



**2023 -
2024**

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

About our Organization

Since 1954, CCI has been welcoming newcomers to Ottawa. From then until now, we have assisted tens of thousands of immigrants and refugees to settle and succeed as individuals in our nation's capital. Our services and programs have expanded over the years, but everything we have done and continue to do aligns with our mission, vision, and values.



As the leading settlement agency in Ottawa, CCI provides a wide variety of services and programs to assist immigrants and refugees settling in our city. Every client is different, and we use a tailored approach to support streamlined inclusion into Canadian society. Of course, integration does not mean subjugation, but a fulsome appreciation of how intercultural communities can complement each other and add value to our social fabric. Our city and country have long recognized the value and benefits of diversity. We know it is a strength, and by supporting newcomers, CCI is invested in reinforcing it.



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MESSAGE

From the chair



My work with CCI's board of directors began in 2002, and for the past five years it has been my great honour to serve as Chair. Looking back over 23 years, I'm struck by how much CCI has grown and evolved. Together, we have achieved a lot, and I feel humbled to have been part of our growth and impact. From navigating complex shifts in immigration policy to expanding our programs to reach even more newcomers, we have consistently risen to meet new challenges. Change has always been a constant in the world of settlement, and it will continue to present us with new challenges and opportunities. I've witnessed firsthand our agency's remarkable ability to embrace these changes and believe that this resilience is one of our greatest strengths.

I offer my sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff, passionate volunteers, generous donors, and committed community partners. As I step back from my role as President, I remain excited about the future of CCI. I know the torch is being passed to capable hands. What has always motivated me, and what continues to inspire me, is the privilege of being part of building new communities. To witness newcomers find their footing and begin to feel at home in our nation's capital is a tremendous reward. I know that our work is not without imperfections, but it is precisely these imperfections that remind us to pursue a better future. I want to thank all of you for allowing me to be a part of CCI's ongoing journey. I look forward to watching CCI continue to grow and make a difference for years to come.

With deepest gratitude,
Luise Czerneko Reid

MESSAGE

From the CEO



This report is not only an opportunity to reflect on the details that form a picture of last year's work, but also an invitation to begin imagining the larger picture of where our organization is headed. Partners and stakeholders in the immigration sector are acutely aware of the shifting trends in the Canadian settlement landscape. There is a palpable degree of unpredictability and even anxiety about what the future

holds for the world of immigration and the complex scope of work that surrounds it. For the years just before and during the pandemic, Canada welcomed a record number of immigrants through multiple streams and initiatives. The tides were high, and everybody was busy paddling, eager to keep the boats floating and full of the promising winds that filled our sails. There was a lot of excitement and activity. But there was also, hidden under the enthusiasm, a lot of struggle. The people that we, as a sector, were working to welcome and support were not always landing on the shores of our communities with the resources and infrastructure to match the promise we were driven by. And now, to various degrees, we are reckoning with it. None of this is to suggest we haven't done good or meaningful work. CCI, and many like-minded agencies have delivered important, lasting impact. For us, this report is a testament to that. In fact, despite our current, uncertain times, CCI has grown, not only in size but in its potential to address the challenges in our midst.

During this time, we have been working diligently on our strategic plan, and throughout this work, we have done a lot of thinking, not only about our processes but about the process of settlement itself. Last year, we celebrated 70 years as a settlement agency in Ottawa. This was and remains a point of pride for us. But in the world of settlement, especially as it evolves, we cannot settle. Instead, to meet our mission, and to truly empower our clients to meet the potential of their dreams, we must innovate. For me, this is the larger picture. I believe settlement can move beyond functioning. Rather than solving the problems within it, we can use it to solve problems that affect the daily lives of our communities, regardless of how new or established they are. I recognize this might be a bold and ambitious statement. But it is largely in line with the intended goals and ambitions of a functioning Canadian immigration system. To get there, we need new ideas. We need new approaches. We need to innovate. Substantial, positive impact demands it. Now is the time to challenge the status quo, to be novel, and transform existing systems to be adaptive, responsive, and forward-thinking. It requires creativity. A willingness to challenge ourselves. And collaboration. I believe, beyond need, the appetite for it exists. I hope, together, we can use this appetite to meet the moment, imagine a better future, and begin the work of directing the tides rather than relying on them to determine our direction.

Cheers to Progress,
Myriam Mekni

OUR VALUED PARTNERS

We at CCI know that building strong, vibrant communities isn't something we can do alone. Our agency relies on a diverse range of partnerships to create a meaningful and lasting impact. We deeply value and depend on a growing number of organizations, government agencies, and the private sector that collaborate with us. Their expertise, resources, and dedication complement and amplify our efforts to reach more newcomers and better support their journey to building a life in Ottawa.

