

**2021-2022**

**CANADIAN CENTRE  
FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE**



**ANNUAL  
REPORT**



Funded by:



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada





# CANADIAN CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

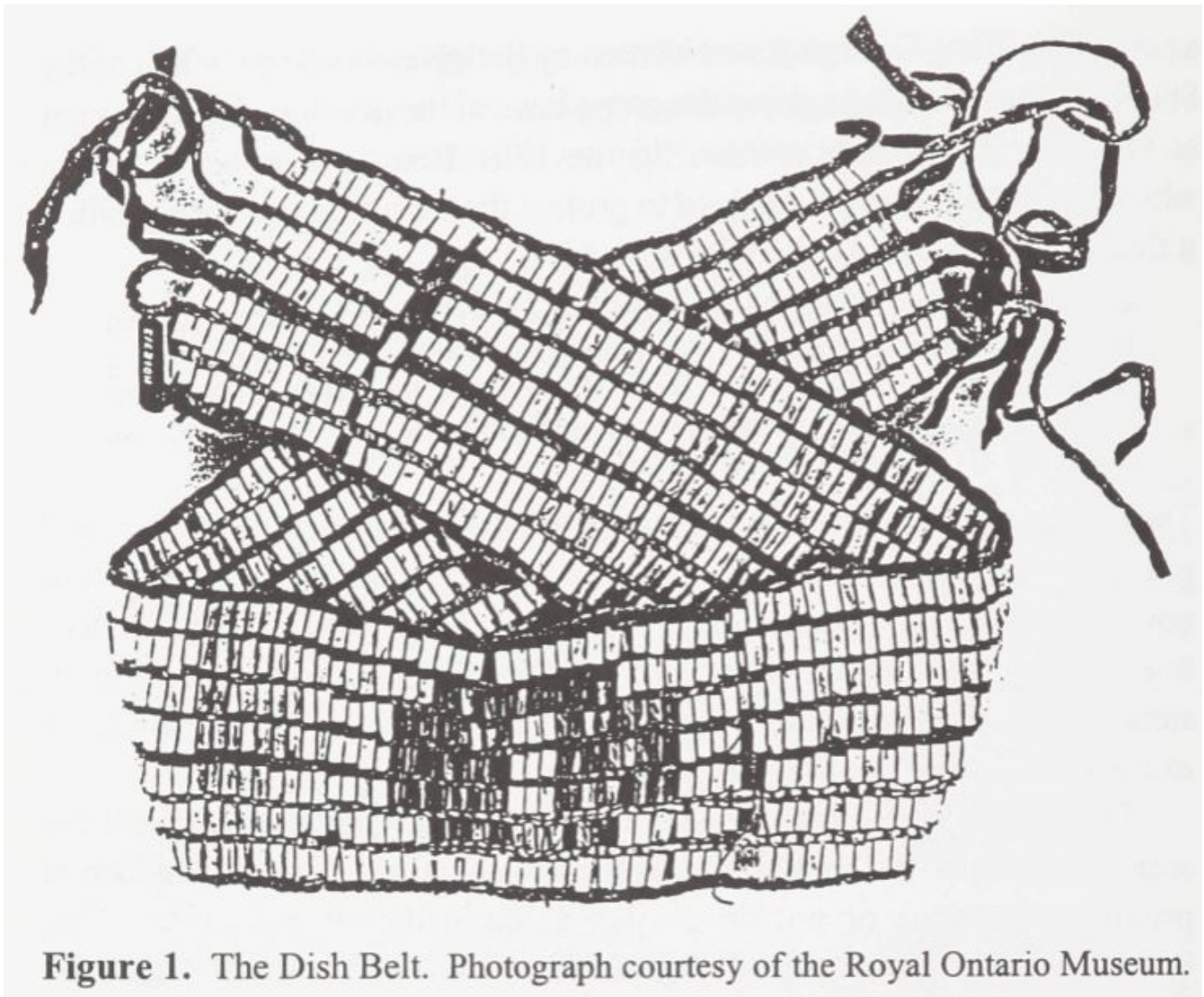


Figure 1. The Dish Belt. Photograph courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum.

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With gratitude, CCVT begins by acknowledging that the land we are on is the traditional territory of many First Nations including the Mississauga's of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We are their guests and need to be better guests in solidarity with their struggles and the ongoing injustices they suffer. First Nations history of the residential school system, cultural genocide and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls give rise to similar health issues which we, at CCVT, deal with regarding the impact of genocide, torture, rape as an instrument of war and human and sex trafficking. CCVT stands in solidarity with indigenous people and communities and we have much to learn from their lived experiences.

CCVT would also like to acknowledge that we are all treaty peoples - including those of us who came here as settlers - as migrants either in this generation or in generations past; and those of us who came here involuntarily as refugees and as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. We honour the original intent of Two Row Wampum and are committed to foster respectful relations with Indigenous communities as we pursue the Truth and Reconciliation efforts.



# CCVT'S MANDATE

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) aids survivors of torture, war, genocide and crimes against humanity to overcome the lasting effects of torture and war.

Working with the community, the Centre supports survivors in the process of successful integration into Canadian society, works for their protection and integrity and raises awareness on the continuing effects of torture and war on survivors and their families

**The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture Gives Hope After the Horror.**

## Locations

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### **Downtown Main Office:**

194 Jarvis Street, 2nd floor  
Toronto, ON M5B 2B7  
TEL: (416) 363 - 1066  
FAX: (416) 363 - 2122

### **Scarborough Office:**

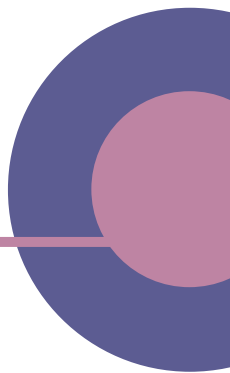
2401 Eglinton Ave. E. Suite 310  
Toronto, ON M1K 2N8  
TEL: (416) 750 - 3045  
FAX: (416) 750 - 4990

### **Mississauga Office :**

130 Dundas Street E, Suite 204  
Mississauga, ON L5A 3V8  
TEL: (905) 277 - 2288  
FAX: (905) 277- 8083

### **The Hub @ Victoria & Eglinton**

1527 Victoria Park Ave., 2nd Floor.  
Toronto, ON M1L 2T3  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Land Acknowledgment .....</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>CCVT Mandate .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Chair and Executive Director Message .....</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Mental Health Report .....</b>	<b>8-16</b>
<b>Trauma-Informed Care Services .....</b>	<b>17-19</b>
<b>Anti-Human Trafficking Report .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CCVT Clients at a Glance .....</b>	<b>21-25</b>
<b>Language &amp; Skills Development .....</b>	<b>26-31</b>
<b>Child &amp; Youth Program .....</b>	<b>32-34</b>
<b>Toronto South Lip Immigration Partnership .....</b>	<b>35-37</b>
<b>International Committee Report .....</b>	<b>38-41</b>
<b>Legal Committee Report .....</b>	<b>42-44</b>
<b>Public Education Committee Report .....</b>	<b>45-46</b>
<b>Volunteer Engagement .....</b>	<b>47-49</b>
<b>Condensed Audit Report .....</b>	<b>50-51</b>
<b>Donors .....</b>	<b>52-53</b>
<b>Board and Staff .....</b>	<b>54</b>

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE <sup>6</sup> BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*Richard Wazana, Board Chair*



*Mulugeta Abai, Executive Director*

Torture continues to be a global epidemic. We have witnessed ordinary men, women, youth, and children become victims of war, torture, and cruel and degrading treatment. Brutal governments, death squads, and para-military groups continue to fan the flame of conflict, torture, and indiscriminate bombing around the world.

The indifference, apathy, and impunity that allow violence against innocent people to spread like fire are quite shocking. The fight against torture has been further complicated by the rise of organized terrorists, and economic and natural crises. At a state level, the ability of states to protect human rights is in serious crisis and unless a concerted effort is made, further global crises will inevitably develop and might be impossible to stop.

In some places, armed groups, criminal groups, or clan chiefs hold sway over people's lives. We need to work harder for a sober reappraisal of what needs to be done to revive the human rights system and our faith in its abiding values.

In 2022, we have also witnessed a brutal imperial war in Ukraine and a civil war in Northern Ethiopia, which have led to the loss of life in the tens of thousands, as well as the destruction of infrastructure.

In Northern Ethiopia, civil war has resulted in a man-made famine. The international order is unable to stop this carnage or takes sides claiming national interest. The United Nations Security Council has been inefficient and is completely paralyzed and unable to reach any decision. Civil societies like the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture have more work to do to make sure that all governments work towards a sustainable peace.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF <sup>7</sup> THE BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Last year the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) assisted a total of 3073 clients from 115 countries by providing a range of holistic therapeutic services. CCVT also collaborated with several agencies both at home and abroad to strengthen the global human rights movement and to hold the government accountable to the international human rights treaties they signed and agreed to implement on our behalf.

CCVT strengthened the delivery of mental health services by partnering with Women's Health in Women's Hand, Parkdale Community Health Centre, and CAMH. In addition to providing treatment and documentation by psychiatrists and family physicians, our certificate program on trauma is running for the 12th year. We are also providing national trauma-informed training virtually and currently, which is very much in demand.

CCVT also partnered with REED Smith LLP to act as a community sponsor, and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada to sponsor refugees from Jordan and Greece. We have so far sponsored over 26 families that have arrived in Canada.

We have applied and also have been approved to become a Sponsorship Agreement Holder. We are currently working on bringing 25 refugees to Canada through this process.

This report is a brief synopsis of the activities of CCVT for the year ended March 31/2022. This is a significant accomplishment and it would have not been possible without the guidance of the board, the unwavering commitment, and the hard work of all staff, volunteers, and community supporters, and of course financial support from IRCC, Public Service Canada, Ministry of Trade and Skills Development, United Way, City of Toronto, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canadian Women's Foundation, HRSDC (Canada Summer Jobs) and other generous donors who provided the resources and support to whom we are grateful!

Richard Wazana, Board Chair

Mulugeta Abai, Executive Director



From April 2021 to March 2022 CCVT saw 3073 number of services users. In the first few months of the fiscal year CCVT conducted all services in a virtual mode. 70% of CCVT services were accessed via telephone, email, text as most clients did not have computers with cameras and were not familiar with various virtual platforms such as zoom. To ease a smooth transition to paperless workplace CCVT staff were trained on a new Human resources virtual platforms and service platforms such as Bell connect, Zoom, Google Suite etc. In addition to the virtual services onboarding, CCVT conducted various educational workshops on COVID-19 and vaccinations. With the support of the City of Toronto COVID-19 Vaccine Engagement Teams Grant led by FCJ refugee centre CCVT as consortium member we hired services users that speak Arabic, Kinyarwanda, French, Swahili, Tamil, Amharic, Tigrinya as resident ambassadors and worked with Access Alliance, Adam House, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Centre Francophone, Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, FCJ Refugee Centre, Matthew House, Romero House, Sojourn House, and Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership to support precarious migrants and individuals living in Toronto without OHIP with accessible information in appropriate methods to increase awareness, confidence, and access to the Covid-19 vaccine.

## Highlights:

### **Covid 19 vaccination clinic for the undocumented**

Launching the Vaccine engagement team with lead Agency FCJ refugee centre with partners which include Access Alliance, Adam House, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Centre Francophone, Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, FCJ Refugee Centre, Matthew House, Romero House, Sojourn House, and Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership. Together, with the support of community ambassadors and community partners, precarious migrants and individuals living in Toronto without OHIP were provided with accessible information in appropriate methods to increase awareness, confidence, and access to the Covid-19 vaccine.





## Additional Highlights:

- The completion of CCVT's strategic plan
- The development of an Anti-black Racism Committee
- Land based research on reimagining relationships between survivors of torture and indigenous people.
- COVID 19 return back to hybrid work and use of hybrid model for LINC 1,2 and 3, 4 , and Homework club
- Creation of Anti Human Trafficking program
- National certificate course
- Start of Youth Outreach Program
- Hiring of Ukrainian Counselor



*Two resident ambassadors Salem Yohannes(left), Hellen Nomugisha (Right) and Mbalu Lumor, Senior Manager, Programs and Newcomer services (Centre)*

CCVT planned a gradual and staggered return to in-person services in consultation with staff and following recommendation from public health. Return to In-Person Guideline was developed to take necessary precaution and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and service users.

It was very important and critical to provide in-person services as many service users were facing difficulty in accessing virtual services due to lack of technology and technical skills. For many service users being at home is not safe or they don't have a privacy for a virtual session. Therefore CCVT adopted to provide services in a hybrid model which includes in-person, phone, email, and zoom. Services are provided with client centered approach and trauma informed care which is welcoming to service users and also a good foundation to build trust and collaboration with service users.

