Research Project on Visible Minority Communities in Canada.

by *Chandra Budhu*

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1. Introduction

This is the final report of the Research Project on Visible Minority Communities in Canada. The goal of the Project, commissioned and financed by the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) Secretariat, was to gather, consolidate and document available information on visible minority communities in Canada with specific reference to demographics, community institutions and major issues. Information was to be accessed primarily through secondary sources, gaps identified and recommendations made for future work.

The methodology used to gather much of this information was through secondary sources, including available published reports, studies and referrals. A limited number of interviews with community leaders across Canada, including members of the National Visible Minority Reference Group, provided additional information.

A mid-point report was provided to the National Visible Minority Reference Group at their second national meeting on October 15, 2001, in Ottawa. Feedback from that meeting has been integrated into this report.

2. Summary of Key Findings

2.1 Critical Issues for VSI Consideration

2.1.1 Voluntary Organizations:

There are numerous organizations within the visible minority community dealing with a wide spectrum of issues - from settlement for newcomers, social justice, to business, religion and sports. A large number of these organizations appear to be locally based groups, run entirely by volunteers and dealing with issues specific to the local visible minority communities in which they are based. There are also numerous organizations from outside of the visible minority community, providing a variety of services and support. However, there is no comprehensive, easily accessible directory of visible minority organizations at the national, provincial or municipal levels.

Several provinces have published directories of voluntary organizations and have included some visible minority organizations in the larger body of ethnocultural organizations. There is insufficient descriptions and information in these directories to accurately determine the type and/or reach of these organizations listed.

Lists of visible minority organizations are being developed in several areas across the country, including Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, for the National Refer-

ence Group consultations. These lists, developed by local host organizations, would provide a good starting point for a comprehensive directory of visible minority organizations in Canada.

Community leaders interviewed expressed a need for visible minority communities and organizations to become more familiar with each other through alliance building and increased collaborations. A comprehensive directory of visible minority organizations, with regular updates, would be a useful tool to support such a strategy.

2.1.2 Broad/major issues

Policy development on issues critical to the community is a major concern. Policy development is viewed as being done in a vacuum, and too often with little regard for the knowledge or perspectives of the community. If included, questions arise on the reasons, method, and timing for community involvement, roles assigned become suspect, as are words such as 'partnership'. Mainstream organizations at policy-making tables are as not adequately representing visible minority perspectives.

Organizational and human resource capacity are under-resourced and under-developed in these communities. A serious lack of developmental financial support undermines the ability of visible minority voluntary organizations to build and sustain capacity in both organizational and human resource, to adequately address growing needs within their respective communities. Changes in structure of government funding, from program to project based criteria, has had negative impact on these organizations. Such criteria fail to take into consideration particular needs of visible minority communities with respect to systemic and structural racism in the Canadian society. Many organizations are also unable to raise necessary funds within their respective community, as these tend not have the adequate financial base.

Opportunities and mechanisms are absent or inadequate to enable visible minority or-

ganizations with opportunities to meet, strengthen alliances/collaborations and to maximize their collective impact on national policies and development agendas. A national visible minority network or umbrella coalition was named as a desired mechanism.

2.2   Other Key Findings

2.2.1 The Demographic Picture

While visible minorities have been in Canada since the 1600s, the vast majority of this population has come through immigration from about the 1960s. And while Europe continues to be a key source of immigration to Canada, there has been an increasing shift, with Asia and to a lesser extent, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East accounting for increasing numbers of immigrants.

Immigration patterns and sources, particularly since the 1980s have resulted in visible minorities almost doubling in numbers - from 6% of the total Canadian population in 1986 to 11% in 1996. There are projections that this number will increase to 20% within the early years of this century.

The largest groups within the larger visible minority population are Chinese, South Asian and Black communities, the majority of whom live in three main urban centres - Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

Demographic characteristics differ among the multiple sub-groups within the larger visible minority population. For example, the Black community has a larger number of younger members, higher numbers of women than men, and lower numbers of older age groups in comparison to the other groups. Patterns of both internal and external migration have also helped to shape its broader demographic characteristics.

2.2.2 Broad/major Issues:

Issues facing the community, with few exceptions, are well known through numerous studies done over recent decades. Actions on recommendations, however, have not been forthcoming. Also noted was that many of these studies tend to be inaccessible - housed in universities, governmental bodies and libraries and not user friendly for the actors in the field, who often do not have resources or capacity to make full use of findings and recommendations.

Deepening of poverty across visible minority communities has been accelerated by liberalization and deregulation of the free-market economy, accompanied by devolution of essential social services from upper to lower levels of government and cutbacks in social spending. There is inadequate attention and response to this crisis as it impacts visible minority communities, either at the level of policy or public discourse. Recent studies, cited in this report, have raised the alarm on this issue as one of critical importance in Canada.

Systemic and structural racism - through major societal institutions, from educational, labour market, to justice and service delivery systems - create barriers, which prevent visible minority communities from fully developing their potential and participating equitably in Canadian society. These barriers also serve to rob the society of valuable human resources.

Mainstreaming visible minority issues was viewed as critical. The standpoint from which the communities wage their struggles for access and opportunities came into question. Despite their growing numbers and contributions to Canada, visible minorities continue to be viewed as a 'special interest' group. A need to reshape the community's issues from being perceived as 'immigrant/othered', to its rightful place in the mainstream of Canadian society, was named as a priority issue to be addressed.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Recommendations for VSI Consideration

- **Return of program funding and developmental resources to visible minority organizations**: Governmental agencies need to recognize that visible minority voluntary organizations are dealing with the impact of deep systemic and structural racism and face serious disadvantages at the level of capacity and sustainability. Their respective communities are unlikely to have financial capacity to make up for the shortfalls in governmental support. Developmental support and program funding would help these organizations to build and sustain necessary organizational and human resource capacity.

