

Scarborough Village Community Needs Analysis



May 2008

Caroline Piazza



YWCA
TORONTO



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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

In February 2008, YWCA Toronto was commissioned by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to conduct a needs assessment of the Scarborough Village community. The focus was on employment services as well as barriers that might affect a person's ability to obtain gainful employment. The objective of the 12-week project was to develop a set of feasible and comprehensive recommendations to improve the employment picture of Scarborough Village.

Research Methodology

The research was designed as a four-pronged strategy to capture a broad spectrum of information about and from the community, as detailed below:

- Labour Market Data
- List of Employment Services in Scarborough Village
- Resident Surveys/Research Team Focus Group
- Key Informant Interviews with Community Stakeholders

The 12-week study took place from 19 February to 9 May 2008 and was managed in three phases: Planning, Research, and Analysis and Report Development.

Research Findings

Labour Market Data

Below, we present some key highlights from the labour market data Statistics Canada (SC), and our research survey (RS):

- 47% of the Scarborough Village population have a non-official language as their mother tongue, in contrast to 42.6% in the City of Toronto (SC).
- 55% of Scarborough Village residents are immigrants, compared to 46% in the City of Toronto (SC).
- 19% identified as newcomers, 21% of whom have been in Canada for three years or less, while 79% have been in Canada for more than three years (RS).
- 99.0% of the total population 15 years and over participating in the labour force have children in their household (SC).
- Labour market participation is 8.8% lower in Scarborough Village compared to the City of Toronto, and the unemployment rate is 2.8% higher (SC).
- An average of 51.9% of the population have completed post-secondary education or training (RS).
- Of the total population 25 to 64 years old, 44.7% earned a certificate, diploma or degree outside of Canada (SC).

- Of the total population 15 years and over spending 30 hours or more per week doing unpaid housework, 76% were female; spending 30 hours or more per week looking after children without pay, 70% were female; and spending 20 hours or more providing unpaid care or assistance to seniors, 76.7% were female (SC).
- Our inventory of existing employment services in the neighbourhood revealed: one Employment Resource Centre (YWCA Employment Resource Centre); one Vocational Assessment program for women (YWCA SOAR Program); two referral programs (Catholic Cross Cultural Services and Youth Link); one Job Development project for youth (PAYE); and two English Language training programs (offered through Polycultural Immigrant Services).

Resident Surveys

Of the 1079 random surveys completed, 161 were done on-site at YWCA Scarborough Village Employment Resource Centre (YWCA ERC) and the remaining 918 were completed off-site. Below are some highlights from the surveys:

- In addition to the two official languages, 75.2% of respondents reported speaking one or more of a range of 45 different languages from across the world.
- 43.6% of respondents identified themselves as visible minorities.
- Well over a third (37.1%) of all respondents reported that they do not currently have an income, and only 16.2% reported incomes of \$30,000 or over.
- 46.2% of respondents currently have employment, while 51.8% are not currently working.

Research Team Focus Group and Key Informant Interviews

Below, we present some of the most common themes from these discussions:

- The three primary gaps identified by the research were: local jobs, childcare and programs for youth. Other challenges noted were: language, access, transportation and settlement services.
- Most employment services offer information that is too general to be of help to job seekers, who need one-on-one, customized support to find appropriate and meaningful work.
- Interviewees stressed the importance of free programs, including English language training, computer training, specific programming for women and girls, and job development and placement with employers.

“Employment Services (the way they are currently provided) is like telling someone that there is food and then only showing them a picture of food.” (Key informant)

- Newcomers are unable to gain Canadian experience and references without finding work, and yet they are unable to find meaningful work without experience and references. All that they can find are temporary, unstable jobs that often exclude them from receiving benefits.

“Everything in Canada is linked to a job... You can’t buy a home, get credit, get a car, rent a place to stay without a job.” (Key informant)

- Inability to find appropriate employment places undue stress on newcomer families, which may lead to mental health issues.

“[The stress from] settlement is the unnamed mental illness. Accommodation and flexibility are key to having people work and feel valued.” (Key informant, health care sector).

- The physical layout of Scarborough Village seems to be a major contributor to weak and fragmented service delivery, as does a lack of infrastructural investment. The overwhelming majority of interviewees identified a ‘hub’ or ‘one-stop shop’ as the ideal program delivery model.
- The lack of funding and integration of services results in disappointment and frustration for people who access the few available services.

“The games have changed. All services have become overburdened. It’s a disaster, like someone bleeding on the road and you offering a band aid.” (Key informant)

Our surveys also revealed that a staggering 51.8% of survey respondents are not currently working and 37.1% do not currently have an income, while 14.7% of respondents are not working but may have some form of income. These figures point to deep poverty in the neighbourhood that may lead to patterns of intergenerational poverty with grave consequences for the future social fabric of Scarborough Village, especially for youth.

Given the high proportion of well-educated residents reported in our survey, it is clear that more targeted services are needed to link foreign trained professionals to appropriate employment. Only 10.7% of respondents reported wanting more settlement services in Scarborough Village, even though the Scarborough Summit (Scarborough Civic Summit Report, 2003) concluded that these services are very overstretched. Feedback from our research team and key informants suggests that people who are eligible for such services lack information and/or the time/opportunity/skills to access them, and that the eligibility criteria are too narrow.

Our research indicates that women face even greater barriers to employment than men, and may require gender-specific services to link them effectively to jobs outside the home. In this regard, it is interesting to note that despite an extensive outreach campaign, participation in YWCA SOAR, a vocational assessment program for women only, remains lower than anticipated. The research points to lack of childcare as the primary barrier to participation. Only the language training programs (eligible to convention refugees and landed immigrants) provide childcare to participants. Neither the YWCA ERC nor YWCA SOAR offers childcare. A self-employment program with childcare space, possibly including an element of English language training, would be an asset to the community.

Service providers and funders of programming within and in the vicinity of Scarborough Village are not always aware of all of the existing services available, even though they have collaborated often in the past. Stronger partnerships among all levels of government, service providers, local employers, grassroots community leaders and residents would go

far to address this issue. Our research focus group and our key informants also told us that programs need long-term, flexible funding parameters. Core funding is essential to sustain a strong presence for employment service providers in the community.

The YWCA Employment Resource Centre appears to be supporting the employment-related needs of the community, but with one glaring deficit: one-on-one employment counselling and job matching. 43.7% of survey respondents named job search assistance as the service that they felt would help them the most in finding employment. Key informants mentioned success stories resulting from one-on-one counselling and placement, and the success of PAYE has shown that this approach is highly effective. A PAYE (or Job Connect) model would therefore be a tremendous asset to the employment services currently offered in Scarborough Village.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Study

The success of the model will depend to a great extent upon having a staff of informed, accessible individuals who are representative of the diverse community. Based on our research, we suggest that the menu of services should include the following key components:

- Job development, career assessment and planning
- Free training at a range of levels, with no eligibility restrictions (fees and immigration status)
- Accessible, quality child-minding to enable women to participate in programs (e.g. self-employment training) and community events, consult with staff and explore employment options
- Transportation support
- Strategic liaison with settlement services
- Space for community meetings, girls-only programs, programs for youth, etc.

Many service providers in the neighbourhood already offer some of these services and programs. Through a more inclusive and organized process, existing services could be strategically enhanced to serve clients more seamlessly and efficiently. In order for an employment and skills development program to work effectively in Scarborough Village, or anywhere for that matter, flexible hours, including evening and weekend hours, are also essential. It will require strong partnerships, long-term planning and capital investment, and must include the active input of the community at all stages of planning and delivery.

Scarborough Village is a low-income community with a significant immigrant population composed of a range of ethnicities and language groups. The geography of the neighbourhood, compounded by a weak transportation infrastructure and lack of childcare facilities, makes it extremely difficult for residents to travel, let alone seek out multiple locations in order to access the services they require. We argue that the most effective way to offer employment and other services would be in a 'hub' model: a one-stop location offering a holistic yet flexible menu of options that can be customized according to clients' specific needs.

The greatest need in Scarborough Village is one-on-one, customized, holistic counselling. From the perspective of an employment or skills development program, this would entail offering a service whereby participants can meet with a case manager, have their needs heard, be referred into whatever specific program suits their requirements and, ultimately, be connected to appropriate employment.

As we were constantly told, people want real employment solutions: practical, appropriate and sustained support to find and keep jobs that fit their needs and aptitudes; and in the case of Scarborough Village, the challenges extend beyond employment programs to encompass a daunting array of other gaps in service.

Key informants emphasized the imperative need for partnership and collaboration among stakeholders in designing a new model for service provision. A large number of people truly care about the residents of this community, including politicians, community workers, grassroots community leaders, service providers and residents. These groups are helping to bring everyone to the table to discuss issues and brainstorm solutions, but greater involvement of the provincial and federal governments would be an asset.

Furthermore, any programs that are introduced must have long-term, consistent and flexible funding parameters in order to serve residents' needs and maintain their trust. We recommend strengthening partnerships among all levels of government, community workers, service providers, residents and grassroots community leaders to build capacity for service provision. We further recommend working with the Neighbourhood Action Partnership (NAP), Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) and Scarborough Village 'Hub' (a steering committee made up of members of the Scarborough Village 'Agency Table' and Scarborough Village Neighbourhood Association) to develop a space (ideally a one-stop model or 'hub') from which multiple employment and training programs can be operated effectively.

The need for, and evident lack of, useable program space in Scarborough Village bears further study, particularly if any new program implementation is considered. The survey method used in this project was extremely effective in finding out from the residents precisely what they want. We would highly recommend that a similar survey be conducted regarding the optimal physical location of employment services.

Conclusion

Scarborough Village shows a shifting composition of residents and patterns of residential and commercial space, with new demands being placed on public infrastructure and community services. Any employment programs seeking to serve residents effectively must be sensitive and responsive to this changing picture. They must offer a welcoming environment that reflects the community's diversity where whole families – women and youth included – can find informed and respectful support to address their employment and other needs.

We heard over and over again from a wide range of stakeholders that a holistic, streamlined model of customized services and supports could remedy many of the deficiencies of a fragmented approach to service. We hope that our research project can provide a springboard towards this alternate vision, bringing together government, employers, agencies and the community to collaborate on a joint venture: finding innovative and practical solutions to connect people to sustainable employment.

2. Introduction

In February 2008, YWCA Toronto was commissioned by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to conduct a needs assessment of the Scarborough Village community focusing on employment services, as well as on barriers that might affect a person's ability to obtain gainful employment.

The objective of the 12-week project was to develop a set of feasible and comprehensive short-term and long-term recommendations to improve the employment picture of Scarborough Village, and make a truly positive impact on the lives of the people who live there. We set out to engage the community actively in our research process, in order to hear from as many residents, community leaders and service providers as we could. This report shares our findings from the research, and recommends some approaches to enhance future service delivery in Scarborough Village.

2.1 About YWCA Toronto

YWCA Toronto is an association of diverse and caring women dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls through dynamic leadership, advocacy, and a range of unique and essential services to promote personal growth and economic independence. In 2007, we helped over 23,628 women and girls secure housing, find a job, build confidence, achieve economic independence and flee violence.

There are currently over 43 programs offered across Toronto at 12 sites, with particular emphasis on serving at-risk communities in the inner suburbs, and women and families who are vulnerable as a result of poverty, homelessness, violence, racism, homophobia and other forms of exclusion.

YWCA Toronto has a proven track record of identifying critical gaps in services available to the community and then implementing and delivering pioneering programming to fill those voids. We have extensive knowledge of the newcomer community in the catchment area of Scarborough Village, as we have been providing a number of programs and services to residents since 2006 and have a record of successful interventions. YWCA participates in many community networks that enable us to monitor trends, identify changing community demographics and keep abreast of government policy changes that impact on community well being. Local schools that we work with and other service providers are also an important source in this regard.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Purpose and Objectives

This 12-week project was initiated on 19 February 2008 with the mandate to conduct a needs assessment of the Scarborough Village community and report the findings to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities by 9 May 2008.

