



FCJ Refugee Centre

Walking with Uprooted People

27 years serving refugees and
other vulnerable populations

ANNUAL REPORT

▶ 2018



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FCJ Refugee Centre

CO-DIRECTORS MESSAGE

We are very grateful to all our supporters for helping us to keep walking with refugees and other precarious populations during 2018. Thanks to you we were able to provide information for refugee claimants and for people who need support in regards to their immigration status and how they can further their situation in Canada.

Access to Education was one of the main achievements for us. We were able to send 17 youth with precarious immigration status to post-secondary education. In general the FCJ Youth Network and the Access to Education team have had an exceptional year, and look forward to the new projects on 2019.

The increase in the number of people arriving in Toronto continued to impact FCJ Refugee Centre and the City in general. The pressures on the City's emergency shelter system included an increased number of refugee claimants needing shelter during 2018. We continued working with the Refugee Houses, the City of Toronto, refugees and migrants to find shelter. Also we partnered with St. Clair Multi-Faith Affordable Housing, we were able to secure funding for a housing worker and a housing allowance. We were able to accommodate five families, one of which was a group of five young siblings from Somalia. In our own houses we managed to shelter 50 women and 6 children in 2018. The majority of them were from Uganda, Nigeria, Colombia, Kenya, Mexico, Cuba, Croatia, and Egypt.

Another large program that we keep running is the Primary Care Clinic, serving people who don't have access to healthcare. We had a psychiatrist assisting people with mental health issues. The psychiatrist was also providing refugee claimants with psychological reports and assessments for their claim.

Public education and the accessibility of information is a key part of the services we provide. The programs included workshops about human trafficking given in rural areas. FCJ has expanded the anti-human trafficking network, and one of our most successful services was the Migrant Worker's Mobile program. We have a phone number so migrant workers can communicate and contact us directly. We have been helping people mostly who are victims of labour trafficking, and we do this through trainings, outreach, and working with a network of other organizations throughout Ontario.

We want to mention that among the many complicated cases we were supporting in 2018, one particular challenging case was a woman who was a victim of sexual exploitation, where she almost lost custody of her son. FCJ helped her gain access to essential services and assisted her in creating a report against the trafficker.

The main challenge for FCJ Refugee Centre is funding, as we don't receive funding from the Federal government, and our main funds come from donations from religious congregation, grants from foundations, and individual donations. Since the provincial government changed, their priorities changed as well. Changes in Ontario Works affected people having access to social assistance, changes to Legal Aid greatly diminished people's access to legal representation, changes for services for youth affected how we can serve refugee and migrant youth. While funding is one of our primary challenges, we were able to end 2018 with a surplus, which was one of our main accomplishments. This was the first time in several years that we were able to do this, and with a large amount of fundraising we were able to make 2018 a year with healthy finances for the organization. Thank you for all your support!

Francisco Rico
FCJ Refugee Centre Co-Director

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FCJ Refugee Centre Co-Director



SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION PROGRAM

FCJ Refugee Centre continues to welcome refugee claimants and newcomers from many parts of the world, helping them settle into life in their new home. A key part of this program is the Centre's transitional housing program for women and their children. In 2018, 45 women were able to take advantage of this arrangement, 8 of whom were mothers with children. The residents mostly stemmed from Nigeria, Colombia, Uganda, Afghanistan, Mexico, Bangladesh, etc. The women are refugee claimants or in a precarious immigration status and they stay in one of the FCJ's three houses on average for 6 months to a year. During that time, our goal is to provide them with a place that is safe and stable and to create a pleasant, supportive environment. In the past year, with the generous support from City we were able to start renovating the first floor of one of our houses, to make better use of the space and create a more comfortable common area that invites community building.

One main highlight benefitting the settlement program is that as of the start of 2018 FCJ has a Housing Worker who supports people looking for shelter in those first few stressful days upon arrival, and later on in transitioning into a rental unit. The Housing Worker assisted more than 350 individuals and families with their search for housing – among these were 8 women staying in our houses who were able to transition into permanent housing.