- **Include visible minority organizations/ leaders in policy-making:** Despite the fact that visible minority leaders are knowledgeable, experienced and insightful on the multiple issues facing their communities, there is a persistent exclusion of their presence at the tables of policy-making, or if included, they are peripheral to decision-making structures. It is critical that policy-making bodies examine the inherent systemic and structural barriers that work to exclude the experiences and knowledge of these communities and ensure that visible minority leaders are included.

- **Support the creation of a national mechanism for visible minority communities**: The visible minority community in Canada has deep roots in the society and is growing at a fairly rapid rate. However, it is still perceived as an 'immigrant' and 'special interest group' and the community has not found a cohesive voice within the larger society. Visible minority leaders view a national voice and visibility as critical in its reach for equitable participation in Canadian society. A mechanism such as a national network of organizations would facilitate the communities, meeting, sharing and bringing a cohesive voice on national policies and development agendas.

- **Support the development of directories/ website of visible minority voluntary organizations at national, provincial and municipal levels**: Directories of visible minority organizations are rare in Canada. These organizations, when listed, are subsumed within larger ethnocultural list-ings. The VSI has made a good start in building such a directory by developing lists of visible minority organizations in several regions.

3.2   Other Recommendations

- **Take action on past recommendations:** Visible minority communities and leaders have provided input into numerous studies and reports on multiple issues facing the communities. It is now necessary for the respective agencies to become familiar with and take action on recommendations made in these past studies and consultations.

- **Mainstreaming of visible minorities and their issues into the Canadian society**: It is recommended that visible minority communities/leaders engage in dialogue to critically evaluate how they understand and view their issues and place within the larger mainstream society. The perception of their communities as 'othered groups' with problems shaped elsewhere and their persistent location at the margins of Cana-dian society, contribute to their exclusion from tables of national policy making and development agendas and an inability to participate equitably in society.

4.   The Scope of the Project

The goal of the project, from August to October, 2001, was to gather, consolidate and document available information on visible minority communities in Canada with specific reference to demographics, community institu-tions and major issues. Specifically, the terms of reference called for research and documen-tation to include:

- **Demographics**: On a national level, gen-eral demographics and trends in visible minority communities - including identifica-tion of different communities and demographics in national, provincial or city populations by broad age groups.

- **Voluntary Organizations**: Identification of voluntary organizations, institutions and networks serving visible minority communi-ties, by types/category, size and geo-graphic reach, and with contact information. Voluntary Sector networks/alliances to include: a) those within visible minority communities, and b) those in which visible minority communities play a major role. Agencies which primarily address needs within visible minority communities, but which are not of those communities.

- **Broad/Major Issues**: Published studies and reports, clarify broad/major issues within visible minority communities, indicat-ing a) those which are common across the communities and b), those that are specific to particular communities. These studies and reports, and short interviews with some key individuals are used to identify major strengths and challenges within visible minority communities.

- **The methodology**: Much of this informa-tion was gathered through secondary sources - through available published reports, studies and referrals. A limited number of interviews with key community leaders provided additional information. The studies, reports and a list of people interviewed are included with this report.

5. Visible Minorities in Canada

5.1 A Brief Historical Overview

Visible minority communities, contrary to popular notions, have been in Canada for the last four centuries. The Black community established roots in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, and elsewhere in Canada, from as far back as the early 1600s. Chinese and South Asian communities have been in Canada since the 1800s, and significant numbers of immigrants from the Caribbean and elsewhere arrived prior to the 1960s. However, accelerated by liberalized immigration policies, the vast increase within the visible minority population occurred from the 1960s onwards,. A recent study by Grace-Edward Galabuzi (2001) estimates visible minorities will make up one fifth of the Canadian population early in this century.

An accurate demographic picture of visible minorities in Canada was difficult to assess until about 1986, when questions in the national census begun to focus on these communities in Canada. Naming this growing body of people continues to be a challenge and cause for debate, with labels such as visible minorities (at times referred to as the invisible visible minorities), racialized communities and people of colour, among others.

Naming the Diversity

With the rich diversity in the community, some studies have pointed out that the use of such broad categorization as 'visible minority' tends to gloss over the complex cultural identities within this larger community and the differential ways in which racial sub-groups experience the dominant culture. For example, Ornstein identifies 89 ethno-racial groups with at least 2500 members in Toronto. The McGill report highlights the complexities within the Black community, brought about by internal and external migration, moving from being characterized by its

old roots in Canada to one with an overwhelming Caribbean presence.

The largest sub-groups within the visible minority population are Chinese, South Asians and Black and they are mostly located in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

The Chinese Community

A preliminary study of the Chinese community by SUCCESS (2000) points out that while Chinese have been in Canada since the mid 1860s, it was not until the 1960s that there was considerable growth in numbers due to more liberal immigration policies and high birth rate. The 1980s provided for a much larger increase, stimulated by both the return of Hong Kong to China and the creation of an investor class within business by Immigration Canada in 1985. Hong Kong and Taiwan accounts for the larger numbers followed by Mainland China.

The Chinese population accounts for the largest visible minority community in Canada, with the majority based in Toronto and Vancouver. A much more comprehensive study of Chinese immigration patterns to Canada can be seen in Peter S.Li's study (1998.)

