



# ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

## REMOVING BARRIERS

Immigrant Women  
Services Ottawa

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Ottawa, ON,  
K2P 2H4

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### *‘Removing Barriers’*

**R**emoving barriers is an expression used very often in the context of the everyday life of a newcomer to Canada who is going through the settlement and integration process or an immigrant woman survivor of violence who is trying to take control of her life. These barriers may be stumbling blocks along the way that impede their progress as they try to reach their destination of hope.

The year 2014/15 presented its own barriers/challenges, but IWSO was determined to forge ahead and achieve its mission. One of the great leaders of the free world said,

*“There are no constraints on the human mind, no walls around the human spirit, no barriers to our progress except those we ourselves erect.” - Ronald Regan*

These words describe the philosophy of IWSO and the many women and children who have benefitted from the programs and services of the agency in the last year. These women chose not to focus on the difficulties they encountered in their lives but rather, with the help of a dedicated staff, worked to re-define the problems and arrive at the solutions that best suited their needs. Our records indicate that close to 2,500 women were served during the year and 1,461 participated in activities initiated for their benefit. This is indeed a success.

While removing the barriers, we stayed true to our plan to continue building for the future. We completed a feasibility study to determine the best way to increase our capacity to respond to the needs of immigrant populations and increase economic security for IWSO beneficiaries. We decided to explore a social purpose enterprise, and will continue this work in the next year.

The Board of Directors continues to determine the long-term direction of IWSO and has been very active in developing, reviewing and ensuring the implementation of several policies, including Social Media Guidelines and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities Policy, to name a few.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the staff and interpreters for their dedicated service, the many volunteers who have contributed hundreds of hours of volunteer time, our funders who have provided the financial resources and our many donors, supporters and friends who have contributed financially to the agency. Special thanks to Pamela Barker and the members of the Women's Group from the Church of Sabbath-day Keeping who continue to contribute to the activities of the agency.

As we look to the next year, we are cognizant of the challenges ahead of us, however, we will continue removing barriers while building a future of hope for women and their children.

In Solidarity,



Milly Baines,  
Chairperson, Board of Directors



Lucya Spencer,  
Executive Director

# BOARD MEMBERS

**Milly Baino**  
Chairperson

**Magdalene Cooman-Maxwell**  
Vice-chairperson

**Farheen Awan**  
Treasurer

**Jo-Ann Williamson**  
Secretary

**Moneeza Waji**  
Member-at-Large

**Joan Gullen**  
Life Member

**Praveeni Perera**  
Member

**Tess Porter**  
Member

**Adrienne Rigg**  
Member

**Yael Kolet**  
Member

**Rosana Veliz**  
Member

***Samina Ali***\*  
Member

**Laurie S. Jaegar**  
Member

**Nicola Moodie**  
Member

**Olga Arnaudova**  
Member

***Alana Glenwright***\*  
Member

***Carol Clarke***\*  
Secretary

*\*resigned during the fiscal year of 2014-2015*



IWSO  
STAFF &  
VOLUNTEERS



# CRISIS INTERVENTION & COUNSELLING SERVICES

*“It is a pleasure to know that there are people like you in the world willing to help others in difficult situations that many of us need to go through. Many blessing to you and your family and I hope that through your work you can continue helping people.”*  
— IWSO client  
*(translated from Spanish)*

**F**or the fiscal year of April 2014-March 2015, the Crisis and Counselling team continued to create a safe, culturally-sensitive, friendly, comfortable, supportive and home-like environment for abused immigrant women to receive support and information.

The team consists of professionally trained, multi-cultural and multilingual crisis counsellors, therapeutic counselor, children counselor, and housing & transitional support worker. By working closely with IWSO's other departments (Language Services and Settlement & Integration Services), the Crisis and Counselling team helped clients meet a diverse set of needs and goals.