To better understand the challenges of finding shelter and affordable housing in the City of Toronto, FCJ undertook an extensive research project. Many of the people who came through our doors kindly agreed to speak to us about their experiences and the barriers they have had to overcome. The findings will be made public soon.

The FCJ Housing Worker also coordinates the women's program for the residents in our transitional houses organising various activities, such as summertime outings, visits to the Art Gallery, Centre Island, etc. There are also workshops on life skills and

small business initiatives. A jewellery making workshop is held every month. The merchandise the women make - earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc. – are sold at fairs and FCJ events and part of the proceeds go back to the women who created them.



SECOND HARVEST SUPPORT

We continued receiving the support of Second Harvest during 2018. Second Harvest donations allow FCJ Refugee Centre to keep our table always ready to welcome vulnerable populations and make them feel at home.

A team of volunteers come to the office every Thursday just to help to download the food truck and distribute the donations to our residents and volunteers. Through 2018 FCJ Refugee Centre receive around 40 visits from Second Harvest.



SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION PROGRAM

PRIMARY CARE CLINIC

The clinic is funded by Inner City Health Associates (ICHA) and sees clients that are living in Canada without health insurance. On average, the clinic was able to see 7 -9 patients a day. Patients are seen by family doctors, one doctor on Tuesday and a rotating schedule of 4 doctors on Saturdays. The clinic also has 3 nurses and 4 volunteers working. Volunteers help clients with locating medical services such as labs and pharmacies close to where they are living.

As FCJ Health Clinic grows, some of the challenges that they are facing are issues of time, where there is a need to expand the times and days that they have to provide service to patients. Another barrier that they face is language, as a large number of the clients are in need of an interpreter.

FCJ YOUTH NETWORK

The past year has been one of change, excitement, dynamism and adventure. We have seen a steadily increasing number of youth participate in our weekly youth network gatherings, and have seen the programs offered expand and develop.

As has become a valued tradition, 12 youth and staff ventured out from the confines of the city to head for an adventure to our treasured Sanctuary North - a space to get away from the bustle of Toronto, appreciate the beauty of Ontario's natural summer landscape, and participate in outdoor activities including bonfires and scavenger hunts. This bond has carried through to today - with many traditions starting on that very getaway. One of the most cherished new group traditions has been the implementation of monthly youth group family dinners. Continuing on throughout the year, the youth participated in more and more activities like the CCR conferences, IKEA Christmas Project

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Building upon the tremendous success of FCJ's innovative and groundbreaking Access to Education program at York University - one which supports



SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION PROGRAM

students with precarious immigration status - over 20 students were referred to York to pursue their post-secondary studies. Along with the continued support of students seeking post-secondary education, the Youth and Education team supported over 30 newcomer youth and their families in accessing elementary and secondary education. This has been a monumental change to every student and their families who have been supported in accessing education.

All in all, the Youth and Education team have had an incredibly successful and empowering year. Through joining in new experiences, learning from each other, telling stories and sitting around a dining room table for shared meals, the Youth and Education team have had an exceptional year, and look forward to the adventures that lie ahead.

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MIGRANT WORKERS

In 2018 the Migrant Workers Mobile Program became a key part of the FCJ's work in anti-human trafficking. The program has three main goals: 1) prevent instances of labour exploitation/trafficking by informing migrant workers about labour and immigration laws, policies and available community supports; 2) identify at-risk or potential labour trafficking/exploitation cases with the support of peers, and offer holistic case management support services; 3) collect information about the extent of labour trafficking/exploitation, as well as the complex experiences of migrant workers exploited within the spectrum.

To facilitate contact with migrant workers, FCJ staff travelled to the areas where these workers congregate and carry out their labour, such as London, Niagara, Barrie, and Kitchener. During these trips FCJ was able to provide information sessions for workers coming predominantly from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and the Caribbean. Some care workers from the Philippines were also referred to FCJ through The Neighbourhood Organization (TNO) for assistance with stabilizing their status in Canada.



