



CMWI
Canadian Muslim Women's Institute



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ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

Program Highlights

Throughout the year CMWI delivered support and services to more than 800 newcomer families and individuals. However, this past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic we have had to adapt and change the way we deliver services to our clients. We had to deliver programming through Zoom. This was extremely challenging at the beginning as the staff had to learn how to navigate this technology. It took a while to learn but the next challenge was in teaching our clients how to use Zoom. Some of them did not have computers or cell phones so CMWI through Computers for Schools was able to get computers for them. It took a while for the clients, but they eventually were successful in mastering Zoom. However, there were many seniors who could not use the technology so the staff made phone calls to them every day to check in with them. This was a scary and confusing time and many of our clients were anxious and exhibiting signs of stress. We realized we had to address this, so we started a new program called Supporting Each Other. This is a support group where we have a social worker having weekly Zoom meetings with clients in their first language so they can talk about the pandemic and how to cope. It has been very successful with an attendance of 35 women. It was first started in Somali and now we have an Arabic speaking support group. The women were feeling very cooped up in their apartments in the winter months especially during the stay at home orders. CMWI introduced a new exercise program where a fitness instructor conducts workout sessions on Zoom. This is also done in Somali and Arabic. It has been very well received.

CMWI received grants for food hampers and was able to help families especially those who lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

Our regular programming like Wiggle Giggle and Munch and all our Financial Empowerment programs continued online through Zoom and were very successful.



Figure 1: Winnipeg Harvest Food Bank

Our Winnipeg Harvest food bank continued throughout the year. There were some churches or community centers staffed by seniors to run the food bank but had to close because of the risk. Winnipeg Harvest asked us if we could take on a second day to serve these people. We agreed and had two days in the month where we served the food bank clients. We had to stop taking the clothing and household donations and clients could only come to the office by an appointment or if it was an emergency.

Employment Training Programs

In 2019 CMWI received funding from IRCC's Special Delivery Improvement funding stream Visible Minority Women, to run employment training programs for 2 years, from July 2019 to March 2021. This was a new initiative for CMWI. Through this program, CMWI continues its mandate towards empowering newcomer women by building their confidence and enhancing their skills to increase their employability and financial stability.



Figure 2: The Culinary Edge Program

The focus of this project was to develop a culinary training program for employability in the commercial food industry and a housekeeping and a cleaning program for employability in the commercial and residential industry.

The models for these programs were built on the successful sewing training program that CMWI is already doing.



Figure 3: The Cutting Edge - Sewing Training Program

2020-2021 Program Report

No	Program name/ service	Number of clients	Number of times served
1	Food Hamper	538	2,842
2	Food grant with gift cards	378	1,134
3	Emergency food /donation	120	1440
5	Mental Health Support group (Somali)	35	48
6	Money management	57	70
7	Somali women exercise	15	24
8	Exercise, Health & Wellness (Arabic)	46	24
9	Citizenship test preparation both Arabic and Somali	29	20
10	Translation documents	50	50
11	Oral interpretation is every day (Ongoing)	100	800
12	CMWI financial assistance	18	18
13	Financial assistance referred to other organization (MIA)	9	15
14	Tax filling	57	70
15	Wiggle, Giggle & Munch	7	10
16	Arabic conversation for service providers	8	20
19	EIA, rent, Childcare, health cards, CERB, CRB, IDA, ID cards and online applications	50	90
20	Computer distribution	43	100
21	Phone check in	700	1000
22	Employment Programs (cooking, child minding, and sewing)	26	400

Organizational Progress

In January 2020 CMWI staff and Board concluded a 3-year strategic plan. The strategic plan is attached. However, Covid-19 has restricted progress on this plan and depending on what happens this coming year it may be difficult to achieve our goals.

We have now settled into an effective way of serving our clients virtually, but we look forward to the day when we can serve them in person.

Like many other organizations, CMWI has shown the ability to adapt to adverse situations so that we can continue to be there for our clients in not only the good times but also be a support during difficult and challenging times.

Awards and Recognition

This year CMWI's team of Financial Empowerment facilitators, Hassan Bare and Sarah Al-Saadi received SEED's Community Builder Award for the extensive workshops they did in educating our clients about financial literacy. They also did tremendous work in tax filing for clients and received a letter of appreciation from Canada Revenue Agency.

CMWI's sewing social enterprise rose to the demands of manufacturing facemasks for businesses. We manufactured over 7,500 masks and received a letter of from Mayor Bowman recognizing the efforts of The Cutting Edge (the social enterprise) in building skills for newcomer women and with the mask production bringing some comfort and security to Manitobans during this crisis.

Financial Highlights

The core funding and the For Every Family Initiative funding from United Way continues to be the financial foundation for CMWI. This allows us to keep our doors open and employ staff to serve our clients. We received funding from various funders that allowed us to continue with our programming.

Some of the major funding we received are:

- \$227,359 Manitoba Education and Training grant for the third year to continue the paid industrial sewing training program.
- \$384,286 IRCC to continue the employment training programs for a second year.
- \$57,881 Wage and Gender Equality (Federal) for capacity building.
- \$74,600 Province of MB for renovations.
- \$50,000 Community Food Centers, Canada (Good Food Access Grant)
- \$49,000 Various Covid 19 grants

Staffing Highlights:

CMWI has now 12 full-time staff and 3 part-time staff.

1. Hodan Ali - Office Administrator
2. Zeinab Ali - Office Administrator
3. Ahlam Jasim - Outreach Coordinator
4. Houda Alkwalty - Donation Coordinator
5. Balqis Olaniyi as Office manager
6. Sarah ALSaadi - Financial Empowerment Facilitator
7. Hassan Bare - Financial Empowerment Facilitator
8. Maria Rabadi - Employment Training Coordinator
9. Trish Sinanan - Culinary Training Instructor
10. Abimbola Wahab - Childcare Specialist
11. Nikhat Merchant - Employment Counsellor
12. Anne_Lydie Bolay - Sewing Operations Director
13. Mohammed Agha - Sewing Instructor
14. Alia Mohammed - Sewing instructor
15. Fisayo Balogun - Accountant

Operating Highlights

Employee Face to Face time:

Staff (Admin @ (40x2) 80 hours, Outreach @ 40 hours, Donation Volunteer Coordinator @ 40, Office manager @ 40 hours, financial empowerment @ 40 hours and COO @40 hours) = 280 hours

In addition to the Family Resource Centre staff, we have 2 full-time sewing instructors at 37 hours (2*37), Cutting edge Director of operations @ 37 hours, Employment Counselor @ 40 hours, Training Coordinator @ 40 hours, Culinary Instructor @ 40 hours and Childcare specialist @ 40 hours.
280 +271 = 551 hours

Normally CMWI would offer **551 hours/wk. of Employee face-to-face time, in addition to 50 hours of volunteer time per week.** However, during this pandemic we have had to restrict visits to the office. Office hours were reduced last year having only a skeleton staff for client emergencies. Staff connected with clients via phone calls and through Zoom meetings.

Looking Ahead

We plan to continue and improve our service and programming to our clients in a safe way whether it be remotely or as socially distanced as the space in our office would allow. We plan to adapt and adjust programming to meet the emerging needs of our clients throughout these difficult times. We cannot thank all our funders enough for the support so that we can keep our doors open. God willing, the coming would be brighter and we will be able to be together again in person.