

2002-2003 Annual Report



**Canadian Centre for Victims
of Torture (CCVT)**



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Mandate

"Hope after the Horror"

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) aids survivors to overcome the lasting effects of torture and war. In partnership with the community, the Centre support survivors in the process of successful integration into Canadian society, works for their protection and integrity, and raises awareness of the continuing effects of torture and war on survivors and their families. The CCVT gives hope after the horror.



A Message From the Executive Director

Torture is prohibited under international law and in many countries under domestic law as well. Regrettably, this past year torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment continues to be practiced on a wide scale in our world. The practice of torture causes inconceivable pain and hardship. From our 26 years of experience, we have come to know that with sensitive, appropriate and timely community –based services the potential for recovery and reestablishing new life is very strong. To this end, the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture has improved its capacity to offer much needed services to survivors and their families. Our goal continues to be one of enhancing recovery by offering effective, client centered interventions.

The state of the world situation continues to create refugees and survivors of torture in need of asylum. In its struggle towards the prevention of torture, CCVT has been active in monitoring national and international instruments relevant to torture, war and organized violence. At a national level, CCVT actively campaigned in partnership with the Canadian Council for Refugees, Ontario Council of Agencies and other Canadian human and refugee rights agencies for a just immigration and refugee policy in Canada. This includes repeated calls upon the government to fulfil its promise of establishing the Refugee Appeal Division, as a provision in the new Immigration Act.

At the International level, CCVT has worked in partnership with International Rehabilitation Council for Torture, UN Committee Against Torture and UN Commission for Human Rights on issues related to the principle of non-refoulement, implementation of the Convention Against Torture, Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and, the prosecution of torturers and war criminals

At a local level, in the last year, 425 men, 442 women and 284 Children/Youth for a total of 1151 new clients from 87 countries have sought CCVT's services. The education of public and professional groups on torture issues, as a mandate of CCVT, has been carried out very intensively. Staff, associate physicians and lawyers, members of the Board and volunteers have participated in over one hundred presentations, training workshops and conferences this year, at local, national and international levels.

This would have not been possible without the commitment of the staff, volunteers and other associated members who deserve recognition and praise for their contributions to building such a vital national service. The CCVT has been extremely fortunate to have so many extraordinary people working as a team. This collective commitment from all supporters of CCVT has enabled us to address the needs of survivors of torture and has made my job easier and more rewarding. I am grateful for that.

Mulugeta Abai,
Executive Director



A Message from the Chair

The past year has been a difficult one for all Canadians, and in particular for we who live in Toronto. In addition to the dramatic crises of SARS and the recent power blackout, our struggles continue as we cope with cuts in funding for programs and services, and the continued loss of permanent jobs with fair wages. As greater numbers of families strive to make ends meet, social service agencies are also struggling to maintain programs and to retain staff.

At CCVT, our staff have risen to these challenges admirably, and has continued to put the needs of our clients first. In addition to the excellent counseling services provided to survivors of torture, our staff have continued to work diligently to assist individuals and families with the increasingly difficult settlement process. Our computer classes continue to be well attended, and we are proud of the achievements of many of our clients who have improved their employment prospects as a result of this program. The children's programs are much needed, and we are fortunate to have staff members who ensure that our young clients receive the attention they deserve.

In these challenging times our Executive Director, Mulugeta Abai, has worked tirelessly to maintain a fiscally sound organization; his work, together with the efforts of our outgoing Treasurer, Mahendra Bungaroo, has ensured that CCVT continues to be financially stable despite the difficulties of the past year.

It is always encouraging when our representatives in Parliament honour the courage of survivors of torture, and recognize the important work of CCVT. Therefore it was with pleasure that we welcomed the Honourable Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to CCVT. As the Minister is the Member of Parliament for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, CCVT is fortunate to be within his constituency. During his visit, Mr. Graham took a real interest in meeting our clients and our staff, and in hearing about our programs. We appreciate the active support CCVT has received from Minister Graham and his family for many years.

CCVT continues to gain international recognition for the high quality of its programs, and its contributions to research and public education. This year, CCVT received accreditation from the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), an independent, international health organization, which promotes and supports the rehabilitation of torture victims worldwide. Dr. Donald Payne, a founding member and current Board Director, was elected to the IRCT Council as one of two representatives from North America. We are proud to have such a skilled and knowledgeable person as our representative, and we are grateful for the Dr. Payne's willingness to serve CCVT in this capacity.

We were also well represented at an international conference on "The Impact of Global Issues on Women and Children," organized by McMaster University and held in Thailand this year. Our Program Coordinator, Teresa Dremetsikas, and Susan McGrath, Chair of the Public Education Committee, presented papers at the CCVT-sponsored event.

The expertise of our staff continues to be in demand here at home as well, and once again, CCVT provided training on the impact of torture, and the specific needs of survivors of torture, to numerous groups, including Immigration and Refugee Board members, front line health workers and language instructors.

While the demands on our staff have increased, their commitment to ongoing professional development has not diminished. In the past year staff have participated in training sessions on outcome evaluation, facilitation skills, data collection programs and the OCASI Professional Development Conference.

As always, all our successes this year were made possible through the efforts of our many dedicated volunteers, who work closely with our outstanding staff. This year CCVT has been greatly enriched by volunteers who contributed in countless ways, from befriending clients to staging theatrical productions and handing out toys at our holiday celebrations. In particular, I would like to thank four departing Board members for their significant contributions to CCVT: Mahendra Bungaroo, Rolando Vasquez, Darnace Torou, and Catherine Brooks.

Finally, I would like to thank our clients; the people who continue to inspire all of us who work at CCVT, both as staff and volunteers. The courage, determination and profound humanity of the survivors of torture with whom we work puts the challenges of the past year in perspective; we are privileged to work with them.

Tina Lopes, Chair



Report of the Medical Committee

The Medical Committee, through its volunteer members, provides medical and medical-legal assistance to CCVT clients. Medical Network members provide medical and psychiatric assessments to assist clients at their IRB refugee determination hearings, their humanitarian and compassionate applications, and their other dealings with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. These reports document clients' histories of torture, provide medical and psychiatric evidence to support the histories, and provide explanations as to why clients may have or may have had difficulty providing testimony at their hearings. Members provide ongoing medical and psychiatric treatment to clients related to their torture and/or war experiences.

The committee attempts to integrate its work with the work of other programs at CCVT, and to provide appropriate support to CCVT staff and clients.

Committee members have participated in training sessions of the Immigration and Refugee Board, assisting in broadening their perspective on refugee claimants who report that they have been tortured and the difficulties that these claimants may have in dealing with their immigration issues.

The committee is seeking to expand its involvement into the academic community. It is planning an event at CCVT in November 2003 to coincide with a presentation on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder at the university earlier that day. It is exploring the possibility of developing an optional elective placement at CCVT for University of Toronto psychiatric residents.

The committee is planning to update CCVT's publication Community Support for Survivors of Torture which was originally published in 1995. It is working on updating the CCVR Resource Binder for medical-legal documentation and in providing a smaller edited version for the practical use of new committee members.

In July 2003, Dr. Donald Payne was elected as one of two Council members from North America to the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT). He will attend the IRCT Council meeting in Copenhagen in September 2003.

The committee is striving to recruit more physicians and psychologists to become involved in its work.

The committee appreciates the support of the staff, particularly Mohamed Ahmed and Terese Dremetsikas, in helping the committee with its work and in arranging the meetings.

Submitted on behalf of the Medical committee.