The South Asian Community

Significant demographic changes have also taken place within the South Asian Community in Canada since their arrival in the early 1900s. The immigration of South Asians to Canada occurred in three distinct stages of immigration - the first in the period 1903-1920 with predominantly males in British Columbia and mostly from the Punjab area. The second phase of the late 1960s, buoyed by more liberalized immigration policies, brought both skilled and semi-skilled immigrants from places such as Uganda, Kenya, South Africa and the Caribbean. The third phase in the 1980s brought large groups of Tamils from Sri Lanka, resulting in significant changes in the complexity of the larger South Asian community and its needs.

The Black Community

The McGill Study (1997) focuses on the Black community at the national level in Canada. Using the 1991 census, this study looks critically at the complexities within the larger Black population in Canada and points out key differences between this community and the larger Canadian population. Some of these highlights include:

- With roots in Canada dating back to the 1600s, the Black community has undergone significant demographic changes in the latter half of the last century. High rates of immigration since the 1960s, particularly from the Caribbean - (7 out of 10 members of the total Black population were born in the Caribbean at the 1991 Census), has significantly altered the characteristics of the larger community.

- Age differentiation within this population has serious implications for understanding the community and for allocation of public resources and services. The Black community is considerably younger, with almost 2 out 3 under the age of 35 (64.2%), - the larger Canadian population has about 53% in that age group. The Black population over age 55 is 1 in 10, while the larger Canadian population is 1 in 5.

- Immigration trends and patterns have resulted in an unequal male-female ratio with substantially more women - accounting for 52.1 % and men 47.9% in 1991. Though males are in slightly larger numbers up to age 25, this changes in the older age group where women outnumber men, accounting for 20,000 more women than men in 1991.

The demographic characteristics of the Black community, particularly in cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa are undergoing further changes brought about by the large numbers of recent immigrants and refugees from the Horn of Africa - from countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Burundi.

6. Demographics of Visible Minorities in Canada

An accurate demographic profile of the visible minority population at the national, provincial and municipal levels in Canada is necessary for the determination of, and access to, public resources and opportunities. Using the 1996 census data as the main information source, this report provides brief demographic information at these three levels. It also identifies a number of studies based on the 1996 census and other data sources, which provide more comprehensive analyses.

The most recent statistical information available on visible minority communities at the national level in Canada is from the 1996 census data. Questions specific to visible minority population in Canada are asked and computed at the national census - every five years. Questions on visible minorities were asked for the first time in the 1991 census, using the Employment Equity definition of 'visible minority'. The release of 2001 census figures on this population is slated for January 2003.

Numerous studies have been done on ethnocultural communities in which racialised groups are subsumed, while a smaller number have focused specifically on visible minorities across Canada. The 1997 McGill Study: Diversity Mobility Change - The Dynamics of Black Communities in Canada, using the 1991 census data, and the Ornstein 2000 study on Toronto: Ethno-racial inequality in the City of Toronto, using the 1996 census data, are two examples of the latter.

6.1 The National Picture

Key points taken from the 1996 census include the following

- The visible minority community in Canada has almost doubled between 1986 and 1996, increasing from 6% of the population in 1986 to 11% in 1996.

- The major centres of growth are Toronto, which grew from 17 to 32% of the total population; Vancouver 17% to 31%, and Montreal 7% to 12%, during this period.

- In 1996, 85% of all immigrants and 93% of those who came between 1991-1996 live in a metropolitan centre - mainly in three large cities: Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

- Sources of immigration to Canada have changed significantly over the last 50 years. European immigrants continue to account for the largest proportion of all immigrants living in Canada in 1996, but for the first time they were less than half the total number of the immigrant population. While in 1981, 67% of all immigrants in Canada were born in Europe, by 1996 this percentage had declined to 47%.

- The 1996 census reported that over one million persons in Canada were immigrants who arrived between 1991-1996 with people born in Asia accounting for more than 57% - up from 33% in 1970s, 12% in 1960s and only 3% prior to 1961. Asia, including Hong Kong, China, India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, headed the list of recent newcomers.

- Following Europe and Asia, immigrants from Central and South America, Africa and the Caribbean Region accounted for the third largest group.

The National Picture: Visible Minority Communities in Canada (1996)

National	3,197,480	28,528,125 -total population
Chinese	860,150	
South Asians	670,590	
Black	573,860	Includes Black Canadians and immigrants from Africa, the Caribbean and elsewhere.
Arab/West Asian	244,665	
Filipino	234,195	
Latin American	176,975	
South East Asian	172,765	
NIE (not identified elsewhere)	69,745	Likely visible minority - identified by nationality- e.g. West Indian, Fiji, etc.
Japanese	68,135	
Korean	64,840	
Multiple	61,575	More than one visible minority group

Note: see Appendix 1 for more details on the visible minority population at the national level.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 http://www.statcan.ca/english

6.2   The Provincial Level:

The major provincial centres of visible minority populations in Canada are Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec and Alberta. Nova Scotia has the oldest visible minority community in Canada, with the Black community dating back to the early 1600s.

The following chart provides the number of visible minorities in each province, the percentage of each provincial population, the main visible minority groups within the provinces and the cities in which they live.