The settlement program was able to successfully provide services and supports such as housing, referral to different internal programs (language classes, computer classes, conversation circle, driver's license preparation etc.). In addition support groups continue to run virtually to provide safe space for people with similar background, language, experience and gender to learn and share their experience as well as build social support and belonging in a community. The support groups that were active and successfully completed are African Women's Support Group, Mind Over Mood Wellness Group, Farsi/Dari Support Group, and Habesha Women's Support Group.

Furthermore virtual group information session were provided on different topics such as environment, Legal Rights and Services, Stages of Adapting Life in Canada, Adult School and Continuing Education, Self-Employment and Small Business, Financial Literacy and Volunteering & Community Engagement. We are able to conduct 72 information and orientation session which is attended by 938 service users.

While Staff dedicated their time to support clients in their rehabilitation journey, we launched a managers and staff virtual wellness initiatives including a biweekly meditation, staff led recreational games, gardening project to connect during the lockdowns, practice wellness and share gardening tips at home (See below). Staff were encouraged to participate in various professional development opportunity in the community, OCASI PET funding and CCVT led trainings on topics focused on Anti-Black Racism, Anti-Human Trafficking and CCVT's commitment to Truth and reconciliation.



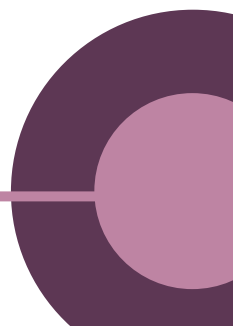
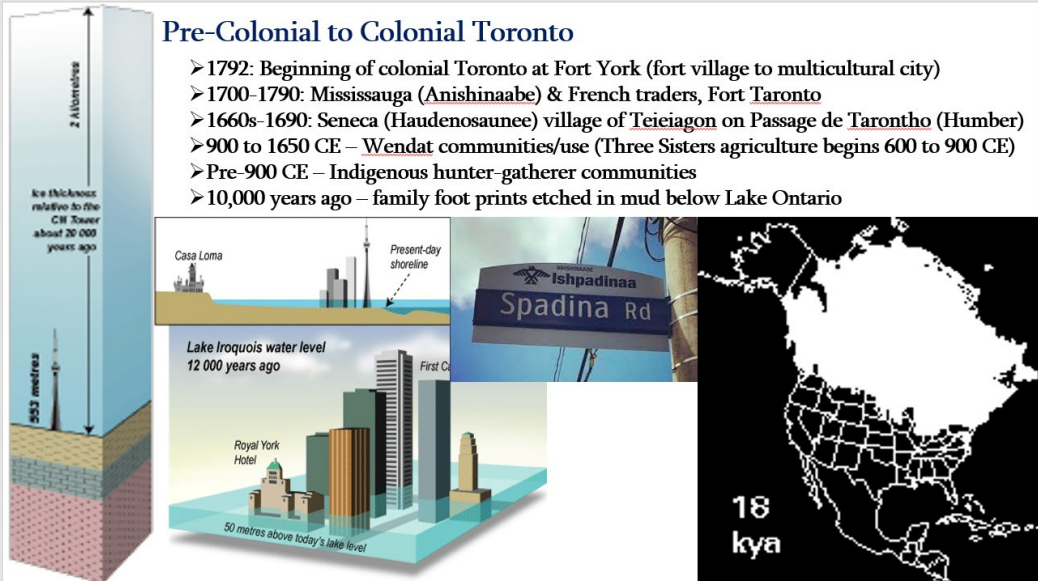
## TRUTH & RECONCILIATION INITIATIVES

*"What a beautiful day! The snow is so beautifully wrapped around every blade of grass, every branch of every tree, there is not one single element that isn't touched by the love of creation, it is a blanket of comfort! So serene, pure 'n gentle amazing! This is the beauty of honoured relationship between two energies of love, compassion, strength 'n hope! Working together in harmony in a dance of intimacy! I love it!"*

**Elder Norma Jacobs**

**Pre-Colonial to Colonial Toronto**

- > 1792: Beginning of colonial Toronto at Fort York (fort village to multicultural city)
- > 1700-1790: Mississauga (Anishinaabe) & French traders, Fort Toronto
- > 1660s-1690: Seneca (Haudenosaunee) village of Teieiaigon on Passage de Tarontho (Humber)
- > 900 to 1650 CE – Wendat communities/use (Three Sisters agriculture begins 600 to 900 CE)
- > Pre-900 CE – Indigenous hunter-gatherer communities
- > 10,000 years ago – family foot prints etched in mud below Lake Ontario

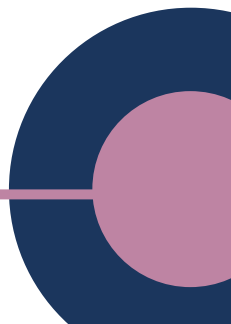


# MENTAL HEALTH REPORT

The fiscal year April 2021-March 2022 saw the Mental Health program transitioning to hybrid services due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. For some clients, receiving virtual sessions was easy but for others, especially those who were not technology savvy preferred to come in person. The Mental Health program supported clients and their families using a holistic approach where settlement and mental health needs were covered to improve the determinants of health of our clients. We understood that in addressing issues of mental health, employment, housing, social support networks, and health among others, we were working to improve the wellbeing and mental health of survivors of torture, war, Genocide and crimes against humanity. Indeed, the program has empowered clients and provided them with tools, so they could cope with daily stressors and therefore improve their health and mental health. The Mental Health program worked with a medical network that included psychiatrists, psychologists and doctors in order to provide a comprehensive service to clients in need. We believed that early intervention was a key factor for the healing process of survivors. We ensured that clients had access to needed internal and external services that promote health and mental wellbeing.

## **CCVT's mental health programming included:**

- One-on-one on-going counselling support in various languages.
- Crisis intervention to individuals and families experiencing mental-health crisis
- Support groups and wellness groups for CCVT clients.
- Confidential assessment by in-house psychiatrists, psychologists and family doctors.
- Public education with a focus on mental health.
- Support letters to advocate for clients within the immigration and refugee claimant process.
- Referral to community partners for medical and mental health services.
- Case management to address clients' social determinants of health; i.e., housing, finances, employment, education, etc.



# MENTAL HEALTH REPORT

## Crisis intervention

The Mental Health program provided crisis intervention using a client's centred approach, as well as trauma informed care approach. Meaningful crisis response required a thorough understanding of the issues at play. An appropriate understanding of the emergency situation not only included an appreciation for what was happening at the moment, but also why it was happening and how an individual felt when he or she was not in crisis. Crises- particularly recurrent crises-likely signaled a failure to address underlying issues appropriately.

In Numbers: 35

## Some examples of crisis situations:

- A married mother in her 40s who was in an abusive relationship. The husband was pressuring her to leave Canada and go back to their country of origin with him. The client did not want to go with him. The client was given the option to leave her residence and move to a family shelter with her children. The client was also provided with supportive counseling and the crisis hotline contact information was provided to her.
- A female client in her 30s survivor of sexual violence. The client was having flashbacks about her past sexual attacks and was feeling suicidal, a safety check was conducted and crisis intervention counseling was conducted, and the counselor provided the client with helpful self-care tips. The client is attending sessions regularly for crisis intervention.
- A male client in his late 40's who is a victim of the war and torture. The client also has addiction issues. The client was seen for crisis intervention as he has been evicted from his apartment and was homeless. The client was highly anxious and had some suicidal ideations. The client was in urgent need of housing/shelter and the counselor secured a temporary shelter for him. The client was also provided with counseling for Stress management and anxiety management. The client is already known at CAMH and has been getting services from them related to his addiction.
- A female client in her late 50's who is a victim of war and torture plus childhood neglect. The client was diagnosed with Complex PTSD and is on ODSP. The client was seen urgently after being involved in a car accident (she was hit by a car while crossing the street and had to spend a week in the hospital). The client had been feeling very sad and had some suicidal thoughts but no plan. The counselor applied Cognitive behavioral therapy to assist the client in improving her thought process from negative to more optimistic view of self. The client was also referred to Community Care Access Centre for assistance with home/personal care. The client has bi-weekly sessions for supportive counseling.

# MENTAL HEALTH REPORT



·A male client in his 30's survivor of sexual violence. The client has a history of mental health issues and has been in and out of the hospital. The counselor saw the client for crisis intervention when the client mentioned to a Service Provider that he was thinking about overdosing on prescription medication. The Service Provider then called this counselor. The counselor provided information on Suicide prevention hotline. Counselor and client discussed for the client to go to emergency if he continues to feel overwhelmed and to keep the counselor updated. The client spoke to Suicide hotline and he did not need to go to the hospital, he was seen by the counselor afterwards for follow up.

A female client in her late twenties, pregnant with her second child. She is a single mother, survivor of domestic violence. The client had also an 18 months old child. The client was at risk of losing her home as she has not been paying the full rent. The Landlord had already notified her that they were taking her to court. The client attended session highly anxious and very emotional. At the beginning of session, counselor applied relaxation techniques, mindfulness to help the client feel more calm and relaxed. Counselor was also able to speak to the client's Landlord and a compromise was reached: The client will be paying the money she owes for rent in instalment.

## **Certificate Course**

One of the mission of Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) is to provide public education. Every year, CCVT facilitates a trauma informed certificate course. The Certificate Course (fiscal year April 2021-March 2022) was conducted virtually.

This course comprised a series of tailored individual seminars addressing key aspects of refugee mental health. Each seminar was a realistic and up-to-date appraisal of the topic, which included resources for the attendee where possible. Each topic addressed across the life course (from childhood to later life) and incorporated understandings and information about best approaches with special need groups. Participants who successfully completed a minimum of six seminar sessions received a Certificate.

## **After completing this course the participants were able to:**

- I. Outline the key determinants of refugee mental health.
- II. Discuss the impact of pre- and post-migration experiences on refugee mental health.
- III. Describe the effects of politically organized collective violence, war, intimidation and targeted individual violence on survivors and their families and communities.

# MENTAL HEALTH REPORT

## Support Groups

There were different kinds of Support groups conducted. The way a group worked depended on its goals. The two main types were mental health groups and psychoeducational groups.

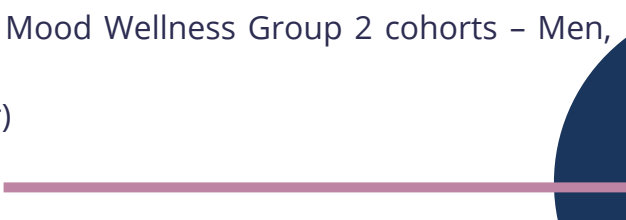
In Mental Health/Wellness groups, the interpersonal experience between the members of the group was a major focus. Opening up in front of others could be challenging, but it also led to major growth and change when participants experienced a sense of belonging and acceptance from their peers. Mental Health groups were based on working through these challenges and changes. Through Wellness group sessions, participants developed better understanding about mental health, and better ability to address their mental health concerns.

Psychoeducational groups were more focused on sharing information on a particular topic or teaching skills (e.g., Housing, Employment, Education, Finances, Health and Mental Health). The relationship between members was not the most important factor in this kind of group, though participants still benefited from connecting with others who were struggling with similar issues. Through educational information sessions and settlement workshops, these groups aimed to empower the participants with settlement information to assist them to be more confident in navigating the Canadian systems and to have access to other community services.

Support groups at CCVT were generally psycho-educational in nature and run for 3 months. There were two mental health/wellness groups conducted, for all-gender, and each run for 6 weeks.

The support group included presentations and workshops by guest speakers from different organization and CCVT staffs. Workshop topics were selected to meet the needs of the participants.

Throughout the year, groups ran virtually. The groups included:

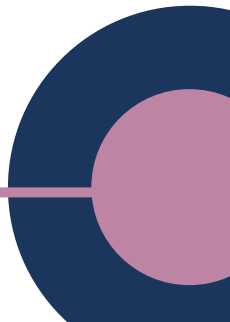
- African Women Group (other than Eritrean background and Francophone community)
  - Adapting to Life in Canada (Women)
  - Farsi and Dari speaking Group (Men and Women)
  - Ethiopian and Eritrean Women Group
  - Stronger Together (Men and Women)
  - Mental Health Support Group (Mind over Mood Wellness Group 2 cohorts – Men, Women and Non-binary)
  - Arabic Speaking Support Group (All gender)
  - Arabic Women Support Group
  - Spanish Speaking Support Group
- 

These groups aimed to provide clients with relevant information. Some examples of the themes presented were:

- Financial literacy
- Information about Employment Ontario Information & Resume Preparation
- Impact of COVID-19 pandemic
- Access to social assistance
- Mindfulness/Stress reducing Yoga exercises
- Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression
- Accessing health services
- Educational upgrading
- Housing rights
- Family Conflict/Domestic Abuse
- Effective Communication
- Interpersonal Conflicts
- General Overview of Toronto Public Health Services
- How to overcome trauma
- Mental health and wellness
- Employment rights
- Self-care
- Self-employment

## In numbers:

**Total workshops/group sessions: 110**  
**Total number of participants: 1430**





# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE SERVICES

## Pilot Project

### Promotion and Outreach

As a way to spread news about the National Trauma Informed Care Project, a promo video (English and French), a poster, and a flyer was created in April 2021. Both versions of the video, the flyer and the poster were shared via email with the agencies and posted on CCVT website.

