

WORKING PAPER SERIES

PERSPECTIVES
ON SOCIAL
INCLUSION

*Immigrant
Settlement and
Social Inclusion
in Canada*

Ratna Omidvar
Ted Richmond



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ON SOCIAL
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About the Laidlaw Foundation

The Laidlaw Foundation is a private, public-interest foundation that uses its human and financial resources in innovative ways to strengthen civic engagement and social cohesion. The Foundation uses its capital to better the environments and fulfill the capacities of children and youth, to enhance the opportunities for human development and creativity and to sustain healthy communities and ecosystems.

The Foundation supports a diverse portfolio of innovative and often unconventional projects in three program areas: in the arts, in the environment and improving the life prospects for children, youth and families.

Working for social inclusion is a theme that underlies much of the Foundation's activities. The key words in the Foundation's mission — human development, sustainable communities and ecosystems — imply that achievement will rely on the enhancement of capacity and capability. Not only is social inclusion being developed as an emerging funding stream, it is an embedded Laidlaw Foundation value, both structurally and programmatically.

Nathan Gilbert
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Foreword:

The Laidlaw Foundation's Perspective on Social Inclusion

The context for social inclusion

Children have risen to the top of government agendas at various times over the past decade, only to fall again whenever there is an economic downturn, a budget deficit, a federal-provincial relations crisis or, most recently, a concern over terrorism and national security. While there have been important achievements in public policy in the past 5 to 10 years, there has not been a sustained government commitment to children nor a significant improvement in the well-being of children and families. In fact, in many areas, children and families have lost ground and social exclusion is emerging as a major issue in Canada. Examples abound and include these facts.

- the over-representation of racial minority families and children among those living in poverty in large cities, and the denial of access to many services by immigrant and refugee families;
- the 43% increase in the number of children in poverty in Canada since 1989, the 130% increase in the number of children in homeless shelters in Toronto, as well as the persistence of one of the highest youth incarceration rates among Commonwealth countries;
- the exclusion of children with disabilities from public policy frameworks (e.g. the National Children's Agenda), from definitions of 'healthy' child development and, all too often, from community life.

These situations provide the context for the Laidlaw Foundation's interest in social inclusion. The Foundation's Children's Agenda program first began exploring social inclusion in 2000 as a way to re-focus child and family policy by:

- re-framing the debate about poverty, vulnerability and the well-being of children in order to highlight the social dimensions of poverty (i.e. the inability to participate fully in the community)
- linking poverty and economic vulnerability with other sources of exclusion such as racism, disability, rejection of difference and historic oppression
- finding common ground among those concerned about the well-being of families with children to help generate greater public and political will to act.

The Foundation commissioned a series of working papers to examine social inclusion from a number of perspectives. Although the authors approach the topic from different starting points and emphasize different aspects of exclusion and inclusion, there are important common threads and conclusions. The working papers draw attention to the new realities and new understandings that must be brought to bear on the development of social policy and the creation of a just and healthy society.

These are:

- Whether the source of exclusion is poverty, racism, fear of differences or lack of political clout, the consequences are the same: a lack of recognition and acceptance; powerlessness and 'voicelessness'; economic vulnerability; and, diminished life experiences and limited life prospects. For society as a whole, the social exclusion of individuals and groups can become a major threat to social cohesion and economic prosperity.
 - A rights-based approach is inadequate to address the personal and systemic exclusions experienced by children and adults. People with disabilities are leading the way in calling for approaches based on social inclusion and valued recognition to deliver what human rights claims alone cannot.
 - Diversity and difference, whether on the basis of race, disability, religion, culture or gender, must be recognized and valued.
- The 'one size fits all approach' is no longer acceptable and has never been effective in advancing the well-being of children and families.
- Public policy must be more closely linked to the lived experiences of children and families, both in terms of the actual programs and in terms of the process for arriving at those policies and programs. This is one of the reasons for the growing focus on cities and communities, as places where inclusion and exclusion happen.
 - Universal programs and policies that serve all children and families generally provide a stronger foundation for improving well-being than residual, targeted or segregated approaches. The research and anecdotal evidence for this claim is mounting from the education, child development and population health sectors.

Understanding social inclusion

Social exclusion emerged as an important policy concept in Europe in the 1980s in response to the growing social divides that resulted from new labour market conditions and the inadequacy of existing social welfare provisions to meet the changing needs of more diverse populations. Social inclusion is not, however, just a response to exclusion.

Although many of the working papers use social exclusion as the starting point for their discussions, they share with us the view that social inclusion has value on its own as both a process and a goal. Social inclusion is about making sure that all children and adults are able to participate as valued, respected and

contributing members of society. It is, therefore, a normative (value based) concept - a way of raising the bar and understanding where we want to be and how to get there.

Social inclusion reflects a proactive, human development approach to social well-being that calls for more than the removal of barriers or risks. It requires investments and action to bring about the conditions for inclusion, as the population health and international human development movements have taught us.

Recognizing the importance of difference and diversity has become central to new under-

standings of identity at both a national and community level. Social inclusion goes one step further: it calls for a validation and recognition of diversity as well as a recognition of the commonality of lived experiences and the shared aspirations among people, particularly evident among families with children.

This strongly suggests that social inclusion extends beyond bringing the ‘outsiders’ in, or notions of the periphery versus the centre. It is about closing physical, social and economic distances separating people, rather than only about eliminating boundaries or barriers between *us* and *them*.

The cornerstones of social inclusion

The working papers process revealed that social inclusion is a complex and challenging concept that cannot be reduced to only one dimension or meaning. The working papers, together with several other initiatives the Foundation sponsored as part of its exploration of social inclusion, have helped us to identify five critical dimensions, or cornerstones, of social inclusion:

Valued recognition – Conferring recognition and respect on individuals and groups. This includes recognizing the differences in children’s development and, therefore, not equating disability with pathology; supporting community schools that are sensitive to cultural and gender differences; and extending the notion to recognizing common worth through universal programs such as health care.

Human development – Nurturing the talents, skills, capacities and choices of children and adults to live a life they value and to make a contribution both they and others find worthwhile. Examples include: learning and developmental opportunities for all children and adults; community child care and recreation programs for children that are growth-promoting and challenging rather than merely custodial.

Involvement and engagement – Having the right and the necessary support to make/be involved in decisions affecting oneself, family and community, and to be engaged in community life. Examples include: youth engagement and control of services for youth; parental input into school curriculum or placement decisions affecting their child; citizen engagement in municipal policy decisions; and political participation.

Proximity – Sharing physical and social spaces to provide opportunities for interactions, if desired, and to reduce social distances between people. This includes shared public spaces such as parks and libraries; mixed income neighbourhoods and housing; and integrated schools and classrooms.

Material well being – Having the material resources to allow children and their parents to participate fully in community life. This includes being safely and securely housed and having an adequate income.

Next steps: Building inclusive cities and communities

Over the next three years, the Children's Agenda program of the Laidlaw Foundation will focus on *Building inclusive cities and communities*. The importance of cities and communities is becoming increasingly recognized because the well-being of children and families is closely tied to where they live, the quality of their neighbourhoods and cities, and the 'social commons' where people interact and share experiences.

Christa Freiler
Children's Agenda Program Coordinator
Laidlaw Foundation

The Laidlaw Foundation's vision of a socially inclusive society is grounded in an international movement that aims to advance the well-being of people by improving the health of cities and communities. Realizing this vision is a long-term project to ensure that all members of society participate as equally valued and respected citizens. It is an agenda based on the premise that for our society to be just, healthy and secure, it requires the inclusion of all.