## Children Who Witness Violence Program

This program consists of individual one-on-one counselling and group counseling with children and mothers. It also offers parenting workshops, advocacy and support services. This year, **26 children** were served and **two 10-week parenting workshops** were provided. This program is run in collaboration with Family Services Ottawa/Services à la famille Ottawa (FSO/SFO).

## Transitional & Housing Support Worker Program

This reporting year, **115 women** sought help, of which 87 were served and 50 found and maintained housing. In total, 87 women received support to develop safety plans, while 62 were assisted in creating transitional plans.

# IN NUMBERS



WE SERVED

367

immigrant & refugee  
women & children



CLIENTS FROM

45

countries, speaking  
different languages



WE PROVIDED

3,780

hours of direct services



DELIVERED

3,335

hours of crisis  
intervention, short term  
counselling & support



COMPLETED

320

hours of therapeutic  
counselling



REACHED

125

hours of sexual assault  
counselling



INDIRECT SERVICES

630

hours of advocacy  
work

*“Workers at Immigrant Women Services understand the situation of abused immigrant women. They are hard working and patient. Women come to IWSO with problems, stress and fear and they get help to find their way to build their new way of living. In brief, my future started here at IWSO.*

*Love you Immigrant Women Services.”*

*— IWSO client*

*(translated from French)*

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

### Support Group

Support groups provide a safe, non-judgmental and friendly environment where women can interact with other survivors of abuse. This opportunity to learn and share with others has fostered clients' self-confidence and restored their sense of empowerment. This fiscal year, **15 women** participated in **two 10-week support groups** (including one francophone group in partnership with Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre). These groups were facilitated by a crisis counsellor and placement students.

### Therapeutic Group

Therapeutic group helps survivors of violence identify their inner strength to cope and heal. The participants also share their experience and support each other. This year, **7 women** participated in a 10-week therapeutic group, which was facilitated by a therapeutic counsellor and assisted by placement students.

### Women's Legal Clinic

It is crucial for women to know their legal rights in order to make their own decisions. As such, we partnered with two lawyers, Odette Rwigamba (immigration and family lawyer) and Claire Tremblay (family lawyer) to organize this clinic that helps women in seeking legal information and advice. Last year, we served **39 women** in total.

*“IWSO’s interpreters are better trained and more sensitive to the emotional needs of clients, compared to other agencies.”*  
— Somerset West CHC

*“IWSO is our 1st choice for assignments.”*  
— Children’s Aid Society

# LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION & TRANSLATION SERVICES

LITS is committed to giving a voice through language to women survivors of violence who are unable to speak English and French. To fulfill its mission, LITS relied on a roster of 133 interpreters. 15 new interpreters were trained and tested. 10 professional development sessions were offered throughout the year by expert speakers and service providers from the community in different settings, legal, medical and social.

The following is a list of the type of victims IWSO is equipped to serve:

- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Victims of Sexual Violence
- Victims of Human Trafficking
- Victims who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Generic

## Translation Services

The translation service is offered to service providers and newcomers in the local area who need to have documents translated. 54 translation requests were processed.

*“Very good. They are experienced and professional. The billing is handled professionally - IWSO knows how much Legal Aid will pay.” – Ottawa Immigration Solution*

*“They are easy to work with. They bring us in once a year for training/discussions on interpretation.” – Ottawa Police Services*

