



# 2024 Annual Report

*Building Stronger Communities Together*

## OUR VISION

- Our vision is an equitable, inclusive, and socially just community that is committed to meaningful participation for all.

## OUR MISSION

- Our mission is to identify regional community development needs and inform relevant policy and programming while supporting and delivering effective services.

## CDCD BELIEVES

- In the enhancement and protection of social and economic rights and freedoms
- That innovative responses to community needs require collaborative thinking and practice
- That we must uphold and embody equity, inclusivity, and social justice
- That meaningful participation is defined by both the community and the individual, and that each person should be equipped and supported with the tools and resources to enable this participation, and
- In sustainable solutions to community issues and concerns





## Land Acknowledgement

Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) is located on the traditional territory of the [Huron-Wendat](#), [Haudenosaunee](#), and Mississauga ([Anishinaabe](#)), on land ceded in the [Williams Treaty of 1923](#) by the governments of Canada and [Ontario](#) and by seven [First Nations](#) of the Chippewa of Lake Simcoe (Beausoleil, Georgina Island, and Rama) and of the Mississauga of the north shore of Lake Ontario (Scugog Island, Alderville, Curve Lake, and Hiawatha). In Durham, we live and work on the traditional territory of the [Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation](#). As settlers, we are grateful for the opportunity to meet here, and we thank all the generations of people who have been stewards of this sacred land.

The importance and contributions of Indigenous Peoples must be central, clear and overtly connected to the collective commitment we make to integrate Truth and Reconciliation in our communities. At CDCD, as we continue to better understand Indigenous Peoples, acknowledge their realities and foster stronger relationships, we also encourage you to join us in reflecting on the history of this land on which we carry out our work and our presence on it today.

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# JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## *Celebrating 55 Years of Building Stronger Communities Together*

This year, Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) proudly marks 55 years of service to the residents of Durham Region. Since our founding in 1970, CDCD has grown from a small, grassroots initiative into a leading community organization dedicated to promoting social change, equity, and meaningful participation for all. Our journey reflects both the resilience of the communities we serve and the commitment of countless staff, volunteers, partners, and funders who have stood with us along the way.

The theme of this year's Annual Report, Building Stronger Communities Together, captures the essence of our work. Whether through welcoming newcomers, supporting families with housing, amplifying research and advocacy, or organizing events that bring people together, CDCD's efforts are rooted in collaboration and inclusion. The milestones of 2024–2025 reflect the power of partnerships and the strength that emerges when community voices, governments, funders, and organizations align for a common purpose.

### A Legacy of Service: 1970–2025

Over the decades, CDCD has responded to the evolving needs of Durham Region with creativity and compassion:

- **1970s–1980s:** CDCD was established to strengthen community participation and grassroots advocacy. Early programs focused on poverty reduction, community planning, and social justice.
- **1990s–2000s:** We expanded into housing services and newcomer settlement, responding to Durham's growing population and the need for coordinated supports.
- **2010s:** CDCD became the lead for the Ajax Welcome Centre, a one-stop hub for newcomers, while also growing our housing case management and advocacy initiatives.
- **2020s:** The COVID-19 pandemic and rising housing crisis demanded rapid adaptation. We launched the Durham Humanitarian Response Program, expanded housing initiatives, and increased our focus on equity-based research through our Community Lens Reports.
- **2025 and beyond:** With 55 years of experience, CDCD remains committed to tackling today's urgent challenges—housing affordability, food insecurity, poverty reduction, and ensuring newcomers and vulnerable residents are supported to thrive.

Our history shows a consistent truth: stronger communities are built when we work together.

## CDCD's Impact Highlights of 2024–2025

This year's achievements reflect the breadth and depth of CDCD's programs and partnerships.

### Ajax Welcome Centre (AWC)

Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the AWC remained a cornerstone for newcomer integration. With staff speaking 43 languages and support from 40+ partners, AWC delivered holistic services that empower newcomers to build stability.

- 44,821 program visits and 3,070 individuals supported, including 1,617 learners in language training.
- 3,444 clients accessed settlement services across five municipalities, a 30% increase over last year.
- 1,820 individuals supported through the Newcomer Settlement Program, and 616 asylum claimants assisted with labour market integration.
- Specialized programs reached 114 youth, 280 adults improving digital literacy, 137 women in entrepreneurship training, and 40 seniors in social inclusion activities.
- The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program supported 2,685 students in 183 schools.
- 373 clients accessed newcomer mental health counselling.
- 3,065 adults joined Community Connections programs.
- AWC and Housing volunteer-run tax clinics filed 807 returns, returning more than \$2.8 million in benefits to families.
- 163 volunteers extended community reach, while 2,100+ families received food, clothing, school supplies, furniture, and holiday gifts through our Donation Program.

The AWC continues to be a hub of inclusion, stability, and hope for Durham's newcomer communities.

### Housing Services

Stable housing is the foundation of healthy communities. This year, CDCD Housing provided direct, personalized supports to individuals and families at risk of eviction, experiencing homelessness, or new to Canada.

- 3,712 housing clients were served, out of which 1,724 adults in Ajax and Pickering received Case Management housing supports.
- 751 newcomers benefited from housing settlement supports.
- 201 households in Oshawa and Whitby received hydro assistance through LEAP.
- 65 families (139 individuals) were housed through Opening Doors Durham, engaging 86 new landlords to create more rental opportunities.
- 30 adults experiencing chronic homelessness were supported through the Housing First program.

Through a combination of advocacy, mediation, landlord engagement, and financial supports, CDCD is helping families move from crisis to stability.

### Durham Humanitarian Response Program (DHRP)

The DHRP turned crisis into long-term solutions for asylum-seeking families:

- 1,022 individuals (335 children, 682 adults, 5 seniors) were served from April 2024 to March, 2025.
- 751 individuals (452 households) were sheltered in three temporary hotel sites.
- 599 individuals transitioned into permanent, affordable housing.

