

A New Canadian's First Decade of Volunteering

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Examining Ways to Involve New Canadians in Community Organizations

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its Multiculturalism Program



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Dedication	4
Pillar's Research Team	4
Executive Summary	5
Introduction	7
Background	7
The Context	8
Objective of the study	9
Methodology	10
Demographics of new Canadian respondents	11
Gender	11
Age	11
Employment Status	11
Volunteering by year of arrival in Canada	12
Length of time volunteering	12
New Canadian Respondents - Informal, Formal and Non-Volunteer breakdown	13
Cultural background of those helped by the volunteer	14
Language spoken when volunteering	15
Rate English skills	15
Country of Origin	16
Results from New Canadian Respondents	18
Reasons for volunteering	18
Benefits from volunteering	19
Activities done by new Canadian volunteers	20
Recruitment techniques for new Canadians	20
Why new Canadians do not volunteer	21
Retention techniques for new Canadian volunteers	23
Results from Organization Respondents	26
Benefits new Canadians bring to organizations	26
Activities new Canadians perform in organizations	27
Recruitment techniques for new Canadians	28
Additional or unique challenges faced by organizations when recruiting new Canadian volunteers	28
Ways to accommodate new Canadian volunteers	30
New Canadians as paid staff	31
Organizations that have not recruited new Canadian volunteers	31
Discussion and Conclusions	33
Organization Readiness	33
Recruitment Strategies	34
Retention Strategies	37
Pillar's Website - Including a search by English level option	39
Summary	40
Appendix 1 Volunteering in other countries	41

Index of Figures

Figure 1. Gender of new Canadian respondents by volunteer status.....	11
Figure 2. Age of new Canadian respondents by volunteer status	11
Figure 3. Employment status of new Canadian respondents by volunteer status.....	11
Figure 4. Volunteering by year of arrival in Canada.....	12
Figure 5. Are you currently volunteering in Canada?	13
Figure 6. Types of volunteering done by new Canadian respondents.....	13
Figure 7. When I volunteer in Canada I help people with the same cultural background as me (Formal/Informal/Non-volunteer) breakdown.....	14
Figure 8. Do you speak in a language other than English when you volunteer in Canada? (Formal/Informal/Non-volunteer)	15
Figure 9. Rate your English level.....	15
Figure 10. What kind of volunteering did you do in your country of origin?	16
Figure 11. Country of origin of new Canadians	16
Figure 12. Country of origin of new Canadian respondents and their volunteer status	17
Figure 13. Why are you volunteering?.....	18
Figure 14. What benefits are you receiving from volunteering?	19
Figure 15. Which activities are you doing as a volunteer?.....	20
Figure 16. How did you become a volunteer for the organization?	21
Figure 17. Why don't you volunteer or why don't you volunteer outside of your cultural or religious centre?.....	22
Figure 18. What has the organization done to help you with volunteering?	23
Figure 19. What has the organization done to keep you as a volunteer?.....	23
Figure 20. What can the organization do to help newcomers like yourself volunteer?	24
Figure 21. In what ways has your organization benefited from recruiting new Canadian volunteers?.....	26
Figure 22. Which activities are new Canadians performing in your organization?	27
Figure 23. Additional or unique challenges that you have experienced by recruiting a new Canadian volunteer?	29
Figure 24. Are most clients/volunteers/staff in your organization willing to work with a volunteer with limited knowledge of English?	29
Figure 25. Which of the following has your organization introduced to accommodate new Canadian volunteers?.....	30
Figure 26. Which of the following would you consider implementing to assist new Canadian volunteers?.....	30
Figure 27. Which of the following benefits offered by recruiting new Canadians could help your organization?	31
Figure 28. Why hasn't your organization recruited new Canadian volunteers?	32

Dedication

This research report is dedicated to my parents, Inayat and Dilshad Daya, who struggled as immigrants so I could have a better life in Canada.

My parents taught me to help those less fortunate. Some may argue that new Canadians are less fortunate than those born in Canada. Some Canadians treat them without the same level of respect or acceptance because they may have an accent or did not receive their education from Canada. But sometimes I wonder if immigrants are more fortunate than those of us born in Canada. Unless we travel extensively, this is the only culture we have known. We have not experienced the beauty of other countries around the world. We may have lost our culture, our roots, and our language when our ancestors came to Canada but for new Canadians their culture is still alive and thrives in their heart. We often take for granted the safety we may feel in Canada and the lifestyle we have here. Some new Canadians come from countries experiencing war, poverty and disease. These immigrants are able to appreciate the luxuries we take for granted like fresh water and vaccines. There are some immigrants that come to Canada with a great deal of wealth, education and experience. Each new Canadian is different. Each of their stories is unique. Take the time to hear them and learn from their experience.

Pillar's Research Team

This report is also dedicated to all of the volunteers who played a role in completing this study. Special thanks to all the support provided from Pillar's Research Committee and Pillar's administrative and research volunteers.

Pillar's Research Committee:

- Brian Matthews
- Estela Quintero
- Ruth Young
- Gerda Zonruiter

Pillar's administrative and research volunteers who assisted with the study:

- Zulma Dominguez
- Mindy Gordon
- Val Reid
- Bo Zhang

This report is also dedicated to all those who participated in the study either through focus groups, personal interviews, or by completing either the new Canadian questionnaire or organization questionnaire.

Special thanks go to our funder, Canadian Heritage through its Multiculturalism Program.

Thank you for all of your assistance. Together we can learn ways to involve new Canadians in community organizations.

Executive Summary

Voluntary sector organizations in London are currently experiencing an increase in service demands but many do not have the ability to meet these demands. Insufficient funds and a shortage of volunteers are two of the main reasons why organizations are unable to meet service demands.¹ As the shortage of volunteers continues to grow, so too does the level of immigration to London by new Canadians. Increasing immigration levels leads to a change in the demographic composition of the City of London.

Organizations need to reflect on ways they can assist new Canadians as they struggle in this new environment. Equally important is including new Canadians amongst an organization's staff, volunteers and clients. Many new Canadians are seeking paid employment in Canada and have learned that volunteering is a way to not only give back to society and help others, but also to improve job opportunities. The challenge lies in finding organizations to recruit them as volunteers in order for them to develop language skills, make contacts, gain Canadian experience and references, and share their skills. Given that organizations are looking for volunteers to fill shortages, and new Canadians are looking to volunteer to improve job opportunities, it seems like a logical fit for organizations to recruit new Canadians. The results of this study show cultural differences, language levels and discrimination make this solution complex.

Organizations in the London area were surveyed to see how they have incorporated new Canadians into their volunteer base. New Canadians were asked what they need from organizations to support volunteering. This document highlights some of the experiences of both new Canadians and organizations with regards to *A New Canadian's First Decade of Volunteering*.

An organization's capacity to successfully recruit new Canadian volunteers depends on the organization's readiness to effectively work with recent immigrants. Before recruiting new Canadians, it is important to look at the organization's culture, vision, mission and goals.

It is important for organizations to ask themselves a number of questions:

- Is our organization open to change and does it reflect the changing demographics of London?
- How receptive will staff, volunteers and clients be to our organization's decision to recruit a new Canadian volunteer?
- Are there paid staff in our organization who are immigrants to Canada and who can share their experiences?
- Are there barriers to recruiting a new Canadian such as asking for references?
- Is there someone that the new Canadian will be able to look to as a mentor in our organization?
- Would new Canadians be welcomed and accepted by our organization?

New Canadians come to Canada with a wealth of skills and knowledge. For many, just being able to practice their skills in a volunteer position makes them feel valued.²

Organizations that currently recruit new Canadians indicate that they benefit from the different perspective new Canadians bring to their organization, their ability to relate to the clients the organization serves, the skills they bring to areas needed by the organization, the ability to reach people the organization would otherwise not reach, and the language/translation skills they offer to the organization. Respondents have generally had positive experiences with new Canadians and almost all organizations indicate they would recruit more new Canadians in the future.

We asked organizations and new Canadians what advice they would have for organizations that currently recruit, or are

¹ Shahin Daya, Mohamed Haitham El-Hourani, Beth De Long, "London's Voluntary Sector Employment and Training Needs Study" *Pillar - Voluntary Sector Network*, 2004, 31.

² Shahin Daya, Mohamed Haitham El-Hourani, Beth De Long, "London's Voluntary Sector Employment and Training Needs Study" *Pillar - Voluntary Sector Network*, 2004, 55.

considering recruiting, new Canadians.

Some of their suggestions are as follows:

- Start new Canadian volunteers off slowly to assess their readiness and commitment levels
- Provide instructions in writing that they can take home and study
- Help them with their goals – If their goal is to find a job then share job leads with them, offer to be a reference, write letters of recommendation, etc.
- Have them volunteer in opportunities that use their existing skills and teach them new skills
- Recruit paid staff that are new Canadians
- Show respect for their culture and religion and make them feel welcomed rather than tolerated
- Provide support, be patient and honest
- Reduce financial barriers by covering training, meals, childcare, and/or transportation costs
- Provide more information about volunteer opportunities, have volunteers share their experiences with others and share the benefits of volunteering

Organization respondents indicate that adding cultural sensitivity or diversity training for staff and volunteers, offering a mentoring system for new volunteers, and offering additional volunteer training, helps prepare both the organization and the new Canadian.

Fifty-five percent of new Canadians who completed the questionnaire do not volunteer. The main reasons they give for not volunteering are they do not have time (32%) and they do not know how to get involved (26%). One in ten new Canadian respondents who did not volunteer indicated that they had never heard of volunteering before.

To recruit new Canadians as volunteers, organizations should consider the following suggested techniques:

- Contact other organizations that help new Canadians, such as WIL Employment Connections (WIL), the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC), the Boys' and Girls' Club, or

Pathways Skills Development and Placement Centre (Pathways).

- Ask new Canadians who use their services if they would be interested in volunteering or ask existing volunteers or staff to contact people they know to see if they would be interested in volunteering.
- Approach ESL classes or religious centres to share information about volunteer opportunities
- Post opportunities on Pillar's website, www.pillarv.com.
- When targeting new Canadians, highlight the benefits new Canadians can obtain from volunteering such as improving English skills and job opportunities.

Of the 34% of new Canadians who volunteer formally, most tend to perform activities such as providing care or support, office work, providing information, teaching/coaching/tutoring, and organizing or supervising events. There is a lack of representation by new Canadians in governance positions at the board and committee level.

New Canadians can offer a wealth of skills to an organization and in turn the organization can help new Canadians as they learn more about the Canadian culture and try to improve their English skills and job opportunities.

Other than Native Canadians/Aboriginals, Canada is a nation of immigrants from the first European settlers to more recent new Canadians from places like Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Although many of us have lived here for generations, there was a time when our ancestors first came to Canada and struggled as immigrants. Embracing diversity as an organization and exhibiting patience and understanding are important steps towards benefiting from the culture, skills, and perspectives of new Canadians.

Introduction

Background

I was born in beautiful Brampton, Ontario, a city known for its diversity. I lived in Brampton my whole life until about a year and a half ago when I moved to London, Ontario. Much to my surprise I experienced an unusual shock. Although in my high school I was what is referred to as a "visible minority", the visible minorities made up the majority of students. It was unusual but comforting in a way. You see, the visible minority rate in Brampton is much higher than in London (40%³ vs. 11%⁴ respectively).

In Brampton, as you walked down the street you sometimes heard people speaking in languages other than English; it was normal to see people dressed in traditional clothing from their country of origin. As you strolled through your neighbourhood at dinnertime, you could smell the different aromas of foods from various parts of the world.

I knew Brampton and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and was familiar with this environment. I learned from experience which routes to take during peak traffic times. I knew that if they didn't have something at my nearest IKEA, I could hop in the car and go to another IKEA just 20 minutes away. When I came to London, I missed the way things were. In London getting around seemed more of a challenge. It seemed that whenever you were late, a train would cross your path. When I moved here I had to learn all new streets, where grocery stores and malls were located, and how to avoid going the wrong way on one-

³Statistics Canada

http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/Details/detail_s1pop2.cfm?SEARCH=BEGINS&PSGC=35&SGC=3521010&A=&LANG=E&Province=35&PlaceName=Brampton&CSDNAME=Brampton&CMA=&SEARCH=BEGINS&DataType=1&TypeNameE=City%20%2D%20Cit%E9&ID=6843

⁴Statistics Canada

http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/Details/detail_s1pop2.cfm?SEARCH=BEGINS&PSGC=35&SGC=3539036&A=&LANG=E&Province=35&PlaceName=London&CSDNAME=London&CMA=&SEARCH=BEGINS&DataType=1&TypeNameE=City%20%2D%20Cit%E9&ID=7104

way streets downtown. London has its history and I was not a part of it. When people gave me directions I would hear things like "go left where the old library used to be" or "turn at the old city hall." I, like many newcomers to London, had no idea where these "old" places were. I have even found temperature differences between Brampton and London. I have only been here for one winter and it felt like the coldest winter ever! I have not seen so much snow since I was a little kid.

All these little differences and London is only 160 kilometres away from my hometown. I started wondering what a shock new Canadians who travel much further than I have traveled must experience. How must they feel during winter when all they have known is the joys of the warm sun on their skin? I then thought of how frustrating it would be if I were an eloquent speaker in my home country but could not speak more than broken English here in Canada. Imagine if the foods I have known all my life were not available at my local grocery store, or if people viewed me as a terrorist just because of the clothes I wear. Imagine if the local customs and culture of Canada were completely different and I had to struggle to preserve my culture but still adapt to the Canadian way of life. Although I tried, it was difficult to truly understand the experience of someone who may be new to Canada.

London is now my home. As I tried to learn more about London I uncovered several secret treasures. While writing this report, I decided to explore some of London's history. I visited Eldon House during the 2004 Doors Open London event. What I found interesting was that even in this 18th Century house, which was once filled with family members, maids and servants, there was an understanding that the world is a bigger place beyond London. Throughout the Harris home there are treasures from around the world including: a small stone mummy from Egypt, bowls and cups for afternoon tea from China, figurines of people at a market displaying the way of life in Japan, shields and spears from Southern Africa, and photographs of buildings, shrines

and temples from around the world. These treasures reflect the Harris family's respect for diversity. They were fortunate enough to be able to travel around the world and then return to London to share stories about the different customs and cultures practiced in other parts of the world.

As more immigrants come to Canada from diverse continents, Londoners are fortunate to be living in a country where these customs and cultures come to life. Instead of relying on treasures from another world or stories in a journal, we can benefit from the diverse people who call Canada their home away from home. We can sample cuisine from around the world at local restaurants and can learn firsthand about the practices of people from other countries. These practices shape our nation and should shape our organizations. Other cities, some with more rapid rates of immigration, have learned how to benefit from diversity. London, too, has the opportunity to embrace diversity.

The Context

Each year Canada welcomes approximately 225,000 immigrants.⁵ This means that over 18% of all Canadians are immigrants.⁶

"Each year approximately 60% of Canada's immigrants come to Ontario. In each of the past few years, Ontario has received over 100,000 immigrants from 180 different countries. The vast majority settle in Toronto and along the highway 401 corridor."⁷ "Currently 20% of London residents are immigrants. The 2001 Census has shown that between 1991 and 2001, 19,475 new Canadians came to London. Major immigrant groups during this time

⁵ "Voices for Change: Making Use of Immigrant Skills to Strengthen the Community of London", [Center for Research and Education in Human Services](#). October 2003, 5.

