



**Women
Working
with
Immigrant
Women**



Newsletter



THE EFFECTS OF CANADIAN IMMIGRATION POLICIES ON RACIAL MINORITIES IN GENERAL, AND RACIAL MINORITY WOMEN IN PARTICULAR.

Racism and Sexism are fully integrated into the social, economic and political structures of Canada. These structures need to be changed for immigrant and visible minority women to gain their rightful place in Canadian Society.

This study examines the exact ways in which Canadian Immigration rules and regulations effect immigrant women, especially visible minority women. In the study are included recommendations for policy changes.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNITY WORKERS—A WORKING MANUAL.

This manual provides information which can be used as a guide by community workers who want to design and organize skills development workshops.

- The topics of the workshops are:
- * Long Range Planning and Evaluation
 - * Basic Accounting
 - * Conflict Resolution and working Collectively
 - * Identifying and Accessing Government Funding Sources
 - * Writing Effective Funding Proposals and Applications
 - * Power in Collectives
 - * Funding in the Private Sector

PROUD WOMEN, STRONG STEPS. FILM AND FILM DISCUSSION GUIDE.

This film is a thirty-five minute, 16mm production, which shows positive examples of immigrant and visible minority women's struggle for equality in a society in which we face Racism, Sexism and Class oppression.

The film can be used by any number of groups. It can be used in English as a Second Language classes, for professional Development Day for teachers and it can be used by Women's Groups, Immigrant Women's organizations and High School Students.

Distribution information is available from DEC 925-9338 and WWIW.

RACIAL MINORITY IMMIGRANT WOMEN AND RACE RELATIONS.

This study examines gaps in Human Rights Services as they relate to immigrant visible minority women. The study also documents the existence of or the lack of mechanisms, organizations or services available to assist a community or an individual in dealing with human rights and race relations issues.

Cost \$ 15.00 per copy. Please include 15% postage and handling charges. Mail your order to Women Working With Immigrant Women.

Objectives of WWIW

To provide a forum whereby women and agencies working with Immigrant women exchange ideas, share information, develop a support network and promote the development of new skills.

To collectively identify the needs of immigrant women and work towards the development of programs to respond to these needs.

To engage in social action related to the needs of immigrant women.

Membership

Membership in WWIW is open to all individual women and non-governmental agencies that work with immigrant women and share in our organizational objectives.

The work and activities of WWIW are carried out by committees.

On going activities

Advocacy on issues related to the Health, Education, Immigration and work place needs of immigrant women.

Research and presentation of briefs on immigrant women's issues.

Lobbying governmental organizations re policies affecting and funding for programs for immigrant women.

Development of strategies related to the Educational, Employment and Health needs of immigrant women.

Active participation in the organized labour movement, solidarity groups, women's organizations and other community groups.

Production and circulation of a quarterly Newsletter.



SPECIAL ISSUE OF HEALTHSHARING ON IMMIGRANT, VISIBLE MINORITY AND REFUGEE WOMEN'S HEALTH -- WORK IN PROGRESS

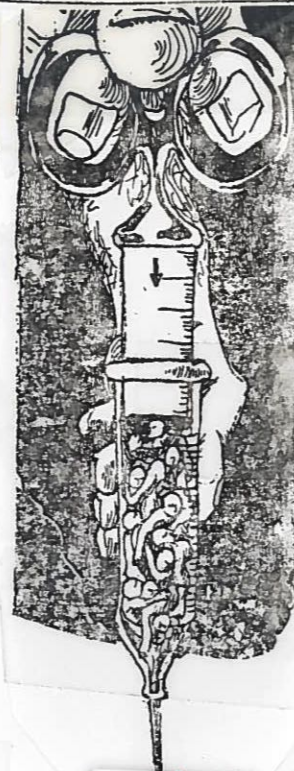
BY E. SZEKELY

Healthsharing, a national women's magazine based in Toronto, is in the process of putting together a special issue on immigrant, visible minority and refugee women's health. The main purpose of this issue is to help identify the health (including mental health) service needs of our communities. This issue is intended as a resource both for immigrant, visible minority and refugee women's groups and for health professionals, health activists and feminist activists.