3.2 Scope of the Research

The study focuses on employment services, as well as possible barriers that may affect a person's ability to obtain gainful employment. Employment services included in the scope of this project are:

- Transportation (assistance and accessibility as related to employment services)
- Skills Development and Employment programs for youth, women, people with disabilities, and internationally trained professionals

Services that were not evaluated in the scope of this project include:

- Emergency housing and shelter
- Emergency healthcare
- Settlement Services
- Food and nutrition
- Legal assistance services
- Police services
- Recreational and 'after-school' programs
- Services for seniors

3.3 Research Strategy

The research was designed as a four-pronged strategy to capture a broad spectrum of information about and from the community. As detailed below, we collected: labour market data; a comprehensive list of existing employment services for Scarborough Village; resident surveys; and key informant interviews with community stakeholders.

3.3.1. Labour Market Data

Labour Market Data was obtained through various sources, including Statistics Canada, Service Canada, City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance and Administration Department and Enterprise Toronto. Background information and the history of Scarborough Village were sourced from Cedarbrae Library's archives, the Urban Affairs Library and Internet searches.

3.3.2. List of Employment Services in Scarborough Village

A full inventory review was conducted to determine the existing employment and training programs currently located in Scarborough Village. Given the limited number of services in the catchments boundaries of Scarborough Village, we also chose to list other employment services within a small, three-kilometre radius.

Note: Please see Section 6, Learning from the Research, for a list of service categories, providers and their location (in or out of the catchment area). See Appendix I for a full catalogue of each Scarborough Village employment service provider's offerings.

3.3.3. Resident Feedback

3.3.3. A. Survey Respondents

We developed a survey containing a total of 14 questions in order to receive direct feedback from Scarborough Village residents. Our research team was intentionally composed of residents, grassroots community leaders and community workers. Surveys were conducted at scheduled sites throughout Scarborough Village, at three community meetings (the Bengali Social Club, Afghani Community Group, and Tamil Association) and through door-to-door canvassing. To engage the local schools, library and other service providers actively in the research process, we established seven sites in and around Scarborough Village where the research team could conduct the surveys.

These sites were:

Scarborough Village Recreation Centre
Bliss Carmen Senior Public School
St. Boniface Catholic School
Cedar Drive Junior Public School
Cougar Court Childcare Centre
Cedarbrae Public Library
YWCA Scarborough Village Employment Resource Centre
Polycultural Immigrant Services

Booths were set up at three of the sites listed above. Researchers also canvassed several high-rise buildings. For a complete list of addresses for all of these sites, please see Appendix II.

3.3.3. B. Research Team Focus Group

At the end of the research phase, a focus group was held with the research team to discuss any findings that were not captured in the survey data, and to garner the team's own valuable feedback about the research. Please see below, p. 34, for further detail.

3.3.4. Key Informant Interviews with Community Stakeholders

There are a group of service providers in Scarborough who work together as the Scarborough Village 'Agency Table'. We contacted each member of this committee and conducted 17 interviews with their agency representatives. In addition, we met with community workers and political leaders.

We completed a total of 27 interviews, each being between 15 minutes to one hour. The seven questions were informal and open-ended, allowing interviewees to provide feedback at a broad level (i.e. about social issues, concerns, challenges), as well as comment on specific issues related to employment and other community programming in the neighbourhood. Please see below, p. 34, for further detail.

These service organizations and various levels of government included:

Government of Canada
City of Toronto
Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC)
East Scarborough Storefront
Newcomer Women's Services Toronto
Scarborough Community Legal Services
Canadian Mental Health Association
| Toronto Social Services
YWCA Toronto
Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
Community Social Planning Council of Toronto
Catholic Cross Cultural Services
Tropicana Community Services

Note: We agreed upon a confidentiality policy for resident and key informant interviews. The sources of specific quotes that are used in this report will therefore remain anonymous.

3.4 Project Timeline

The 12-week study took place from 19 February- 9 May 2008 and was managed in three phases:

- Planning (19-29 February)

During the planning phase, the project schedule and requirements were developed. Our collaboration with Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) started with an initial discussion of the project, and sourcing the research team.

- Research (3 March-11 April)

The research phase covered the four key research components: labour market data collection, an inventory of the employment services in Scarborough Village, conducting surveys and key informant interviews.

- Analysis and Report Development (14 April-9 May)

During the final four weeks of the project, the survey results were captured in a database and analyzed. The data gathered through various other methods were also analyzed and this report was developed.

4. Scarborough Village Profile

4.1 Location

Scarborough Village is a small community situated in East Toronto and bordered by Scarborough Golf Club Road on the east, the CN Rail tracks on the north, Bellamy Road to the west and the Lake Ontario shoreline in the south.



Source: City of Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles (www.toronto.ca).

4.2 History

First established in 1800 by Cornell and Secor, the Kingston Road and Eglinton Avenue area provided settlers with access to the lakeshore and was an invaluable through-way for soldiers during the War of 1812 (*The Scarborough Mirror*, 25 October, 1978).

In 'A History of Scarborough', Robert R. Bonis describes Scarborough Village as "consisting only of a brick schoolhouse, a general store, a blacksmith shop, a building for the sale of farm implements, the Methodist parsonage, less than a dozen dwellings, and a large railway hotel converted to other uses" (*Toronto Neighbourhoods*, Maple Tree Publishing, 1999).

By 1930, Kingston Road was used as the major highway between Toronto and Montreal (*The Scarborough Mirror*, 25 October 1978), and over the past century, the community has developed into an eclectic mix of low-income rental properties, subdivisions and executive homes.

4.3 The Neighbourhood Today

Scarborough Village includes Wards 36, 38, and 43 of the City of Toronto. It contains a community centre, five public schools and a handful of religious based organizations.

Scarborough Village was identified in the 2004 City of Toronto and United Way Task Force as one of the city's 13 priority neighbourhoods that are under-served and require infrastructural investment. The City of Toronto's Neighbourhood Action report presented in November 2007 (City of Toronto, Social Development, Finance and Administration) recognized the "unequal investment and inequitable access to programs and services". Over the past few years, strategic partnerships have been established to help the priority neighbourhoods, including collaboration between the Social Policy and Research Unit of the City of Toronto, the United Way, and other levels of government. Since December 2006, The Neighbourhood Action Team (NAT) and the Neighbourhood Action Partnership (NAP) have been spearheading a campaign to help build neighbourhood capacity and community well being in Scarborough Village.

4.4 Demographics

Please note: Although the majority of results of the 2006 Statistics Canada census (i.e. population, immigration and employment rates) have been released at the time of this report, income statistics will not be made public until early May 2008, and are therefore unfortunately beyond the scope of this report.

Scarborough Village encompasses three census tracts: 0331.03, 0331.04 and 0332.00. According to the 2006 census, the total population of Scarborough Village is 15,595, a 7.5% decrease from the 2001 census (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census Area Profile). Of the total population 47.5% are male and 52.5% are female.

4.4.1 Population

Labour market data from the 2006 census shows that the population of Toronto grew by 9.2% from the period 2001 to 2006, while the population of Scarborough Village decreased by 7.5% over the same period.

Population	Toronto	Scarborough Village
Population, 2001 - 100% data	4,682,897	17,029
Population, 2006 - 100% data	5,113,149	15,590
Population % change, 2001 to 2006	9.2	-7.5

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 census tracts: 535 (Toronto), 0331.03, 0331.04, 0332.00 (Scarborough Village).

4.4.2 Gender

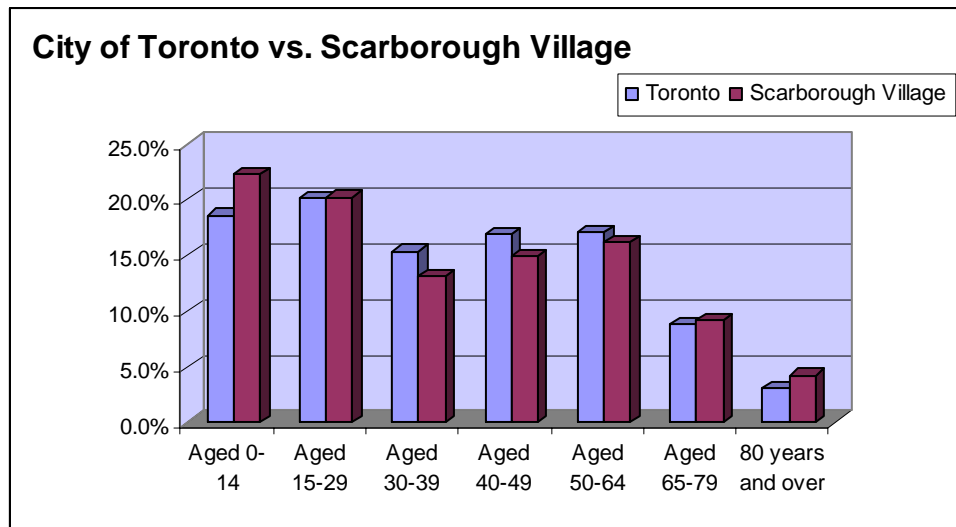
Scarborough Village has a 1.1% higher female population than the City of Toronto.

Population by Gender	Toronto	Scarborough Village
Male %	48.6%	47.5%
Female %	51.4%	52.5%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 census tracts: 535 (Toronto), 0331.03, 0331.04, 0332.00 (Scarborough Village).

4.4.3 Age

The population in Scarborough Village aged 14 years and younger is 3.7% higher than the same age range in the City of Toronto. The age group of 15 to 29 is the same as the remainder of the City, while the population aged 30 to 39, 40 to 49 and 50 to 64 all have lower representation in Scarborough Village, at -2.2%, -2.0% and -1.0% respectively.



Population by Age	Toronto	Scarborough Village
% of Population aged 0-14	18.6%	22.3%
% of Population aged 15-29	20.2%	20.2%
% of Population aged 30-39	15.3%	13.1%
% of Population aged 40-49	16.9%	14.9%
% of Population aged 50-64	17.1%	16.1%
% of Population aged 65-79	8.8%	9.2%
% of Population 80 years and over	3.1%	4.3%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 census tracts: 535 (Toronto), 0331.03, 0331.04, 0332.00 (Scarborough Village).

4.4.4 Household Size and Income

The number of census families in private households with five persons is 4.2% higher in Scarborough Village than in the City of Toronto.

Household	Toronto	Scarborough Village
% of Private House. W 2 Persons	39.8%	40.3%
% of Private House. W 3 Persons	24.6%	22.7%
% of Private House. W 4 Persons	25.0%	22.5%
% of Private House. W 5 Persons	10.6%	14.8%

According to a preview obtained by *The Globe and Mail* of the final 2006 census data (to be released by Statistics Canada in early May 2008), “median incomes [are] falling for immigrants and native-born 18-30-year-old males who compete directly for the same entry level jobs that are increasingly characterized as low-pay, unstable and short term” (“Wealth Gap Exposes Fresh Labour Challenge”, *The Globe and Mail*, 26 April 2008, A18).

In the ‘Poverty by Postal Code’ report, the Scarborough Village neighbourhood includes two census tract areas considered ‘high’ poverty (26% to 39.9% of families living below the low-income cut-off) and ‘very high’ poverty (indicates 40% or greater rate of families living below the low-income cut-off). The report further states that according to U.S. research, “poverty rates at this level (40% or greater) are an indicator of extreme neighbourhood distress”.

Note: Low-income cut-offs (LICOs) provide low-income threshold figures. The figures below are extracted from 2005 data to highlight the rates for a community the same size as Scarborough Village.

Low Income cut-offs before tax, 2005	
Size of Family Unit	Community Size of 500,000 or over
1 Person	20,778
2 Persons	25,867
3 Persons	31,801
4 Persons	38,610
5 Persons	43,791
6 Persons	49,389
7 or more Persons	54,987

Source: Low Income Cut-Offs for 2005, Income Statistics Division, Statistics Canada).

4.4.5 Language

47% of the Scarborough Village population have a non-official language as their mother tongue, in contrast to 42.6% in Toronto. Of these non-official languages, 11.6% speak Tamil, 8.2% Urdu, 4.2% Persian (Farsi), 3.0% Tagalog, 1.6% Spanish and 1.4% Bengali. 5.5% indicate neither “neither French nor English,” as their mother tongue, although they

do not specify their language. The remaining languages each make up less than 1% of the population.

4.4.6 Immigration

55% of Scarborough Village residents are immigrants, compared to 46% in the City of Toronto. 19% identified as newcomers, 21% of whom have been in Canada for three years or less, while 79% have been in Canada for more than three years.