FCJ also continued to work on enhancing and expanding our relationship with allies and partner organizations for collaboration, reaching out to employment lawyers, regional legal clinics, health practitioners etc. Through the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network (TCHTN, which FCJ leads) and the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change (MWAC) FCJ and partners have also been advocating for policy changes, for example the implementation of Open Work permits for workers that do not tie them to a particular employer and render them vulnerable to abuse – and better oversight of work places and monitoring of the treatment by employers and/or recruitment agencies.

To enhance awareness of labour trafficking, the FCJ together with the TCHTN organized a one-day forum on May 31, 2018 entitled “Deconstructing human trafficking: Exploitation spectrum and protecting survivors”. It was attended by around 150 people, exceeding our expectations.

Another emphasis was raising awareness about Ontario's Human Trafficking Helpline and the hidden issues connected to labour trafficking, particularly in connection with international cases.

To connect with more workers who may be in need of support, throughout 2018 we also distributed flyers for our program, along with the Canadian Council of Refugees Migrant Workers Report Cards for Ontario.

IMMIGRATION HELP AND REFUGEE PROTECTION



numerous phone inquiries from individuals living in Canada, asking if their relatives who were travelling in the US can qualify for the Family Member Exception of the Third Safe Country agreement - the answer is yes for immediate family members such as siblings, offspring etc. but not for cousins, aunts, etc.

At the same time we saw an increase in the number of unaccompanied minors, youth around 16 or 17 from Honduras or El Salvador who may have some family members in Canada (such as their grandparents) but travelled by themselves through the United States.

We also received more people informing us that a family member had been detained by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officials who went to their home, or that they themselves had been contacted by the CBSA and asked to come in for an appointment.

2018 TRENDS

In terms of the trends or emerging issues the following were some noteworthy ones that impacted on the people we work with and subsequently impacted on the FCJ's resources and staff needs. In 2018 we continued to see a shortage of adequate shelter space and appropriate housing for newcomers and refugee claimants in the City of Toronto, coupled with a reluctance by landlords to rent apartment units to individuals who receive assistance from Ontario Works or who could not provide adequate credit references.

Ensuring that newcomers are able to obtain a space in a refugee shelter was an ongoing challenge, particularly when the newcomer was a single man or a couple without children (as priority appeared to have been given to families with kids).

We saw an increase in the number of cases of women who were fleeing domestic violence and FCJ responded in part by referring them to supporting organizations.

We continued to see a large number of people coming to Canada via the US, for example individuals from Nicaragua, Venezuela, Colombia and Nigeria who were able to obtain tourist visas to the USA. We also received

Some of these individuals were subject to Pre Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA) and at risk of being removed from the country. FCJ assisted these clients with an H&C application, referral to lawyers, etc.

One more emerging issue we saw and which places stress on individuals and the agencies that support them is the increase in the waiting time for protected persons who apply for Permanent Residence. The average time was 15 months but that has now increased to 27 or 30 months.

This results in longer family separation times; for example we assisted a woman from Uganda who fled domestic violence and whose claim was accepted after a year and a half, but who was not yet able to sponsor her three children left behind in Uganda and was facing up to 3 more years of separation. FCJ assisted her with her claim but also with a) finding financial support for the cost of the PR application through a partner organization, b) seeking counselling support as she was extremely distressed by the prolonged separation from her children and c) reaching out to a Member of Parliament or another individual who could support her application and possibly expedite the process.

IMMIGRATION HELP AND REFUGEE PROTECTION

NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Since its establishment, the FCJ Refugee Centre has provided support to vulnerable newcomers to Canada including refugee claimants, and individuals with precarious status.

The Newcomer Settlement Program funded by the Ontario Government provided us with the opportunity to focus more efforts on our most vulnerable clients. Due to the increased demand, we exceeded the total number of unique clients who accessed one-on-one services and we also exceeded the number of participants who attended and benefitted from the workshops we offered, on topics such as submitting a refugee claim or a humanitarian and compassionate application.

Furthermore, the FCJ Refugee Centre is a trusted partner for referrals from other agencies given our unique position in working with migrants with precarious status and our ability to offer services in a number of languages. Most individuals also tend to visit our office more than one time, to receive assistance with the immigration process, and then follow up with their search for housing, education, employment, etc. The approach to our work has always been based on an integrated model, meaning that we consider each individual in a holistic way to ensure the range and quality of services offered to them.