From providing essential services to creating welcoming spaces, our partners are indispensable. We are grateful and offer our heartfelt thanks to all of our current partners, and we always welcome the opportunity to forge new connections. Expanding our network and collaborating with like-minded partners is crucial to achieving our goal of fostering inclusive, thriving communities. Because ultimately, a community is only as full and strong as the people working together within it.

FUNDERS



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



PARTNERS

- Algonquin College
- Caldwell Centre
- Capital Rainbow
- Carty House
- CCAC
- CCR
- Centretown Community Health
- CESOC
- CHC
- CHEO
- Children Aid Society
- Connecting Ottawa
- Connecting Ottawa
- DSO
- Employment Ontario
- Immigrant Women Services of Ottawa
- Interval House
- Jewish Family Services
- La Cite Collegial
- LARC
- LASSA
- Legal Aid Ontario
- LHIN
- Matthew House
- OCASI
- OCISO
- OMRA Shelter
- Onyx Community Services
- OSTC
- Ottawa Catholic School Board
- Ottawa Chinese Community Services
- Ottawa Community Loan Fund
- Ottawa Food Bank
- Ottawa Muslim Community Services
- Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre
- Ottawa Newcomers Clinic
- Ottawa Police Service
- Ottawa Public Library
- Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
- Pinecrest Queensway
- Point d'Accueil Francophone (PAF)
- RBC
- Refugee 613
- Saint Paul University
- SC
- Somalia Association
- Somerset West Community Health Centre
- TD Bank
- The City of Ottawa
- The Excellence in Literacy Foundation
- Together Project
- University of Ottawa
- Vanier Community Service
- World Skills Employment Centre
- YMCA
- YSB

FINANCES AT GLANCE

SOURCE OF FUNDING	REVENUE 2023-2024	REVENUE 2022-2023
FEDERAL	12,773,509	11,651,022
INTERNAL	653,663	454,607
MUNICIPAL	2,356,990	1,892,905
OTHER	1,178,048	931,725
PROVINCIAL	754,773	740,911
GRAND TOTAL	17,716,983	15,671,170

EXPENDITURES	2023-2024	2022-2023
FEDERAL	12,773,509	11,651,022
INTERNAL	190,031	274,668
MUNICIPAL	2,356,991	1,892,905
OTHER	1,401,940	1,048,942
PROVINCIAL	754,773	740,911
GRAND TOTAL	17,477,244	15,608,449

OUR MISSION AND VISION



MISSION

To champion newcomers as they work towards realizing their aspirations and establishing a sense of home in Ottawa.



VISION

To inspire Ottawa to continue embracing the rewards of multiculturalism as a conduit for making a community that is equitable, prosperous and rich with opportunities for everyone.

OUR VALUES



Transparent, data-driven services that espouse our responsibilities to funders and the larger community.



Focused, goal-driven partnerships that maximize the impact of our services and shared objectives.



The pursuit of fresh ideas and innovative solutions that provide clients with meaningful solutions to the barriers they experience.



Engaging in active listening and taking responsive actions based on client and community feedback.

OUR SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

The Settlement Program assists newcomers with all elements of settling and adjusting to life in a new community. Settlement is a complicated process and touches so many components that are part of setting down roots and beginning a new life in a new country. Among these components are navigating complex paperwork, accessing housing, healthcare, education, and food security. CCI's Settlement Program includes a Housing Team, the Refugee Asylum Project, the International Student Project, Youth Settlement Counselling and Refugee Employment support. Settlement counsellors conduct needs assessments and tailor individualized settlement plans for well over 7,000 individual clients each year. We also support recurring clients when necessary to ensure they are well-placed to participate in their communities with a sense of belonging and purpose. The Settlement Program also manages the Sponsorship Agreement Holder Program as well as the Sponsorship and Pastoral Program.