⁶ "Enough Talk: An Action Plan for the Toronto Region", [Toronto City Summit Alliance](#). (2003).

⁷ K.M., Kilbride, P. Anisef, E. Baichman-Anisef, & R. Khattar, "Between Two Worlds: The Experiences and Concerns of Immigrant Youth in Ontario." [Report to the Ontario Administration of Settlement and Integration Services of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#). 2000.

period include: Poland, China, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, United States, Vietnam, Iran, Lebanon, India."⁸

Immigrants, especially recent immigrants, face many challenges. Studies show poverty levels are higher for immigrants and it takes longer for immigrants to adapt to society than in previous years.⁹

In London, research conducted in 1999 paints a picture of the challenges faced by recent immigrants. "The 1999 study surveyed over 1,678 immigrant professionals and tradespeople in order to find out what their employment experience had been. While almost all (99%) respondents were of prime working age (20 to 49 years), were generally well educated, and almost all (99%) were looking for work, the study found:

- A 40% unemployment rate.
- Of those employed, 76% were employed in fields other than their profession or trade. Men were much more likely to be unemployed (60%) than women (17%).
- Most common work performed by immigrants outside their field was factory work (102 respondents), followed by retail clerk (43) and cleaner (31).
- Top reasons thought to prevent people from finding relevant work included: a lack of Canadian experience (38%), a lack of Canadian certificate (28%), lack of references and networks (13%), and difficulties with English (7%).
- Of the immigrants with professions identified as being the top 10 in demand in London: 62 engineers were unemployed, 38 teachers were unemployed and 14 nurses were unemployed."¹⁰

Volunteering has been cited as a solution to the situation faced by new Canadians. It is a way to acquire skills, practice English, and

⁸ "Permanent Residents Destined to Selected Communities by Country of Citizenship", [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#). 2003.

⁹ Martin Papillon, "Immigration, Diversity & Social Inclusion in Canada's Cities", [CPRN Discussion Paper No. F27](#). December 2002: 9-10

¹⁰ "Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades (PROMPT)" Program documents. 2003.

meet people. It allows newcomers to build networks, gain Canadian experience, and learn more about the work environment in London. It can also enable the development of a sense of attachment and integration to a new community.¹¹

"An important dimension of inclusion is the degree to which immigrants participate in the daily life of their community, neighbourhood and society more broadly."¹²

"The 'social capital' thesis popularized by Robert Putnam (1994; 2000) suggests that participation in community-based networks will enhance the capacity of immigrants to build relationships and strengthen the general cohesion of the community. Social networks and voluntary organizations are thus seen as key agents in promoting sustainable diversity."¹³

Lacking familiarity with the language and culture in Canada, some new Canadians isolate themselves at home or with members of the same ethnic group as themselves.¹⁴ Volunteer Victoria has found, "With adequate, ongoing support, volunteering can be a very effective option for easing isolation. It can lead to a decrease in barriers, and an increase in skills. Volunteering can be one strategy for ensuring that more members of our community are participating and feeling valued and connected."¹⁵

Canada's culture is a mixture of different ethnicities. We embrace diversity rather than expect conformity. But is this concept applied to our staff and volunteers? What about our board and committee members?

As the immigration rates continue to rise organizations need to decide if they will convert their intentions into action and recruit new Canadians to their organizations.

Objective of the study

The objective of Pillar's study, *A New Canadian's First Decade of Volunteering*, was to determine strategies for recruiting new Canadian (immigrants to Canada within the last ten years) volunteers. These strategies would then help to create and support a relationship where both the volunteer and the organization could benefit. In order to do this, it was important to first understand what prevents new Canadians from embracing the many volunteer opportunities available in London, Ontario. Interviewing new Canadian individuals who currently volunteer outside of their cultural or religious centres, would allow us to learn about the benefits these individuals have obtained from volunteering. Interviewing representatives of organizations that have new Canadian volunteers as part of their team, would help us find out what works and what doesn't work in the recruitment of new Canadians.

We hoped that by learning more about new Canadians and voluntary sector organizations through research, Pillar could offer suggestions to organizations that are looking to incorporate new Canadians into their organization. In addition, Pillar could learn how to encourage new Canadians to take advantage of the many volunteer positions available in London, Ontario.

¹¹ Mc Clintock, Norah. "Understanding Canadian Volunteers NSGVP". [Canadian Center for Philanthropy](#). 2004, July 2004:

¹² Morton Weinfeld and Lori Wilkerson. "Immigration, Diversity, and Minority Communities." [Race and Ethnic Relations in Canada](#), (Toronto: University Press, 1999)

¹³ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000)

¹⁴ Wendy Barbulak, "Connecting Volunteers with Your Community: A Research Project for Volunteer Victoria", [Volunteer Victoria](#), 2003.

¹⁵ Wendy Barbulak, "Connecting Volunteers with Your Community: A Research Project for Volunteer Victoria", [Volunteer Victoria](#), 2003.

Methodology

In order to learn more about the relationship between new Canadians and volunteering, Pillar designed a three-page questionnaire and distributed it to immigrants who have been in Canada for 10 years or less. Pillar's research coordinator visited English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and Conversation Circles across London to recruit respondents. The research coordinator first shared information about volunteering with new immigrants and then distributed the questionnaire. Since most of these respondents were learning English, the research coordinator went through each question with respondents and addressed concerns along the way. Respondents were also recruited through voluntary sector organizations and by emailing out the questionnaire to various immigrant groups. Overall 245 questionnaires were returned by new Canadians, entered into SPSS and analyzed.

A second three-page questionnaire was distributed to voluntary sector organizations in London to learn about their experiences with new Canadian volunteers. This questionnaire was generally completed by the organization's executive director or by the volunteer coordinator. Various email distribution lists were used to gain respondents. These lists included members from organizations such as Pillar, Employment Sector Council, Networking for an Inclusive Community, and London Administrators of Volunteer Associations (LAVA). In total 61 completed questionnaires were analyzed.

As a complement to the statistical results, personal interviews were held throughout the research process. Before designing the questionnaires, the research coordinator conducted information interviews with organizations and new Canadians. During the analysis phase, interviews were conducted with new Canadians to find out more about their experiences as volunteers or to learn about why they did not volunteer. A focus group was also held with

11 voluntary sector organization representatives to discuss some of the strategies they have implemented to incorporate new Canadians into their organization.

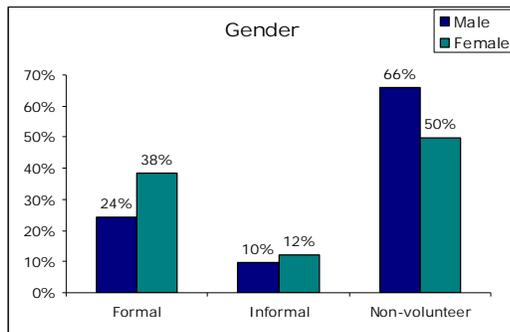
Results from the literature review, two questionnaires, personal interviews, and focus groups have been combined to create the final report, fact sheets and a presentation.

Demographics of new Canadian respondents

A profile of the 245 new Canadian respondents has been provided to give a better understanding of the composition of the respondent pool.

Gender

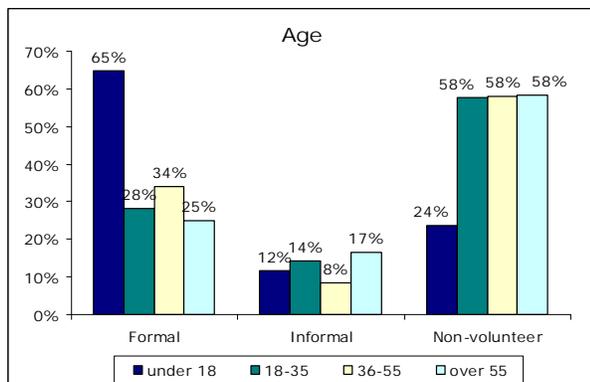
Figure 1. Gender of new Canadian respondents by volunteer status



Overall a greater percentage of females completed the new Canadian questionnaire than males (66% vs. 34%). Of the females completing the questionnaire half did not volunteer at all and 38% volunteered formally. Two thirds (66%) of male respondents did not volunteer at all and approximately ¼ (24%) volunteered formally.

Age

Figure 2. Age of new Canadian respondents by volunteer status

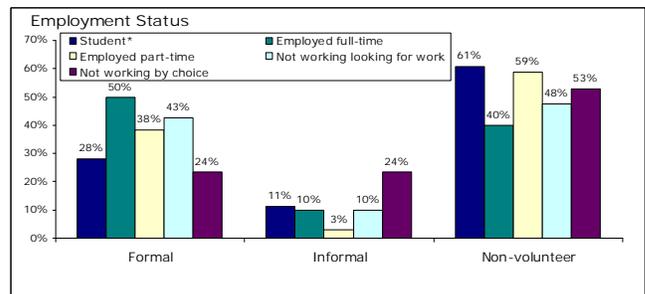


Half (50%) the respondents were between the ages of 36-55. Only 7% were under 18 and 5% were over 55 years of age. It is

interesting to note that youths under the age of 18 gravitate towards formal volunteering. This may be due to youths adapting to the Canadian lifestyle more rapidly and their considering volunteering a part of living in Canada. Alternatively, since Ontario high school students are required to complete 40 hours of community involvement in order to graduate, these new Canadian youths may be volunteering to fulfill a school requirement.

Employment Status

Figure 3. Employment status of new Canadian respondents by volunteer status



* One of the methods used to find respondents was to approach English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Many respondents indicated on the questionnaire that they were students in the employment status section as they were taking ESL classes at the time. The question was designed to allow only one response. Therefore if a respondent was taking ESL classes but also not working and looking for work, we could not capture the true employment status of the individual. Results show 45% of respondents indicated they were students. Although valuable information can be derived from the results of this question, these results should be viewed with caution.

Figure 3 shows half (50%) of all formal volunteers are employed full-time. This indicates these respondents are volunteering even though they have already secured full-time employment. Forty-three percent of respondents indicated they were not working but looking for work (this result may be higher if some of the students were included in this category). Later in the results, we will see that over half of the respondents have improved their chances of getting a job through volunteering.

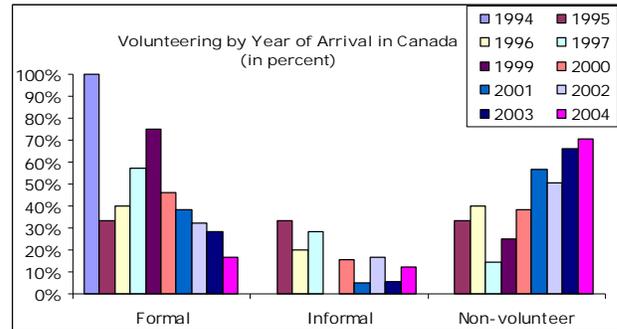
Volunteering by year of arrival in Canada

Ewa came to Canada from Poland at the end of 1989. After living in Canada for 12 years, she started volunteering at the Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC). Initially, her goal was to learn English, complete her Ontario Secondary School Diploma, and find a job. Now she has decided to help others at the CCLC facing similar situations to her own.

"When I came to Canada I didn't volunteer right away because I needed to work. I came here without English skills and started studying English at Wheable. I got my OSSD and then started working. I used to clean hotel rooms and worked very hard. At the end of my shift I was just exhausted. I didn't feel like going out I just needed to rest. Volunteering wasn't an option at this time. Actually, when I first came to Canada I didn't really know much about volunteering. In Poland, volunteering is not a popular thing to do. Only now some of the young people have started volunteering, but generally not too many people volunteer. I learned about volunteering from some of my friends in Canada and it sparked my interest.

My mother is elderly and has become very ill. I decided to leave my job and stay home to take care of her. I still wanted to get out of the house and meet people but I did not feel I could commit to a part time position. I needed something flexible so I could still be there for my mother. I decided to volunteer and went to the CCLC. The CCLC offers me the flexibility I need so I can care for my mother and still meet people from all over the world. Depending on my mom's health, I volunteer an average of once every two weeks. I am currently involved with Conversation Circles as part of the Host Program at the CCLC. As an immigrant, my goal is to help other people facing the same challenges I did when I first came to Canada. I enjoy my position at CCLC and will continue volunteering as long as I am able to do so."

Figure 4. Volunteering by year of arrival in Canada



Since Ewa has been living in Canada for more than 10 years, she did not qualify to complete the questionnaire. Her comments, however, are reflected in Figure 4. Generally, new Canadians who have arrived more recently to Canada do not volunteer. The longer a new Canadian has been in Canada the greater the probability that they will volunteer formally. Individuals who have just arrived in Canada this year or last year are least likely to volunteer formally.

Length of time volunteering

We asked those who are volunteering how long they have been volunteering for. The average figure was 1.733 years. The average year that new Canadian formal volunteer respondents came to Canada was 2001. Given that our questionnaire was distributed in mid-2004, we concluded that it generally takes around 2 years of living in Canada before new Canadians begin volunteering formally.

Many of the respondents, both new Canadians and organizations, indicated that it takes time to settle in any new place. The fact that it only took 2 years for new Canadians to volunteer formally indicates that volunteering is being encouraged through the settlement process.

Upon arrival in Canada, many new Canadians are attempting to satisfy basic necessities such as finding food (grocery stores, food banks), shelter, access to medical treatment and employment. Volunteering is often not a priority until these basic necessities are satisfied. Other studies on immigrants in general have found

that adjustment rates for new Canadians and acceptance rates by the rest of Canada have been slow. A Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) study found, "Recent data suggest that today's immigrants are facing greater difficulty adjusting to life in Canada than their predecessors. They experience higher than average levels of poverty and unemployment, and face difficulty accessing affordable housing and skilled jobs. Racial discrimination and linguistic and professional barriers exacerbate the situation. These are signs that we are not doing enough to ensure the inclusion of newcomers."¹⁶

Another CPRN study found that, "It is, however, in the early stages of settlement that immigrants face the greatest challenges. Finding a job and housing, obtaining access to public services, and developing a social network for support and cultural expression are all part of this phase."¹⁷

A study done by Omidvar and Richmond found, "...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."¹⁸

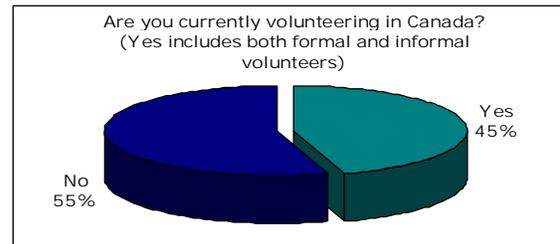
New Canadian Respondents - Informal, Formal and Non-Volunteer breakdown

We asked new Canadians who have lived in Canada for less than 10 years if they

volunteer and whether they engage in formal or informal volunteering. Formal volunteering was explained to new Canadians as volunteering that is generally outside of one's cultural or religious centre. Examples of formal volunteering were provided along with an explanation of the screening process that individuals complete in order to engage in formal volunteering.