This program exemplifies how immediate support, when paired with housing and settlement pathways, creates opportunities for new beginnings.

## Community Development Department

The Community Development team focuses on strengthening Durham's non-profit sector, advancing equity-based research, and fostering collaboration.

- Launched the Durham Non-Profit Network (DNN) with 8 members.
- Convened 79 service providers through the North Durham Social Development Council and led 9 meetings of the Ajax Homelessness Task Force.
- Produced the first Community Lens Reports on racialized populations in Durham, using 2021 Census data.
- Hosted the annual Multicultural Picnic, bringing together 339 residents during Welcoming Week.
- Delivered 11 Seniors for Seniors by Seniors sessions, engaging 93 participants.
- Submitted 16 funding applications, including joint proposals with Durham Region and Social Planning Network of Ontario.

These initiatives provide the knowledge, advocacy, and partnerships that underpin stronger, more inclusive communities.

## Looking Ahead

The successes of 2024–2025 demonstrate what is possible when communities unite. Yet, we also recognize the challenges ahead: the affordability crisis, food insecurity, systemic inequities, and the need for sustainable funding for essential services.

As we celebrate 55 years, we renew our commitment to:

- Championing housing affordability and poverty reduction.
- Ensuring equitable access to services for newcomers, seniors, youth, and vulnerable communities.
- Advancing research and advocacy that informs action on social justice issues.
- Continuing to expand and build sustainable programs that will serve Durham for the next 55 years and beyond.
- Continuing to nurture a joyful, supportive, inclusive workplace and serve as an employer of choice for our employees.

## Our Gratitude

To our funders and elected officials: thank you for your confidence and support in our mission.

To our partners and community organizations: thank you for walking alongside us in service.

To our staff and volunteers: your dedication, compassion, and expertise are the heart of CDCD.

To our clients: thank you for trusting us to be part of your journey. We are inspired daily by your courage, strength and acknowledgement.

Together, we will continue Building Stronger Communities where every person in Durham Region has the opportunity to belong, contribute, and thrive.

With gratitude,



**Roger Ramkissoon**  
Board Chair



**Hermia Corbette**  
Executive Director



THE GOVERNOR GENERAL • LA GOUVERNEURE GÉNÉRALE

**Message from the Governor General  
55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Community Development Council Durham**

I am pleased to extend warm congratulations to Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) on 55 years of service to the people of Durham Region.

Since 1970, CDCD has been advocating equity, inclusion and social justice, leading programs that address such critical issues as housing, immigration and social well-being. Through various initiatives supporting newcomers, promoting housing stability, and strengthening community partnerships, CDCD empowers individuals and families to build brighter futures for themselves.

The longevity of CDCD is a testament to its members' unwavering commitment to fostering a more cohesive, resilient and compassionate society. Congratulations to all those who have contributed to this legacy!

I wish you every success as you continue your vital mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Mary Simon'.

Mary Simon



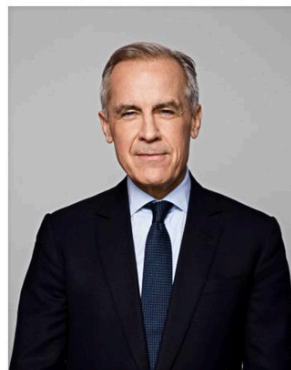
PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

I would like to convey my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 55th Annual General Meeting of the Community Development Council Durham (CDCD).

Since it was established in 1970, the CDCD has provided a wide range of services, such as transitional programs for newcomers to Canada. This event offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the organization's many accomplishments and to set goals for the future.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone involved with the CDCD for their commitment to serving the community and enriching the lives of others.

I wish you all a productive meeting and continued success.



The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., O.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada

Ottawa  
2025





On behalf of the Government of Canada,



it is my privilege to present this certificate of appreciation to



*Community Development Council*  
*Durham*



on the occasion of your

*55th Anniversary*



Your commitment to empowering individuals and supporting families significantly contributes to making Durham an equitable, inclusive and socially just community.  
Thank you for the much-needed work you do.



**Ryan Turnbull**  
Member of Parliament for Whitby



24<sup>th</sup> September, 2025







## ROB CERJANEC

### MPP, AJAX

September 9, 2025

On behalf of the Province of Ontario and as the Member of Provincial Parliament for Ajax, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) on your remarkable achievements and continued impact in our community.

For over 55 years, CDCD has been a cornerstone of Durham Region, leading with compassion and vision to build a more equitable and inclusive community. Your tireless efforts in housing, immigrant and refugee support, youth engagement, homelessness prevention, and community development have transformed lives and strengthened the fabric of our region.

Your success in helping families, empowering newcomer women, and fostering meaningful connections with Indigenous peoples are a testament to your dedication and commitment to collective action for lasting change.

Ajax is proud to have CDCD's leadership and programs making a positive difference for individuals and families. Please accept my warmest congratulations and gratitude for your unwavering service to our community. I look forward to continuing to support your work and celebrating future successes.

Rob Cerjanec  
MPP for Ajax

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**LORNE COE**  
MPP - Whitby



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September 16, 2025

Community Development Council Durham  
458 Fairall Street, Unit 4, Ajax ON  
L1S 1R6

Dear Friends,

It is my distinct pleasure to extend congratulations to the Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) on the occasion of your 55th anniversary of service in the Region of Durham.

For more than half a century, CDCD has been a cornerstone of our community, helping newcomers find their footing, supporting vulnerable families, and advancing initiatives that strengthen social and economic inclusion across Durham Region. Your work has touched countless lives, offering hope, opportunity, and practical support to those who need it most.