Province/ Territory	Visible Minorities	% of total provincial population	Largest Visible minority Groups	Key cities
Ontario	1,682,045	16%	Chinese, South Asian, Black, Arab, Filipino, Latin American	Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Windsor
British Columbia	660,545	18%	Chinese, South Asian, Filipino, Japanese, Southeast Asian	Vancouver, Victoria
Quebec	433,985	6%	Black, Arab, Latin American, Chinese, South Asian	Montreal
Alberta	269,280	10%	Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino	Calgary Edmonton
Manitoba	77,355	7%	Filipino, Chinese, South Asian, Black	Winnipeg
Saskatchewan	26,945	3%	Chinese, Black, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Filipino	Saskatoon Regina
Nova Scotia	31,320	3%	Black, Arab, South Asian, Chinese	Halifax
New Brunswick	7,995	1%	Black, Chinese, South Asians	Moncton
Newfoundland	3,815	1%	Chinese, South Asian, Black	
NW Territories	1,670	3%	Filipino, Chinese, South Asian,	
PEI	1,520	1%	Arab, Chinese, Black	
Yukon	1,000	3%	Southeast Asian, South Asian	
National Total	**3,197,480**	**11%**		

Source: A Graphic Overview of Diversity in Canada - Department of Canadian Heritage 2000

While Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec have the largest numbers of the visible minorities in Canada, the majority of these groups live in the main major urban centres of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

A brief demographic profile of British Columbia:

- Of the 660,545 visible minorities in the Province, 564,600 or 85% live in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), accounting for 31.3% of the urban population.

- 93% of the Chinese population of British Columbia live in the GVRD area.

- Among visible minority population in the GVRD area, 70% are from only two main groups - Chinese with 49.4% and South Asians at 21.3%.

- Over one quarter of all visible minorities in Skeena-Queen Charlotte area are Filipinos, while in Central Kootenay, 19% of the population are Black.

Source: BC Statistics. August,1998.

A brief demographic profile of Ontario:

- Ontario has 1,682,045 visible minorities, accounting for 42%of the visible minority population in Canada.

- The largest group is comprised of the Chinese community with 391,095, quickly followed by the South Asians at 390,055 and the Black community at 356,220.

- Significant number of Arabs/West Asians and Filipinos live in Ontario - 118,660 and 117,365 respectively.

- The largest numbers reside in Toronto with 1,338,095 or 32% of the city's population, followed by Ottawa-Hull at 115,460 and Hamilton at 48,910.

A brief demographic profile of Quebec:

- Quebec has a visible minority population of 433,985 or 12% of the total provincial population.

- Quebec's largest group of visible minorities is the Black community with 131,970.

- Arab/West Asians at 79,710 is the second largest group, followed by the Latin American community at 51,440, the Chinese at 50,360 South Asians at 47,590 and Southeast Asians at 42,130.

- The majority of the visible minority community in Quebec, 401,425, live in Montreal.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1996.

6.3   At the Municipal Levels

The majority of the visible minority communities across Canada live in major urban centres. The 1996 census figures show these to be Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, followed by Calgary, Edmonton and Ottawa-Hull. Most visible minority immigrants who came between 1991 and 1996 went to Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. While comparable analyses of the visible minority communities in either Vancouver or Montreal were not located, Michael Ornstein's critical study: *Ethno-Racial Inequality in the City of Toronto: An Analysis of the 1996 Census,* 2000, provides a picture of the demographic complexities within one major urban centre.

Toronto - example of a major urban centre:

Toronto is home to approximately 42% (1996 Census) of the visible minority population of Canada, with over 89 ethno-racial groups according to Ornstein's study. It highlights wide demographic variations within the larger visible minority community in Toronto and also points out significant demographic differences between these communities and European ethno-racial groups in Toronto.

The study found that the largest visible minority community in Toronto, 15.3%, is made up of people from East, South East Asia and Pacific Islanders (including Filipinos), with 9% of all Torontonians being Chinese. Ten percent of people in Toronto describe themselves as from African, Black or Caribbean origins, with Jamaicans at 3%, as the largest sub-group. South Asians account for 8.4 %, with the majority, 5.4 %, of Indian origin — Bengalis, Gujuratis and Punjabis. Tamils, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis make up the rest. About 2.9% of the population have Arab and West Asian roots, with Iranians making up the largest single group and significant numbers with Afghan, Armenian, Egyptian, Lebanese and Turkish origins. Latin Americans make up approximately 2.8% of the Toronto population.

The study also notes significant age differentiation between visible minority and Euro-Canadian population as significant and with serious implications for programs. With the exception of East and Southeast Asians, all visible minority groups have younger than average age profiles. For example, differences can be found even within the sub groups, as in the larger Black/African population - while 44.1% are under age 15, the Jamaican population has 26.8%, while the Ghanaian group has 42.8% in this age group. In the Arab and West Asian group, demographics differ yet again, with Afghans being the youngest - over one third are under 15, Armenians are the

The Municipal Picture

Provincial Total Visible Minorities	Ontario	British Columbia	Quebec	Alberta	Nova Scotia
	1,682,045	660,545	433,985	269,280	31,320
Municipal Total	**Toronto**	**Vancouver**	**Montreal**	**Calgary**	**Halifax**
	1,338,095	**564,600**	**401,425**	**127,555**	**22,320**
Diverse Communities in the Municipalities					
Chinese	335,185	279,040	46,115	44,670	2,405
South Asians	329,840	120,140	46,165	25,525	2,625
Black	274,935	16,400	122,320	10,575	12,000
Arab/West Asian	72,160	18,155	73,950	8,085	3,175
Filipino	99,115	40,715	14,385	11,795	445
Southeast Asian	46,510	20,370	37,600	9,870	500
Latin American	61,655	13,380	46,705	6,545	235
Japanese	17,055	21,880	2,310	3,205	255
Korean	28,555	17,085	3,500	2,220	220
(NIE)	45,655	6,775	3,485	1,530	175
Multiple	27,435	10,215	4,880	3,655	285

Note: See Appendix 2 for other demographic information, including gender breakdown within sample municipalities.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census website: http://ceps.statscan.ca/english/profil/

oldest group, while similarities in age distribution can be seen in the Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese and Turkish communities.