Donald Payne, M.D.



Report of the Legal Committee

The CCVT Legal Committee is presently composed of four lawyers (in different fields of refugee/immigrants and human rights) and two staff members of the Centre who act as liaisons and bring the legal problems of the CCVT clients to the attention of the Committee. Two of the Legal Committee members are the CCVT Board members as well.

Legal Committee deals with legal matters arising from the CCVT mandate with the view of making CCVT work more effective to serve its clients in a better way. Legal Committee is specifically active in the field of policy analysis, legal support and research. The Committee recruits its members from the CCVT Board, Legal Network, staff and volunteers. It provides recommendation to the CCVT Board and includes at least one person from the Board and one from the CCVT staff members.

During the past year, the CCVT Legal Committee has been involved in the following areas of policy support:

Monitoring the implementation the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act was implemented on June 28, 2002. Since then, almost all regulations attached to the Act have been implemented. The Legal Committee is working with the CCVT staff in monitoring the implementation of the Act and its regulations. This has helped CCVT to contribute towards the overall campaign of the Canadian Council for Refugees and other Canadian human and refugee rights agencies for a just immigration and refugee policy in Canada. This includes repeated calls upon the government to fulfil its promise of establishing Refugee Appeal Division, as a provision in the Act.

Detention Guidelines

The enforcement of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, with its focus on detention and removal, resulted in increased detention of refugees and immigrants. This trend was accentuated by the aftereffects of September 11th 2001. The CCVT started receiving requests from people in Detention Centres, their friends and relatives, their lawyers and our community colleague to do intake of torture survivors in CIC detention centres. The past practice of potential clients being escorted by the enforcement authorities to CCVT is apparently being abandoned by CIC. The CCVT's scarce resources do not allow us to send an intake worker to the detention centers - specifically those located at a remote area in Ontario. Besides, detention authorities are not obligated to provide free access to the CCVT staff. Given the above realities, the CCVT Legal Committee recommended comprehensive detention guidelines for CCVT staff and intake workers to follow. This important document was approved by the Board and is in place now. This has allowed CCVT to extend its services to survivors of torture in Immigration detention centers.

Communication with the UN Committee against Torture

The implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act has resulted in tough removal measures against rejected refugee claimants. Among these claimants are clients of the CCVT who are genuinely at risk of return to torture. Communication with UN Committee against Torture could be considered as the last remedy. The CCVT has documented the case of a victim of torture who was in real danger of refolement to torture and possible execution. This prompted CCVT to make some investigations about communication with the UN Committee against Torture. Legal Committee helped the CCVT staff with its recommendations. We are in an ongoing contact with the client's lawyer to help him writing a detailed submission to The UN Committee against Torture, if the need comes. Legal Committee members will provide feedback upon the lawyer's request to enable him to make communication on behalf of the client. If it comes to the point that CCVT should either intervene or make a submission to the committee, the issue will be brought to the attention of the CCVT Board.



Proposed Citizenship Act

Legal Committee provided CCVT staff with feedback on the proposed Citizenship Act (Bill C-18). This enabled CCVT to appear before the parliamentary Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration on February 10, 2003 to provide the Committee with a brief on the Proposed Act. We mentioned that the Bill should consider, among other things, an exhaustive approach to the Canadian national and international human rights obligations. It should be at par with instruments such as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes Act, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or punishment, the 1998 Statute of Rome for International Criminal Court. We added in our brief that the CCVT had focused its contributions on areas of the Bill C-18 that concern torture survivors.

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB)

The Legal Committee has been monitoring the implementation of the consolidated provision at the IRB level. It seems that panel members are not consistent in using broader consolidated grounds in their refugee determination decisions. They still base their decisions on refugee grounds. No internal appeal mechanism yet. Based on the recommendation of the Legal Committee the CCVT brought the issue to the attention of the IRB and reiterated the need for education of board members on the scourge of torture and all grounds for giving protected status:

- 1) Convention grounds
- 2) Risk to life
- 3) Torture
- 4) Unusual and cruel treatment (So far, no decision on the last three grounds).

We have also provided IRB with training for its new panel members and Refugee Protection Officers.

Legal Aid Consultation Committee

The CCVT is involved in Legal Aid Consultation Committee and a CCVT staff member is attending the Committee's meetings regularly. This is a useful venue to raise legal aid problems of our clients. Legal Committee has always been active in providing feedback to the Legal Aid Consultation Committee through the CCVT staff. The following issues are of particular interests to the CCVT: legal aid coverage for designated reps for unaccompanied minors (separated children), detention of children, detention of people outside Toronto, mileage for lawyers and doctors to visit detention centres, 28 days deadline for PIF with no extension, etc.

The Principle of non-refoulement to torture

Through providing its regular advices, the Legal Committee has contributed towards CCVT efforts in preventing people from being returned to torture.

Impunity

With the help and participation of the Legal Committee, the CCVT has monitored the Statute of Rome for International Criminal Court. This important document has entered into its enforcement stage. The CCVT is also collaborating with human rights agencies to address the question of impunity. CCVT contributed towards the founding of the Canadian Centre for International Justice (CCIJ) to that effect. The CCIJ is now incorporated as a non-profit charitable NGO. A CCVT staff member, who is on the board of the CCIJ, receives ongoing feedback from the Legal Committee about impunity and about his activities within CCIJ. There is an ongoing work with other organizations including Amnesty International. The Legal Committee also provide direction to the CCVT in protecting clients from their torturers and war criminals, if they ever end up in Canada.

Limbo Project

The Legal Committee has provided support to the CCVT staff in helping clients in limbo.

Thilaga Jaganathan
Ezat Mossallanejad
CCVT staff liaison with Legal Committee



CCVT Limbo Project

Since early 1990, the CCVT has been continuing assisting people who have fallen between the cracks of Immigration limbo. What will follow is a summary of the project report.

- We continued with the project in the context of the implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act on 28th of June 2002. This Act, in our assessment is focused on deportation and removal and, in a short period of its life, has led to more cases of asylum seekers and refugees in detention or in indefinite limbo.
- During the year 2002-2003, the CCVT dealt with 27 cases of refugees in limbo (15 men and 12 women). With their family members, they totaled 57 people among them 23 children. The breakdown of the cases in terms of the causes of limbo is as follow: 12 cases of limbo due to security reasons, 5 as a result of family separation, 3 were rejected refugee claimants fearful of return to torture, 3 were posed as danger to public (criminality), 2 because of the lack identification documents, 2 were stateless.
- The limbo project provided survivors of torture in Immigration orbit with individual counseling, training and, in many cases, a program of specific support. During this period, we served survivors of torture in limbo who had come to Canada from different countries: 15 cases of limbo from Iran, 3 from Afghanistan, 2 from Angola, 2 from Eritrea, 1 from Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Nigeria each.
- At the individual level, our most significant achievement was the landing of a client of CCVT who is a highly professional gentleman. He had gone through such an inhuman torture and trauma that Immigration and refugee Board did not believe his story. He remained in the limbo of landing for almost 5 years. We worked with the community and mobilized the whole Centre to save his life. He received his landed status in the first quarter of the 2003. Another success story was that of a woman from Burundi who was suffering from the limbo of family separation. After years of separation from her 2 kids, she received them in Canada in late Spring 2003. Another success story was bailing out a client of the Centre who was languishing in Immigration detention for almost 20 months. This was achieved by the CCVT close collaboration with his lawyer and the community.
- We assisted two survivors of torture in limbo due to security reasons to apply for Minister's Relief. In the case of a client from Afghanistan, the CCVT Legal Committee helped him to write his submission, as he was so frustrated with the system that he refused to take help from any agency except the CCVT. A senior Immigration officer contacted CCVT to let us know that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration himself would review our client's submission. There is no final decision on either of the above cases.
- We continued to develop and strengthen our networking abilities. Through e-mail and via meetings and conferences we maintain regular contacts with activists from across the country working on refugee issues. We received feedback from the many agencies including the UNHCR in Canada, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), and Amnesty International. This year, we attended two biannual conferences of the CCR and raised problems related to the protection of torture survivors including those suffering in limbo. As always, we remained in contact with lawyers and community activists committed to refugee protection and advocacy.