Training Manual, PowerPoint slides and speaker notes were created for all five modules. Adjustments and changes had been made accordingly and was reviewed by CCVT management between the dates August 9th and September 23rd 2021.

Outreach for Ontario agencies started on August 9th 2021 and ended by September 20th 2021. There was a total of 69 registered training attendees from 35 agencies for the Ontario Trauma-Informed Training Project. The registration forms received from the agencies contacted were added to the database.

### Project Speakers

Experienced members of the National Advisory Committee, Subject Matter Experts, and the Focus group were invited to choose subtopics that matches their expertise and participate in the training as speakers. These external speakers were from agencies across Canada and their experience and knowledge enriched the training for the audience. CCVT staff were also chosen based on their expertise as speakers for specific training subtopics.

### Delivering the Topics

The five training sessions were held from October 2021 to February 2022. Each topic included interactive activities such as mentimeter, case studies, polls, breakout room discussions and open discussions to encourage participation and positive feedback from the audience. Each sessions included two 10 minute wellness breaks. The last 20 minute of each session was dedicated to a Q&A session for the audience to address their questions or concerns to the speakers.

Some CCVT staff attended the sessions as well and there were (approximately) a total of 70 participants each session. The feedback received for each session was largely positive.



# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE SERVICES

## Certifications

Certifications were created and the participants who attended at least four sessions were contacted to confirm their attendance. The process which took a month (March 2022) included gathering the participants' mail and email addresses in an excel sheet and contacting them to confirm their addresses. The certificates were emailed or mailed to the participants based on their preference.

## National Delivery Preparations

### Promotion and Outreach

A new promotion video in English and French is in the process of creation. The video promotes the new national delivery while thanking the speakers and participants who joined the Ontario Pilot Project delivery. The flyer and poster are also updated and sent to the agencies along with the invitation email. The promotional material are posted on CCVT website.

Approximately 300 agencies have been contacted and the team is in the process of receiving and uploading the registration forms to the database. The outreach efforts commenced on July 29th 2022 and will end by August 31st 2022.

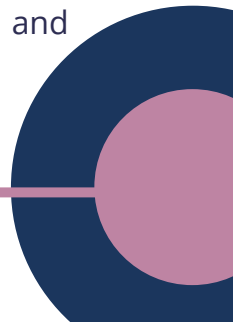
## Project Speakers

The team has contacted NAC, SMEs, and Focus Group members who have participated in these committees from across Canada. They have been asked to participate in the training as speakers or refer an expert from their agency to volunteer as a speaker for the National Trauma-Informed Training topics. These efforts will ensure that the speakers are not only limited to Ontario and thus their knowledge and experience will enrich the training. The team is in the process of finalizing the speakers.

## Planning and Scheduling for New Sessions

The five training sessions will be held from October 2022 to February 2023. As part of the preparation and planning for the next delivery, the team and the management met biweekly to review the feedback received from Ontario Trauma-Informed Care Training Project to improve the training accordingly. The team discussed the changes necessary in both the content and the outline of each topic. Each meeting covered a different topic and the management focused on the material related to that meeting. The final meeting was a general review session during which the team finished final edits and improvements.

After negotiations and several meetings with a zoom representative, the team decided to upgrade trauma-informed training Zoom account to business.



# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TRAIN<sup>19</sup> THE TRAINER TRAINING

## This account includes:

- Up to 300 participants
- Language Interpretation channels

With the new Zoom Upgrade, it is possible to offer simultaneous French interpretation. A French interpreter was hired for the training project and will be present and interpreting in all five sessions. She has prior experience working with CCVT and is familiar with the terminology used in the training. The training manual is translated by a certified French translator to be accessible to French-speaking participants. The PowerPoint slides are also translated into French.

## NATIONAL TRAUMA- INFORMED CARE FEEDBACK

### Module 1: Principles of Trauma-Informed Service

**01**

I appreciate your efforts ,  
The modules are excellent  
. it was a good workshop.

**02**

That was a well  
coordinated, informative  
and educative session

**03**

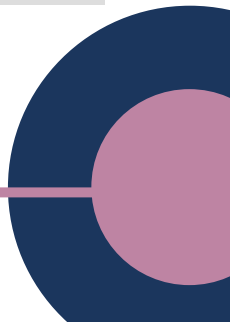
Very good presenters;  
engaging and  
knowledgeable. Looking  
forward to the other  
sessions

**04**

I am looking forward to the  
rest of the formation and  
appreciate that participants  
can share.

**05**

I like it that the hand outs were sent in advance. We were able to follow the Speakers. Very informative. Speakers speak from experience. Learned a lot. Thank you.



# ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORT

Since the beginning of the Anti-human Trafficking undertaking at CCVT at the end of the fiscal year 2020-2021 to the end of the fiscal year being reported: 2021-2022; the initially called Anti-human trafficking project is now a program in good standing and regular service is provided to clients under this program.

The early activities including staff training taken by whole staff and provided by other organizations it is now converted into training done inside CCVT and continued during the present year to ensure that staff gets updated about resources and new staff is brought up to date as well. Similarly, presentations on this topic to clients, is an ongoing activity to keep our clients well informed and provide them with valuable information and resources. We have this year moved into providing as well, presentations for volunteers in order to equip them with the knowledge needed to understand some particular needs of clients that have experienced human trafficking.

The program has acquired a good reputation in the community and CCVT has even led joint ventures in collaboration with other organizations which are specifically delivering services for the population affected. CCVT has also been invited to do presentations on its strategies and services at several events happening at different levels: Locally by grassroots organizations as well as to participate in International conferences. To illustrate it is relevant to mention just a few of the several events attended by CCVT during this year:

“UZIMA Women Relief Group” presentation in a support group July 30 2021

Participation (virtually) at the UN International Day against Trafficking in persons. Organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) and Apne Aap Women Worldwide. IT: (virtual platform hosted in Vienna: July 30 2021

Pelletier Mothers of Teenage Foundation (PTMOF) International Conference in Toronto “in person” presentation, September 12, 2021

Forum organized by the counter trafficking network on November 17, 2021 and CCVT participated as facilitator:

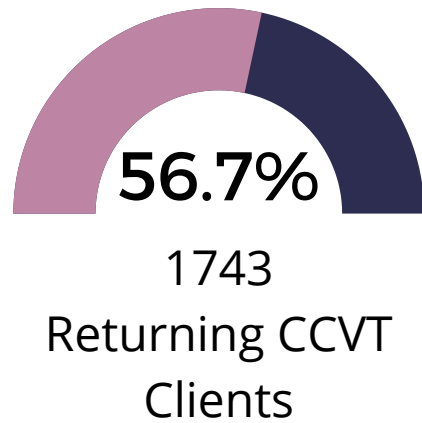
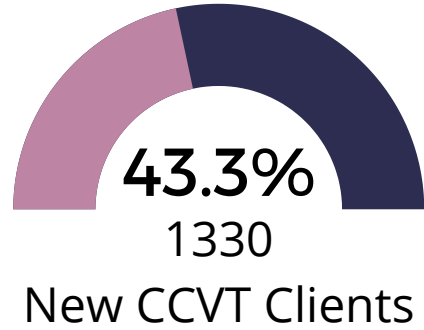
Presentation at UN International Conference on the Status of Women; NGO- CSW66  
UN workshop March 21, 2022

Presentation at one of the AHT support group of clients of FCJ Refugee Centre; February 28th and March 1st 2022

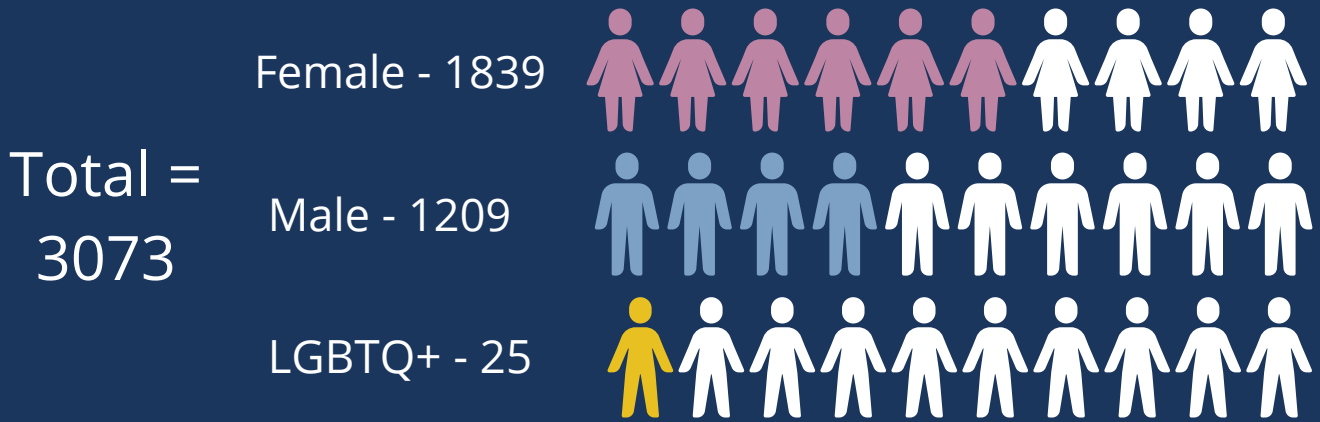


# CCVT CLIENTS AT A GLANCE

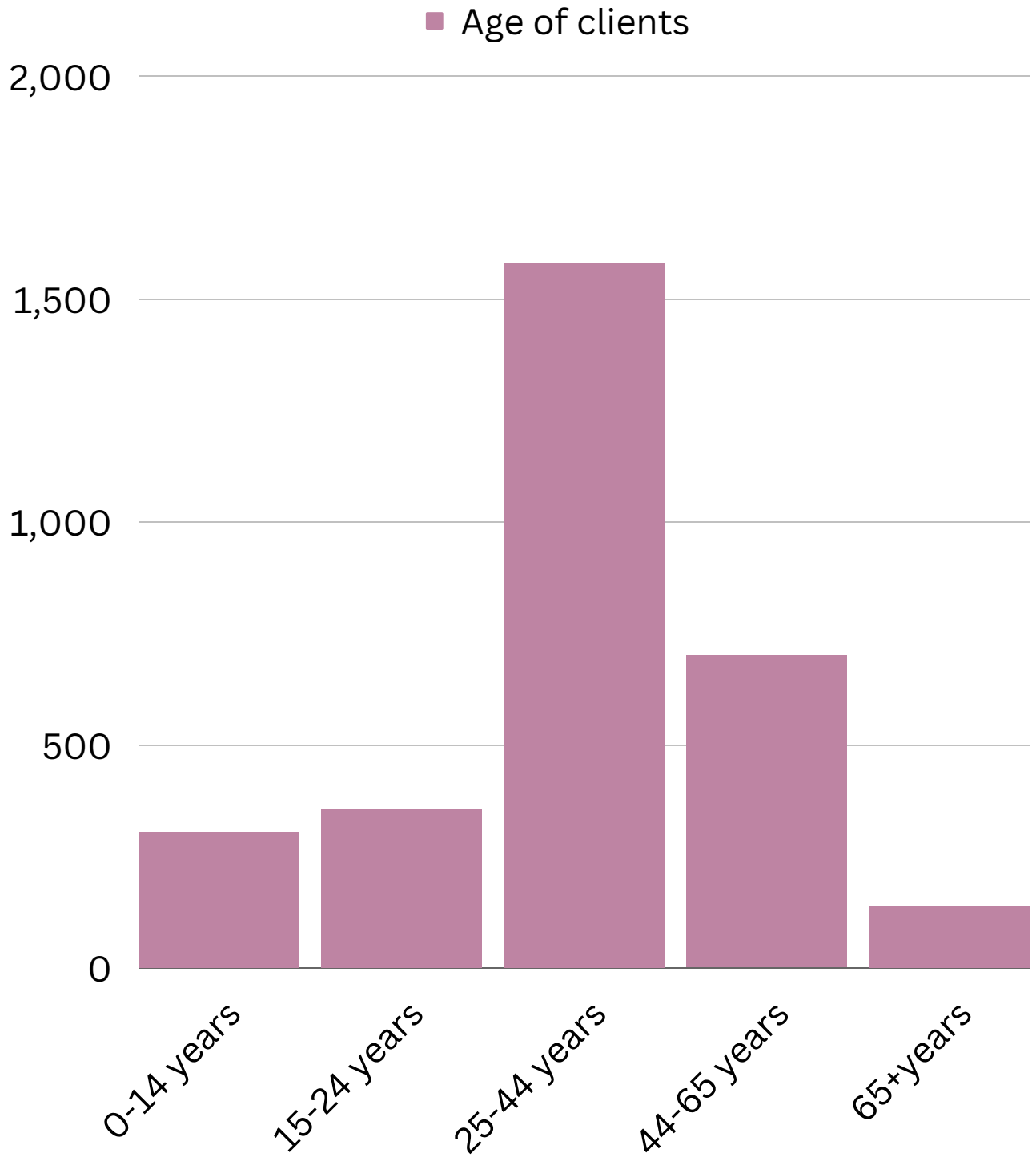
## UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS 2021-2022



