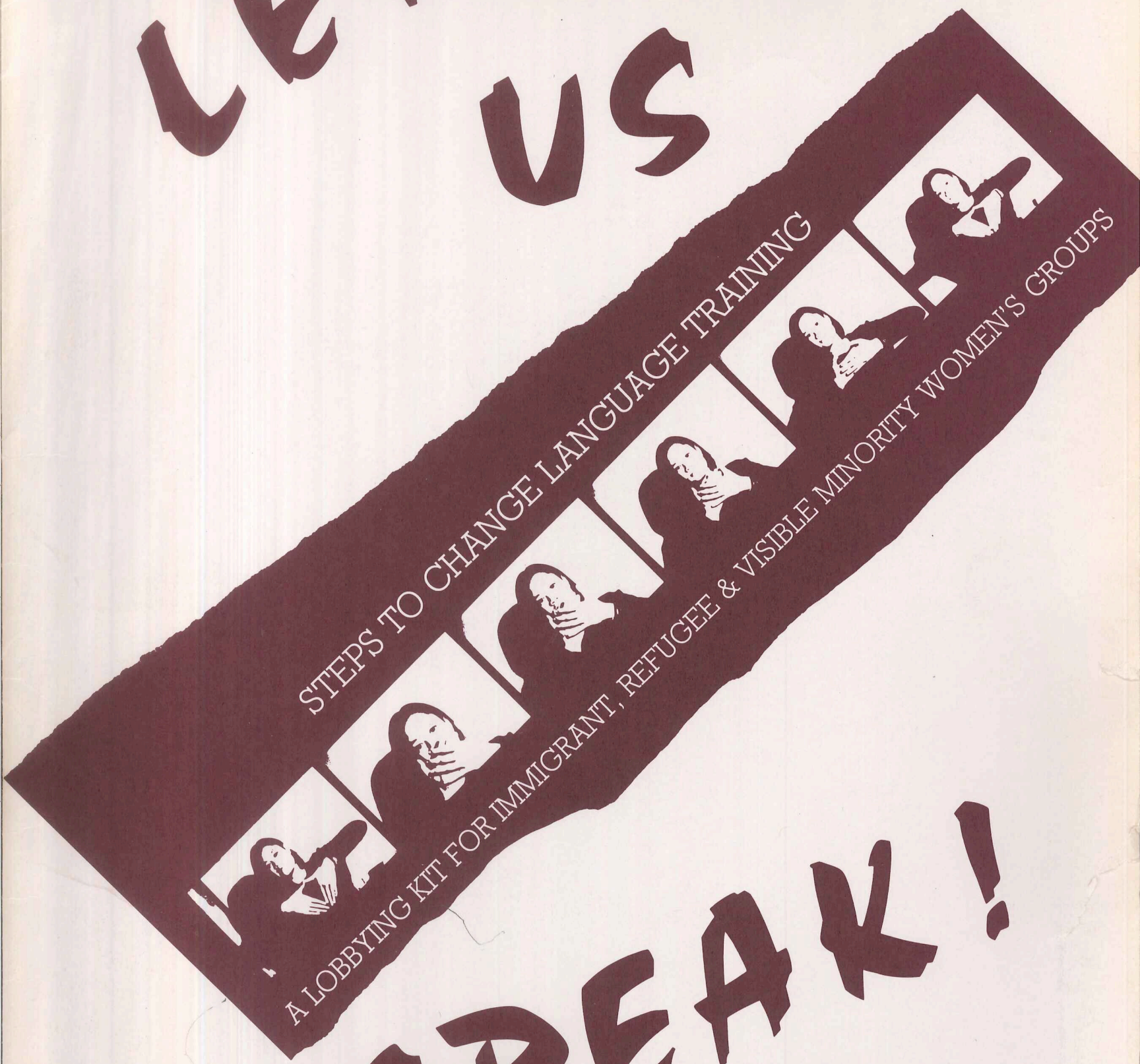
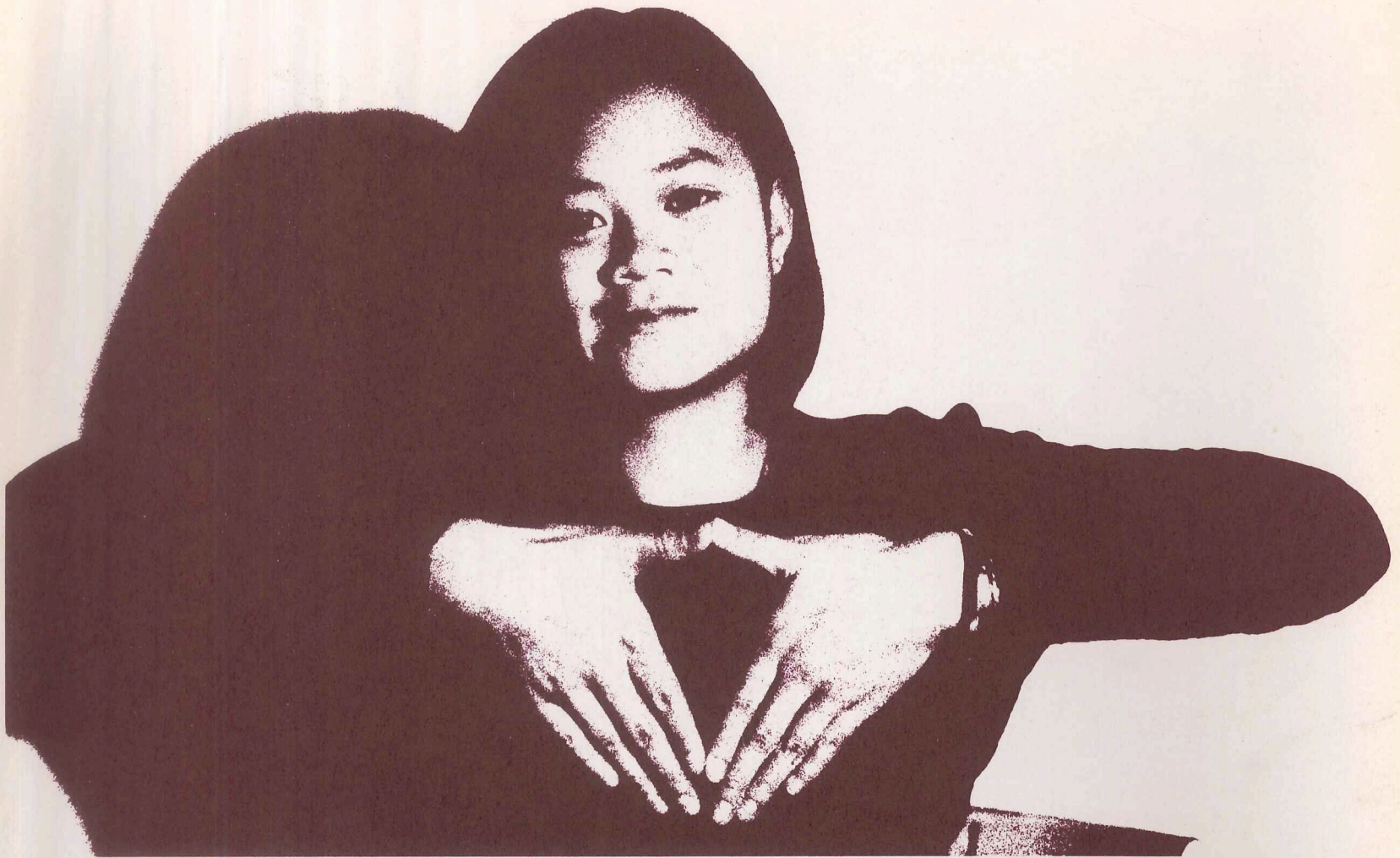


LET US



SPEAK!

ews



Produced by: A. Estable and M. Meyer
for the Equity In Language Training Project.
Toronto/Ottawa, 1989

A joint project of:

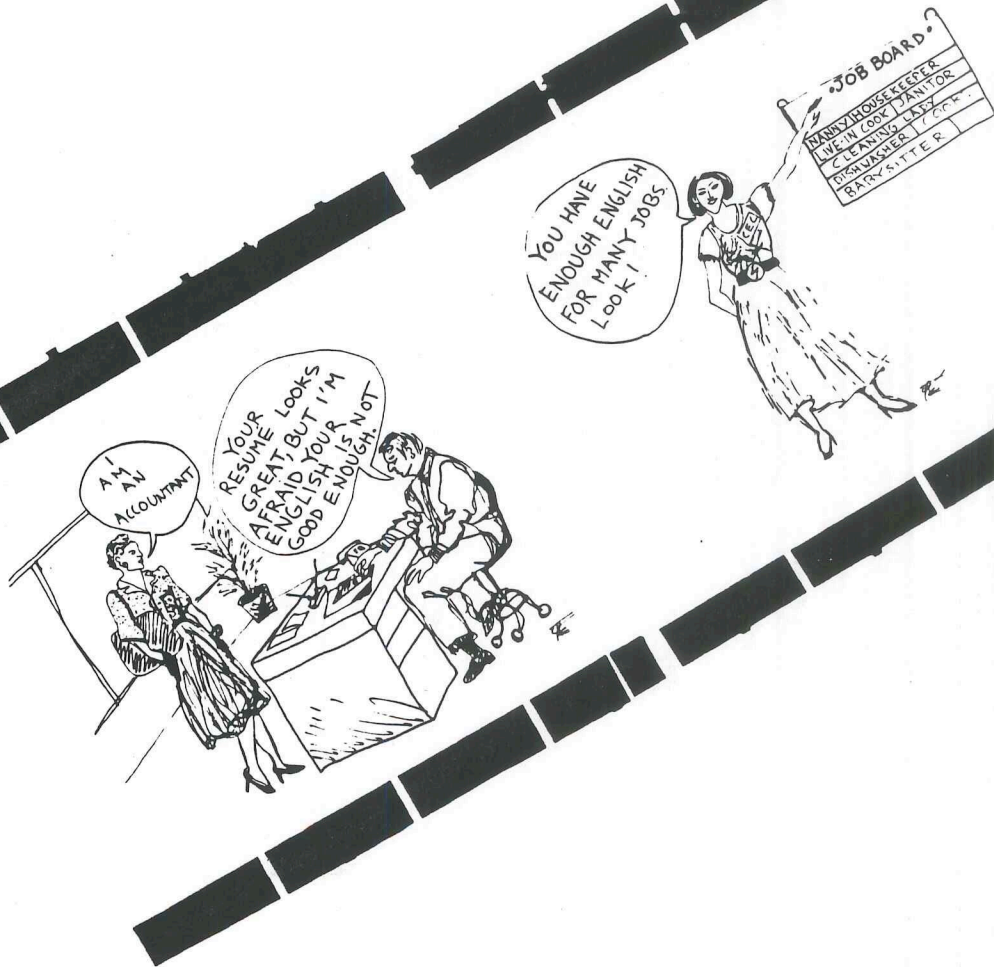
- Ontario Region of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada
- Canadian Ethnocultural Council Women's Committee
- Chinese-Canadian National Council Women's Issues Committee
- Toronto Chapter of the Congress of Black Women of Canada
- Ontario Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Organization
- Coalition of Visible Minority Women (Ontario) Inc.

