a view to achieving a level comparable to other support services. Government-funded settlement services provided by community-based organisations, particularly those that focus on sociocultural aspects of refugee adaptation and integration, can play a vital role in assisting refugees and immigrants cope with the challenges they face, and also in helping sensitize neighbours to the challenges they themselves will face in their efforts to be helpful. Neighbourhood initiatives such as mentoring and tutoring programs, parenting programs, peer support circles for immigrant and refugee youth, sports clubs, befriending programs, driving clubs, peer facilitation and leadership training can all contribute positively to the development of communities in which refugees are welcome
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored the disconnect that exists between refugee policy ideals and the structural inequalities that hamper their successful implementation. The nature of those structural inequalities and the paradoxical outcomes that can result from their influence on policy implementation were determined through discussion with refugees and resettlement service providers in three large Western Canadian cities. Participants included male and female adults ranging in age from 19 to 60, all of whom had arrived in Canada within the previous year. The three officially recognized classes of refugees: Convention Refugees Abroad, Source Country and Country of Asylum Refugees along with refugee claimants were represented in approximately equal numbers. The discussions were almost all conducted in the preferred languages of the participants, males with males and females with females. As such, it seems fair to say that the findings are generalizable to Western Canada, although it is less clear how they might apply to Central and Eastern Canada.

In the following section, I refer back to the central questions of this research. The questions were intended to not only explore the barriers informants perceived to their inclusion in Canadian society but to also explore what they thought the public sector and community members could be doing to remove those barriers and, finally what informants themselves were doing to improve the quality of their own resettlement experience:

- How do refugees and their advocates describe the barriers to social inclusion they face during their resettlement in Canada?
• What actions do they propose might be undertaken by governments and
neighbours to remove those barriers and what are they doing in the
meantime to privately mitigate their negative effects? (p. 3-4)

A summary of the key findings, as viewed through the lens of the central questions
follows.

7.1 BARRIERS TO INCLUSION

Informants expressed general dissatisfaction with their lack of preparation for coming to
Canada and wished they had had access to realistic and sufficient information about the
challenges they would be facing; their individual rights; the financial, medical, family, and
language training support they would receive; government agencies they would need to access
and most of all, information in their first languages. Participants described how this lack of pre-
arrival orientation, combined with a lack of reception programs at ports of entry resulted in their
feeling acutely alone. Arriving in the country with little money, little English and no information
about how to find shelter and safety, they also felt extremely vulnerable.

Their lack of pre-arrival knowledge about labour market access also contributed to
participants’ unhappiness. Informants in the consultations spoke of being in a Catch 22 situation
where they could not gain the Canadian experience necessary to get a good job because they
could not get a Canadian job. A few quickly determined that obtaining unpaid volunteer work
was an effective strategy for obtaining Canadian experience, but even that route was difficult for
some due to a shortage of volunteer opportunities in their city. It was difficult even to get a
driver’s licence. They reported being under great stress because of their inability to support
financially dependent relatives back home and their humiliation at being forced into dependency
Recognizing that some re-training might be necessary, most participants were distressed to discover how much the labour market appeared to devalue the skills they possessed. It was clear that newcomers often had no access to the complex socio-linguistic knowledge that native speakers of English and French employ to develop resumes, complete applications, write letters of inquiry and meet potential employers. In fact, job-hunting itself as a concept was unknown in many source countries. For the internationally trained professional and tradesperson the process of obtaining accreditation and licensure was often encumbered by insufficient or inaccessible labour market access information, complex and expensive prior learning assessment and credential evaluation processes and limited language training support. Depending on the profession or trade and regulatory body or union that govern it, there could be lengthy delays before an individual is able to re-enter his or her profession or to obtain skilled employment.

The general insufficiency of family support was perceived as a barrier in all consultations. Families who were dealing with interpersonal difficulties caused by their transition into a new culture reported that there were no places they could go for counselling. When their families broke apart, their chances of retaining vestiges of their ancestral cultures diminished greatly. Consultation participants reported that the viewed the future as promising for children but “mysterious, unclear and black” for adults. They described a feeling of being at a loss.