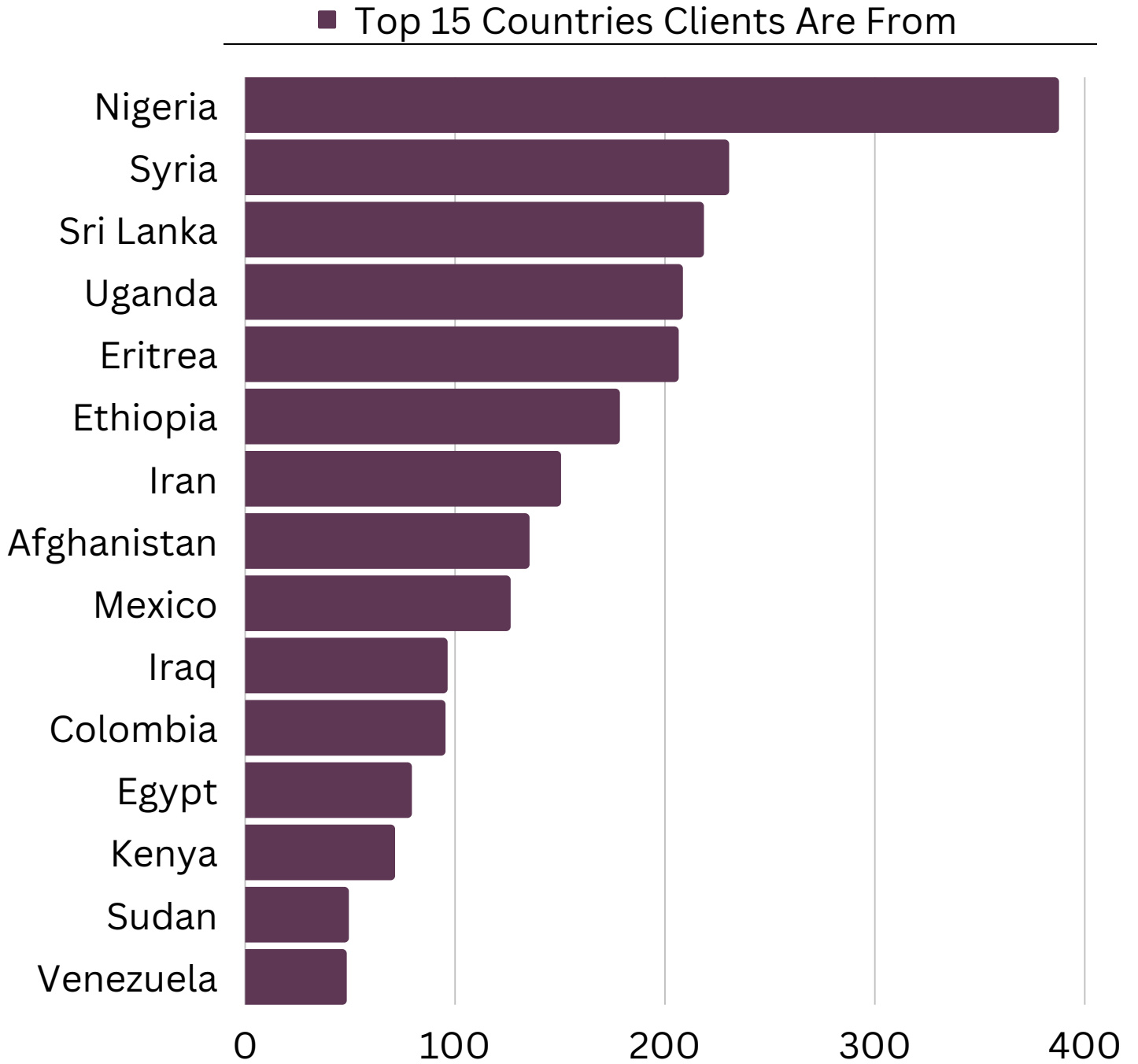
## Gender Identity of CCVT Clients



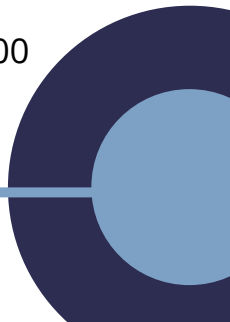
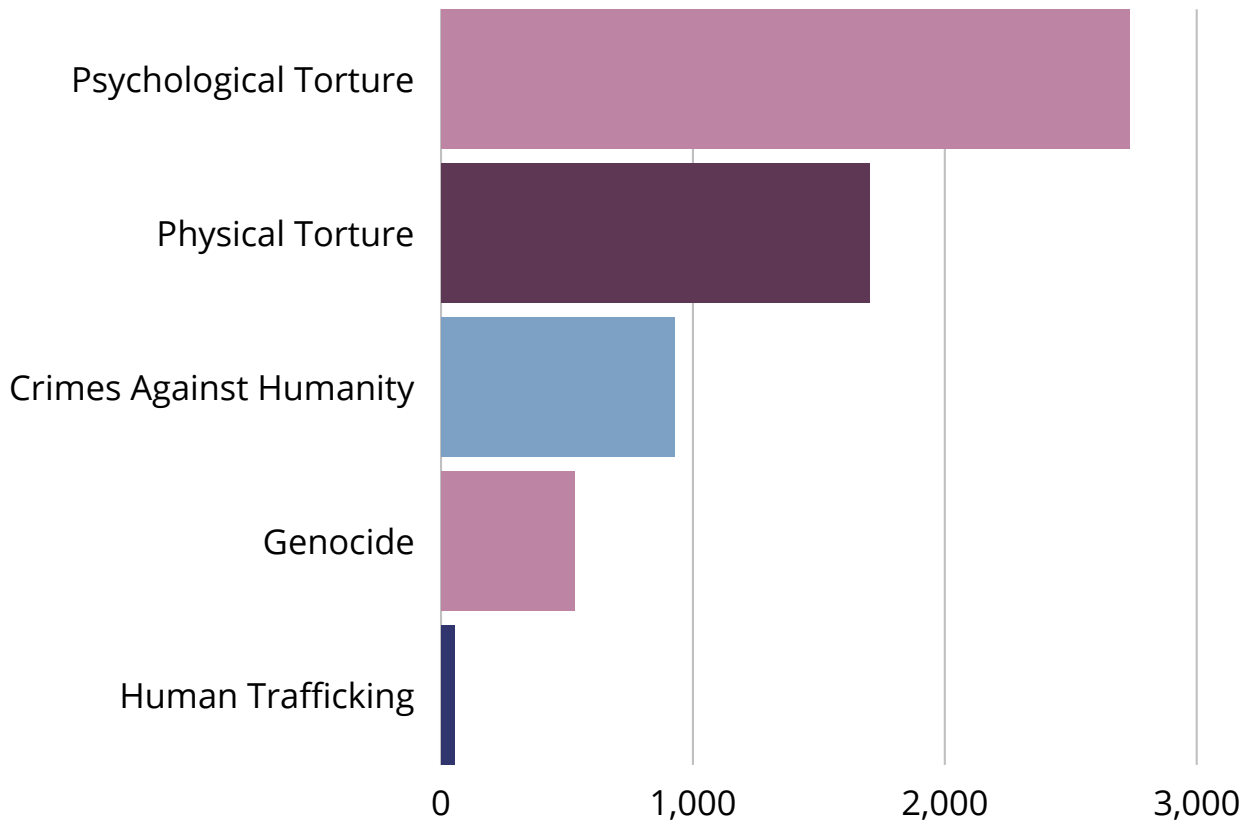
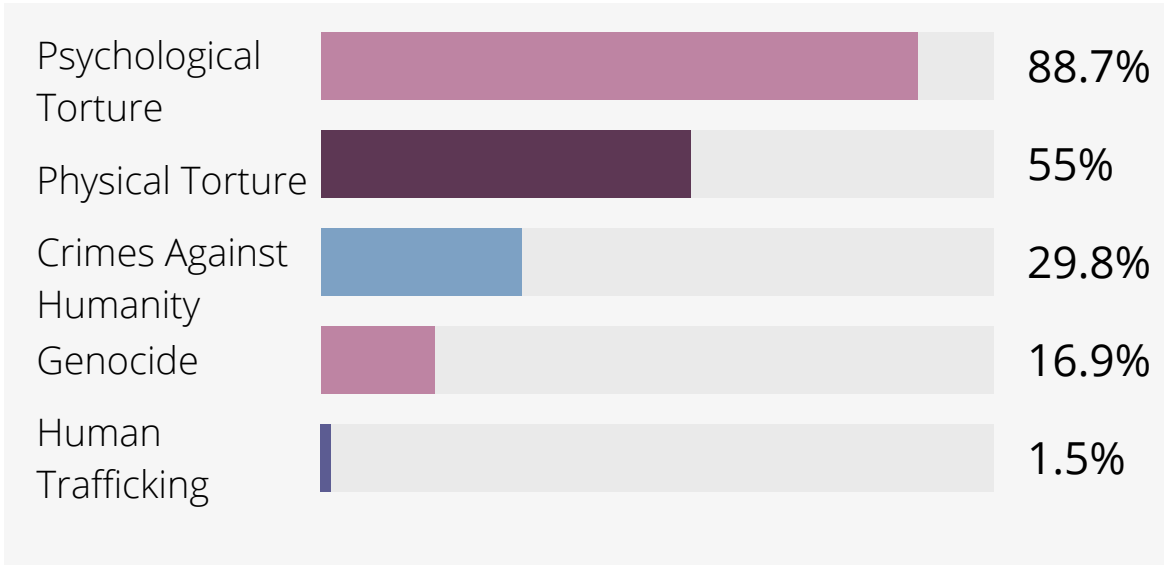
# CCVT CLIENTS AT A GLANCE



# CCVT CLIENTS AT A GLANCE

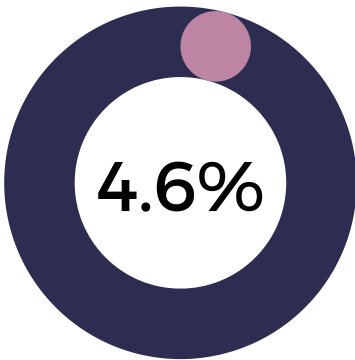
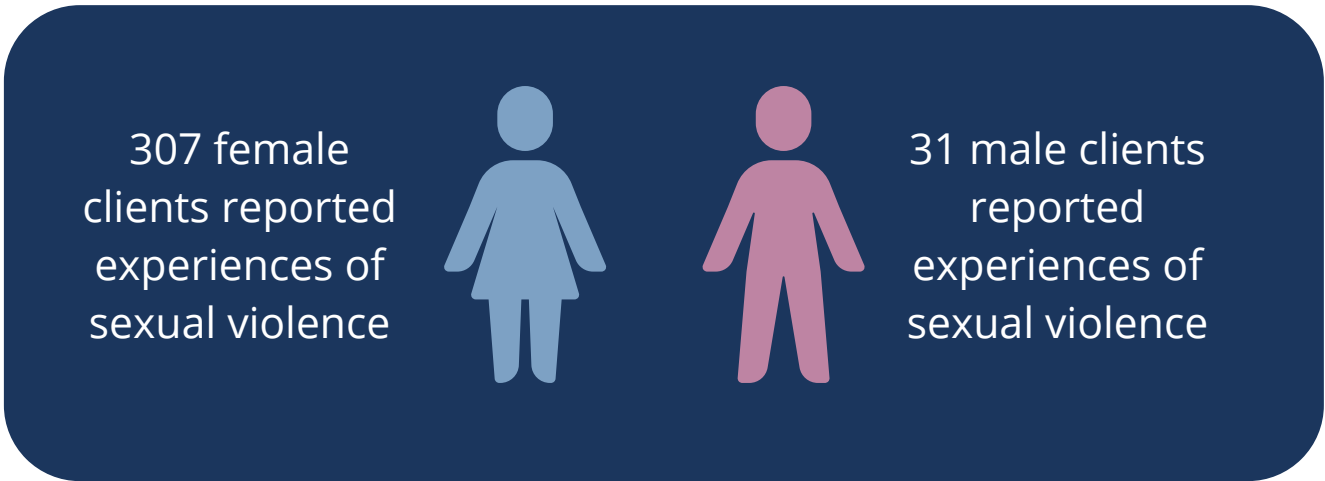


# CCVT CLIENTS AT A GLANCE

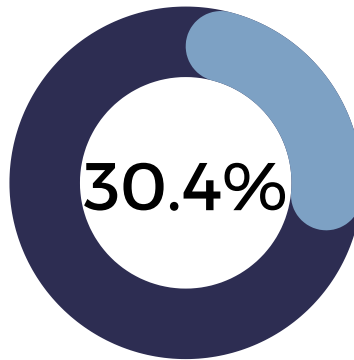




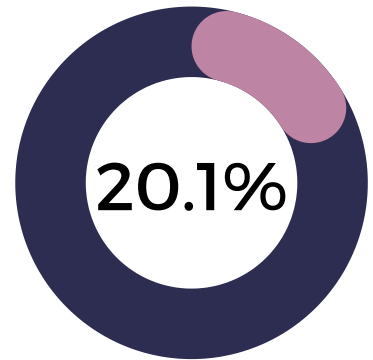
# CCVT CLIENTS AT A GLANCE



141 clients reported experiences of female genital mutilation



1045 clients reported experiences of being detained abroad



618 clients reported experiences of domestic violence



# LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING REPORT

According to CCVT mandate, the Center "...aids survivors of torture, war, genocide and crimes against humanity to overcome the lasting effects of torture and war." This statement defines the details of all the endeavors of the Centre, including the Language and Skills Development program.