# IN NUMBERS



## TOTAL ASSIGNMENTS

4,217

completed through a roster of 133 interpreters



## MESSAGE RELAY

841

assignments delivered over the phone



## TELEPHONE

415

assignments, including conference calls



## FACE-TO-FACE

2,580

at various locations throughout Ottawa

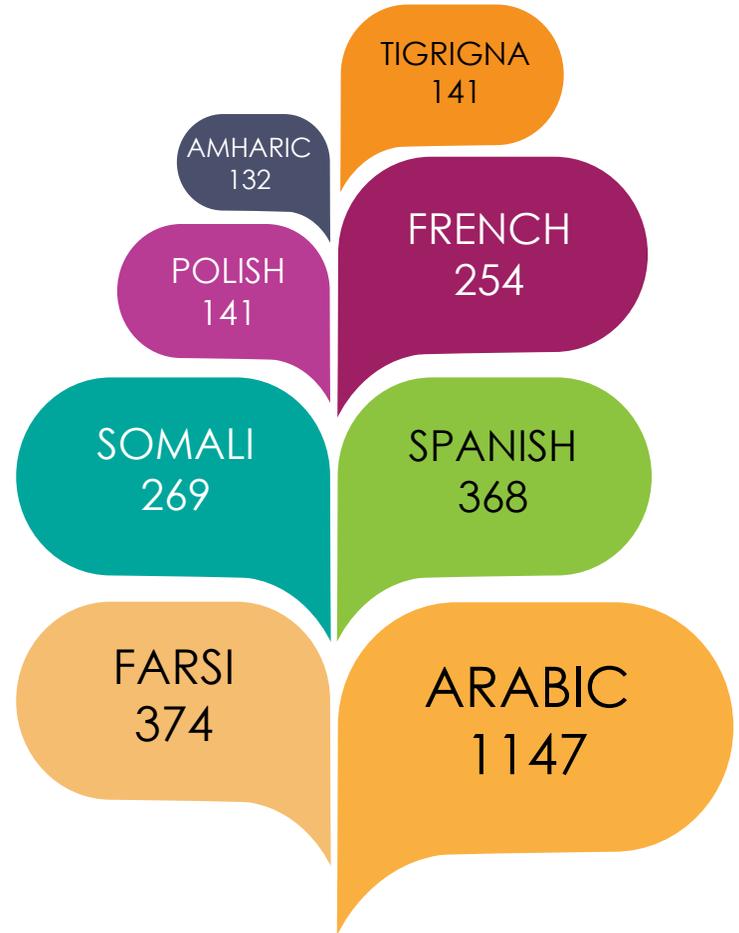


## GROUP

381

interpretation assignments

## ASSIGNMENTS BY LANGUAGE





LANGUAGE  
INTERPRETATION  
& TRANSLATION  
SERVICES



# SETTLEMENT & INTEGRATION SERVICES

*I really appreciate all the things you are doing to help me facilitate life and the obstacles that meet us sometimes here. I can't imagine living in Canada without you guys! You helped me since my arrival when I was lonely and afraid. You gave me help and security. I attended computer classes, arts and crafts, yoga, French conversation, and most importantly I made lots of friends!*

*- IWSO client*

**T**his report highlights the outcomes of services provided by the Settlement & Integration Services department during the 2014/2015 fiscal year.

Our goal was to assist and empower newcomer immigrant and refugee women, including victims/survivors of violence, to overcome barriers specific to their settlement & integration experience in order to facilitate their full participation and contribution to the Canadian society.

We achieved our goal by providing individual needs assessment and appropriate referrals to resources and supports to meet identified needs; Information & orientation which helped newcomer women to access services and understand 'life in Canada'; Culturally sensitive settlement counseling in a safe and empowering 'women's only' environment to deal with issues such as culture shock and adaptation; Support services such as Care for Newcomer Children, Interpretation and Translation services and critical skills development opportunities including computer training and French conversation circles.

Other activities included Arts & Crafts, Theatre, Canadian citizenship test preparation classes, sewing club, and free yoga for women. These activities provided an avenue for learning, networking and socializing and also a therapeutic platform for mitigating feelings of isolation and loneliness and promoting the physical and mental wellbeing of newcomer women.