The main challenge before us is the continuation of our services to the CCVT clients and their families who are in limbo (some up to 11 years) due to security reasons. They suffer in silence and it is not possible to make effective communication about their cases either with Immigration Canada or the CSIS. With the expansion of inadmissibility provisions in new Immigration legislation and regulations, it is predicated that there will be ever-increasing number of the cases of survivors of torture in detention or in limbo of immigration decision.

Ezat Mossallanejad
Limbo Project Coordinator



Report of the Public Education Committee

Mandate

The function of the public education committee is to contribute to the implementation of the organizational mandate to raise awareness of the continuing effects of torture and war on survivors and their families and to work for their protection and integrity. The committee strives to increase public awareness of torture, its effects and its global dimensions and to contribute to the development of human rights theory and practice. CCVT is a learning centre on issues related to torture and human rights. Activities include research, the production and distribution of learning materials, onsite training and education programs for staff, volunteers, students and the community, and public forums and presentations - locally and globally.

Training and Education

CCVT remains worried about the Canadian government's focus on security issues, perhaps to the detriment of the protection needs of refugees and survivors of torture. Of particular concern is the so-called Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the United States, which, CCVT believes, has a serious risk of abrogating the rights of people to seek asylum. Our goal was to keep awareness of the impact of torture and the needs of survivors in the public domain. On September 21, as part of a broader coalition with NOW Magazine and other agencies, CCVT participated in the UN Global Ceasefire and Non Violence Day by sponsoring a Peace Blossom Ceremony at Harbourfront Centre. On May 9, CCVT staff, board, clients and volunteers, along with other immigrant and refugee serving agencies, marched to the Canada-US border at Niagara Falls for a peaceful demonstration against the Safe Third Country Agreement. And on June 26, CCVT presented a panel discussion on the intersections of war, terrorism and torture, and how this can create opportunities for torture to occur.

Staff, volunteers and board members frequently made other presentations in a variety of settings (both locally and globally) on torture and the work of the Centre. The sites during the past year have included local high schools, universities, human service agencies, and national and international conferences. Learning activities included placements for students of law, medicine and social work, public forums by local and international guests, monthly education sessions by and for volunteers, and special celebrations such as the June 26 United Nations Day in recognition of survivors of torture.

Learning Materials

CCVT's journal *First Light* continues to provide valued and critical commentaries on current issues along with information on the Centre's programs and activities. One issue was published during the past year, addressing the best practices and methodology of CCVT's work. *First Light* along with other research reports and public education materials are available at the CCVT web site.

The Committee

Mulugeta Abai, Michele Millard, Teresa Dremetsikas and Ezat Mossalanejad are the active staff members on the committee, Susan McGrath and Darnace Torou represent the board.

Susan McGrath
Chair, Public Education Committee



Report of the International Committee

The CCVT is associated with a network of organizations that support survivors of war and torture through its International Committee. This committee is also working towards monitoring and responding to the global issues related to prevention, exposure and eradication of torture.

The CCVT has always been active in monitoring the plight of women and children across the world – especially those who are victims of torture and war. We have been continuing with our networking with global NGOs since our active participation at all levels of the International Conference on War-Affected Children, Winnipeg, September 2000. In 2002-2003, the CCVT participated in two international conferences about the impact of global issues on women and children: the first one was in February 2003 in Thailand and the second one in March 2003 in Hamilton, Ontario. The Faculty of Nursing, McMaster University and the Burapha University organized the conference in Thailand. The conference in Hamilton was initiated by the Faculty of Women's study, McMaster University.

During the past year, the International Committee continued with its previous efforts with regards to Rwanda. With the involvement of the member of the Committee, Prof. Susan McGrath, CCVT collaborated with a centre in Rwanda, the Forum for Activists Against Torture (FACT). We continued with our information sharing relationship with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), an umbrella organization of Centres treating survivors of torture – especially with regards to June 26th, the International Day in Solidarity with Survivors of Torture.

The CCVT's collaboration with other human rights agencies in establishment of the Canadian Centre for International Justice (CCIJ) produced fruits last year. The CCIJ is now incorporated as a non-profit NGO and will get its charitable status soon. The mandate of the new centre is addressing the global problem of impunity and bringing torturers, war criminals and people who have committed crimes against humanity to justice in Canada.

The CCVT has been monitoring, among other things, the perpetration of the state-sanctioned and religiously consecrated torture across the world. We objected against stoning women and men to death for alleged adultery. We wrote to the Canadian government and responsible authorities overseas, including presidents of Pakistan and Nigerian, urging them to abandon such cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment.

The CCVT was also actively involved in monitoring, research, letter writing campaign, press releases, presenting submissions, and publishing articles both at home and abroad. We continued with these activities either independently or in collaboration with the UNHCR, UN Commission on Human Rights, Amnesty International, and Canadian Council for Refugees:

Monitoring and researching on the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 and its after-effects: the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is of special significance to us, because we have plenty of clients from these two countries.

Participating in the annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva;

Research and monitoring of the development of the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

Research on the need to create a day dedicated to prisoners of conscience worldwide. This led to the CCVT draft proposal for dedication of a UN Day in Solidarity with Prisoners of Conscience. We are still working on the proposal with a belief that this will add to the national struggle of local human rights groups in addressing the plight of prisoners of conscience. It can lead to the recognition of the struggles of prisoners of conscience internationally. With the introduction of this day, prisoners can experience a global community supporting them in their struggle. This day can provide hope for prisoners of conscience and encourage them to continue with their human rights activities. This day is an opportunity to give voice to voiceless prisoners of conscience and to recognize that prisoners of conscience have spoken out against injustice and inhumanity. We are in contact with the Amnesty International and hope to finalize the proposal and send a joint letter to the national and international human rights authorities.

Following the death of the Canadian journalist, Zahra Kazemi, under torture in Iran, the CCVT sent a letter to the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. In this letter, we called upon the Canadian government to play a key role in investigation about Ms. Kazemi's death under torture. In a similar letter to the editor of the Globe and Mail, we asked Canada to address the problem of impunity and use international institutions to this effect.

Mulugeta Abai
Executive Director

Ezat Mossallanejad
Staff liaison, International Committee



Intake and Settlement Program

Numbers this year were as follows: Total number of clients 1151 including 425 men, 442 women and 284 children. Clients were referred from all kinds of sources (see figure 1).

The profile of the clients in terms of gender, age, education, source of referral, country of origin, languages, marital status is detailed in the numerical part of this report.

The usual settlement needs were addressed within the CCVT programs: Information on issues such as employment, housing, training programs, schooling, access to trades and professions, translations, day care, banking, family reunification, access to health care, and so on.