2018	PHONE CALLS RECEIVED	NUMBER OF CLIENTS RECEIVED IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SUPPORT
JANUARY	371	76
FEBRUARY	204	450
MARCH	721	613
APRIL	576	500
MAY	588	377
JUNE	354	482
JULY	655	451
AUGUST	763	404
SEPTEMBER	776	357
OCTOBER	984	243
NOVEMBER	941	223
DECEMBER	549	204
TOTAL ANNUAL	7482	4380

Thank you, FCJ, for doing the much-needed work of supporting migrants wherever they are at on their journey and for building a wonderful sense of community within your organization. I love working in an environment that respects and empowers migrants.

Tamera Campbell, Public Policy Co-op and Sociology student at the University of Toronto Scarborough.



PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

MIGRANT PROTECTION CLINIC

As part of the Public Education Program, the Migrant Protection Clinic was successfully implemented during 2018. Through the year we provided 194 Migrant Protection Clinics serving 4,546 vulnerable populations.

The migrant clinics allowed FCJ Refugee Centre to visit agencies/communities at various locations across the GTA and Ontario to offset the barriers, better equip a wide range of service providers and increase access to justice to a wide base of precarious migrant populations.

Thanks to the Law Foundation of Ontario, FCJ Refugee Centre's staff were able to work directly with staff at partner organizations to schedule appointments, complete intakes and work on various applications



TOTAL OF MONTHLY WORKSHOPS DURING 2018

MONTH	WORKSHOPS	PARTICIPANTS
January	2	32
February	5	38
March	6	137
April	4	47
May	3	48
June	6	235
July	12	264
August	7	171
September	14	217
October	10	153
November	16	344
December	4	62
TOTAL	89	1,748

associated with different migration processes.

The Migrant Protection Clinic included individual orientations and workshops.

Through the year we worked with our partner organizations supporting clients at their locations in Toronto: Youth Without Shelter, Hostel Services/COSTI, ABRIGO Centre, Toronto Plaza Hotel in Toronto, COSTI, etc. Outside of Toronto we kept supporting organizations like the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre, LUSO Community Services (London); Casa El Norte and Matthew House (Fort Erie) and Chez Marie (St. Catharines).

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

READY TOUR AND REFUGEE APPEAL INFO- SESSIONS.

Through the year there were 26 Ready Tours and Refugee Appeal, RAD, info-sessions. A total of 346 refugee claimants and more than 50 observers from different agencies had the opportunity to visit a refugee hearing room.

Since 2018 the Ready Tour was moved to the morning time, the new schedule is more convenient for families with children, because while parents attend the Ready Tour their kids can stay in school.

In addition to the actual Ready Tour we started to facilitate a Pre-Ready Tour Session where the claimants have an opportunity to ask the kind of personal questions in a supportive group environment. For half an hour, after every Ready Tour, we provided an orientation on resources and additional support that participants might need. Our experience at these sessions is that the majority of participants who are not referred by other agencies, are not aware of services and resources for refugee claimants.



We found a lot of confusion among participants who are not familiar with Legal Aid. We developed a pre-questionnaire that give us a sense of the level of information participants have; particularly the section related to settlement services. The questionnaire is an excellent tool that allowed us to detect the best way we can support during the session. Besides the questionnaire we also produced a tip sheet that provides information on basic settlement services and resources for refugee claimants.

EXPERIENCES AT FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

I can truly say that I've never been in a place where so many people are helping others in such critical ways. I observed FCJ staff running educational workshops for youth, meeting with a seemingly constant stream of clients, and liaising over the phone with Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada to resolve client issues. It's easy to get disconnected from real world issues in law school, so I'm very grateful that I've been able to watch the staff at FCJ expertly help those with daunting immigration related problems.

JP. 1st year law student at the University of Toronto.

I had the privilege of working with FCJ Refugee Centre as my 1st year placement in the Community Worker Program. I am fortunate to have been able to learn and work with a group of people who genuinely care about the community and those that seek assistance in integrating into Canadian Society with their families. .