Funds were received from:

- Ontario Women's Directorate
- Ontario Ministry of Citizenship
- Secretary of State Regional Office

Design: Gravity Works, Ottawa

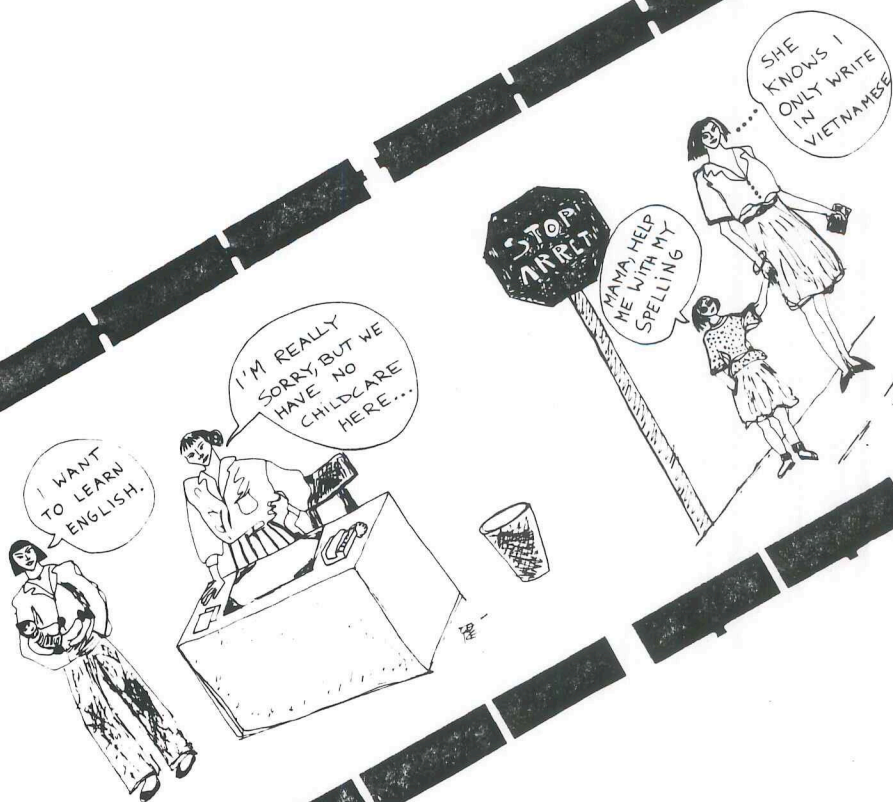
DIFFERENT WOMEN / SAME STORY



DIFFERENT WOMEN / SAME STORY



DIFFERENT WOMEN / SAME STORY



HOW TO USE THIS KIT

Who is the kit for?

*This kit is called **Let Us Speak!** We hope it will help your group:*

- learn more about the lives of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women;*
- fight for equality in language training; and*
- find ways to make changes to the society in which we live and work.*

You will find:

In this kit you will find:

***Fact sheets on eight topics** with summarized background information on lobbying for language training for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women. The fact sheets can be used for quick reference: for example if you want to look up points for a discussion, or clarify an argument, you can pull out one of the fact sheets and quickly get information in point form on the facts about women's access to language training.*

*A manual which provides you with more detailed information on the same topics is available at cost from the **National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada** (see address below).*

The facts and figures are explained more fully, and put into a broader context. The manual can be used to get more information on certain issues related to language training. For example, if your group is preparing a brief on language classes for women at home, you can look up different sections in your manual: how to write a brief; what are the facts; what are some possible solutions. You will find statistics you can quote in a brief, and recommendations which you can discuss and refer to.

Why was this kit prepared?

Canada is not benefitting fully from the skills, experience, and labour potential of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women who cannot speak English or French. Structural barriers and discrimination deny women equal opportunity to learn an official language.

HOW TO USE THIS KIT

Immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's organizations identify knowledge of at least one official language as the most crucial link to full participation in Canadian society. Without language, women have limited options for employment; lack equal access to services to which all Canadians are entitled (health care, social services, education, training, and recreation); remain in often painful isolation; and can neither integrate into Canadian society, nor contribute with their full potential. And we, as a society, are denied the benefits of their skills and experience.

Recommendations towards a comprehensive language training policy and for an integrated, well-coordinated approach for second language program delivery have been developed and voiced by immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's organizations since their inception. Community organizations as well as policy makers, E/FSL teachers, and government critics are concerned about the lack of an integrated approach in language training, and recognize the disadvantages immigrant, refugee and visible minority women face compared to their male partners when accessing language training.

*Despite many years of recommendations, hardly anything has changed. This led the Equity in Language Training Project to take a more pro-active approach on the issue. Instead of yet another report, we have produced **Let Us Speak!**, a lobbying and public education kit for community organizations to use in working for change.*

Who was involved in the project?

The Equity in Language Training Project is the result of concerted effort by a number of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's organizations. The Advisory Committee includes representatives from: Ontario Region of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada; Canadian Ethnocultural Council Women's Committee; Chinese-Canadian National Council Women's Issues Committee; Congress of Black Women of Canada (Toronto Chapter); Ontario Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Organization; Coalition of Visible Minority Women (Ontario) Inc.

HOW TO USE THIS KIT

Funding was received from the Ontario Women's Directorate, the Ministry of Citizenship, and Secretary of State Toronto Regional Office. Two consultants were hired in July 1988, themselves immigrant women for whom English was a second language. They worked closely with representatives from the sponsoring organizations, and also held community consultations to solicit input from other community organizations, including Women Working With Immigrant Women; Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants; New Experience for Refugee Women; TESL Canada; Ottawa Multicultural Women's Association; Toronto Labour Council; Language Subcommittee of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women, and Centre for Spanish Speaking People. During these consultations, the model for an "ideal" language training system was developed.

*A draft version of this kit, including a feedback sheet, was circulated at the National Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Organization Biennial General Meeting, and at the Canadian Council for Refugees Biannual Consultation, in November, 1989. The material, models and recommendations were presented for discussion and constructive criticism during workshops at both conferences. Based on the comments and suggestions of the community, revisions and amendments were made to the draft version, which resulted in the kit as you read it today. For additional copies of **Let Us Speak!**, please contact:*

Equity in Language Training Project Advisory Committee
c/o NOIVMWC
251 Laurier Avenue West
Suite 1102
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5J6

Community input and feedback continue to be very important. Please let us know of any new developments in your area, and share with us your group's reactions to the material, your comments and any suggestions for changes! Please send them to the address above.

WHO CAN HELP?

Many organizations and associations throughout Canada work on behalf of equality for women. Some have been formed by immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women themselves. Some have direct links to the government. A few organizations are listed below; many more could not be included because of space.

You can contact them for more information about the issues presented in this kit and manual. Some organizations have affiliates or chapters in different regions - ask if there is one in your area. If not, they may have the names of supportive and interested women with whom you could make contact. Some will have written material on the language training issue, or on other important issues, which you can also request. Ask to be put on a mailing list, to receive regular information or newsletters.

Voluntary organizations usually have a membership and a constitution. You can ask for a copy of their constitution and goals, so you know more about the organization itself, and can choose to become involved if you wish. The governmental organizations can provide written materials, documents, and reports that sometimes are useful. It is their job to advise the government about women's issues, so they should be interested to learn about your concerns.

Your elected representatives of parliament can also help you to get more information (see MANUAL - What You Can Do). The three main political parties have women's issues committees, and there is a Minister responsible for the Status of Women in the Federal Parliament, as well as opposition critics on women's issues for each party. Most provincial governments also have ministers with responsibility for the status of women.

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

National Organization of Immigrant
and Visible Minority Women of Canada
251 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 1102
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5J6
(613) 232-0689

Chinese-Canadian National Council
Women's Issues Committee
386 Bathurst Street 2/F
Toronto, Ontario
M52 2S6
(416) 868-1777

Canadian Congress of Learning
Opportunities for Women
47 Main Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4E 2V6
(416) 699-1909

Canadian Ethnocultural Council
Women's Committee
251 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 1100
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5J6
(613) 230-3867

Congress of Black Women of Canada
(Ontario Region)
756 Ossington Avenue, Suite 6
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 3T9

Canadian Research Institute
for the Advancement of Women
151 Slater Street, Suite 408
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5H3
(613) 563-0681

National Action Committee
on the Status of Women
323 Chapel Street
Ottawa, Ontario
(613) 234-7062

WHO CAN HELP?

ONTARIO VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

Ontario Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Organization 555 Bloor Street West Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Y6 (416) 538-2045	Women Working With Immigrant Women 555 Bloor Street West Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Y6 (416) 531-2059	YWCA of Canada 80 Woodlawn East Toronto, Ontario M5B 1G6 (416) 593-9886
Coalition of Visible Minority Women (Ontario) Inc. 579 St. Clair Ave. West Toronto, Ontario M6C 1A3	Association of Community-Based Training and Education for Women Toronto Office Skills Training Project 511 King Street West, Suite 400 Toronto, Ontario M5V 1K4 Tel.(416) 595-9920	Equity in Language Training Committee 777 Landsdowne Avenue Toronto, Ontario M6H 3Z1
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants Women's Committee 579 St. Clair Ave. West, Suite 201 Toronto, Ontario M6C 1A3 (416) 657-8777	Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) P.O. Box 6989 Station A Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X7 (416) 963-9654	

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women 110 O'Connor Street, 9th floor P.O. Box 1541, Station B Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R6 (613) 992-4975	Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues 900 Bay Street Mowat Block, 5th Floor Queen's Park Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2 (416) 965-1111	Women's Program Secretary of State Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M5 (819) 997-7788
		Women's Bureau Labour Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0J2 (613) 997-1550

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Immigrant and refugee women do not need to speak much English or French because:

- *they want to maintain their mother tongue and culture;*
- *they do not want to adjust to "Canadian life";*
- *they want to stay home and look after their children;*
- *they can easily get by in their ethnic neighbourhoods;*
- *they can pick up enough English/French to get by in their daily lives;*
- *they don't go out much in public, since this is against their traditions.*

But we know that...

- *A main priority for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women is to be able to communicate in an official language. They want to learn English or French; the problem is that they are not given an equal chance to learn.*
- *Without knowing English/French, women do not have the opportunity to choose which parts of their culture they would like to maintain and which parts they might want to change. Without being able to communicate, immigrant women can not share their culture and traditions with the rest of Canadians in a multicultural society.*
- *Without communication skills, women can only observe what is happening around them; they cannot ask questions to receive clarifications about what they are observing. Canadian life remains a myth.*
- *Women who stay at home to look after families do need to be able speak an official language - to communicate with neighbours, teachers, children's friends; to be active parents and involved in their children's education and recreational activities; to read product labels, newspapers, leaflets, any public information; to function as a normal human being in a society!*
- *Not all immigrants and refugees live in "ethnic" neighbourhoods, nor should they be ghettoized because they can't speak an official language.*
- *There are many women who, after 20 years in Canada, still have not "picked up" an official language. This is the result of a language training model which relies on the Canadian public at large to somehow provide "language training on the street". Many Canadian people are unwilling to even talk with a woman who speaks "broken" English or French. Prejudice and discrimination increase when women are forced to communicate simplistically.*
- *Many immigrant women may be uncomfortable going out in public without their husband or family; but this is not always the result of their traditions. If they can't communicate, they are forced to depend on their families for every little thing, in a way that didn't happen in their home countries.*

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Everyone in Canada can learn an official language; programmes are available to anyone who really wants to learn.