Paul Zarnke
President and Former Chair,
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*This series is dedicated to the memory of
Dr. Jennifer Keck who died on June 12, 2002
after a long battle with cancer.*

*Jennifer was a key member of the editorial committee,
an insightful and passionate reviewer of the working papers,
and an unwavering advocate for
social justice and the social inclusion of all people.*

***Immigrant
Settlement and
Social Inclusion
in Canada***

Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion in Canada

Introduction

During the past two years, the Laidlaw Foundation has been working to develop the notion of social inclusion as a framework for a more progressive approach to social policy questions in Canada. As well, the issue of immigrant settlement is evolving as one of the most important questions of public policy in Canada. Canada is experiencing serious and increasing difficulties in making full use of the skills and talents of our newcomers in both the economic sphere and in public life in general. Simultaneously, immigrant and refugee communities and their spokespersons are expressing a growing sense of frustration, even despair, at the barriers they encounter to full participation in all domains of Canadian life.

This paper is an attempt to bring together these two important issues and to pose the following questions. What does the concept of social inclusion offer for a better understanding and ultimately a better resolution of the problems of immigrant and refugee settlement in Canada today? More specifically, does the concept of social inclusion offer new perspectives and help us formulate improved policies in the vital area of immigrant settlement?

Social inclusion involves the basic notions of belonging, acceptance and recognition. For immigrants and refugees, social inclusion would be represented by the realization of full and equal participation in the economic,

social, cultural and political dimensions of life in their new country. In a simple but useful sense, therefore, social inclusion for immigrants and refugees can be seen as the dismantling of barriers that lead to *exclusion* in all these domains.

As many commentators have noted, the definition of “social inclusion” remains fluid and open to debate, and is ultimately shaped by political and ideological convictions. Within the framework of our own beliefs, we will attempt to address different dimensions of the notion of inclusion: as a process, as an outcome and as a metaphor or means of reconceptualizing fundamental issues.

Recently there has been much discussion and debate with the goal of refining the concept of social inclusion, both inside and outside the dialogue promoted by the Laidlaw Foundation, and it is well beyond the scope of this paper to adequately address all the issues that have been raised. We are working in this paper with a more practical focus, which is to test the potential of social inclusion as a policy framework against what we know of the reality of immigrant and refugee settlement in Canada today.

The Economic Status of Newcomers in Canada

During the last two decades there has been a dramatic downward shift in the economic status of newcomers to Canada. The groups of immigrants and refugees who have arrived in the last 20 years—overwhelmingly non-European visible minorities—are experiencing severe difficulties in the Canadian labour market and associated problems of individual and family poverty.

During roughly the first 40 years after the Second World War, newcomers to Canada, with some initial settlement support and over a period of time, generally were successful in the Canadian labour market. Their employment participation rates were as high or higher than the Canadian-born, and their wages and salaries rose gradually to the level of the Canadian-born. However, recent research indicates persistent and growing difficulties in the labour market integration of immigrants, especially recent immigrants. Rates of unemployment and underemployment are increasing for individual immigrants, as are rates of poverty for immigrant families. As well, there is a substantial body of evidence indicating income discrimination against visible minority workers (both immigrant and Canadian-born) as well as gender-based wage discrimination for female immigrants. The general trend is summarized by J. Shields:

The great difficulty is that since the 1980s immigrant performance in the Canadian labour market has deteriorated precipitously, dampening the possibilities of economic integration and expanding the dimensions of immigrant social exclusion (2002:21).

These general trends have been documented in numerous studies including Devoretz (1995), Harvey and Siu (2001), Galabuzi (2001), Kazemipur and Halli (1997;

2000), Lo et al. (2000), Mwarigha M.S. (2002), Ornstein (2000), Pendakur (2000), Reitz (1998; 2001), and Shields (2002). Some of the main trends were summarized in the much-cited HRDC bulletin (2001) which revealed that immigrants to Canada in the 1990s have not fared as well as previous cohorts of immigrants in terms of earnings and employment outcomes, in spite of the fact that these recent immigrants are more highly-educated and skilled than previous cohorts. The bulletin noted that this is contrary to historical trends, in which the pattern has been that immigrants earn less on arrival but their incomes rise rapidly and catch up or surpass the Canadian employment earnings average after 10 to 14 years. In previous periods economic principal applicants selected on the basis of education and skill have had earnings higher than the average of the native-born more quickly, starting one year after arrival. However recent immigrants have lower rates of employment and they declined markedly between 1986 and 1996. The result is that Canada's immigrants exhibit a higher incidence of poverty and greater dependence on social assistance than their predecessors, in spite of the fact that the rate of university graduates is higher among all categories of immigrants including family class and refugees as well as economic immigrants than it is for the Canadian-born.

These trends are accompanied by a general increase in poverty for immigrants, particularly recent non-European immigrants, which impacts on families as well as individuals. For example, Harvey and Siu (2001) found that poverty levels for all immigrants have increased between 1991 and 1996, with visible minorities in Toronto showing the largest increase from 20.9 per cent to 32.5 per cent. The study

also shows that visible minorities are much more at risk of experiencing persistent poverty for 35 years than immigrants who are not visible minorities. It confirms earlier findings by Ornstein (2000), based on 1996 Census data, of increased unemployment, underemployment, and individual and family poverty for recent immigrants and visible minorities in Toronto, the destination of about one-half of Canada's newcomers. The Ornstein research revealed that non-European groups in Toronto are burdened with family poverty rates at twice the levels of families of European and Canadian origin, and that for some groups such as Latin Americans, Africans Blacks and Caribbeans, and Arabs and West Asians the rate is more than 40 per cent, or roughly three times higher. This academic research is confirmed by accounts in the popular press, which reveal a dramatic increase in the use of food banks by highly-educated newcomers (Quinn 2002).

A significant factor in these trends is the underutilization of immigrant skills within the Canadian labour market. Reitz (2001) has looked at the quantitative significance of this issue using a human-capital earnings analysis which identified immigrant earnings deficits as arising from three possible sources: lower immigrant skill quality, or underutilization of immigrant skills, or pay inequities for immigrants doing the same work as native-born Canadians. He concluded that in 1996 dollars, the total annual immigrant earnings deficit from all three sources in Canada was \$15.0 billion, of which \$2.4 billion was related to skill underutilization, and \$12.6 billion was related to pay inequity. He observed as well that employers give little credence to foreign education and none to foreign work experience, that discrimination specific to country of origin or visible minority status is mainly related to pay equity rather than skills utilization, and that the economic impact of visible minor-

ity status and immigrant status is very similar for both men and women. In addition, Reitz noted that race appears to be a more reliable predictor of how foreign education will be evaluated in Canada than the specific location of the origin of the immigrant from outside Europe.

These trends must be considered in relation to structural changes in the international economy and Canadian labour market in the past several decades, specifically the trends towards globalization of markets and liberalization of world trade making both labour and capital more internationally mobile and domestic (Canadian) employment less secure. Historically, during the first decades after the Second World War, the majority of immigrants gained employment in relatively high-wage, low-skill industrial jobs. Now in Canada as in other advanced economies, the service sector is replacing industrial production as the main source of employment, and immigrant employment is more concentrated in the relatively high-wage and high-skill (public) service sector as well as in low-wage, low-skill (private, retail) services.