A guest editorial collective, with representatives from Healthsharing, Women Working with Immigrant Women, Immigrant Women's Health Centre, OCASI, Centre for Spanish Speaking People and other community groups has been formed to plan the content and form of this special issue. The collective has decided that feature articles will include a profile immigrant women's groups, analysis of funding issues, discussion of the pros and cons of alternative versus main-stream health services, and the accessibility of the health care system to immigrants as health service providers as well as users. Assault and sexual violence, occupational health and safety, and various mental health issues related to our situations as immigrant, refugee and visible minority women will also be illustrated by the experiences/stories of a number of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women.

The special issue will contain a resource section listing immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's health projects and organizations across the country, films, handbooks, and other educational materials, as well as information about service users' rights and strategies for seeking quality services. This resource section will be translated into a number of languages. If you have or know of any materials that you think would be useful to include in this section of the issue, please write to: Healthsharing, Special Issue on Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women's Health, 14 Skey Lane, Toronto, Ontario, M6J 3S4.

The projected publication date of this issue is Summer 1990.



THE JOINT WORK GROUP ON MULTICULTURAL HEALTH

BY SARAFINA HUI

The Joint Work Group on Multicultural Health was initiated by the Multicultural Health Coalition, the Access Alliance, and the Access Council of Metro Social Planning Council in January 1989. Diana Moeses was elected as chair of the group.

The goal of the Group is to influence Health Care policy formulation at Metro and provincial levels to facilitate universal accessibility through active community participation.

Anyone with special concerns about the health care services, please contact Sarafina Hui at the Immigrant Women's Centre, tel. 367-1388. Sarafina would forward your concerns to the group.



NOIVMWC - Biennial Conference

BY JUDY VASHTI PERSAD

Two and a half years ago, after a stormy weekend in Winnipeg, the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada (NOIVMWC) became a reality. The organization provides us, as immigrant and visible minority women, with the opportunity to present a strong, united voice in Canadian society.

In November of 1988, Women Working with Immigrant Women participated in the Biennial Conference of the NOIVMWC, held in Ottawa. The conference was productive in that it brought together immigrant and visible minority women with varying backgrounds, interests and politics. It was a week of networking, debating, compromising, learning and working together. We determined the organization's constitutions and political direction. Panel discussions and workshops were held on the topics of Employment Equity, Health and Social Services, Racism and the Women's Movement, Violence, Language Training and Women and Politics.

Judy Vashti Persad, chairperson of WWIW, was one of the two presenters in the two workshops on Racism and the Women's Movement. The content of the presentation was developed collectively with Carolyn Egan, a Board member, and Salome Loucas, WWIW's co-ordinator.

WWIW's presentation covered the following areas:

1. The existence of racism in the Women's Movement. The different levels which visible minority women/women of colour experience racism in the Women's Movement.

2. The barriers to the involvement of visible minority women/women of colour in the Women's Movement. Here the presentation addressed the existence of racism in the structures and processes used, and the attitudes, analysis and politics present in the Women's Movement.

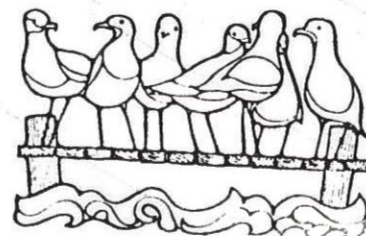
3. Should we or should we not choose to work with the Women's Movement, and how the goals of our organizing and the way we see change occurring in the society, affects our decision and our strategy.

This section of the presentation addressed the need for us to work with other Movements in order to achieve long term social, economic, and political change in this society.

4. Strategies for working in the Women's Movement or any other progressive movement for change.

Here we discussed the different strategies which are currently being implemented by community groups, such as WWIW, in their work with other movements.