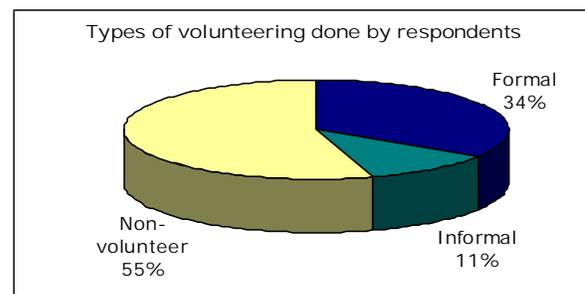
Informal volunteering was explained as helping others without getting paid which includes helping at a religious or cultural centre where there is no formal screening process such as an interview, reference checks, or application form.

Figure 5. Are you currently volunteering in Canada?



Almost ½ (45%) of all respondents indicated they volunteer in Canada either formally or informally. Of that 45% three quarters of volunteers engage in formal volunteering, and one quarter of volunteers engage in informal volunteering.

Figure 6. Types of volunteering done by new Canadian respondents



More than one in ten (11%) respondents indicated they engaged in informal volunteering.

Results from the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP) found, "Over one quarter (26%) of the

¹⁶ "Immigrants and Cities: Making the Most of an Advantage." [CPRN Press Release](#). [Ottawa] January 24, 2003.

¹⁷ Martin Papillon, "Immigration, Diversity & Social Inclusion in Canada's Cities", [CPRN Discussion Paper No. F27](#). December 2002: 4

¹⁸ Ratna Omidvar & Ted Richmond, "Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion in Canada", [Perspectives on Social Inclusion](#). 2003.

hours volunteered by recent immigrants were devoted to religious organizations, compared to just 15% of the hours contributed by all Canadians.”¹⁹ Statistics Canada conducted research on first, second and third generation Canadians. Their results show “Not surprisingly, one area where the first generation tended to have a higher participation rate was in ethnic or immigrant associations. In 2002, about 6% of the first generation participated in ethnic or immigrant associations, compared with just 2% of second generation and 1% of third-plus generation Canadians...the social network of family and friends was key to the integration and initial settlement of newcomers to Canada. Ethnic or immigrant organizations also sometimes provide settlement services to immigrants and may account for their higher participation in these organizations.”²⁰

The 34% of respondents who are currently volunteering formally went on to complete questions relating to their volunteer positions. For the remainder of this report, the term “volunteering” generally refers to formal volunteering.

Cultural background of those helped by the volunteer

Samira came to London a year ago from Dubai. She settled with her four daughters in London to give them a better life.

“I started going to the mosque here in London. In Dubai there were so many volunteers and the committee was very well organized so I didn’t feel I could help out that much. Here in London the community is very small and my social life is not as active so I had some free time and decided to volunteer.

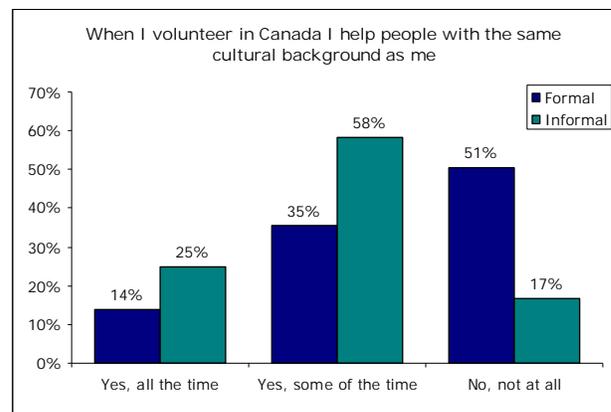
I started volunteering about a month after coming to London. There were only a few

people in the kitchen so I asked them if they needed a hand. Now I am on the Ladies’ Committee and perform a variety of duties including; cooking, cleaning the centre, organizing the volunteers, serving food, helping to organize the ladies’ programs, and inviting people to come to the centre for programs.

I speak both English and Urdu when I volunteer at the mosque because there are some people I volunteer with that do not understand Urdu. I prefer to speak Urdu because I am more comfortable with the Urdu language. When I volunteer at the mosque I am helping people with the same cultural background as me but also others who are from other parts of the world but share the same religion as me.

I volunteer because I enjoy helping others and gain a feeling of satisfaction from giving back to my community. I have thought about volunteering outside the community but feel my skills are best used at the mosque. I feel accepted here and know that people value me at the mosque.”

Figure 7. When I volunteer in Canada I help people with the same cultural background as me (Formal/Informal/Non-volunteer) breakdown



Like Samira, the new Canadian volunteers who completed the questionnaire have a tendency to help those of the same cultural background as them, some of the time or not at all. Informal volunteers are more likely to help those with the same cultural background as themselves. Often new

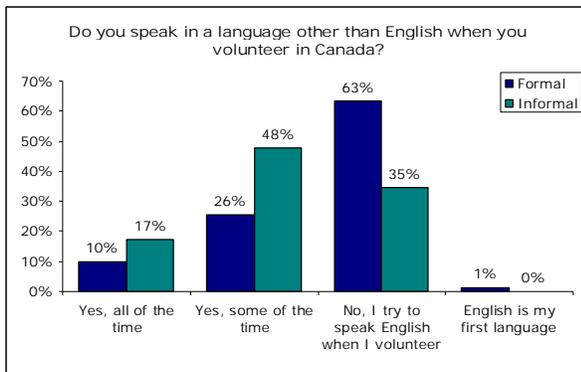
¹⁹ Mc Clintock, Norah. “Understanding Canadian Volunteers NSGVP”. Canadian Center for Philanthropy. 2004, July 2004: 5.

²⁰“Ethnic Diversity Server: Portrait of a Multicultural Society”, Statistics Canada, Housing, family and social statistics for Canada, 2003, 17. <<http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/downpub/freepub.cgi>.>

Canadians begin volunteering informally at their cultural or religious centre because they feel more comfortable helping those with the same cultural background as them. This form of segregation enables new Canadians to foster relationships with people of the same background, however it can make it difficult to learn English and network with those outside the community.

Language spoken when volunteering

Figure 8. Do you speak in a language other than English when you volunteer in Canada? (Formal/Informal/Non-volunteer)



Overall, formal and informal volunteers try to speak English when they volunteer and they seek out volunteer positions where they are able to practice their English skills. Formal volunteers are more likely to speak English when they volunteer than informal volunteers. This could be due to the fact that many informal volunteer positions involve working with people of the same cultural background (see Figure 7).

Samira, who volunteers informally at her mosque, speaks both English and Urdu depending on the language spoken by the other volunteers. She prefers speaking Urdu because she feels more comfortable with this language and speaks Urdu at home with her family.

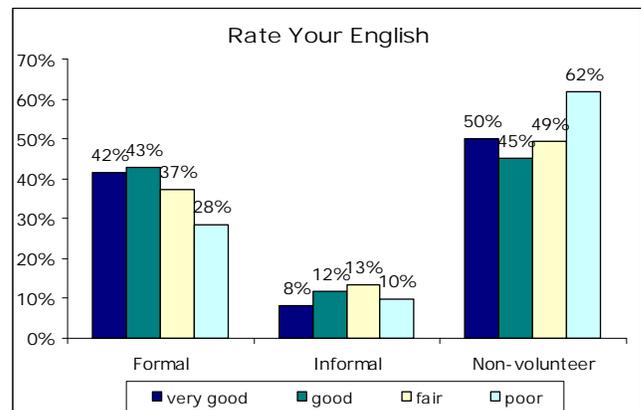
From our focus group discussions we learned that some organizations face challenges encouraging new Canadians to speak English especially if two volunteers come from the same culture.

Rate English skills

Hernando came to Canada in April 2003 from Colombia.

“Although everyone told me my English was good, I wasn’t confident with my English skills. I had the opportunity to learn English before coming to Canada. When I arrived here in London in 2003 I started taking English courses. I soon started assisting with conversation circles at CCLC helping newcomers practice English. One of the volunteers told me my English was good and that I should start leading the conversation circles with another volunteer. Melina, the volunteer coordinator at CCLC, was great at encouraging me to volunteer. I needed the confidence to volunteer and needed a push to get me to start volunteering..”

Figure 9. Rate your English level



Hernando’s story is reflected in Figure 9. Because he learned English during the year he was in the United States before coming to Canada, his proficiency in English was considered above average. Although he had only been here 3 months, he was asked to volunteer and now continues to do so at two different organizations. Generally, the better the English skills are of new Canadians before they come to Canada, the more likely they are to engage in formal volunteering. Almost two-thirds (62%) of respondents who rated their English before coming to Canada as poor did not volunteer in Canada.

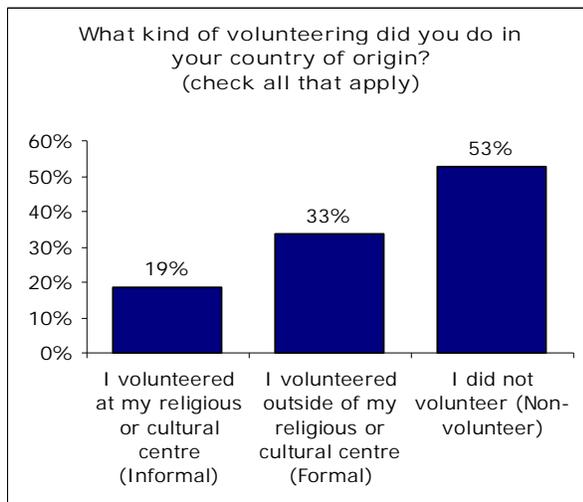
Country of Origin

We asked respondents what kind of volunteering they had done in their country of origin.

Celina came to London three years ago with her two daughters. She is a nurse and has worked in the health field for more than 25 years.

"If I had to describe myself I would say I am very committed to helping others. In Cali, Colombia I used to work as the Volunteer President at St. Vincent de Paul for many years. When I came to Canada, I had a very poor English level. I missed my work and decided that I should give back to my new community. I contacted St Vincent de Paul in London directly and started working as a volunteer helping in their monthly food bank. It didn't take long for the other ladies who worked with me to start becoming my friends. I now work part-time, study English and I continue to volunteer at my church. I enjoy volunteering as it is a great way to help others and give something back to society. "

Figure 10. What kind of volunteering did you do in your country of origin?

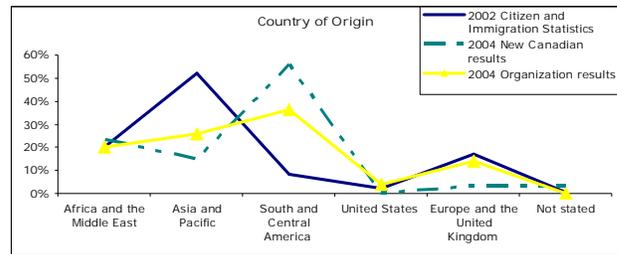


About half of all respondents did not volunteer in their country of origin, 1/3 volunteered formally and approximately 1/5

(19%) volunteered informally. In some countries, the concept of formal volunteering does not exist. Many respondents indicated they volunteered by helping others but a formal structure involving application forms, interviews and reference checks did not exist. Formal volunteering is common in Canada and in some select countries. Appendix 1 briefly describes what volunteering is like in selected countries from around the world.

Further analysis was done and showed that 78% of the respondents who volunteered formally in their country of origin continued to volunteer formally in Canada. Celina is an example of a volunteer who gave her time in Colombia and missed the feeling of helping others in Canada.

Figure 11. Country of origin of new Canadians

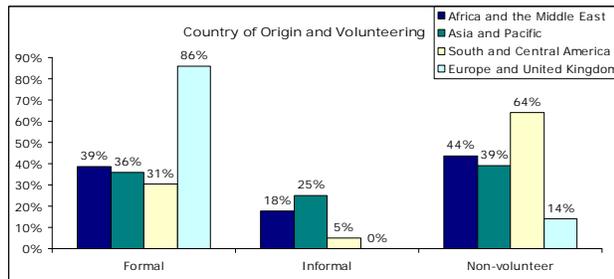


Pillar asked new Canadian respondents to indicate their country of origin. Pillar also asked organizations to describe the country of origin of their new Canadian volunteers. We then compared these results to Citizen and Immigration Canada statistics from 2002.

Figure 11 shows that organizations have recruited a large number of new Canadians from South and Central America. In addition, those from South and Central America were more likely to complete Pillar's new Canadian questionnaire than new Canadians from any other country of origin. According to Citizen and Immigration statistics, the number of immigrants arriving from this part of the world is much smaller than the number represented in our results. From discussions with other researchers and ESL teachers in London, it seems immigrants from South and Central America

are active in the London community and are networking with others to find out about services available to new Canadians and London residents.

Figure 12. Country of origin of new Canadian respondents and their volunteer status



Those of European decent (originating from Europe and the United Kingdom) were more likely to volunteer formally in Canada (86%) than other respondents. Approximately one-third of all respondents from Africa and the Middle East, Asia and Pacific, and South and Central America were likely to volunteer formally. Regardless of their country of origin, respondents tended to be involved more in formal volunteering than informal volunteering.

Summary

- New Canadian females are more likely to volunteer than males
- Younger new Canadians (under 18) are more likely to volunteer than new Canadians from any other age group
- Generally, the longer a new Canadian has been in Canada the more likely they are to volunteer
- It takes approximately two years from the time new Canadians arrive in Canada before they embark on volunteering
- The better new Canadians rate their English skills, the more likely they are to volunteer
- New Canadians who volunteered formally in their country of origin are more likely to volunteer in Canada

Results from New Canadian Respondents

Reasons for volunteering

Zulma came to Canada 3 years ago from Colombia. Volunteering has provided Zulma with the confidence she needs to enter the workforce.

"Like so many new Canadians in London, I came to Canada trying to avoid the violence in my home country and looking for a brighter future for my little boy.

I have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and more than 10 years of work experience in the administration field. I have also taught Marketing and Administration principles in two colleges in Colombia. Since coming to Canada, I have been interested in the voluntary sector as an opportunity to help me feel more useful while I learn English. Through the Cross Cultural Learner Centre I learned about the London & District Distress Centre and their need for Spanish speaking volunteers to manage their 'Spanish Line'. I did a four-month placement there until the Spanish Line was shut down.

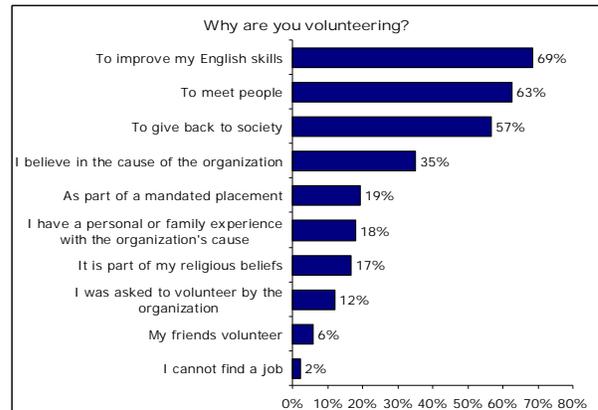
Once I finished my ESL course I began volunteering in the administration field trying to apply my skills and experience. Furthermore, I wanted to practice my English skills in a real work environment. After my Employment Preparation Program at WIL, I received an eight-week full-time voluntary placement at Thames Valley Children's Centre as an Administrative Assistant in the Research Department. Even after my placement was completed, I continue to volunteer at TVCC twice a week because this volunteer job has provided me the opportunity to gain Canadian work experience, get Canadian references, use my skills and experience, as well as meet new people and make English speaking friends.