Through programs in settlement services, housing stability, and community engagement, CDCD has not only addressed immediate needs but has also helped to build the foundations of a stronger, more resilient Durham. The dedication of your staff, volunteers, and community partners reflects the very best of our region's spirit of compassion, inclusion, and care for our neighbours.

As you celebrate this important milestone, I encourage you to take pride in all that has been accomplished and in the lasting difference you continue to make each and every day. The legacy of the past 55 years is remarkable, and the future holds even greater promise as CDCD continues to adapt and lead in meeting the needs of our growing and diverse community.

On behalf of the residents of Whitby and the Province of Ontario, I extend heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for continued success in the years ahead. May the next chapter of CDCD's journey be marked by the same commitment, innovation, and community spirit that has defined your past.

Sincerely,

Lorne Coe, MPP  
Whitby

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services  
Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence, and Security



**The Regional  
Municipality of  
Durham**

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**John Henry**  
Regional Chair and  
CEO

**Re: Community Development Council Durham 55th Annual General Meeting**

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Dear valued members of Community Development Council Durham (CDCD),

On behalf of the Region of Durham, I would like to thank you for another year of supporting, empowering and uplifting individuals and families across our communities.

CDCD has been a valued partner of the Region for 55 years, making a meaningful impact through its social development and community planning work.

It continues to lead newcomer settlement and integration efforts, offering programs in language, childcare, and entrepreneurship to support successful transitions into the community.

It is the home of the Ajax Welcome Centre, which provides a safe and welcoming environment that caters to the complex and diverse needs of newcomers.

And it is committed to supporting individuals and families achieve stability; helping people find and maintain safe housing, advocating for those experiencing homelessness or living with mental health and addictions, and so much more.

CDCD has made a big impact on the well-being and quality of life for so many in our communities. We are extremely grateful for its continued partnership. Thank you for all you do for Durham Region.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Henry'.

John Henry  
Regional Chair and CEO

If you require this information in an accessible format, please contact Communications and Engagement at [CorporateCommunications@durham.ca](mailto:CorporateCommunications@durham.ca) or 311, extension 3743.



# Clarington

**Mayor Adrian Foster**

August 27, 2025

Hermia Corbette  
Executive Director  
Community Development Council Durham (CDCD)  
458 Fairall St. Unit 4  
Ajax, ON L1S 1R6  
Via Email c/o Padmini Roberts: [proberts@cdcd.org](mailto:proberts@cdcd.org)

Dear Hermia Corbette:

As we celebrate Community Development Council Durham's (CDCD) 55<sup>th</sup> year of serving Durham Region, on behalf of Council of the Municipality of Clarington and our residents, I wish to take this opportunity to extend heartfelt gratitude to the staff and volunteers at CDCD who selflessly dedicate their time, energy and compassion to support individuals and families in our community.

Through your essential work, you bring hope and joy to many lives, and to our most vulnerable citizens. Your willingness to step up and lend a hand helps to make Clarington and Durham Region a stronger and more caring place, for which we are immensely grateful.

Your dedication and contributions do not go unnoticed. Your willingness to devote your time and energy to the betterment of others is truly commendable. Thank you for being the heart and soul of our caring community!

Sincerely yours,

Adrian Foster  
Mayor



# THE ROAD SO FAR – 55 YEARS AND COUNTING

1970

**Establishment of Social Planning Council of Ajax-Pickering:** Community Development Council Durham, formerly known as the Social Development Council of Ajax-Pickering, a **not-for-profit charitable organization**, is rebranded as the **Social Planning Council of Ajax-Pickering**.

1971

**Family Counseling Service Transition:** In August, Family Counseling Service, which had already been established under the **auspices of the Social Planning Council**, was placed under the Pickering Township Social Service Department. The Social Planning Council also becomes aligned with the **Municipality's Social Service Department**, but retained its independent Board of Directors.

1974

**Transition of Social Services to the Region of Durham:** On January 1, all **Social Services** became the **responsibility of the new Region of Durham**. The Region offers to continue the close association with the Social Planning Council by providing **office space in its new Centre at 138 Commercial Avenue in Ajax**.

1980

**Launch of Host Program:** The HOST Program is born to support newcomers. It was **funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada**. As well as additional financial support from the **United Way of Ajax/Pickering/Uxbridge**.

1983

**New Office Location:** As the agency secured new projects, **larger accommodation** was secured at **32A Commercial Avenue in Ajax**.

1992

**New Office Location:** The Agency **expands its office space** to include **134 Commercial Avenue** as well.

2000

**Durham's Child Nutrition Project begins:** Initially funded by the Region of Durham and by the Canadian Living Foundation, **this breakfast/healthy snack program is delivered to schools in Durham Region**.

2003

**Introducing the Agency's New Name:** Having only Ajax and Pickering in its name was self-limiting, so in November, **the council changed its name to Community Development Council Durham (CDCD)** to reflect the work being done across the Region.

2007

**New Office Location:** The agency **expands** to include the **whole of 138 Commercial Avenue**.



# THE ROAD SO FAR – 55 YEARS AND COUNTING

2011

**CDCD Launches its first One-Stop Newcomer Centre:** CDCCD moves into its new premises at 458 Fairall St, as it is tasked to take the lead role in establishing the **Welcome Centre Immigrant Services in Ajax**, offering a one-stop service option for newcomers to the Durham community.

2015

**Ajax Pride House:** is held at the **Ajax Welcome Centre in partnership with the Town of Ajax** to provide a temporary location offering a **safe space for the LGBTQIA2S+ community** during the **2015 PAN AM Games**.

2016

**Leadership Durham program is launched:** a community leadership program that is intended on **increasing collaboration** throughout the Region and in **building capacity within the non-profit/charitable sectors**.

