

IMMIGRANT WOMEN SERVICES OTTAWA

Service pour femmes immigrantes d'Ottawa



"Creating Positive Changes in Women's Lives".

Annual Report 2004/2005

Our Clients Say.....

“J’ai toujours été bien accueillie, et J’ai toujours été bien servi pour la résolution de mes problèmes. (Translation: I was always well-served, and I was always well-advised for the solution of my problems)- Crisis Intervention & Counselling Services(CICS) client

“ Estoy satisfecha con el service que me han prestado y muy agradecida.(Translation : I am satisfied for the services that they provide to me and I very thankful)-CICS client.

“During the program ‘Changing the Landscape’ done by IWSO, I developed some leadership skills. I met other abused women, and I had the privilege of listening to their stories. I got a strong impression I was not alone with my problems. I was part of the abused immigrant women group.....and now I am STRONGER. I also have basic knowledge about ‘this subject’ and I can give some advice, like where an abused woman can go for help”- Survivor leader.

“Once again I see I am not alone in this situation of domestic abuse that I went through a few years ago. I am most comfortable talking about it with people who have experience the same. I enjoyed the group’s support and felt very empowered that I can transform the abuse I got into “words of wisdom” to help other women”. -Support group participant.

“Only by working together(for example: Service Provider Training by IWSO) abused immigrant women and service providers like CAS, Legal Aid, Shelters, etc., we can make changes. We can improve all these services, make them more productive in our society! We Will!” (Changing the Landscape participant)

“The interview tips that I learned from the Job Search Workshop really helped me get the job and that is why I called to say thank you. You know, you are doing really very good work for people like me”. – JSWorkshop participant.

“I have got a job! I believe that most useful in getting this job were interview skills I have gained in your workshop and improving my resume and cover letter”. JSWorkshop participant.

“It gives me such pleasure to be able to say ‘Thank you’. Your instruction and advice were not only an eye opener on my part but that it also imparted in me such confidence. I left the workshop ready to face Canada and feeling right on top” - Pre-employment Workshop participant.

“These workshops made me think to go forward – to face the future. It did not make me feel sorry for myself but to pick up the pieces of my life and to go forward”. - Pre-employment Workshop participant.

“ This [Language Interpreter Service] is a very professional service provided. An excellent service, very valuable to me and the client” – Service provider

“ The interpreter as well as the staff I spoke with over the phone were very friendly and helpful. The assignment was booked very quickly considering the lack of Ukranian speaking interpreters available in Ottawa” – Service provider.

Message from the Chairperson and the Executive Director

We have chosen as our theme for the year “Facing the Future With Confidence”. At IWSO, we have expressed a level of optimism for the future in spite of the global economic and social conditions which we see and experience daily. In 2004/2005 we successfully completed a Fundraising and Marketing Plan and in the coming year we will implement the plan. We hope to break new ground, develop new partnerships, initiate new strategies for fundraising, reach out and promote our services to potential donors in the local area.

At the service level, we are truly impressed with our accomplishments. The Crisis Intervention and Counselling Services were enhanced with the addition of a new counselor this year, thus created more opportunities for immigrant women fleeing abuse to receive the services they required. With the financial assistance from the Ministry of Community & Social Services, IWSO implemented the Transitional and Housing and Support Program for Abused Women. This was a well-needed program as evidenced by the number of women who received services during the first 3 months (January – March 2005) of implementation.

The Children Who Witness Violence Program in partnership with Family Services à la Famille Ottawa, has been a resounding success this year. We especially want to express our sincere thanks to Merelie for her valuable contribution and Linda for her support in helping IWSO to realize our goals for the year.

Developing the appropriate skills and finding a job is extremely important to the integration of a new comer to the community, especially for those women who are survivors of abuse. However, in recognizing that some women required additional supports, we were able to secure funding from the Ontario Women's Directorate to implement a successful Pre-employment program for the women who were not yet job ready.

Words are inadequate to express our profound thanks to the staff, board members, volunteers and those who in any way contributed to a successful year. To those staff persons who left during the year, we thank you for helping IWSO and the many women and children who benefited from your service.

Reflecting on the past year, we are indeed proud of our accomplishments. We could not have achieved these without the financial assistance from our funders, donors, supporters and partners. To each we are truly grateful and we hope for your continued and stronger support in the coming years.

As we face the future with confidence, we will continue to create positive changes in the lives of immigrant women and their children. To achieve our goal, we need the full support of all our funders, donors, supporters, partners and friends.