4.4.7 Employment Opportunities

In the 2005 Toronto Business Directory, there were 2,368 businesses listed in the three City of Toronto Wards bordering Scarborough Village: Ward 36, 38 and 43. Of these businesses, 2,260 had less than 100 employees, and 51 had between 100-1,000 employees. Four organizations had over 1,000: City of Toronto, Rouge Valley Health System, Telus and Scarborough General Hospital (please note that these figures represent the entire area of the three City wards, of which Scarborough Village is only one part).

The majority of the Scarborough Village area contains residential units, and so the number of businesses and employers is limited. The corner of Markham Road and Eglinton Avenue East forms the nucleus of retail shops. It currently contains a large grocery store, childcare centre and other retail services on the southeast corner, and smaller 'strip-mall' shops on the northwest and northeast corners.

Over the next five to ten years, retail space on the southeast corner of Markham Road and Eglinton Avenue is slated for a phased demolition and zoning for residential use. This change will further deplete the already limited employment opportunities in Scarborough Village.

5. Research Findings

As described in Section 3, Methodology, our research findings are presented in four parts:

1. Labour Market Data Analysis
2. List of Employment Services in Scarborough Village
3. Resident Feedback
4. Key Informant Interviews

5.1 Labour Market Data Analysis

5.1.1 Labour Market Overview

Canada is currently experiencing the lowest unemployment rate in 33 years. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) conducted a recent study that found out there were vacant 309,000 jobs for four months or more in 2007 (“Time to Mend Policy”, *National Post*, 7 April 2008, F4). The labour market is also changing: all levels of government have moved to address a growing gap in supply of skilled trades, and to introduce programs to support ‘older’ workers and aboriginal people to enter the workforce.

A growing gap between wealthy and poor is driving up the cost of housing, thereby consuming a disproportionate amount of poorer people’s income. Meanwhile, “the traditional premium paid by employers to well-educated workers is declining, largely because there are so many of them – bad news for both the highly educated immigrants Canada vacuums up from the developing world and its own well-educated native-born”. New immigrants therefore face yet greater barriers to integration into the Canadian economy and society than earlier generations. With a shift in power balance from what workers can command to what employers are demanding, many foreign trained professionals are finding themselves excluded, “as prospective Canadian employers stubbornly devalue [their] foreign workplace experience and university education” (“Wealth Gap Exposes Fresh Labour Challenge”, *The Globe and Mail*, 26 April 2008, A18).

As our research shows, Scarborough Village provides an all too accurate illustration of this new trend: it contains a large proportion of recent immigrants, high rates of poverty and unemployment, and a high average level of education and training. Nearly half of the total population between 25 and 64 years hold foreign certificates, diplomas and/or degrees.

According to the 2006 census, there are 2.2% more people in Scarborough Village participating in ‘labour force activity’ than in the City of Toronto. The percentage shifts greatly for the population aged 25 and over in Scarborough Village, who have 2.2% less participation overall than the City, although as the chart below shows, there are some notable gender differences in participation.

Population by Participation in Labour Force	Toronto	Scarborough Village
% of Population 15 to 24 years	16.5%	18.7%
% of Population 25 years and over	83.5%	81.3%
% of Males 15 years and over	48.1%	46.5%
% of Males 15 to 24 years	8.4%	10.0%
% of Males 25 years and over	39.6%	36.4%
% of Females 15 years and over	51.9%	53.5%
% Females 15 to 24 years	8.1%	8.6%
% of Females 25 years and over	43.8%	44.8%

A large number of Scarborough Village residents who participate in the labour force fall into the following categories of occupation according to the National Occupation Classification (NOC): Sales and Service (26.9%); and Business, Finance and Administration (22.0%).

Scarborough Village by Occupation	%
Management occupations	7.6%
Business, finance and administration occupations	22.0%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	5.6%
Health occupations	5.3%
Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion	6.1%
Sales and service occupations	26.9%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	10.8%
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	11.7%

According to the North American Industry Classification System (2002), of the Scarborough Village population 15 years and over participating in the labour force:

- 11.7% are in the manufacturing industry
- 10.7% in Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services
- 10.4% are in the retail trade
- 10.4% are in health care and social assistance

We note below some other interesting figures about Scarborough Village residents gleaned from the 2006 census:

5.1.2 Unpaid work

- Of the total population 15 years and over who spent 30 hours or more per week without pay **doing unpaid housework, 76% were female**
- Of the total population 15 years and over who spent 30 hours or more per week without pay **looking after children, 70% were female**
- Of the total population 15 years and over who spent 20 hours or more **providing unpaid care or assistance to seniors, 76.7% were female**

5.1.3 Childcare

- **99.0% of the total population 15 years and over participating in the labour force had children in their household**

5.1.4 Education and Training

- Of the total population 15 to 24 years of age **59% have obtained a certificate, diploma or degree**
- Of the total population 25 to 64 years, **44.7% earned a certificate, diploma or degree outside of Canada**

5.2 List of Employment Services in Scarborough Village

The following list of existing employment services in the community was gleaned from our research, as well as from interviews with local employment service providers who were among our pool of key informants. As it is not possible to list here all the specific services provided by each provider, please see Appendix 1 for a complete profile.

Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services (Polycultural)

3174 Eglinton Avenue East

Polycultural offer a variety of services, including:

- Two English language training programs – Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and starting May 5th, Enhanced Language Training (ELT).
- ELT is an 18-week part-time program has three occupational streams: Technical Services (e.g. electricians and engineers), Health Services, and Administration and Consumer Services. Foreign trained professionals and skilled trades who complete the program will be placed for a six-week work bridging or mentoring within their sector. Both program are open to convention refugees and landed immigrants, and provide childcare and TTC support.
- A pre-employment development service for recipients of Social Assistance.
- A small self-directed resource centre for residents.
- Screening and referrals to solution-focused counselling and case management for refugee claimants, convention refugees, permanent residents and landed immigrants.

YWCA Scarborough Village Employment Resource Centre (ERC)
3730 Kingston Road, 2nd Floor

YWCA Scarborough Village ERC is a full service resource centre open to all individuals offering:

- A computer centre with 27 client computers, each fitted with high speed internet
- Resume assistance
- Free access for job searching to telephones, printing, scanning and faxing
- A large selection of resources to help people with their job searches
- An extensive library of books and videos
- Specialized workshops and information sessions
- Saturday opening hours

YWCA Toronto Seek, Obtain, Advance, Retain (SOAR)
3730 Kingston Road

YWCA Toronto SOAR is a four-week program for all women. It focuses on unemployed women with multiple barriers to employment, with an emphasis on sole support mothers, and offers:

- Vocational Assessment and Counselling (2 weeks)
- Employability Enhancement (2 weeks)
- Career planning
- Transportation support
- Job Search Café with networking opportunities and motivational activities

Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) City of Toronto
Recruitment drives in Scarborough Village taking place from Q-ssis Banquet Hall (3474 Kingston Road).

Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) is a collaborative initiative between the City of Toronto and the private sector that aims to match youth between the ages of 16-29 with employers. Seven agencies have been engaged in Scarborough to provide frontline counsellors and a coach to help prepare participant resumes, conduct interview workshops and facilitate the hiring process. The first project took place in 2007, at which time 100 Scarborough Village youth went through the program. Of the 100 participants, 37 were placed with employers and 29 of those were able to get jobs. The second project is in progress and will be running hiring events in April and May 2008.

The following services are within a three-kilometre radius of Scarborough Village, and/or may have outreach workers who assist the residents of Scarborough Village:

Catholic Cross Cultural Services
1200 Markham Road, Suite 503

Although this agency does not have a physical presence in Scarborough Village, it has an outreach worker who provides information and referrals related to settlement needs. Services are open to all individuals in the community, and are offered through local schools and to residents.

South Asian Family Support Services
Morning Centre, 1154 Morningside Avenue East, Suite #206

The South Asian Family Support services offer a Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) with up to Level 7 literacy. Classes are offered Monday to Friday, from 9am to 2pm, and include childminding. Immigrant and convention refugees are eligible to attend.

YOUTHLINK
747 Warden Avenue

YOUTHLINK is a community-based, accredited children's mental health centre located in Scarborough. It provides services and programs for vulnerable youth between the ages of 12-24 and their families or caregivers. One of their programs is part of the Opportunity Outreach Program, Ministry of Children & Youth Services. This initiative helps youth in priority neighbourhoods, including Scarborough Village. Two outreach workers provide referrals, operate recreation programs (e.g. martial arts) and offer a free drop-in service through the Scarborough Village Recreation Centre. Although the centre does not itself provide employment services, outreach workers can take youth to the Tropicana Community Service, which offers an employment assistance program for youth in Scarborough.

Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough
100 Galloway Road

The Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough has a mobile team of three workers who run programs from the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) building at 3171 Eglinton Avenue East. The team conducts mini-workshops for residents who are Canadian citizens or landed immigrants and between the ages of 16 to 29. Workshop topics include resume writing, interviewing skills and employment rights.

YWCA Employment Programs, 3090 Kingston Road
3090 Kingston Road

Through the location at 3090 Kingston Road, a number of employment programs and services are offered to women. Employment services include customized career assessment, one-on-one counselling with vocational assessment counsellors, work readiness training and job development support. There is a 10-week career assessment and employment preparation program offered to women who qualify for Ontario Works benefits. In addition, there are a variety of on-line and in-class training programs, as well as job-matching with employers.

YWCA Girls' Centre, 3090 Kingston Road

This YWCA centre runs a girls-only program at the Toronto Community Housing Corporation building at 3171 Eglinton Avenue East in Scarborough Village. The program is guided by a Girls' Council and concentrates on recreational and safety initiatives for girls aged 8-13.

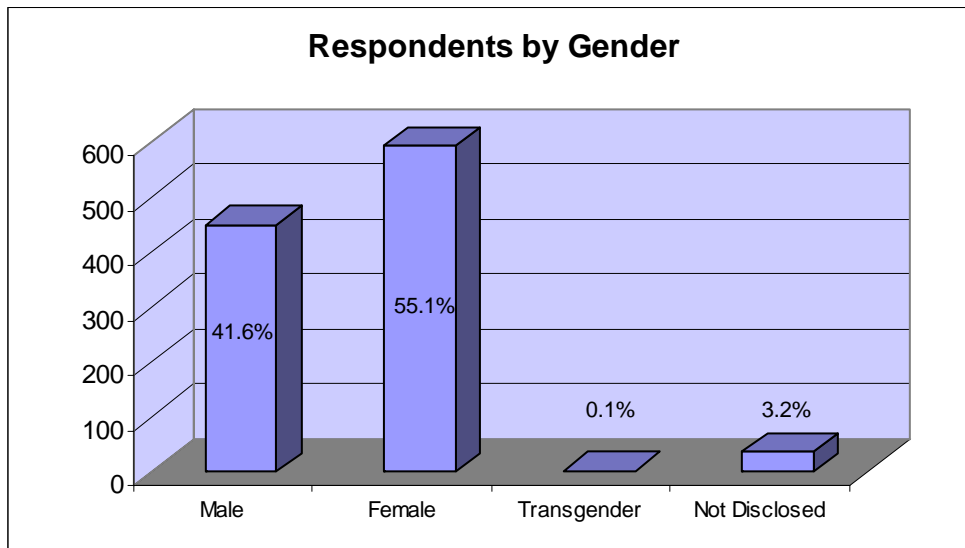
5.3 Resident Survey Results

As detailed in the Methodology, findings from the 1,079 surveys completed by our research team provided us with a picture of the residents themselves, their involvement with employment services in the community, and their employment service needs. Of these 1,079 surveys, 161 were done on-site at YWCA ERC and the remaining 918 were completed off-site (please see Section 3, Methodology, for a full list of survey sites). Since the survey was conducted with a random sampling of residents, we do not claim that our picture is representative of the entire labour market of Scarborough Village.