CDCCD conducted a **living wage study** examining the cost of living throughout Durham and what a family of four needed to meet its **basic needs**.

2017

**Discover Your Durham Newcomer Bus tour:** This event was a way for newcomers to become **familiar with their community, while celebrating our heritage through Canada 150 activities**.

2018

**Point-in-time (PiT):** CDCCD produced Durham's Point-in-time (PiT) Count, which provided an **estimated snapshot of the extent and nature of homelessness in Durham Region**.

**CDCCD changes its logo:** The new logo reflects a more **diverse and vibrant entity, as well as the community it supports**.

2019

**The first Resettlement Program was launched in Durham.** The program assisted refugee families with children in becoming resettled and housed in the Region and surrounding communities.

**Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)** celebrated **10 years of helping newcomer families** navigate Durham's Catholic and public **elementary and secondary school systems**.

CDCCD's Housing Department co-developed and facilitated the **Ajax Homelessness Task Force** with Ajax Counselors Lisa Bower and Joanne Dies. This brought together churches, local businesses, BIA members, service providers, mental health agencies, the local youth shelter, social workers, paramedics, and people experiencing homelessness in Ajax, and **led to the implementation of locker storage for the homeless population, Doors of Compassion – Out of the Cold supports, and a Hygiene Hub**.

2020

**Technology & Infrastructure Revitalization:** CDCCD implemented a comprehensive infrastructure update in response to COVID-19, equipping all staff with mobile and computer devices to ensure business continuity, employee safety, and operational efficiency.

**Opening Doors Durham Pilot:** Launched a first-of-its-kind program in Durham to engage landlords in south Durham to provide units below market rate for clients experiencing chronic homelessness and are on the By-Name list.

**Sector Research:** Funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation, assessed the impact of COVID-19 on non-profits across Durham Region through research and reporting, highlighting challenges and opportunities for the sector.

**Chalmers Durham APP:** Launched the app, a chatbot powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide real-time referrals to homeless services – the first of its kind in the region. **CDCCD received a Certificate of Recognition from Regional Chair John Henry** for this innovative initiative, underscoring the organization's leadership in leveraging technology for community support.



# THE ROAD SO FAR – 55 YEARS AND COUNTING

2021

**Virtual Women Entrepreneurs Marketplace:** Hosted the first online marketplace for newcomer women-led businesses at CDCD's virtual AGM, providing a platform to showcase their products, expand reach, and build community engagement.

**Housing Settlement Workers:** Introduced Housing Settlement Workers to Durham Region to help newcomers navigate the housing system.

**Building Bridges Program – Orange Shirt Day:** Recognized Orange Shirt Day through a virtual forum featuring a Residential School survivor's testimony, fostering meaningful dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and newcomers about Canadian history.

**Addressing Gender-Based Violence:** In response to the rise in gender-based violence, CDCD expanded its prevention and support initiatives. Through the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program, CDCD launched the *"Let's Talk About Relationships"* initiative, providing education, resources, and safe spaces for newcomer youth to discuss healthy relationships and challenge harmful norms.

2023

**Staff Appreciation Day:** Introduced the first full-day appreciation event, recognizing employee contributions, boosting morale, and strengthening agency-wide team building. This is now an annual signature event.

**Collaboration with Lived Experience Community:** CDCD continued to serve as the Agency Lead for the GAP Committee, leveraging the expertise of people with lived experience, service providers, and partners to strengthen community-building efforts aimed at ending homelessness in Durham Region.

**Launching Digital Community Resources:** CDCD further developed the *Homelessness in Durham: Hope in Our Community* website, a community-led and co-designed online resource for individuals experiencing homelessness and the service providers who support them. This tool aimed to foster dialogue, raise awareness, and encourage collaboration across the Durham Region.

2022

**Opening Doors Durham – Annual Funding Secured:** The pilot program's success resulted in it becoming a fully funded initiative, continuing to provide sustainable housing opportunities for those experiencing chronic homelessness.

**Care for Newcomer Children (CNC):** Began operations offering free on-site childminding for up to 10 children (ages 19 months to 6 years) while parents or guardians attend in-person IRCC-funded programs at the Ajax Welcome Centre.

**Strengthening Humanitarian and Mental Health Supports:** CDCD was selected by IRCC as the focal point service provider to coordinate and deliver settlement services for Ukrainians in Durham Region. OCASI also selected CDCD to integrate Mental Health Promotion into settlement services, which built the agency's capacity to deliver short-term therapeutic counselling to newcomers.

**Durham Humanitarian Program:** Launched in response to the Ukrainian crisis, initially with one site and later expanding to three locations. In partnership with the Region and other community partners, the program supports asylum seekers from around the world.

2024

**Workforce Growth:** For the first time, CDCD's staffing levels peaked at **100 employees** working concurrently across all programs.

**Back-to-School Partnership:** Nearly **900 backpacks** were distributed to school-aged children through a partnership with UWAY Durham Region.

**Holiday Toy Drive:** In partnership with Durham Police Services and the Town of Ajax, **183 toys** were donated annually for low-income and newcomer families. In 2024, **263 families signed up**, and **182 families received toys**, benefiting over **700 children** with the help of **13 volunteers**.

**Provincial Funding for Asylum Claimants:** Received one-time funding (2024–2025) for Settlement and Labour Market Integration Services for Asylum Claimants to address the growing influx of asylum seekers in Durham. Contributed to the development of the **Newcomer Housing Journey Map** in partnership with the Durham Local Immigration Partnership.



# THE ROAD SO FAR – 55 YEARS AND COUNTING

2025

**Oshawa/Clarington Welcome Centre Immigrant Services and RAP House:** Opened the second **CDCD Welcome Centre** in Oshawa, along with Durham's **first IRCC-funded Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) House**, significantly expanding capacity to support newcomers and government-assisted refugees.