I recommend to all new Canadians that they should try to volunteer. Even the process of

applying to a volunteer job is good experience. Preparing my resume, filling out the application form, and the volunteer job interview were all good ways for me to practice for when I enter the job market.

Volunteering gave me the self-confidence that I had lost along the way trying to adapt to this new culture. Now I am ready to enter the job market and I really expect to be successful. I would like to continue volunteering even if I get a full-time job. Giving something back to Canada makes me feel like I am helping the country that was kind enough to open its doors to me and my son to help us live a more peaceful and better life."

Figure 13. Why are you volunteering?



Zulma's inspiring story is reflected in our study results. Improving English skills (69%), meeting people (63%), and giving back to society (57%) are the top three reasons why new Canadians volunteer. When comparing these results to the NSGVP from 2000, one can see the different motivations between recent immigrants and the rest of Canada. According to the NSGVP, "Almost all volunteers (95%) agreed that the reason they volunteer is to help a cause they believe in. Approximately 8 out of 10 volunteers (81%) volunteered because they wanted to put their skills and experience to use."²¹

²¹ Mc Clintock, Norah. "Understanding Canadian Volunteers NSGVP". [Canadian Center for Philanthropy](#). 2004, July 2004: 7

Almost two thirds (63%) of new Canadian respondents indicated they volunteered to meet people. Through personal interviews we uncovered that recent immigrants tend to associate with those of a similar background to themselves. They often speak the same language which prevents them from practicing their English skills. Volunteering has been identified by new Canadians as a way to meet English speaking friends. Volunteer Victoria has found, "Volunteering is one option for easing isolation for certain individuals. It can be an effective way to connect with and contribute to the community. Volunteering can increase self esteem and social skills, as well as improve skills for future paid employment."²²

Benefits from volunteering

Jayashree immigrated to Canada in 2001 from India. She used to work in sales and marketing for an information technology company in India.

"When I was in India I used to volunteer by teaching small kids how to read and write. We used to go to the rural village areas where there were hardly any educated people and provide minimum education such as teaching them the alphabet, how to sign their name, and basic reading skills. I really enjoyed this and felt very satisfied with helping these kids. I did it for two years once a week. I felt I was fortunate to have parents who were able to help me with my education and felt bad for these rural kids who didn't have the same opportunity as me. I especially felt bad for the orphans who had no one to care for them. When I came here I missed that feeling of giving back to others.

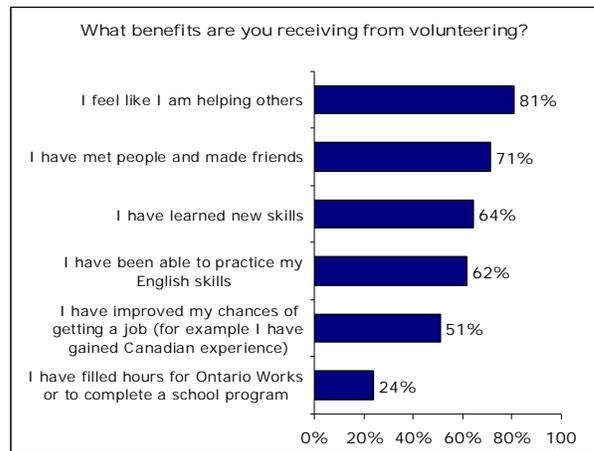
When I landed in Canada even though I had relevant experience in India, the first question I was asked was: do you have Canadian experience? I decided to engage in volunteer work to gain some Canadian

experience. I found the position I was looking for at Pillar.

When I started volunteering it was primarily to gain Canadian experience and to keep myself busy. I learned the role of volunteers in the economic and social systems of Canada. I was also able to interact directly with persons on the phone learning about the problems that new immigrants face and how the voluntary sector can change their lives. The voluntary sector helps so many people like the kids and orphans and I had no idea about the structure here in Canada. Volunteering became more than just getting back something tangible for me.

When I started volunteering, my first motive was to gain Canadian experience. I didn't have any clue of how Canadian offices work and coming here I got to learn how the office world works. I also learned how to deal effectively and patiently with physically challenged people that come to Pillar. I have also had the chance to meet others and make friends rather than just sitting home alone. I am thankful to Pillar for giving me relevant experience. The organization has always appreciated my skills and even gave me a certificate which I will treasure for life. Although I wasn't being paid for the work I was doing, I can join any organization now and share the experience that I received."

Figure 14. What benefits are you receiving from volunteering?



²² Wendy Barbulak, "Connecting Volunteers with Your Community: A Research Project for Volunteer Victoria", Volunteer Victoria, 2003.

In her interview, Jayashree highlighted the benefits she gained from volunteering: the feeling of helping others, making new friends, learning new skills, and improving her chances of getting a job. This was reflected in the responses of others. More than 8 out of 10 respondents indicated their primary benefit was the feeling of helping others. Approximately half (51%) indicated that they have improved their chances of getting a job.

Approximately 71% of respondents indicated meeting new friends was a benefit of volunteering. In making new friends when they volunteer, new Canadians are able to share stories and learn from their new networks. According to a report by Volunteer Victoria, “a volunteer job could be the first step; the social contact helps to rebuild self-esteem. The feeling of making a contribution is an important aspect of connection. [The people we work with] want to be active. To feel as though they are contributing would go a long way to easing the isolation.”²³

Activities done by new Canadian volunteers

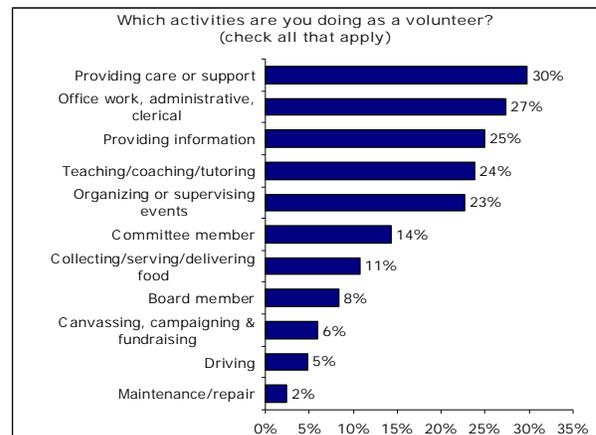
Zhang is from China and is currently studying Economics at The University of Western Ontario. He is on a student VISA which prevents him from working outside of the university. This past summer, he did not have a job and chose to volunteer.

“Boredom drove me to volunteer. I felt like I was wasting my life and time by not doing anything. Before I started volunteering I was very lonely since all my friends from school left campus. Volunteering helped me make new friends, feel welcomed, and also gave me skills to help me get a job in the future. Volunteering enabled me to gain experience so when I try to find a job I have a better chance.”

²³ Wendy Barbulak, “Connecting Volunteers with Your Community: A Research Project for Volunteer Victoria”, *Volunteer Victoria*, 2003.

I am currently volunteering as a ‘Technology Tutor’ at Cherryhill London Public Library and as an Administrative Assistant at Pillar - Voluntary Sector Network. Teaching others how to use the computer enables me to practice my English skills and my ability to explain things to others. I found volunteering at Pillar was a lot of fun. I’ve learned a lot about the office environment such as how to answer the phone, how to develop relationships with co-workers, and how to get a job done. At Pillar, I helped others who were looking to volunteer use the Pillar website to find a place that suits their needs. Even the volunteer application and interview I completed was good experience for me. I would like to continue volunteering even after school starts.”

Figure 15. Which activities are you doing as a volunteer?



The activities Zhang performed are common activities for many new Canadian volunteers. Providing care or support (30%) was the most common response followed by office work, administrative, clerical (27%), providing information (25%), teaching, coaching, tutoring (24%), and organizing or supervising events (23%).

Recruitment techniques for new Canadians

Mauricio’s story shows the impact an organization can have on a volunteer and also is an example of how many new Canadians first get involved with volunteering. Mauricio is originally from

Colombia and is married with two children. He came to Canada in November 2000 and is a professional in Business Administration. Mauricio completed his post-secondary education in the United States where he gained what he thought was valuable work experience in his field.

“When I came to Canada I had excellent English skills, education and experience from the United States and a great understanding of the North American business culture. I thought I would get a job very easily in a position related to my education and experience. I was surprised to find out the job market in Canada was different from the United States, and months later I was still unemployed. It was a difficult time for me as this was the first time I had been unemployed since I had my first job in 1986 and the first time I ever had to rely on external factors to make ends meet.

I decided to go to Pathways where I took an Employment Preparation Program to get me ready for a job in Canada. After the course, I started volunteering at Pathways as an Office Assistant. The volunteering I did at Pathways enabled me to explore new fields as well as learn about the work environment in Canada. It helped me feel better about myself and increased my self-esteem and self-confidence. I really felt I belonged at Pathways and they treated me like one of the team.

After many failed attempts, I finally got a paid job as a Sales Representative. I was making a good wage and worked for three months until an opportunity I couldn't resist came up. The Placement Coordinator at Pathways was going on maternity leave and the organization needed a temporary person to fill in for her position. The director of Pathways asked me why I thought I could do this job and I told him that my experience in Canada enabled me to relate to the clients that I would be helping with this position. I have been working at Pathways for three years now, and two months ago I was offered a position to run a new program called Identity and the Employment Contact Centre launched in

London for Pathways. Pathways' vision is to unleash the potential of people to build new futures. The staff helped me unleash my potential and now I can assist others build new futures.”

Figure 16. How did you become a volunteer for the organization?



Pillar’s study has found that 40% of new Canadian volunteers started volunteering because they were asked to do so by a friend or relative. The next most common response was through organizations that assist newcomers (36%) like the CCLC, WIL, Pathways, and Boys’ and Girls’ Club. Another 18% of respondents indicated they were personally asked by the organization to volunteer. Mauricio’s story is not uncommon. Many of the people interviewed revealed they first went to a placement organization to find out more about volunteering. Many decided to volunteer directly at the placement organization since they were already familiar with the services of the organization.

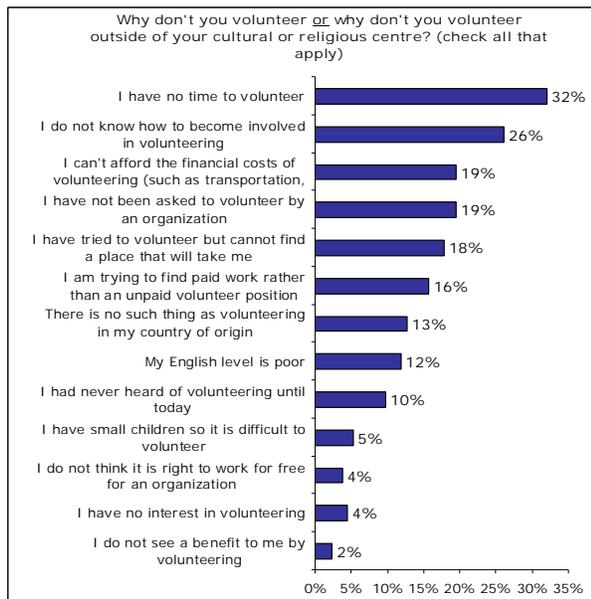
Why new Canadians do not volunteer

Figure 5 shows 55% of respondents interviewed did not volunteer. Francisco is a 34-year-old Colombian who came to Canada

3 years ago and is not currently volunteering. His story is as follows:

"I knew it would be difficult coming to Canada. I had to learn a new language. I was in a new place. But what made it the most difficult was not having my wife and two kids with me. I left them to come to Canada and am still waiting for them to join me here after 3 very lonely years. When I came to Canada I started learning English right away. My goal was to get a job so that I could support my family. I needed to earn money so I could get their papers ready for them to come to Canada. I have been working full-time shifts in a plant outside of London trying desperately to earn money to give my family a better life. I cannot volunteer because I just don't have the time. I cannot volunteer and spend my time working for free."

Figure 17. Why don't you volunteer or why don't you volunteer outside of your cultural or religious centre?



Francisco's story is not uncommon. Almost 1/3 (32%) of respondents indicated they did not volunteer because they did not have time. This figure is much lower than results from Canada as a whole. According to the 2000 NSGVP, 69% said the reason they did

not volunteer was because they did not have the time.²⁴

Like Francisco 16% of respondents indicated they were trying to find paid work rather than an unpaid volunteer position. Other reasons include they do not know how to get involved (26%), they have not been asked by the organization to volunteer (19%), they cannot afford the financial costs of volunteering (19%), and they cannot find a place that will take them (18%).

Almost 1 in 5 (18%) respondents did not volunteer because they could not find a place that would take them. A CPRN study states, "...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."²⁵

The second most common response cited by more than one in four respondents (26%) was not knowing how to become involved in volunteering. "According to the 2000 NSGVP, those born outside Canada were more likely to say that they didn't volunteer because they did not know how to get involved. One-third of non-volunteers born outside Canada cited this reason, compared to just 10% of Canadian-born non-volunteers."²⁶

²⁴ Michael Hall, Larry McKeown, Karen Roberts, "Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating" Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and Statistics Canada Aug 2001.

²⁵Ratna Omidvar and Ted Richmond, "Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion in Canada", Perspectives on Social Inclusion. 2003: 15

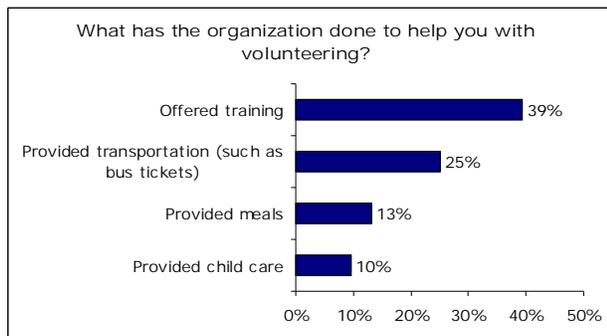
²⁶ Mc Clintock, Norah. "Understanding Canadian Volunteers NSGVP". Canadian Center for Philanthropy. 2004, July 2004: 20

Almost 1 in 5 (19%) respondents who did not volunteer indicated that they could not afford the financial costs of volunteering.

Retention techniques for new Canadian volunteers

Individuals who are currently volunteering were asked what the organization has done to help them with their volunteering.

Figure 18. What has the organization done to help you with volunteering?