Service providers in two provinces expressed frustration with the federal government in their efforts to provide a continuum of support for refugees and claimants. Funding constraints were a major barrier. The government tended to focus on short-term projects with specific, measurable outcomes that did not necessarily take into account the responsibilities of service
providers to their clients, boards, partners and communities. To add to the providers’ frustrations, the government maintained tight control on the information it released on the numbers for claimants who were refused at points of entry. Two providers commented on what they perceived as the negative attitude some front line government officials appeared to hold towards claimants. One provider commented that claimants were not given a proper chance to make their case because the process began from a negative assumption that they were somehow attempting to subvert the system.

7.2 PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY

Participants agreed that orientation was a shared responsibility but that it was only the government that could provide current and accurate information about government policies, the supports and services they would receive, qualifications and credentials for specific occupations in Canada and perhaps some of the challenges they would be facing. This information could be disseminated in the languages of the newcomers both online and through an expansion of the Canadian Orientation Abroad program. This should start overseas just before their arrival, and within Canada shortly after the arrival because most the newcomers do not speak English, so it is very hard for them to express themselves. During the immediate post-arrival period, there is a need for improved cooperation between federal and provincial agencies in order to help facilitate access by refugees to settlement agencies and immigrant-serving organisations that are active in the regions they plan to settle. Support for newcomer networking initiatives and such collaborative endeavours as the development of joint service delivery arrangements would be helpful and appropriate. Such support services should be provided for at least one year and provide immediate access to the
social services provided to nationals

There is a need for transition to employment programs that are based upon careful consideration of the special challenges facing refugees. Most importantly, they should be exempted from the Employment Insurance eligibility requirement that prevents their access to many training opportunities. Specialized job development and counselling initiatives should be encouraged in order to facilitate entry into the job market. Building the capacity of employers to assist in the transition process by offering, for example, wage subsidies and/or tax incentives in return for one-year non-renewable refugee placements, could be helpful. Similarly helpful could be providing incentives for the development of workplace language training opportunities. Such initiatives as these would allow refugees to gain the Canadian experience so often demanded by employers while simultaneously addressing some of the most urgent challenges facing them in their initial efforts to support themselves.

Findings indicate that language training concerns must be addressed quickly. One innovation suggested in the majority of consultations was for the government to fund the development of language-training programs that focussed on preparing newcomers for employment. One consultation group suggested a new type of partnership arrangement be created to establish micro-enterprises in communities, undertaken by immigrant groups under the guidance of sponsoring agencies. Certainly a partnership between government and the private sector to develop credential assessment and licensure guidelines would go far toward the elimination of a major source of frustration. Similarly, jointly developed public education initiatives on relevant issues of concern such as family violence, mental health care, personal safety and intercultural adaptation would also serve to help bridge the gap between newcomer and the host society.
Service providers in the consultations agreed on the importance of the government providing stable, longer-term funding with streamlined accountability and reporting processes to support a range of settlement services. More resources are needed in order to distribute the benefits of resettlement across the country, to allow smaller centers across the country to offer comparable programming for language training, employment preparation and Canadian workplace training as are available in larger centers.

Service providers also noted that the personal safety of refugees and refugee claimants at points of entry should take into consideration the fact that, due to Canada's participation in the Safe Third Country Agreement, the number of refugee claims made at land borders has been decreasing dramatically. This phenomenon may perhaps suggest that the border is becoming less secure than in the past, when claimants presented themselves, were interviewed and given a security check before being admitted to Canada. It seems obvious that government attempts to make it more difficult to enter the country will exacerbate the problems faced by refugees in obtaining documents that prove their legitimacy and furthermore will fuel the increases in such criminal activity related to transporting and exploiting refugees that has been seen in recent years along the USA-Mexico border. The number of irregular crossings could be in fact, be increasing because claimants assume they will be refouled and would rather take their chances with a smuggler.