For example, Shields (2002) concludes that during the 1950s and 1960s male immigrant labour market success was mainly a product of the wide availability of jobs and relatively high wages in the manufacturing and construction sectors, which did not demand high levels of formal schooling. With the decline of this sector and the rise of the service sector, the labour market is much more challenging for recent immigrants. As well, Lo et al. (2000) note in a study of Toronto that while immigrants are still over-represented in manufacturing, they are concentrated in unstable, lower waged and disappearing sectors.

Pendakur (2000) provides a comprehensive historical analysis of these trends, covering the period from the end of the Second World

War to the 1990s, during which the source of immigration shifted to predominantly non-European countries and the work done by immigrants in Canada moved from factories and construction sites to retail stores, hospitals and classrooms. Historically, this period examined includes two very different immigration paths, one emphasizing family reunification and the other stressing labour force requirements as well as family reunification. It was also a period of major transformation from a manufacturing-based economy to a largely service-based one.

For Pendakur, changes in skill and education requirements meant that immigrants were likely to perform labour force roles different than either the Canadian-born or previous immigrants, but their options were also determined by prevailing labour market conditions within a relatively rigid Canadian labour mar-

ket. As the relatively high-wage and low-skill jobs in manufacturing disappeared, new immigrants were recruited into both high-wage and high-skill positions in social services and business, and low-wage jobs in the retail sector. Differences in the occupations of the new immigrants were also related to whether they were employed for wages or self-employed, and whether they were male or female. It appears that male immigrants are more subject to labour market discrimination as visible minorities, while female immigrants experience more discrimination both as immigrants and as women. Pendakur's study also confirms the penalties in income and occupational status paid by immigrants whose education has been acquired outside of Canada, as well as the existence of substantial income penalties in the Canadian labour market rooted in ethnicity and colour.

Other Groups of Newcomers

While the economic analysis summarized in the preceding section reveals many of the barriers to social inclusion for Canada's newcomers, we must also take account of a number of other groups facing both economic and social exclusion. Attention to these groups is particularly important because for various reasons they often do not receive as much attention in official statistics and current research.

Among the temporary immigrants admitted to Canada, for example, there are agricultural workers imported on a seasonal basis to labour under harsh conditions with minimal legal rights. Historically, domestic workers, while enjoying the right to an eventual claim to Canadian citizenship, have also endured both economic exploitation and workplace and sexual harassment to earn this privilege. As

well, in Canada there are small but growing numbers of female temporary immigrants recruited for the illicit sex trade, and victims of international immigrant smuggling schemes abandoned without any legal status.

At the present time, there are also a number of undocumented immigrants such as failed refugee claimants or visitors who have stayed beyond their permitted time in Canada. The exact numbers are not known; the reports come from social service and health agencies who provide emergency supports to these people without provision for funding for these services. These people make silent contributions to our economy, often through exploited labour, while being denied basic social and health services for lack of documentation. Many are parents, including parents of Canadian-born children, whose children may

be denied the right to schooling and access to health care. All of these vulnerable groups of newcomers are excluded in various ways from access to basic legal protection and economic justice.

To understand the multiple dimensions of both economic and social exclusion for Canada's newcomers we must also consider the gendered experiences of immigrant and refugee women (Chard et al. 2000; James et al. 1999; Mohab 1999; Preston and Man 1999). To a large degree, newcomer women in Canada continue to be streamed into lower-wage jobs in the growing service sector as well as in the declining manufacturing sector. At the same time, due to factors related both to their conditions of arrival in Canada and to the socio-cultural traditions of their country of origin, newcomer women carry very heavy burdens of domestic responsibility in terms of housework, family maintenance and socialization of children.

Finally, from the perspective of newcomer social inclusion, one of the most important issues in Canada is the extended period during which thousands of refugee claimants remain in a "legal limbo." Although Canada's inland refugee determination system and the quasi-judicial nature of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) are seen as progressive by the rest of the world, there are serious problems within

the system. The determination of the status of refugee claimants is legally and administratively complex and can create significant backlogs (delays). For refugee claimants this can mean an extended period during which they face significant barriers in access to social services and the labour market, as well as a postponement in potentially acquiring rights such as sponsorship of family members and eventual citizenship. They can't get a bank loan, or vote, or work in certain professions (e.g. education and health care); they can't travel internationally, even to the USA; and they can't get loans for post-secondary education. Currently, it is common for this situation to last five years, or more.

The situation of refugee claimants in legal limbo is creating a new underclass of persons without status composed of those who most need our help, those who left their own countries under conditions of great stress and with tremendous hopes for their new life in Canada (Mohamed 2002). It has a tremendously negative impact not only on the individuals concerned but also on their family and friends, and this negative impact is occurring during the first few years of their life in Canada—the years most important to successful settlement. And during those years, Canada is losing the opportunity to benefit from the education and skills these people have brought to their new country.

Immigrant and Refugee Children and Youth

One of the more comprehensive studies of newcomer youth is that by Kilbride et al. (2000), which integrates a number of research projects involving community collaboration focused on diverse groups of adolescent newcomers in different cities of Ontario. The researchers found that the challenges of adolescence were greatly compounded

by the stresses of settlement. They found as well that immigrant and refugee youth felt pulled in opposite directions, between what seemed to be irreconcilable values or cultures, and a desire to adapt and fit in to their new homeland. The tensions between parents and youth associated with the challenges of settlement were very important. Feelings of isola-

tion and alienation were linked to perceptions of cultural differences and experiences of discrimination and racism. Support from friends, family and institutions was key to overcoming the challenges of settlement.

One of the particular findings from this study was that lack of (Canadian English) language facility creates barriers for newcomer youth in education, employment and general social adaptation, including for those (for example from the Caribbean) who speak English with a dialect. The study also found that newcomer youth who arrived while younger had a less difficult process of adaptation than those who arrived as older adolescents, because they had a longer period of time to adapt to the education system and adjust to Canadian social and cultural values.

This study also revealed that the stresses of the settlement process experienced by their parents had a great impact on the newcomer youth. Parents who had to work longer hours for lower pay had less time for involvement in family activities, and youth were often obliged to take up correspondingly greater obligations such as staying home alone, caring for siblings, doing grocery shopping and cooking, finding paid employment and translating and interpreting for their parents.

Other reports and research studies emphasize the particular experiences of refugee youth and children. Omidvar (2002) emphasizes the fact that immigrants and refugees have different experiences, while supporting the observations of Kilbride et al. that racism and discrimination are real factors, and complicated by intergenerational issues. She notes as well that there are special issues for female newcomer youth. For Kaprielian-Churchill and Churchill (1994) one of the main points from a study of Ontario schools is that refugee children have special needs and that teachers and schools have not developed the training and

programs of intervention to deal with these needs.

Sadoway (2002) emphasizes that children are at risk around the world, particularly when they are separated from their parents and families due to war, poverty and oppression, and also when their caregivers have become their oppressors. Sadoway asserts that the community and the state have often been reluctant to intervene to protect children because of deeply ingrained paternalistic notions of children as property, as chattels or extensions of their parents, rather than persons in their own right. Children lack power in our society and therefore are dependent on adults to recognize their needs and ensure their care and development as well as safety and protection. The issue of what constitutes "persecution" of children, in terms of the UN Convention for the determination of refugee status, continues to challenge adjudicators. Issues like forced conscription, sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation are beginning to be recognized, but other more commonplace issues such as domestic service in private homes receive less recognition.