5.3.1. Profile of the Survey Respondents

Gender

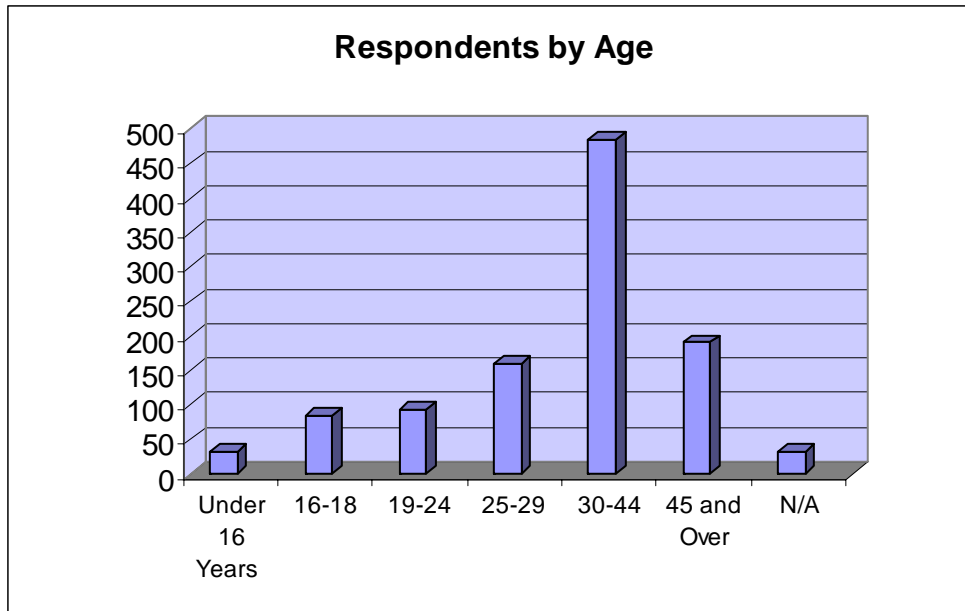
Of the sample surveyed, 41.6% are male and 55.1% female. 0.1% identified themselves as transgendered and 3.2% did not disclose their gender.



Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 13 results

Age

The sample showed a broad cross-section in terms of age: 3.1% of respondents are 16 years or under, 7.9% are 16 to 18 years old, 8.6% are between the ages of 19 to 24, 14.8% are 25 to 29 years old, and the largest respondent age group are between the ages of 30 to 44, 44.9%. 17.6% of respondents are 45 years old or over. 33 respondents (3.1%) did not identify their age.



Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 12 results

Languages Spoken

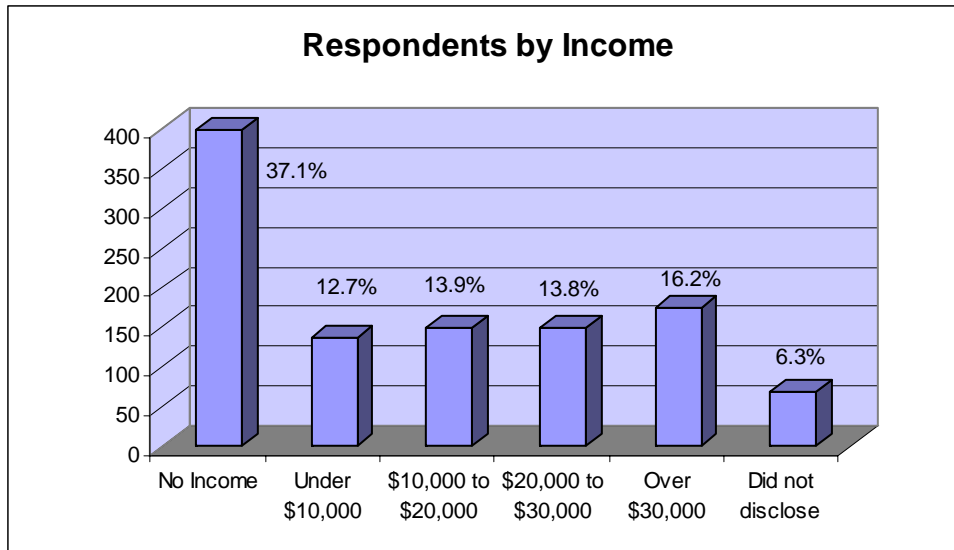
92.4% of respondents reported speaking English, while 7.6% reported speaking French. In addition to the two official languages, 75.2% of respondents reported speaking one or more of a range of 45 different languages from across the world (for a full list of these languages, please see Appendix 3). Of these 75.2% of respondents, 47.9% spoke one of the following four languages: Urdu (17.3%), Tamil (14.3%), Hindi (8.3%) and Bengali (8.0%).

Identification

43.6% of respondents identified themselves as visible minorities. 4.8% identified as persons with a disability, 2.6% as Aboriginal/Métis, and 2.2% as Francophone.

Income Levels

Well over a third (37.1%) of all respondents reported that they do not currently have an income. 12.7% have incomes of less than \$10,000, 13.9% have incomes between \$10,000 and \$20,000, 13.8% have incomes between \$20,000 and \$30,000 and 16.2% reported incomes of \$30,000 or over. 6.3% did not disclose their income level.



Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 9 results

Employment Status

46.2% of respondents currently have employment, while 51.8% are not currently working. Of those respondents without work, 20.8% have been unemployed for less than one year and 31.0% have been unemployed for more than a year. 1.9% of respondents did not answer this question.

Benefit Recipients

68% of respondents indicated that they have not applied for, nor are they receiving any of the following: Employment Insurance Benefits, Social Assistance, Worker's Compensation Benefits, Severance Pay, Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits, Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) or Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits.

The remaining 32% of respondents have applied for or are currently receiving benefits as follows:

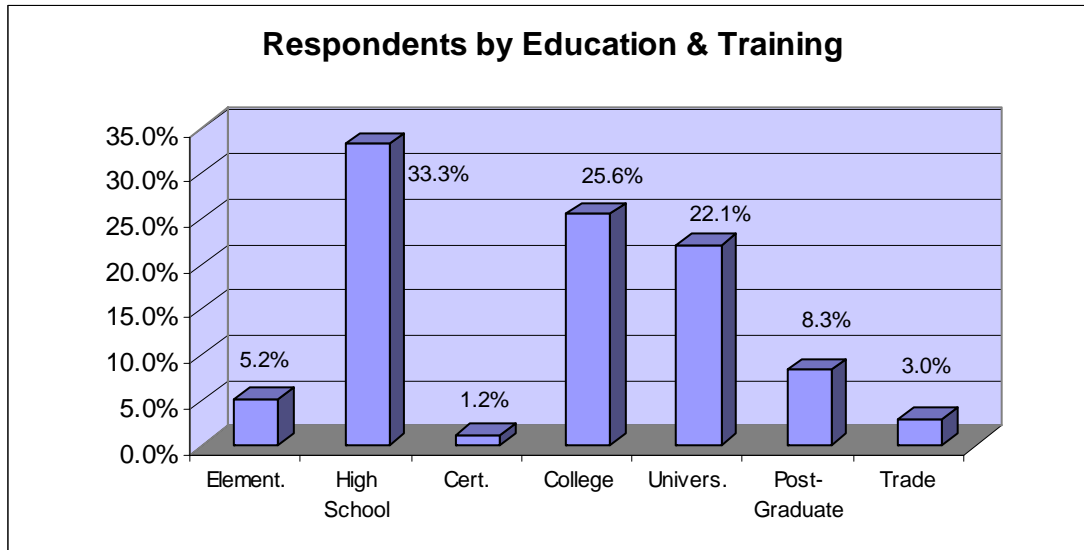
Social Assistance	13.1%
EI Benefits	12.7%
WSIB	3.0%
Severance Pay	2.0%
ODSP	0.7%
OSAP	0.3%
Canada Pension	0.2%

Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 8 results

Of the 12.7% of respondents who have applied for or are currently receiving Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, 18.7% reported collecting EI benefits in the last three years, or having received maternity or parental benefits in the past five years.

Education and Training

5.2% of respondents have completed elementary school and 33.3% high school, while 1.2% have obtained a certificate. 25.6% have attended college, 22.1% have attended university and 8.3% have obtained a post-graduate level of education. In addition, 3% reported having completed an apprenticeship or trade.



Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 5 results

Computer Skills

Respondents were asked about their level of computer skills, and reported as follows:

Category	%
Using a Mouse	78.2%
Keyboard	77.1%
Internet Search	76.0%
Word Processing	73.1%
No Computer Skills	11.1%
Microsoft Office	6.0%

5.3.2. Survey Responses

The responses below follow the order of questions asked in the survey (please see Appendix IV for a sample questionnaire).

Employment Service Needs

The first question on the survey asked: “What type of employment services or information would help you?” and twenty-six possible services were listed, as well as an ‘other’ option, to which respondents could suggest additional services.

Below are the list of services and the percentage of respondents who selected the service:

Employment Service	%
Job Search Assistance	43.7%
Internet Access	41.8%
Computer Access	40.6%
Training Opportunities	40.4%
Career Planning	37.2%
Resume Assistance	36.3%
Job Search Listings/Job Board	35.6%
Career Assessment	35.2%
Job Bank	35.0%
Photocopying Service	34.8%
Employment Counselling	33.1%
Use of Fax/Scanner	32.6%
Interviewing Strategies	30.8%
Cover Letter Writing	30.7%
English Language Training	30.5%
Use of Telephone	30.1%
Newspapers	29.1%
Government Listings	24.8%
Student Services/Youth Programs	24.7%
Workshop/Tutorial	24.3%
Community Resource Information	22.0%
Occupational Information	20.9%
Small Business Information	20.8%
Apprenticeship Opportunities	20.6%
Labour Market Trends	15.2%
Business Directories	14.6%
French Language Training	0.8%
Networking Opportunities	0.5%
Mentorship for Professionals	0.5%
Co-Op Training Programs	0.5%
Programming for Seniors	0.2%
Services for Persons with Disabilities	0.1%
Volunteer Opportunities	0.1%

Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 1 results

Employment Services Accessed

Survey respondents were asked: “What employment services have you used in the past year?” The responses are follows:

Employment Service	%
Employment Resource Centre	36.8%
Community Services	27.6%
Skills Training Program	16.3%
Job Connect	16.1%
Career Assessment Program	13.0%
Programs for Women	12.3%
Youth Programs	11.8%
Settlement Services	10.7%
Career Counselling	0.2%
Continuing Education	0.1%
Volunteer Opportunities	0.1%
Referrals to Employers	0.1%
ESL Program	0.1%
Other:	0.0%

Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 2 results

Other Employment-Related Service Needs

The survey asked if there are any services that would assist respondents in their employment search. As can be seen in the chart below, one of the major barriers identified by a significant number of respondents was lack of or inadequate transportation. Almost a third cited difficulties in accessing child-minding services. Meanwhile, language training such as English as a Second Language (ESL) or Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) was identified as a need by almost a quarter of respondents. A small percentage of respondents wanted more networking opportunities, credential evaluation, flexible program times and co-op programs.

Service	%
Transportation Assistance	43.2%
Childcare/Child minding	26.8%
ESL/LINC	23.0%
Better Access to Transportation	19.6%
Networking Opportunities	0.3%
Credential Evaluation	0.1%
Flexible Programs	0.1%
Co-op Programs	0.1%

Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire, Question # 3 results

Note: “Transportation Assistance” includes T.T.C. ticket and Wheel Trans Service while “Better Access to Transportation” refers to service provision.

5.3.3. Feedback from Research Team Focus Group

The surveys were brief and focused in design, in order for our research team to capture results from as a broad a sample of respondents as possible in the time available. In addition to answering the survey questions listed above, however, a number of respondents provided the researchers with informal feedback about the employment picture in their community.

We discussed the following questions:

Did you receive any feedback from participants that was not captured in the surveys?

- There is a lack of knowledge in the community regarding the availability of employment services. Scarborough Village residents in general, and youth in particular, are not aware that YWCA Scarborough Village ERC or YWCA SOAR (Seek, Obtain, Advance, Retain) programs exist. It was also mentioned that the YWCA ERC location is out of the way, and not visible to the community.
- Employment program staff do not mirror the community, or speak their languages. There is also a lack of services for people with disabilities, such as employment assessment and job development.
- Providing general information for job seekers is not enough: targeted support for job finding is essential. Meanwhile, training opportunities are lacking. The requirement of Canadian work experience and references is also a major barrier to employment.
- The unavailability of childcare is a serious obstacle to attendance at employment programs, as is the lack of flexible programming. For example, it would be helpful to offer programming on weekends as well as during the week.

Each of you is seen as a leader in your respective communities. What do you think the needs are in Scarborough Village?