"CCI has been very significant in my life because my Caseworker has greatly contributed to helping me settle and prepare for my new life in Canada by -providing important information about services in Ottawa; responding to every problem or obstacle I faced; following up with me on the details of my job search and providing me with important and realistic advice. Sometimes I felt embarrassed by the number of questions I had, but I was always reassured that the program exists to provide this level of support. I am grateful for all I received, including patience, listening, understanding and honesty." - Client Testimony

CLIENT STORY

A client who arrived a few years ago spoke no English and felt understandably disoriented in her new community. However, with the dedicated guidance and support of CCI, she gradually found her footing. Through CCI's assistance, she was able to participate in ESL classes, which significantly improved her language skills. Additionally, she accessed daycare services, which provided her with the necessary support to balance her responsibilities. Finding a sense of purpose, she began volunteering with our volunteer program, which not only helped her integrate into the community but also allowed her to give back and make meaningful connections. Over time, her confidence in speaking English grew, and she recently achieved a significant milestone by passing her Canadian citizenship test. This accomplishment is a testament to her hard work, resilience, and the comprehensive support provided by CCI. Now, she speaks English confidently and is a proud Canadian citizen, ready to embrace new opportunities and contribute to her community.

SETTLEMENT PROGRAM IMPACT NUMBERS

10,753

Direct sessions

34

Individuals (24 adults, 10 children) sponsored through CCI SAH Program

7,242

Unique clients

235

Group sessions were attended by 1,034 clients

1,998

Refugee claimants served

1,998

Ukrainian families and 379 individuals with housing supports, including host matching, transitional housing, and private market rentals

312

Households and 423 individuals were assisted with housing support

254

Bed nights were created for 29 families by a transitional housing unit was created in partnership with the City of Ottawa

OUR CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES (CSS)



The CSS Program offers intensive and focused client-centered case management for Government Assisted Refugees. Our staff work tirelessly to deliver comprehensive, essential services to GARs with the ultimate goal of empowering each to become independent Canadian residents, fully settled and secure in their communities and roles as community members. The CSS team works with community partners to ensure access to essential services and needs associated with the settlement journey.

13,297

Case management services delivered

3,164

Government-assisted refugees (GARs) supported



CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES IN FOCUS



An Afghan family that was supported by CCI in their first few years eventually moved beyond their need for settlement services, established themselves in Ottawa, and have recently purchased their first home. This remarkable journey began with the assistance provided by CCI, which helped the family navigate the challenges of settling in a new country. Over time, they gained the skills and confidence needed to become self-sufficient and fully integrated into the community. Their recent achievement of purchasing their first home is a testament to their hard work, resilience, and the invaluable support they received. This milestone not only marks a significant personal accomplishment for the family but also underscores the positive impact of CCI's services in helping newcomers build successful lives in Canada.



Through the tireless efforts of one of our dedicated caseworkers, a young Sudanese client was recently reunited with their family here in Ottawa. This heartwarming reunion was the result of hard work, perseverance, and unwavering commitment to the well-being of our clients. The caseworker navigated numerous challenges, including complex legal procedures and logistical hurdles, to ensure that the young client could be safely brought together with their loved ones. This successful reunion not only highlights the importance of our work but also serves as a testament to the positive impact we can have on the lives of those we serve.



During a challenging transition period, a GAR couple received essential support that enabled them to welcome a newborn baby into their family. This critical assistance provided them with the stability and resources needed to navigate the complexities of their situation. With continued support, the new father is now pursuing trades program certificates, which will equip him with valuable skills and qualifications for future employment. Additionally, he is exploring entrepreneurial opportunities, demonstrating his ambition and determination to create a better life for his family. This journey highlights the importance of providing comprehensive support to newcomers, helping them overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.

OUR COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYMENT CONNECTIONS (CEC)

The Community and Employment Connections Program supports clients in adjusting to life in Ottawa. This program helps newcomers find employment, improve their English or French through conversation circles, and navigate public services. It encourages participation in local activities, such as recreational and sporting events designed for families and children. Additionally, the program educates clients about volunteering and connects them with both Canadian volunteers and other newcomers.



“With seven years of work experience in finance and customer service back in my home country, I was eager to contribute my skills and knowledge to the Canadian workforce. The CEC program became my trusted companion in the early stages of my journey. It provided many courses designed to help newcomers like me integrate into the Canadian job market effectively. From crafting a resume to mastering the art of interviews, the program truly prepared me for the Canadian job market, and I was able to secure a job that perfectly aligned with my qualifications and aspirations. The support, guidance, and resources offered were instrumental in my rapid job placement, and I couldn't be more grateful.” - Client Testimony

COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYMENT CONNECTIONS IN FOCUS

CEC's employment program played a crucial role in assisting a client secure a position as an actuarial professional by providing a comprehensive understanding of the Canadian job market. This included guidance on resume creation, interview techniques, and workplace culture. The program offered job search workshops and personalized counselling sessions, which helped the client showcase their analytical skills and expertise. Additionally, the program connected the client with industry professionals and other immigrants, boosting their confidence and providing assurance that they were not alone on their journey. The combination of practical skills and knowledge gained was instrumental in securing their current job and setting the foundation for future success in Canada.