Evellyn Rosales – George Brown College (1st Year Student – Community Worker Program)

I strongly believe that the hands-on approach at FCJ has allowed me to greatly develop and exert more prominently skills such as patience, greater compassion and understanding. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at FCJ, it is more than just a house with offices; it is a home for everyone.

Regina Osei-Bonsu. International Relations student at the University of Leeds, England

FCJ Refugee Centre

SUPPORTERS

We want to acknowledge the support we received from each one of our donors: individuals, religious, institutions, foundations and government. Thanks to your support we were able to keep walking with uprooted people.

A lot of the work that FCJ Refugee Centre does relies on volunteers and placement students. We are happy that our supporters are very highly skilled students with capacity to help either in the Migrant & Refugee Support area, Settlement support, Education, etc.

Through the year we received support from 50 volunteers that have been donating their time helping in the different programs. They were working through the week according to their availability. Some of them are only able to come on Saturdays to support the English class or the Primary Care Clinic.

At the end of the year we started to receive the support of 5 pro-bono law students from York. They started to come to the office every Friday for the whole day supporting with applications and forms like work permits, H&C cases, etc.

Government Grants

Dept. of Justice
Ministry of Housing
Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration
Ministry of Children Community and Social Services
City of Toronto

Grants -Foundations

UNIFOR (CAW)
Law Foundation
St. Stephen's Community House
The Daly Foundation
Chum Charitable Foundation
Maytree Foundation
Catherine Donnelly Foundation

Religious Congregations

FCJ Sisters
Basilian Fathers
Christian Brothers
Felician Sisters
Loretto Sisters
Our Lady's Missionaries
Salesian Sisters
Sisters of St. Joseph
Sisters of Charity
Scarborough Missions

IKEA Christmas Tree Program



Winter clothes donations received from ROOTS

Roots is proud to support the FCJ Refugee centre with some of our cold weather favorites to welcome the FCJ women and children to Canada! Stay warm!!
-Your friends at Roots
@Roots #Roots

208 Oakwood Ave. Toronto ON

FCJ Refugee Centre



Thank you to all our supporters who keep helping us in different ways like the Monthly Donor Program through Canada Helps or campaigns such as the Ride for Refuge, Giving Tuesday, NeedsList, Refugees Welcome!, Neighbourhood community and other FCJ Refugee Centre friends.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

	2018	2017
Revenues		
Donations		
Individual donations	\$ 36,315	\$ 25,563
Religious organizations (note 7)	99,732	141,585
Foundations	128,984	112,850
Government grants (note 6)	498,752	310,836
Amortization of deferred capital contributions (note 5)	44,197	56,617
Rent	79,706	67,167
Other	12,210	15,861
	899,896	730,479
Expenses		
Legal program	107,505	129,990
Popular education	104,315	94,669
Settlement program	310,275	272,904
Development and fundraising	78,892	40,053
Administration (note 3)	238,186	221,413
	839,173	759,029
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses for the year	60,723	(28,550)
Net assets (deficit) - at beginning of year	(17,728)	10,822
Net assets (deficit) - at end of year	\$ 42,995	\$ (17,728)

208 Oakwood Ave. Toronto ON



FCJ Refugee Centre
Walking With Uprooted People

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FCJ Refugee Centre serves refugees and others at risk due to their immigration status, and welcomes anyone asking for advice, counsel and support regarding their refugee or immigration claim process. We address systemic issues that newly arrived refugee claimants face in Canada including lack of resources, marginalization, and discrimination.



MISSION

FCJ Refugee Centre helps uprooted people overcome the challenges of rebuilding their lives in Canadian society. With an open door approach, the Centre offers an integrated model of refugee protection, settlement services and education, including shelter for women and their children.

MANDATE

The FCJ Refugee Centre has a mandate to assist refugees and other uprooted people in re-establishing their lives and integrating into Canadian society by:

- Offering inclusive and timely counselling and support, including interpretation, referral to legal assistance, employment training, programs on Canadian culture and life, and other educational workshops.
- Providing temporary shelter for women and children
- Collaborating with relevant organizations to deliver popular education about the protection of human rights and the dignity of uprooted people.

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