7.3 PRIVATE RESPONSIBILITY

Participants generally viewed the role of their ethnocultural community was primarily to act as volunteers for the resettlement-providing agencies and for the newcomers. Participants in one consultation offered to share resettlement duties with service agencies by assisting in the
orientation of newcomers to living in Canada in terms of shopping, going to appointments and socialization. They also discussed the need to create a committee that would assist newcomers overcome some of the barriers encountered in terms of access to settlement and other social, legal and financial services. One participant summarized a view held by many of his peers that he knew exactly the needs and feelings of newcomers form his own ethnocultural communities and was thus able to provide the culturally sensitive emotional support and local knowledge to help make their lives easier. One service provider spoke enthusiastically about how the active support of her organization's "alumni" was essential to sustain the activities of the organization.

Participants in two consultations described the importance of developing the capacity of their ethnocultural communities to not only support newcomers but to also help resolve internal problems among members of the community, advise on employment opportunities, organise cultural events and provide heritage education for their children. By doing so, they felt that they would increase their own survivability as a community. One group proposed it approach relevant bodies about entering into mentorship programs with foreign trained people, suggesting these programs could be offered in the work place and in the evenings to accommodate shift workers.

The most common response on the part of service providers to the ineligibility of refugee claimants was to provide their services anyway. One service provider reported that nobody was refused access to any of the services of the agency. Another service provider maintains a small number of "out of the cold" respite rooms for claimants who find themselves sleeping "in the rough" after being freed from detention. Faith communities in particular have been prominent in providing services to those who have sought protection, including providing physical asylum in church buildings. In all cities, service providers had established ad hoc
networks of like-minded organizations whom they could contact for assistance in times of urgency.

One service provider responded to concerns the agency had about financial sustainability and accountability to the local community by developing language training programs that incorporated field trips to local agencies, speakers from the community, cooking and gardening sessions with neighbours, frequent community celebrations, testing for driver licences and citizenship classes. Another service provider has established a community leadership institute that provides leadership training for newcomers and orientation for volunteers. Yet another has established a housing cooperative with the support of the municipal government, a national labour union and the local faith community. The operation of the cooperative is the responsibility of volunteer newcomers who live in the coop for one year and train their successors. Through such initiatives these service providers have begun to move resettlement from being a process that has survived largely at the pleasure of the federal government of the day to one that approaches settlement as a respectful, community-based practice in which newcomers are encouraged to voice their concerns and assume agency in the process.

Refugee resettlement in Western Canada emerges from this study as a dynamic process that is continually challenged by the shifting needs for humanitarianism and compassion in the world. It is an evolutionary work in progress. This aspect of the process confounds it with uncertainty but also reveals its potential strength. Findings make clear that a promising strategy for strengthening the process is for the government to promote inclusive practices by increasing the participation rate of refugees and immigrants in the development and implementation of resettlement programs. By bringing the voices of those who have the most to benefit from the
process into the process, the opportunity for innovation and partnership increases along with the potential for improving the accessibility, sufficiency and reliability of resettlement programs.
REFERENCES


Murphy, R. (December 1, 2001). Without rights what separates us from them? The Globe and Mail, A23.


Notwithstanding clause could offer some safety. (2001, October 3). Vancouver Sun, p.A18


Ramos, H. (2001). It was always there? Looking for identity in the (not) so obvious places." In A. Shadd (Ed.), Encounters in race, ethnicity and language (pp. 104-114). Toronto: Between the Lines.


Appendix A: Consultation Questions

The following questions were asked at all consultations. Additional questions were asked as circumstances dictated in the actual consultations.

a) Preparation for coming to Canada

1. What advice would you give a friend who was planning to come to Canada?
   Why would you give that advice?

   Sample memory prompts used were:
   - What was your image of Canada before you arrived here?
   - Where did you think you would live?
   - What kinds of food did you think you would be eating?
   - What kind of language training did you think would be available?
   - What kind of job did you think you might get?
   - Did you think that your life would change a lot?

b) Resettlement in Canada

1. a) How similar do you think your resettlement experience has been to other immigrants and refugees from your cultural community?

   b) Why do you think so?