**Durham Refugee Hiring Event:** In partnership with **WES, DRUHC, and the Region**, hosted Durham's first Refugee Hiring Event. The event saw **127 participants, 14 employers, and 148 onsite interviews**, achieving an **89% success rate**. Twelve candidates were hired on the spot, and **101 attendees were retained** for the next stage of the interview process.

**Championing the Durham Not-for-Profit Network (DNN):** CDCD continued to champion the newly established Durham Not-for-Profit Network (DNN) in partnership with **8 founding member agencies**. The DNN brings together nonprofit organizations across the region to strengthen collaboration, share resources, and advocate collectively on sector-wide priorities. By serving as a central hub for coordination and knowledge exchange, DNN amplifies the voice of the nonprofit sector and builds stronger connections with government, funders, and community partners.

**Newcomer Women's Leadership Program:** CDCD launched a Newcomer Women's Leadership Program, funded by IRCC, to empower newcomer women through mentorship and peer support, fostering confidence and stronger community engagement.

20

“

As CDCD celebrates 55 years of service, we proudly reflect on the milestones that have shaped our journey. From expanding newcomer and humanitarian services to launching Durham's first government-assisted refugee Resettlement Program, strengthening housing supports for tenants and socially responsible landlords, and advancing lived experience communities and partner- and non-profit sector-driven social planning initiatives. Guided by our values of equity, inclusion, and collaboration, we remain committed to building stronger communities in Durham, where every individual feels supported, empowered, and at home.”

”

**Hermia Corbette**

Executive Director – September 2025

25

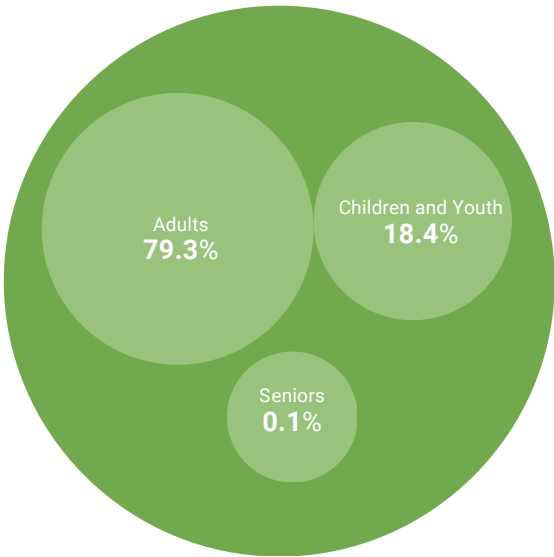


# CDCD'S Impact in 2024

The Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) offers a range of programs, including Housing Services, Community Development and Research, and the Durham Humanitarian Response Project (DHRP). CDCD also leads the Welcome Centre Immigration Services in Ajax, which is a hub that provides comprehensive support to newcomers and immigrants in Canada. In collaboration with over 40 service providers, CDCD facilitates referrals and ensures access to essential services tailored to individual needs.

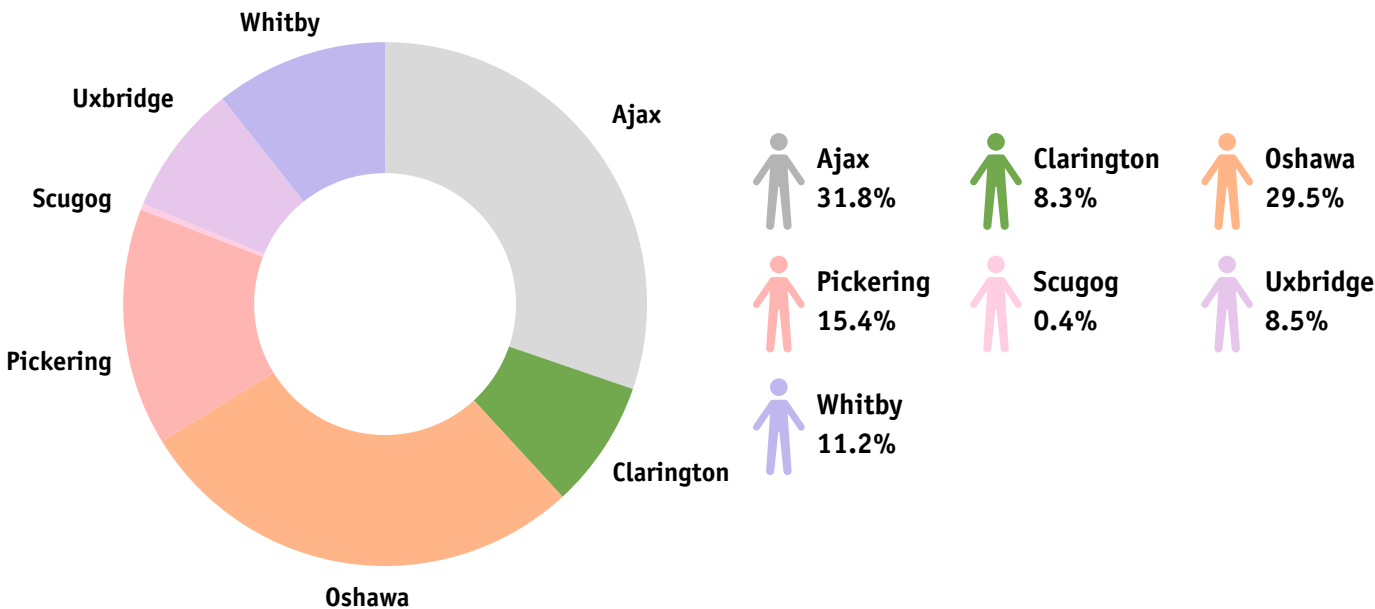
23,901

Clients Served  
Across Durham Region



*I wish to express my deep appreciation for the work CDCD does. Being part of some of their programs has truly changed my outlook. Through their support, I've seen lives—mine included shift from uncertainty to hope and determination.*