For the past 31 years, CCVT's specialized Language and Skills Development Program has been a key component in the recovery and successful rehabilitation of survivors of torture, war, and organized violence. It is an organic part of CCVT's goal to offer survivors the will to live. In collaboration with the many other services at the centre and in partnership with the community, CCVT's English as a Second Language and Skills Training Program enables and supports survivors in the process of successful integration into Canadian society and promotes hope after the horror.

The program aims to assist survivors of torture and war with learning language tools and developing the communication skills needed to achieve their recovery goals and start their journey of integration into Canadian society. To this end, our Language and Skills Training Program works in conjunction with TDSB ESL classes and other CCVT services to provide a supportive learning environment and accessible delivery approach to maximize the learning experience of our students.

To achieve the highest quality and best outcomes, we also partner with community groups like Second Harvest Food Bank to provide needed nutritional support and decrease client food insecurity.

Another key objective of the program is to reduce barriers faced by survivors of torture and war by aiding students in their acquisition of English language. Our English language courses as well as our Computer Skills Training Program are designed to be flexible and sensitive to the needs of adults who have experienced trauma and aware of the impact that such trauma can have on learning and memory. Our program offers alternative schedules and supportive learning environments while maintaining a high quality of teaching.



# LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING REPORT

## Nurturing

The Language and Skills Training courses at CCVT are specifically adapted to the learning abilities and needs of our students and designed for the language proficiency and skills development of survivors of torture and war. Our courses nurture the individual and cater to the needs of adult learners who suffer from debilitating imprints of violence that make the learning process harder and more strenuous than for other adult learners. Our teachers are highly qualified and specially trained, and our curriculum is adapted to help students acquire skills related to their immediate and long-term life goals. The classroom atmosphere and supportive environment provides clients with encouragement, hope, community, social context and the help they need to progress with their language and social skills.

Experiencing torture, war and other forms of organized violence results in isolation, stress and despair of survivors. Through the years, CCVT has met the challenge of teaching English as a Second Language, providing Skills Training and addressing resettlement issues by fostering and addressing the needs of our clients by creating a “safe haven” where clients feel welcome and by creating an environment where virtually all services are delivered in a central location and found in one organization.

## Fostering Interpersonal Connections

A special feature of CCVT’s Language and Skills Training Program is fostering interpersonal ties and connectedness as an objective, and as a mediating link between survivors and the host community. Clients attend LINC, ESL and Skills Training programs not only to learn the language and skills, but to make friends, network, socialize and be among others who have come from and experienced similar traumatic situations. They come to their “family” where they know they are accepted. This is especially true for many of our ESL clients who are seniors and can develop social networks through interacting with the other students in the classrooms. This interaction aids in breaking their isolation and fosters a connection with our younger clients. In addition, our students also engage regularly with CCVT volunteers and teachers in the classes and together they all serve to become agents of change in the community.



# LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING REPORT

## The Classroom

Involvement in Language and Skills Training activities gives our clients the opportunity to access our trained settlement staff, who provide other settlement services which would otherwise be beyond their reach because of the language barrier or lack of information. You can see the effort put into language instruction at CCVT. It is not an ordinary class or learning environment but a unique and specialized classroom for people who are survivors and often suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Class levels available to our clients range from low beginner to advanced. Every year CCVT provides language and skills training for approximately 300 clients from 80 countries. Clients stay with our English Language Programs for an average of 3 to 18 months, moving through language proficiency levels at their own pace. Normally classes are provided on CCVT premises downtown and in Scarborough so that clients and teaching staff will have access to counselors and other CCVT services when emotional or other needs arise for themselves or their families. During the last 2 fiscal years we transitioned to remote learning due to the pandemic to provide an opportunity for our teachers and students to stay safely at home and continue their work on language skills and be a part of the community during this difficult time. The teachers had to learn how to conduct their lessons remotely. Initially, we had some difficulties connecting with all our students and teaching them how to attend their classes online over Zoom. We partnered with another organization to provide our students with good and very affordable computers as many of our clients did not have access to technology.

## Language Program Expertise

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our programs through collaborative work with instructors, counselors, computer and secretarial staff, CCVT volunteers and partner agencies in Europe. The CCVT language program has gained significant expertise in delivering services to traumatized immigrant and refugee learners, and in providing workshops and seminars for ESL and educational professionals. CCVT has already developed its reputation as an active and leading organization that can provide curriculum and delivery practice as well as professional insight into newcomer and refugee learner issues.



# LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING REPORT

## **Tutoring, Conversation Circles, Citizenship Class**

In cooperation with the volunteer program, we have enhanced our English tutoring program to include a significant number of our students. We continue running our volunteer-driven Citizenship Class to assist our students in preparing for citizenship tests. Conversation Circle is also facilitated by volunteers to expedite communication skills development in low beginner and intermediate level students. Before the pandemic we had an increased number and frequency of volunteer teaching assistants in the classes to provide more opportunities for our students to interact with other Canadians in English and a successful Computer Aided English Language Instruction classroom that benefited our students tremendously. Currently, because of the pandemic restrictions, English tutoring program, Citizenship Class and Conversation Circle are successfully running remotely over Zoom.

Success and Recovery

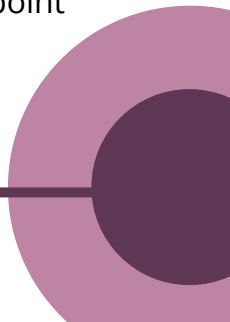
Clients may also be in need of upgrading language skills to master the language and acquire basic computer skills to pursue long term learning in continued education. It is our aim to help students achieve their goals in skills training or higher education so that they can find work and live higher quality, independent lives and also become self-sufficient and active participants in Canadian Society. The CCVT Language and Skills Training Program continues to be a critical component of a successful recovery program for our clients. It is also often the first point of contact with their new home in Canada. The Language and Skills Training program at CCVT has become a source of strength and support that helps our clients resume their lives with independence, confidence and dignity.

## **Employment Services and Skills Training Program 2021 - 2022**

This program helps our clients to be informed and equipped with the new technology on their journey to successful employment.

It helps prepare participants for a range of jobs within an office and retail environment, or develops required computer skills for positions like Personal Support Worker, where reporting would be done on-line. Many entry-level office positions are available to individuals that have limited job market experience, or are new to the Toronto labour market, or people that are returning to work following an interruption in their career. These positions are frequently used as a first work experience and as a starting point for many other occupations in the same industry.

While acquiring these skills the students also have access to an expert advice on job search strategies, resume writing and interview skills.



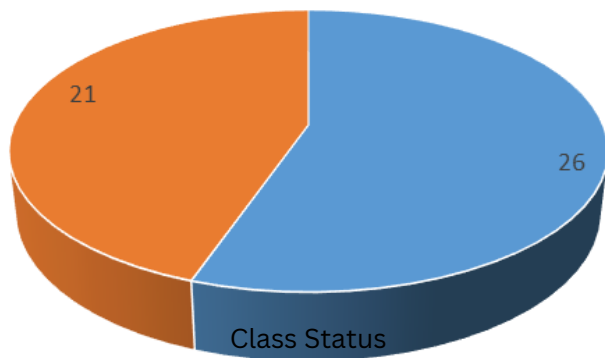
# LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING REPORT

CCVT is always looking for opportunities to expand our course selection to provide the service users with broader spectrum of choices while selecting their career path in Canada. In an effort to do so we added Introduction to Web Design as a part of our Computer Course and extended the course from 3 to 4 months.

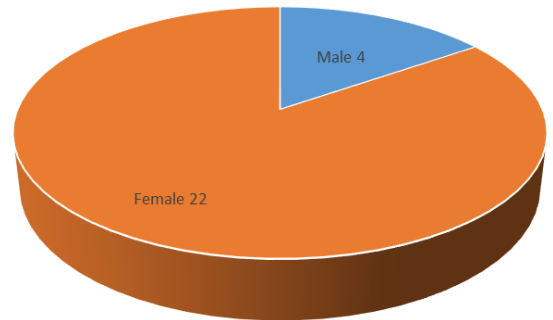
### The program currently includes:

- Virtual Computer Skills Course: Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Introduction to Web Design, One-on-one employment counselling and resume writing help, One-on-one help with any technical issues that students might have while trying to attend their classes remotely over Zoom

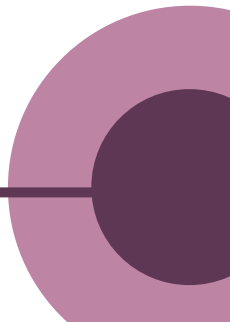
Enrolled/Graduated



■ Enrolled ■ Graduated



Class Composition



# LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING REPORT

## Our Impact

Employment Services and Skills Training Program not only survived the pandemic embracing technology, but managed to come out stronger, expanding our reach by adding Introduction to Web Design module to the CCVT Computer Course. This allows us to attract highly educated professionals to the CCVT and assist them more fully with our community support and expertise on their journey of integration into the Canadian society.

We consistently receive a very positive feedback on the program from our students.

## Here are some of their voices.

“Excellent Thank you very much”

“My gratitude goes to Canada as a country for allowing me to enter and have the wonderful course, and also to Elena she is such a wonderful and calm teacher and finally to CCVT i pray that God will guild and protect everything that concerns you Thank you i so much appreciate it!”

“I'm so happy and thankful was belonged this course. Thanks people to CCTV to make this possible to us.”

“Thank you CCVT and Elena for making this program possible for us.”

“I want to say thank you to CCVT for giving me the opportunity to take part in this class. And, I also want to thank Ms. Elena for a job well done. Thank you.”

“I take this opportunity to thank CCVT and my teacher Elena for being so supportive to me for all the services rendered and also giving me new skills in this Dot-com era.”

“I would like to leave a thank you note to My teacher Elena and CCVT at large . Thank you for this opportunity, I have attained knowledge and I'm so grateful. Teacher Elena is the most patient person I have met with all challenges with students.”

“Thank you so much for your program.”

“CCVT is great”

# CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM REPORT

The Children and Youth programs in Scarborough and Downtown offices continued to have a challenging year again, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. All our services continued to be provided online/virtually to stay connected with our young service users.

Traditionally, the children and youth department have been a blend of information sessions, training, recreational events and other activities for CCVT service users who are between the ages of 7 to 24. As the vast majority of our clients are new to Canada, our sessions aim to provide knowledge and education that best support their settlement needs. CCVT also strives to bridge cultural gaps with unique programming to give newcomers the tools they need to be successful in their daily interactions. Prior to the provincial closures, our trips into the community were educational, while also orienting newcomers to resources in their neighbourhoods. Lastly, recreational programming was a means to provide social experiences to the children and youth without a financial cost to their families to ensure they stayed active, made new friends and practiced their English language skills.

## **Information Sessions and Training for Youth: Scarborough and Downtown 2021-2022**

The sessions for youth aimed to build practical skills that would better equip our clients in the challenges they would face in this particular stage of adolescence. There was a blend of both training and information sessions provided to the youth who were in the 14 to 24 age group.

