



STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2012

Five Year Focus and Direction

VISION

Women from diverse backgrounds are empowered to reach their goals and dreams as equal and contributing members of Canadian society.

MISSION

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association delivers professional services that facilitate the integration and full participation of women and their families in the community.

VALUES

Equality

We treat our clients, partners, each other and ourselves with fairness. We work to promote equal opportunities for women, as an extension of the principle of fairness.

Empathy

Our support for immigrant women and each other stems from a sincere attempt to understand the experience of others. We work to broaden societal awareness of the varied experiences and perspectives of immigrant women.

Inclusiveness

We celebrate the diversity of CIWA's staff and recognize that employees at all levels contribute knowledge and ideas that make the organization thrive. We work to promote the inclusion of immigrant women from diverse backgrounds in all areas of society.

Integrity

We maintain consistency between our values and our actions. In our work and with each other we act ethically and responsibly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the 2007-2012 Strategic Plan	1
Board of Directors	1
Immigrants in Calgary	1
CIWA within the Calgary Immigrant Services Sector	2
Role of the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association	3
CIWA's Growth	4
Foundations of Success	4
Situational Analysis	5
Goals and Strategic Priorities, 2007-2012	7

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ABOUT THE 2007-2012 STRATEGIC PLAN

The *Strategic Plan 2007-2012: Focus and Direction* (the “Plan”) outlines the Calgary Immigrant Women’s Association’s (CIWA) highest level objectives and strategies. It was developed by the Board of Directors through a process of consultation involving group interviews with representatives from CIWA’s clientele, staff, Board, volunteers, as well as external stakeholders. It replaces the Strategic Plan 2005-2010: Five Year Focus and Direction.

This document outlines the objectives for the Business Plan for 2007–2012 and is intended to be accompanied by the Business Plan. It does not enter into the mechanisms by which the objectives and strategies are carried out, as those decisions are the prerogative of management, subject to limitations approved by the Board.

The Plan will be evaluated for relevance by the Board on a bi-annual basis.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CIWA’s Board of Directors is composed of up to 18 volunteer members, with a maximum of 15 Full Board Members and a maximum of 3 Reserve Members. At minimum, 75% of the Board must be foreign-born, and at least 2 Board Members must be Canadian-born. The Board employs consensus-based decision making. In the past five years, the Board has updated its policies, created efficient operating procedures, and strengthened the governance framework for the organization.

IMMIGRANTS IN CALGARY¹

Calgary is a preferred destination for immigrants. It has the fourth largest immigrant population in Canada with immigrants accounting for more than 18 per cent of Calgary’s population. Citizenship and Immigration Canada estimated 9,000 to 10,000 new arrivals came to Calgary from other countries in 2005.² As well, it is estimated that Calgary will receive an average of 10,000 new immigrants per year during the next five years. A steady influx of immigrants implies that there is a continued need for immigrant services in the Calgary area.

Immigrants from Calgary’s traditional immigrant source countries (China, India, and South Korea) declined in 2004 while immigration increased from the Philippines and Pakistan, as well as England and the U.S. More and more immigrants are arriving lacking fluency in either of Canada’s official languages i.e. over 51% during 2004.³

Most immigrants (50%) arrived in Calgary under the Skilled Worker and Business Class categories, and 30% under the Family Class category. The remaining 17% arrived in the refugee or “other” categories.⁴

¹ Section taken from report entitled, Calgary Immigrant Women’s Association Organization Review, Report on Research Analysis, by Centrepoint Consultant Liza Worthington for CIWA, January 26, 2007

² The City of Calgary. Annual Report 2005.

³ Community and Neighbourhood Services Policy and Planning Division. Presentation to Family and Community Support Services, Calgary and Region Socio-Economic Outlook 2005 – 2010. The City of Calgary. September 28, 2005.

⁴ Cultural Cues: A Resource Guide for Service Providers Working with Calgary’s Culturally Diverse Seniors. The City of Calgary Community & Neighbourhood Services. 2005.