# IN NUMBERS



WE SERVED

395

new clients within  
the fiscal year



WE PROVIDED

520

needs assessments by 2  
settlement counsellors



RESPONDED TO

806

return visits during the  
reporting period

## CLIENT SETTLEMENT SERVICES



# IN NUMBERS



## CARE FOR CHILDREN

1,226

newcomer children accessed Care for Newcomer Children (CNC)



## SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES

1,439

women participated in settlement activities initiated for their benefit



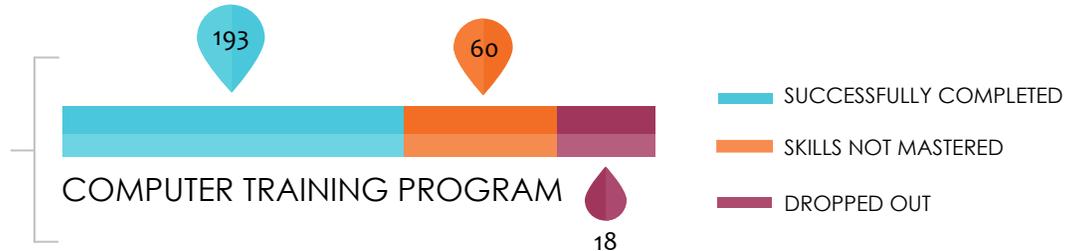
## JOB SEARCH

160

clients completed job search workshops; 68 Intake, Assessment & Referrals (IAR)



271 WOMEN REGISTERED FOR THE PROGRAM



## WE CONDUCTED

24

information sessions on various topics



## ATTENDED BY

377

newcomer women

# CLIENT STORY

**R**atka Damjanoska, arrived in Canada in June 2013 from her native Macedonia to reunite with her husband. With no social network and lack of information on services available to her, Ratka said it was very difficult to adjust and adapt to her new life in Canada. She decided to start by learning English (LINC program), and later became a client of IWSO where she received a needs assessment and was referred to community agencies and other resources to meet her settlement needs and goals. She also attended many of the programs and activities offered at IWSO.

Ratka stated that: "This way I met a lot of other immigrant women, and just by talking and sharing experiences it helped with my settlement. I found the Friendship Group information sessions very useful. They provided me with a wealth of useful day to day information (some of which even my husband didn't know though he had been in Ottawa for more than 6 years)."

As Ratka's confidence in herself and her abilities grew, she attended the Job Search Workshop in order to acquire the needed tools and information to enable her enter the Ottawa job market. She then had the opportunity to volunteer at IWSO in order to gain some hands-on experience of the Canadian workplace culture.

"My first volunteer experience in Canada was provided by IWSO, and for this, I am very grateful' Ratka has since settled into her community and is gainfully employed by a community agency. "In the beginning, I was really scared, but now I believe that with the right support, positive thoughts and hard work you can achieve your goal, and build a successful career & life in Ottawa. I have taken my first steps, and I'm ready for whatever comes next."





SETTLEMENT &  
INTEGRATION  
DEPARTMENT  
ACTIVITIES



# SETTLEMENT & INTEGRATION SERVICES PROGRAMS

*“I would like to say a big thank you to IWSO for the childcare services they provide to their clients. Their facilities are great, full of learning toys and always well organised making it a very inviting place for kids. The staff put so much effort into creating different activities and opportunities to learn and have fun. My kids always love going there. Thank you Luz and Saba for always welcoming us with a warm smile.”*

*- Rafeale Walder*

## Care for Newcomer Children

1226 newcomer children accessed IWSO's Care for Newcomer Children services. Newcomer parents and legal guardians were offered childcare services while they accessed settlement services and activities offered at IWSO, CCI and World Skills. During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the staff of CNC planned many activities that focused on the social and emotional wellbeing of the children. Children enjoyed different art and craft activities, music and musical instrument activities, they undertook modeling with play dough, learned building with blocks, played with cars and trucks, used their creativity in the dramatic learning center, dressed up, and put puzzles together to name a few of the most common activities.

## Computer Training Program

The computer training program at IWSO offers three levels of training to assist immigrant women to acquire the needed technological skills which will increase their odds of successfully competing in the Ottawa labour market. This training is offered free of charge to immigrant women and during the year in review, of the 271 women who registered for the program, 193 successfully completed and acquired the needed skills, 60 participated but the skills were not mastered and 18 dropped out. This is a big success because 67% of the women who participated in the program stated that they had never attended a computer training program before coming to IWSO. The success is also largely due to the dedication and enthusiasm of the instructors Iskrena and Larysa, who work tirelessly to ensure that participants acquire these much needed computer skills.