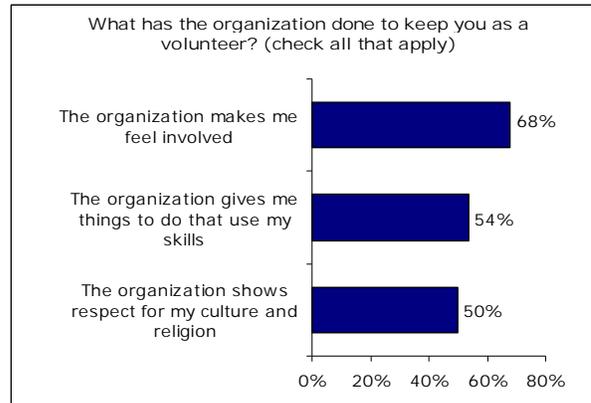
Only 39% of respondents indicated the organization offered training to help them with volunteering. This can also include an initial training on the organization and the role the volunteer will be performing. The organization offered transportation to 25% of respondents, provided meals to 13% and provided childcare to 10%.

Yakepsy is a young woman who came from Venezuela one year ago. She is married, has an 18 month-old little boy, and was pregnant at the time of the interview. Her English skills are at level 4 according to her ESL program. Yakepsy's story demonstrates the importance of valuing a volunteer's time and initiative.

"This summer I decided to do a volunteer job in order to practice my listening-speaking English skills. One of my friends suggested I should go to a particular organization and try to find a volunteer placement. After the one-day training session I was ready to start. They called me only once to volunteer. I worked for three hours at the organization's office but they never called me to work again. I didn't really feel needed at the organization since

they had so many people already. The organizers visited all of the departments looking for something for me to do. They did not have anything at this time and promised to call me back when something came up. They never called me. I will be returning to school soon and I feel very disappointed with my summer volunteer placement."

Figure 19. What has the organization done to keep you as a volunteer?



Although Yakepsy had a poor experience with volunteering, there are several respondents who indicated they have had very positive experiences. Respondents indicated the organization where they volunteer makes them feel involved (68%), gives them projects that use their skills (54%), and shows respect for their culture and religion (50%).

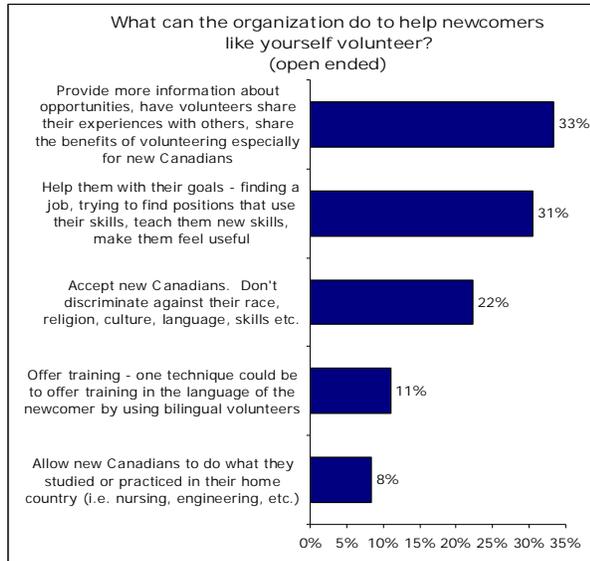
Mario is a graphic designer with a lot of experience in his field from Colombia. He and his wife came to Canada 4 years ago. For Mario, the reason he volunteers is to use his graphic design skills.

"When I came with my wife to Canada we both had a low level of English so we started ESL classes. Even though I was new to Canada, I decided to volunteer. I went to an organization and was able to help by wrapping presents at White Oaks Mall. After that, I didn't hear back from them and I just continued studying English. Then I heard about Pathways and through them I got a volunteer placement as an occasional graphic designer at the Children's Museum. I really enjoyed using my skills as a graphic

designer and I continue to volunteer for them when something is required. I do not have an interest in volunteering in any area other than graphic design. I see volunteering as a way to get some Canadian experience in my field since it is not easy to get a paid job as a graphic designer in London."

"When I came to Canada my English level was not good so for two years I studied English through ESL classes. When I felt my English was strong enough to enable me to communicate properly, I decided to get a volunteer position to gain some Canadian experience as well as offer my skills to a non-profit organization in London.

Figure 20. What can the organization do to help newcomers like yourself volunteer?



Pillar's questionnaire asked respondents an open-ended question about what organizations can do to help new Canadian volunteers. The most common responses have been grouped together and are displayed in Figure 20.

I went to one organization in London to their volunteer placement department. They told me there were not any placements available for someone with my skills at the present time. They promised to call me back when something was available but I have never heard from them since. I find that the volunteer positions offered by organizations for newcomers are positions with a low profile. Generally these positions are not very challenging. They are routine, simple and boring. I wanted to use my skills to help people but found that my skills were not needed as a volunteer.

I think that the volunteer system in London should be more interactive. I would suggest a model where an information center gathers the profile of volunteers, such as their skills, education and experience and then provides this information to organizations that have volunteer placements available. In this way, the organizations could offer better placement opportunities when they see the number of people and the strong skill sets that are offered."

Mario's story shows that many new Canadians use volunteering as a means to find a job. In Pillar's questionnaire, 31% of respondents indicated that organizations can help new Canadian volunteers by assisting them with their goals and finding positions for them that make use of their skills and teach them new skills.

Many new Canadians want to use their education and experience in a volunteer position. In Canada, it is generally voluntary sector organizations (nonprofits and charities) that recruit volunteers. Due to some of the limits on roles volunteers can play, it is often difficult to have volunteers performing certain roles in, for example, the medical or engineering fields. This often frustrates new Canadians who end up taking on volunteer roles which are not related to their area of specialization. Roberto's story shares his emotions about how he feels volunteering devalues his skill set.

Roberto is a 36-year-old Colombian man who came to Canada 3 years ago. Roberto is highly educated in the Computer Science field. He is also a technician, technologist and engineer in computers and has great practical experience as a project manager in Colombia.

We discussed this issue in our focus group and some organizations offered their

suggestions on how to deal with this situation. *"I have found that it is best to be honest with the new Canadian and explain that they will probably need re-certification but they should try to find a volunteer position at an organization where they would like to work. I tell them they may not be able to practice what they learned in their home country but volunteering at a place that they may eventually be able to work at after they receive their re-certification can allow them to establish contacts, practice the language and feel what that work culture is like at that organization."*

One of our focus group respondents described how her organization has been able to apply the skills of new Canadians to volunteer positions. *"Our organization has a number of positions and they involve a fair amount of responsibility. Working with women or seniors, offering transportation, making friendly calls, organizing programs, etc. When we place new Canadians we try to find positions related to the skills they have or want to practice. For example, we have foreign trained professionals who have backgrounds in photography and advertising that run the whole advertising campaign for our Latin American Diabetes project. I see a real utilization of skills at our organization."*

Summary

- New Canadians are able to gain from the altruistic benefits of volunteering, such as helping others and giving back to society, while also improving their chances for getting a job, practicing English and meeting friends
- New Canadian volunteers perform a variety of activities with the most common being providing care or support, office work, providing information, teaching, and organizing or supervising events
- Most respondents first became involved with volunteering because they were asked by a friend or relative or by going through an organization that helps new Canadians
- Barriers to volunteering for new Canadians include a lack of information about volunteer opportunities, the costs associated with volunteering, and facing discrimination as organizations are reluctant to take new Canadians with limited English skills
- Valuing volunteers may involve easing financial burdens on volunteers by offering transportation, meals and childcare, by keeping the volunteer involved, using their skills, and showing respect for their culture and religion

Results from Organization Respondents

Organization respondents were asked to indicate the total number of volunteers and the number of new Canadian volunteers they have in their organization. The data from our 61 respondents show that these organizations had an average of 195 volunteers in total. On average, there were 12.8 new Canadian volunteers per organization. Over one-third (36%) did not have any new Canadian volunteers*. New Canadians make up approximately 6.2% of all volunteers*.

We asked organizations that have recruited new Canadian volunteers if they would recruit more new Canadians to volunteer with their organization. Ninety-five percent of respondents indicated yes. Only 2.5% of respondents indicated they were unsure and another 2.5% of respondents indicated that this option did not apply to their organization (i.e., they did not recruit any volunteers).

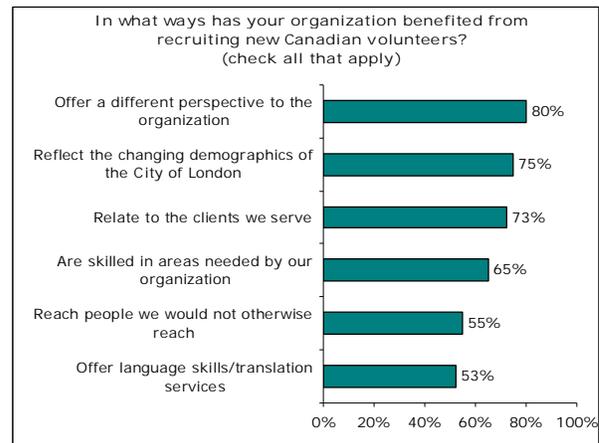
Benefits new Canadians bring to organizations

"We have been recruiting new Canadian volunteers for the entire length of our volunteer program. We serve a really diverse population and our volunteers bring different points of view that are representative of our clients. New Canadians help us to enhance our programs especially by providing services in other languages for our clients. It is mutually beneficial because we have opportunities for

*Given the fact that most respondents completed the questionnaire because they wanted to help new Canadians, we would expect the respondents who completed the questionnaire would be more likely to recruit new Canadian volunteers. Therefore, the 36% of organizations that did not have any new Canadian volunteers is probably an understatement of the number of organizations that are currently not recruiting any new Canadians in London's voluntary sector. For the same reason, the finding that new Canadians make up 6.2% of volunteers is likely an overstatement.

them not only to practice their English, learn new skills, and gain Canadian experience but also they develop an affinity towards our organization since we have been receptive to them as volunteers. Our organization is one that new Canadians use early on after arriving in Canada. By volunteering they have an opportunity to give back to an organization that they use heavily. Our organization values the new Canadian volunteers we recruit. The skills and expertise they bring far outweigh any obstacles experienced due to language and cultural differences."

Figure 21. In what ways has your organization benefited from recruiting new Canadian volunteers?



Eight out of ten respondents indicated one of the benefits that new Canadians bring is the ability to offer a different perspective to the organization. Three quarters found that by recruiting new Canadians they help the organization reflect the changing demographics of the City of London. Other common responses include: relate to the clients we serve (73%), are skilled in areas needed by our organization (65%), reach people we would not otherwise reach (55%), and offer language skills/translation services (53%).

Respondents identified other benefits:

- "New Canadians allow us to offer a diversity of services that we would otherwise not be able to offer."
- "Our staff and volunteers are passionate about being inclusive and promote this concept to other nonprofits in London. We recruit new Canadians to develop

credibility in our communities. By recruiting new Canadians we are not just paying lip service to the term "inclusive". New Canadians have also been able to refer others to our services and have enhanced the knowledge of our staff and volunteers about other countries and ethnic/cultural practices."

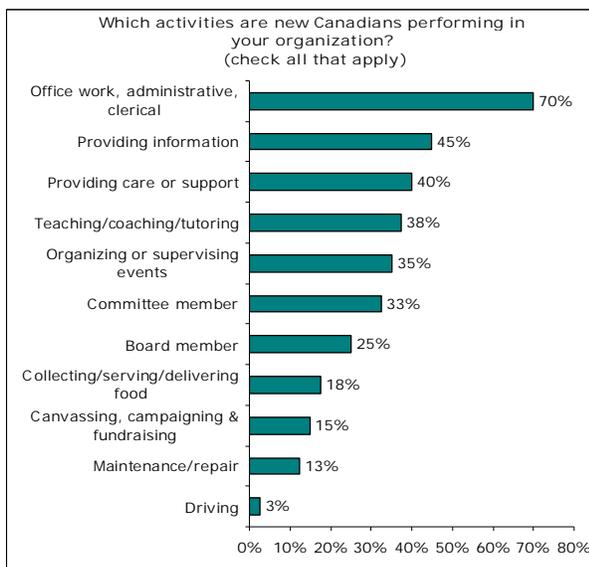
- "They bring a genuine enthusiasm and a desire to be involved in community activities."
- "New Canadians have been able to offer suggestions for organizational change that we have overlooked."

Each volunteer offers a unique skill set and perspective to an organization. New Canadians are able to use their perspectives to help shape an organization.

Activities new Canadians perform in organizations

After gathering the results from new Canadians on this question, we asked organizations about the activities new Canadians are performing in their organizations.

Figure 22. Which activities are new Canadians performing in your organization?



The majority of organizations indicated their new Canadian volunteers were engaged in

office work, administrative, clerical positions (70%), followed by providing information (45%), and providing care or support (40%).

In an interview with Lissa Foster, Manager of Business Development at WIL Employment Connections, she indicated that immigrants without fluency in English tend to enjoy working with children. The belief is that new Canadians feel more comfortable speaking English with children because they do not feel judged by kids.

One focus group respondent indicated, *"We place a lot of new Canadians in office positions at our organization. We find that they are very highly trained professionals and we don't want to put them in a position where they are not using their skills. Some of our volunteers have started with very little English skills. Just answering the phones and interacting with people on a regular basis seems to be beneficial and enables a new Canadian to improve their English skills."*

Another focus group respondent shared some information about new Canadian volunteers in her organization, *"In our organization we do a lot of activities with seniors like playing shuffleboard and golf. Sometimes you have to teach the new Canadian how to play the game but once they have been taught I think they're less intimidated because our elderly people don't really care whether their language is right on. We place a lot of our new Canadians in that environment so they can interact with the elderly. We also put them in mealtime assistance because they can sit and chat with them and there's not that intimidation."*

What is interesting to note is the small proportion of new Canadians who serve as board or committee members compared to the NSGVP. Pillar's results show only 8% of new Canadians served on a board and 14% volunteered on a committee compared to 41% of all Canadians²⁷. Results are more

²⁷ Michael Hall, Larry McKeown, Karen Roberts, "Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and

positive when looking at the responses from organizations with new Canadian volunteers. One-third of these organizations recruited a new Canadian to their committees and 25% recruited a new Canadian to their board.

Recruitment techniques for new Canadians

Organizations were asked to indicate the five most common ways new Canadian volunteers became involved with them. The results reflect the responses given by new Canadian volunteers in Figure 16.

New Canadian volunteers became involved with our organization

1. from an organization that helps new Canadians
2. because someone from our organization asked the new Canadian to volunteer (i.e., an existing volunteer recruited other volunteers)
3. from being personally involved with the services of our organization before volunteering
4. from a friend or relative
5. from an ad in the newspaper, radio or television

These are just some of the methods that have been used to find new Canadian volunteers. Organizations have also approached ESL classes and religious institutions.

One respondent from our focus group indicated, *"We did an article in the Londoner with the help of Pillar – Voluntary Sector Network and that really helped. We had a lot of response from newcomers to Canada. We have a lot of people approaching us from other countries because they are familiar with our organization. They know that we went into their home country and helped after wars and to rebuild cities, etc, and they want to give back to us here in Canada."*

Additional or unique challenges faced by organizations when recruiting new Canadian volunteers

During our focus groups, several challenges that organizations have had with new Canadians came out in discussions. Some of the challenges relate to cultural differences where a new Canadian may speak very close to individuals as they engage in conversation invading someone's personal space. Other challenges relate to inappropriate dress by new Canadians (e.g., low cut tops), having new Canadian volunteers not taking volunteering seriously (e.g., not showing up, leaving early, arriving late), and having new Canadians approach volunteer coordinators to share personal or family matters seeking counselling advice.