We hope we can count on you!

Silvia Valdman

Silvia Valdman
Chairperson

LSpencer

Lucya Spencer
Executive Director

2004/2005 Board of Directors

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Volunteers

Volunteers make a significant contribution to the services and programs of IWSO. In the past year volunteers have assisted with administrative duties or helped with special events such as the annual Roses and Candles Gala. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following:

Pauline Pinnock-Kelly	Farideh Nouri Soghra	Rani Telang
Wei Wu	Cazibe Oloumi	Cindy Sezlik
Majooba Noori	Yuri Hosono	Beth Schubert
Tammy Hum	Rachel O'Connor	Carol Segal
Sue Allan	Veena Nath	Ellen Lesiuk
Catherine Belanger	Linda Hancock	Helen De Roia
Mary Lou Eberley	Monique Germain	

Student Placements

IWSO hosted placement students enrolled in the Master of Education-Counselling - University of Ottawa, Master of Social Work, Bachelor of Social Work - Carleton University and Diploma of Social Work - Algonquin College. Pro-bono students from the Law Faculty of Ottawa University were a great asset along with those from the Adult Education Program who provided administrative support. Our sincere thanks to all.

May Tanous	Aicha Youssouf	Zahra Karimi
Paola Quintana	Mirjana Pobric	Faiza Ahmed
Rachel O'Connor	Shirin Karim	Farideh Nouri
Azeb Gebremeskel		

Staff

The successes over the last year were achieved through the support of a 24 member staff complement, 8 of whom were contract or seconded staff. Together they spoke 20 languages and provided a variety of services to women and their children. Our sincere thanks to those who left during the year for other positions in the community or abroad.

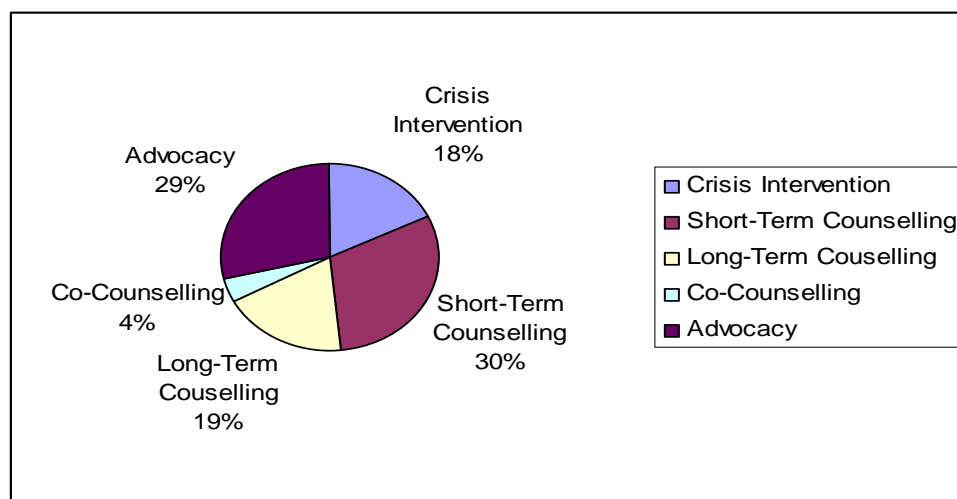
Services and Program Highlights

Crisis Intervention and Counselling Services

In spite of challenges such as staff turnover, inadequate resources etc., the team – a group of professionally trained and multilingual workers – provided a variety of services to abused women and their children.

This year 444 women from over 30 countries received 3,931 hours of crisis intervention, short term and long term counselling, co-counselling and other supportive services.

Total Hours of Direct Service – 2004/2005 (3931 hours)



Transitional Worker Program (Phase 1)

Transitional Housing & Support Program for Abused Women (Phase 2)

These two programs ran concurrently. Phase 1 was done in partnership with Nelson House and Carlington Community Health Centre, while Phase 2 an in house program at IWSO began in January 2005. The primary purpose of each program was: -Phase 1- provide support and accompaniment to appointments while Phase 2 assisted women in finding and maintaining affordable housing. A total of 55 women benefited from the two programs.

Children Who Witness Violence Program

This program was done in partnership with Family Services à la famille Ottawa. The children of IWSO's clients who witnessed violence had a chance to be counselled on a one-on-one basis or in a family group by an experienced and well-trained social worker. The women expressed their appreciation for this type of service. This year 17 survivors and 32 children who witnessed violence were served.