- “People don’t have the luxury of spending time researching at an ERC; they need people that will help them get into jobs.”
- “People can’t get jobs in their field, and this leads to gaps in their resume.”
- “Bring in employers, assess people’s skills and match them with jobs. Act as a mediator between employers and participants.”
- “Professionals are suffering the most... [They] want placement and internship opportunities. Some things are done differently here, that is why a (one year) internship would be helpful.”

- “People are starting from zero over here and need more guidance from the Canadian government. People are only learning from word of mouth. Give people information when they arrive at the airport.”
- “The way that [employment programs in Scarborough Village] are now is not suitable. They are missing the main needs: internships for professionals, training programs and programs for youth.”
- “People want to get what employers are asking for – references and Canadian experience.”

5.4 The Key Informant Interviews

Between March 12th and April 11th, the project research coordinator conducted 27 in-person key informant interviews with local service providers and community stakeholders.

Interviewees were asked about existing and new services available in the community (listed above in this section, and also mentioned in the Scarborough Village Profile). They were also asked a number of open-ended questions about the community and its employment challenges. These questions and the interviewees’ responses are provided below.

What feedback about employment challenges have you received from Scarborough Village residents?

Two common themes emerged here, the first of which concerns newcomers to Canada.

Newcomers are caught in a ‘Catch 22’ situation: they cannot get Canadian experience and references without finding work, and yet they are unable to find meaningful work without experiences and references. All that is available to them is temporary employment. One interviewee pointed out that the requirement for job seekers to have Canadian experience might in fact be a human rights issue, since it renders a person ineligible for the benefits that should be available to all Canadians under our social welfare system.

For this and other reasons, newcomers face immense difficulty in securing employment in their area of expertise, which in turn places a severe stress on their families:

- “People are upset because they can’t find jobs in their field. This leads to pain, frustration and resentment.”
- “There is a huge stigma for men who are new to Canada and cannot find jobs. There is also more pressure on (newcomer) women to go out and get jobs.”

This vicious cycle is the primary root of newcomers’ inability to integrate successfully into Canadian society:

- “Everything in Canada is linked to a job... You can’t buy a home, get credit, get a car, rent a place to stay without a job.”

The second common theme concerns residents’ dissatisfaction with existing employment programs/services.

Most employment services offer information that is too general to be of help to job seekers, who need one-on-one, customized support to find appropriate and meaningful work:

- “People have used the YWCA ERC and it has not been effective in helping them find a job.”
- “There is a lot of talk but no action. There need to be more job development and individualized services.”
- “People that we refer to employment agencies often come back feeling frustrated. They are just getting more information but no help.”

Pre-employment services and workshops do not appear to be the best strategy in supporting people to find jobs:

- “People have been to workshops. They don’t want any more workshops.”

What do you think are the gaps in employment-related services in Scarborough Village?

The majority of interviewees identified three primary gaps: childcare, local jobs and programs for youth.

Childcare

The unavailability of accessible, quality childcare presents a major problem for residents, particularly for women seeking to enter/re-enter the workforce, and there is also a lack of subsidized childcare spaces:

- “Scarborough [overall] is saturated with services. What is missing [in Scarborough Village] is the systemic stuff, things like childcare and language training.” (Key informant, employment service sector).
- “Childcare needs to be closer [to Scarborough Village residents]. There is a long wait for childcare placements and they need to be more accessible.”
- “There are limited child-minding services, and newcomer families have children.”
- “Childcare [services] should be easy to get to and offer flexible schedules.”

Local Jobs

The lack of and low quality of local employment opportunities were identified as serious gaps:

- “The gap in the community is jobs. People need to be earning an income.”
- “It’s one thing to offer services, it’s another to provide people with jobs.”
- “[For profit] employment agencies have people going from job to job and it can create issues in terms of benefit eligibility [since sporadic work for short periods may affect a person’s eligibility for benefits].”

Programs for Youth, Women & Girls

Interviewees spoke of gaps in general community and employment programming for youth, women and girls. This lack of services has an impact on safety and quality of life in Scarborough Village:

- “Girls are scared to come out of their apartments without a purpose [unless they have somewhere specific to go] because the guys are taking over the space and harassing.”
- “Engage the police. Have a community policing component, and engage them with youth and parents.”
- “Counselling for parents and women is a gap. The services that did exist are now gone” (this key informant further noted that she used to receive two to five calls a week from girls and women looking for counselling).
- “There is a gap in terms of free services for girls aged six to nine.”

There were also suggestions about introducing more self-employment training programs to enable women to work from home:

- “Women [in Scarborough Village] want to work from home so they are creating home based businesses. There are a number of ‘illegal’ daycares, cake decorating, tutoring and other home businesses.” (Key informant, community development).

What do you think are the general challenges faced by Scarborough Village residents?

There were a number of recurring themes in this area:

Language

Language was cited as one of the biggest issues. Interviewees stressed that more ESL programs were needed to serve the needs of the many residents who did not speak English:

- “The only one is Polycultural.”

Access

Interviewees mentioned a lack of access to information, especially about programs and services in surrounding areas:

- “Scarborough Village is surrounded by many programs...people [just] don’t know about them.”
- “Do program providers know enough about other programs in their communities [to be able to refer participants]?”

Access to transportation was also a problem:

- “[In Scarborough Village] there are transit service issues – [there are] pockets of poverty mixed with old wealth, and lots of newcomers.”

Interviewees spoke of the serious gap in services to support newcomers to deal with settlement, particularly in terms of the psychological stress of moving to a new country:

- “[People] need support to get to the same standard of living that they left. Otherwise, it may lead to mental health issues.”
- “[The stress from] settlement is the unnamed mental illness. Accommodation and flexibility are key to having people work and feel valued.” (Key informant, health care sector)
- “The games have changed. All services have become overburdened. It’s a disaster, like someone bleeding on the road and you offering a band aid.”
- “‘Do you have Canadian experience my dear?’ He casually asked the foreign trained engineer. ‘But, Sir I just landed here only a month before/How shall I get in if no one opens the door?’” (from *Coming to Toronto*, a poem by Akbar Khan, a key informant; see Appendix V for the complete poem)

What challenges do you see, as service providers/stakeholders in the community, in terms of providing programs in Scarborough Village?

Interviewees identified the following challenges:

Space

Space was mentioned as a key issue by the vast majority of interviewees, and appears to be the primary challenge for Scarborough Village from the standpoint of community leadership. One interviewee mentioned an organization that would like to donate computers and operate a computer program for Scarborough Village, but there are no available locations.

The physical layout of Scarborough Village seems to be a major contributor to the problem, as does a lack of infrastructural investment:

- “The biggest challenge is finding space in Scarborough Village. The existing space is limited, parking is a problem.”
- “There are a lot of infrastructure barriers in Scarborough around space as a result of [City of Toronto] amalgamation.”
- “Permit fees are an obstacle – community groups without non-profit status pay higher fees to rent space.”
- “Funders need to provide infrastructural investment, along with program dollars.”
- “Grass roots groups don’t have anywhere to meet. Other faith groups are charging to use their space, and there may be conflicts with different faiths using the same place.”
- “The biggest thing missing is space and a community ‘hub’. There is no place to put the programs and the existing space does not meet the needs.”
- “There are a lot of itinerant services but they don’t have a presence here.”
- “People don’t want to go far from their families.”

Transportation

Interviewees echoed the research focus group’s comments about the lack of accessible transport:

- “Scarborough was built on the American-drive-to-work model. The public transportation systems need to be improved.”
- “Buildings [property management] do not clear roads properly, and people have many children, so getting around is a problem.”

Fragmented, Under-Funded Services

Interviewees pointed to a lack of funding and integration of services, which results in disappointment and frustration for people who access them:

- “Proper referrals from other agencies are a challenge – there is miscommunication and participants are not sure about the process.”
- “There is a high rate of turnover with service staff so people don’t get to know or trust anyone because the next time they come in that person is gone.”

- “Employment Services (the way they are currently provided) is like telling someone that there is food and then only showing them pictures of food.”
- “The system now is fragmented – people are being sent to different locations for different needs and they are getting frustrated. People want one person who they can talk about their [employment] needs with.”

Various levels of government were also criticized for a general failure to address service gaps, and a lack of sensitivity to the needs of newcomers:

- “There seems to be no political will or commitment from politicians. There is a lot of talk but no action.”
- “Government should not lump refugees and immigrants together... Refugees get money and services, while immigrants are left to fend for themselves.”
- “Foreign trained professionals programming is in high need. We have to get these people into the job market.”

What trends/changes are you seeing in Scarborough Village?

Interviewees identified some significant changes in the landscape of the community, including efforts to reshape the physical boundaries of Scarborough Village, and redevelopments to increase the availability of residential housing:

- “Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) is working to re-define the borders of Scarborough Village to move up to Lawrence in the north and take out [the area] south of Kingston Road.”
- “We need to expand the boundaries of Scarborough Village to go up to Cedarbrae Mall. [This will] create capacity because right now Scarborough Village does not have a library, high school, bank or affordable supermarket.”
- “The (retail) places that had opportunities for youth to be employed part-time are being converted to residential housing.”
- “Markington Square is slated for redevelopment within the next few years by Rio Cam and will be shifting to residential space.”
- “The Markington Mall tear down may take up to 10 years”.

In terms of demographic change, one interviewee noted that Scarborough Village is “the immigrant reception center – turnover is very high”. Patterns of immigrant settlement are constantly altering, however:

- “There is a growing Afghani community, while the Tamil community seems to have levelled off.”

What suggestions do you have for program development in Scarborough Village?

Interviewees were eager to provide suggestions as to how programs could be improved and new services introduced to serve the needs of Scarborough Village.

Below we present a sampling of their ideas, in their own words:

Improving Programs

- “Simplify the system – have one caseworker who has the connections to work with the people and get them what they need.”
- “Case management makes it easier for people to connect with employers.”
- “She did not have any ‘number’ restrictions, and she was booked solid with clients who wanted to tell their story and have someone help them.” (of a counsellor who was not restricted by the usual requirements of non-profit funders, by which agency staff usually have to make a ‘count’ of the number of clients that they specifically serve).
- “The current model does not allow [service providers] to write resumes for others.”
- “More and more people, even those in poverty, have access to computers at home. Has the ERC model run its course? How can it be better defined?”
- “Offer more flexibility to programs, instead of just 3-5 week programs.”
- “Programs must include childcare services...this is just as important as the program itself and needs to be an integrated piece.”
- “Day-care on-site is essential.”

Suggestions for New Programs

Interviewees stressed the importance of free programs, including English language training, computer training, specific programming for women and girls, and job development and placement:

- “There is a need for flexible and open ESL classes where status of immigration does not matter. Nine to five does not work – a lot of people work and need evening and weekend programs.”
- “Offer more computer classes, and more basic English classes with child minding.”
- “Employment and skills training is needed...especially for women.”

Interviewees emphasized the importance of customized job search and placement interventions, and the need to build stronger relationships with employers:

- “Employment assessment must be done properly, otherwise it leads to underemployment.”
- “One-on-one coaching works extremely well, especially when it’s at a full service site.”
- “Facilitating communication between employers and those looking for employment is critical.”
- “Job brokers are the way to go.”

What would the ideal service model for Scarborough Village residents look like?

- “We need to start thinking differently about how we create space.”

The overwhelming majority of interviewees identified a ‘hub’ or ‘one-stop shop’ as the ideal program delivery model: to have one place for the residents of Scarborough Village to go to for their various service needs (whether it be employment, skills development, legal, recreation or counseling). A number of challenges were mentioned, however, such as capital investment and partnership, and there were differing opinions as to the location of such a ‘hub’. Below are some ideas offered by the interviewees for the design of this model:

- “A community hub with programming space would be a cultural centre that facilitates integration.”
- “The community needs a combination of space, a Coordinator, community outreach workers who will go out into the community and grassroots leaders.”
- “There should be a structure in which people’s employment, health and social needs are supported in a simple way.”
- “We need support and advocacy for residents, in addition to service provision.”
- “A one-stop service model would be the best for those who need to make a living and can not communicate their needs.”
- “People feel comfortable going there. Regardless of their need, they know that this is their first point of contact.”
- “Link youth programming and security, childcare and programming in the same space.”
- “Ideally the hub will be local and centrally located.”
- “Centralization loses the personal touch.” (arguing that the program location should be in Scarborough Village)

- “We need more localization...illusions of centralization are just that, illusions.”
- “If you were to open a storefront or Hub in Scarborough Village, it will fail because nobody would go there. There is a stigma, people are afraid. But everyone goes shopping at Scarborough Town Centre.” (arguing that the program location should not be in Scarborough Village)

Challenges and Needs

Some major themes related to the challenges of providing better services in the community concerned the need for capital investment, stronger partnerships and a greater diversity of staff to reflect the demographics of Scarborough Village:

- “Each priority neighbourhood is getting \$1 million for capital projects. We need other donors to partner – government and the private sector.”
- “Need to get tri-level (government, business, service provider) support, and develop sustainable, adaptable and flexible programming.”
- “We need multi-year funding and support.”
- “All three levels of government, as well as the private sector, agencies and residents need to be involved.”
- “More comprehensive capital for creating space is needed.”
- “Both capital and programming costs need to be addressed.”
- “Any program that you bring in must have staff who reflect the community and speak the languages.”
- “Diversity in programming is key. The Ethiopian Association is an excellent model. At one site, they have LINC, ISAP, employment programs, crisis counsellors, community development programs, seniors programs, programs for women, people with disabilities and people staffed from the community – very important.”