## Clients Served by Municipality



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

## TAKING COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO INEQUITY

### Community Development Partner Agencies for 2024 to 2025:

- Durham College
- Feed the Need Durham
- Back Door Mission
- Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre
- Boys and Girls Club Durham
- Affiliation for Inspiring Youth Upliftment
- Durham Community Foundation
- Nourish and Develop Foundation
- Brock Community Health Centre
- Community Living North Durham
- Blue Door
- Durham Community Legal Clinic
- Region of Durham Public Health and Community Safety and Well-Being.
- United Way of Durham
- AIDS Committee of Durham Region
- North House
- Durham Mental Health Services
- 211Central
- John Howard Society of Durham
- Town of Ajax
- Ajax Public Library
- Christian Faith Outreach Centre
- Robert McLaughlan Gallery
- Social Planning Network of Ontario
- Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre

### Happy 55th Anniversary CDCD!

As the original department of the organization, the Community Development Department proudly honors the legacy of CDCD's founders. Through our commitment to community development approaches and equity-focused social research and planning, we continue to uphold their vision while adapting to meet the evolving needs of Durham's communities.

Current staff members remain dedicated to strengthening the capacity of the community to address Durham's most pressing social issues. Guided by values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and participatory approaches, Community Development has had a busy year convening networks of service providers and community members. In addition, the team has produced reports that shed light on inequities in our communities and highlight actionable steps to advance social and economic justice.

### Fund Development

Community Development work at CDCD is essential to building stronger, more inclusive communities. This challenge has fueled our team's creativity and determination to pursue grant opportunities, to sustain and grow our social research, planning, and community development activities, ensuring we continue to fulfill our mandate.

- In 2024–2025, the Community Development department submitted **16** funding proposals, a 140% increase from the previous year.
- This growth demonstrates our team's commitment to securing resources that support equity-focused research, planning, and community development in Durham.

#### Community Development Partners Cont'd

- Pickering Village United Church
- The Abilities Centre
- Lakeridge Health
- 211
- Town of Ajax
- MPP Barnes
- Durham Community Health Centre
- Durham Regional Police, Victim Services

Applications were submitted to the following funders:

- Federal New Horizons Seniors Grant
- Provincial Seniors Community Grant Program
- Ontario Trillium Foundation Seed Grant
- United Way of Durham Region
- Thriving Communities Fund
- Hydro One Energizing Life Communities Fund
- Advancing Accessibility Standards Federal Research Program
- Town of Ajax Partnership Grant
- Catherine Donnelly Foundation
- Canadian Race Relations Foundation (in partnership with SPNO & Social Planning Hamilton)
- National Crime Prevention Grant, Public Safety Canada (in partnership with SPNO & Social Planning Ottawa)
- Canada Summer Jobs Program

## Social Research

With the hiring of a Social Researcher in November 2024, CDCD strengthened its commitment to conducting community-based participatory action research and expanding the reach of our Community Lens Reports.

Over the past year, proposals were submitted to:

- Advancing Accessibility Standards Federal Research Program and
- Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Collaboration has also been a priority. The department collaborated with the:

- Social Planning Network of Ontario (SPNO) and Social Planning Ottawa on the National Crime Prevention grant through Public Safety Canada and
- Region of Durham on the IRCC Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) funding application to establish a comprehensive, systemic approach to humanitarian response in the region.

These proposals reflect the team's ongoing commitment to pursuing research funding and promoting social research in Durham Region and beyond.

## Community Lens Report

The Department dedicated significant time to producing [Community Lens Reports on the migration paths and socio-economic and housing circumstances of racialized populations in Durham Region](#), using 2021 Census data. The series, covering Durham Region, Ajax, Oshawa, and Pickering, is the first of its kind locally and highlights barriers faced by racialized communities in employment, income, housing, and education. These reports will be shared with the community and serve as valuable resources to raise awareness and inform action on equity and social justice.

## Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) Mental Health Promotion Project



As part of the Mental Health Promotion Project, a Community Development staff member co-facilitated a workshop with OCASI and Catholic Cross-Cultural Services on newcomer mental health peer support at the Pathways 2 Prosperity Conference in Vancouver on November 24, 2024. The session was well-received and sparked important discussion on peer support models. CDCD remains engaged in the project and is exploring ways to integrate peer support into its settlement services.

### Community Development Affiliated Networks by Numbers 2024 to 2025

# 202

GAP Committee Members

# 8

DNN Members

# 60

AHTF Members

# 9

NDSDC Members

#### Ajax Homelessness Task Force (AHTF)



AHTF was highly active last year, expanding its membership and launching new sub-committees on education and awareness, Warming, Cooling Centres, and Micro Homes.

A successful Community Building Day event was held, in September 2024, bringing together about **40** service providers, government representatives, business leaders, community members, and people with lived experience. The Task Force is a strong collaborative voice for ending homelessness in Ajax.

CDCD is proud to coordinate this important work and invites community members to get involved by emailing [ahtf@cdcd.org](mailto:ahtf@cdcd.org)



#### North Durham Social Development Council (NDSDC)

NDSDC achieved significant milestones, thanks to the dedication of its Executive Committee members. Alongside monthly Executive Committee meetings, key accomplishments included:

- **Inter-Agency Collaboration:** Organized four Inter-Agency meetings bringing together service providers and stakeholders across Durham Region. Topics included:
  - Rural Response to COVID-19
  - Ontario Non-Profit Network State of the Sector Report
  - Beaverton Supportive Housing
  - Your Way Forward project
- **Advocacy in Action:** Presented before municipal councils in Brock, Uxbridge, and Scugog, highlighting the Council's ongoing work and advocacy to improve transportation in North Durham.