728

Children and
youth served
in total

1,539

clients received support with
employment, youth
programming, sports/recreation,
matching/mentoring,
and
learning English or French.

116

Full-time jobs
secured

OUR RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RAP)



As a core feature of the Resettlement Assistance Program, CCI operates the Maison Sophia Reception House. For government-assisted refugees arriving in Ottawa, Maison Sophia Reception House is their first touchpoint on the journey towards becoming fully settled in Ottawa. GARS often have complex needs and, in addition to being a site for temporary accommodation, Reception House is a highly integrated service site that helps newcomers adjust to their new community and address some of the most pressing barriers impacting their eventual autonomy. With 24 rooms that can accommodate up to 96 people, the centre offers shelter, amenities, information workshops, programs for children, and links to community resources that can assist them further.

The staff at Maison Sophia work attentively with each client to offer tailored support that will set them up for success as they prepare to move into their first, independent residence in Ottawa. With no one-size-fits-all solution, this personalized approach ensures that each client receives the specific support they need to overcome their unique challenges and build a new life in Canada. Reception House is their first touchpoint on the journey towards becoming fully settled in Ottawa. GARS often have complex needs and, in addition to being a site for

RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN PERSPECTIVE

904



Government-Assisted
Refugees were
resettled in Ottawa

Secondary migrants
were served through
various programs



110

930



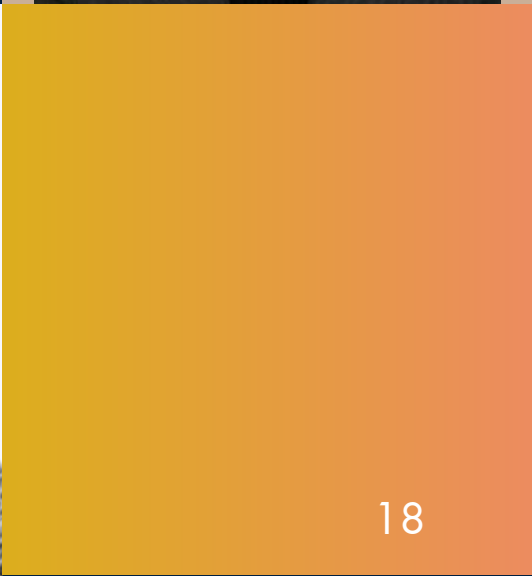
GARs transitioned
into suitable housing
across Ottawa

Displaced by conflict in their home country, a mother and her two children arrived in Canada with permanent, traumatic injuries requiring multifaceted assistance to complete basic, daily tasks. Upon their arrival at CCI's reception house, the dedicated staff immediately took action. They connected the family with doctors and a physiotherapist to address their medical needs. When the mother first arrived, she was in a wheelchair, but thanks to the diligent efforts of the staff in coordinating her therapy, her care team is now optimistic about her potential to walk again. The two children, who also have special needs, were placed with specialists in audiology and speech language therapy, all thanks to the staff's prompt intervention.

With the support of CCI's RAP program, the staff helped the family secure an apartment conveniently located near clinics, services, and a school that offers programs supportive of their educational and medical needs. Meanwhile, the father, who remains in their home country, is in the process of applying to reunite with his family, with staff actively working to complete his documentation. CCI is pleased to report that the family is adjusting well, and the staff takes great pride in delivering on its mission.



“Every volunteer brings something unique to the table, and at CCI, that uniqueness is celebrated and nurtured. I’m deeply thankful for the opportunity to contribute, and I wholeheartedly encourage others to join.”



OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



CCI's robust volunteer program is a foundational component of our advocacy network for newcomers. The program remains essential to our model of delivering programs and services to help individuals and families build new lives in Ottawa. Our volunteer team is currently made up of over 300 individuals. Collectively, they have generously given over 14,000 hours of their time this past year. Our volunteers are instrumental in expanding our reach and deepening our impact across multiple communities in the Ottawa region.

Last year, the volunteer program experienced remarkable growth, including a 24% increase in the number of volunteers and a 15% rise in volunteer hours donated. This growing community of dedicated volunteers continues to contribute their time, skills, and passion, significantly increasing our capacity to support newcomers and build a more welcoming community.

Our volunteers play a vital role in the success of our mission and the strength of CCI, enhancing both the reach and impact of our work. We extend our sincerest gratitude to all our incredible volunteers. Their dedication and hard work are invaluable, making a profound difference in the lives of newcomers. We thank them for generously sharing their time and talents to support our mission.