In general the workshops in which WWIW made a presentation were very successful. Out of them came exciting discussions, and resolutions with regards to racism and the Women's Movement, which were discussed and adopted in the plenary. Due to a shortage of space we cannot include the entire presentation or the complete list of resolutions. If anyone wants more information please call Judy Persad (760-7855) or Salome Loucas (531-2059).



RACIAL MINORITY IMMIGRANT WOMEN AND RACE RELATIONS

As you are aware, WWIW has made anti-racist work in the community a priority. In 1988, the organization undertook a research project to examine gaps in services as they relate to immigrant and visible minority women. The research was conducted with both service providing organizations as well as women these organizations serve. The research documented the existence of or the lack of mechanisms, organizations or services available to assist a community or an individual in dealing with human rights and race relations issues. Also, recommendations were put forward to aid the community in developing strategies to deal with the existing problems that have been documented.

The research and the recommendations were completed in November of 1988, and a final report was prepared which was distributed to the community. In April 1989, a community conference was held, to allow for full community consultation on both the findings of the report and the recommendations.

This conference, which was attended by 48 community activists, looked at the original recommendations, solicited community feedback, discussed the findings and strategized how best to implement the recommendations.

Through the research project and the community conference it was clearly established that community based services, as well as main-stream service organizations have no mechanisms or procedures to document and deal with complaints of systemic racism experienced by members of the community they serve. Clients are left with very little resources, and the community organizations in the frustrating circumstance of not being able to serve the community in an adequate manner. WWIW is raising funds for a three year project, to begin to deal with this problem in conjunction with the community services affected.

The three year project will include the development of a manual which will deal with the needs of the clients and services, outline the systemic nature of the racism experienced and outline the procedures, policies and mechanisms that could be implemented by community services to adequately document and respond to incidents of systemic racism in housing, employment, education, etc., and listing existing resources available to assist them. Community

workshops will be planned to assist community services to implement policies, procedures and mechanisms to more adequately document and deal with complaints of systemic racism. These workshops will also provide an opportunity for ongoing networking and information sharing, for those involved in dealing with systemic racism.

These activities will lead to a community conference to examine the current situation and develop strategies with the objective of providing further directions to deal with the systemic racism that our communities are experiencing.

Through these activities we will lay the foundations for the development of an anti-racist advocacy and information centre, which would deal with community referrals and individual complaints. The Centre, will provide direct counselling and advocacy to clients, develop popular educational materials for the community and provide support for those experiencing systemic racism by implementing community strategies to change the systemic nature of the problem.



WHAT HAPPEND TO THE FUNDING WE WERE PROMISED?

BY SALOME LOUCAS

WWIW and other community agencies' concern regarding funding cutbacks and delays in the processing of applications and issuing of chaques, is growing. Last year's delays by the Secretary of State Multiculturalism Department, were worse than ever before. The financial uncertainty has caused a lot of frustrations to community workers, paralyzed the delivery of services and cheated the people who need these services from what are their rights.

Community based services are developed as an alternative to the services of mainstream institutions. To-date the services of these institutions remain racially and culturally bias, and the structures of these institutions make their services unaccessible to immigrant, visible minority and refugee women who have specific settlement and integration needs. We grew tired of lobbying the politicians and hearing promises, and always having to prove the need for our programs. After years of efforts and hard work, the immigrant and racial minority community service groups are still scraping to find enough money to deliver the services.