But we know that...

- *Canadian laws and regulations deny many women access to subsidized language training. Sponsored immigrant women, women who are not considered to be "destined for the labour market", and women with few marketable skills, are not allowed to take subsidized language classes on an equal basis with other immigrants and refugees.*

- *Many immigrant and refugee women do not receive information about the options they might have. Information is not available in their own language and they do not possess the communication skills to ask for it. Illiterate women do not have access to information at all.*

- *The cost of living in Canada is higher than many immigrants expect. Most women, whether or not they were originally destined for the labour market, have to go out to work shortly after arriving in Canada because the family cannot survive on a single income or on the training allowance the husband receives while taking ESL/FSL courses. Since they lack official language knowledge, they can only find work in jobs which do not require communication skills, like unskilled factory work or cleaning.*

- *The only option for many immigrant and refugee women is to take language courses at night at their own expense. Even this option is very limited for women who work shifts, or who are not in a major urban centre. Our society, therefore, has chosen to grant immigrant, refugee and visible minority women the "freedom" to engage in a triple day: to work at a full-time job, to perform all household duties including looking after the kids, and to try to learn ESL/FSL in the evening.*

"It is hard to work nights and go to courses in the daytime. Because there is a lot of work in a home...My husband worked in the morning he went at five to work, came back at night. The only thing was, for days, me and my husband wouldn't see each other, because my husband worked at day, he returned late, went to sleep. In the evening, I went out to work, and my husband returned to sleep at home. Days, entire days we didn't see each other all the day long. That was a hard sacrifice... that gave me no possibility to go to school, how was I supposed to do it? "

- *It is a credit to the courage and perseverance of women that some are actually managing this "triple day" out of desperation. However, many of them have to give up.*

The real issue is not that women don't want to learn an official language; the real issue is obtaining equal access to language training for women.

"The thing they told me, my English was not good enough. When I tried to get English training they said 'You don't need English because you already know English we can't give you a course'. But I go there and they say my English is not good enough. So where can I learn English?"

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Immigrant women do not work outside of their homes because:

- *In their cultures women do not work;*
- *their husbands do not allow them to work;*
- *they are used to being poor anyway;*
- *they do not want Canadian people to take care of their children.*

But we know that...

• *More immigrant women work outside the home than Canadian-born women. Most immigrant women worked before coming to Canada. In Canada, they work for the same reasons that Canadian-born women work: to earn a living if they are on their own, or because the cost of living is too high for most families to survive on a single income.*

• *Not all immigrant women are married; nor are they any more likely to remain married than Canadian-born women. In many households, women are the main breadwinners.*

• *Immigrant and refugee men are as likely to be supportive of their wives' going to work as Canadian-born men; in fact, because of economic need in the first few years after immigration, they may be even more supportive.*

• *Because of prejudice and lack of language skills, many immigrant, refugee and visible minority women can't find jobs related to their experience.*

"Sometimes I feel really frustrated without work. I hate doing things in the house, because I'm doing it anyhow if I'm working outside... I like the type of work when you create things, when you're more creative, you're using your mind, you are working doing something, helpful. Because washing dishes ... is not creative. I hate it."

• *Surveys have shown that most immigrant women do want day care for their children. Many are forced to work at nights or do piece work at home, not because it is their tradition, but because they cannot find adequate child care.*

"Daycare is very expensive and if both parents are working it's hard to qualify for subsidy, although we can't afford to pay for daycare after rent and food, and all. So, you must choose : not going to work because you must take care of the children, or hiring a baby-sitter."

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Immigrant women who do not speak English/French are uneducated and do not possess any qualifications or skills, and have little to complain about, since:

- *the jobs they find in the lower occupational levels are just right for them;*
- *they like to work where they do not have to speak English/French;*
- *they should be grateful to work when so many Canadians are unemployed;*
- *they get paid much better in Canada than in their home countries.*

But we know that...

- *According to Statistics Canada, immigrant and refugee women are more likely to have university education than Canadian-born women (13% compared to 11%). Another 57% have received secondary education (high school or technical training). Women from certain world regions are even more highly educated. For example, 36% of immigrant and refugee women from Southeast Asia have a university education.*

- *There is also a group of women with less formal education who are penalized in a double way. They were denied equal educational opportunities in their home countries; and now Canada denies them access to language training by labelling them as "unskilled", and prevents them from having the same educational or training opportunities that are available to Canadian-born women.*

- *Immigrant, refugee and visible minority women do the jobs that Canadian-born women don't want to do, or are trying to get out of (cleaning, cooking, unskilled factory work). They are often forced into these underpaid jobs because they are not eligible for subsidized language training. Without English/French, they can not advocate on their own behalf as workers, or know their rights.*

- *Yes, wages may seem to be higher in Canada than in some other countries; but immigrants and refugees are also paying Canadian prices for the goods they consume, and should receive an equitable share of the Canadian economic wealth that they are helping to produce.*

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Immigrant and refugee women are afraid to learn English/French in a formalized institutional setting such as a school, a college, or a university because they are not used to classroom learning; therefore:

- *even if they have access to formal classes, these women won't learn much;*
- *women can only learn English/French informally, as part of a social activity;*
- *we can't expect women to become as fluent as men.*

But we know that...

• *There is no documentation that certain types of programmes are inherently better for one gender than for another, once all the institutional and structural barriers equalize opportunity of access between the genders. The degree of language acquisition in the different types of programmes ("formal" college training versus "informal" training programmes at community centers or parent-preschooler settings) has never been carefully researched. Although the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission has been funding subsidized language training for decades, it has never examined the quality of official second language training across educational institutions and provinces, nor assessed the effectiveness of different teaching and learning strategies!*

• *Drop-out rates from formal programmes have not been investigated systematically. Self-reports by immigrant women identify systemic reasons, such as lack of childcare and the pressure to perform a triple day, as the major problems. Another reason is the irrelevance or inappropriateness of programme content. None of these reasons translate into inability to learn in an institutional setting.*

• *Almost all immigrant and refugee women have some formal education, and the great majority have more than elementary education. It is normal to be apprehensive of new situations, particularly if one cannot ask a question or understand an answer. Although alternative programmes are also important, a classroom setting in a regular E/FSL programme need not be barrier for most immigrant women, if teaching methods and curriculum are appropriate, teachers bilingual (an official language and the learners' mother tongue), and materials non-racist and non-sexist.*

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Canada does not have the money to provide language training for all.

But we know that...

- *The real cost to be calculated must include the consequences for a multicultural society which prides itself on being egalitarian and democratic, yet prohibits a segment of the population from fully exercising their basic civil and human rights.*
- *Canadian society loses millions of dollars every year because it can not benefit from the qualifications, skills, and work experiences immigrants bring with them. One reason for that is the lack of adequate language training.*

“Is this what Canada wants? Not to use these people and let them rot in the houses?”

- *The costs for adequate language training are small compared to the amount of money the tax payer would have to spend in order to train a Canadian person to perform on the same level as an immigrant who arrives with education and training.*
- *Expenditures on second language training have not nearly kept pace with Canada's recruitment of immigrants and refugees in recent years, nor with the increasing numbers of newcomers who speak neither official language.*
- *In the long run, it will cost less for Canada to provide adequate ESL/FSL training to all who need it. With official language ability:*

△ *immigrant women will be better adapted to Canadian society;*

△ *they will react more flexibly to a changing job market;*

△ *they will have expanded economic opportunities, and reduce dependency on social assistance for themselves and the families;*

△ *they will feel less isolation, reduce requirements for health and social services;*

△ *they will be able to communicate better with their own children;*

△ *they can lead a healthier life in general;*

△ *they will participate more fully in Canadian life, and be better contributors to a truly multicultural society.*

“The government should be aware that they do not end up with an upside down mental health situation in immigrant homes..Our potential is high, the immigrant women who stay at home and who are well educated. High in the sense that we are like a bomb. We are in the houses and...I don't know how we will end up.”

- *Canada's growth depends on increased immigration levels in future. Immigrants and refugees create wealth; why should they be the last to benefit?*

PEOPLE SAY... BUT WE KNOW...

People say that...

Many immigrant women are too old to learn English or French anyway.

But we know that...

- Because only "labour force destined" individuals are entitled to subsidized language training, few seniors have equal access to E/FSL classes: a clear discriminatory practice on the basis of age. Older immigrants need to learn one of the official language as much as younger immigrants do: to be able to communicate in society and not be left in total isolation. The result of denying language training to seniors are isolation, dependency on their children to access any services, and depression. Exploitation and abuse of older family members - mainly women because they are the ones who would take care of grandchildren - are surfacing as problems in many communities. Since they have no ability to communicate, these seniors can not access any services.

- Research on learning has not confirmed that older people are unable to acquire new knowledge or skills. Non-immigrant seniors are increasingly involved in continuing education programmes of all sorts. Motivation is a major factor for life-long learning. With enough encouragement, sensitive teaching and good curricula, most older immigrant and refugee women are able to acquire communication skills in a second language.

People say that...

Immigrants who criticize the Canadian system do not appreciate the benefits and freedom they are receiving here in Canada.

But we know that...

- It is **because** Canada is seen as a democratic, fair and peaceful nation that many immigrants and refugees have chosen to come here. On the other hand, Canada has built its economic wealth by accepting "the right immigrants at the right time", and the consequences of this screening process have been felt for generations. In the past, people from certain races or countries were not permitted to enter Canada as immigrants. Today, there are other criteria which are supposed to be more equitable.