Montgomery (2002) in discussing the status of unaccompanied minors in Canada states that in principle the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* grants equal rights to all persons residing in Canadian territory, but in practice all residents are not treated equally. Minority and immigrant communities experience forms of exclusion related to the immigration process, access to services and discrimination. Unaccompanied minors (youth under the age of 18 who have been separated from parents and who arrive in Canada unaccompanied by a legal guardian) are particularly vulnerable due to their dual status as minors and as refugee claimants. In Canada in 2000 the number of unaccompanied minors was estimated at around 1,000, most going to Ontario, Quebec

and British Columbia. However, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) report that numbers are rising, probably because parents in conflict zones try to get their children out first, or may only have the resources to get their children out.

Montgomery's analysis reveals that unaccompanied minors, particularly older youth, experience settlement problems similar to those of immigrants in general and refugees in particular. For example, in the labour market employers often refuse to hire persons without a regularized immigration status. As well, refugee claimants are excluded from most government-sponsored employment and training programs because of their immigration status, and although they have a right to language training, in practice it is difficult for them to access this service. As well, there is discrimination in obtaining housing, such as the requirement of supplementary proof of identity or additional proof of capacity to pay rent. Access to health services is also a problem, as the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) provides only "essential" services and not rou-

tine medical, dental or mental health services. Montgomery emphasizes as well that the process and lengthy period of resolving status creates great mental stress.

A social inclusion perspective on newcomer integration therefore must include sufficient attention to the particular and complex needs of immigrant and refugee youth. Recent findings as outlined above suggest that the settlement challenges of newcomer youth are compounded by the barriers of social exclusion faced by their parents, and indeed are often essentially the same. We must note as well that newcomer youth not only face particular challenges as immigrants and refugees, but also confront the general barriers of youth in today's Canadian society with respect to changing socio-economic conditions and opportunities. Tyyska (2001) for example demonstrates convincingly that the age status of the young in Canada has become a factor of disadvantage (or risk, or marginalization, or social exclusion) along with related factors such as gender, poverty and visible minority status.

Settlement Services and the NGO Sector

Many immigrants and refugees require settlement services when they first arrive, as well as linguistically- and culturally-appropriate health and social services throughout their years of adaptation. The provision of these services is essential both to ensuring the effective settlement of newcomers, and maintaining public support for the continuing high levels of immigration required for our labour force. Indeed Reitz (1998) has shown in a comparative study of different countries that the level of public support for settlement is vital to immigrants' economic success and socio-political inclusion.

Currently most funded settlement services are devoted to initial support for newcomers, including language training, assistance with labour market integration, individual and family counselling, translation and interpreting and referrals to health and social services. The *funds* for these services come from a variety of sources including the federal government, provincial governments, municipalities and community charities and private foundations. However, the *delivery* of these services (in Ontario and across Canada) is provided mainly by non-governmental organizations—community-based immigrant service agencies or ISAs.

One of the most serious problems of the current system lies in the fact that settlement funding and programming is focused on the initial stages of adaptation, in spite of the fact that the process of settlement continues throughout the life of the newcomer.

Mwarigha M.S. (2002) notes that after the initial or first stage of adaptation, in the middle or intermediate stage newcomers require assistance with access to various Canadian systems and institutions including municipal services, with their principal needs usually centered around timely and equitable access to the labour market. Other important needs in the intermediate stage include access to housing, health services, legal assistance and advanced or employment-specific language instruction. In the long term or final stage of settlement, immigrants and refugees strive to become equal participants in Canada's economic, cultural, social and political life. It is no exaggeration to state that settlement policy in Canada is currently in a state of crisis, due largely to the lack of a pan-Canadian and long-term perspective that takes into account all three stages of settlement.

A second grave problem, directly related to the first, is that the NGO sector delivering settlement services is in a precarious state due to a combination of funding cutbacks and imposed restructuring. The situation of the ISAs in Ontario including Toronto has been documented in numerous studies including Owen (1999), Richmond, T. (1996), Shields (2002) and Simich (2000). The effect has been that many community-based providers of settlement services, particularly the smaller "ethno-specific" agencies, have been forced to curtail their services drastically or even to close their doors. Those that are still functioning are operating under conditions of extreme stress due to a combination of overloaded service demand and limited funding.

This situation, however, derives not just

from inadequate funding but as much or even more from a restructuring of the conditions of government funding. The transition for most government funders from "core" to program-specific funding favours the larger agencies with more administrative resources for the management of programs delivered on a contractual basis, and leaves all remaining ISAs with extremely limited resources for community education, needs assessment, program planning and advocacy. This kind of imposed restructuring as noted by Evans and Shields (2002) is part of a general trend towards neo-liberal restructuring of the relationship between government and the non-profit or third sector. These authors point out that the expansion of the welfare state has been based not only on a growth in government social support services, but also on the growing role of the third sector, and that this symbiotic relationship is threatened by restructuring which compromises the basic mission of third sector organizations and therefore their ability to contribute to social inclusion.

One of the essential mechanisms of this restructuring is the imposition on the ISAs, as part of the new contractual terms of service, of so-called "evaluation" schemes which are really nothing more than administrative mechanisms to maintain state control of third-party (and third-sector) service providers (Chambon and Richmond, T. 2001). While this issue may appear to be purely administrative, in reality it is political because our frameworks for evaluation are directly linked to our visions of accountability in a democratic and pluralist society (Hanberger 2001). This type of restructuring has particularly serious and negative implications for the ISAs, which historically have used their legitimate autonomy as community agencies to play a leading role in the development of an anti-discriminatory and anti-racist framework for human services (Richmond, T. 1996).

Urban Issues and Newcomer Settlement

To understand the dynamics and challenges of newcomer settlement in Canada today from a social inclusion perspective, it is essential to recognize that immigration is principally, indeed overwhelmingly, an *urban* phenomenon. Currently about 70 per cent of immigrants to Canada settle in the our three largest cities of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal with about half of them eventually arriving in Toronto alone.

For the past five decades immigration has become a primary force not only in broad economic and demographic terms, but also in shaping the Canadian urban environment, impacting on residential housing development, neighbourhood and street life, the delivery of municipal services, urban politics and cultural life (Troper 2000). Siemiatycki and Isin (1997) point out as well that transnational migration has generated new claims to urban citizenship in Toronto. Newcomers have dispersed their residences and developed and transformed their neighbourhoods, laying claim to public space, challenging cultural traditions, creating organizations and getting involved in civic politics.

Unfortunately, one of the most disturbing and indeed dangerous trends associated with the urbanization of immigration is the growing risk of the racialization of urban poverty. For example, Shields (2002) observes that there is a strong correlation between recent immigrant status and elevated levels of family poverty, and notes the real danger that a process of racialization of poverty is underway. As well, Galabuzi (2001) confirms the development within our major urban centres of an underclass of visible minorities, many of whom are recent immigrants, concentrated in racial enclaves of poverty. Kazemipur and Halli (2000) found that larger urban centres—Montreal, Winnipeg,

Quebec City, Toronto, Saskatoon, Regina and Vancouver—had large concentrations of visible minority immigrants in neighbourhoods with a poverty rate of 40 per cent and higher. The latter study also revealed that in Toronto, immigrants are more likely than non-immigrants to live in neighbourhoods with high rates of poverty. Mwarigha M.S. (2002) suggests that one of the most disturbing consequences of the current settlement service system is that it is ineffective in combating the accelerated emergence of an immigrant underclass, concentrated primarily in the poorer neighbourhoods of Toronto.