SETTLEMENT &  
INTEGRATION  
DEPARTMENT  
ACTIVITIES



# COMMUNICATION SERVICES



WE TWEETED

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**810**

---

times this year



WE HAVE

---

**665**

---

likes on Facebook



WE HAVE

---

**835**

---

subscribers to our  
e-bulletin



WE SENT OUT

---

**21**

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e-bulletin issues on  
Mailchimp

# IWSO PARTNERSHIPS

PROVINCIAL

LOCAL



ONTARIO COUNCIL OF AGENCIES  
SERVING IMMIGRANTS

ONTARIO COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY  
INTERPRETERS

SOCIAL SERVICES NETWORK

REXDALE WOMEN'S CENTRE

LOCAL AGENCIES SERVING IMMIGRANTS

OTTAWA LOCAL IMMIGRATION  
PARTNERSHIP (OLIP)

WORLD SKILLS EMPLOYMENT CENTRE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN COMMUNITY  
POLICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVISORY

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

*“Very good. They are experienced and professional. The billing is handled professionally - IWSO knows how much Legal Aid will pay.”  
– Ottawa Immigration Solution*

**W**orking in partnership is one of IWSO's hallmark of doing business.

This year, IWSO worked closely with the [Social Services Network of Toronto](#) and several other agencies to organize the [5<sup>th</sup> Impact on Family Violence Conference in Ottawa](#) which was attended by [over 250](#) practitioners and interested individuals.

[Opening Doors for Abused Women](#) was another project led by [Rexdale Women's Centre](#) and provincial partners. This was an opportunity for our local settlement workers to learn some techniques when working with women victims of abuse.

Developing a province-wide accreditation structure for Language Interpreters was the goal of the [Ontario Council of Community Interpreters](#). This council comprised of language interpreters, provincial representatives of language service providers and community colleges. Interpreters can now apply to become accredited interpreters.

The infograph highlights some of our partners for the reporting period.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



KPMG LLP  
Suite 1800

Telephone (613) 212-KPMG (5764)  
Fax (613) 212-2896

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of Immigrant Women Services Ottawa

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Immigrant Women Service Ottawa, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2015, the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

### *Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### *Auditors' Responsibility*

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on our judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, we consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

*Opinion*

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Immigrant Women Services Ottawa as at March 31, 2015 and its results of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

*KPMG LLP*



Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

July 28, 2015

Ottawa, Canada

# IMMIGRANT WOMEN SERVICES OTTAWA

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2015, with comparative information for 2014

	2015	2014
<b>Assets</b>		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 203,629	\$ 268,112
Accounts receivable	34,779	39,641
Prepaid expenses	20,362	2,412
Short-term investments (note 3)	10,000	51,804
	<u>268,770</u>	<u>361,969</u>
Long-term investments (note 3)	162,538	117,357
Tangible capital assets (note 4)	3,994	6,595
	<u>\$ 435,302</u>	<u>\$ 485,921</u>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 5)	\$ 16,176	\$ 37,616
Deferred revenue (note 6)	222,924	244,794
	<u>239,100</u>	<u>282,410</u>
Net assets:		
Investment in tangible capital assets	3,994	6,595
Unrestricted	192,208	196,916
	<u>196,202</u>	<u>203,511</u>
Commitments (note 8)		
	<u>\$ 435,302</u>	<u>\$ 485,921</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

On behalf of the Board:

 Director

 Director

# IMMIGRANT WOMEN SERVICES OTTAWA

## Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 2015, with comparative information for 2014