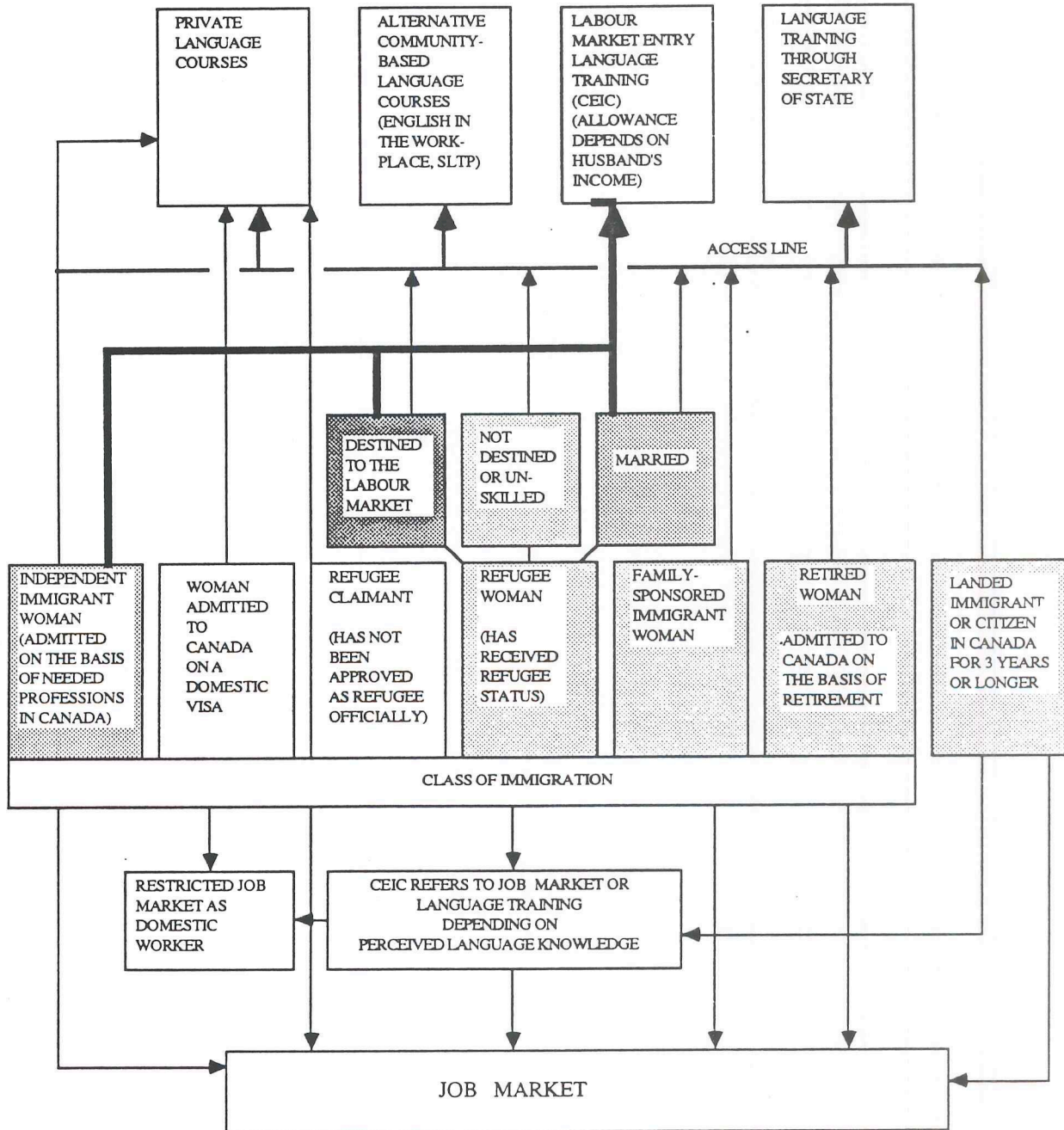
- Unfortunately, many kinds of discrimination still exist. The underside of multiculturalism is a racially stratified society, in which visible minority women are at the bottom. Immigrant and refugee women are still discriminated against through the regulations of Employment and Immigration Commission. By denying women the same rights as men, Canada's tradition of equity is sullied.

- We can not make discrimination go away by pretending it is not there. Immigrants and refugees who want to contribute to their new country not only have the right, but the democratic responsibility, to participate in making changes to achieve a better society for all of us.

N.B.: All the quotes used in this section come from Interviews with Immigrant, refugee and visible minority women living in the Ottawa area, from Mental Health Service Needs of Immigrant Women, a report by A. Estable and J. Holmes for O.C.I.S.O, 1985.

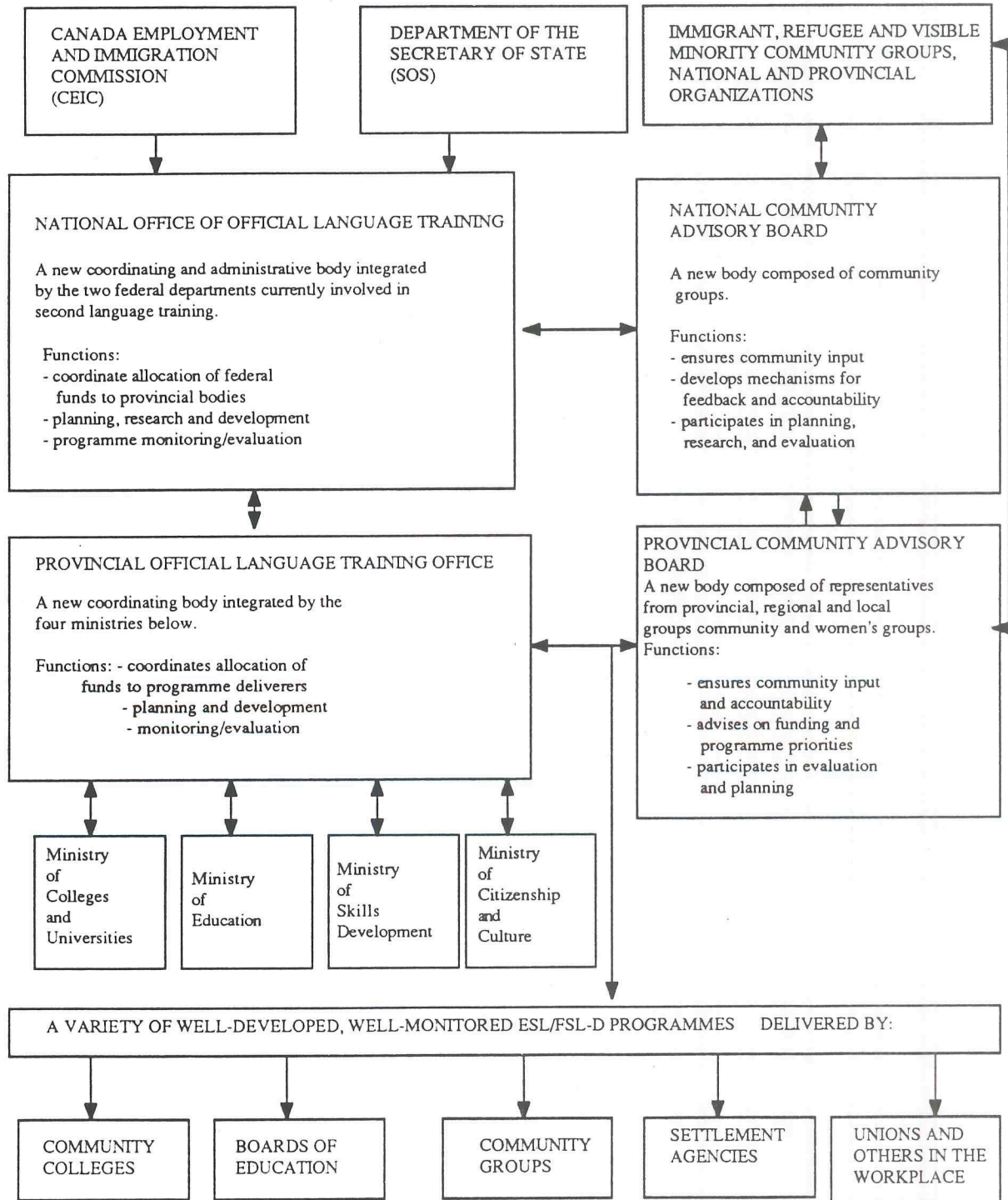
A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK

ACCESS MAZE (CURRENT SYSTEM FROM THE WOMEN'S POINT OF VIEW)



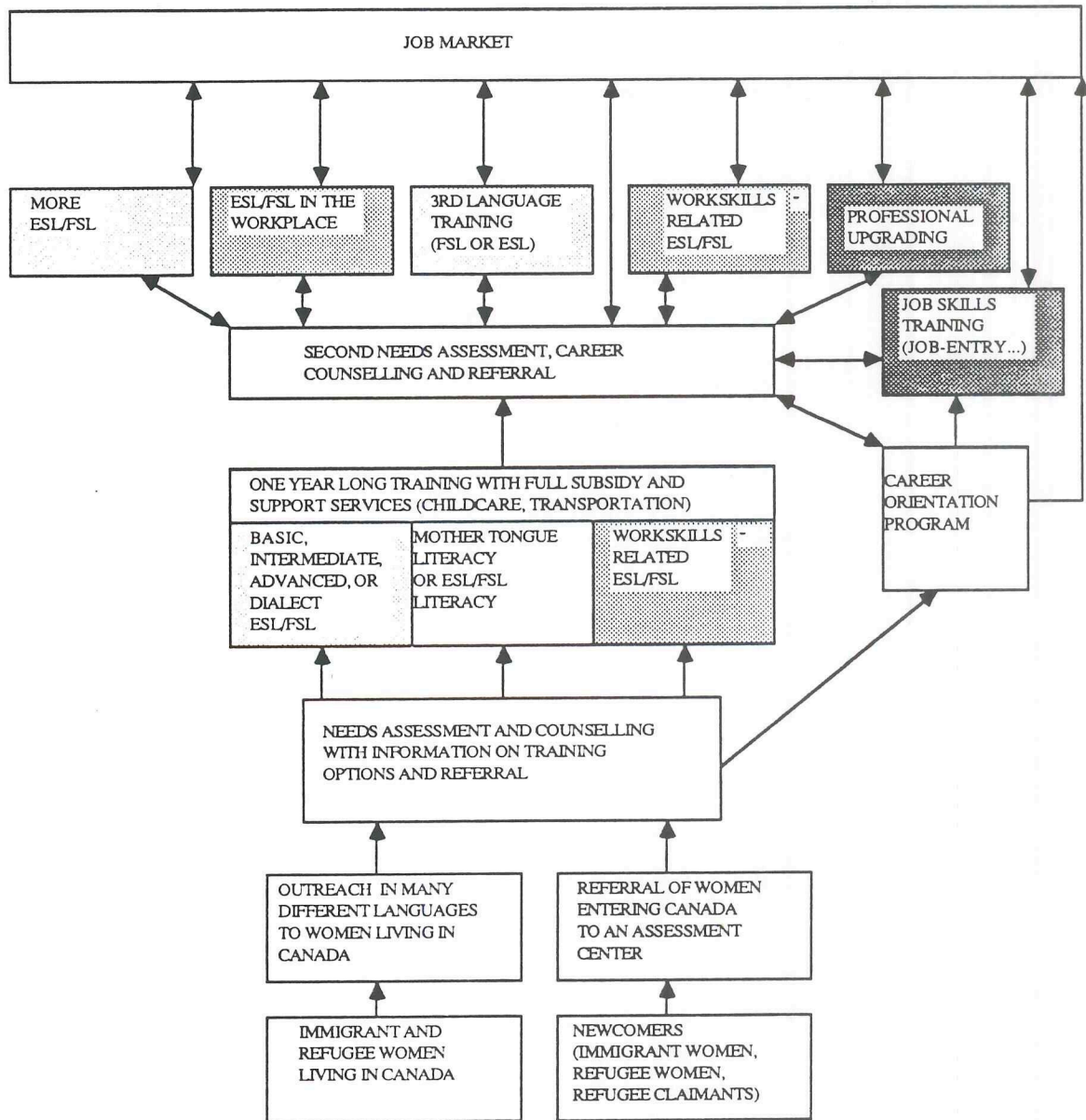
A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK

A TRANSITIONAL MODEL



A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK

AN ACCESSIBLE SYSTEM (FROM THE WOMEN'S POINT OF VIEW)