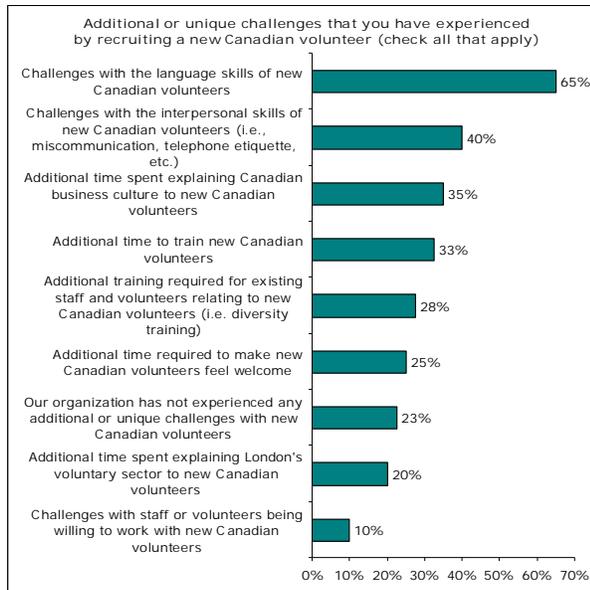
One focus group respondent indicated that new Canadian volunteers who are applying for positions tend to be very persistent and want to know the status of their application. They make repeated phone calls and begin calling others in the organization to find out more details about their application. A focus group respondent from an employment assistance organization explained they encourage new Canadians to be assertive to "get yourself out there". However, their interpretation of assertiveness may be seen as pushy or annoying in the Canadian culture.

Other focus group respondents indicated that the challenges they face with new Canadians are common for all volunteers regardless of their country of origin. *"I deal with 45 volunteers in total and they range from high school to seniors and the same issues apply. We have people who dress inappropriately, they come late and leave early, they don't show up for the shifts they have chosen themselves... I count very strongly on these people and expect them to be reliable. I think this is common all the way through for volunteers not just new Canadians."* In addition, one focus group respondent indicated, *"We need to realize that we operate in a very fast paced culture – sometimes too fast for our own good."*

Often we forget that not everyone operates at the same pace as us all the time."

We asked organization respondents to describe the additional or unique challenges they have experienced by recruiting new Canadian volunteers.

Figure 23. Additional or unique challenges that you have experienced by recruiting a new Canadian volunteer?



Almost 2/3 (65%) of respondents indicated they faced challenges with the language skills of new Canadian volunteers. Although new Canadians can provide a wealth of skills to organizations, sometimes language skills or even an accent can lead to challenges. One focus group respondent indicated, *"At our organization someone will come in and say they have secretarial skills and want to do reception right off the bat. We try to accommodate them and have them answer the phones, but then we have people call in and say that they don't understand the person who answered the phone. You still want to give the person a chance but you also want to be able to communicate with clients."*

Other respondents indicated they had challenges with interpersonal skills of new Canadians (40%) often as a result of fluency levels in English and the differences in culture. One respondent indicated, *"Some of our new Canadian volunteers may appear rude or curt with callers. Instead of saying*

something like 'unfortunately she's not available right now', they will say, 'she's not here'. We try to have scripts for ways to answer the phone but you cannot control every situation. You want to give them some autonomy also."

We asked organizations how willing their clients, volunteers, and staff are to work with a volunteer with a limited knowledge of English.

Figure 24. Are most clients/volunteers/staff in your organization willing to work with a volunteer with limited knowledge of English?

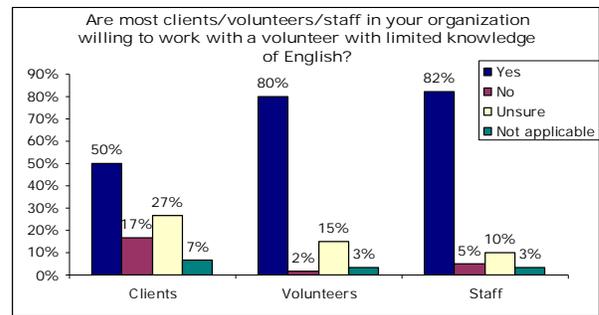


Figure 24 shows that staff and volunteers are more accepting of volunteers with limited English skills than are clients; only half of clients would be willing to work with these volunteers.

One of our focus group respondents shared the challenges she faced with clients when placing new Canadian volunteers, *"One of the challenges in our organization is that our clients have Alzheimer's and some of our volunteers who are Sikh wear the turban and our residents get very taken back because they aren't used to seeing people like that. And we try to introduce the volunteer to the clients first and then they kind of hang back and observe a bit and our people will warm up to them. I am honest with them in the interview and tell them that people may take a while to warm up to them."*

Although our responses show staff and volunteers seem accepting of volunteers who are not fluent in English, some respondents felt otherwise. One focus group respondent indicated, *"I have had a challenge with getting our new Canadians*

volunteers to work with other staff. Other staff do not have the patience, the time, or the energy and just say they'll do the project themselves rather than wait for the new Canadian to learn the process."

Another respondent indicated that discrimination and racism tend to emerge even in diverse organizations, "Our organization is very diverse but every so often you will hear someone say, 'I don't know if she has the skills for that' but I have to step in and say 'yes she does'. You always know that underneath they are saying that because the person is an immigrant."

Ways to accommodate new Canadian volunteers

We looked at the techniques that can be implemented in order to make new Canadian volunteers feel welcomed in an organization.

Figure 25. Which of the following has your organization introduced to accommodate new Canadian volunteers?



Four in ten organizations added cultural sensitivity or diversity training for staff and volunteers to accommodate new Canadians.

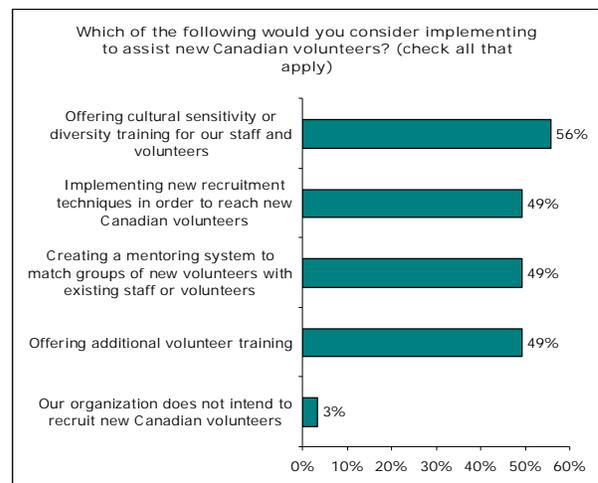
Diversity training was highlighted in our focus groups, "Part of our jobs is to be educating volunteers and staff when diversity issues come up. And with diversity training we have to make sure that no matter what position, class, gender, race,

culture, or whatever the person is, we need to work around these biases. We need to encourage equality."

One-third of organizations offered a mentoring system for new volunteers. Examples of successful mentoring strategies were discussed in our focus groups, "I team up people to help out new volunteers. For example I have a retired ESL teacher that works with new Canadians. I have some new Canadians who have been here a little longer from Germany and Poland who have acquired a grasp of the language and are very familiar with the struggles and the challenges of not being able to communicate. So they are able to draw out those challenges from my new Canadians more than people who don't understand those challenges. They can share their own little secrets with them such as, 'this was made easier for me because I was able to ask these questions' or 'don't be afraid or embarrassed to ask this question until you understand.'"

We then asked all respondents, including those that do not recruit new Canadians, which techniques they would implement to assist new Canadian volunteers.

Figure 26. Which of the following would you consider implementing to assist new Canadian volunteers?



Roughly half of all respondents would consider implementing cultural sensitivity or diversity training, new recruitment techniques, a mentoring system, and additional volunteer training.

New Canadians as paid staff

We asked organizations how many new Canadians they currently have employed as paid staff. Most organizations (57%) did not employ any new Canadians. The remainder employed an average of 3.4 new Canadians.

During focus group discussions, we asked respondents if having new Canadians as paid staff has helped them recruit and retain new Canadian volunteers. Almost all respondents indicated, *"Absolutely, having new Canadians as paid staff helps new Canadian volunteers feel more welcomed, have someone to relate to, etc."*

One focus group respondent shared an example of how helpful it was to have a new Canadian employee at her organization, *"I think just trying to be understanding and patient is important. At our organization we had a new Canadian who started as a volunteer with us and ended up as an employee at our organization helping new Canadians. He had a wealth of experience to share with them about the resources available and his own personal experience. He received a promotion and now I am working with the new Canadians. I am still learning where to refer them and where to send them for support."*

Although most respondents indicated it would be helpful to have new Canadians as paid staff there was one focus group respondent who shared some insight on her experience, *"I think sometimes it depends what countries people are from. What I have seen is sometimes depending on the person they may have biases. For example, we have a staff person who feels like where she comes from is better than where other people are from. She is from a European country. I see the way she interacts with other newcomers and her comments and subtle behaviours. You cannot assume that new Canadians are going to be supportive of other new Canadians. There are politics, linguistic differences, religious differences, and class differences that come into play."*

Organizations that have not recruited new Canadian volunteers

We asked organizations that are not currently recruiting new Canadians which benefits offered by new Canadians could help their organization.

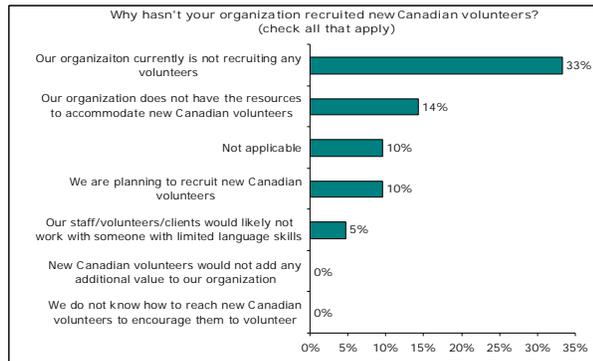
Figure 27. Which of the following benefits offered by recruiting new Canadians could help your organization?



More than half of respondents (57%) indicated that their organization could benefit from the different perspectives offered by new Canadians. Almost half indicated that new Canadians could help them reach people they would not otherwise be able to reach (48%), would enable them to better reflect the changing demographics of London (48%), and would offer the ability to better relate to the clients they serve (43%).

From Figure 27, it appears that organizations see the benefits that could be offered by new Canadian volunteers; however, they do not currently recruit them. We then asked them why their organization has not recruited new Canadian volunteers.

Figure 28. Why hasn't your organization recruited new Canadian volunteers?



One-third of respondents indicated the reason they did not recruit new Canadian volunteers is because their organization is not recruiting any volunteers at this time. One in ten organizations indicated they are planning to recruit new Canadian volunteers.

Summary

- New Canadians provide several benefits to organizations such as offering a different perspective, relating to clients, sharing their skills including translation services, and reaching new clients
- Organizations that have had success in bringing new Canadian volunteers to their organizations have actively recruited new Canadians by asking new Canadians to volunteer, targeting new Canadians who use their services, and working with referral organizations
- Although organizations indicated several new Canadians were performing administrative duties, few organizations had representation on committees or on boards of directors
- Some of the challenges cited by organizations that have recruited new Canadians include challenges with language skills, interpersonal skills, and with clients accepting volunteers with limited language skills
- Organizations have found they can help accommodate new Canadian volunteers by offering diversity training, mentoring volunteers, offering additional training to new Canadian volunteers, and by having new Canadians as paid staff

Discussion and Conclusions

Pillar's research shows that new Canadians who volunteer in organizations where they feel valued and accepted are very happy with their volunteer positions. These volunteers benefit both by improving their skills and helping others. They share their positive experiences with other new Canadians and encourage them to also volunteer.

Organizations that have recruited new Canadians are also very satisfied with the contributions made by new Canadians. These organizations benefit from the different perspectives and skills new Canadian volunteers bring to the organization. Evidence for this can be found in stories like Jayashree's, Celina's and Zulma's.

The potential for frustration and disappointment also exists. Yakepsy's and Mario's stories are examples of new Canadians who were never called to volunteer again after volunteering only once. There are many new Canadian volunteers who want to share their skills, but the responsibility to allow this to happen rests on the shoulders of the organizations.

This section amalgamates the data collected to create viable suggestions for organizations regarding the involvement of new Canadian volunteers in their organizations.

Organization Readiness

During our focus group with organizations currently recruiting new Canadians, respondents were asked to provide advice to organizations on how to make new Canadians feel welcome in their organization.

The first key concept that came out of discussions was the idea of organization readiness. The group felt that before you recruit a new Canadian you have to analyze the organization's culture and the views of

the organization's stakeholders (including staff, volunteers, clients, and funders).

One respondent shared her experiences, *"It is important to look at the organization's mission, vision, objectives and the readiness level of the organization. There is a mindset that an organization can have that can prevent new Canadians from being accepted by the organization. You should ask yourself if your organization has the competency to welcome new Canadian volunteers. Is there at least one person in the organization that will take care of new Canadian volunteers? I would suggest offering more personal contact, perhaps even training opportunities. Look at the skills that the person has and think about what you can offer them. It's trying to match them to make a good fit for the individual and the organization. But before you do that, you have to look at the organization and make sure it is ready."*

Another respondent indicated that her organization's culture has a very open approach to diversity, *"In my organization we have staff from all over the world. It depends on your organization's philosophy and approach to diversity. We have a very open philosophy. We believe that everyone has something to contribute. We view multiculturalism as something positive and we have the view that it can enrich an organization. We learn from each others' values."*

Before recruiting new Canadians to an organization, it is important to know if the organization is ready to open their doors to people with different cultures. An internal examination of the organization's culture, mission, vision, policies, and volunteer recruitment process is essential to making new Canadians feel welcomed in an organization.

Often any challenges organizations face with new Canadian volunteers can be mitigated if the organization is ready and willing to recruit new Canadians.

Recruitment Strategies

Recruiting new Canadians to volunteer is an important task for organizations wishing to benefit from the skills of immigrants and to fill volunteer shortages.

The data from both new Canadians and organizations are similar and suggest the need for an active recruitment process in order to engage new Canadian volunteers. Many new Canadians do not know how to become involved with volunteering or did not volunteer because they had not been asked by the organization. Organizations should consider approaching new Canadians, especially clients of the organization, and asking them to volunteer. This may help to boost the confidence levels of new Canadians and make them feel their skills are valued.

It is also essential for organizations to spread information to new Canadians about the importance of volunteering and how to get involved. One-third of respondents indicated organizations should provide more information about opportunities and have new Canadian volunteers share their experiences about the benefits of volunteering with others.