Vancouver:

The study done by SUCCESS on Chinese in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) points out that this community is the largest visible minority population in the area with an age breakdown showing 20.5% under 15 years. The bulk of the population, 67.3% were between 15 and 64, and approximately 12% over 65 in 1996. The shift of immigration sources from Hong Kong to Mainland China provides specific settlement challenges.

7. Voluntary Organizations:

Identification of voluntary organizations, institutions and networks serving the visible minority communities, by types/category, size and geographic reach, and with contact information, is a key element of the project. As noted earlier, this has certainly been the most challenging aspect of the research. The National Reference Group, at their October 15th meeting, agreed that more time is required on this aspect of the project than was allocated. This meeting requested a file on the organizations identified this far. The main points on this aspect of the project are as follows:

- Directories of visible minority organizations are rare in Canada. Black Pages, which focus on the Black community and publishes directories of organizations are available in some regions.

- For the most part, visible minority organizations are subsumed in larger listings of ethnocultural organizations, for which, there are some provincial directories, eg. British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and the Atlantic Provinces. A number of umbrella networks, working with immigrant and ethnocultural populations at provincial levels, have membership lists, which provide information on some organizations in, and/or serving visible minority communities.

- Several groups across the country, including Toronto, Montreal and Nova Scotia, are developing lists of visible minority organizations for consultations of the National Visible Minority Reference Group.

- As pointed out earlier, more time than has been allocated to this project is needed to develop lists of organizations as required in the terms of reference for this research project. The lists being developed for the cross-country consultations, as well as the others, provide a good starting point for a comprehensive directory of visible minority organizations across Canada.

8. Broad/Major Issues

Based on some published studies and reports, as well as interviews with key leaders in the communities, the following broad/major issues within visible minority communities were identified:

8.1 Systemic and Structural Barriers

Systemic and structural racism plays a major role in shaping issues facing all visible minority communities across Canada, but there are significant differences in the impact across the different racialized groups. For example, Ornstein (2000) concludes that while no ethno-racial group is immune from poverty, there are groups in which more than half of all the families live below the poverty line - Ghanaians are the poorest in Toronto with adult unemployment rate at 45%, followed closely by Afghans, Somalians and Ethiopians. Unemployment rate for African and Black youth is at 38%, compared to 20% for all youth.

Grace-Edward Galabuzi's study, *Canada's Creeping Economic Apartheid* (2001) based on Statistics Canada's *Survey of Labour Income Dynamics* for incomes for 1996, 1997, and 1998, sheds light on the growing racialization of the gap between the rich and poor in Canada. He found a 'persistent and sizeable gap between economic performance of racialized group members and other Canadians over the period 1996-1998. The report notes that even as these groups become demographically more significant - visible minorities are set to become one-fifth of the national population early in this century - they continue to confront racial discrimination in many aspects of their everyday life. This, Galabuzi points out, is widening with little public or policy attention. He concludes that historical patterns of systemic racial discrimination is key to understanding the persistent over-representation of racialized groups in low-paying jobs, low income sectors, higher unemployment, poverty and social marginalization.

The absence of representation from the visible minority communities at the policy-making tables also means an absence of their specific issues in such critical spaces. This is a major concern to community leaders. Inaccessibility to policy and decision-making is seen to be exacerbated when mainstream organizations do not adequately represent issues of visible minority communities in their absence at tables of decision-making.

8.2 Funding Needs /Charitable Status

Voluntary organizations within visible minority communities are finding it difficult to raise necessary funds. Not only are financial resources vital to meet the increasing demands of the community, but such resources are equally important to meet capacity developmental needs of organizations serving the communities. Concerns raised include governmental funding drying up and/or becoming more difficult to access. The move from funding at the program to project level has left many organizations scrambling to find core support, and some are forced to compromise their projects to meet funding requirements at the expense of community needs. Public and private foundations, which can add to the pool of resources and make up short falls, are underdeveloped in Canada, unlike in the USA.

Changes in governmental funding criteria have led to some organizations dedicated to visible minority communities 'disappearing off the map'. A particular need in the visible minority community, and one which had been previously recognized by the government, was that of developmental funds to help organizations build capacity and strategies to overcome structural and systemic barriers in the wider Canadian society.

Most visible minority communities do not have financial capacity to provide much needed support to their respective community based organizations and many of these organizations do not have charitable status to help in this respect. Most organizations have to develop funding strategies to reach beyond

their communities for support. Some visible minority communities have limited capacity in this respect and are thus able to meet only some of their needs from within their communities.

The question of obtaining charitable status poses great difficulty for some organizations, as they are unable to meet the strict qualifications and thus are precluded from supporting themselves in these times of shortage. Those engaged in lobbying and advocacy find that charitable status is beyond their reach and is not desirable in some cases, as this is likely to compromise their ability to meet their mandate.

8.3 Organizational/Human Resource Capacity

Organizational and human resource capacity are areas of significant concern within the communities, with issues of survival and sustainability named as high priorities. While visible minority organizations provide much needed services and leadership in their communities, they do so against great odds. Interviewees felt that there was a failure on the part of funders to appreciate that visible minority organizations do not have access to financial or training resources, necessary to build and sustain capacity.