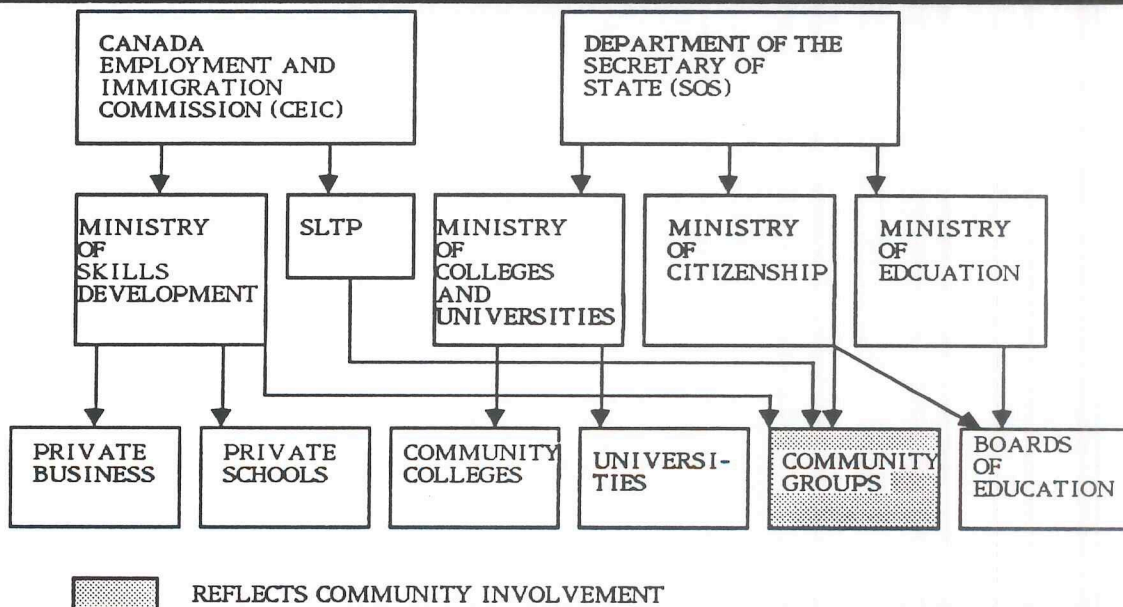


A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK

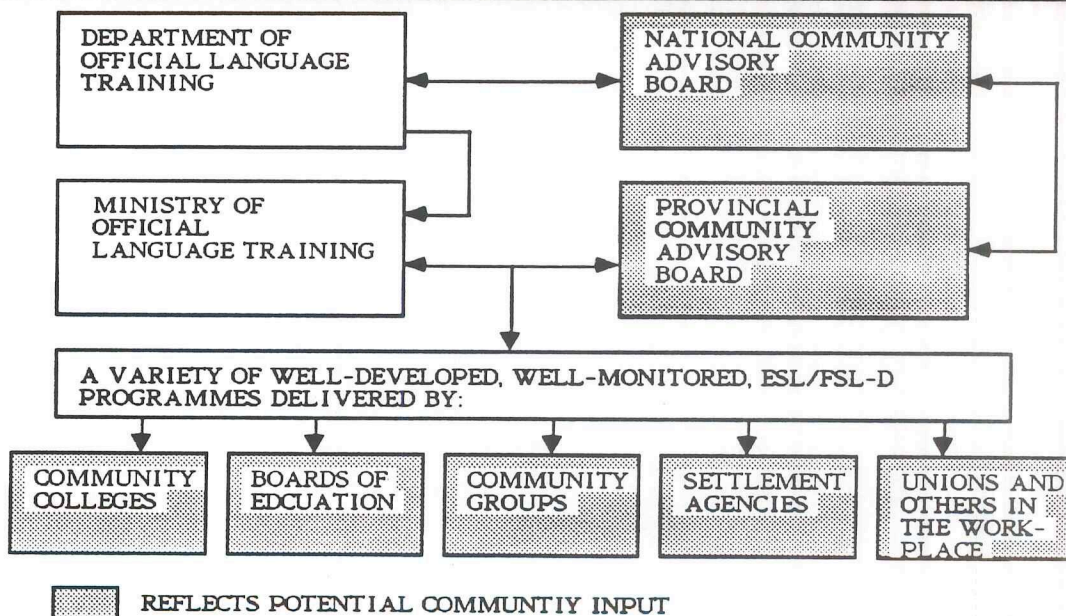
The current system of official language training is uncoordinated, inequitable, and inadequate. It does not meet the needs of immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women, as outlined below in the figures entitled "WHAT THE SYSTEM IS NOW", and "THE ACCESS MAZE". An alternative framework is presented in form of three figures: The "TRANSITIONAL MODEL" is the first step for the implementation of an ideal system for coordinating and delivering quality language training. Such an ideal system is outlined in the figures titled "WHAT THE SYSTEM COULD BE", and "AN ACCESSIBLE SYSTEM".

This framework was developed as a result of active consultation with a number of community-based groups involved in the issue of language training for immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women. The specific models presented here are based most directly on the situation in Ontario. Feedback from the workshops at which the draft version of this kit was tested confirmed that the essential elements are adaptable to the situation in most other provinces.

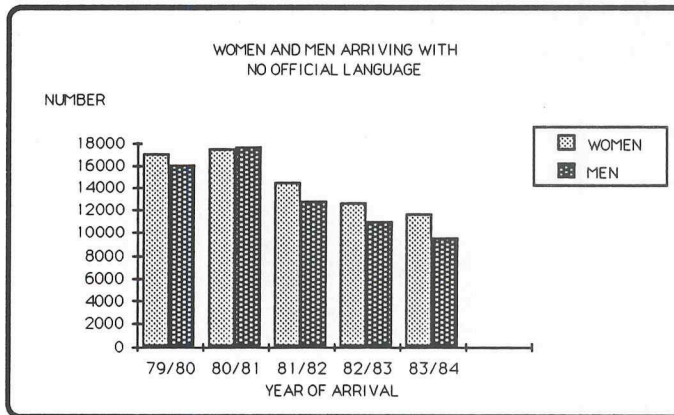
WHAT THE SYSTEM IS NOW



WHAT THE SYSTEM COULD BE

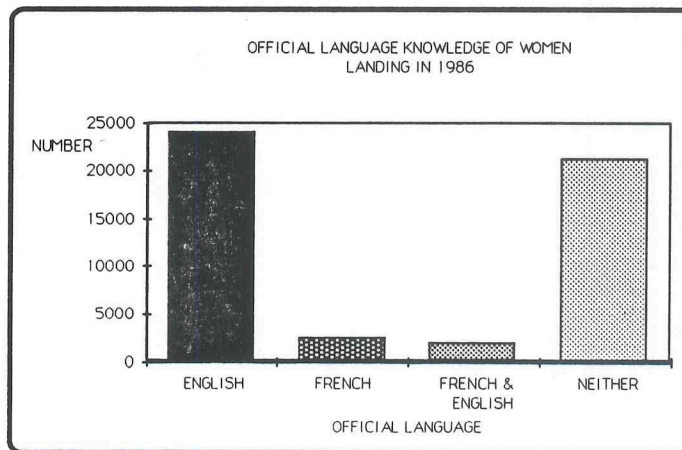


WHAT ARE THE FACTS



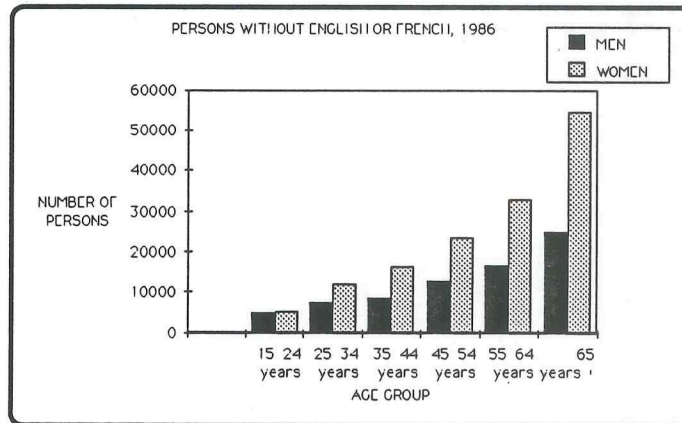
(SOURCE: EIC Settlement Branch Presentation to Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration)

- Why do immigrant and refugee women especially need language training?
- Because more women than men can't communicate in an official language. Almost half the women (43%) landing in Canada in 1986 did not know either official language upon arrival, and this number has increased in recent years. But women have fewer opportunities to learn English or French. Without language, women are isolated and marginalized; they can't use or develop their skills; and they can't contribute fully to a society that places a high value on fluency in official languages.



(SOURCE: EIC IMMIGRATION STATISTICS)

WHAT ARE THE FACTS



(SOURCE: 1986 CENSUS)

- What language training is available for immigrant and refugee women?
- The Canadian government recognizes its responsibility to help immigrants and refugees learn an official language. To that end, a number of language training programmes are supported in whole or in part by the Federal and Provincial governments. An immigrant or refugee woman who wants to learn an official language in theory has a number of possibilities .

1. Labour market entry language training through CEIC

The federal government, through the Employment side of Employment and Immigration, provides language training for independent immigrants and refugees, mostly through community colleges. It consists of up to 6 months of formal full-time courses, free of charge and with a training allowance for those who are eligible. Eligibility requirements are quite strict, and spaces are very limited. This programme is not available to persons who a CEC officer decides are "not destined to the labour market, who are seeking employment in the longer term, who do not possess an occupational skill (unskilled), or whose lack of fluency in one of the official languages is not preventing them from securing employment..." (Source: EIC, 1981). Most of the persons excluded are women.

WHAT ARE THE FACTS

2. Language training through the Secretary of State

The Secretary of State Department provides funding for language training linked to citizenship education for immigrants and refugees who are not citizens.

Secretary of State funding is used by many Boards of Education to cover part of the cost of both day and evening classroom instruction.

Community groups and organizations also use this funding for less formal and sometimes innovative programmes. Most of these courses are part-time. A few provide childcare on-site. No income support or allowances are usually available for this training.

3. The Settlement Language Training Programme

This experimental language training programme offered by the Settlement Branch of Employment and Immigration programme is entering its third year in 1988. It was intended to provide language training to immigrant women at home, delivered by immigrant serving agencies. No training allowances are provided. Most of the programmes have been part-time, and of very short duration. The number of programmes has been very small, and they are not universally available. Most participants in SLTP programmes take the courses because they hope to enter the labour force.

4. Private language courses

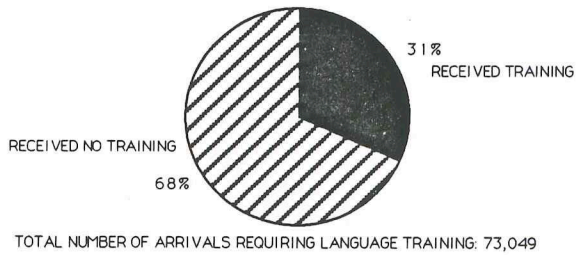
Colleges, universities, and language schools also offer full and part-time language training courses, sometimes by correspondence. These are generally expensive, and financial assistance not routinely available to most immigrant women.

5. Alternative community-based courses

In some major centres, such as Toronto, community groups offer a variety of language or language-and-skills training courses. Many of these programmes are funded through project funds available at different times and on a short-term basis by provincial ministries, such as Ministry of Skills Development in Ontario, for example. Sometimes, community groups are able to access federal funds directly, through the Canada Job Strategy, and provide language training as part of another training programme. Some very innovative and creative programmes have been developed in this way, including "English in the Workplace". Funding for most of these is very unstable; and few can offer training or other allowances which permit full participation of all women. They are not available in all parts of the country.