It must be emphasized however that the issue here is not simply the fact of the concentration of ethnoracial groups within particular neighbourhoods. Qadeer (forthcoming) has concluded that the concentration of an ethnic group in a particular urban neighbourhood can facilitate the development of religious, cultural and community institutions. According to his studies, once a community has formed, it tends to persist and evolve, as on the basis of a segmented housing market, as a socio-ecological grouping. These “ethnic enclaves” are largely expressions of preferences, common interests, social networks and common cultural and/or religious needs of their residents. They can be especially helpful to women, children and seniors, especially those not fluent in English and who are accustomed to the supportive presence of friends and relatives. For Qadeer there is a risk however that ethnoracial residential concentrations can act as a barrier to the residents meeting and networking in the mainstream society and economy, and the risk is particularly high if the segregation coincides with low incomes, poverty and poor housing. Nevertheless, Qadeer suggests that this process gives a new meaning to social integration: con-

structing a 'common ground' of institutions and services for civic engagement of diverse communities. Residential space then, along with schools, workplaces, recreation and sports and political participation, is one of the many sites for social inclusion.

The issue then is the degree to which concentration in neighbourhoods of *poverty* acts as a barrier to social and economic integration of new immigrants and their children. Living in areas of concentrated poverty has

adverse impacts on a whole range of life experiences, and in the case of new immigrants it leads to family conflicts, loss of self-esteem, and a sense of despair about future prospects in the new country of settlement. Young immigrants who grow up in such conditions can develop a culture of alienation both from their parents and their community of origin, and from that of the host society (Mwarigha M.S. 2002).

The Social Inclusion Perspective

The notion of social inclusion originated in Europe in response to the crisis in the health and welfare programs in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. In the period from the Second World War to the mid-1970s, most European governments developed comprehensive health and social insurance programs to protect their citizens (Guidford 2000). This was followed by a period of fiscal restraint and cutbacks in the United States, Canada and most European governments, which not only proved to be unpopular, but also in many ways aggravated the problem of poverty among the most disadvantaged groups. The increasing number of people experiencing long-term poverty became a big problem for the welfare system, especially in Europe. Initial measures to limit benefits through increased means-testing only meant that more and more people ended up living outside the system, jobless and homeless.

Social inclusion was initially started by the French to effectively reintegrate the large numbers of ex-industrial workers and a growing number of young people who right from the start did not have the opportunity to join the new economy labour force of the 1980s and 1990s. As the concept gained credence in

the rest of Europe, it incorporated non-traditional target groups such as racial minorities, the elderly, youth and people with disabilities as sections of the population in need of deliberate social inclusion programs.

The social crisis caused by the unfettered growth of the new economy in the 1980s and 1990s provided an opportunity for governments to not only revisit the traditional notion of universal welfare, but also to add in new values of inclusion_ "characterized by a society's widely shared experience and active participation, by a broad equality of opportunities and life chances for individuals and by the achievement of basic level of well-being for all citizens" (Sen 2001). In essence, social inclusion became a vehicle to enhance access and equity in the field of social policy and programming.

The notion of social inclusion also gained acceptance in countries that did not proceed as radically towards the dismantling of their post-war social welfare system. In Sweden, for example, whose welfare system remained relatively intact in the new economy age of the 1980s and 1990s, there was recognition that "...the system had not fully succeeded in guaranteeing the welfare of young people, immi-

grants and single parent providers. These groups were hit particularly by the employment crisis at the beginning of the 1990s. And as a result they also suffered most as regards other aspects of welfare. At the same time there were groups in the 1990s, as before with significant problems such as substance misuse and homelessness” (Government of Sweden 2001).

At a broad policy level, the goals of social inclusion are pursued on the basis of the following key principles: 1) structuring policy interventions around a life cycle approach, where necessary to meet individual need; 2) tackling failing communities and the needs of other excluded groups of people; 3) mobilizing all relevant actors in a joint multi-agency response; 4) tackling discrimination in its forms, wherever it occurs; and 5) ensuring all policy formulation is evidence-based. These principles enable a multidimensional approach to confronting the problems of social exclusion and promoting social inclusion.

Evidently, the notion of social inclusion is the antithesis of social exclusion. Social exclusion is a way of understanding the impact of existing social economic systems on marginalized groups, while social inclusion is about finding out what works and mobilizing resources to resolve the problems brought about through social exclusion.

Within this general framework, however, the notion of social inclusion can be developed in different directions. One focus can be the incorporation of access and equity principles into a traditional agenda of national (universal) social inclusion, based on a universal social security system for children and families, and universal human development such as early learning for all. Such an approach would see

the problems of social exclusion as being resolved by returning to the traditional post-war welfare state that was dismantled by neo-conservative governments in Europe in the last three decades and more recently in Canada. A second focus, typical of the European approach, emphasizes the basic notions of capacity building and focusing resources to those at the bottom end of the social spectrum. This approach would target traditionally marginalized workers like retrenched workers and the long-term unemployed as well as racial/ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, children in poverty and the homeless.

A third focus would emphasize social inclusion as a fundamental capability, in a ‘right-based approach.’ According to Sen (2001), an inclusive society is characterized by widely-shared social experience and active participation, by broad equality of opportunities and life chances for individuals, and by the achievement of a basic level of well-being for all citizens. This approach emphasizes the need for policy to improve capabilities through legal human rights protections that ensure that all have the opportunity and ability to be included. It shifts the focus away from the individual that is for example living in poverty or dependent on social assistance, and thus away from blaming the victim.

Ultimately, the test of the relevance of these notions of social inclusion lies in their ability to shape progressive and practical social policy reforms and initiatives. They must therefore be grounded in and shaped by the complex realities of growing social exclusion for Canadian newcomers.

Social Inclusion and Canada's Official Multiculturalism

Any consideration of social inclusion in the Canadian context must take into account the fact that Canada is an officially multicultural and anti-racist society, with what is considered to be one of the most open and welcoming immigration policies in the world.

Canadian policies of multiculturalism, however, are rooted within and limited by their specific historical origins. Canadian multiculturalism evolved within a process of political bargaining among the two "founding nations" of English and French and the more established immigrant communities of European origin (Wayland 1997), without the political participation of the overwhelmingly visible minority immigrant arrivals of the past two decades. Furthermore, official Canadian multiculturalism and its derivative formal anti-racist policies have not been adequate to resolve the demands for Quebec independence, Aboriginal claims to land and autonomy, or anti-racist mobilization by visible minorities both immigrant and Canadian-born (Winter 2001).

Indeed, Canada has one of the world's most inclusive policies of citizenship acquisition, and this must be recognized as a legitimate and important factor of social inclusion. Newcomers are able and encouraged to become citizens after three years of settlement in Canada, and the vast majority do acquire Canadian citizenship. As documented previously in this paper, however, the immigration status of newcomers (immigrant, refugee, refugee claimant) represents a hierarchy of rights with both legal and practical implications for social exclusion. Furthermore, the actual possibilities for economic, social and political inclusion of all newcomers, regardless of their formal immigration status, are too

often in contradiction to the formal and official promises of multiculturalism, anti-racism and citizenship acquisition.