On the economic front, Calgary's unemployment rate is expected to remain low (about 4.6%) through to 2010 with employment growth expected to slow down over the next five years i.e. down from 3.2% to 2.1%.⁵ Calgary Economic Development forecasts approximately 90,000 new jobs over the next five years and 158,000 in the next 10 years.⁶ Immigration will be an increasingly important contributor to population and labour-force growth. Challenges with respect to language and inclusion of other cultures will need to be addressed as Calgary's population grows more diverse.⁷

Of immigrants who arrived in Calgary after 1986, 41.6 per cent live in poverty. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that the Canadian economy loses \$6 billion annually by not utilizing the skills of immigrants. Approximately 69 per cent of immigrants have a university education when they arrive compared to just 22 per cent of non-immigrant Canadians. However, immigrants have a more difficult time finding employment. Fluency in English, Canadian work experience and obtaining Canadian education credentials are essential to finding good jobs. As well, many immigrants face discrimination. As a result, when new immigrants arrive, they find many doors closed to them and must rely largely upon low- income jobs.⁸ On the basis of their education some immigrant women appear overqualified for the type of occupations they hold – many working in administrative, clerical, sales or service jobs. Nearly 3 in 10 immigrant women living in Canada have incomes that fall below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs.⁹ Other challenges for newcomers include Calgary's high rate of inflation¹⁰ and housing shortages.

CIWA WITHIN THE CALGARY IMMIGRANT SERVICES SECTOR¹¹

There are a number of organizations that provide services to Calgary immigrants. These include CIWA, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), Calgary Immigrant Aid Society (CIAS), Centre for Newcomers (CFN), and Calgary Immigrant Educational Society (CIES). The following table summarizes immigrant needs and the services offered by each of the above organizations:

Immigrant Needs/ Services Provided					
	Settlement	Language training & development	Employment services	Childcare	Services in first language
CIWA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCIS¹²	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CIAS¹³	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CFN¹⁴	✓	✓	✓		✓
CIES¹⁵		✓	✓		

⁵ Community and Neighbourhood Services Policy and Planning Division. Presentation to Family and Community Support Services, Calgary and Region Socio-Economic Outlook 2005 – 2010. The City of Calgary. September 28, 2005.

⁶ <http://www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com/relocateAndExpand/calgaryworks.cfm> (accessed December 23, 2006)

⁷ The City of Calgary Corporate Overview 2006 – 2008.

⁸ Economically Challenged Families The Case for Action. M.G. Hayes and J. Myers. June 2004.

⁹ Women in Canada 2000 A Gender-Based Statistical Report. Statistics Canada.

¹⁰ Calgary leads nation in inflation. The Calgary Herald. December 20, 2006.

¹¹ Portions of first two paragraphs and table taken from report entitled, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association Organization Review, Report on Research Analysis, by Centrepoint Consultant Liza Worthington for CIWA, January 26, 2007.

¹² www.ccis-calgary.ab.ca

¹³ www.calgaryimmigrantaid.ca

¹⁴ www.centrefornewcomers.ca

¹⁵ www.immigrant-education.ca

Other organizations such as CCIS and CIAS deliver similar services to CIWA, but CIWA differentiates itself by catering primarily to immigrant women and girls, and is well-recognized by clients, partners and other organizations for its competency in this niche. As detailed in the previous section, new immigrants to Calgary face numerous barriers to integration in the community including language, citizenship and immigration issues, employment, cultural differences, and isolation from the larger Canadian society. Immigrant and refugee women and girls often face additional barriers, along with shifting expectations and roles. CIWA was founded in 1982 based on this recognition. An immigrant woman's own culture and family may emphasize a traditional role for women, including restrictions on public movement, which can limit her ability to access services in mixed-gender settings. In addition, a woman's primary responsibility for childcare and the well-being of her family adds an additional level of concern and complexity to establishing a new life in Calgary.

CIWA is unique in developing services to address the specific needs of women and the issues they face, as newcomers and as women. Service delivery is designed to be truly accessible to women, notably through women-only classes, female staff and volunteers, a woman-friendly and welcoming environment, and on-site childcare.