1. IDRF (International Development and Relief Foundation)'s Get Job Ready Workshop: How to Successfully Navigate the Job market
2. Skills for Change: Youth Employment
3. Seneca College: Information Session
4. OSAP & Financial Aid: Information Session



# CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM REPORT

## March Break Children and Youth -2021

For March Break 2021, there were 9 virtual events scheduled, 5 for children and 4 for the youth.

**CANADIAN CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE**  
**CHILDREN EVENTS**  
**SUMMER QUEST 2021**

- SCAVENGER HUNT**  
Tuesday, July 13th  
4:00 PM- 5:00 pM
- CRAFTS**  
Thursday, July 15th  
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM  
What you will need:  
Paper snake: Paper, Glue  
Snake: Cornstarch and hair conditioner or flour, oil and water
- CULTURAL SHOW AND TELL**  
Tuesday, July 20th  
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM  
What you will need:  
Bring any item, clothing or dish that represents your cultural
- DANCE & MUSIC**  
Thursday, July 22nd  
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM
- PUPPET SHOW**  
Tuesday, July 27th  
4:00 PM- 5:00 pm  
What you will need:  
Socks

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/836662120207>  
 Meeting ID: 836 6621 2030  
 Passcode: 050619

For any questions please email: [rgebrechristos@ccvt.org](mailto:rgebrechristos@ccvt.org)

**CANADIAN CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE**  
 For any questions please email: [rgebrechristos@ccvt.org](mailto:rgebrechristos@ccvt.org)

## Summer Quest 2021

- Introduction & Feedback**  
Wednesday, July 14th  
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM
- Employment Information**  
Wednesday, July 21st  
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM
- Tik Tok Theatre Monologues**  
Wednesday, July 28th  
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM
- Movie Day (Movie TBA)**  
Wednesday, August 4th  
3:00 PM- 5:00 PM

**YOUTH EVENTS**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/818276264547>  
 Meeting ID: 818 2762 6454  
 Passcode: 610817

## March Break Children and Youth -2022

For March Break 2022, there were 11 virtual events scheduled, 6 for children and 5 for the youth, at both locations. The children and youth families were also given ROM, AGO and OSC tickets to attend in person at their chosen dates and times.

# CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM REPORT

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### Educational:

- Children: CCVT X Agscape: From This to That: Food Processing in Canada
- Children: NPower & TVOkids (Level 3 - Engagement)
- Youth: TVO Mathify (Level 3 - Engagement)

### Art: VIBE ARTS x CCVT

#### Painting sessions

- Youth: Watercolour Painting
- Children: Acrylic Painting

### Fun Activities:

- Movie Day (Children & Youth)
- Youth Jeopardy

### Outings: Museums//Recreation

- Royal Ontario Museum (ROM)
- Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO)
- Ontario Science Centre ( OSC)

### Workshops:

- Children: Movement/Physical Activity Day {Dance & Music}
- Youth: Emotions & Self Awareness Workshops were

### Other Events and Activities

Virtual Winter Fest 2021; Holiday Themed Activities for CCVT Children

- Christmas Carol, Christmas Jeopardy, Dance off

### Other Events and Activities: 2021-2022

Virtual Winter Fest 2021: Holiday Themed Activities for CCVT Children

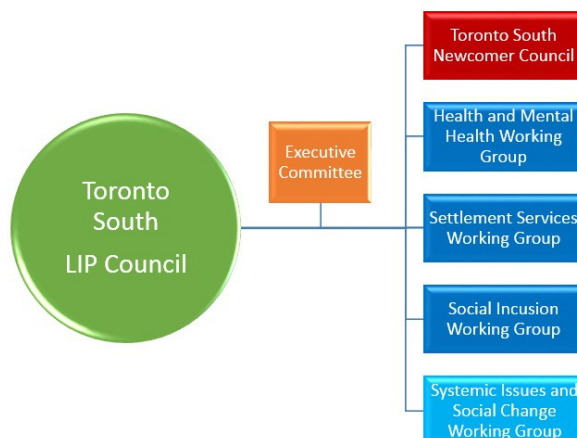
- Christmas Carol, Christmas Jeopardy, Dance off
- 

# IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP REPORT

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are federally funded planning bodies focused on developing and implementing settlement strategies that coordinate and enhance service delivery to newcomers while promoting innovation and efficient use of resources. We seek to engage various stakeholders in the partnership process, including employers, school boards, boards of trade, levels of government, local associations, ethno-cultural groups, faith-based organizations; in conjunction with community, legal, health and social services sectors. There are over 80 LIPs across Canada, with four quadrant community LIPs in Toronto. Additionally, one municipal LIP, the Toronto Newcomer Office based at City Hall engages the City of Toronto. The 40 official City of Toronto neighbourhoods that comprise the Toronto South area occupy the central southern part of the city that generally runs from Lake Ontario, north to St. Claire Avenue, and from Victoria Park Avenue west to Parkside Drive/Keele Street.

Our vision is for LIPs to be perceived as a valuable resource for the local community, facilitating access to information and resources and fostering partnership building and collaboration. As structures that are uniquely connected to a wide range of stakeholders, LIPs have an important strategic role to play in advising on and implementing Canada’s immigration and settlement policy.

In support of this vision, the Toronto South LIP’s member organizations such as CCVT, are committed to exploring new ways of communicating, collaborating, coordinating and partnering for the benefit of newcomers in the Toronto South area. We are committed to working together to provide a collaborative network of information, programs, supports, and services for newcomers that reflect our service values that include being: welcoming, accountable to newcomer communities, responsive to changing needs, and inclusive. The work of the Toronto South LIP is executed through a sophisticated structure which is depicted below:



# TORONTO SOUTH LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP REPORT

## TSLIP Activities in 2021-2022

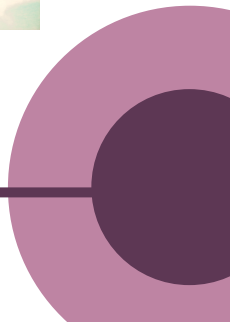
### TSLIP Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Ordinarily, TSLIP implements a 5-year strategic plan that drives project direction. As the pandemic brought great uncertainty, a 1-year transitional plan was instead implemented to address urgent and emerging needs for 2020-2021. Our strategic planning process for 2021-2025 was highly successful. All levels of our partnership were consulted. While we identified three major strategic directions, our overarching theme was to provide “a just COVID recovery for all” with an anti-racist lens employed in all of our work. We had strong attendance from both management and front line members during the consultation process which included open discussion, needs assessment surveys, focus groups and expert interviews. The feedback received from these processes had directly informed our aims, incorporating the membership's input to focus on areas such as employment and research, which had not been our focus in previous years.

Of special mention, we were committed to highlighting issues of anti-racism, supporting the sector and hybrid service delivery and also ensuring we connected with a diverse section of our membership such as our Newcomer Council and youth. The new plan is comprehensive and addresses most of the foreseeable sectors needs faced by newcomers within TSLIP's purview. At ratification, many of our membership noted the detail and thought allotted to the process.

The final Strategic Plan 2021-2025 consists of three strategic directions:

1. Policy and Research
2. Support for Newcomer Success
3. Strengthening the Newcomer Serving Sector



# IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP REPORT

## Executive Committee Nominations

In December 2021 an Executive Committee (EC) nominations and Council Elections process was held to fill seat vacancies and ensure the EC represented a broad cross section of the newcomer serving sector. One new executive committee member was elected and three previous members re-elected by acclamation. Current Executive Committee Members include our three Consortium Partners (The Neighbourhood Group, Woodgreen Community Services and the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture) as well as Access Alliance, Sojourn House, Culturelink and Cecil Community Centre.


## Working Groups

Our Social Inclusion working group merged with the existing Health and Mental Health working group and the new Employment working group was launched at the end of the fiscal year. These changes were made based on the outcome of partner consultations conducted as part of our strategic planning process, which pointed to a high degree of alignment between the activities undertaken by the Social Inclusion Working Group and the Health and Mental Health Working Group, as well as a great need for an employment group focused specifically on tackling discrimination against newcomers during the COVID recovery phase. There were no notable changes to our Newcomer Collaboration Services working Group and the city-wide Systemic Issues and Social Change working Group, both of which have exciting projects on the horizon.

## Newcomer Council

We rely on our Newcomer Council to provide us with direct input into TSLIP decision-making. The Newcomer Council members are selected through an application and interview process that takes into account factors such as length of time in Canada and familiarity with settlement services. Diversity is one of our main criteria in the selection process, and we ensure the inclusion of representatives who have never accessed settlement services or have done so to a very small extent. Other types of diversity criteria explicitly selected for include age, immigration status, ethnicity, education, gender and type of employment. Between October and November 2021, TSLIP held 14 interviews for interested newcomers in our catchment to fill vacancies and refresh and strengthen the Newcomer Council. Seven (7) new members were selected and will receive mentorship from the existing council members. Our objective is to ensure newcomers' perspectives are represented in our work towards community development and social cohesion.

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# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

## REPORT

The CCVT International Committee monitors the activities and services of a network of organizations that support survivors of torture, war, genocide and crimes against humanity and makes any necessary recommendations to the CCVT Board of Directors. This committee is working towards monitoring and responding to global issues related to the prevention, exposure and eradication of torture, war, genocide, crimes against humanity and human trafficking. During the fiscal year of 2021-2022, the International Committee was involved in the following activities:

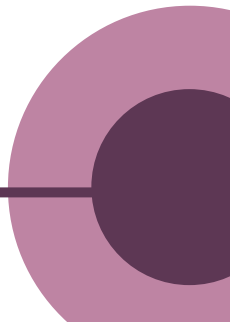
### Collaboration with IRCT

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) is an accredited member of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT). Mulugeta Abai, the Executive Director of the CCVT, has been appointed as the Canadian representative of the IRCT in North America.

### War in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Prime Minister Mr. Abiy Ahmed began his military operations in the Tigray region in Northern Ethiopia on November 4, 2020. The capital of Tigray, Mekele, was occupied by the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies as well as the Amhara militia forces on November 28, 2020. The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) wrote a detailed letter to the Prime Minister of Canada amidst the war (November 14, 2020) and raised grave concerns of the escalation of armed conflict.

The CCVT requested the Prime Minister of Canada to add to the efforts initiated by the US president, Congresspersons and senators in giving voice to the voiceless people of Tigray who are in desperate need of peace and relief.



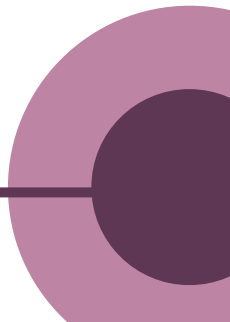
# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

## REPORT

### Following are CCVT's specific demands:

- Pressuring the government of Ethiopia to remove its blockade against Tigray and guarantee unhindered access of international relief agencies to provide humanitarian aid to the regions, including transporting food and medicine directly from Djibouti to Mekelle.
- Restoration of communications and reopening of banks and public service agencies;
- Cessation of hostilities, ceasefire with the involvement of all parties (including the TPLF as the legitimate government of Tigray) and beginning of all-inclusive negotiations for a durable peace;
  
- Full and independent investigation about the crime of genocide and ethnic cleansing in Tigray and the prosecution of the perpetrators of heinous international crimes;
- Immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Eritrean forces and Amhara militia to their pre-war territories;
- Resettlement of the most vulnerable sections of refugees and displaced people;
- Repatriation of refugee and displaced people to their homes in Tigray in safety and security under the supervision of the United Nations and African Union;
- Investigation of all human rights violations including the crime of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity;
- Reconstruction of war-ravaged areas by the Ethiopian government and compensation for war-affected people and communities in Tigray.

The CCVT has also written to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees about resettlement of Ethiopian refugees in safe countries. Similar letters were also written to the Canadian Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The CCVT calls for peace has also been shared with the African Union, as well as the US, Chinese and the Russian presidents.



## REPORT

### War in Ukraine

On August 08, 2022, the CCVT wrote to the Prime Minister of Canada and shared concerns about the military aggression of the government of Russia against the people of Ukraine.

The war has created Europe's fastest-growing refugee crisis since World War II. More than 1.5 million displaced people and refugees have fled their homes desperately looking for shelter and protection in remote areas of Ukraine and in neighboring countries such as Poland, Hungary, Moldova, Romania and Slovakia. Aid agencies and volunteers have so far failed to provide adequate assistance.

