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# Encouraging Voluntarism Workshop

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Promoting Newcomer Integration and Social  
Inclusion through Community Participation and  
Engagement

OCASI - 2008

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# Workshop Outline

- Welcome
- Why volunteer?
- Community Engagement and Participation
- Levels of Engagement and Impact
- Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities
- Canadian Charter and the OHRC
- What next?

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# Workshop Objectives

At the end of the workshop, participants will better:

- Understand opportunities for different levels of community engagement and civic participation
- Understand the impact of different involvement
- Name their own motivations to volunteer
- Understand the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of being a resident in Canada
- Understand the Canadian Charter and the role of the OHRC

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# Volunteering and Participating in Community

People volunteer or participate in community activities for different reasons:

- For their own development and needs.
- To help and serve the community.
- To advance education, advocacy or social change

*Whatever the reasons for participation, they all contribute to the development of our communities.*

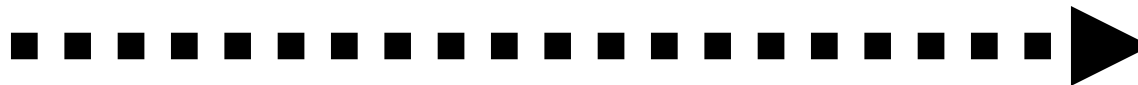
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# Community Engagement and Civic Participation

- Community engagement helps to create a more equitable society where immigrants can achieve full and equal participation in the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of society.
- Reaching out to engage newcomers, and newcomers involving themselves, are part of the shared responsibility of strengthening community.

# Levels of Engagement

PASSIVE	REACTIVE	PARTICIPATIVE	EMPOWERMENT	LEADERSHIP
Local residents and organizations are informed of issues by external organizations	Local residents and organizations provide input into the priorities and resource use of external organizations	Local residents and organizations influence the priorities and resources of external organizations	Local residents and organizations work in shared planning and action with external organizations	Local residents and organizations initiate and lead with external support on issues
Levels of Engagement				



***Whatever the reasons or level, participation contributes to the development of our communities.***

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# Examples of Participation

- Being a member of organizations such as charities, community organizations, or advocacy groups which aim to improve society in a variety of ways
- Voting in elections
- Sharing ideas and voicing opinions through debates and discussions about the affairs of the community
- Being a productive and contributing member of society by sharing your hobbies, your work, education, culture, and family values with others

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# Knowledge and Skills Enhance Engagement

- Learning one of the official languages: English or French
- Learning about what is happening in Canada, in the province, and in the neighbourhood.
- Basing opinions and decisions on facts and respecting differences of opinion.
- Understanding rights, freedoms and responsibilities.

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# Barriers to Engagement

Newcomer barriers to engagement include:

- Socio-economic factors
- Levels of marginalization
- Duration in Canada
- Cultural factors
- Information and resources

Organizations also face barriers to engaging newcomer volunteers

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# Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities

- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- The Ontario Human Rights Commission

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# The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Under *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, all residents of Canada have:

## **a. Fundamental Freedoms**

- to practice any religion, or none at all
- to say, believe, or think whatever they wish
- to read anything, or to listen to anything
- to belong to any group or to meet with anyone

(Fundamental Freedoms are guaranteed only to the extent that the practice of these rights and freedoms does not interfere with the rights and freedoms of others, such as the right to personal security, or to protection from slander or hate propaganda)

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# The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms cont.

## **b. Legal Rights**

- ❑ to be protected by laws which ensure the right to life, freedom and security of the person

## **c. Equality Rights**

- ❑ to be treated equally before and under the law
- ❑ to expect equal protection and benefit without discrimination

## **d. Official Languages of Canada**

- ❑ to be served in either French or English when using federal government services

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# Ontario Human Rights Commission

The OHRC is an independent statutory body that provides leadership for the promotion, protection and advancement of human rights, and builds partnerships across the human rights system. In pursuit of this vision, they will:

- ❑ Empower people to realize their rights.
- ❑ Ensure those responsible for upholding human rights do so.
- ❑ Advocate for the full realization of human rights
- ❑ Work with our independent partners at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and the Human Rights Legal Support Centre.

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# Ontario Human Rights Commission

cont.

- ❑ Develop and encourage the implementation of human rights policies.
- ❑ Conduct research.
- ❑ Monitor developments, trends, problem areas and case law involving human rights issues.
- ❑ Use our legal powers to pursue remedies in the public interest.
- ❑ Carry out public inquiries where appropriate
- ❑ Educate and build capacity
- ❑ Report on the state of human rights to the people of Ontario

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# Responsibility

- Look after ourselves, our families, our country, and help those in need
- Contribute to Canada through our work, taxes, talents, cultures, families
- Be willing to help others in need through volunteer work, donations or other means
- Treat people with dignity and respect, including ourselves, family members, neighbours and others in society

# What next?

Based on time and interest, there are many ways and levels to contribute with organizations and in the community other ways.

## **How to get involved**

- Visit organizations whose work is of interest to you and ask for their volunteer opportunities
- Talk to family, friends and neighbours about needs in your community and visit community centres to find out who you can collaborate with to address those needs
- Talk to the facilitator of this workshop for more ideas on engagement and participation