Numbers seem to be very important but even more important is each person and her or his unique story. Neither words, nor numbers, nor graphics, nor even pictures are sufficient to illustrate the pain they feel as torture victims or the joy they feel as survivors who have recovered. CCVT plays a role in the recovery process, a careful assessment is done for every client and individualized attention is provided to ensure that all receive the care that they deserve. This task goes beyond giving information. Many clients require lengthy interviews and assistance to clarify misunderstandings, mediate conflicts, support during crisis, facilitate access to services, etcetera. In addition to the individual on-going counseling provided by the staff, trained volunteers provide extra support for individuals through the Befriending program, ESL tutorials, escorting and interpreting activities, among other things.

Other services are provided in groups. A total of 22 orientation sessions of diverse topics were delivered to 285 clients this year. In addition, 8 self-support groups were run for 12 weeks each for the following ethnic groups:

- Two Albanian Family groups
- Two groups of African women from various countries
- Two Iranian Men and Women groups
- Two Somali women and children groups

The social activities and/or gatherings organized by CCVT such as the Holiday Party, Picnic, "UN Day (June 26) in Support of Victims of Torture" and the AGM, aside from fulfilling their respective goals, also provide an opportunity for the clients to break their isolation and to widen their network of relations which is crucial in the rehabilitation of survivors of torture.

Teresa Dremetsikas,
Intake and Settlement Coordinator



Volunteer Program

The Volunteers at CCVT are an absolutely essential part of the CCVT and its programs. They are escorts, accompanying clients to and from appointments with doctors, specialists, lawyers and social service agencies. They are interpreters, allowing a client to communicate with his or her child's teacher, or at a medical appointment. They are ESL tutors, giving students the opportunity to practice their English in a non-threatening environment. And they are Befrienders, where, as members of the community, they act as catalysts in the process of integration and help develop an atmosphere of trust and friendship in order to break the isolation of survivors. Befrienders offer basic information and advice on life skills and social skills, which help the survivor to adapt to life in a new country. Befrienders help survivors rediscover the joy, self-esteem, and confidence that has been inhibited or lost as a result of torture. The personal support provided by volunteer befrienders helps to empower the survivors and enables their integration into the community.

The following points illustrate the accomplishments of the Volunteer Program over the past year:

1. CCVT continues to invest in regular, on-going training sessions for all volunteers, new and old.
 - Over the past year, CCVT has offered 5 workshops to volunteers. These sessions dealt with befriending survivors of torture, skills development for ESL volunteer tutors, and an art therapy workshop.

The Volunteer Program also presented 9 volunteer information meetings on topics relevant to their experiences and needs. The topics included: *Holistic Justice: Beyond Trials and Punishment*, *Refugee Women*, *Stoning: a Religiously Consecrated Torture*, *Art Therapy*, *Women and Peace Building in Palestine and Israel*, *The Work of People Against Torture (PAT) in Kenya*, *The Specialized Settlement Needs of Survivors of Torture*, and *Issues Facing Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Immigrants and refugees*. One hundred and thirty-three volunteers attended the meetings and contributed some lively discussion. These meetings were reported on in the monthly CCVT Newsletter sent out to volunteers, Board members and the Health and Legal Network members.

1. Ninety-one new volunteers were recruited and trained in eleven orientations given by the Volunteer Coordinator and CCVT Staff. Altogether, CCVT has 105 volunteers involved as Befrienders and Tutors, of which approximately 58 were matched in 2002-2003, and as well as 57 volunteering as Interpreters (representing more than 38 languages). Volunteers were also active in the Newsletter Committee, the Volunteer Advisory Committee and in Public Outreach.
2. The Volunteer Program organized the CCVT Summer Picnic in July and the CCVT Holiday party in December. Both events were extremely successful and very well attended by CCVT clients and volunteers alike. June 26, 2002 marked CCVT's 25th Anniversary as well as the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture and CCVT held a concert in honour of the day. Many groups from the community and professional musicians from the CCVT client base performed to great appreciation, and our keynote speaker was the Honourable Denis Coderre, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.
3. The Volunteer Program continued to do public outreach by hosting information tables, attending fundraisers and other community events, as well as through advertising and volunteer recruitment. CCVT volunteers and clients were also involved in performing a short play about the experiences of living as and working with refugees for students at York University.

Not surprisingly, this year has been a busy one. The coming year will also be very active. Outreach remains an ever-important component of the Program and CCVT will continue to nurture the skills and development of its Volunteers.

Michele Millard
Volunteer Coordinator



Children/Youth Program

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) has been active in assisting child/youth survivors and their families in healing from their traumatic past and rebuilding their lives in Canada. From April 2001 to March 2003, a total of 284 children and youth were registered with CCVT. This client group comprises about 30% of CCVT's special needs population.

The Children and Youth Program's primary goals are :

- a) To alter the life course of refugee children who have been submitted to torture and their families by providing treatment which will promote long term healing and restitution in a safe environment.
- b) To augment our wisdom in the development and treatment of survivors of torture by conducting on-going qualitative and quantitative evaluations of the treatments and interventions applied.
- c) To disperse research findings, program evaluation and specialized program design information on a local, national and international level through conference presentations, workshops, publications, public educational events and our website.
- d) To champion the urgent needs of refugee children who are survivors of torture and their families by advocating and consulting with other agencies, schools and government about their urgent and unique

This program hopes to achieve the following outcomes: easing/healing the after-effects of torture/war and settlement issues through education, information and creative thinking, effective ways of managing stress, dealing with anger, intergenerational and cultural conflicts and new ways of parenting, peer mentoring skills, healthy life style and participation of children in promoting their own rights and education. The activities for this program involves intake, assessment, psychotherapy, children's group, art therapy, play therapy, parents' group and working with the educational system.

This year on June 20th, 2003 for World Refugee Day sponsored by UNHCR, CCVT in partnership with Amnesty International, Canadian Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, Culture Link and Right to Play organized a colourful display and activities at the Cinesphere at Ontario Place. This is year's theme was "Refugee Youth-Building a Future". It was to pay tribute to the courage, creativity and resilience of youth refugees in coping with difficult situations and circumstances. The main features included free screening of the IMAX film: India — Kingdom of the Tiger, photo exhibit of Colombian refugees, celebrity guests, educational materials and information about refugee youth and display of the art works of CCVT children/youth who participated in the art therapy program. Of the over 200 CCVT clients who were invited, many came and truly enjoyed this event and CCVT's display received much attention from everyone, especially the media.

The CCVT children and youth program plans to expand its involvement in public education by promoting awareness of the unique needs of war-affected children through doing outreach in schools and other community agencies.

Afsaneh Shafai
Children/Youth Counselor



English Language Program

In the past 14 years, the CCVT English language program has been delivering a key component in the successful rebuilding of the lives survivors of torture and organized violence. Our English Program caters to the needs of adult learners who suffer from debilitating imprints that make the learning process hard and strenuous. Our ESL classes are specially adapted to the learning abilities of CCVT clients. Our teachers are specially trained and our curriculum modified to assist students in the acquisition of various skills related to their immediate life goals. The classrooms atmosphere and the supportive environment we foster in the program provided the clients with the encouragement, hope and the help they need to progress with their language and social skills.

The class levels available to our clients range from low to beginner to high intermediate. Every year CCVT provides language training for approximately 300 clients from 60 countries. Clients stayed with our English Language Program for an average of 3 to 18 months, moving through the language proficiency levels at various paces. Classes are provided strictly on CCVT premises in order for clients and teaching staff to access counsellors in case counselling on emotional or other kinds of difficulties become necessary. The ESL program is funded partly through the Federal Government's Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) project and partly through the Toronto District School Board and through fundraising efforts.