Support Groups For Abused Women

Approximately 30 women participated in 3 support groups for abused women. Providing a safe environment for the women to receive support, information and develop friendship with other group members contributed to the success of the groups. Many of the women came regularly and at the end of each group session, they showed an interest in continuing with the group or expressed interest in participating in other types of groups to continue supporting each other.

Staff Professional Development

We all agree “Knowledge is Power”, and staff should be granted opportunities to enhance their knowledge and expertise in order to help our clients efficiently. Therefore this year, our staff not only attended external workshops and information sessions, but professionals were invited to provide group training, such as micro-counselling skills for the whole team.

Public Education & Outreach Activities

At IWSO, staff were engaged in numerous activities over the year in an effort to reach out to the immigrant women in the community who are victims/survivors of abuse. Presentations were made to students in ESL classes, at Algonquin College, the University of Ottawa and at other community events. Presentations were made to participants in the Volunteer training programs of Interval House and Victim Assistance Services of Ottawa Carleton . Other activities included a training program for survivors followed by a two day workshop for service providers and a 2 day conference for stakeholders.

Conference for Community Stakeholders

As one of the first steps in responding to the growing need to provide culturally appropriate and competent services to abused immigrant women, IWSO hosted a 2 day conference entitled: *“Shifting the Paradigm: Creating A Multicultural Framework for Services to Abused Immigrant Women”* This conference brought together over **130** community stakeholders - (the settlement sector, health sector, the violence against women sector and child welfare)-, government representatives, police personnel and academia from Montreal, London, Toronto and Ottawa, to examine the many facets that affect service to immigrant women in the Ottawa area. One of the aims of the conference was to strengthen the multicultural competence of service providers and increase their capacity to work with abused immigrant women.

The ideas for the development of the Multicultural Framework for Services to Abused Immigrant Women came from the many presentations and discussions by participants.

(photo)

Changing the Landscape

The training of 11 survivors to become workshop facilitators, culminated in a 2 day workshop for 65 service providers working with immigrant women and their children. The workshops were extremely interactive and resulted in several recommendations. Coming out of the conference,

participants wanted to see more of these conference designed for a higher level within their organizations so that changes can be made possible. Ten of the 11 survivors completed the training and at the graduation ceremony, many of the them expressed their gratitude for the opportunity, that allowed them to develop their leadership skills and most of all build their confidence to speak about the abuse in their lives and share their achievements with other survivors.

Language Interpretation Service

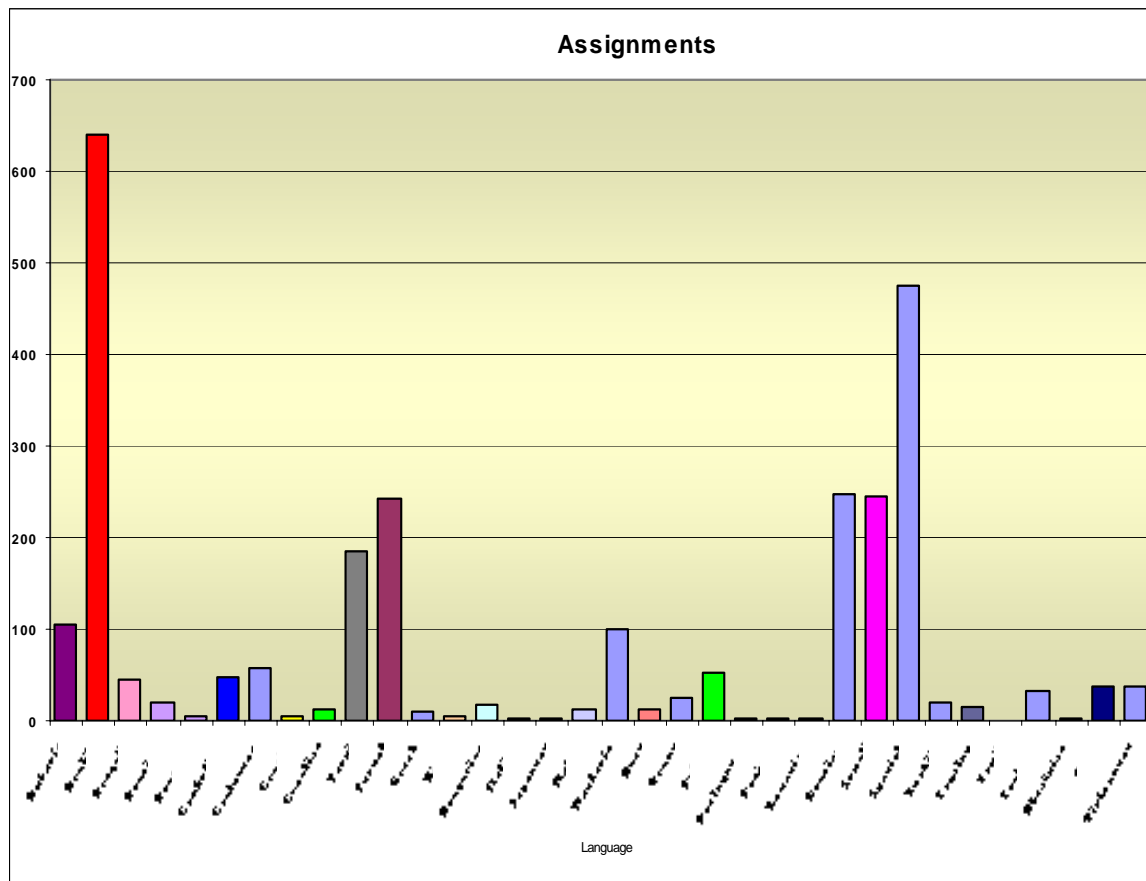
“Interpreting is an activity that consists of establishing, either simultaneously or consecutively, oral or gestural communications between two or more speakers who are not speaking (or signing) the same language.” (Unknown)