ROLE OF CALGARY IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Interviews with and informal surveys of CIWA clients reveal that newly arrived immigrant women are in need of information about housing, social services, the Calgary school system, and recreational facilities offered by the City of Calgary. Immigrant women with foreign credentials are in need of language training and networking opportunities to connect with Calgary employers. Many are in need of basic language training as well as information about the Calgary job market and workplace cultures in the city. Childcare is also a need. There is preference for services in the first language of the immigrant woman.¹⁶

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association assists and supports immigrant and refugee women and their families in their quest to lead prosperous and rewarding lives in Canadian society as per our vision, mission and values. Our mandate as a non-profit organization is to continually improve upon our ability to service the immigrant women community in Calgary. The goal of the Plan is to ensure that CIWA services are relevant, and that the Association has the resources to provide these services on a long-term basis.

CIWA responds to its clientele through three core program departments (i) Settlement and Integration, (ii) Language Training, Employment and Childcare, and (iii) Family Services. Two additional departments, Financial Management and Office Administration, ensure the smooth operation of the Association. In its program delivery, CIWA collaborates with numerous service providers, including those in the immigrant-serving sector, as well as various non-profit agencies, and public service organizations, to address the wide-ranging concerns of a diverse clientele.

The past five years have demonstrated CIWA's exceptional ability to provide our clients with focused professional intervention, a network of support and friendship, and a reliable supply of vital information to aid in the integration and settlement process. CIWA also addresses the concerns of our larger constituency of immigrant and refugee women and their families through

¹⁶ A Business Plan for The Board of Directors of The Calgary Immigrant Women's Association. Dr. Mary Sheridan. September 2006.

advocacy and public education aimed at increasing understanding and opportunity, and ending discrimination and intolerance. Based on this history, CIWA is well-positioned to continue our successful client-centered service delivery and our public role as a strong voice for immigrant and refugee women, girls, and their families.

CIWA'S GROWTH

CIWA clients originate from 125 countries and speak more than 100 different languages. Therefore, stemming from the recognition that the needs and concerns of immigrant and refugee women, girls, and their families are as varied as the countries and life circumstances they come from, CIWA has developed innovative programs (like Pebbles in the Sand, S.M.I.L.E.S., Enhanced Business English, New Friends and Neighbourhood Groups, Crossing the Bridge, Making Changes, Networking Breakfast, and Legal Clinic, to mention a few), entered into partnerships, extensively re-organized its departments and organizational structure, and become an association that is truly responsive to the needs of its constituency.

From our main office and 45 off-site locations throughout the city of Calgary, CIWA now offers 29 programs, compared with 9 programs in 1998. Demand has also steadily risen, up by approximately 500% in the same period. In 2006/2007, the total number of clients served by the three core departments exceeded 6000, up from 1000 clients served in 1998. In addition, increased volunteer training and opportunities resulted in 361 volunteers contributing a total of 27,419 hours of work in 2006/2007.

In the coming years, CIWA will undoubtedly experience challenges and opportunities. Like many non-profits, our capacity for response and proactive service delivery is affected by the numerous fluctuating political, economic, and social factors present within the external environment. While it is impossible to forecast with precision the future effects of these factors, the following section looks at areas where CIWA can build and sustain the appropriate foundation for future success.

FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS

The continuous growth and demand for CIWA's services over the years has been a result of (i) establishing unique and relevant programs for Calgary's ever changing immigrant demographic, (ii) obtaining the resources to deliver these programs, and (iii) outreach to ensure clients, partners and funders have access to and awareness of CIWA. These three factors are pivotal to CIWA's success in serving its clients. It is therefore the goal of the Plan to further solidify and build upon our current programs and strengths while addressing evolving needs to ensure organizational longevity. Current factors which CIWA must address in this period are outlined in the following table, along with their corresponding program, resource and outreach requirements.

OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

INFLUENCING FACTOR	PROGRAMS	RESOURCES	OUTREACH
<p>FAST ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ALBERTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Housing shortage</i> • <i>Highest inflation in the country</i> • <i>Competitive job market</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore new partnership opportunities with other agencies, in particular regarding affordable housing. • Respond to the increased demand for programs supporting clients to secure employment appropriate to their level of education, training and experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate effect on the organization caused by high staff turnover • Enhance fund development (FD) strategy to make it more comprehensive and supportive of multi-year campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit CIWA's information delivery methods by which we make newcomers aware of our services.
<p>SOCIETY'S INCREASED RELIANCE ON IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Requirement for Web presence for potential clients and funders</i> • <i>Increase reliance on IT for internal operations</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate methods to capture statistical information regarding services provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand internal databases to support multi-year FD campaigns and tracking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the changing demands of the ways the clients seek information
<p>COMPETITION: INCREASING NUMBER OF NON-PROFITS IN ALBERTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increased public awareness of education and health issues</i> • <i>Possibility of real or perceived duplication of services between immigrant-serving agencies</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek new ways to model partnerships and referral relationships to reduce real or perceived duplication of programs or services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure funders are aware of CIWA's unique programs and services within the immigrant serving sector. • Manage and compete for an increased number of professional and corporate volunteers to provide consultation and mentoring to clients, and act as advocates, assisting with public relations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance communication strategy to provide a strong community identity. Ensure messages are targeted, specific and concise. • CIWA members and former clients exhibit commitment to the agency's mission, vision and values, and are often CIWA's best ambassadors. It is important for CIWA to expand its membership base while providing members with the necessary information.

INFLUENCING FACTOR	PROGRAMS	RESOURCES	OUTREACH
<p>INCREASING NUMBERS OF IMMIGRANTS SETTLING IN CALGARY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity of existing programs. • Increase collaboration with partner agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore sources of non-traditional funding (compete for corporate, private, and other funding) in order to accommodate the growing numbers of clients and the increasingly complex issues they face. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore innovative ways of reaching potential clients. • Ensure that programs continue to be provided in locations easily accessible by clients.
<p>GROWING NUMBERS OF SINGLE IMMIGRANT WOMEN OR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES HEADED BY WOMEN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore offering evening and weekend programs (and childcare) for immigrant women working 'survival jobs'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with funders to increase their support for CIWA's unique services and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public awareness of gender specific issues.
<p>MANY IMMIGRANT WOMEN NEED SUPPORT PAST 3-YEAR LIMIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trend of women immigrants at home with children during settling-in period</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make program offerings open to both government-funded and privately funded clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure non-government funding for integration of women immigrants who have been in Canada longer than three years. • Work with traditional funders to remedy this issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how to reach women who may have become isolated due to funding cutoff.
<p>RIISING NUMBERS OF IMMIGRANTS WITH PROFESSIONAL DEGREES / OCCUPATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Many immigrant women are employed in job position below their training and experience</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand language programs supporting business English and Canadian pronunciation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-affirm existing partnerships and establish new partnerships with corporate Calgary to support these programs both financially and with volunteer time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure more public awareness, especially amongst professional associations.
<p>PROGRAM-SPECIFIC FUNDING¹⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lack of funds to cover administrative costs</i> • <i>Core funding for administration would provide a more stable foundation base.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek non-traditional funders to help in covering administrative expenses. • Explore avenues of self-generated funds. 	

¹⁷ The advent of multi-year funding by the United Way, some federal departments and agencies, and the City of Calgary has provided some stability to CIWA's core programs for at least three years. However,

GOALS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, 2007-2012

Offer high quality, professional services through a mix of programs that reflect CIWA's mission and address the evolving needs of immigrant and refugee women and their families.

Priority 1: Strengthen core services and program areas where CIWA has special expertise.

Priority 2: Establish partnerships and collaborative programs with other agencies, where feasible and appropriate, to serve clients through the combined strengths and resources of CIWA and partner agencies.

Expand access to sustainable sources of funds to ensure smooth operations and long-term viability.

Priority 3: Develop a comprehensive fund development strategy with clear funding targets and establish an effective infrastructure to implement it.

Attract and retain a skilled workforce to deliver high quality services to clients.

Priority 4: Develop a comprehensive human resources plan and establish an effective infrastructure to implement it.

Provide up-to-date and easily accessible information to clients and stakeholders and increase CIWA's public visibility.

Priority 5: Develop a comprehensive communications strategy and establish an effective infrastructure to implement it.

such funding requires increasingly complicated outcome measurement tools and reporting procedures without money allocated for administration, training and implementation.