Attracting and maintaining qualified personnel, both staff and volunteers, is a serious challenge in many of these organizations. Low salaries and benefits for staff are persistent problems within the voluntary sector and particularly in visible minority communities. Exhaustion and stress in trying to cope with sustaining the organization can and often does lead to a high turnover of, or inability to attract qualified staff. It was pointed that several older organizations are barely able to maintain operations, facing serious challenges in attracting and maintaining qualified personnel and volunteers. Some of these are still overly dependent on volunteers.

Visible minority voluntary organizations continue to deal with challenges of building and sustaining effective and efficient governance and management structures. Leadership development is seen as a critical issue in the community, with succession planning named as a particular concern and the inability to attract and sustain young leaders. Need for resources to enable a range of skills training, including leadership/board development, community needs assessment and program planning and delivery, was raised as a priority in several interviews.

Systems of accountability and transparency are equally high priority in the community. The need for more effective organizational structure and systems - including governance, management, financial and membership are viewed as necessary to questions of relevance, sustainability and community ownership.

8.4 Mainstreaming visible minority communities/issues in Canadian society

Where/how visible minority struggles are located and expressed within the Canadian socio-political landscape was noted as a key concern. The communities and their issues persist at the margins of the society - such at the edge of the poverty debate. This is seen to be informed by systemic and structural racism, and also through internalization within visible minorities, of an 'othered' space in the Canadian social structure. Issues that are 'made in Canada' are perceived as coming from elsewhere and as 'immigrant/refugee' issues.

That the visible minority communities must engage in a 'paradigm' shift in how the communities view and understand their issues and standpoint within the larger society, was raised as a timely issue. Visible minority communities need to engage in dialogue and to develop strategies to move their issues into the mainstream of the society.

Strengthening alliances and building mechanisms across visible minority communities in order to develop and move from a position of strength was also noted as a pressing concern. One recommendation made is to develop a national umbrella network to bring a cohesive and strengthened voice national policy making and development agendas.

Alliance building and networking with mainstream organizations was recognized and named as important to advance the struggles and issues of the visible minority communities.

8.5 Call for Action: Many Consultations / Little Follow-up

Visible minority organizations and leadership are knowledgeable and experienced on the numerous issues facing their communities, and provide vital leadership and programs to address these. They have shared this knowledge and experience in numerous consultations, studies and reports conducted on their respective communities over the years. But they are deeply concerned that very little action followed up on recommendations made.

Knowledge of the communities and issues, they believe, are available at many levels in the society. And the need to constantly make the case for inclusion or action is found to be a tiring process, leading to a sense of frustration and one of being studied continuously. Changes within the government and/or lack of institutional memory too often mean that issues are once again either not known or understood and communities are caught in a recurring state of raising awareness - of making the case over and over again. Consultations therefore become problematic and understanding of concepts such as 'partnership with communities' become blurred. Some felt that the 'community has spoken too many times and the need is to become familiar with what they have said'.

It was however recognized that there are some gaps. Credible research in areas such as violence against women, and health con-

cerns specific to visible minority communities, is seriously lacking.

Another concern named by community leaders is the manner in which visible minority communities are consulted and the roles they are allocated at the tables of policy making. Several felt that policies are often developed in a vacuum and without input from the communities, or that representatives from the communities are integrated late into the process and in areas and roles which have little impact or decision-making power.

The inclusion of the National Visible Minority Reference Group within the Voluntary Sector Initiative was one example cited - done late in the process and members unable to access roles and space in critical areas of decision-making.

9. Other Major Issues

The social issues facing visible minority communities and organizations in Canada are multiple, far-reaching and complex. Structural and systemic racism has thrown up major barriers to these communities finding an equitable space in the society. The following list touches briefly on some of these critical issues visible minority organizations are working on.

9.1 Gender

- **A triple bind:** Racism, sexism and classism, structurally integrated into mainstream service delivery agencies, compound the inequities faced by women within visible minority communities. Visible minority women face a triple bind in their attempt to negotiate Canadian society: as women dealing with gender-based inequity, as immigrants facing settlement issues, and as women of colour facing systemic and structural racial barriers. Gender based violence, single parent status, and overrepresentation in the low-income sector of the economy, are serious concerns for a significant number of women in visible minority communities.

- **Gender base abuse and violence:** This issue is viewed as both an internal and external one. While some work has been done on the issue and women leaders from within the community have been active in naming and taking action, much more work is needed for the communities to talk and take action on the issues. External influences including economic inequity, contribute to the cycle of violence and abuse, through limiting their ability to leave violent relationships. Under funding of organizations contribute to the inadequacy of responses on these issues within the community. One negative aspect attached to this issue is the perception within the mainstream that violence, including sexual abuse, as a cultural trait of some of these communities. As noted by the FREDA

report (2000), 'discussions of violence in Aboriginal and immigrant and refugee communities use an essentialist notion of culture to explain violence'. Interviewees pointed out the need for credible research and information on the different forms of violence and abuse in different visible minority communities - including violence and abuse against women and girls, sexual violence, elder abuse and violence among youth.

- **Labour Market and women** - as noted in studies including Galabuzi (2001), systemic and structural racism impedes visible minority women in the workforce through unemployment, under-employment and in the changing structure of work. The Contingent Workers Project in Toronto: Breaking the Myth of Flexible Work (2000), notes that racialised women are over represented in low paid, low end occupations, low income sectors and in the growing unregulated temporary or contingent work. 'And We Still Ain't Satisfied' -Gender Inequality in Canada (2001) notes that 'women in racialized groups are much more likely to be poor. In 1995, 37% of women of colour had incomes below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cutoffs, compared with 19% of other women and their unemployment rate was 15.3%, compared to 9.4% for other women'. The domestic worker category adds another dimension to the plight of visible minority women in the Canadian labour market. In a report by the Philippine Women's Centre in Vancouver, the deskilling of the Filipina immigrant women in the Canadian labour market is described as socio-economic violence - low wages, insecure working conditions and separation from families left back home.