These efforts strengthened collaboration, amplified local voices, and fostered advocacy on critical issues affecting rural communities across the Region. To learn more, contact Community Planner at [proberts@cdcd.org](mailto:proberts@cdcd.org)

## The GAP Committee

CDCD serves as the lead agency for the GAP Committee, established in 2019 to take a community-based and collaborative approach to addressing homelessness in Durham Region. The Committee is comprised of individuals with lived experience of homelessness, service providers, and committed community partners. Together, members amplify the voices of residents experiencing homelessness, strengthen communication, foster meaningful collaboration, and co-design initiatives that connect the community with local agencies.

In 2024–2025, the GAP Committee promoted awareness and advocacy across Durham Region to address homelessness. Some key highlights included:

- **Documentary Screenings:** Hosted community screenings of *Us and Them*, a powerful film chronicling the experiences of three individuals navigating homelessness and addictions.
- **Encampment Engagement:** Committee members connected directly with individuals living in encampments to gather input on how best to respond to their needs and realities.
- **Peer Support Training:** Executive Committee members completed Peer Support training, laying the groundwork for a peer support model to assist individuals transitioning from homelessness into housing.
- **World Homeless Day:** Marked on October 10, 2024, with flag raisings in each of Durham's municipalities, organized and led by the GAP Committee.
- **Candlelight Vigil:** Held in March 2025 to honour and remember individuals in Durham Region who lost their lives while experiencing homelessness.

CDCD commends the GAP Committee for its leadership, commitment, and impactful contributions to addressing homelessness across the Region.

## Durham Non-Profit Network (DNN)



**NONPROFIT  
DRIVEN**  
REGIONAL CONNECTS  
**DURHAM**

Join us for Nonprofit Driven Regional Connects: Durham, an opportunity for nonprofits, charities, and community organizations across the region to connect, deepen relationships, and discuss big picture issues with a local lens to work together for a thriving nonprofit environment.

This event is co-hosted by Ontario Nonprofit Network, Durham Nonprofit Network, and Community Development Council Durham.

Audley Recreation Centre  
1955 Audley Road Ajax

October 14, 2025  
9:30 AM - 4:00 PM

\$85 regular tickets  
\$70 ONN members

### Event Highlights

**Local insights**   
Get practical data, information about policies and trends impacting nonprofits in Durham and across Ontario, and resources that you can use right away.

**Local catering**   
Enjoy breakfast and lunch with nonprofit colleagues.

**Connect!**   
Make connections over the issues that matter to you and have conversations about what's happening in your own communities.

**Ticket details**   
Limited number of subsidized and low-barrier ticket options available - [see registration page for details](#).



The Durham Non-Profit Network accelerated its work over the past year with support from the Region of Durham's Thriving Communities Fund. The current membership of Feed the Need, Back Door Mission, AIDS Committee of Durham Region, Affiliation for Inspiring Youth Upliftment (AFIYU), Boys and Girls Club of Durham, CDCD and Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre guided the work of the Network over this implementation phase.

The DNN will soon be prepared to move into the next phase of work, which involves formalizing and expanding the Network. To this end, we invite Durham non-profits and stakeholders to an ONN/DNN/CDCD hosted **Regional Connects event that will be held on October 14th, 2025** at the Audley Recreation Centre in Ajax.

Please contact DNN Coordinator at [kmollah@cdcd.org](mailto:kmollah@cdcd.org) to register.



## Homelessness in Durham Hope in Our Community Website



The Hope in Our Community website ([www.homelessnessindurham.ca](http://www.homelessnessindurham.ca)) is a community-centered platform that raises awareness about homelessness in Durham Region, highlights the challenges individuals face, and showcases our community's collective response.

In 2024–2025, the site was accessed by residents, service providers, colleges and community members, underscoring its value as both an educational tool and a support resource.

In collaboration with the Website Advisory Committee, CDCD continued enhancing this platform to ensure it remains a vital, community-driven resource for individuals experiencing homelessness and the agencies that serve them.



### Welcoming Week



Welcoming Week was celebrated again by CDCD in 2024, with the Community Development department organizing another successful Multicultural Picnic to mark the occasion.

Welcoming Week, observed September 13 - 22, promotes cross-cultural understanding and celebrates the benefits of welcoming everyone.

The event attracted over **300 community members, service providers and local leaders** and was a reflection of the diverse cultures in Durham Region.

### Seniors for Seniors by Seniors (S3)



Funded by the Provincial Seniors Community Grant, CDCD's S3 project brought together newcomer and established seniors to share migration and settlement stories while learning about available services and activities in Durham Region. Key highlights:

- Bi-monthly sessions were facilitated by local leaders, creating opportunities for newcomer seniors to connect, socialize, and learn directly from service providers and government representatives.
- Cross-cultural exchange was fostered, social inclusion was strengthened, and isolation was reduced among newcomer seniors.

**Next steps: Newcomer seniors will identify issues that affect them in Durham and will take collective action to address them.**

To get involved, contact Community Planner at [proberts@cdcd.org](mailto:proberts@cdcd.org).

### Supporting Grassroots Organizations in Durham



Comm Dev's Incubation program continues to work with grassroots groups located in Durham. **A range of support services is available to these organizations, including:**

- Financial oversight through trusteeship
- Mentorship
- Administrative and technical assistance
- Guidance in grant writing

A clear application process now makes it easier for community members to access program supports. CDCD is privileged to work alongside emerging service providers and support their goals.