BRIDGES OF HOPE



"When I arrived last year, at the beginning, Canada seemed strange and I was afraid of the unknown. But when I started attending Bridges of Hope activities, I made friends and felt at home. At one of the events, I met an author who signed her book for me. We didn't speak the same language, but I still felt included and respected."

Wroud - program participant

Bridges of Hope is a volunteer-based initiative that supports newcomers with disabilities, as well as their caregivers and loved ones. The program is designed to provide a non-judgmental and inclusive space for individuals and families facing challenges related to a range of physical, mental, sensory, and cognitive impairments. These challenges vary greatly from one individual to another, and access to support, especially among the newcomer community, is very limited. Started by staff members investing their time beyond normal working duties, Bridges of Hope offers creative, educational, and social activities to address the multiple barriers that newcomers with disabilities experience. Programming is offered in multiple languages and is committed to being as accessible as possible.

Bridges of Hope emphasizes empathy, respect, and collaboration to deliver meaningful support that contributes to the overall well-being of participants. Through its inclusive and non-judgmental approach, the initiative aims to empower individuals and families to overcome challenges and thrive in their daily lives. What makes this program additionally special is that it is overseen by staff and volunteers with their own lived experience with disabilities. Without its own dedicated funding and based entirely on the will of good people doing good work, Bridges of Hope is an outstanding example of the spirit of community building that is at the core of CCI's mission. To the staff and volunteers supporting this initiative, we are truly grateful.

WELCOME HOUSE

Welcome House in Ottawa provides a welcoming environment for homeless immigrants, offering information, orientation sessions, life skills coaching, and a children's program. The facility is staffed 24/7, assisting newcomers with immigration processes, life in Ottawa, and accessing community resources. The Housing Team helps clients find long-term accommodations, negotiating with landlords, and providing life skills support through visits after they settle in their homes.



SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

CCI operates two sponsorship agreements: one with the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Ottawa, which mostly helps local parishes, and another with CCI, which assists groups of all affiliations. CCI also helps with Group of 5 applications, assists all sponsors with applications and, as a settlement agency, provides access to pre-arrival information on the settlement process as well as post-arrival counselling, orientation, and a variety of other services.

13 parishes sponsored 38 refugees from Eritrea (in Sudan, Israel, Ethiopia, Egypt), and Syrians (in Lebanon, South Africa, and Saudi Arabia)

OUR SETTLEMENT ONLINE PRE-ARRIVAL PROGRAM



The SOPA team delivers a series of online courses to new immigrants intending to come to Canada. The courses help develop Canadian job search skills, improve communication abilities for the Canadian workplace, and connect with local resources in Canada before and after arrival. These essential tools help immigrants learn about the Canadian labor market, workplace culture, legislation for specific professions, expectations in the workplace, and communication with coworkers.

CIN PROGRAM

The Community Integration Network (CIN) offers professional development, knowledge exchange, resources, and skill development to staff from Community Connections programs, Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS), Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP), and other similar programs funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) across Ontario. Over the year 2023-2024, CIN hosted four 2-day professional development sessions in Toronto, with participation of more than 200 frontline workers from across the province.



PASTORAL PROGRAM

The Pastoral Program connects newcomers with their faith communities. This activity is based on the notion that to thrive in new surroundings, newcomers often require the support that a spiritual community can provide. This initiative enables members of the city's faith communities to live out their beliefs and values through positive action. It also allows them to reaffirm their commitment to social justice.

34 family units were connected to the faith communities of their choice



*Home
is Here*

CONCLUSION

Considering the full substance of this report, it is evident that our collective efforts have made a significant impact on the lives of newcomers in Ottawa. From the dedicated guidance provided by our programs to the comprehensive support offered by our staff, volunteers, and partners, we have consistently risen to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by the ever-evolving landscape of immigration. Our programs have been instrumental in assisting newcomers with all elements of settling and adjusting to a new life in Ottawa, ensuring they are well-placed to participate in their communities with a sense of belonging and purpose.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to innovating and adapting to meet the needs of our clients. Our valued partners will continue to play a vital role in our mission to build strong, vibrant communities. We deeply value and depend on a growing number of organizations, government agencies, and the private sector that collaborate with us. Their expertise, resources, and dedication complement and amplify our efforts to reach more newcomers and better support their journey to building a life in Ottawa. Together, we will strive to create a better future for all, empowering newcomers to achieve their dreams and contribute to the fabric of our society.





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