6. Learning from the Research

Our research process offered us a range of fascinating insights into the employment service needs of Scarborough Village, and also gave us a broader picture of residents' daily lives and concerns, as many of them strive to adapt to a new culture and find a secure and satisfying economic future for themselves and their families.

In this section, we present our learning about some of the key themes raised during the research process. We were interested to note how our findings from residents, our grassroots team of researchers, and our key informants often mirrored what we gleaned from statistical and other surveys of Scarborough Village. In some cases, however, we were able to capture a yet clearer picture through our individual surveys, interviews and group discussions, reaching to the heart of some of the multiple challenges faced by people in the community.

6.1 The Current Labour Market

“[L]ow-wage workers, especially women, immigrant and racialized workers are increasingly working in temporary, contract and part-time work that is beyond the reach of protection.” (*Working on the Edge*, Workers Action Centre, 2007, p.6).

According to the 2006 census, labour market participation is 8.8% lower in Scarborough Village compared to the City of Toronto, and the unemployment rate is 2.8% higher. Meanwhile, the majority of labour market participants are highly educated: an average of 51.9% have obtained a certificate, diploma or degree. The percentage mirrors the results of our survey, which showed that 56% of respondents had completed college, university and/or a post-graduate degree. This suggests that some residents may be facing serious barriers to participation in the labour market. Moreover, we heard from our research team focus group and our key informants that many residents are presently employed in jobs far inferior to their levels of training and experience. Obviously their sense of frustration and wasted opportunity must add significantly to the burden of living with insecure, usually low-paid employment and, as researchers and key informants noted, can result in serious mental and physical health problems.

6.2 Poverty

According to the 2006 census data, 60% of Scarborough Village households have three or more people. At the very least, their low-income cut off (LICO) would be \$31,801. Of our survey respondents, only 16.2% reported incomes over \$30,000. Our surveys also revealed a staggering 51.8% of respondents are not currently working and 37.1% do not currently have an income. We again acknowledge that our survey is a random sample of the community, and does not necessarily reflect the entire Scarborough Village community. Nonetheless, our finding points to deep poverty in the neighbourhood that may lead to patterns of intergenerational poverty with grave consequences for the future social fabric of Scarborough Village, especially for youth.

Given that so many residents are living without work or income, we have to ask why 68% of our survey respondents reported having neither applied for nor received any benefits.

Although further study would be needed to reach a definitive answer, our research suggests a number of possible reasons:

- Weak language skills and a lack of knowledge and information about entitlements in Canadian society
- Benefit requirements that discriminate against certain categories of immigrants, and/or people working in temporary/part-time jobs
- Lack of information and/or support to navigate complex bureaucratic systems and processes
- Fear of providing personal information, especially in the case of newcomers from war-torn countries
- Reluctance to reveal facts about income (including, in the case of people working ‘irregular hours’, the sources of that income)

It is interesting that our research team mentioned how reluctant and even fearful some respondents were to answer survey questions. Clearly this is a sensitive area.

6.3 Immigration and Settlement

“Settlement services are overstretched and cannot provide enough support.” (*Scarborough Summit Summary Report*, p.7)

Our survey results on the high level of newcomers to Scarborough Village mirror both City of Toronto findings and Statistics Canada’s 2006 census information: Scarborough Village has a higher percentage of immigrants, recent immigrants, non-official home languages and visible minorities compared with the City of Toronto. Through our interviews, we heard Scarborough Village described as ‘the immigrant corridor’ or ‘the immigrant reception centre’, and 43.6% of respondents identified as a visible minority.

Curiously, however, only 10.7% of respondents reported wanting more settlement services in Scarborough Village, even though the Scarborough Summit concluded that these services are tremendously overstretched.

Again, this is an issue that merits further investigation, but we can draw on the feedback of our research team and key informants to suggest some possible reasons for the low figure:

- People who are eligible for such services lack information and/or the time/opportunity/skills to access them
- Eligibility criteria are too narrow, particularly in the case of landed immigrants

“Everything in Canada is linked to a job... You can’t buy a home, get credit, get a car, rent a place to stay without a job.” (Key informant)

The ability to find appropriate employment is the cornerstone of successful settlement. Particularly in a community with a large visible minority population, any effective employment program should have a settlement support component, with an opportunity for one-to-one counselling and an effective, up-to-date system of accessible referrals.

6.4 Lack of Canadian Credentials and Experience

Our research findings about the huge barrier posed by lack of Canadian credentials and experience parallels the findings of the Scarborough Civic Summit held on September 10, 2003, which reported that the invisible barrier of Canadian experience is preventing newcomers who have the appropriate credentials from obtaining employment in their fields. As a result, newcomers feel that their skills are not being used and that they are being marginalized from Canadian society.

43.7% and 30.5% of survey respondents identified job search assistance and English Language training respectively as key services that would help them find employment, particularly without a fee or eligibility restrictions. The new English Language Training program at Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services will therefore be a welcome addition to the residents of Scarborough Village, although eligibility is restricted to convention refugees and landed immigrants.

Given the very high proportion of well-educated residents reported in our survey, it is clear that more targeted services are needed to link foreign trained professionals to appropriate employment. Our research suggest that it would save time, money and further frustration if these services were customized, instead of providing general programs that may be a waste of classroom hours for those attending, as well as an unnecessary expenditure of agency resources. Some individuals might require only very minor interventions to link them to employment, such as a new resume, or language or 'soft skills' training. As will be discussed later in our recommendations, on-the-job training and follow-up, as well as stronger connections between service providers and employers would also greatly enhance employment opportunities for the large number of qualified immigrants presently unemployed or 'stuck' in jobs well below their level.

6.5 Childcare

Families are larger than average: according to census data 14.8% of Scarborough Village residents have five or more people in their households, in comparison with Toronto's 10.6%, and 99% of residents reported the presence of children in their households. Unsurprisingly, residents and interviewees told us that lack of access to childcare is a major constraint for people seeking access to employment-related services or to work outside the home. The only programs in Scarborough Village that offer childcare are language training (eligible to convention refugees and landed immigrants only).

6.6 Location and Space

The location, current boundaries and layout of Scarborough Village were major topics of debate for both the research team focus group and the key informants. It was evident that before even considering the type of services needed by residents, there would have to be a discussion of space.

The available space in Scarborough Village is extremely limited. There are currently two retail spaces available; at Markham and Kingston Road, the site of the 'Harvey's Restaurant' and in Markington Mall, the 'Roger's Video' location, which closed recently. Given the limited retail or commercial space available, these sites will likely be rented soon. In terms of possible space in the future, the City of Toronto has committed \$1

million dollars to capital development in each of the 13 Priority Neighbourhoods. Possible sites are currently being investigated for feasibility and may include the expansion of the Scarborough Village Recreation Centre. There may also be the option of renting space at Markington Mall before its conversion to residential units, which is phased and may take up to ten years.

Feedback from key informants and published reports also identifies the use of local schools in the evenings and weekends as a possible option for service delivery, particularly if capital investment is an issue.

There are essentially two sites through which employment and skills development programs that currently being run in the community:

- 1) 3730 Kingston Road (corner of Kingston Road and Scarborough Golf Club Road), the site of YWCA ERC and YWCA SOAR
- 2) 3174 Eglinton Avenue East (Eglinton Road and Markham Road, in Markington Mall), the site of Polycultural Immigrant Services

Feedback from the research focus group told us that residents are not aware of the services offered at the 3730 Kingston Road site, due largely to the location not being visible. The nucleus of the community is clearly the corner of Markham Road and Eglinton Avenue East, which makes the Polycultural location far more visible and accessible to residents. An added benefit is that residents can stop by for services while they are out shopping or running errands.

6.7 The 'Hub' Model

Our research findings showed that a one-stop 'hub', offering residents' one location to go to for all their service needs, would be by far the best service delivery model for Scarborough Village. It has operated successfully in communities across Ontario, and, closer to Scarborough Village, through the East Scarborough Storefront.

As we heard from key informants and observed ourselves, the Scarborough Village Recreation Centre is currently only being used by a small segment of the community. The majority of residents, particularly visible minorities, are not using the services available at the centre, with one exception: due to the lack of space, grassroots groups are renting rooms to hold community meetings. Unfortunately, because these groups do not have non-profit status, they are required to pay higher rental fees. Given that a significant proportion of residents report having no income, this is a serious barrier to their ability to collaborate and share information.

6.8 Partnerships and Capacity Building

Another issue emerging from the research is that even service providers and funders of programming within and in the vicinity of Scarborough Village are not always aware of all of the existing services available. This is leading to inefficiencies and duplication in service, as well as weak referrals for clients. Despite outreach efforts and collaboration among service providers and community workers, there is still a clear need for stronger partnerships among all levels of government, service providers, local employers, grassroots community leaders and residents.

6.9 Lack of Capital Investment

Capital investment is obviously a critical need in Scarborough Village. Our research focus group and our key informants also told us that programs must have long-term, flexible funding parameters and that core funding is essential to sustain a strong presence for employment service providers in the community.

Many residents have participated in local programs only to have them discontinued due to funding cuts. This had led to disappointment and disillusionment on the part of residents, and immense frustration for community leaders and agency staff.

6.10 Transportation

Lack of transportation in the neighbourhood was also a major challenge raised by both residents and key informants. It affects people's ability to access not just employment but many other types of services. 43.2% of survey respondents indicated transportation assistance as a need for their employment search, while 19.6% would like better access to transportation.

Although the Toronto Transit Commission responded to the need by increasing service for a local bus line early this spring, our research suggests that many residents, particularly those with low-incomes and/or children, still face enormous problems in negotiating the neighbourhood, let alone leaving it to seek employment or employment-related services outside Scarborough Village.

6.11 Women and Youth Services

Census data revealed a significant imbalance in the number of hours of unpaid work between the genders, as well as a higher proportion of large families in the neighbourhood. Women in Scarborough Village are spending a significantly larger amount of time in unpaid housework, childcare and care of seniors. Given the significant population of newcomers and fairly recent immigrants, many women may belong to extended families, necessitating these long hours of domestic duty. All this suggests that they face even greater barriers to employment than men, and may require gender-specific services to link them effectively to jobs outside the home.

It is interesting to note that despite an extensive outreach campaign, participation in YWCA SOAR remains lower than anticipated. The research points to lack of childcare as the primary barrier to participation.

A self-employment program with childcare space, possibly including an element of English language training, would also be an asset to the community. As the research has found, women in Scarborough Village are running small businesses from their homes. These may include childcare or catering and are likely not assessed by regulatory standards. The current Ontario Self-Employment Benefit model would not be applicable in this community, as the newcomers would likely not have established a claim for Employment Insurance benefits.

Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) was run successfully in 2007 and is now in the second cycle of recruitment. With the exception of PAYE, which runs for only two months per year, there appears to be a considerable gap in youth programming, particularly for girls. The lack of jobs within the community makes it more difficult for youth to obtain part-time employment: 24.7% of survey respondents indicated a need for student services or youth programs.

6.12 Employment Resources and Training

When asked what employment service they had accessed during the past year, 36.8% of survey respondents mentioned using an employment resource centre. An even higher proportion of survey respondents are evidently interested in accessing the employment-related services that are offered by a center such as the YWCA ERC: 41.8% selected Internet Access, 40.6% computer access, 36.3% resume assistance, 35.6% job search listings, and 34.8% photocopying.