The contradictions between Canada's official policies and the reality of social exclusion for Canada's newcomers are well-documented. For example, A. Richmond (1994, 2000) reports on a system of "global apartheid" in which controls on international migration continually increase for the most vulnerable while becoming more flexible for the international business elite. Galabuzi (2001) speaks of a looming crisis of social instability and political legitimacy for Canadian society based on the growing trends towards the racialization of poverty for visible minorities and recent immigrants. Henry and Tator (2000) speak of "democratic racism" in reference to the deep tension in Canada between two competing value systems: the reality of pervasive racism, and a commitment to the ideology of democratic liberalism. And Lo et al. (2000) talk of the failure of immigrant settlement and integration policies because of the persistence of high unemployment, low income and poverty for specific immigrant groups and the incongruity between immigration selection policies and integration policies.

We are witnesses, therefore, to a real and growing contradiction between Canada's official policies of multiculturalism, anti-racism and immigration citizenship acquisition, and the growing reality of social exclusion for Canada's newcomers. The resolution of this contradiction involves at least two fundamental issues.

One of these issues which is explored more fully by Saloojee (2003) concerns the fact that a social inclusion framework must incorporate an anti-racist perspective, taking into

account the limits of multiculturalism and the realities of systemic racism in contemporary Canada. Within this perspective, of course, we must recognize that the vast majority of recent newcomers are non-European “visible minorities” experiencing systemic barriers of exclusion within the process of settlement.

The second issue addressed by others including Jenson (2002) involves our basic notions of citizenship. Jenson suggests that the Canadian diversity model can incorporate a notion of shared citizenship, in which unity and diversity are not mutually exclusive, and that we can rely on democratic institutions to choose between competing social values. Such a perspective might allow us to move beyond the limits of multiculturalism as the conservative preservation of “cultures of origin” and move towards a creative public dialogue incor-

porating the progressive values imported by our newcomer communities along with the democratic traditions of the host society. In exploring the relationship between citizenship values and the impact of newcomer settlement there is much to be learned from our colleagues in Quebec, where the debates and experiments have taken place in the context of a commitment to the social dominance of the French language and a critical distance from official Canadian multicultural policy (McAndrew 2001). One important lesson of the Quebec experience is that there is a considerable tension between a focus on individual rights, which tends to co-exist with more traditional notions of citizenship values, and an emphasis on collective rights, which tends to be supportive of an anti-racist perspective and notions of deep diversity.

Policy Perspectives within a Social Inclusion Framework

There can be no doubt of the importance of including newcomers to Canada in the development of a social inclusion perspective on public policy reform. Canada has one of the highest proportions of immigrants to total resident population of any country in the world; and (both) newcomers and visible minorities make up more than half the population in our largest cities like Toronto. The role of Canada’s newcomers is therefore central to any meaningful development of the notion of social inclusion.

But do the concepts of social inclusion “work” for newcomer settlement in Canada? Do they resonate? Do they offer new perspectives? Can they be useful tools for developing policy?

At the most basic level the notion of social inclusion certainly provides a powerful

metaphor for addressing the challenges of newcomer settlement in Canada today. Immigrants want to be included, especially in the labour market. Refugees want to be included though resolution of their status. And all newcomers want to be included as full and equal participants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their new homeland, while fearing that public policy debates will exclude their particular issues and interests as immigrants, or refugees, or visible minorities. The notion of social inclusion therefore provides an important starting point as an alternative to the currently-dominant concept of focusing immigration policy exclusively on recruitment of “the best and the brightest”, of continually raising the bar for admissions to Canada while secondarizing the needs of family reunification and refugee resettlement and ignoring the barriers of social exclusion experienced by those who have already begun the

settlement journey within our country.

We would contend that the three possible focuses of a social inclusion perspective identified earlier are not mutually exclusive, but rather essential and overlapping elements of the application of a social inclusion perspective to the challenges of newcomer settlement in Canada. The restoration of government responsibility for universal social programs in the face of the neo-conservative tide, for example, is a necessary precondition for the social inclusion of both newcomers and the Canadian-born. Furthermore, the targeting of social programs to the most disadvantaged is of obvious necessity for immigrants and refugees excluded from equitable participation in the Canadian labour market, as well as in areas of exclusion for newcomers such as housing, education and access to health and social services. At the same time, a rights-based approach to social inclusion is an essential perspective for dealing with the reality of differential legal and practical rights for Canada's newcomers based on immigration status (citizen versus immigrant versus refugee; selected immigrant versus family class; sponsored refugee versus refugee claimant, etc.).

We would argue as well that the five elements of a social inclusion perspective as previously identified can be applied directly, and productively, to the policy challenges posed by the growing social exclusion of Canada's newcomers. The notion of structuring policy interventions around a life cycle approach, for example, relates directly to the reality of the settlement process extending over the newcomer's lifetime and continuing (at least) into the second generation. The necessity to deal with failing communities and the needs of other excluded groups of people is directly relevant to the reality of economic, social and political exclusion for large groups of newcomers as documented in this paper. The need to mobi-

lize all relevant actors in a joint multi-agency response speaks to both the necessity to involve all levels and relevant departments of the federal, provincial and municipal governments in tackling the challenges of newcomer settlement, and the necessity to incorporate all stakeholders in a policy response including settlement agencies, mainstream institutions, employers and private foundations. Tackling discrimination in all its forms, with respect to newcomer settlement, means nothing more nor less than the necessity of an anti-racist perspective in dealing with the social exclusion of immigrants and refugees, the majority of whom are visible minorities. Finally, the notion of ensuring that all policy formulation is evidence-based speaks directly to the need for practical and transparent mechanisms of public accountability for the various sectors of government responsible for combatting the exclusion of Canada's newcomers from full participation in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their new homeland.

Within this perspective, we offer the following suggestions for policy reform. While they vary considerably in scope and complexity, they all represent concrete examples of the potential of a practical and incremental approach to the application of the social inclusion perspective to the challenges of newcomer settlement.

Access to Trades and Professions

An example of the immediate relevance and practical applicability of the notion of social inclusion is the issue of Access to Trades and Professions (ATP). There can no longer be any doubt that the economic contributions of immigrants and refugees would be significantly higher if Canada were capable of properly utilizing their foreign-based experience, education and skills. In the next few decades, Canada will reach a point where net immigration

accounts for 100 per cent of both population growth and labour market replacement. Effective utilization of the experience, education and skills of newcomers is therefore key to economic success in an increasingly competitive global economy. As a result, there is growing pressure for real progress in this area based on a recognition by multiple stakeholders that we are quite simply wasting the talents of our new citizens (Alboim and The Maytree Foundation 2002; Brouwer 1999; Reitz 2001). It is particularly and bitterly ironic for newcomers, and for those who try to assist them, that the various licensing and professional bodies as well as Canadian employers appear to deny the legitimacy of the very skills and education that gained them admittance to our country.

Fortunately, the vital importance of this issue is gaining increasing attention at various levels including the federal government. The Canadian Innovation Strategy, for example, is a federal policy initiative which focuses on the necessity to develop the skills, talents, knowledge and creativity of Canadians in an increasingly globalized, technological and knowledge-based economy (HRDC 2002). It is significant that this policy includes specific objectives related to immigration, and that in addition to attracting and selecting highly skilled immigrants, the goals also include developing an integrated and transparent approach to the recognition of foreign credentials, supporting the integration of immigrants into Canada's labour market and helping immigrants to achieve their full potential over the course of their working lives.