We strongly believe that the continuation of war will benefit war-mongering forces and the arms magnates to make super-profit out of people's bloodshed. It leads to more tyranny and more hostilities. People in Ukraine as well as Russian Federation want and need peace urgently. We requested Mr. Prime Minister to consolidate his efforts and spare no time and efforts to achieve eloquent goal of a durable peace in Ukraine. We specifically demanded the following measures by our government:



1. Continue to utilize its relationship with the Canadian allies, other governments (including China), United Nations Organization and pressure Russia to stop its aggression and choose a peaceful solution to the present conflict.

2. Encourage the direct talks that are now taking place between Ukrainian and Russian delegations. It has produced a ray of hope for the ceasefire followed by a diplomatic solution to the present hostilities.

3. Russia must respect the international humanitarian law and human rights instrument and take all necessary measures to protect civilians fleeing the war zones by allowing them to cross the border into the neighboring countries to seek refugee protection.

4. Freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel must be guaranteed and they should be helped to facilitate safe, rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief. No obstacle should be made in the way of delivering humanitarian relief to the civilian population in the affected areas.

5. Support the neighboring countries in their efforts to protect Ukrainian refugees and encourage them to extend their solidarity without any discrimination based on race, religion or ethnicity.



# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

## REPORT

As a settlement and service organization, the CCVT proclaimed willingness to provide its holistic services for the resettlement and settlement of Ukrainian refugees in Canada, the way we did for the Kosovar and Syrian refugees.

Participation at International Conferences:

During the past year, the CCVT Program Manager participated in the following international conference:

- For Pelletier Teenage Mother's Foundation (PTMF) on September 12, 2021.
- There was also the International Conference on the Status of Women on March 21, 2022 (NGO- CSW66 UN workshop) that was attended by the staff.

### **Canada's Contribution to the UN Voluntary Fund**

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture believes that the UN Voluntary Fund for Victim of Torture (UNVFVT) is instrumental to the rehabilitation of survivors of torture. It provides opportunity and access to remedies for victims and their family members through direct assistance including psychological, medical, legal, humanitarian, social, and vocational among others in order to support their independent livelihood. The support of UNVFVT is an opportunity for survivors to redress and to experience empowerment in their healing process. We have reiterated that Canada is one of the initiators of the UN Voluntary Fund for Torture Victims, but its contribution is minimal (\$60,000) in comparison with other industrialized countries. We have frequently brought it to the attention of the Canadian government that given Canada's prominence in the human rights movement, this is inexcusable. Unfortunately, the government has not yet considered our frequent requests. We expect that the Canadian government increase its contribution to the UN Voluntary Fund and allocate more resources for the rehabilitation of torture services at home.



The CCVT Legal Committee is presently composed of lawyers (in different fields of refugee/immigration law and human rights) and a staff member who acts as a liaison bringing any legal problem CCVT clients may have, to the attention of the Committee. The Legal Committee is also specifically active in the field of policy analysis, legal support and research as well as being involved in monitoring national and international human rights instruments dealing with torture, genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, impunity as well as activities of bodies involved in protection and rehabilitation of survivors, refugees and other uprooted people. The Committee recruits its members from the CCVT Board, Legal Network, staff and volunteers and it provides recommendations to the CCVT Board; it includes at least one person from the Board and one CCVT staff member.

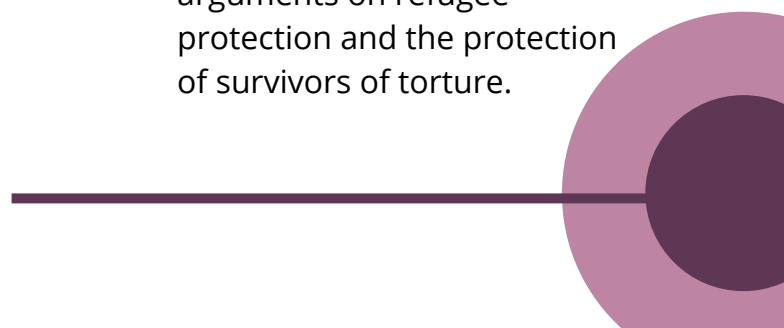
During the past year, the CCVT Legal Committee dealt with the following cases that were of utmost significance:

## **Intervention with the Supreme Court of Canada**

The CCVT was approached by a group of refugee and human rights lawyers in November 2020 to intervene with the Federal Court of Appeal against the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement. Other NGO interveners included the Canadian Council for Refugees, Amnesty International and the Canadian Council of Churches. The CCVT made a joint intervention with the Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights (CLAIHR). On December 30, 2020, we made a joint move for intervention with the Registry Office of the Federal Court of Appeal. Following the rejection of the Case by the Federal Court of Appeal, the CCVT intervened with the Supreme Court of Canada along with the CLAIHR against Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement.



With its unique expertise in serving survivors of torture, war, genocide, crimes against humanity and human trafficking, the CCVT supplemented the contributions of other interveners. While all three interventions based their discussions on the application of international law, the CCVT and the CLAIHR based their arguments on refugee protection and the protection of survivors of torture.



## Following are the main points of our intervention:

1. Our intervention related to the interpretation of the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, both of which must conform with Canada's international legal obligations.
2. We referred to international law with special focus on the non-refoulement obligations as set out in the Refugee Convention and the UN Convention Against Torture.
3. We based our intervention on the specific provisions of the binding international human rights instruments that were not fully explored by the parties.
4. We shared our concerns on consequences of the application of international human rights law in Canada and Canada's compliance with those obligations.
5. We reiterated the fact that the CCVT and the CLAIHR had experiences making submissions before Canadian Courts regarding Canada's international human rights law obligations and working on issues connected to immigration, refugee rights and protection of survivors.
6. We incorporated the relevant practical facts and evidence in in our arguments to ground the international human rights implicated.
7. We argued about Canada's obligation to ensure that individuals under its jurisdiction are not subject to rights violations when those violations are foreseeable; we found the foreseeability of rights violations in the United States relevant.

There was a verbal argument by the Canadian Council of Churches, Amnesty International and the Canadian Council for Refugees before the Supreme Court on October 06, 2022. We are enthusiastically waiting for the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. The Safe Third Country Agreement has been contentious since it became law at the end of 2004. The agreement stipulates anyone seeking asylum in either Canada or the United States must file for refugee status in the country where they first land. Canada sends refugee claimants who enter from the United States back to the United States. The agreement only applies to people crossing at official land border crossings. The law does not consider the vast difference between refugee deamination system in Canada and the USA. It does not also address the specific condition of survivors of torture, war, genocide, crimes against humanity and human trafficking.



## Participation at the Quality of Life Meetings

During the past year, the CCVT staff members participated regularly at the Quality of Life Meetings organized by Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA). Along with refugee and human rights lawyers as well as community agencies we raised the legal and other problems of the Immigration detainees:

1. Conditions of the Immigration Holding Centres (IHC) in terms of minimum international standard of behavior with detainees as well as their health, nutrition and recreational facilities. and life State of the IHC
2. Update on Contracts within the IHC- Building/Construction and detainees' security issues.
3. Update on the number of detainees, their outbreak in terms of age, gender, countries of origin and the duration of their detention. We have been particularly interested in getting information about detention of children and the number of removals.
4. Phones at the IHC to maintain connections with the outside world, specifically with the Legal Aid and counsels.
5. Availability of extracurricular activities offered to detainees at the IHC, during COVID-19 pandemic.
6. Engagement legal counsel at all stages of detention review.
7. Timely delivery of the detention review disclosure, in particular 48 hour reviews.

## Clients in in Limbo of Citizenship

With feedback from the Legal Committee, staff has been continuously assisting clients in immigration and Canadian citizenship limbo.

## Collaboration with Barbara Schiffer's Clinic

The Barbara Schiffer's Clinic has provided legal consultations to two female clients, survivors of domestic violence, every month by its legal experts.

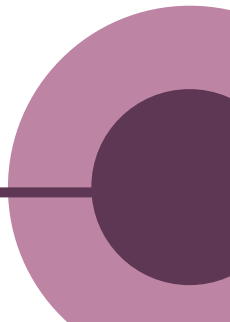
## Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT)

CCVT has been monitoring the position of the Canadian government with regards to the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT).

## Clients' Refugee and Immigration problems

Throughout 2021-2022 the Legal Committee provided CCVT with advice on the following issues: Immigration limbo, legal obstacles to family reunification, and different kinds of inadmissibility problems, citizenship, housing and eviction.

Staff Support: Ezat Mossallanejad



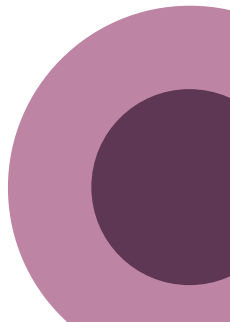
# PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

## 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, war, genocide, crimes against humanity and human trafficking on survivors and their families, and to work for their protection and integrity. The Committee also strives to contribute to the development of human rights in theory and in practice on a domestic, national, regional and global scale. The CCVT is also a learning centre, focusing on torture, other international crimes, and protection and rehabilitation of survivors through activities that include research, production and distribution of learning materials, onsite training and education programs for staff, volunteers, and students and the community, as well as public forums and presentations - locally and globally. The CCVT is involved in a partnership with universities, colleges, hospitals as well as refugee and human rights agencies to promote its mandate.

### Collaboration

In its public education endeavors, the CCVT maintained a close collaboration with the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), Ontario Council for Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI), the Canadian Centre for International Justice (CCIJ), York University, University of Toronto, Ryerson University, University of Ottawa, Wilfred Laurier University, George Brown College, Humber College, Seneca College, FCJ Refugee Centre, Amnesty International and the branch office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The CCVT staff continued to play a major role in the Speakers' Bureau of the United Way. It has been a wonderful training opportunity to educate non-profit agencies as well as business communities about the scourge of torture, war, genocide, crimes against humanity and human trafficking while paying special attention to the need for rehabilitation of survivors. The CCVT staff attends consultation meetings of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), Canada Border Service Agency and the Immigration (CBSA), Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and provide them with feedback about government policies and regulations.



# PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

## Continuing Partnerships

The CCVT has been in close involvement with Mount Sinai Hospital as well as the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in a training program on issues related to after-effects of torture, war, genocide and crimes against humanity. We are also in collaboration with the Barbara Schleifer Clinic. We have addressed issues such as trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, vicarious traumatization, etc.

The CCVT continued its partnership with a number of settlement agencies affiliated with the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP). The Scarborough branch of the CCVT collaborated with the Toronto East Quadrant as well as Eglinton East/Kennedy Park Network. The latter includes a network of many agencies such as the YMCA, Tropicana, Public Health, the City of Toronto, etc. The CCVT is collaborating with almost all member agencies with regards to public education on health and legal services.

## Human Rights Presentation

The CCVT Policy Analyst provided a series of Zoom presentation on different aspects of human rights:

Human Rights in Literature on June 13, 2021

Tyranny: Some Observation, PowerPoint presentation on 31 January 2022

Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 11 February 2022

## Collective Trauma of African Refugees and IDPs

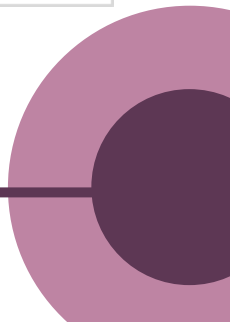
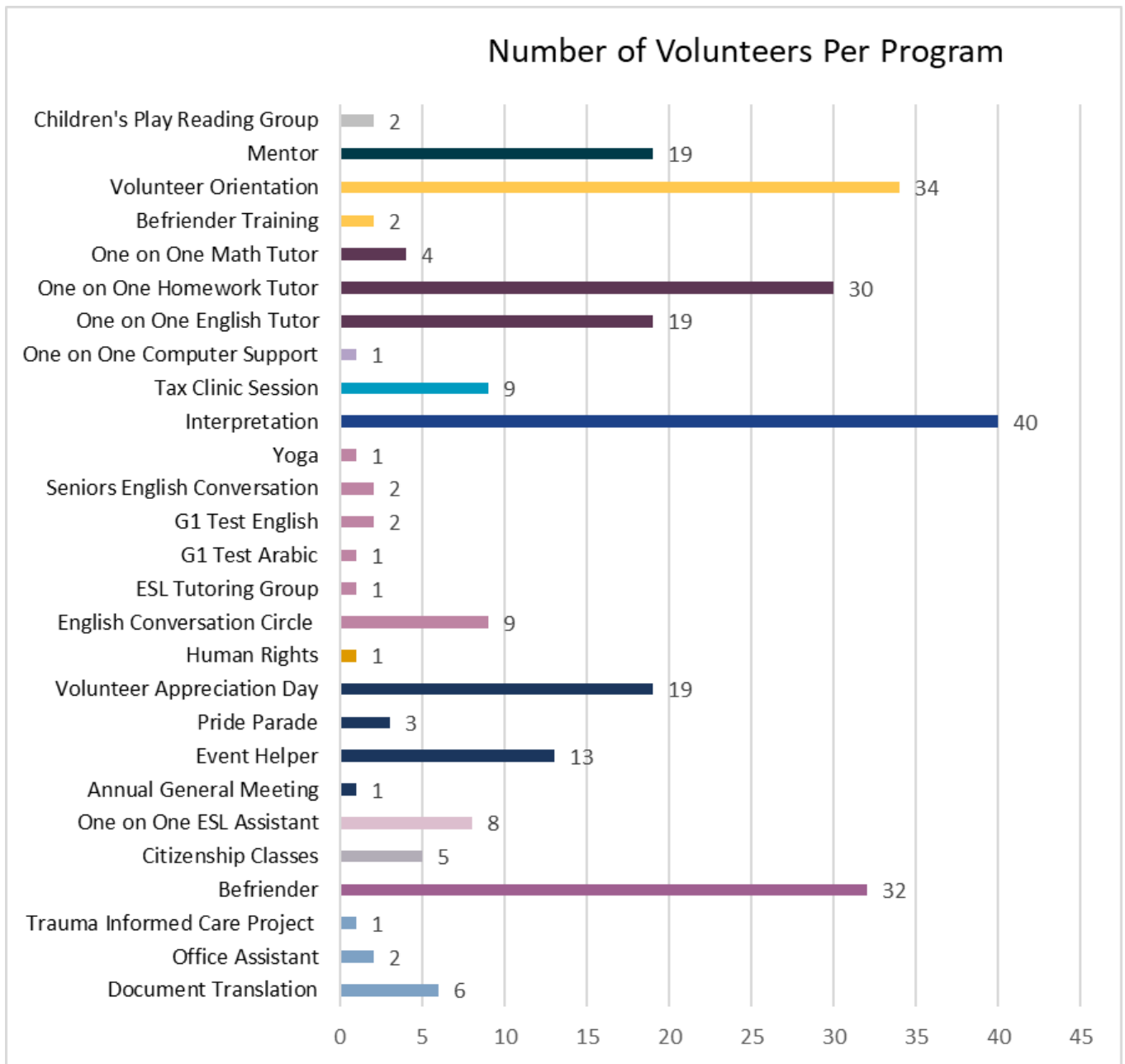
On December 02, 2021, the CCVT Policy Analyst and Researcher joined panel on the Collective Trauma of African Refugees and IDPs. He spoke about the problem of trauma and collective trauma in the context of war, ethnic conflicts, slavery, famine and environmental collapse in Africa.

## Learning Materials

CCVT's journal, the First Light, continues to provide valued and critical commentaries on current issues along with information on the Centre's programs and activities. The last issue was on No to the Evil of the War. It contained articles and research by the CCVT staff, volunteers, clients and supporters. First Light has and will continue to serve as a valuable means of education and public awareness. First Light, along with other research reports and public education materials are available on the CCVT web site: [www.ccvv.org](http://www.ccvv.org)

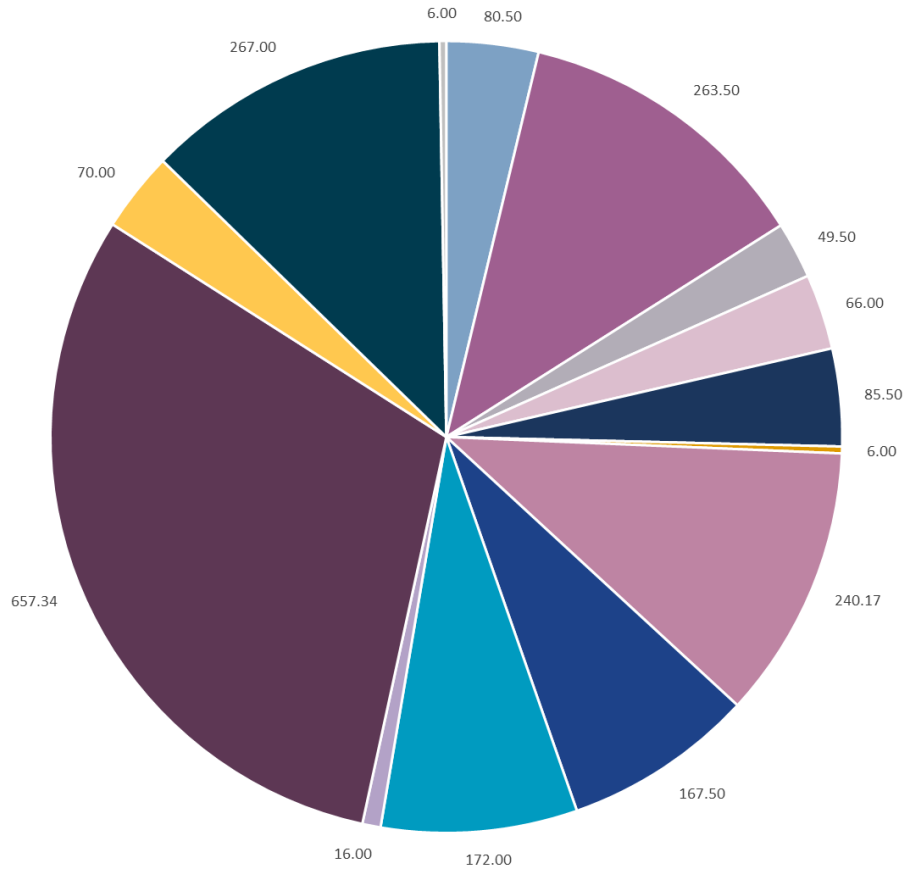
# VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

CCVT knows first hand the benefits that our volunteers bring to the organization. They are the glue that holds the community together. Throughout this past year, and during the COVID lockdown, our volunteers rallied to the challenge and provided assistance to the agency and its clients virtually in a myriad of tasks. This has enabled our clients to still feel connected to the community and most importantly, assisted in breaking their isolation. Thank you to all who have made a difference.



# VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Total Hours Volunteered Per Program  
2147.00 Hours Total

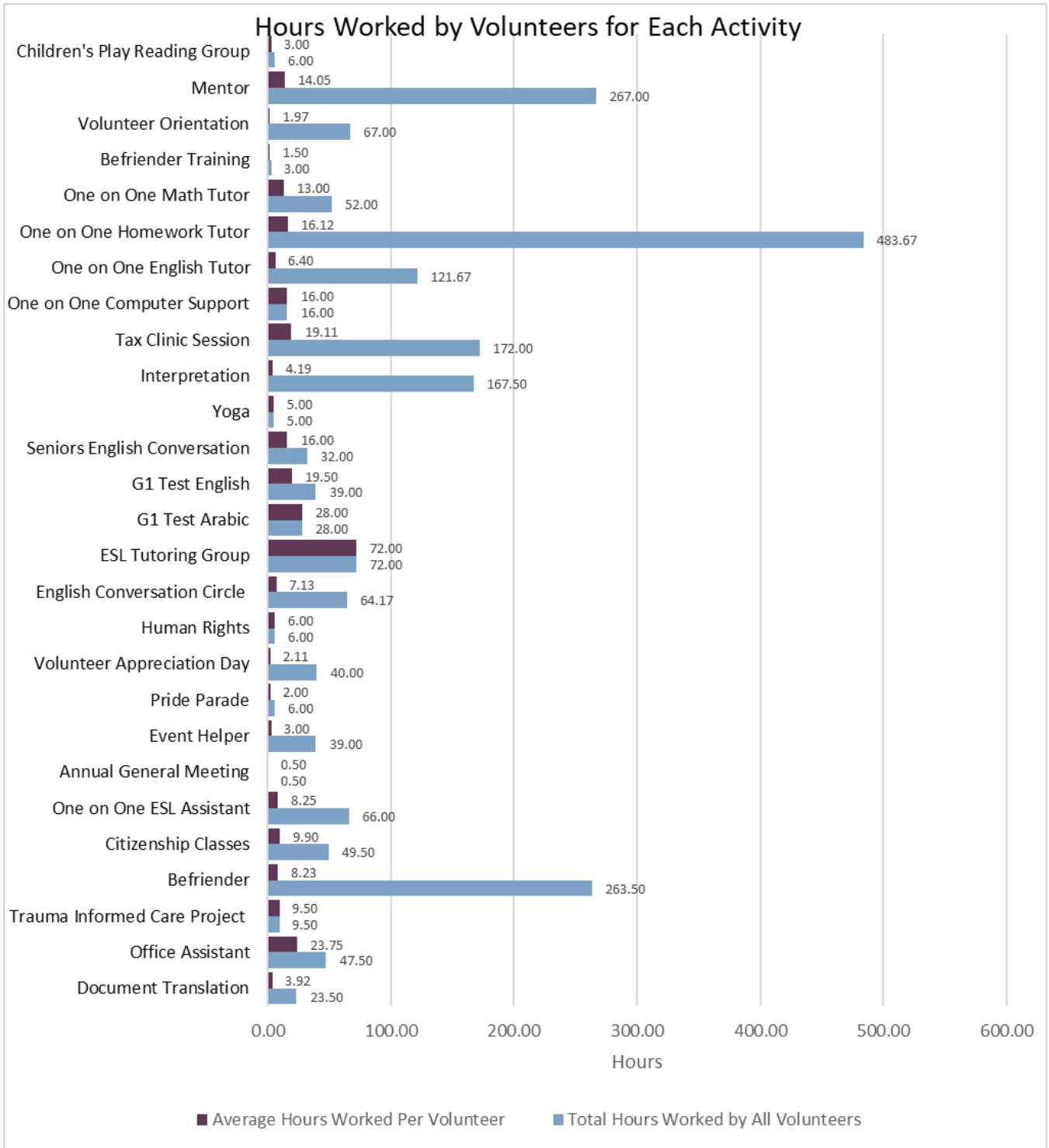


- Admin Assistance
- Befriender Program
- Citizenship
- English Language Tutor
- Events
- Group Presentation
- Group Sessions
- Interpretation
- Tax Clinic
- Technical Support
- Tutor
- Volunteer Training
- Youth Mentorship
- Youth Program





# VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



# CONDENSED AUDITED REPORT: 50

## APR 01,2020 - MAR 31, 2022

INCOME	2021-2022	2020-2021
	\$	\$
Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada		
- Settlement	1,765,315	1,656,618
-TSLIP	96,369	92,648
- NHQ	26,803	26,803
- TM	160,161	184,077
- Public Safety Canada	71,944	19,970
Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration		
- Newcomer Settlement Program	76,910	76,910
- Pay Equity	23,311	23,311
City of Toronto		
- CSP	29,075	28,785
Ministry of Children & Youth Services	54,681	78,214
Ministry of Health-LHIN	46,092	46,092
HRSDC - Canada Summer Jobs	13,526	8,669
United Way of Greater Toronto	269,177	342,808
Donation\Fundraising	67,902	88,085
Foundations and Other Charities	16,105	15,067
Government Assistance	0	25,000
Canadian Women's Foundation	70,300	25,000
Reed Smith LLP	337,985	298,360
Honoraria\Fees	500	1,543
Interest\Sundry Income	3,519	2,392
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>3,129,675</b>	<b>3,040,352</b>

<b>EXPENSES:</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
	\$	\$
Wages and Benefits	2,346,787	2,263,858
Rent	143,419	155,880
Program Supplies & Expenses	117,524	102,335
Common Expenses	55,088	52,318
Maintenance & Cleaning	17,580	16,774
Funded Capital Purchases	18,808	75,542
Bookkeeping	58,500	85,545
Fundraising Expense	6,455	32,121
I.T. Support\Web Hosting	56,031	51,299
Telephone	40,563	42,985
Professional Fees	96,144	34,144
Printing and Photocopying	19,544	21,283
Utilities	23,283	19,303
Staff Development	17,525	7,848
Conference & Meetings	1,760	2,420
Amortization	25,866	24,660
Insurance	17,350	16,302
Stationary & Supplies	2,050	4,051
Volunteer Support	2,422	1,982
Consulting	46,037	6,615
Postage and Courier	3,506	3,404
Mortgage Interest	1,577	2,406
Sponsorship & Partnership	2,734	9,425
Membership Dues	4,900	2,722
Interest & Bank charges	2,374	2,690
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,127,827</b>	<b>3,037,912</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>1,848</b>	<b>2,440</b>

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Chum Charitable Foundation  
Congregation of Notre Dame -  
Visitation Province Inc.  
Howard Family Foundation Inc.  
The Benevity Community  
Impact Fund  
The Charitable Gift Funds  
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 Mahnoush Kay Kohpaei - Training Module Project  
 Manager /Community Engagement Manager  
 Mbalu Lumor - Senior Manager, Programs and  
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 Rahel Hailemichael - Settlement Manager  
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 Souham Alkhazaal  
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 Inas Mustafa  
 Korey Karbasi

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Elena Solokhina

\*Resigned