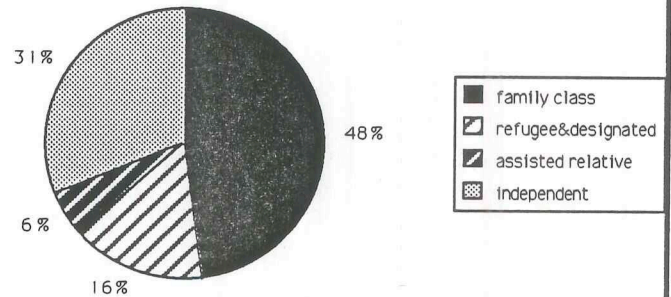
WHAT ARE THE FACTS

WOMEN RECEIVING LANGUAGE TRAINING
1979 - 1984



(SOURCE: EIC SETTLEMENT BRANCH; DUE TO ROUNDING, FIGURES DO NOT ADD UP TO 100%)

WOMEN IMMIGRANTS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES OF IMMIGRATION
1986



SOURCE: EIC IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

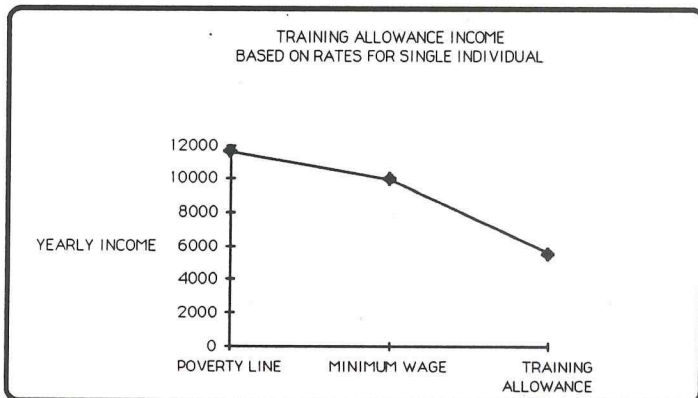
- **If all these programmes are available, why don't immigrant, refugee and visible minority women learn an official language? What barriers keep them from learning English or French?**
- **It is not easy for anyone to learn a new language while adapting to a new country and culture. But for immigrant and refugee women, it is made more difficult by structural and institutional barriers that deny them equal access to language training. In theory, the programmes are set up to help both women and men to acquire an official language. In practice this does not happen. Women do not have equal opportunity to learn English or French.**

The government itself estimates that, between 1979 and 1984, fewer than one in three newly arrived adult women (between 18 and 54) who needed language training actually received it. (Source: EIC Settlement Branch Presentation to the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration, 1986). These are some of the reasons a woman may have difficulty learning English or French:

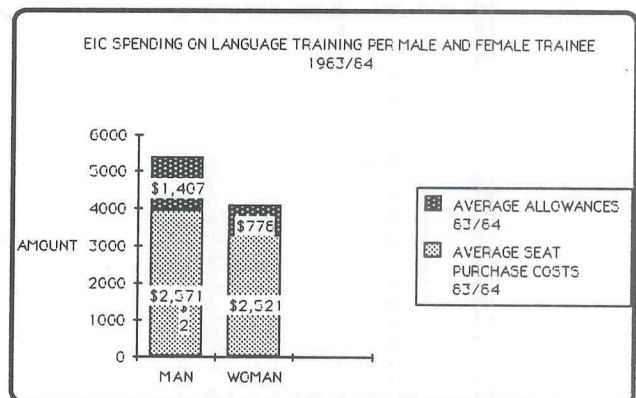
- 1. The cost of a language course is more than the average family can afford to pay, even without adding the cost of lost wages while she takes a course. Without adequate training allowance, she can not afford to learn.*
- 2. But, she is probably not eligible for income support: because she is 'sponsored', is not seen as 'immediately labour destined'; can get a job as a cleaner without an official language; is classified as an 'unskilled' worker; is married.*

In 1986, 54% of women newcomers were automatically ineligible for subsidized language training, since they were in the family and assisted relative classes of immigration.

WHAT ARE THE FACTS



(SOURCES: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WELFARE ESTIMATES; CEIC, MINISTRY OF LABOUR, 1988)



(SOURCE: EIC UNPUBLISHED TABLES)

3. Even if she manages to get an allowance, the level is below poverty line. This keeps many working people from getting training. It is also less than what the average minimum wage-job pays.
4. The government has chosen to spend less on allowances for women. Even when immigrant women are eligible for federal government sponsored language training, they are at a disadvantage because they do not receive the same access to training allowances. On an average, male trainees received almost twice as much money in allowances as women.
5. As a married woman, her level of allowance is reduced.
6. She has to handle an exhausting triple day of paid job, housework, and school.
7. She can not get child or infant care while she goes to classes.
8. Allowances are cut if she has to stay home with a sick child.
9. She can not upgrade language skills to improve job chances while she is on UIC.
10. She can not understand the language teacher, who is unilingual; the curriculum and resources are inappropriate to teach her the communication skills she needs.
11. She faces the consequences of racism and discrimination.
12. She does not know where to go, since there is no information in her language.
13. She can find no language courses in her area.
14. She doesn't get supportive counselling, and lacks confidence to start a course.
15. Most immigrant and refugee women work outside the home; and almost three-quarters of them work full-time (72.4% compared to 68.5% of Canadian-born women). In fact, the labour force participation rate of immigrant and refugee women is consistently higher than that of Canadian born women (54.6% versus 51% for Canadian-born women; Source: 1981 Census).

WHAT ARE THE FACTS

- **What are the consequences of not getting language training?**

- **Without official language, immigrant, refugee and visible minority women face disadvantages in employment and income; access to training and skills development; and family and home life. Society as a whole suffers, as women are prevented from participating fully in all aspects of their country's economic, social, cultural, and political life.**

1. Although they work more than Canadian-born women, immigrant women earn less: on average, full time workers make 4.5% less than their Canadian born counterparts (\$12,676 compared to \$13,280 per year)(Source: Statistics Canada, 1981). As well, immigrant, refugee and visible minority women are concentrated in the low-wage, low-status dead-end jobs that Canadian-born people don't want to do, such as cleaning and piece work. In Ontario, 75% of foreign born women are employed in jobs characterized by low pay and poor working conditions. Many workplace disadvantages result from lack of language ability, aggravated by racism and sexism.

2. Few women have access to training programmes. Women who do not speak English or French face additional barriers, and have even more limited opportunities. Even for basic upgrading in the educational system, fluency in an official language is a prerequisite. Other types of training require high-school level English or French. Without access to language training, all the other retraining and upgrading doors remain closed for immigrant and refugee women. This inability to improve and renew skills, especially in a time of rapidly changing workplace demands, reinforces ghettoization for this sector of Canada's work force.

3. Home and family life are jeopardized. Over the years, as husbands and children learn an official language, many women find themselves living in a language ghetto within their own family. Communication within the family breaks down, and women are forced into dependency on other family members for day-to-day communications. Dependency and isolation within the family increase the stress level women have to cope with, and influences women's physical, emotional and mental well-being.

4. Language is the major barrier preventing equal access to needed social and health services. Without equal access to language training, immigrant and refugee women are denied access to services to which they and their families are entitled, as are any other Canadians, and will not fully benefit from any "multicultural access" policies.

*5. We expect immigrants and refugees to integrate into Canadian life, to participate in society, and to function as responsible citizens. But Canadian society is not fulfilling its side of the bargain; we are not providing the language training which is the most important step for immigrants and refugees to take in reaching the goal of successful integration and participation. **Without language training, immigrant and refugee women are unable to participate in the daily lives of their neighbourhoods; to play a guiding role in their children's education; to get involved in the local school, neighbourhood association, trade union, or community group. Lack of an official language keeps immigrant and refugee women from participating in the political process and denies them the exercise of their full rights and responsibilities as citizens.***

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS

These Recommendations were developed by the Equity in Language Training Committee. The National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada used these recommendations as a basis to formulate their own recommendations in November, 1988, which are also included in this section. The recommendations were also approved in principle by the Canadian Council for Refugees at their Biannual Meeting in November, 1988.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EQUITY IN LANGUAGE TRAINING COMMITTEE:

GIVEN THAT:

- 1. Communication is a basic human need;*
- 2. Canada has ratified the international Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and guarantees equality in its legislation;*
- 3. The current system for delivering English as a Second Language (ESL)/French as a Second Language (FSL) training is underfunded, lacks coordination and discriminates against women, and is inaccessible for many immigrant, visible minority, and refugee women;*
- 4. The current system discriminates against women, both actively and systemically;*
- 5. A universal, comprehensive, coordinated and equitable language training model has been called for by immigrant, visible minority, and refugee women's groups for the past 10 years;*
- 6. Language learning should be life-long learning, with full and equal access for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women to all training programmes;*

THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. That universal access to English as a Second Language training (ESL), French as a Second Language training (FSL), or both, should be guaranteed to all immigrant, visible minority and refugee women, regardless of their immigration status, present and future employment, and length of residency in Canada.*
- 2. That the content and duration of language training programmes be flexible and relevant to meet the specific training needs of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women.*

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3. That women who have taken subsidized training programs in one of the two official languages should not be denied further training in the other official language.*
- 4. That the federal and provincial governments immediately adopt the principles and process of the Equitable Language Training Model (outlined in this manual), and incorporate these into a new federal-provincial agreement to replace all current language training and textbook agreements.*
- 5. That the federal government commit adequate resources and funding to implement an Equitable Language Training Model before 1990.*
- 6. That, in the meantime, the federal and provincial governments adopt and implement structures and processes based on the Transitional Model (outlined in this kit), and immediately provide adequate resources and funding for its implementation.*

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LANGUAGE TRAINING WORKSHOPS AT THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF IMMIGRANT AND VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN OF CANADA CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 1988:

RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE GOVERNMENT

GIVEN THAT:

- 1. Communication is a basic human need; the inability to communicate in one of the official languages results in isolation and marginalization from society, and which threatens women's mental and emotional well-being;*
- 2. Canada has ratified the international Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and guarantees equality in its legislation;*
- 3. The current system for delivering English as an Additional Language(EAL)/French as an Additional Language (FAL) training is underfunded, lacks coordination, and is inaccessible for many immigrant, visible minority, and refugee* women, particularly in areas outside of urban centres;*
- 4. The current system discriminates against women, both actively and systemically;*

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5. A universal, comprehensive, coordinated and equitable language training model has been called for by immigrant, visible minority, and refugee women's groups for the past 10 years;*
- 6. Language learning should be life-long learning, with full and equal access for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women to all training programmes;*
- 7. There are no universal, enforceable, and appropriate standards for teacher education and qualification as English/French as an Additional Language teaching; and there is a lack of bilingual* and culturally sensitive teachers in the current system;*

THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. a) That universal access to English as an Additional Language training, French as an Additional Language Training, or both, should be guaranteed to all immigrant, visible minority and refugee women, regardless of their immigration status, present and future employment, and length of residency in Canada.*
*b) That bridging programs for women requiring mother-tongue literacy * be established in the women's native language, using bilingual teachers.*
- 2. a) That the content and duration of language training programmes be flexible and relevant to meet the specific training needs of immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women.*
b) That language training be provided to all who wish it beyond the basic communication skills level; ie, there be language training courses at all levels equally accessible to all women (multi-level point of entry).
c) That continuity of training be guaranteed across provinces; regardless of the province in which a person started her language training, she should be able to continue in another province with the same level of subsidies and supports (portability across provinces).
d) That the length of language training not be limited to any specific time period, but instead be determined by each learner's needs, and continue until the learner achieves her desired goals of language knowledge.
e) That there be a comprehensive system of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of all language training programs, including input from learners and participants in the programs.