Over the last year more than 100 interpreters provided services in 60 languages to those in need. They completed 2728 assignments in 4435 hours. Leading languages were:

Arabic (641)
Somali (244)
Amharic (106)
Polish (53)

Spanish (475)
French (243)
Mandarin (99)
Other (377)

Russian (247)
Farsi (185)
Cantonese (58)



Our trained interpreters are constantly monitored by the program manager, at the same time they are provided opportunities to enhance their skills during the monthly professional development workshops.

Another successful core training program for was completed in February 2005. More than 40 candidates expressed interest in the training. Of that number 27 were interviewed, and although 26 successfully fulfilled the pre-requisites for training, only 11 met the financial expectations, completed the training and passed the final exam.

The monthly professional workshops were very interactive. The purpose of these workshops were to exchange thoughts, concerns, ideas, improve skills and stay updated on any changes to the program by the Ministry.

One of the activities of the LIS is Marketing and Outreach and during the year, efforts were made to introduce the service to new agencies or other providers of services to immigrant women victims/survivors of abuse. We are proud of the excellent cooperation with the service providers. This is supported by the open communication between the service providers and the LIS manager.

Employment Service

The 2 main programs within the Employment Services Unit are the Job Search Workshops and the Pre-Employment Skills Training Workshops for Immigrant Women.

Job Search Workshops

The Job Search Workshops are designed to empower new immigrant women (landed immigrants who have been in Canada less than 5 years, convention refugees and women who come to Canada to work as care givers) to become self-sufficient through job search training. The aim of the workshop is to provide the women with tools needed to develop individualized and effective action plans for a successful job search. In 2004 – 2005, 101 women from 34 countries participated in the Job Search Workshops.

A total of 35 women found employment, 5 in their field of expertise, i.e., engineering, physiotherapy, laboratory technology, and banking. Two women are currently undergoing training as aesthetician and 1 as home support worker. One physician and 1 teacher are upgrading their skills. Another 11 women have decided to stay home and look after their children. Ten women have continued to improve their English language skills at ESL and LINC classes. Eleven women continue to look for employment. Of the remaining 30, some have relocated and the others are yet to update IWSO on their activities.

(photo)

Success stories

Hala, an industrial engineer by profession, arrived in Canada in August 2004 and attended a Job Search Workshop in September, 2004. In January 2005, she successfully completed the Interpreters Training Course at IWSO and began working as an interpreter for the agency. In July 2005, she secured full time employment with Purolator as a maintenance engineer.

Ragini, a physiotherapist, arrived in Canada in April 2005 and attended a Job Search Workshops in June 2005. She found employment as a physiotherapy assistant 3 weeks after attending the workshop. She is also undergoing training to obtain her license to work as a physiotherapist in Canada.

Pre- Employment Skills- Training Program

The aim of this program is to equip the women with skills and tools to rebuild their confidence and to provide them with information and techniques to improve their job search. Four workshops were held between August 2004 and March 2005. Fifty women from 33 countries attended these workshops. This program was extremely successful and some of the participants have continued to refer others to the program. Five of the participants found volunteer positions to gain Canadian experience, 6 have secured employment, 6 were able to access other services such as legal aid, housing, counselling and training after the workshop and the remaining 33 are planning their future direction.