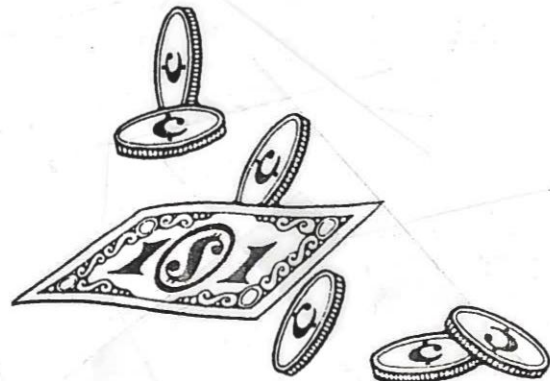
Fund raising, as any community agency can confirm, takes a large part of our time and energy. There is no one funding source from which we can secure enough money for our programs. Each funding source advises us to seek funding from other sources. If after filling pages and pages of applications, we manage to get some funding from other sources, then our funding is cut from someshere else. Then we have to wait and wait... for the cheque to come. Phone calls to our regional officers are fruitles. Once they make there recommendation and send the application to Ottawa, they have no power or information as to what and when things will happen. We are left to scrape, during the waiting period, to find money to pay for stamps and bills. WWIW does not have the monopoly on this problem. Salaries are not paid, and benefits (on which there is a late payment penalty) are not paid.

We are forced to make personal loans to subsidize the programs and services. The interests that we have to pay for these loans increases the cost of the services, and since we have no other means to recover this loss, it reduces the actual funding that we receive.

This situation paralyzes the development and delivery of services. We are unable to deliver the services as we have planned them and in the time we have planned. To reapply we have to report how the funding was spend - funding which has not yet been received.

The social cost that result from this situation is even higher. Unpaid staff is not very happy staff. Board members who sign for these loans are put under personal financial pressures which affect their jobs and families. The people who need the services cannot put their lives on hold. Family violence, racial discrimination and attacks are not timed to coincide with the releasing of government funding and at the time that we are financially in the position to deal with these issues and provide the necessary services.

If the story sounds familiar, and your group has similar difficulties and concerns, we encourage you to send us the information. Specifically we want to know where do you get your funding from, if you experience cutbacks and/or delays, and whether you are forced to make personal loans in order to subsidize the programs.



SERIES OF WORKSHOPS FOR COMMUNITY WORKERS WORKING WITH IMMIGRANT WOMEN

In 1986 WWIW had organized a series of Skills Development Workshops for community workers. The turnout and interest for these workshops was so high, that we had to turn people away and promised to repeat the Skills Development Workshops.

In keeping our promise, this year, in conjunction with the Cross Cultural Communication Centre (a WWIW member group) we planned a new series of Skills Development Workshops.

The first workshop of this series was held in February 1989 in the Peel area. The workshop gave the opportunity to participants to meet other co-workers in the area of Peel, to share information about existing programs and to discuss problems regarding the delivery of programs and services. Participants were also introduced to and discussed the new resource kit **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITH IMMIGRANT WOMEN - A COURSE FOR COMMUNITY WORKERS**. This resource was produced by the CCC. Due in part to this workshop, the participants felt the need to form a network in the area. More than 35 community workers are currently planning a conference with the objective to address the needs of clients and service organizations in the area.

The second workshop, which focused on the topic of Program Planning was held in May in Toronto. The workshop was designed to assist participants in developing skills that are needed for the different stages of program planning, such as, needs assessment, outreach, curriculum development and evaluation. The above two workshops were sponsored as well by the Toronto Region of the Ontario Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Organization.

When the planning committee evaluated the success of these workshops, it was concluded that the time-frame for these workshops present some problems. Community workers, who cannot be away from their work find it difficult to participate in a day-long workshop. Also, as much as we try to cover the agenda of the day, interesting but unexpected discussions arise which slows the agenda. The Planning Committee feels that half-a-day workshops, which can be offered more frequently may be an answer to these problems.

We are looking for people who are interested to join our planning committee. Also if there is a topic for a workshop that you are interested in, please let WWIW know.

VOICE OF OUR OWN

On March 10th, 1989, Women Working with Immigrant Women had co-sponsored with other immigrant and visible minority women's organizations an international Women's Day event, with the theme "what colour is the women's movement".

The event was the premier of the film "VOICE OF OUR OWN", which was produced by Premika Ratnam and Ali Kazimi. The film is an inside look at the process of the formation of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women in Canada. The organization was formed in 1986, at a National Conference in Winnipeg.