Nevertheless, as noted by Couton (2002), the non-recognition of foreign credentials remains one of the most serious challenges to making effective use of the increasing numbers of highly-skilled and highly-educated newcomers attracted to Canada by our current immi-

gration policies. Furthermore, as documented in detail by Alboim and The Maytree Foundation (2002), real progress on the issue of access to trades and professions requires a series of complex and detailed policy reforms involving multiple stakeholders. Progress in this area would represent a major "win-win" situation from the perspective of both newcomers and the Canadian-born, but the realization of this progress remains a vital testing ground for the practical application of a social inclusion perspective, particularly with regards to the development of effective partnerships and successful, incremental policy reforms.

Local Autonomy and Immigrant Settlement

One progressive trend in the urban environment is the growing demand for municipal autonomy. Across Canada, there is growing pressure from municipal governments for a "new deal" in their relationship with federal and provincial authorities. Among the demands of municipal governments are increased resources for immigrant settlement and a greater political voice in immigration policy (Chief Administrator's Office 2001; Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services 2001; Mwarigha M.S. 2002).

Historically, issues of immigration and settlement have been the responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. In recent years however, the major urban centres have not only increased their role in providing support services to newcomers, but also have been obliged to deal with all the multiple aspects of an increasingly ethnoracially diverse population with respect to municipal programs and policies. In recent years, extra pressures have been placed on municipalities because of the effects of downloading of responsibilities to municipalities by senior levels of government, severe cutbacks to public spending, the amal-

gamation of municipalities and the lack of an integrated and effective pan-Canadian policy for newcomer settlement. In Toronto, for example, city planners warn that the municipality requires more resources to respond to the growing need for housing, employment and community services for newcomers and that services currently provided to many new immigrants are not adequate (Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services 2001).

Greater involvement by municipal governments in the settlement process and in consultations over immigration policy could provide real benefits. Local governments could make essential contributions to the development of long-term planning for newcomer settlement, and could also play a key role as “brokers” in bringing other partners to the table, including federal and provincial departments with no direct mandate for short-term settlement, as well as the voices of NGO service providers and immigrant and refugee community leaders.

There is, of course, no guarantee that municipalities will be any more responsive to, or representative of, newcomers and visible minorities than other levels of government. The outcome of the current drive for urban reform with respect to newcomer settlement will depend on political mobilization, particularly on mobilization of the immigrants and refugees who now constitute such a significant portion of the population of our major cities. Nevertheless, the drive for urban reform provides an important impetus for the active political involvement of newcomer communities in urban politics, just as the mobilization of these communities is essential to ensuring that urban reform results in improved newcomer settlement. Therefore, the prospect of linking urban reform to newcomer settlement has real potential for the policy application of a social

inclusion framework.

The Immigrant Dispersion Policy

One very contemporary and controversial policy debate in Canada involves the proposals by Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Denis Coderre to regulate the dispersion of a portion of Canada’s newcomers to our smaller cities.

These proposals are motivated by legitimate policy concerns. On the positive side, there is no doubt that our smaller or “second-tier” cities could benefit economically and otherwise from increased immigration. On the negative side, there are doubts—within the framework of existing settlement policy—about the capacity of our three largest cities to successfully absorb the overwhelming majority of immigrants and refugees that currently choose to reside in Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal.

The problem with the proposals as currently formulated, however, is that they will contribute to the *exclusion* rather than the inclusion of a segment of Canadian newcomers (Siddiqui 2002). Their mobility rights will be restricted, in comparison both to rights of the Canadian-born and previous immigrants, and in possible violation of our *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Furthermore, they will be denied the very benefits that have attracted previous newcomers on a voluntary basis to our largest cities: economic opportunities, social and cultural diversity and support from communities of their own ethnoracial origins.

Within a social inclusion framework, the same policy challenges could result in new solutions. Dispersion of recent newcomers could be developed on a voluntary basis, with appropriate material incentives. Newcomers could be attracted to second-tier cities through the development of improved settlement serv-

ices within these urban centres. Furthermore, the process of developing these incentives and improving local settlement services would involve a generally beneficial increase in collaboration between federal, provincial and municipal governments.

Newcomer Children and Youth in the Schools

There is clearly a need for improved and extended settlement services for both newcomer youth and their parents, and recent research and program developments suggest that the school system is the natural location for such programs. Along with its importance for the education of increasingly large numbers of newcomer children and youth, the school system provides opportunities for interaction with these children's parents and their ethnoracial communities, for experimentation and innovation in the development of anti-racist curriculum, and for more effective coordination of support services. Kilbride et al. (2000) emphasize the importance of schools as a location for integrated, supportive programs with a focus on anti-discrimination and anti-racism. They note as well that programs and interventions must be targeted, taking into account the differences experienced by newcomer youth according to country of origin, ethnoracial and cultural and religious background, immigration status and gender.

One example of the development of such programs is in Ontario, where Citizenship and Immigration Canada during the past few years has funded pilot programs for school settlement workers, working in collaboration with both school boards and local settlement agencies (Centre for Applied Social Research 2002). The program began in Toronto in 1998 as a partnership of the Ontario Administration of Settlement and Integration Services (OASIS), the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and a number of community-based immigrant

service agencies. Since its inception, the program has expanded to other cities in Ontario and also has developed in French-language schools. Initial evaluation suggests that the program has been very successful in providing increased support to newcomer children and youth, in helping their parents understand and interact with the school as an institution and in building productive partnerships amongst various agencies involved in newcomer settlement.

Public Defense of Refugee Rights

Another and vital area of public policy efforts with respect to newcomer inclusion must be the defense of basic refugee rights, which have become particularly vulnerable in the post-911 climate as interpreted by both politicians and the media. The vulnerability of newcomers in this context is of course focused on particular groups, such as Muslim women (Forcese 2002). But we are witness as well to an increasing general fragility of refugee rights, as the fundamental legal and human rights of refugees become secondarized or even displaced through the pretext of concerns for security. Examination of the evidence suggests that the growing legislative and administrative restriction of refugee rights in Canada is motivated very little by actual security threats arising within the refugee community, but very much by a pre-911 agenda that favours increased mobility for skilled immigrants and restricted asylum rights for refugees (Adelman 2002).

Policy efforts to defend the basic human and legal rights of refugees in Canada must be based in broad public education and advocacy. As such, it offers an opportunity for new voices to speak out in support of newcomer inclusion, and for leaders from our immigrant and refugee communities to take up an active role of leadership.

Student Loans and Exclusion of Newcomers

The Canada Student Loans Act is the primary vehicle that is used by Canadians to finance their post-secondary education, and loans are available to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants. However, there are currently a few intended and unintended forms of exclusion for newcomers. Convention refugees who are waiting for landing and are caught up in the identity issue are not eligible for student loans (Brouwer 2000). As well, landed immigrants are not allowed access to student loans until they have completed one year of residency in any given province, although we know that the first year of engagement in training and upgrading is often determinant for newcomers in terms of future attachment to the occupational sector of their previous training, education and experience (Goldberg 2000). Furthermore non-degree and non-diploma courses at universities and community colleges, courses that could aid newcomers in the establishment of equivalencies leading to licensing and/or employment in their previous field, are not eligible for student loans.

As a response to the situation of Convention refugee youth, The Maytree Foundation has established a scholarship program to provide access to post-secondary education. The program aims to give high performing young men and women, who would not otherwise have access, an opportunity to participate in a community college or university program of their choice. It also seeks to facilitate the landing process for participating students and their families, and to promote social responsibility through volunteer service.