- **Healthcare** issues specific to visible minority women are viewed as being neglected, with practitioners lacking a vested interest in the specific needs of visible minorities. HIV/AIDS is a growing concern in several communities. While the communities continue to play critical roles, lack of resources, information and credible research

on diseases unique to different visible minority populations, are concerns in the community. Information targeted to women and girls in visible minority communities, particularly with regard to domestic violence as a healthcare issue, is seen as inadequate. A study is currently being undertaken by Women's Health in Women's Hands to examine the impact of racism on women's health.

9.2   Youth

For a significant number of visible minority young people - both newcomers and Canadian born, poverty is a reality in their lives - this has a deeper impact on some communities than others, as pointed out in Ornstein's study. While many of these young people continue to make some gains despite structural inequities in the education system and labour market, a significant number struggle with issues such as high drop out rates especially of male students, teenage pregnancy and dead end jobs, sometimes leading to illegal activities.

Streaming and de-streaming continue to be critical issues facing some communities. Systemic barriers which include selection criteria for academic streams, bias in school curriculum, shifting of funding from public to private schools, teacher indifference and/ or overt racism and high drop out rates are some of the elements facing young people from visible minority communities within the education system.

Inadequate access to apprenticeship programs, skills development and support initiatives in entrepreneurship, as well as mentoring opportunities and role models, contribute to the marginalization of young people. Community leaders point out serious lack of facilities to provide a safe and nurturing space for young visible minority members and inadequate responses from the older generation to include and listen to them.

A recent study by the Canadian Council on Social Development on immigrant youth in Canada, Immigrant Youth in Canada (1999),

estimated that 230,000 immigrant youth and children arrived in Canada between 1996 and 1998. About 44% were from Asia and the Pacific region and 22% from Africa and the Middle East, with most of these heading for the major urban centres in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec. Settlement and acculturation issues are high on the agenda for these young people, including language skills, which the report points out that over two thirds of these recent immigrants age under 15 spoke neither of the two official languages. The study found that most new immigrants interviewed reported experiences of racism and bigotry and found that their accents and features created barriers to being accepted as Canadians, with normal problems associated with the school system becoming magnified for them. Challenges encountered by these young people included overcoming social isolation and inter-generational challenges.

9.3   Labour Market

Employment equity, unemployment and under-employment are key issues across visible minority communities. But the focus differs across them - some are dealing with newcomers' needs, such as language skills, acculturation, and skill training/retraining. Others are facing issues such as recognition of qualifications and work experience gained outside of Canada, employment inequity informed by race and gender, and access to the job market for young members, especially those who are school dropouts and/or lack marketable skills.

Henry and Ginzberg's Who Gets the Work (1985) provided concrete evidence of substantial racial discrimination against visible minorities in the job market. It appears that little has changed since that report, as new studies have demonstrated.

Galabuzi (2001) points out that racialised practices in employment persist among those with low or high educational levels and that the demand for above average immigrants to Canada has not translated into comparable employment and earnings. Ornstein (2000)

also points out that the 'labour market plays the central role in economic inequality' and that unemployment and underemployment are key features facing visible minorities. Bauder (2001) cites several studies making the link between visible minority status and varying degrees of disadvantages in the labour market in British Columbia and across Canada.

The study by the Contingent Workers Project in Toronto (2000) underscores the overrepresentation of visible minority women in this growing sector of the labour market, characterized by temporary, part-time and shift work and an absence of job security. Low wages and the lack of health and safety benefits are some of the other concerns facing visible minorities in the workforce.

Lack of recognition of foreign credentials and work experience leads to the de-skilling and under-employment of foreign-trained professionals. This obviously leads to under-utilization of credible human resources and a tremendous loss to the Canadian economy (Pendakur, 2000).

9.4   Information Technology

The assumption that everyone in Canada is connected to information technology does not hold in some visible minority communities - affordability, access and skills are key challenges here, especially for those outside of urban centres. Programs tend not to reach those who need it. Knowledge on where visible minorities are on this issue is lacking. The level of capacity in managing and using information technology - including technical skills, knowledge and access - varies across the organizations.

9.5   Public Perception / Media Image

Media portrayals of racial and minority groups have a profound effect on how these groups are perceived and accepted in society. Balanced portrayal of visible minorities in the media continues to be a challenge, and negative images far outweigh the positive. Concern that these negative images feed into the

insecurities of mainstream thinking and perceptions and work to limit access to opportunities and resources in the society for visible minority communities. The negative portrayal of members of visible minority communities can and often result in negative consequences for particular communities, as in the media portrayal of 'black on black crime' and in the current 'terrorist in our midst problem as a consequence of our lax refugee and immigration policies'.

9.6   Immigration/Refugee issues

Periods and patterns of settlement in the country determine to a large extent the experience of new immigrants and refugees in Canada. Newcomers' issues and needs are different from those associated with older communities. With large numbers of recent immigrants coming from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Caribbean and Latin America, the needs differ significantly from those of European immigrants. These new immigrants face uphill settlement problems, including inequities of the market place, lack of recognition of qualifications and work experience, skill training/retraining opportunities, language skills/proficiency, access to affordable housing and other support services.