The screening of the film was followed by a panel discussion. Panelist (Salome Loucas Represente WWIW on the panel) talked about the need to form the NOIVMWC, their experiences working in the Main-stream Women's Movement, the efforts to make the links with this movement, and the inadequacy with which issues of concern to immigrant and visible minority women are dealt with in the main-stream women's organizations.

Participants at the event expressed similar concerns, and talked about their experiences and their fears about the future of our children because of the prejudice and racism in the Canadian society.

** Organizations interested about the film, please call Premika at 921-5853.



CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION GENERAL CONFERENCE

BY CAROLYN EGAN

Women Working with Immigrant Women was asked by the Ontario Public Health Association to sit on the planning committee for the Canadian Public Health Association General Conference which is to take place in Toronto in 1990. We have been participating regularly on the committee. The conference is to be entitled "CULTURES" and its goal is to develop a more culturally and racially sensitive health care system. Thousands of delegates from the United States and Canada are expected to attend, and our participation in the planning committee has allowed us to have direct input into the structures, speakers and program of the conference. We feel that it will be a very exciting meeting place for those involved in the health care system, and will hopefully further the integration of an anti-racist and culturally sensitive perspective.

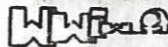


THE WORKERS AND THE COMMUNITY

BY CAROLYN EGAN

The Worker and the Community Conference was held at York University on the weekend of May 27th and 28th. It brought together academics, trade unionists and community workers to present workshops and papers on a variety of workplace and community issues including a multi-racial union coalition in California to stop the closure of an auto plant, the use of art and theatre in community politics, the experience of Italian workers in Toronto, and the community and the corporations.

Women Working with Immigrant Women was asked to chair the session on Employment Equity which included presentations from the Movement for Mandatory Affirmative Action, the Employment Equity Alliance of which we are a founding member, the Black Coalition for Employment Equity, the Coalition of Disabled People for Employment Equity and a

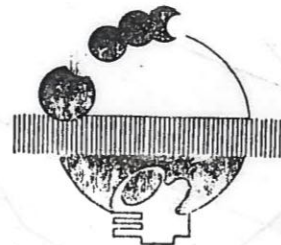


We would like to remind WWIW member groups that membership payments are valid from April 1st to March 31st of the following year. Payments need to be received by March 31st, and late payments will cover only the remaining period.

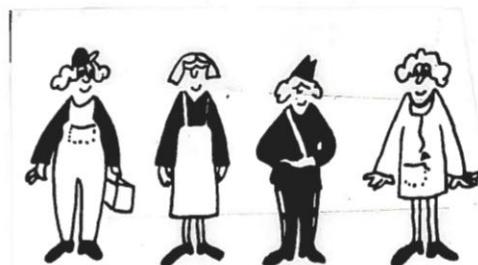
We need to know who our members are, so we can forward information to them on current developments in WWIW as well as developments in the Immigrant, Visible Minority Women's movement. Also we would want to provide our members with support in the different areas of their work.

Over the years, WWIW has been immigrant Women's progressive voice. To continue being heard and in order to initiate new services and programs in the community, we need your participation and your support.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 1989/90



member of the Native community. WWIW was also one of five organizations asked to address the final plenary session. These organizations represented movements across Canada and the United States and spoke of the need for alliance building and coalition politics as a strategy for today. We felt that it was a very worthwhile endeavor to take part in which recognized the contributions that our organization has made to the development of community politics and coalition building, and allowed us and other organizations working in the immigrant and visible minority community to raise our concerns to this varied audience.





Women Working With Immigrant Women

555 Bloor St. W. Toronto, Ont., M5S 1Y6

Tel. 531-2059

Application for membership in Women Working with Immigrant Women

Name Address

Organizational affiliation if any

Phone No. B H

Membership Fees: Individual \$10.00 Enclosed
Organizations \$15.00

Volunteer (for those who cannot afford membership fee but would like to give time)

I would like to participate in the:

- Health Cttee Education Cttee Labour Cttee
- Outreach and Advocacy Cttee Newsletter Cttee