Other policy reforms in this area offer the potential of simple and practical steps to combat the intentional or unintentional forms of exclusion that currently exist, and therefore to promote incremental progress towards social inclusion.

Towards an Integrated Settlement Policy

Perhaps the most important application of the social inclusion framework to newcomer settlement would be a redefinition of the basic notion of settlement. The current crisis of settlement policy in Canada is directly related to the lack of a long-term, multi-dimensional and pan-Canadian vision of the settlement process. The settlement journey for newcomers is one that lasts a lifetime and extends into the second generation, and our public policy response must accept this basic reality as a point of departure. The elaboration of a new vision of settlement therefore involves the identification of mutual obligations and benefits for both newcomers and the host society with respect to all the social, economic and political institutions of Canadian society.

One essential component of such a visioning process must be the clarification of our notions of public accountability with respect to newcomer settlement. All levels and departments of government must be held accountable for the results of newcomer settlement, not only with respect to the provision of adequate resources for newcomer settlement, but also in terms of the necessity for broad public policy discussion on the nature and goals of the newcomer settlement journey and its impact on our social, cultural and political institutions. Indicators are required not just for measuring the effectiveness of service provision, but also for evaluating the capacity of our labour markets and public institutions to combat exclusion and promote inclusion for newcomers. Immigrants and refugees, and their associations and their allies, must be more vocal and more organized in demanding such accountability.

Another essential component of an integrated settlement policy must be the restoration of adequate resources for settlement services. Another still is the protection of the auton-

omy of the community-based agencies on the front lines of settlement service delivery, which play an essential role in program innovation and in advocacy for newcomer rights. Another again is the development of mechanisms to directly include the voices of leaders from the immigrant and refugee communities in the definition and monitoring of our settlement policies.

Conclusion

In this paper we have attempted to document the process of growing exclusion for Canada's newcomers, and to argue that the social inclusion framework provides a valuable perspective for re-examining our policies on newcomer settlement. The questions that are posed by the tension between newcomer inclusion and exclusion are fundamental. Will we fulfill our promises to utilize immigrant skills, welcome refugees and build a truly multicultural and anti-racist society? Or will we instead be pressured by international and domestic forces into consolidating various forms of newcomer exclusion, and reproducing a hierarchy of rights based on ethnoracial and immigration status?

The visioning of true social inclusion for Canada's newcomers must be profound. True inclusion would mean not only a radical reform of our policies of newcomer settlement, but also the development of economic, political, social and cultural mechanisms and practices that include immigrants and refugees as

The clarification and elaboration of an integrated, pan-Canadian and multi-faceted settlement policy therefore represents an essential element for testing and elaborating the relevance of the social inclusion perspective, both conceptually and practically, to the challenges of newcomer settlement in Canada.

full participants. Such a vision must begin with an anti-exclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-racist framework and progress towards new concepts and deeper notions of the value of diversity and the potential for new forms of citizen participation and engagement.

The ultimate test of the social inclusion framework, however, rests in its usefulness in framing practical policy alternatives to the growing reality of exclusion for Canada's newcomers. Such policies should be defined in concrete terms appropriate for incremental implementation, and must as well win public acceptance. In this paper we have suggested the points of departure for a number of such policies promoting social inclusion for Canada's newcomers; we invite our readers to critique these and to suggest others.

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Appendix: Background on Origins of Canada's Immigration Policy

Immigration in Canada

The development of Canada during the last several hundred years has been shaped by waves of immigration from all corners of the world, to such an extent that Canada is often described as “a nation of immigrants.” Immigration is generally assumed to be beneficial to long-term economic growth. Historically in Canada both government and industry have generally supported relatively high levels of immigration, although the absolute levels have varied significantly and sometimes declined during periods of economic recession. Due to our aging workforce and declining birth rates, immigration is also considered to play an essential role in augmenting Canada's workforce and maintaining our tax base for social services. Canada has one of the highest proportions of immigrants to total resident population of any country in the world: approximately 17 per cent compared to 10 per cent for the USA and less for European countries.

The *Immigration Act* of 1953 listed countries by preference and was judged in this sense to be racially discriminatory. Pressures to eliminate this discriminatory aspect came both from domestic human rights advocates and international diplomacy. These pressures eventually led to the *Immigration Act* of 1976 in which racial criteria for immigration were formally eliminated and three broad classes of immigration were established: independent (point-selected), family reunification and refugees.

During the period of time since these changes were implemented, the principal source countries for immigration to Canada have shifted from Europe (including Great

Britain) and the United States to Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, the Caribbean and particularly Asia. However the source of this change must be located not only in the policy and regulatory changes but also in the changing preferences of potential immigrants. Rising economic prosperity in Europe in the past decades, in particular, has limited the number of potential immigrants from European countries.

Historically, the system since 1967 for selected immigrants has been based on points assigned on the basis of skills of the prospective immigrant and labour market needs. Attributes assessed have included age, education, occupational demand, skill level, arranged employment and province of intended destination within Canada. The mix of points has varied over time through administrative decisions and has recently been revised through legislation. Current policy favours a greater proportion of skilled immigrants (“the best and the brightest”) and a lower proportion of family class immigrants than in the past.

Some immigrants are also chosen as business or entrepreneurial class immigrants based on their potential economic contributions through investment and resulting job creation. Immigration regulations also permit entry for a temporary period for students and others; and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program of the federal government provides assistance to Canadian employers in recruiting foreign workers to fill short-term labour market gaps (for example as agricultural labours, and in the high technology sector).

For the past years, the government of Canada has been committed to a long-term goal of increasing immigration levels to

approximately one per cent of the population or 300,000 annually. Actual numbers have been less, but greater than 200,000 annually. In 2002 Citizenship and Immigration Canada expects to receive 140,000 selected on qualifications or investment potential, 62,000 family class and 30,400 refugees.

Refugees

The Canadian government is committed under its international obligations and as part of its immigration program to provide support for resettlement of refugees. Historically Canada has not only maintained an ongoing policy of refugee resettlement as an integral component of its immigration program, but also provided rapid responses to refugee situations around the world. Examples include the acceptance of large numbers of refugees from Hungary in the 1950s, from Vietnam in the 1970s and more recently from Kosovo. As well, the conditions of many of those who immigrated to Canada from Europe immediately after the Second World War, who were at the time described as “Displaced Persons”, were similar to those of today’s “refugees.” As a result a large portion of Canada’s immigrant population is made up of persons who came to our country as refugees.

While immigrants come to Canada by choice, refugees arrive here because they are fleeing human rights abuses in their home countries. They are hoping for a safe haven in Canada and a chance to live in freedom and security. Refugees that are selected abroad include both government-sponsored and privately-assisted refugees; they arrive in Canada with an established legal status as permanent residents and receive some social support. Inland refugees or refugee claimants are those that make a claim to status as a Convention refugee, after arrival in Canada either as a legal visitor or without legal status. The determination of refugee claimants seeking status as Convention refugees is dealt with by a separate administrative body, the Refugee Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).

During recent years, the number of refugees admitted annually has varied between about 20,000 and 30,000; refugees represent approximately 12-13 per cent of the total number of immigrants. Inland refugee claimants are about half the total number of refugees coming to Canada. In 2001, there were over 40,000 refugee claims made in Canada.

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