We are constantly seeking for ways to improve on our programs through collaborative work with instructors, counselors, the CCVT Computer Program and CCVT volunteers. The CCVT language program has accumulated significant expertise in providing workshops and seminars for other English language and educational professionals on delivering services to traumatized refugee learners. CCVT has already developed its reputation as an active and leading organization that can provide professional in sight into working with traumatized newcomer and refugee learners.

Despite challenges, the CCVT Program continues to be an irreplaceable component of a successful recovery program for our clients. It is also the first point of contact with the new home Canada for our clients. Our English program at CCVT has become a source of strength and support that helps our clients resume their lives independently with dignity and confidence.

Abdul Abubaker
LINC/ESL Coordinator



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*Coordinator, Online Technical Support, OCASI
Member, Program Committee*

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*Social Worker, Family Services Association
Chair, Volunteer Committee*

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*Coordinator, Africans in Partnership Against
AIDS (APAA)
Member, Public Education Committee and In-
ternational Committee*

Rolando Vasquez

*B.Sc., Psychiatric Nursing
Co-Chair, Health and Program Committee*



Financial Report

Consolidated Schedule of Operations Year Ended March 31, 2003

Revenues	2003	2002
Citizenship and Immigration Canada – ISAP A	269,684	260,525
Citizenship and Immigration Canada – LINC	194,270	179,313
Donations	157,219	129,772
United Way	165,397	154,390
United Nations	37,558	45,000
City of Toronto	18,700	21,000
Ministry of Citizenship		
- NSP	39,854	35,300
- Pay Equity	33,405	23,311
Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development	—	15,000
Interest and sundry income	164	16,014
Foundations	87,330	39,125
C.A.W.		13,891
Honorarium	2,480	825
	<u>1,006,061</u>	<u>933,466</u>
Expenses	1,019,514	933,307
Excess of Revenues Over Expenses	<u>(13,453)</u>	<u>159</u>



CCVT ANNUAL REPORT 2002 - 2003

Consolidated Statement of Expenses Year Ended March 31, 2003

Expenses	2003	2002
Wages and benefits	671,607	682,380
Partnerships/Sponsorships	81,130	
Fundraising expenses	52,262	36,176
Program supplies and expenses	34,165	46,777
Contract fees		-
Stationery and supplies	8,520	7,884
Common expenses	17,559	14,363
Traveling expenses	26,536	23,822
Conference and meetings	3,991	5,283
Telephone	6,420	5,881
Maintenance and cleaning	17,099	18,026
Bookkeeping	13,953	12,327
Resource Production	166	161
Mortgage interest	7,045	7,394
Utilities	8,907	7,013
Postage and courier	6,556	6,484
Insurance	6,581	3,627
Printing and photocopying	9,945	14,104
Interest and bank charges	4,297	5,360
Professional fees	7,928	4,480
Equipment rental	7,662	7,171
Development and travel	10,392	4,637
Dues and fees	2,663	2,524
Publicity	248	2,284
Amortization	13,882	15,149
	<u>1,019,514</u>	<u>933,307</u>
Total	1,019,514	933,307

Note: To view the complete audited financial report, please contact CCVT at 416-363-1066



CCVT Programs

1. Settlement Services

- Includes information/orientation, interpretation/translation, counselling, employment-related issues and referrals to resources relating to the economic, social, cultural, educational and recreational facilities that could contribute to the initial settlement of the client.

2. Mental Health

- To assist in developing trust and promoting healing through a strategy of re-empowerment.
- **Counselling**
- **Individual and Group Therapy, Mutual Support Groups**
- **Crisis Intervention:** suicide prevention, breakdowns, family problems, etc.
- **Art Therapy**
- **Coordinated professional services:** The centre coordinates a medical network of experienced physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists and other specialists, lawyers, social service workers who provide treatment, documentation and legal support. Referrals of survivors of torture are accepted and the staff will arrange for a client assessment.

3. Children/Youth Program

- Intake/assessment, settlement services, mental health services, recreational and empowerment activities that incorporate conflict resolution, mentoring, peer support and story-telling.

4. Volunteer Program

- **Befriending** to assist survivors in rebuilding their connections to others as well as to the greater community.
- **ESL Tutoring and Conversation Circles** to help students learn and practice their English.
- **Escorting and interpreting** for survivors at different appointments (medical, legal, social).

5. Public Education

- Responds to numerous requests for information, education, assistance and consultations on torture and its effects by delivering workshops, seminars and presentations. Also regularly produces resource materials, undertakes research and publishes a semi annual publication, "First Light", to inform the public about torture and its effects.

6. Refugees in Limbo

- Services to refugees in limbo that include counselling, assisting in sponsorships, family reunification and other immigration-related issues.

7. Language Instruction and Training

- LINC/ESL classes specially designed to address the needs and realities of survivors of torture (concentration, memory, depression, triggers).
- Computer training: basic and intermediate levels.

8. International Projects

- CCVT is associated with a coalition of Centres which support victims of violence, repression and torture, in exile or in their own countries.



CCVT Health and Legal Networks

PSYCHIATRISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS

Dr. F. Allodi
Dr. L. Andermann
Dr. R. Berdichevsky
Gerald Devins
Dr. M. Freire
Dr. Fornazzari
Dr. Mitra Gholamani
Dr. Oren Gozlan
Dr. S. A. Hassan
Dr. Ted Lo
Dr. R. Meier
Dr. Clare Pain
Dr. D. Payne
Dr. J. Pilowsky
Dr. R. Ruskin
Dr. B. Schamberger
Keren
Dr. Sooriabalan
Dr. J. Santa Barbara
Dr. Richard Stall
Dr. Stewart

OTHER SPECIALISTS:

Dr. Degani, General
Surgeon
Dr. Singer, Ophthal-
mologist
Dr. Sliwin, Plastic Sur-
geon
Dr. Wade, Hearing
Specialist
Dr. Ryhanian, Dentist

GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

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Dr. Wendell Block
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Dr. L. Richmond
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Dr. A. Stern
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Dr. D. Thow
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Dr. J. Weinstein
Dr. Miriam Wiebe

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CCVT Staff

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Thilaga Jeganathan
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Sandra Monteath
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Ezat Mossallanejad
Policy Analyst

Afsaneh Shafai
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Jorge Pombo
Maintenance Worker

Mary Sanderson
Art Therapist

Munni Subhani
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Delfina Vega de Paiz
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Carmen Zbarciog-Faciu
Computer Instructor

* Resigned

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Jana Tomeckova
Arshia Najikhoie

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University of Toronto

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Kevin Wingarten, Faculty of
Medicine
Leena Hajra, Faculty of Medicine

Ryerson University

Fauzieh Mohsenzadeh, Fac-
ulty of Social Work



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Dina Aloï
Michelle Amador
Wendy Ayala
Muzaffer Aydin
Naciye Gulfen Aydin
Sima Azmi
Karin Baqi
Euridice Baumgarten
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Parna Bhattacharjee
Maya Bhusari
Pat Bishop
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Darren Boisvert
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Fisnik Brovina
Tanya Brusselers
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Krista Bulmer
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Andrea Cameron
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Zinawbizu Chewaka
Sonam Choedon
Derek Christ
Nikolay Chsherbinin
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Calvin and Diane Dadian
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Caterina Scorsona
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Suzanne Shub
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Jeffrey Strasburg
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Olya Eleina Tomina
Wolfgang Vachon
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Andrew Webster
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Barb Yealland
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The Sisters of St. Joseph of the
Diocese of London
The Late Thomas Asquith
Shelagh Towson
Alan G. Trites
Ursulines of Jesus
Henry Van Essen
Richard Vernon
Stephen Wadhams
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Menai Wardle
Frances Warren
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WCR Solutions
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Ruth Wilkins
Sheila M. Williams
Geoffrey Williams
Melissa S. Williams
The Late Donald Williams
Sheila Wolofsky
Edward A. Wood
Barbara Yealland
David Young
Milton Zaretsky
Robert J. Zettel