Organizations looking for new Canadian volunteers should target existing volunteers and staff to see if they know someone who would be interested in volunteering. They should visit centres that offer services to new Canadians such as Boys' and Girls' Club, WIL, Pathways, and the CCLC. They should distribute information on volunteer opportunities to cultural or religious centres and ESL classes.

New Canadian respondents indicated they volunteer to help others and to give back to society, but also to improve their chances of getting a job and to learn English. Often new Canadians will speak their first language instead of English when volunteering informally at cultural or religious centres. Encouraging new Canadians to venture beyond informal volunteering is important for the development of their language skills and for

interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds. Organizations should therefore highlight both the altruistic benefits from volunteering and the ways formal volunteering can improve job opportunities.

Barriers to volunteering – Time, financial barriers, transportation

Some new Canadians experience barriers to volunteering such as time constraints, not being able to afford transportation or childcare, and discrimination. Organizations should consider offering some assistance to new Canadian volunteers to reduce these barriers.

Organizations should share information about virtual volunteering, where the new Canadian can work from home if childcare, travel and time limitations exist. These time limitations may also be addressed by volunteering for a specific time period as in a special event. These techniques allow new Canadians experiencing barriers to take advantage of volunteer opportunities.

Organizations should not assume it is easy for people to gain access to transportation in order to volunteer with them. Offering transportation as an incentive may draw additional volunteers who are unable or uncomfortable with getting to and from their placement. "If people live in more isolated areas, where bus services are limited, or non-existent, connecting can be more difficult. Even when bus service is available, some people experience barriers to using it well. Also, transportation can be a significant barrier for seniors who are no longer able to drive, and must adjust to different modes of transportation.

Transportation is an important consideration when matching people with volunteer placements. Positions that are within walking distance can be a good option for some people. Other options may be providing bus tickets as an incentive for volunteering, or possibly arranging for

volunteer drivers to and from the placement.”²⁸

Barriers to volunteering - Discrimination

Volunteering in Canada is part of the Canadian culture and it is important to introduce the concept of volunteering to new Canadians so they too can contribute to society. The challenge some of these individuals face is finding organizations that are willing to recruit them as volunteers.

More than 1 in 5 respondents indicated that organizations should be more accepting of new Canadians. In particular, these individuals indicated organizations should not discriminate against their race, religion, culture, language, skills, etc. Eighteen percent of respondents indicated that one of the reasons they did not volunteer was they could not find a place that would take them.

In focus groups, a new Canadian said, “I think because of my hijab (head scarf worn by Muslim women) I find it difficult to volunteer because I wear Nikab (face cover) too.” Another respondent indicated, “I used to volunteer but now I don’t volunteer anymore because a man that was helping the manager didn’t like immigrants.”

The study shows that clients are least likely to accept volunteers with limited language skills. Focus group respondents indicated gaining support from staff can also be a challenge.

Some of our focus group respondents expressed their views about how open their organization is to accepting new Canadians. One person said, *“I work in a very traditional organization and there is a huge challenge with regards to new Canadian volunteers. Our organization employs people to go out to other countries in distress and help people in need; but in turn when they want to come and help us as volunteers in Canada there is a huge stigma*

there. This has been difficult for people in Canada to accept.”

Although many organizations try not to discriminate against new Canadians, sometimes discrimination can be hidden. We often recruit someone as a staff member or as a volunteer who shares similar characteristics to us. Naturally, we tend to judge applicants using Canadian culture norms without realizing that people from other countries behave differently. For example, an applicant may not look the interviewer in the eye since in their cultural group that is perceived as confrontational. However, in Canada if someone does not look you in the eye they appear untrustworthy or shifty. In addition, if applicants are asked to describe their accomplishments, we expect them to sound confident and list a number of significant accomplishments. For some new Canadian applicants, this can be seen as boasting and a sign of pride, which may be discouraged in their culture or religion.

Showing respect for a volunteer’s culture and religion is a way of recognizing their differences in a positive way. A Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) study states, “The extensive theoretical literature on diversity and citizenship reminds us of the importance of the recognition of difference as an integral part of inclusion. Different identities, cultural and religious practices, and world-views should not simply be *tolerated* as part of individuals’ choices, as classic liberal theorists and republican ideology suggest. For diversity to be sustainable, it must be part of the public life of the *polis*. Norms, rules and practices of the citizenship regime must acknowledge difference and allow its full expression in the public realm.”²⁹

A focus group respondent indicated the importance of treating each new Canadian as an individual, *“I think it is important not to label someone but treat them as unique. Approach people with unique identities do*

²⁸ Wendy Barbulak, “Connecting Volunteers with Your Community: A Research Project for Volunteer Victoria”, *Volunteer Victoria*, 2003.

²⁹ Martin Papillon, “Immigration, Diversity & Social Inclusion in Canada’s Cities”, *CPRN Discussion Paper No. F27*, December 2002: 3

not lump them all as one based on their background. They are a person that is an individual - not a label." Another focus group respondent indicated her organization tries to celebrate the holidays or special events of their new Canadian volunteers.

Canadians need to be more accepting of immigrants as they make the adjustment to life in Canada. This may require tailoring volunteer positions to fit the skills of new Canadian volunteers. Organizations should consider altering existing positions to fit the language levels of new Canadians and embracing the cultural and language differences of potential new Canadian volunteers.

Like other volunteers, new Canadians want to be able to use their skills and experiences to contribute to an organization. Many come with a wealth of knowledge and are highly skilled and educated. Organizations should embrace this opportunity. Once a new Canadian is part of an organization, showing respect for their culture or religion is a simple way to value the volunteer and their contribution. It is important not to discriminate against new Canadians and be aware of hidden forms of discrimination in recruitment and hiring practices.

Training

As indicated above, staff, volunteers and clients in an organization do not always welcome new Canadians. It is important, however, for them to do so and to be supportive of their needs. Diversity training can ease tensions and increase acceptance rates.

Like other new volunteers, new Canadians may need an adjustment process where they learn how to perform their volunteer role in the organization. Mentoring and offering additional training to them can help mitigate the challenges of language and interpersonal skills.

We often forget what it was like when we started at an organization as a volunteer or as a staff member. One focus group respondent pays close attention to the initial

orientation of the volunteer, "I will invite them into the office and teach them about our organization culture first. What is our organization, what do we do here, what is our mission, etc. I will show them around and explain how people dress and behave and show them how in the office there is no chatting and this is how we work. I then teach them about our organization and how we fit within the structure of funders and organizations, service providers, volunteer associations, health and social services, etc. I help them find a fit and see where they can play a role. I use different forms of mentoring by bringing them to meetings with me, inviting them to seminars and workshops, events, and training opportunities. I give them opportunities where they can network and meet people. I let the person try to move into a role with the organization. We try to find ways we can successfully integrate the volunteer into various departments or teams."

There are also small ways to encourage diversity in an organization and make the new Canadian feel more accepted. One focus group respondent indicated, *"At every meeting we bring up something from different cultures around the world. Last year it was mostly centered on India but we learned about different cultures too."*

Being patient and honest with new Canadian volunteers is key to facilitating integration.

New Canadians as Paid Staff

Hiring new Canadians or other immigrants as paid staff can help the organization to learn about and value diversity. For clients and volunteers who approach the organization, seeing someone who looks like them or speaks their native language can help them feel more comfortable and at ease. Having paid staff that are immigrants means that this staff member can share their experience and may have more information on the resources that new Canadians can access. Although recruiting new Canadians as paid staff does not guarantee that they will be receptive to other new Canadians, the majority of respondents indicated that this endeavor

has led to positive outcomes for their organization.

New Canadians as Board or Committee Members

Pillar's study shows that organizations' recruitment of new Canadians to boards and committees is still lacking. It is important to have new Canadians play an active role in governance and leadership. Immigration rates in the City of London continue to rise and organizations should strive to have an accurate representation from new Canadians at the decision-making level to reflect the population the organization serves. New Canadians offer a wealth of experience and a different perspective that can be refreshing to boards and can also help boards understand how their organization is viewed by other communities.

Having new Canadians on an organization's board can also lead to more acceptance of diversity by the organization's staff, volunteers, and clients allowing this acceptance to filter down into the organization's objectives, hiring practices, and training.

One focus group respondent indicated the importance of reflecting on the diverse structure of an organization's board, *"Our board went through a facilitated process. It kind of spurred our board to look internally at our diversity. It was a very positive experience because it really forced the board to look at the issue. They put it on the agenda and actually went through a checklist to determine where they were lacking, and then planned some outreach efforts."*

A focus group respondent found that new Canadians can offer several advantages to an organization's board including questioning the way things are done. *"One of the great things that new Canadians can do is ask the board questions. They want to know why we do things a certain way and it leads us to question our own justifications and procedures. It challenges us, which can affect our future planning, and that can be a good thing."*

Another focus group respondent identified the steps their organization went through to target new Canadians *"At our organization we sought someone who was successful by our definition, who had certain skill sets, and who came from a minority community. When we identified a candidate we approached them and asked them to join our board. We were honest with them. We told them they had the skill set we were looking for and also that we were looking for someone with a diverse background. We asked them to help us change. They obviously cannot be representative of the entire community they come from, but it is a start."*

Another focus group respondent indicated that it is important not to stereotype or generalize the views of new Canadians. *"You do have to be careful that recruiting a new Canadian board member does not lead to tokenism. There was a board in Toronto and one fellow on there said he was asked to be on the board only because he was Asian. He argued that he didn't necessarily represent the views of all Asian people."*

Retention Strategies

Retention strategies range from offering tangible incentives to volunteers like certificates, to valuing the volunteer's culture and religion, to giving them projects that use their skills.

In Yakepsy's story, she indicated that she was called to volunteer only once and did not have anything to do at the organization. Unfortunately, Yakepsy was not the only person who indicated that she was not called back to volunteer. Yakepsy's story demonstrates the importance of valuing volunteers. New Canadians have left their home country, find themselves in an unfamiliar environment, and are speaking a language they may not feel comfortable with. Many have experienced rejection from the workforce and feel like their years of hard earned education have been washed away. When individuals, regardless of whether they are a new Canadian or not,

approach an organization to volunteer, it is important to show acceptance and appreciation as they may feel very vulnerable in this situation.

Organizations need to be sensitive to the needs of volunteers and keep them informed from the beginning. In addition, a lack of familiarity with the English language and the volunteer application process may lead to a misunderstanding between the potential volunteer and the organization's representative or volunteer coordinator. It is important to have clear communication with the prospective volunteer throughout the application process.

In Jayashree's story (in "Benefits from volunteering") she indicated that she felt valued by the organization. She was given a certificate to acknowledge her contribution, and the organization demonstrated flexibility to adapt to her schedule.

A study by Volunteer Victoria highlights the importance of incentives. "Incentives can help to encourage individuals to continue volunteering, and contribute to a feeling of being appreciated for their work. A research respondent commented on the value of some sort of incentive: Certainly some kind of incentive is huge, whether it's a free lunch, or a volunteer driver to get you there. Incentives make a difference. It makes them feel like they are appreciated for what they are doing. In the ideal world we would all get paid handsomely for what we're doing, but there does need to be both internal motivation and the external incentive. All of these aspects of providing support for individuals will help to ensure success in the placement for both the volunteer and the agency."³⁰ Offering even a small token of appreciation can make a world of difference to the volunteer. Organizations need to be sensitive to the various recognition needs of volunteers and try to fulfill these needs when possible.

Many new Canadians have professional qualifications from their home countries and bring a wealth of experience and skills. Over half of all respondents indicated that an organization should give them projects that use their skills in order to keep them as a volunteer. This can be a difficult task to achieve because of the high skill levels of many new Canadians. One focus group respondent indicated, *"Sometimes I feel I don't have enough to offer new Canadians because they are so highly skilled. I try to keep it as interesting as I possibly can but sometimes I feel almost apologetic."*

In order to keep new Canadians engaged, one focus group respondent suggested tailoring opportunities to the volunteer, *"People will come into my organization and say, 'I want to volunteer' and we have job descriptions or roles but for some people that is not what they are interested in. So we ask them what they would like to do. If we can find out what they are interested in and try to build on that it gives them the opportunity to grow and use their skills. Sometimes the existing job descriptions don't give them the opportunity to grow. Some people come in and say 'this is what I did back home' and they want to do this here so we try to accommodate them. We see where their skills are instead of slotting them into an existing position. We have had success with that also."*

Showing respect for the volunteer's culture and religion is another way to retain volunteers. This concept was discussed in the recruitment section. Part of this process involves learning more about the volunteer and what they believe in. Some volunteers are not comfortable telling the organization when a volunteer task may be against their religion. In this case, the volunteer will likely not show up, use an excuse to get out of volunteering, or perform the task with discomfort. An example of this involves a Muslim female volunteer who was asked to assist a client during an aquafit session in a swimming pool. Instead of explaining that removing her Islamic dress and wearing a bathing suit in a public pool was against her religion, the volunteer did not show up for

³⁰ Wendy Barbulak, "Connecting Volunteers with Your Community: A Research Project for Volunteer Victoria", *Volunteer Victoria*, 2003.

her scheduled session without any explanation.

Pillar's Website - Including a search by English level option

One of the focus group respondents indicated her frustration with the lack of volunteer opportunities for people with limited fluency in English, *"I think one of the barriers that I'm really facing is trying to place new Canadian volunteers. They are still in full-time ESL and they want to volunteer. They want to meet people and get out into the community. I have had a real hard time finding places that will actually take them on as volunteers when their language skills are still at a lower level i.e., level 5 or level 6. They want to volunteer and they are willing to do anything. It doesn't matter if they are engineers, they'll sweep a floor."*

At Pillar we have also found an increase in the number of new Canadians who are not fluent in English who want to volunteer. Pillar currently operates a volunteer matching website where individuals looking to volunteer can search through a number of volunteer opportunities posted by nonprofits and charities in London. During our focus group discussion we asked organizations if it would be possible for them to rate the English fluency required for their volunteer positions (i.e., low, medium, high) and create or adapt existing opportunities to accommodate new Canadians who have limited fluency in English.

One respondent indicated her technique for recruiting new Canadians with limited language skills, *"I'm very flexible; I've taken people who couldn't speak 25 words of English when they started. Then again, I use the team approach and it is a very slow, long approach but it has worked very well for many people."*

One focus group respondent indicated having volunteers rate their English might screen out a lot of potentially good new Canadians from even applying to her organizations. Some new Canadians judge

their own language skills unrealistically harshly.