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.** *That women who have taken subsidized training programs in one of the two official languages should not be denied further training in the other official language.*
- 4.** *That language training be progressive, systematic, and ongoing, to ensure that learners will achieve their desired level of proficiency in the official languages, including progression to English or French training for special purposes (such as professional vocabulary) in order to be able to perform the profession/occupation/trade acquired in her country of origin.*
- 5.**

 - a) That adequate training allowance be universally accessible to all learners based on individual need, and that the amount reflect the cost of living.*
 - b) That adequate childcare, transportation costs, and any other supports women need to be able to take training be universally available.*
- 6.**

 - a) That training for ESL/FSL teachers be improved and standardized; that continuing education be required to maintain qualifications, and that teacher training include mandatory anti-racist, cross-cultural, and anti-sexist education.*
 - b) That curriculum and teaching methods be developed with input from immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women's organizations.*
- 7.**

 - a) That combined programs of English/French in the Workplace and Job Skills Training be provided to ensure that women do not have to leave their jobs in order to take the language training they desire; and also can keep up with developments in their occupations.*
 - b) That, considering the job losses inevitably faced by immigrant and visible minority women as a result of the Free Trade Agreement and/or technological changes in the workplace, retraining programs with integrated English or French training components be immediately established with sufficient resources to ensure that displaced workers are able to find adequate and satisfactory employment.*
- 8.** *That the government develop and implement mechanisms for community input, consultation, and accountability, and that these mechanisms be developed in close consultation with immigrant, refugee, and visible minority organizations across the country.*

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE NOIVMWC

- *That the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada distribute copies of the kit and manual "Let Us Speak" prepared by the Equity in Language Training Project to all provinces; and that this material be used as a basis for discussion in each province, leading to provincial recommendations on language training and a comprehensive model.*
- *That these recommendations and models be channeled back to the National Organization through the Language Committee Chair three months from now.*
- *Based on the feedback from each province, that the National Organization develop a comprehensive language training policy which will be recommended for implementation to the government.*
- *That the National explore ways to make links with all other voluntary organizations committed to improving the current system of language training, and educate these organizations about the concerns of immigrant, visible minority, and refugee women.*

DEFINITIONS:

- * *The term "refugee" in these recommendations refers to refugees and refugee claimants.*
- * *The term "bilingual" in these recommendations refers to speakers of one official and one "non-official" language.*
- * *The term "literacy" refers to the ability to read and write in one's own first language, and therefore the term "illiteracy" must not be applied to the inability to read and write in an official language.*

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Many government and community organizations produce written material about their services. You can request such information by writing or phoning the organizations directly.



A number of documents on the issue of language training and related areas which contain useful information for further study were selected. The manual contains a fuller bibliography.

IMMIGRANT, VISIBLE MINORITY, AND REFUGEE WOMEN

- **Das Gupta, Tanya.** 1987. **Learning From Our History: Community Development by Immigrant Women in Ontario, 1958-1986.**

Availability: Cross Cultural Communication Centre, 965 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6H 1L7. Cost \$8.00 Language: English.

Content: Valuable tool for organizing and programming for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women. Describes actual experiences and programs in existence, as well as analysing important issues such as racism, employment, and funding.

- **Estable, Alma.** 1986. **Immigrant Women in Canada: Current Issues.** Background Paper prepared for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW). Ottawa.

Availability: CACSW, Central Office, 110 O'Connor Street, 9th Floor, Box 1541, Stn. B., Ottawa, Ont., K1P 5R5, (613) 992-4975;

Language: English, French. Out of print; ask for a photocopy. Length: 59 pages.

Content: Summary on the situation of immigrant women in Canada including analysis of legislation, sexism, racism, and other barriers encountered by immigrant and visible minority women.

- **National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada (NOIVMWC).** **National Office Update (Newsletter of the NOIVMWC)**

Ottawa. 1988 (first issue, May 88; June 88).

Availability: NOIVMWC, 251 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 1102, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5J6, (613) 232-0689; Language: English/French. Length: each issue about 4-6 pages.

Content: Up-to-date information on current developments, trends, and specific programs of interest to immigrant and visible minority women and their organizations.

- **Seydegart, Kasia and Spears, George.** 1985. **Beyond Dialogue. Immigrant Women in Canada, 1985-1990. A Plan for Action Arising from a National Consultation.** Commissioned by Multiculturalism Canada. Erin Research. Ontario.

Availability: Multiculturalism Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0M5, (613) 997-9900, Language: English. Length: 115 pages.

Content: Documents priorities for policy development and programming for the next five years with the goal to achieve equality in the participation and status of immigrant women in Canada; contains useful background statistics.

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

LANGUAGE TRAINING

- **Burnaby, M., Steltzer, N. and Collins, N.** The TESL Canada Federation. 1987. **The Settlement Language Training Program: An Assessment**. Prepared for Canada Employment and Immigration. Ottawa.
Availability: Immigration libraries, Employment and Immigration Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0J9, (613) 994-4182, Language: English. Length: 42 pages.
Content: Assessment of the first year of the Settlement Language Training Program, a pilot project to provide language training to immigrant women not destined to the labour force through settlement agencies.
- **Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.** 1986. **CEIC Settlement Branch Presentation to Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration**.
Ottawa.
Availability: Canada Employment and Immigration, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0J9, (613) 994-4182, Language: English/French. Length: 23 pages.
Content: Important assessment of settlement services including lack of sufficient language training. Includes statistics and recommendations.
- **Go, Teng Teng Amy.** 1987. **Draft Discussion Paper on ESL Funding**. Prepared for the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). Toronto.
Availability: OCASI, 579 St. Clair Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Tel: (416) 657-8777; Language: English. Length: 28 pages + appendices.
Content: Excellent overview of the current situation of language training with Ontario as example; valuable for other provinces because the lack of coordination between federal departments and provincial ministries is well described.
- **Manitoba Education, P.A.C.E. Working Group.** 1984. **Report on Restructuring Adult ESL**. P.A.C.E. Working Group, Post Secondary Adult & Continuing Education. Manitoba Education.
Availability: Contact PACE Working Group/Manitoba Education; Language: English. Length: 87 pages.
Content: Analysis of Manitoba's language training situation, and concrete suggestions for re-organizing delivery. Contains thorough analysis of major problem areas, and practical suggestions for implementing a comprehensive adult language training model.
- **Mouammar, Mary Yursa (ed).** 1987. **Equality in Language and Literacy Training. Report of the Proceedings of A Colloquium on Immigrant and Visible Minority Women**. Toronto.
Availability: through Ms. Mouammar (416) 276-8291. Language: English. Length: 93 pages.
Content: Speeches, presentations, and discussions from a colloquium held in Toronto; includes material on the Charter Challenge, and good background on the overall language training situation.
- **Paredes, Milagros.** 1987. *Immigrant Women and Second-Language Education: A Study of Unequal Access to Linguistic Resources. In: Special Issue on Immigrant Women. **Resources for Feminist Research = Documentation sur la recherche féministe**. Vol 16. No.1, pages 23-27.*
Availability: In women's bookstores, some libraries (the whole issue can be ordered from OISE, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6); Language: English/French. Length: 5 pages
Content: Well summarized article including figures and facts describing how the lack of language training fundamentally affects the lives of immigrant and refugee women in all aspects.

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

GENERAL USEFUL INFORMATION

- **Burt Perrin Associates.** 1987. **A Guide for Settlement Service Workers: How to Use Community and Government Services.** Prepared for the Citizenship Development Branch. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. Toronto.
Availability: Ontario Government Bookstores; Publications Services Section, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, Ont, M7A 1N8, (416) 965-5015, or through the Ministry of Citizenship by calling 1-800-268-7540; Language: English. Length: 63 pages.
Content: Provides an overview of how the government is structured, what kinds of community and government services exist and how to use them. Although some information is specific to the province of Ontario, much of it is also of general use.
- **Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW).** 1978.
Sharing the Power. Ottawa.
Availability: CACSW, 110 O'Connor St., 9th Floor, Box 1541, Stn. B, Ottawa, Ont. K1P 5R5, (613) 992-3123, out of print; can request a photocopy. Language: English, French?; Length: 32 pages.
Content: Gives a good overview with practical suggestions on: why women should get involved in political work; how to lobby (letter, phone, in person, media contacts, writing and presenting briefs); how to organize; how to be a candidate; and how to run an election campaign.
- **Government of Canada.** 1988. **Telephone Directory.** Ottawa.
Availability: Government Bookstores for \$16.00 (in 1988).
Content: Lists all government officials and employees alphabetically and by government departments. Excellent resource for lobbying, and to get information.

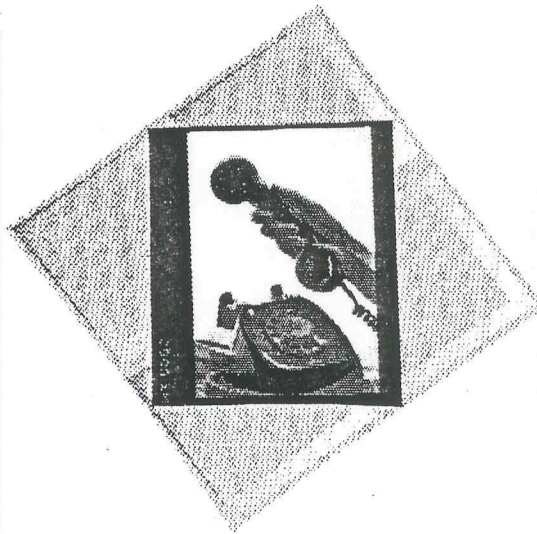
STATISTICS AND BACKGROUND DATA

- **Employment and Immigration Canada.** Publishes **Immigration Statistics** yearly, free of charge. You also can ask for specific detailed information, including some computer print-outs free of charge, by contacting: Immigration Statistics, Planning and Program Management, Immigration Group, Employment and Immigration Canada, Place du Portage, Phase IV, 140 Promenade du Portage, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0J9, (819) 994-3161.
- **Statistics Canada.** The most comprehensive source of statistical information available, both in publications and in summary tables. Some information available over the phone. Written material available at cost. Inquiries can be directed to Publication Sales, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, K1A 0T6, (613) 951-2327.
- **Ontario Ministry of Citizenship.** **Ethnocultural Data Base.** Published every year since 1980. Contains many useful statistics on immigration trends in Ontario, by region. You can receive the information by calling: 1-800-268-7540.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

WHAT IS LOBBYING?

Changes do not come about by themselves. If we want to have adequate language training for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women, we have to help this happen. We have to convince the people who are making decisions about language training to make the changes we want. There are different ways or methods you can choose from when you are trying to influence people who are making decisions.