Race-based inequities integrated into service delivery agencies, account for further hardships for newcomers and refugees, and families are often left to serve as primary support structure, leading to some stress and conflict. Refugees are even less likely to benefit from equity gains, which are more likely to work for people already within the system. In addition, some urban centres such as Ottawa, where growth of the visible minority population occurred largely over the last ten years, have been unable to keep up with needs in both social infrastructure and services. Also of concern in some communities is the issue of family reunification, particularly among refugees who feel re-traumatized in the struggle to get loved ones to join them from war zones and other troubled areas.

9.7   Civil Rights

There is a growing concern across visible minority communities in Canada on the question of civil liberties and in particular, issues such as race/ethnic profiling heightened by the September 11th tragedy in the USA. The current Bill C36, calling for expansive security mechanisms ostensibly to deal with the threat of terrorism in Canada, is creating fear and deep insecurity in communities. Many immigrants and refugees, particularly those within the Arab, Muslim and South Asian communities express concern that gains made in Canada on just and humane refugee and immigration policies are at great risk of being rolled back. As most communities do not have a voice at these policy-making tables, their members continue to feel vulnerable.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Visible Minority Population at the National level by Age breakdown (1996 census)

The following provides a snapshot of the national visible minority population broken down by age groups within the specific communities.

	Total	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75 plus
National	28,528,125	5,899,200	3,849,025	9,324,340	6,175,785	2,024,180	1,255,590
National Visible Minority	3,197,480	778,340	521,060	1,125,730	581,275	129,410	61,665
Chinese	860,150	171,110	135,580	299,815	177,980	50,680	24,995
South Asian	670,590	168,585	107,465	230,245	127,355	26,425	10,505
Black	573,860	170,870	96,895	186,995	94,520	16,025	8,555
Arab West Asian	244,665	60,850	37,040	95,005	39,955	8,185	3,630
Filipino	234,195	50,985	33,995	90,100	45,370	8,845	4,900
Latin American	176,975	46,530	31,575	68,500	25,190	3,670	1,500
Southeast Asian	172,765	49,295	28,380	68,210	20,195	4,895	1,785
Japanese	68,135	12,545	11,830	20,850	14,670	5,280	2,965
Korean	64,840	12,115	15,525	19,475	14,610	1,765	1,340
NIE	69,745	15,065	11,015	27,590	12,995	2,160	915
Multiple	61,575	20,385	11, 755	18,945	8,425	1,480	575

Source: Canadian Statistics. 1996 Census Website: http//www.statcan.ca/english/

Appendix 2

Visible Minority Population at the Municipal Level by Gender breakdown

The following table provides visible minority population information on two municipalities, showing the gender breakdown at the municipal and group levels. Similar gender breakdown is also available at the provincial levels.

	Toronto			Vancouver		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
Municipal Total	**1,338,095**	**647,500**	**690,590**	**564,600**	**273,710**	**290,885**
Community						
Chinese	**335,185**	163,305	171,880	**279,035**	135,120	143,925
South Asian	**329,840**	166,315	163,530	**120,140**	60,075	60,065
Black	**274,935**	127,300	147,630	**16,400**	8,740	7,660
Arab/West Asian	**72,160**	39,090	33,065	**18,155**	9,745	8,410
Filipino	**99,110**	41,630	57,485	**40,715**	16,595	24,120
Southeast Asian	**46,510**	23,045	23,465	**20,370**	9,915	10,455
Latin American	**61,650**	30,065	31,585	**13,380**	7,005	6,825
Japanese	**17,055**	8,300	8,755	**21,880**	9,845	12,035
Korean	**28,555**	13,475	15,085	**17,085**	8,250	8,835
NIE	**45,655**	21,415	24,240	**6,775**	3,250	3,525
Multiple	**27,435**	13,560	13,880	**10,215**	5,175	5,035

Source: Statistics Canada: 1996 Census website: http://www.statcan.ca/english/profil

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Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration (PCERII): www.pcerii.metropolis.net

Vancouver Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM): www.riim.metropolis.net

Centre for Social Justice: www.socialjustice.org

Canadian Council on Social Development: www.ccsd.ca

Interviews

Interviews were held with the following individuals:

Pramila Agarwall,
Professor, George Brown Community College, Toronto

Dr. John Asfour,
President, Canadian Arab Federation

David Austin,
Community Worker, Montreal

Nehemiah Bailey,
Past President, Canadian Jamaican Association

Dr. Anu Bose,
Executive Director, National Organization of Immigrant and
Visible Minority Women, Ottawa

Francis Chan,
Acting Director, SUCCESS, Vancouver

Emanuel Dick,
President National Council of Trinidad Tobago Organizations

Donny Fairfax,
Executive Director, Employment Clinic for African Canadians, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Tam Goossenn,
President, Urban Alliance on Race Relations, Toronto

Khadija Haffajee,
Islamic Society Of North America (Canadian Section)

Hanny Hassan,
President, Council of Muslim Community of Canada

Alia Hogben,
Canadian Council of Muslim Women, Ottawa

Carl James,
Professor, York University, Toronto

Eunadie Johnson,
Executive Director, Women's Health in Women's Hands

Fo Niemi,
Executive Director, Centre for Research Action on Race Relations, Montreal

Ratna Omidvar,
Executive Director, The Maytree Foundation

Sandy Onyalo,
National Dialogue Committee of African Canadians

Fleurette Osborne,
Congress of Black Women

Ivan Suenarine,
Clinical Director, Cross Cultural Counselling Unit, Winnipeg

Sylvan Williams,
Canadian Ethnocultural Council