Source of Funders: Government/Foundations

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

- Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program – ISAP – A
- Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada - LINC

Canadian Auto Workers (CAW)

Foundations

- Maytree Foundation

City of Toronto

- Community Services Grant

Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation

- Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP)

Toronto Board of Education

United Way of Greater Toronto

- Membership allocation

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Torture Victims



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CCVT Survivors New Intake and Previous Clients

April 2002 to March 2003

TOTAL NUMBER: 1151 COUNTRIES: 87 MEN: 425 WOMEN: 442 CHILDREN: 284

COUNTRY	Adults		Children/Youth		Total	COUNTRY	Adults		Children/Youth		Total
	M	F	M	F			M	F	M	F	
Afghanistan	23	10	5	11	49	Kenya	3	11	2	11	27
Albania	43	41	16	8	108	Kosova	26	27	24	18	95
Algeria	1	1			2	Kyrgystan		1			1
Angola	4	6		7	17	Lebanon	1				1
Argentina	6	6	1	2	15	Liberia	2	1			3
Armenia		1		1	2	Lithuania		1			1
Azerbaijan	1	3			4	Macedonia		1	1		2
Bangladesh	8	5	1	2	16	Malawi			1		1
Bolivia	2	1			3	Malaysia		1			1
Bosnia	2	8	1	2	13	Mauritania			1		1
Brazil		1			1	Mexico	5	8	3	1	17
Bulgaria	1		1		2	Morocco	1				1
Burma	1				1	Mozambique	1				1
Burundi	2	5	1	3	11	Nigeria	9	2		3	14
Cambodia	1	2			3	Oman				1	1
Cameroon	1	1			2	Pakistan	5	6		1	12
Canada		1			1	Palestine			1		1
Chad	3			1	4	Peru	3	2	2	2	9
Chile	1				1	Philippines	1	2	1	1	5
China	1	2			3	Russia	6	4		1	11
Colombia	7	8	3	3	21	Rwanda	1	4		1	6
Congo Dem.	13	38	7	8	66	Saudi Arabia	1				1
Costa Rica	1				1	Senegal		1			1
Croatia		2			2	Sierra Leone	9	6	8	3	26
Cuba		1			1	Somalia	3	41	4	11	59
Djibouti	1		1	3	5	Sri Lanka	35	22	10	5	72
Ecuador		1			1	St. Lucia				1	1
Egypt	3	1			4	St. Vincent				1	1
El Salvador	3	4		1	8	Sudan	6	3			9
Eritrea	7	6		1	14	Syria	1	1			2
Ethiopia	7	19		7	33	Tajikistan		1			1
Gambia		1			1	Tanzania	9	3	6	1	19
Georgia	1	2			3	Togo	1				1
Guatemala	2	1			3	Trinidad				1	1
Guinea	1	1	1		3	Turkey	28	13	7	1	49
Guyana	1	1			2	Uganda	3	3	2	2	10
Honduras			1		1	Ukraine	2	5	1		8
Hong Kong	1				1	USA	1				1
Hungary	3	3	1	2	9	Venezuela	2	2		1	5
India	5	3	1	1	10	Yemen	4	1	3	1	8
Iran	77	64	15	22	178	Yugoslavia	6	1	1		8
Iraq	22	10	2		34	Zambia		1			1
Jordan	1				1	Zimbabwe	2	8		4	14
Kazakastan		1	1		2	TOTAL	425	442	129	155	1151