Enhanced computer training opportunities could also be an asset: 40.4% of survey respondents were interested in further training (without specifying what kind), particularly without a fee or eligibility restrictions. 11.1% of survey respondents reported having no computer skills.

The research suggests that the YWCA ERC is supporting the employment-related needs of the community, but with one glaring deficit: one-on-one employment assessment, counselling and job matching. 43.7% of survey respondents named job search assistance as the service that they felt would most help them in finding employment. In addition, 35.2% of respondents requested career assessment and 37.2% career planning services. Key informants mentioned success stories resulting from one-on-one counselling and placement, and the success of PAYE has shown that this approach is highly effective. A PAYE (or Job Connect) model would therefore be a tremendous asset to the employment services currently offered in Scarborough Village.

As one focus group participant pointed out, residents do not have the luxury of time: they need to get into jobs. Services that bridge job seekers to employers would fill a vital gap, allowing people to find and retain meaningful employment suited to their training, experience and aptitudes. At present in Scarborough Village there appear to be no staff devoted specifically to job development.

7. Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Study

We began this project with the goal of completing 100 surveys from residents in Scarborough Village. Since more conventional census surveys might not be accessible to a predominantly immigrant community, we chose to work with a team composed of residents and grassroots community leaders who knew the neighbourhood and, perhaps more importantly, were trusted by the people they surveyed. They could suggest appropriate survey locations and the best times to reach respondents, and were able to survey attendees at community events, enabling us to capture information from as broad a cross-section of the population as possible.

As a result, over a period of four weeks the research team managed to complete a total of 1,079 surveys, just 161 of which were filled in on-site at YWCA ERC. Through a respectful and inclusive process, the team not only documented a profile of the residents and their needs, but also gave them a ‘voice’ in the project. We would strongly recommend this research approach, particularly for any study of a similar high needs area with a large immigrant presence.

Below we present some key recommendations and suggestions for further study, in order to improve service provision and the general quality of life for people in Scarborough Village.

7.1 The Optimal Service Model

As we discovered, Scarborough Village is a low-income community with a significant immigrant population composed of a range of ethnicities and language groups. The geography of the neighbourhood, compounded by a weak transportation infrastructure and lack of childcare facilities, makes it extremely difficult for residents to travel, let alone seek out multiple locations in order to access the services they require.

Meanwhile, we heard from our grassroots research team and our key informants that residents are not accessing existing facilities at the Scarborough Village Recreation Centre. Based on our research findings, we would suggest that this is because the conventional model of a community centre, which traditionally offers facilities such as a gym, ice rink, library, and/or senior’s programs, does not meet the most crucial needs of Scarborough Village residents. As we were constantly told, people want real employment solutions: practical, appropriate and sustained support to find and keep jobs that fit their needs and aptitudes; and in the case of Scarborough Village, the challenges extend beyond employment programs to encompass a daunting array of other gaps in service.

We argue that the most effective way to offer employment and other services would be in a ‘hub’ model: a one-stop location offering a holistic yet flexible menu of options that can be customized according to clients’ specific needs.

7.2 Operating and Capacity Building for the One-Stop ‘Hub’

From our interviews and discussions, we can see why there is so much debate about the practicalities of operating such a model, given the multiple levels of funding with which agencies must juggle, and the broad range of services, safety measures and accessibility

regulations that would be required at such a centralized location. Nevertheless, we believe that the benefits of a one-stop model, or ‘hub’ would far outweigh any of these potential challenges to service providers.

Key informants emphasized the imperative need for partnership and collaboration between stakeholders in designing a new model for service provision. As we learned through our research, there are a large number of people who truly care about the residents of this community, including politicians, community workers, grassroots community leaders, service providers and residents. Their commitment and willingness to work together overwhelmed us as observers. Many of them have already come together to find solutions and have formed various collaborations and committees, some of which include:

- Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) – a revitalization initiative funded by United Way of Greater Toronto
- Neighbourhood Action Team (NAT) and Neighbourhood Action Partnership (NAP) – led by the City of Toronto
- Scarborough Village ‘Agency Table’ – organized by ANC
- Scarborough Village Neighbourhood Association (SVNA) – emerged from the work of ANC and is comprised of people who live and work in the community
- Co-operative Committee (COCO) – the coordinating committee of the SVNA
- Scarborough Village ‘Hub’ – a steering committee made up of members of the Scarborough Village ‘Agency Table’, SVNA members, a ‘Hub’ Coordinator and a representative of West Hill Community Services (the trustee agency for ANC)

Note: There is no physical space currently available for the ‘Hub’.

These groups are helping to bring everyone to the table to discuss issues and brainstorm solutions. There is money available, as demonstrated by the City of Toronto (\$1M in capital grants has been earmarked for each of the 13 Priority Neighbourhoods), and an interest among both public and private organizations as well as individuals to create more formalized, cohesive working partnerships.

Greater involvement of the provincial and federal governments would be an asset, however: although both are providing some program funding, there are serious deficiencies in capital investment in Scarborough Village. Furthermore, any programs that are introduced must have long-term, consistent and flexible funding parameters in order to serve residents’ needs and maintain their trust. We therefore recommend strengthening partnerships among all levels of government, the City of Toronto, service providers, residents and grassroots community leaders to build capacity for service provision.

We would further recommend that the Scarborough Village ‘Hub’ be provided more support to secure a permanent space, and that employment programs be operated from the ‘hub’ location. This would allow, for example, the Bengali Community Association (which meets monthly, with between 60-100 residents) to organize their community to take advantage of specific employment and/or skills development programs. The community association would conduct the outreach, since, as our survey approach has

shown, the best way to understand residents' issues is to hear from the residents themselves.

Participants in the employment programs would be able to access other services through the same site. We have seen first hand how a one-stop model can work effectively to meet the needs of the community: through the YWCA programs at 3090 Kingston Road, women and girls are able to access a variety of support, employment, training, networking, counselling and recreational activities.

7.3 Selecting a Location for the 'Hub'

The idea of centralized services has been part of City development for decades; but would local or centralized employment and skills development services better serve the Scarborough Village community?

In 2006, the Economic Development and Parks Committee looked into the resource requirements to open schools in the 13 priority neighbourhoods until 10:00 pm on weekdays and 11:00 pm on weekends. Three schools in Scarborough Village were identified: George P Mackie Public School, Scarborough Village Public School and Cedar Drive Public School (Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division; report prepared by Kelvin Seow, 23 January 2006).

Another suggestion from a key informant is to offer employment programming at the Scarborough Town Centre. This person argued that even if a new program were introduced into Scarborough Village, it would fail because people would not come. He mentioned that the Town Centre is recognized as the 'downtown' of Scarborough. Residents from across Scarborough (to the tune of 40,000 per day) visit the site. The developers are apparently very open to helping the community and may be interested in discussing a Storefront location.

The need for, and evident lack of, useable program space in Scarborough Village bears further study, particularly if any new program implementation is considered. The survey approach of this project was extremely effective in finding out from the residents precisely what they want. We would highly recommend that a similar survey be conducted regarding the optimal physical location of employment services.

7.4 One-stop, Customized Provision of Services

As we have stressed frequently in this report, the greatest need in Scarborough Village is one-on-one, customized, holistic counselling. Residents want to speak with someone who they can trust, who can help them access the appropriate employment services and, ultimately, connect them with employers. From the perspective of an employment or skills development program, this would entail offering a service whereby participants can meet with a case manager, have their needs heard and then be referred into whatever specific program fits their requirements.

The success of the model would depend to a great extent upon having a staff of informed, accessible individuals who are if possible representative of the diverse community. The main focus of programming and services would be on the unemployed and

underemployed population in Scarborough Village, particularly newcomers, youth and women.

Based on our research, we suggest that the menu of services should include the following key components:

Job Development and On-the-Job Training

- Job development (solution-focused case management, including resume assistance and employment counselling for at least six months, links to employers, and appropriate on-the-job training and follow-up)
- Career assessment and planning

English Language/Computer Training

- Free training at a range of levels, with no eligibility restrictions

Childcare Facilities

- Accessible, quality child-minding to enable women to participate in programs (e.g. self-employment training) and community events, consult with staff and explore employment options

Other Services

- Transportation support
- Strategic liaison with settlement services
- Space for community meetings, girls-only programs, programs for youth, etc.

Although this list may appear ambitious, many service providers in the neighbourhood already offer some of these services and programs. Through a more inclusive and organized process, existing services could be strategically enhanced to serve clients more seamlessly and efficiently. We also believe that it is more effective to split programs into flexible modules, particularly in the case of serving newcomer and immigrant clients, to enable them to choose the components which best suit their needs, thereby avoiding a waste of time and resources.

This 'hub' model of service provision would enable clients to:

- Gain a full understanding of the job search process in Canada
- Understand employment services and support available to them
- Make informed and career decisions
- Become self-directed, proficient and proactive in their job search
- Increase their ability to find meaningful employment
- Become job-ready and integrate into the labour market
- Access the full range of community services
- Assist with the integration and settlement process (for newcomers)

- Improve English Language skills
- Meet other members of the community
- Improve self-esteem and self-confidence

7.5 Effective Service Provision

In order for an employment and skills development program to work effectively in Scarborough Village, or anywhere for that matter, flexible hours, including evening and weekend hours, are essential. This would open up the service to youth, residents with childcare issues, and those who may be working during business hours, but at jobs that do not fit their experience and credentials.

For any program to succeed, it will require strong partnerships, long-term planning and capital investment. It must also include the active input of the community at all stages of planning and delivery. Experience with programs that ‘come and go’ leads people to lose trust in the system and its ability to help them in any meaningful way.

Staffing

We learned from the focus groups, key informant interviews, and particularly the success of the survey research, that, at least initially, residents feel more comfortable speaking to other residents, particularly those from the same ethnic group. A significant 75.2% of survey respondents in Scarborough Village reported speaking another language, other than English and/or French. The four dominant languages (Urdu, Tamil, Hindi and Bengali) alone are spoken by 47.9% of respondents.

As mentioned above, a critical element for the success of any service will therefore be to hire staff who reflect the community. It was interesting to learn from a key informant about the model used by the Ethiopian community in Etobicoke. The success of this model relies on the ability of community participants to make their needs heard and be directed to the appropriate programs, most of which are offered at the same location.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this research project was to conduct a needs assessment in Scarborough Village, with a focus on employment services and possible barriers that might affect a person's ability to obtain gainful employment. We set out to develop a set of feasible and comprehensive short-term and long-term recommendations to improve the employment picture in the community. At the close of the process, we recognise how multi-faceted and potentially daunting the employment challenges are for the majority of Scarborough Village residents.

According to a study conducted by Innovative Research Group for the Dominion Institute (Illusion that Canada's a Multicultural Mosaic, Innovative Research Group, November 15, 2005), 70% of Canadians believe that new immigrants "should adapt to their new country's way of life, emulating the melting pot model"; yet we have heard through our research how very difficult it is for newcomers even to integrate into the Canadian labour market. We are experiencing a general climate of low unemployment in which many businesses are having trouble filling positions, but without Canadian experience and references, which have become a standard requirement by the majority of employers in this country, a significant population of highly skilled newcomers cannot find meaningful jobs. As a result, we are wasting their enormous potential to participate in and contribute fully to Canadian society and the economy; and the longer this waste continues, the greater the burden will be upon our health, social and legal systems. Indeed, one of our key informants wondered whether the hiring process as it currently exists in Canada might actually present a human rights issues for immigrants, a subject which would be an interesting area for future study.

While we have gained a better understanding of these challenges through the research, we have also been tremendously encouraged that change is possible. There is a growing recognition on many fronts – government, business, non-profit agencies and communities – that we must invest in our human resources if Canada is to remain competitive in the global economy.

As we see from our research, the profile of urban Canada is in constant flux: the example of Scarborough Village shows a shifting composition of residents and altering patterns of residential and commercial space, with new demands being placed on public infrastructure and community services. Any employment programs seeking to serve the needs of residents living in such areas must be sensitive and responsive to this changing picture. Programs must also be inclusive, in a neighbourhood where there are children in almost every household. They must offer a welcoming environment representative of the community's diversity where whole families – women and youth included – can find informed and respectful support to address their employment and other needs.