*The different methods are called **lobbying** techniques, and are commonly used in the Canadian political system. The following fact sheets give you an overview of different ways you can lobby, and outline necessary steps for a successful campaign. If you want more information and detailed examples of the different techniques, refer to the sections in your Manual.*

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT - DEVELOP A PLAN

a) Define your goal

- *What exactly do you or your group want to change/achieve?*

b) Collect information on the issue

- *Contact other immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's groups.*
- *Find out details, particularly how other programmes were developed and paid for.*
- *You can request information through your elected representatives :
alderperson, councillor, mayor, Member of Provincial Parliament or Member of the Legislative Assembly (MPP, MLA),
Member of the Federal Parliament (MP).*
- *To find the name of your members of parliament, call the government information number in your telephone book,
and ask.*
- *Write a letter explaining who you are and what you want. Follow it up with a
telephone call a week later (see Manual for sample).*

c) Find out who makes the decisions about your specific goal

- *Find out in what offices/departments/ministries decisions are made for the programme you would like to see in place.*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

d) Where can you find out the names of the people responsible?

Possible sources for information are:

- *The telephone book: for contacts in local, provincial or federal government, check in the special section of your telephone book.*
- *The federal and provincial governments publish special phone books listing all the persons who work in the different departments.*
- *Local community centers and service agencies can give you some information.*
- *Your elected representatives' offices can give you other names to call.*
- *When you are on the telephone, ask people to repeat names and phone numbers if you do not understand the name the first time.*

YOU ARE NOT ALONE...FIND OTHER PEOPLE WHO WANT CHANGES

a) Form a group if there are no groups for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women in your community ...

To make changes, you need support and the help and strength of many women who have the same goal. People in government offices will pay more attention to a representative of a group than to an individual. And it is more fun to work together!

- *Organize a meeting with other women.*
- *Invite every immigrant, refugee and visible minority woman you know and ask her to bring her friends.*
- *Make a simple poster with information about the meeting, place, time, childcare.*

b) What to do during the first meeting of a group on language training

- *Don't be discouraged if only a few women show up, building a group takes time.*
- *Make people feel welcome and comfortable.*
- *Make sure that women who do not understand English well sit beside someone who can translate.*
- *Have name tags for every woman.*
- *Sit in a circle so everyone can see everyone else.*
- *When you are ready to start the meeting, every woman in turn says her name and talks a little about herself.*
- *Explain why you wanted to form a group, and ask what kind of ideas everyone else has for such a group.*
- *Ask if women want to meet again.*
- *Before the end of the meeting, pass a paper around to collect names and phone numbers of all the women.*

c) Find other groups

There may already be other groups in your area who would support your cause. If more groups work together on the issue of language training, we have better chances to make real changes.

- *Contact your provincial immigrant and visible minority women's organization and ask what they are doing on the issue (see Who Can Help You section).*
- *Find out if there are other women's groups in your area, including Canadian-born women, who might want to support your group's efforts.*
- *Try to find influential women in your area who want to help.*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

WHEN AND HOW TO LOBBY

a) When to lobby

- *Your group has realized that people you are trying to influence are not responding in the way you expected: your group does not give up and decides to start lobbying.*
- *You learn that changes are being made that affect your group, such as cutbacks in certain programmes or new legislation.*

There are different ways of lobbying. Here are two things that a small group can do.

b) Letter Lobby: numbers count

- *Write a letter on behalf of the group to the person you want to influence.*
- *Each woman in the group writes a letter.*
- *Each woman gets a friend to write a letter.*
- *Involve other groups or organizations in the letter campaign.*
- *Develop a sample letter that others can adapt (see Manual for sample).*

c) Phone lobby: numbers count

- *Ask every member of your group to phone the person you want to influence on a certain day. Explain exactly what can happen and how women should act.*
- *Provide each woman with a sample conversation, writing down what she could say. Role play possible telephone conversations in a group (this is fun!).*
- *If the secretary of the person you want to speak to "screens" you (which means she does not put your call through to the person) - leave a clear message (see Manual for a sample conversation).*
- *Have some background information in front of you which you can read if the person you are talking to asks for more information.*
- *Keep phoning and keep writing!*
- *Request a meeting with the person or persons you are lobbying.*
- *Request a meeting with your member of parliament about the issue.*

HOW TO WRITE AND PRESENT A BRIEF

a) What is a brief?

- *Briefs are written documents that inform influential people about issues in a concise way, and make concrete suggestions for change.*
- *Your group can write a brief to:*
 - *criticize existing conditions;*
 - *suggest steps to change the situation;*
 - *initiate a project;*
 - *inform and persuade.*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

b) Writing a brief

- *Discuss with your group why it might be useful to write a brief.*
- *Background information should be up-to-date.*
- *Structure of the brief is very important because the information you are giving must be presented in a form which is easy and fast to read.*
- *Prepare an outline, then fill in the information that is needed.*
- *Have the brief beautifully typed on good clean paper, and check for errors: appearance is important (see Manual for sample outline).*

c) Presenting a brief

Briefs can be presented in person or by mail. Personal presentation is very effective.

Before the presentation:

- *prepare an agenda for the meeting; decide with your group who will present the brief, and who will speak about each issue presented in the brief.*
- *find out more about the person or group you are presenting the brief to.*
- *anticipate questions and prepare answers.*

On the presentation day:

- *be on time and dress appropriately;*
- *have extra copies of your brief available for other listeners;*
- *introduce all members of the group and explain who you represent;*
- *compliment the listeners for showing interest in the issue;*
- *be positive about the follow-up of this meeting;*
- *deliver your brief with confidence in the importance of your message;*
- *be prepared to answer questions and speak on issues you have prepared;*
- *if you don't know the answer to a question, say you would like to check back with your group on this issue.*

After the presentation:

- *send a thank you letter, which is an opportunity to summarize your position;*
- *arrange for follow-up meetings;*
- *ask that a report be sent to your group on the actions taken;*
- *keep in touch by letter or telephone, so your brief isn't forgotten;*
- *report back to your group.*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

HOW TO GET YOUR ISSUE TO THE PUBLIC

a) Why get the issue to the public - Involving the Media

Once you have decided to start a lobbying campaign, it is time to make the issue public, to recruit new supporters and to put pressure on the "target" you are lobbying. The way to get your issue to the public is to get the media to become interested in reporting about it. To do this, you write a press release. The release is sent at the same time to TV and radio stations, and to newspapers, to interest the media to report on your concerns. Two important things to learn are writing a press release and calling a press conference.

b) Writing a press release:

- *Opening paragraph: give four W's: Who did What, Where and When. Try to use some catchy lines which might interest people working in the media.*
- *Middle paragraph: explain the issue further and provide reasons with two or three quotations.*
- *Last paragraph: always identifies and describes the group. Give a contact number and make sure someone is there to answer the phone (see Manual for sample).*
- *Send the release to local, regional, and national T.V. and radio stations, and to newspapers.*
- *Send a special copy of the press release to sympathetic reporters.*
- *Try to maintain contact with responsive media people, and keep them informed of all developments.*

ORGANIZING A PRESS CONFERENCE

To get media coverage from as many newspapers, radio and TV stations as possible at the same time, it is more effective to organize a press conference.

- *If you have already prepared a press release, it is easy to insert information about your press conference - the place, time, and who you expect will be there.*
- *Send the press release with the press conference information to all local newspapers, radio, and TV stations.*
- *Send a copy of the press release or a telegram (which is expensive, but underlines the urgency of your issue) to your local alderperson, MPP, MP and the minister responsible for the issue.*
- *Invite and inform other organizations which you know support your issue.*
- *Organize a meeting to discuss the details and divide responsibilities among group members.*

a) On the day of the press conference:

- *Try to organize a "strategic meeting" with your group right before the press conference to refresh the issue and provide support to group members.*
- *Go over the list of issues and make sure that every woman knows when and on what topic she is supposed to speak.*
- *Make sure you have copies of your press release or brief available for participants of the press conference.*
- *Circulate a paper or have a booklet ready at the entrance of the room where you are holding the press conference, and ask participants to record their names and the names of their media organization. This way you can collect names for your media file, and monitor reporting on the issue.*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

b) During the press conference:

- *Begin by welcoming the members of the media, and introduce the persons giving the conference by name and organization.*
- *Each woman can read a prepared statement, and then be available to answer questions on her statement.*
- *Take time to think before you reply to a question. Breathe deeply, try to relax. Don't worry if you feel nervous; remember that most people get a little nervous when they speak before a group.*
- *You do not have to answer every question that is asked, especially if it is not directly related to your subject; take the opportunity to emphasize again your important points when you give an answer.*
- *Try to anticipate difficult questions; discuss how to react ; if you do not have an answer, say you need to check back with the group or check certain information before making a public statement on that specific issue.*
- *Do not let reporters put words into your mouth by saying "...Do you agree with the statement" . Stick to your own way of saying things, rather than agreeing or disagreeing with what reporters state. If you are not sure, say that your group has not discussed this statement yet.*

c) After the press conference:

- *Meet with your group to share how the conference went, and to analyze what went well and what needs improving for the next time.*
- *Plan a follow-up activity (for example, your group could get in touch with the media again by the end of the month to provide an up-date on the developments).*

KEEPING A MEDIA FILE

A media file should contain:

- *A list of all local newspapers, radio and TV stations with complete addresses and phone numbers.*
- *A list of names of reporters who might be willing to interview you and report on the issue, and the dates of and comments about any contacts.*
- *Newspaper clippings or comments from radio and TV reports, including the names of reporters, so you can identify those who report on issues related to immigrants, refugees, visible minorities, multiculturalism, social justice, or women. When you contact them, refer to some of their previous articles or reports, and say you are glad they seem to have a special interest in your issues.*

HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS DURING A PUBLIC MEETING

It is not often that the issues of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women are specifically discussed in public meetings. Even when public meetings deal with issues that are important to immigrant, refugee and visible minority women (for example, education funding), unfortunately, many organizers will not think to contact or include our groups. Therefore, we have to use every occasion possible to raise our concerns, and to get the general public to understand and support our demands.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

a) Why is it important to ask questions

Many kinds of public meetings happen in Canada. Most meetings are not related to any political party. For example, a public meeting could be organized by your local school to talk about changes in education or by a community center to plan a winter carnival. Public meetings can also be called by ethnocultural and community associations by churches, and by special interest groups. Before elections, there frequently are meetings at which all candidates in a riding talk to the public and answer questions.

b) Raising issues at a public meeting

Make sure you know the purpose of the meeting. Does the group want to have community input, or do people want to organize an event? This will determine how you can get involved.

- *Find out about procedures. Phone the person who is organizing the meeting and ask if there are certain procedures and rules for asking questions. You can also ask somebody who is familiar with similar meetings to tell you.*
- *Go with other women (friends, members of your group) to the meeting. It is easier to support each other to speak up. Also, you can take turns asking more questions if there are more of you present.*
- *Listen carefully during the meeting to what is said. Go prepared with paper and pencil so you can make notes to record the main points of the discussion. This can help you plan your questions.*
- *Most people are nervous when speaking in public. Try to relax, breathe deeply, and do not be afraid to read out your question from a paper if this is easier. You will feel good to have done it. Think about how much you will accomplish by raising our concerns; how much you will learn by participating; and remember, that you won't die by opening your mouth!*
- *Keep your questions short and clear.*

WE HOPE THIS HELPS YOU AND YOUR GROUP. GOOD LUCK WITH ORGANIZING AND LOBBYING!