CCVT ANNUAL REPORT 2002 - 2003

Figure 1: Source of Referrals

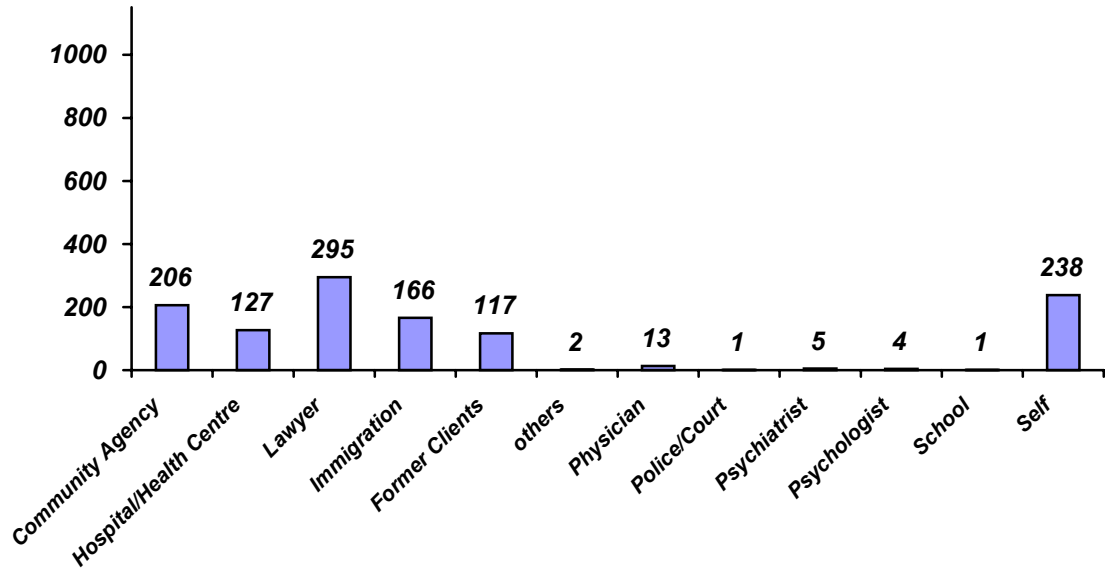


Figure 2: Age

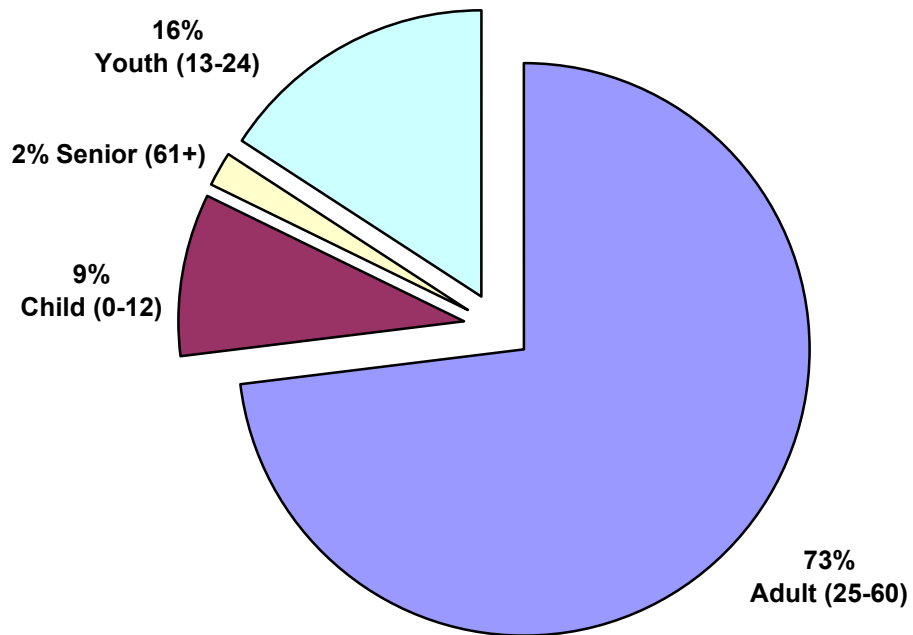


Figure 3: Gender

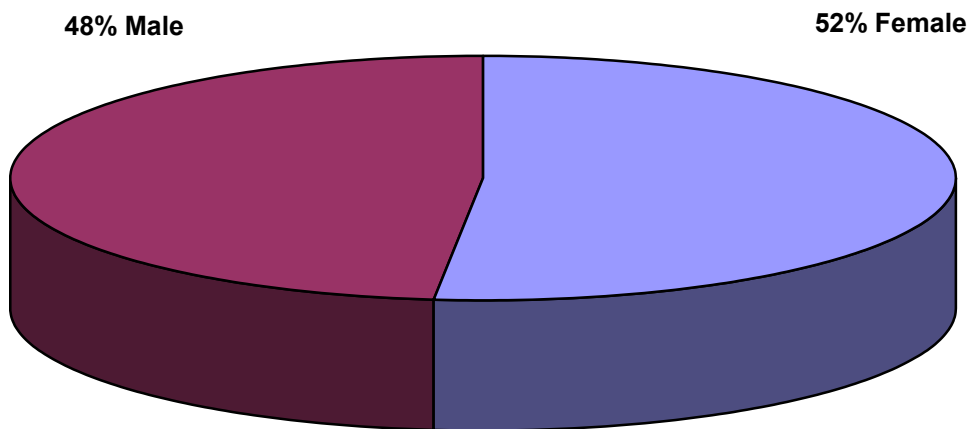
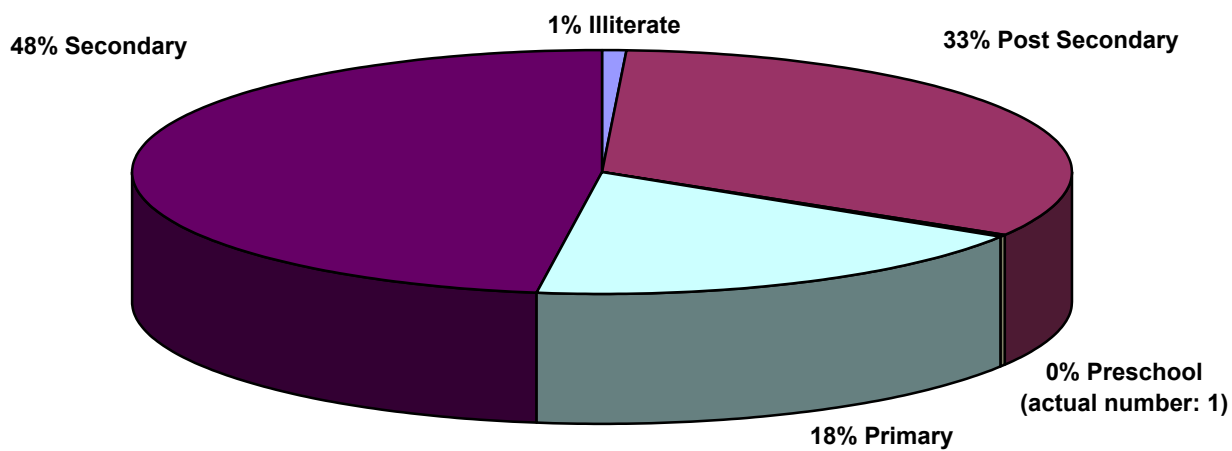


Figure 4: Education



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Figure 5: First Language

COUNTRY	LANGUAGE	COUNTRY	LANGUAGE
Afghanistan	Dari, Pashtu	Liberia	English
Albania	Albanian	Lithuania	Lithuanian
Algeria	Arabic	Macedonia	Macedonian
Angola	Angolan, Kimbund, Portuguese	Malawi	Chichewano
Argentina	Spanish	Malaysia	Mandarin
Armenia	Armenian	Mauritania	Arabic
Azerbaijan	Azari	Mexico	Spanish
Bangladesh	Bengali	Morocco	Arabic
Bolivia	Spanish	Mozambique	Maconole
Bosnia	Bosnian	Nigeria	Hausa, Yoruba
Brazil	Portuguese	Oman	Arabic
Burundi	Kirundi, French	Pakistan	Urdu, Punjabi
Bulgaria	Bulgarian	Palestine	Arabic
Burma	Burmese	Peru	Spanish
Cambodia	Cambodian	Philippines	Tagalog
Cameroon	Bagante, French	Russia	Russian
Canada	English, French	Rwanda	Kinyarwanda, French
Chad	Arabic	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
Chile	Spanish	Senegal	French
China	Cantonese	Sierra Leone	Kiro, Limba, Mende, French
Congo Dem. Rep.	Chiluba, Kikonga, Lingala,	Somalia	Somalia
Costa Rica	Spanish	Sri Lanka	Tamil, Sinhala
Croatia	Croatian	St. Lucia	English
Cuba	Spanish	St. Vincent	English
Djibouti	Somali, French	Sudan	Arabic
Ecuador	Spanish	Syria	Arabic
Egypt	Arabic	Tajikistan	Russian
El Salvador	Spanish	Tanzania	Swahili
Eritrea	Tigrinia	Togo	French
Ethiopia	Amharic, Adere, Oromo, Tigrinia	Trinidad	English
Gambia	Gambian	Turkey	Turkish, Kurdish
Georgia	Azeri	Uganda	Acholi, Luganda, Swahili
Guatemala	Spanish	Ukraine	Russian, Ukrainian
Guinea	Malinka	USA	English
Guyana	English	Venezuela	Spanish
Honduras	Spanish	Yemen	Arabic
Hong Kong	Cantonese	Yugoslavia	Serbian
Hungary	Hungarian	Zambia	Swahili, English
India	Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu	Zimbabwe	Ndebele, Shona, English
Iran	Farsi		
Iraq	Arabic		
Jordan	Arabic		
Kazakhstan	Russian		
Kenya	Kikuyu, Swahili		
Kosova	Albanian		
Kyrgystan	Russian		
Lebanon	Arabic		