Our findings point to the striking gaps and inefficiencies that have emerged from a fragmented approach to service design and delivery. We heard over and over again from a wide range of stakeholders that a holistic, streamlined model of customized services and supports could remedy many of the present deficiencies. We hope that our research project can provide a springboard towards this alternate vision, bringing together government, employers, agencies and the community to collaborate on a joint venture: finding innovative and practical solutions to connect people to satisfying and sustainable employment.

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Appendix I

List of Scarborough Village Employment Services

1. Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services, 3174 Eglinton Avenue East

Services

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program

- Full time and evening English classes free of charge
- Up to Level 6 Literacy
- Childcare and T.T.C support available

Participant Eligibility Criteria

- Landed immigrants and convention refugees

English Language Training (ELT) Program

- 18 week program with 12 week in-class training and 6 week on-the-job training components
- Three occupational streams: Technical Services (e.g. electricians and engineers), Health Services, and Administration and Consumer Services.
- Part-time evening and weekend classes
- Up to Level 6 Literacy
- Childcare and T.T.C support available

Participant Eligibility Criteria

- Landed immigrants and convention refugees

Settlement Services:

Information on and referral to:

- Employment services
- Education and training programs
- Financial support programs
- Professional licensing and trades certification
- Legal aid and legal clinics
- Social services programs
- Housing and healthcare services
- Immigration and citizenship
- Community and recreation services

Interpretation and translation:

- Translation of a limited number of education, identity and employment related documents necessary for immediate settlement needs
- Interpretation over the phone and/or in person to facilitate access to programs and services
- A fee of \$10 may apply for these services

Participant Eligibility Criteria

- Landed immigrants and convention refugees

Screening and referrals for counselling and case management services:

- Assistance in decision making process
- Case management services for underserved and high needs clients
- Career counselling
- Short term supportive counselling
- Crisis intervention

Participant Eligibility Criteria

- Landed immigrants and convention refugees

Employment Assistance Program:

- Developing individualized short-term and long-term employment goals
- Action planning
- Job search techniques
- Resume & cover letter writing
- Interview preparation

Participant Eligibility Criteria

- Social Assistance and Ontario Works recipients

2. YWCA Employment Resource Centre (ERC), 3730 Kingston Road, 2nd Floor

Services

Employment Resource Centre:

- Computer Access (with full internet access)
- Job Search Assistance
- Career Assessment
- Career Planning

- Employment Counselling
- Job Banks
- Business Directories
- Government Listing
- Labour Market Trends
- Small Business Information
- Printers, Photocopier and Fax
- Telephones and Audio Video Equipment

Critique and Assistance with:

- Resume and Cover Letter Writing
- Developing Effective Interviewing Skills
- Job Search Methods

Group Workshops:

- Introduction to Microsoft Office (MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint)
- Resume Writing
- Introduction to the Internet
- Interviewing and Practice Interviews
- Marketing and Networking
- Dress to Get the Job You Want (Dress for Success)

Computer Centre:

- 27 computers, each equipped with high-speed internet access and Microsoft Office

Free Communication Services:

- Use of telephones and fax machines
- Use of printers and photocopier
- Scanning service provided by staff

Community information and referrals:

- School Calendars
- Youth and Community Programs
- Small Business Workshops
- Self-Directed Computer Tutorials
- Job-Finding Clubs (and networking opportunities)
- Referrals to Career Assessment Programs, Language Instruction (LINC and ELT)

Participant Eligibility Criteria

Anyone 16 years of age or older

3. YWCA SOAR, (Seek, Obtain, Advance, Retain) 3730 Kingston Road

Services

Vocational Assessment Module:

- To identify the employment goal of each participant
- To create a personalized career profile
- Individualized counselling sessions with Vocational Assessment Counsellors
- Individually selected career assessment tools
- Participation in a series of self discovery workshops aimed at enhancing 'soft skills'

Employability Enhancement Module:

- Employment preparation techniques
- Job search, job matching and job maintenance workshops
- Evaluation of progress on the implementation of return-to-work action plans

Job Search Café | A Networking & Support Group:

- Networking opportunities/events
- Identification of new job leads and employment opportunities
- Open forums for sharing and receiving feedback on job search progress
- Motivational activities

Participant Eligibility Criteria

All women who:

- Are unemployed
- Are working less than 20 hours per week
- Are sole support mothers
- Are in receipt of Social Assistance
- Do not speak English as their first language
- Are on E.I. reach back (in the last three years)
- On maternity benefits (in the last five years)

4. Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE), City of Toronto. Recruitment drives taking place from Q-ssis Banquet Hall (3474 Kingston Road)

Services

Critique and Assistance with:

- Resume and Cover Letter writing
- Developing Effective Interviewing Skills
- Job Search Methods

Job Development:

- Matching participants with employers for placement opportunities

Appendix II

Scarborough Village Survey Site Locations

1) Scarborough Village Recreation Centre

3600 Kingston Road
Scarborough, Ontario M1M 1R9

2) Bliss Carmen Senior Public School

10 Bellamy Road South
Scarborough, Ontario M1M 3N8

3) St. Boniface Catholic School

20 Markanna Drive
Scarborough, Ontario M1M 2J1

4) Cedar Drive Junior Public School

21 Gatesview Avenue
Scarborough, Ontario M1J 3G4

5) Cougar Court Childcare Centre

3225 Eglinton Avenue East, Unit 109
Scarborough, Ontario M1J 2H7

6) YWCA Scarborough Village Employment Resource Centre

3730 Kingston Road, 2nd Floor
Scarborough, Ontario M1J 3H3

7) Polycultural Immigrant Services

3174 Eglinton Avenue East
Scarborough, Ontario M1J 2H5

8) Building Sites:

- i. 3171 Eglinton Avenue
- ii. 3181 Eglinton Avenue
- iii. 225 Markham Road

Appendix III

Percentage of Survey Respondents by Languages Spoken

English	92.4%
French	7.6%
Other Language	81.6%
Urdu	17.3%
Tamil	14.3%
Hindi	8.3%
Bengali	8.0%
Panjabi (Punjabi)	4.1%
Dari	2.8%
Spanish	2.7%
Arabic	2.5%
Gujarat	2.5%
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	1.7%
Creole	1.4%
Persian (Farsi)	1.2%
Chinese	1.1%
Pashto	1.0%
Sinhala (Sinhalese)	0.9%
Russian	0.6%
Akan (Twi)	0.6%
German	0.5%
Cantonese	0.4%
Italian	0.4%
Kannada	0.3%
Malayalam	0.3%
Amaril	0.2%
Mandarin	0.2%
Slona/Shona	0.2%
Africaans	0.1%
Amharic	0.1%
Azeri	0.1%
Balochi	0.1%
Croatian	0.1%
Czech	0.1%
Ethiopian	0.1%

Greek	0.1%
Hungarian	0.1%
Japanese	0.1%
Kerio	0.1%
Korean	0.1%
Latvian	0.1%
Oromifr	0.1%
Polish	0.1%
Portuguese	0.1%
Romanian	0.1%
Tajeki	0.1%
Telugu	0.1%
Uzbeki	0.1%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 census tracts: 535 (Toronto), 0331.03, 0331.04, 0332.00 (Scarborough Village).

Appendix IV Research Survey



Employment Ontario
programs are funded in
part by the Government
of Canada



Ontario

YWCA Toronto

Scarborough Village Employment Service Questionnaire

YWCA Toronto is conducting an employment service needs analysis of Scarborough Village. We are collecting information for research and statistical purposes. This questionnaire is voluntary and your answers will be anonymous. YWCA Toronto will share information with Employment Ontario for planning and development purposes.

1. What type of employment services or information would help you? (please mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Labour Market Trends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Business Information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Counselling | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Resource Information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Government Listings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Search Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Resume Assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Search Listings/Job Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Cover Letter Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Bank | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewing Strategies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Photocopying Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of Telephone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop/Tutorial | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of Fax/Scanner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Information | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Directories | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers |

Other _____ (please specify any other employment assistance service that you require)

2. What employment services have you used in the past year?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Resource Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Assessment Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Connect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Training Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Programs for Women |
- Other _____ (please specify)

3. Which of the following services would help you with your employment search?

- ☐ Childcare / Childminding
- ☐ Transportation Assistance (e.g. TTC tickets, Wheel-Trans)
- ☐ Better access to transportation
- ☐ ESL/LINC
- Other _____ (please specify)

4. What computer skills do you have? (please mark all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using a mouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Search |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keyboard | <input type="checkbox"/> No Computer Skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word Processing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (Please specify) | |

5. Which is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Graduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship/Trade | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College | |

6. Are you currently working? (Please mark only one of the following choices)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, how long have you been unemployed?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ More than 1 year

7. Have you collected Employment Insurance benefits in the last 3 years or received maternity or parental benefits in the last 5 years?

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Have you applied for or are you receiving any of the following? (Please mark all that apply)

☐ Employment Insurance Benefits ☐ Social Assistance

☐ Workers Compensation Benefits ☐ Severance Pay

☐ Other _____ (please specify).

9. Is your current income within the following ranges?

☐ No Income ☐ \$10,000 to \$20,000

☐ Under \$10,000 ☐ \$20,000 to \$30,000

☐ Over \$30,000

10. Do you consider yourself to be: (please mark all that apply)

☐ Person with disability ☐ Visible Minority

☐ Aboriginal/Métis ☐ Francophone

11. Are you a newcomer to Canada (in Canada for 3 years or less)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. In which age group do you belong?

☐ Under 16 years ☐ 25-29 years

☐ 16-18 years ☐ 30-44 years

☐ 19-24 years ☐ 45 years and over

13. Gender

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Transgender

14. Languages spoken

☐ English ☐ French

☐ Other _____ (please specify)

Thank you for your time.

Appendix V

Poem by Akbar Khan, Tropicana Community Services

Coming to Toronto

[Back Home]

Darling according to this international survey
Toronto is the best to live, work and play

A democratic country, the home of the free
The schools are free, the healthcare is free

The government gives you money for your children
Weather is pretty darn good every now and then

There is no law and order here, no security no future
No dreams to realize, no aspirations to nurture

You know the state of our country's education
Mediocre universities in a state of dilapidation

But honey what about our language, our culture
Should we sacrifice these for the sake of the future?

Look at all the facilities that are available to us here
Palatial homes, servants, free car and chauffeur

Anyway, let's fill in the forms and applications
We can always return after we become citizens

So you qualify on the point basis and your visa is sent
You are on your way, Canadian permanent resident

[In Canada]

From the plane everything looks so great
To get off the plane, you can hardly wait

The tall skyscrapers, the six lane highways
Well landscaped houses with paved driveways

Well this is it, the land of milk and honey
Now to get a job and make a lot of money

Do you have Canadian experience my dear?
He casually asked the foreign trained engineer

But, Sir I just landed here only a month before
How shall I get in if no one opens the door?

I do have a Masters from a reputable university
Unfortunately not in Toronto but another city

I have also worked for five years as an engineer
Alas, it was for a firm back home not here

I do not see why credentials are less than sufficient
I had them accredited as being par excellent

I qualified for the government's skilled worker program
Now it seems my experience is not worth a damn

At the interview they said with my skills as an engineer
I should be on my way quickly to a rewarding career

Canada needs skilled workers like you they said
Now looking back I think I have been had

I liquidated all my assets and cashed in the savings of my life
And ended up with disoriented children, and an unhappy wife

I pounded the pavement and burned sole leather
In snow, in rain, and in hell kind of weather

I learnt well lessons that survival living teaches
Once I got sucked by the employment agency leaches

They provided you with temporary sustenance work
Feeding on your helplessness, they yank and jerk

For a mere eight dollars you sweat in a factory and strain
Your degrees, your training, gone down the drain

But it is necessary to put food on the table to pay the rent
Your life savings have been all exhausted, spent

You alone can't make ends meet so your spouse works too
Who looks after the kids? Not her, not you

Coming home dog tired, frustrated and ticked
You can't just relax yet dinner needs to be fixed

Your children speak strange words no one understands
Your mind just can't cope with their constant demands

You must not be so arrogant, you yell rant and rave
Surely this is not the way that good children behave

Your dreams shattered in the land of opportunity
You regret leaving behind the life of luxury

But it's too late all your boats have been burned
All you have to show is a lesson well learned

So you keep on toiling to achieve the Canadian dream
Though a million miles away right now it may seem