(photo)

Partnership Project

The Diplomatic Residents Committee

Under the lead of the Ottawa Police Service – Victim Crisis Unit and in partnership with IWSO, the diplomatic residents project was conceived. The goal of the project is to enable victims of domestic violence who are diplomatic residents access available information and resources that reflect victims' rights, while effectively utilizing community resources and ensuring seamless service delivery by professionals providing services to these victims.

A coalition of institutions and agencies namely: the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Ottawa Police Services, the Department of Foreign Affairs Canada, Victim Crisis Unit (OPS), Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Crown Attorney's Office-Victim Witness Assistance Program, Children's Aid Society of Ottawa, Employment and Financial Services – City of Ottawa, the Family Law Office and IWSO, are working together to implement the goals of the project. Some of the work in progress includes the creation of a web site and the production of an information pamphlet in several languages for use by diplomatic residents in Canada and abroad.

Our Service Partners

At IWSO, we appreciate the opportunity to work in partnership with other agencies to address the needs of immigrant women victims/survivors of violence. Thanks to:

Aboriginal Women's Support Centre
Action Housing / Action-Logement
Canadian Council on Social Development
Carling Family Shelter
Carlington Community and Health Centre
Catalyst Research and Communications
Catholic Family Service of Ottawa-Carleton
Catholic Immigration Centre
Chrysalis House
Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation
Centre Town Community Health Centre
Children's Aid Society of Ottawa
City for All Women Initiatives
City of Ottawa
Community Legal Services
Cross Sectoral Violence Against Women Strategy Group
Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre
Family Law Office
Family Service à la Famille Ottawa
Forward Family Shelter
Harmony House
Interval House of Ottawa
La Présence, Ottawa
LASI WorldSkills
Lowertown Community Resource Centre
Maison d'Amitié
National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada
Nelson House of Ottawa Carleton
Nepean Community Resource Centre
Odette Rwigamba Law Office
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
Ontario Legal Aid
Oshki Kiziz Lodge
Ottawa-Carleton Housing Registry
Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre
Ottawa Chinese Community Health Resource Group
Ottawa Community Care Access Centre
Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization
Ottawa Hospital (all sites)
Ottawa Police Services (Victim Crisis Unit)
Ontario Works-Social Services; Probation and Parole Service
Pinecrest- Queensway Health & Community Centre
Regional Coordinating Committee to End Violence Against Women
Sexual Assault Treatment Program (Ottawa Hospital)
Somali Family Service Centre
South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre
University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic
Victim Assistance Services of Ottawa-Carleton
Victim Witness Assistance Program
Violence Against Women Management Committee
Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre
YMCA-YWCA

Audited Financial Statement

Acknowledgements

IWSO acknowledges the range of support provided by funders, corporate and private sponsors that has enable us to offer the necessary services, programs and activities to our clients..

Our Funders

- Citizenship & Immigration Canada (LASI)
- Department of Justice Canada
- Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration
- Ontario Women's Directorate
- Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- United Way/Centraide Ottawa

Our Donors

Thanks to the businesses and many individuals who made generous donations. You have not only supported the programs and services of IWSO, but have helped to make a difference in the lives of the women and children served by IWSO. Special thanks to our top donors:

- Agarwal Sahba
- Christianne Lefbvre-Bollinger
- Giant Tiger Stores
- BTI Canada
- Satya Sai Baba Centre of Ottawa Carleton
- Hindu Temple of Ottawa Carleton – Dr. Shivchandan
- Manju Singhal
- Anand Aggarwal
- Pawan Gupta
- United Way of Greater Toronto
- Elk Property Management
- Anu Bose
- Lori Pope

About IWSO....

Our History

IWSO was established in March 1988 in response to the need for services to immigrant and visible minority women victims/survivors of domestic violence. The agency began offering language interpretation service and a crisis intervention and counselling service in 3 languages. Today the agency has grown and has provides services in over sixty languages and dialects with the help of a pool of trained interpreters.

Our Mission

Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO) exists to empower immigrant women and their families in the City of Ottawa and surrounding area to achieve their full potential, become productive citizens of society and participate in the elimination of all forms of abuse against women.

Contact Information

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Our Services are 'CONFIDENTIAL' and 'FREE' to victims/survivors of violence