Figure 6: Employment Skills

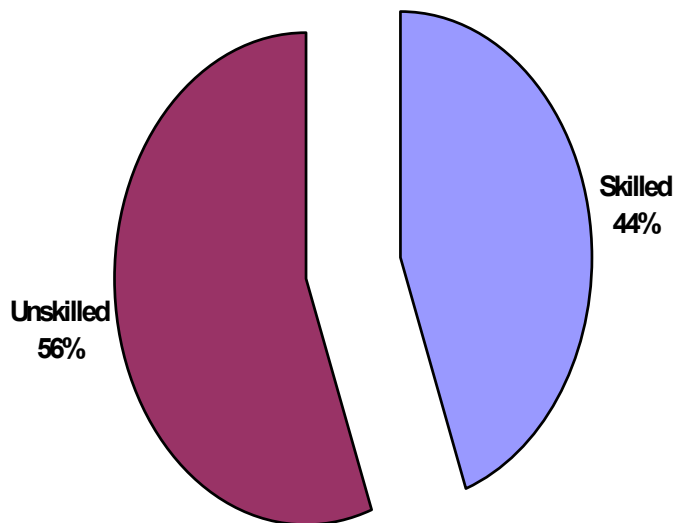
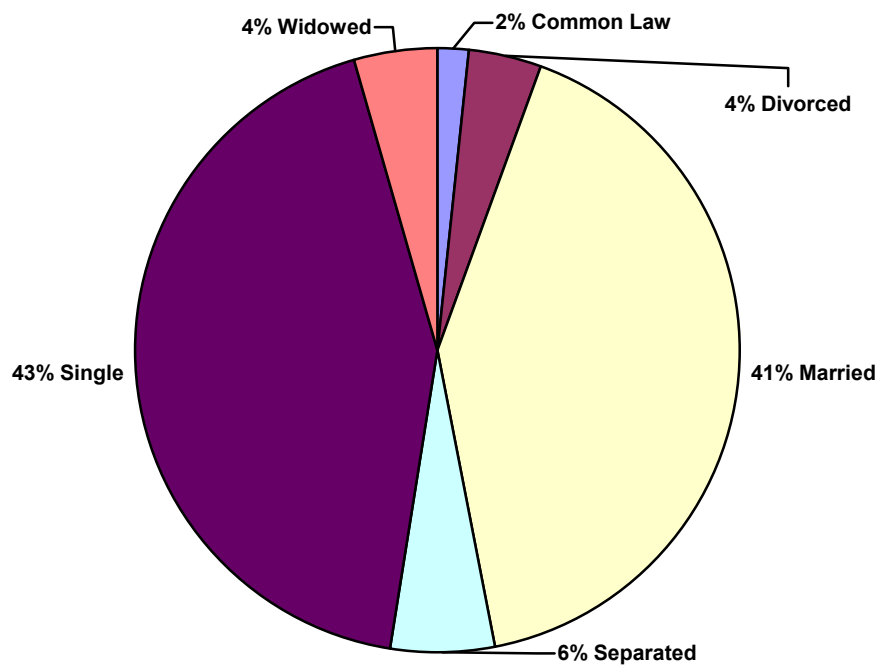


Figure 7: Marital Status



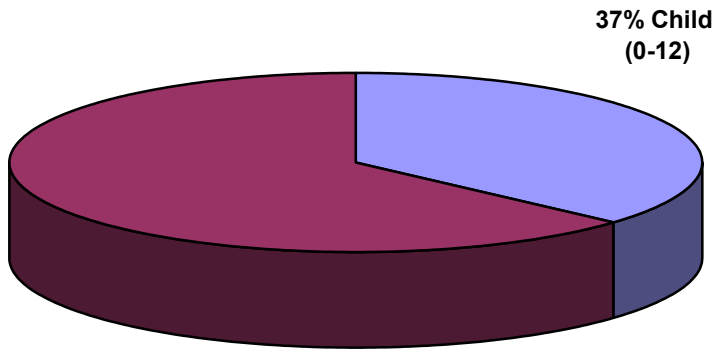


Figure 8: Children/Youth

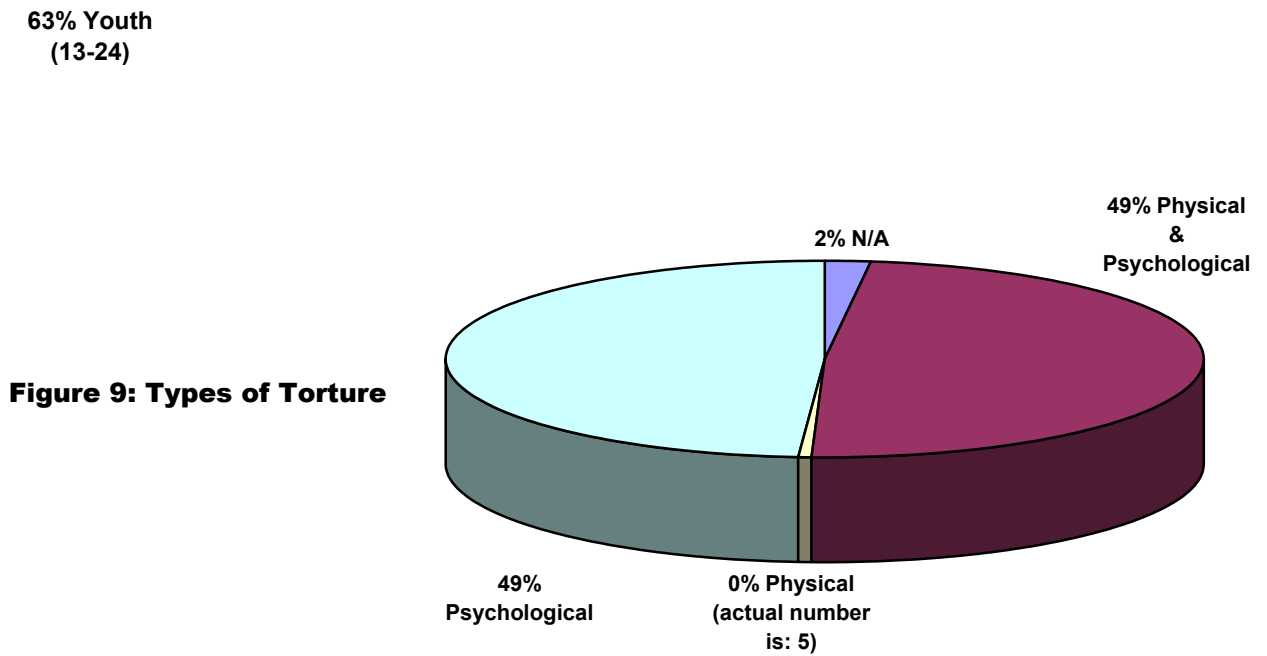


Figure 9: Types of Torture

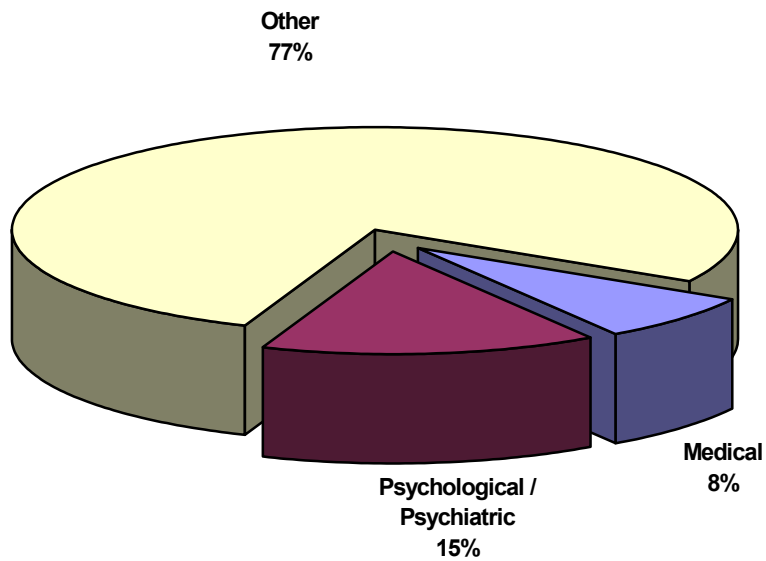


Figure 10: Client Referrals



Contact Us

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

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