2. a) What kinds of things could the Canadian government do that might improve the quality of the resettlement services it provides to other immigrants and refugees from your cultural community?

   b) Why do you think so?

3. a) What kinds of things could people like yourself do that might improve the
quality of the resettlement experience for immigrants and refugees from your cultural community?

b) Why do you think so?

c) Integration into Canadian society

1. a) What kinds of things do you think the government could be doing to help immigrants and refugees from your cultural community integrate into Canadian society?

b) Why do you think so?

2. a) What kinds of things do you think people like yourself could be doing to help immigrants and refugees from your cultural community integrate into Canadian society?

b) Why do you think so?

3. a) What kinds of things do you think other Canadians could be doing to help immigrants and refugees from your cultural community integrate into Canadian society?

b) Why do you think so?

d) Community Capacity Building

1. a) What kinds of things do you think people like yourself could be doing to ensure that immigrant and refugee resettlement activities are based on local knowledge and understanding of problems?
b) Why do you think so?

2. a) What kinds of things do you think people like yourself could be doing to help build local capacities and develop the abilities of immigrants and refugees to manage and to negotiate resettlement and community development activities

   b) Why do you think so?

3. a) What kinds of things do you think people like yourself could be doing to help to secure the sustainability of the activities as immigrants and refugees assume ownership of them.

   b) Why do you think so?
Appendix B: Letter of Consent for Consultation Participants

Project Title: Participatory Development in the Vancouver Immigrant and Refugee Community

My name is William McMichael. I am a student in the University of British Columbia's Educational Studies Ed.D. program. As part of the requirements for my Educational Doctorate degree I am conducting research that I hope will help improve the status of refugee claimants by determining effective strategies for including them in the local planning and delivery of resettlement services.

I would like to ask for your assistance in my research by participating in a series of up to four small group discussions with other members of your linguistic community who have similar refugee experiences. The group discussions will be coordinated by two trained peer facilitators: [Name] and [Name]. Your primary responsibility will be to contribute to a dialogue concerning resettlement service needs and the ways in which such services might best be delivered. I expect that the entire amount of time involved will be from 4-6 hours over a period of two days. I will be happy to assist in providing transportation to the location of the group discussions.

I will not identify you by your real name. Any tape recordings of your discussions will be heard only by you and the peer facilitators. If you do not want something that you say to be recorded, the peer facilitators will not record it. If you want something that you said to be erased from a recording, they will erase it in your presence. You may withdraw from the research at any time. If you have any concerns about your rights or treatment you may contact my faculty advisors, Dr. Donald Fisher at (604) 822-5295 or Dr. Kogila Adam-Moodley at (604) 822-4315. You may also contact the Research Subject Help Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at (604) 822-2598.
If you are willing to participate in this research, please indicate your consent by signing in the space provided below. Thank you very much.

William McMichael

UBC Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange
113-6460 Agronomy Road
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W9
Tel: (604) 822-1971
E-mail: william.mcmichael@ubc.ca

I, ____________________________, give my permission for [Name] or [Name] to tape record my participation, under the terms and conditions described in this letter. I have received a copy of this letter.

Signature           Date
Appendix C: Ethical Approval

The University of British Columbia
Office of Research Services and Administration
Behavioural Research Ethics Board

Certificate of Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fisher, D.</td>
<td>Educational Studies</td>
<td>B02-0468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT |
| Collingwood Neighbourhood House |

| CO-INVESTIGATORS |
| McMichael, William, Language and Literacy Educ |

| SPONSORING AGENCIES |
| TITLE: |
| Participatory Development in the Vancouver Immigrant and Refugee Community |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROVAL, RENEWAL DATE</th>
<th>TERM (YEARS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APR 2004</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| CERTIFICATION: |
| The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by the Committee and the experimental procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects. |

Approval of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board by one of the following:
Dr. James Frankish, Chair,
Dr. Cay Holbrook, Associate Chair,
Dr. Susan Rowley, Associate Chair

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the experimental procedures.