	2015	2014
Revenue:		
Grants and subsidy payments:		
Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade base funding	\$ 413,941	\$ 407,678
Ministry of Community and Social Services:		
Base funding	383,115	381,244
Pay equity	8,106	8,437
Citizenship & Immigration Canada - Settlement Program	293,752	290,648
United Way/Centraide Ottawa	56,682	55,239
Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade - SV & HT	28,803	69,160
Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade - Digital	25,390	53,301
Ontario Women's Directorate	8,037	2,403
Crime Prevention Ottawa	2,491	431
Purchased services	54,754	65,252
Miscellaneous (note 7)	39,210	10,186
Job search	36,077	35,643
Fundraising	4,657	32,849
Interest	4,088	3,542
Amortization of deferred tangible capital contributions	—	1,711
	<u>1,359,103</u>	<u>1,417,724</u>

Expenses:

Salaries, personnel costs and benefits	916,455	905,792
Purchased services	206,996	229,887
Rent	78,656	78,656
Professional fees	25,295	27,573
Photocopy and printing	22,803	19,633
Office supplies	21,216	23,917
Miscellaneous	18,928	46,444
Staff professional development/resources	13,408	13,095
Telephone	11,602	9,572
Translation	11,531	8,858
Capacity building	9,667	10,290
Advertising	5,574	3,539
Travel	4,409	5,592
Insurance	4,008	3,702
Fundraising	3,206	37,215
Bank charges	2,976	2,830
Amortization of tangible capital assets	2,601	4,970
Postage and courier services	2,356	2,483
Support groups	2,256	3,314
Outreach	1,455	1,211
Harmonized sales tax	1,014	1,789
Other costs	-	191
	<u>1,366,412</u>	<u>1,440,553</u>

<u>Deficiency of revenue over expenses</u>	<u>\$ (7,309)</u>	<u>\$ (22,829)</u>
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See accompanying notes to financial statements.



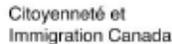
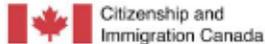
ART  
EXHIBITION  
2014



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Immigrant Women Services Ottawa gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by the various funders throughout the year. These include:

Citizenship & Immigration Canada  
Ontario Ministry of Community & Social Services  
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration & International Trade  
United Way/Centraide



To those who have donated to our various initiatives & events, we express our sincere thanks.  
Special thanks to the following corporate donors:

CBC Radio  
Maple Lodge Farms  
World Financial Group  
Miner Brothers Custom Framing  
Law Office of Odette Rwigamba  
So Good Restaurant

Al-Arz Lebanese Dance Group  
Bollywood For Fun  
BranchOut Theatre (Naomi Tessler)  
Bridgehead Coffee  
Loblaws Supermarkets  
TD Bank, Asian Leadership Network

# THANK YOU

Our sincere thanks to all the volunteers and placement students who have contributed of their time and effort in making a difference at Immigrant Women Services Ottawa

## Crisis Intervention & Counselling Services

**Volunteer:**  
Sabita Baniya

## Placement Students:

Yiu Yin Cheng  
Rana Hussain-Awni  
Nesreen El Hashmy  
Kathy Chan  
Mavis Lo  
Fatima Radijheran  
Mayra Jerez

## Language Interpretation & Translation Services

**Volunteers:**  
Alyce Akineza  
Zakia Tasneem  
Pagah Mirzakhali

## Settlement & Integration Services

**Volunteers:**  
Yulia Lisitsyna  
Tuulia Law  
Tam Nguyen  
Aline Brito  
Ann McCarthy  
Ann Valois  
Alyssa Mcurmury  
Noha Sedera  
Nancy Xue  
Angie Saikali  
Lucilla Rutayisire  
Ratka Damjanoska  
Almaz Bekuretsion  
Zannat Musammat  
Maria Gonzalez  
Cristina Villarreal Garza  
Sabreen Naser  
Shimin Cao

## Placement Students:

Romina Mertu  
Sahar Zaylaa

## Events & Other Volunteers

Rebecca Ferguson  
Paul Arca & friends  
Corinna Buhay  
Mitra Ghaffari  
Zainab Alnasser  
Xochilt Yaakunah  
Krishna Kanth Magapu

*‘Creating positive changes in  
women’s lives’*

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