Another respondent indicated that by volunteering and undergoing extensive training offered by the organization, new Canadians are able to develop their English skills to be able to work at their help line, *"At our organization there isn't a lot of choice for volunteer roles, almost 100% are working on the help line. We need a lot of volunteers for that. It is entirely a language-based service in English which can be very daunting. There is a fairly intensive training that gives us, as well as the individual, the opportunity to determine whether their language skills are adequate to handle calls. And we have people that do have somewhat halting English and are still learning but it is a great opportunity to really ramp up your skills when that's all you're doing. The people that are successful with us are absolutely realistic but very willing to work on their skills. It has always been a mutual decision if they are not ready to do it."*

Volunteer Ottawa has recognized the challenges faced by new Canadians who are encouraged to volunteer by ESL classes or settlement organizations. Volunteer Ottawa's strategy has been to contact organizations and encourage them to find volunteer positions for people with limited language skills. When a new Canadian approaches them with difficulties in English, they refer them to one of the organizations that they know will be more accommodating. In addition, staff and volunteers at Volunteer Ottawa will make initial phone calls and set up interview dates for new Canadians with organizations. Volunteer Ottawa has found that new Canadians find talking on the phone and leaving phone messages amplifies their limited English levels. They often have less confidence when talking on the phone and can be screened out just by leaving a phone message. By Volunteer Ottawa setting up an interview, the organization gets to meet

the new Canadian instead of judging their skills based on a phone message.³¹

The idea of having a section on Pillar's website where new Canadians can search for volunteer opportunities by English fluency is one that needs to be explored further. Pillar currently asks all organizations posting opportunities to indicate the languages needed for the volunteer role they are seeking. Focus group respondents felt it would be useful to allow volunteers to search by "languages spoken". This would enable an organization looking specifically for someone who is fluent in another language such as Spanish, French, or Arabic, to post opportunities by languages spoken. Usually these positions require translation skills so the new Canadian would be able to practice both English and their native language.

relationship for the organization and new Canadian volunteers.

Volunteering has always been a part of Canada and this tradition needs to be shared with immigrants to make our society better. It is time to turn our intentions into action and embrace diversity to make the first decade of volunteering a success for new Canadians.

Summary

When an organization recruits new Canadians it benefits from the different perspectives offered by these individuals. The high skill levels, education and experience new Canadians bring with them contribute greatly to an organization's success. New Canadian volunteers may also help new Canadian clients feel more welcomed and comfortable when dealing with the organization. In welcoming new Canadians as volunteers, organizations give them a chance to use their skills, improve job opportunities, learn English, and give back to society.

In order to make new Canadians feel welcomed in an organization, it is important to examine the culture, vision, mission, and goals of the organization. If staff, volunteers and clients are not open to recruiting someone from a diverse background, then the countless benefits obtained from new Canadian volunteers will not be realized. Cultural or diversity training can help stakeholders welcome new Canadians and create a symbiotic

³¹ Rachel Stoparczyk. *Volunteer Ottawa*. Telephone Interview. 22 June 2004.

Appendix 1 Volunteering in other countries

This section has been provided as supplemental information for purposes of further investigation by the reader.

We did some research to find out what volunteering is like in other countries. Several websites were consulted and the results show that overall the concept of helping others without pay is common in most countries. We also found there are differing motivations for volunteering based on culture and government ideology.

"Japan has had a long tradition of putting the government above the people. In Japan volunteerism is seen more in terms of service and sacrifice. In Japan, families and neighbors have handled problems that arise."³²

"Although there is a long tradition of community action and mutual aid in Russia, the idea of voluntary activity through organizations and on behalf of specific causes is only now developing. Because the term 'volunteering' is still associated with the Communist regime, it retains largely negative connotations. If a person spoke about doing some volunteering for no reason other than altruism, this was thought of as an odd phenomenon."³³

Volunteering in India - "People felt it was a 'value based more on a feeling' rather than on an image. Volunteering had its roots in the idea of swantaukhaya, 'one's own happiness lies in another's'. The sense of what volunteering is has been developed through the relationship of 'self to society' and by the fact that many communities in India have made seva, 'service', dana, 'voluntary contribution', and shraamdaan,

'voluntary labour', an intrinsic part of their activities."³⁴

"14% of Korean adults aged 20 or older volunteered an average 2.2 hours in 1999. Korean adult volunteers are middle class and mostly are housewives (34.1%), self-employed (19.5%), or office workers/engineers (12.2%). Most volunteer activities were done in religious organizations (34.4%), and the next in social service organizations (23.9%), civic organizations (11.2%), public health and medical organizations (5.6%), educational institutions and environmental organizations (5.3% each)."

"The survey found that sixty-four percent of Lao people volunteer on a daily basis. They believe that community participation, solidarity and helping each other is just a part of being a community member and way of life and culture of Lao people. Empathy, altruism, and the desire to improve the quality of life in their communities motivate some volunteers. Others volunteer to develop new skills and knowledge, adding to their experience and credentials. Some Lao people are compelled to volunteer from a sense of social obligation; they may not be deeply committed to volunteering but do so to maintain their image and standing in the community."³⁵

Cambodia - "The main reason for people to contribute money, rice or labour is to gain merit for the next life. At the same time it is practical: the contributions are used to develop the village in this life and to sustain the institution that enables people to gain merit. Gaining merit is a powerful motivation and is often the main drive for social action. The help that is offered is often not only material, but also mental or spiritual: there are older and wiser people you can ask for advice. They take time to

³² "Volunteerism in America and Japan." 14 July. 2004 <<http://www.heartsandminds.org/articles/volunteer.htm>>.

³³ Priya Lukka and Angela Ellis, "An exclusive construct? Exploring different cultural concepts of volunteering." Institute for Volunteering Research, July 14, 2004 <<http://www.ivr.org.uk/culturalconcepts.htm>>.

³⁴ Priya Lukka and Angela Ellis, "An exclusive construct? Exploring different cultural concepts of volunteering." Institute for Volunteering Research, July 14, 2004 <<http://www.ivr.org.uk/culturalconcepts.htm>>.

³⁵ "Status of Volunteerism in the Lao PDR." July 2002, 28 July 2004 <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/02_07_01LAO_StatusofVolunteerism_MeasuringVolunteering.pdf>.

talk with you: they are interested in you as a person. They also voice the desire to see their community live in harmony, help the poorest people survive and get a better life. Conservation of traditions and cultural heritage are important as well."³⁶

Volunteering in Bosnia and Herzegovina - "This fact translates into the conclusion that the concept of volunteerism and volunteers as a human resource base of the community is not fully embraced by the third sector in the BIH society. Volunteers in Bosnia and Herzegovina are motivated for volunteering as they have a need to apply their knowledge and to gain new skills."³⁷

Hong Kong - "This survey has found that only a quarter (22%) of the respondents have participated in organized volunteering before (donation excluded), whilst over half of them (55%) have participated in some form of mutual aid. All in all, over 60% of the respondents have participated in one form of volunteering activity or another. Reasons for people who participated in any kind of volunteering include, "to help others" (72%) topped the list, followed at a distance by the reasons "to serve the community" (33%) and also "to kill time" (24%)."³⁸

"69 percent of Kazakhstan's population aged over 18 participated in some form of voluntary activity during 2001. Volunteers' top motivations for doing voluntary work were: the desire to help others (71%); the desire and opportunity to realize their potential by using their skills and abilities (39%); the need to do something good, change society and the world for the better

(36%); and the opportunity to socialize with others, meet new people (28%)."³⁹

"Mongolia - 11.5 percent of men and 9.5 percent of women tested by the survey have participated in voluntary activity before 1990s. During the years of 1990- 2000, 22.6 percent of men and 25.3 percent of women were involved in volunteering. Participation in volunteering reaches at its highest point at middle age of people and it goes down after the age of pension, in general. Respondents valued the benefits of being a volunteer is sharing experience and skills, self-development, meeting new people, seeing the result of what s/he has done."⁴⁰

"In Albania, volunteering is something belonging to middle school and university educated people who make up more than 80% of volunteers."⁴¹

Nepal - "The modern form of volunteerism promotes the concept of welfare and external dependency, encourages mobilisation of external volunteers, which is likely to increase external dependency among the people. In the present context, there is a dire need to revisit the concept and definition of volunteer and volunteerism. Voluntary action is not limited only to welfare, essential service delivery, distribution of meals and other materials at the time of emergency. Volunteers at the

³⁶ CASLim Sidedine, Heng Kim Van and Judith Zweers, "Volunteer Resurgence in Cambodia." 28 July 2004, <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/KHM020405_IYV_Volunteering_engl.pdf>.

³⁷ Azra S. Kacapor, "Volunteering in Bosnia and Herzegovina." November 2002, 27 July 2004 <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2003/03_04_15_BIH_volunteerism.pdf>.

³⁸ The University of Hong Kong Public Opinion Programme "Study on Public's Reception and Perception of Volunteer Services." 04 Aug. 2004, <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/0201205_HK_study.pdf>.

³⁹ Julian Hansen, Dana Askarbekova, Irina Yerofeeva and Valentina Kurganskaya, "Volunteering in Kazakhstan: Key Findings of a National Survey 2001." 2002, 21 July 2004 <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/02_12_05KAZ_volreport.pdf>.

⁴⁰ The Statistical Information and Research Department of the Governor's Office of Capital City of Ulaan Baatar, "Sociological Survey on Volunteerism." 5 May 2001, 28 July 2004

<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/MNG021004_IYV_Volunteering_engl.pdf>.

⁴¹ Zyhdi Dervishi, "VOLUNTEERING IN THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA: REALITY, IDEAS, CHALLENGES." June 2002, 28 July 2004 <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/ALB020612_IYV_VolunteeringReference_engl.pdf>.

local level can also be effective in the process of social mobilisation."⁴²

"19% volunteers in Slovakia. Volunteers work almost exclusively in non-governmental organizations; and often these organizations are completely dependent on the work of their volunteers. The majority of volunteers work in social-care establishments (humanity and charity organizations, self-help groups), where the need for help is most urgent."⁴³

"The culture of volunteerism in Sri Lanka has continued to be influenced largely by religious ideas and practices, also of a diverse nature and of diverse origins. However *dana* or the practice of sharing and giving is the most dominant motivation in volunteerism and remain the bedrock of volunteerism in the country. Individual volunteerism may be described in terms of motivation, such as, a sense of self-satisfaction, a sense of family or community, arising out of religious motivation, a sense of sharing or giving of one's own free will, a desire to give something back to community/society, a reluctance to join others in volunteerism."⁴⁴

Ismaili Muslims, Chinese, Latin American, Polish

"Cultural attitudes: In some cultures, 'volunteerism' is not a promoted concept or is seen in a completely different light. Perception varies as widely as 'giving a helping hand' as a courtesy in the Chinese community, to a religious requirement for Ismaili Muslims, to activities restricted to privileged persons in Latin America, to a

negative perception for some Polish immigrants who were forced to volunteer to promote government ideology."⁴⁵

"In a second study, Moghaddam, Taylor and Lalonde (1987) look at how Iranian immigrants perceive their ethnic associations. This group sees such institutions as a way to obtain a more egalitarian social status for their community or as a way to achieve personal gain. They are more inclined to try to preserve the values of their homeland if they believe they cannot obtain the same advantages on their own. Cultural preservation and ethnic community building are not mechanically related. Cultural differences appear rather to be an ideological factor supporting institutional action and galvanization."⁴⁶

Lalonde and Cameron (1993) confirm the relationship between a negative perception of the reference group's social status and the development of solidarity. Caribbean and Chinese immigrants, who report being strongly discriminated against, favour community action, unlike other immigrants, who consider themselves less stigmatized (Greek or Italian immigrants).⁴⁷

"Another study (Labelle and Therrien, 1992; Labelle, Therrien and Lévy, 1994) describes how leaders of ethnic communities perceive their associations. Some of the groups in this study, such as the Italian and Jewish communities, are strongly institutionalized, while others, such as the Haitian and Lebanese communities, are not. Respondents see ethnic institutions as organizations that assist and socialize newly arrived immigrants (by helping them learn and decode social mores, laws and consumption patterns, for example). In

⁴² Vinod K. Shrestha, et al. "Volunteerism in Nepal." December 2002, 04 Aug. 2004
<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/02_12_05NEP_book_on_volunteerism.PDF>.

⁴³ Nora Benakova, "Volunteerism in Slovakia." 21 July 2004
<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/html/2001/01_01_99SVK_statistics.htm>.

⁴⁴ Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development, "Volunteerism in Sri Lanka: Case Study for International Year of volunteerism." November 2001, 28 July 2004
<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/dynamic/infobase/pdf/2002/LKA020130_IYV_Volunteering_engl.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Lillias Skinner, et al., "The Changing World of Volunteer Management: A Practical Guide to Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management." Association of Volunteer Resources, 1995.

⁴⁶ F.M. Moghaddam, and D.M. Taylor, "The Meaning of Multiculturalism for Visible Minority Immigrant Women," Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science 19(1987): 121-136.

⁴⁷ R.N. Lalonde and J.E. Cameron, "An Intergroup Perspective on Immigrant Acculturation with a Focus on Collective Strategies," International Journal of Psychology, 28(1993) 57-74.

addition, Jewish, Italian and Haitian leaders see their institutions as instruments for preserving their cultural differences, particularly by promoting the teaching of mother tongues. Again, they point to their function as spokespersons and advocates of the interests of a group, government or pressure group, notably in the case of umbrella organizations such as the National Congress of Italian Canadians and Canadian Jewish Congress."⁴⁸

"Some studies deal indirectly with the question of involvement in leisure activities by examining the use of leisure time. Ujimoto (1987) deals with the distribution of leisure time in elderly Chinese, Korean and Japanese immigrants. His study leads him to three conclusions. The shorter the time spent in Canada, the more likely activities are to center on the family and circles of compatriots. Korean immigrants present one distinctive feature: they are involved in more leisure activities and volunteer work than are Chinese and Japanese immigrants, because of their religious affiliations. In all three groups, the proportion of individuals who do not participate in leisure activities outside the home is twice as high as the proportion of those who engage in no such activities within the family. These data, collected from a survey of 800 immigrants, illustrate the importance of examining patterns of daily life before describing any form of social participation."⁴⁹

"More recently, Tirone and Shaw (1997) have discussed the role of cultural socialization in the perception and use of leisure time, based on interviews with Indian immigrant women. Like Ujimoto, Tirone and Shaw show the central role of family life in these women's lives and the slight importance they attach to personal

leisure. These women have no desire for free time for themselves or for leisure outside the family sphere, and indeed view such activities in a negative light.⁵⁰

"A study of young immigrants (Helly, 1997) shows, on a small scale, that Adventist and evangelical churchgoers, particularly of Haitian origin, volunteer either in their religious institutions or in non-religious organizations, as do Vietnamese immigrants who go to Buddhist pagodas. These institutions and organizations can be either ethnic or universalist, and may also serve as the site of leisure activities (choirs, music, dance)."⁵¹

⁴⁸ Denise Helly, "Voluntary and Social Participation by People of Immigrant Origin: Overview of Canadian Research", Second National Metropolitan Conference Immigrants and Civic Participation: Contemporary Policy and Research Issues. [Montreal] November 1997.

⁴⁹ K.V. Ujimoto, "Sociodemographic Factors and Variations in the Allocation of Time in Later Life," *Daily Life in Later Life: Comparative Perspectives* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1988) 186-204.

⁵⁰ S.C. Tirone and S.M. Shaw, "At the Centre of Their Lives: Indo-Canadian Women, Their Families and Leisure," *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29:2 (1997) 225-244.

⁵¹ Denise Helly, "Voluntary and Social Participation by People of Immigrant Origin: Overview of Canadian Research", Second National Metropolitan Conference Immigrants and Civic Participation: Contemporary Policy and Research Issues. [Montreal] November 1997.