To access the Incubation Program, contact [proberts@cdcd.org](mailto:proberts@cdcd.org)

# HOUSING PROGRAM

## HELPING PEOPLE FIND A HOME

CDCD's Housing Programs, funded by the Regional Municipality of Durham, are designed to help individuals and families find and maintain safe, stable housing. Through personalized supports, the team provides advocacy, guidance on landlord-tenant matters, mediation, and assistance in resolving housing challenges, while also connecting clients to a wide range of community resources and services.

### Housing First Program

Funded by the Region of Durham and using the coordinated access framework and real-time By-Name List, the Housing First Program prioritizes services based on client need and eligibility.

CDCD Housing First workers provide intensive, personalized support to **30** individuals experiencing homelessness to transition into safe, stable, and permanent housing.

#### Highlights:

- Housing placements are secured through Opening Doors Durham, market rentals, and community housing.
- Strong partnerships with Ontario Works, ODSP, Durham Mental Health Services, Back Door Mission, and Christian Faith Outreach Centre ensure wraparound supports are available to clients.

This collaborative approach transforms lives by turning homelessness into housing stability and long-term security.



### Housing Case Management

CDCD's Case Management Team assists individuals in **Ajax and Pickering** with their housing needs.

The goal of the program is to work with clients to ensure their housing is stabilized and connect them with appropriate services.

# 1,724

**Clients Received Housing Supports**

Housing Case Managers assisted clients with a range of housing supports as follows:

# 3,712

**Total Housing Clients Served in 2024 - 2025**

- Develop individualized settlement and housing plans
- Assist with ID replacement
- Search for legal rental units in Durham Region
- Educate clients about the Residential Tenancies Act and the Landlord and Tenant Board
- Apply for subsidized housing and other supportive housing
- Advocate with landlords, housing providers, and community agencies on behalf of the client
- Support community integration
- Access emergency shelters, Transitional housing, and Micro homes
- Complete forms for income assistance (e.g., Ontario Disability Support Program [ODSP])
- Connect to community resources that cater to their needs
- Secure essential items, such as bus tickets

## A New Look For CDCD's Housing Department



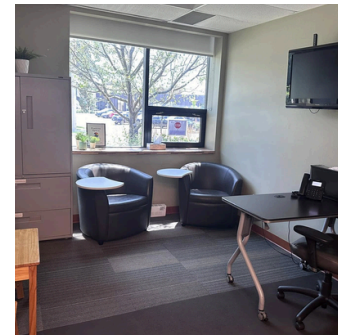
With a Capital Grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), CDCD transformed its reception area into a dedicated resource space for individuals experiencing homelessness, low income, and newcomers in Ajax and Pickering. The newly renovated space features:

- A reception and resource area with three computers, internet access for housing and job searches, online applications, and document printing.
- An additional meeting room for private appointments with Housing Case Managers, virtual medical visits, job interviews, or Landlord Tenant Board hearings.



This investment creates a secure, one-stop hub that supports community members with the tools they need to build stability and move forward.

We're grateful for the ongoing support of OTF, local MPPs and Town of Ajax Councillors, community members and partners who helped to launch the new space in July, 2024.



### Housing Settlement Case Management

Two Housing Settlement Case Management Workers strengthen CDCD's ability to support newcomer families across Durham Region.

The staff play a vital role in helping families find, secure, and maintain safe housing. By combining housing support, settlement services, and case management, they promote long-term housing stability and create stronger foundations for successful settlement.

# 751

Newcomer Housing Clients Served

### Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)

The Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP), administered by the Ontario Energy Board, provides monthly on-bill credits to help low-income households reduce their electricity costs. The credit amount is based on household income and size, ensuring support goes where it is needed most.

OESP support eases the burden of rising utility costs and helps families stabilize their housing and redirect limited resources toward other essential needs.

# 47

Households Secured OESP Assistance



## Opening Doors Durham (ODD)

Opening Doors Durham is a housing-focused initiative designed to address homelessness in Durham Region through collaborative engagement with both landlords and tenants. The program operates with two key components:

### 1 Landlord Engagement

Landlord Engagement Specialists work directly with landlords to:

- Onboard and support them throughout their involvement in the program
- Offer incentives such as signing bonuses and mitigation funds to reduce the risks associated with renting to individuals exiting homelessness
- Provide ongoing support and education, including information about the Residential Tenancies Act and best practices for maintaining successful tenancies.

For 2024 - 2025 ODD, onboarded:

86

New Landlords

102

New Units

#### Low-Income Energy Assistance (LEAP)

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) is designed for low income individuals and families who have difficulty paying their hydro bills. Applicants may qualify for a one time grant through an application process.

Out of 343 applicants

201

Clients Approved

\$122,574.87

LEAP Funding Dispersed

#### Housing Tax Clinic

CDCD Housing offers a year-round, free income tax clinic in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Trained volunteers complete and file tax returns for eligible residents, ensuring they can access important tax credits and benefits.

The program supports individuals and families with modest incomes and simple tax situations, including low-income residents, seniors, students, newcomers, and people with disabilities, helping them maximize their resources and strengthen financial stability.

425

Tax Returns Completed

### 2 Housing Retention

Housing Retention Caseworkers support clients by:

- Assisting them in securing rental units
- Providing ongoing support to promote housing stability and reduce the risk of eviction
- Acting as a liaison between tenants and landlords to resolve issues and help to sustain long-term tenancies

251

ODD Referrals

139

Individuals Housed

#### CDCD Housing Youth Program

The Housing Youth Program, funded by the Town of Ajax, is a pilot initiative providing after-school programming for Ajax youth aged 12–17 who are experiencing housing precarity or homelessness.

The program offers a safe and supportive space to help youth develop communication, social, and life skills. A part-time youth worker leads interactive activities such as arts and crafts, gardening, baking, budgeting, job search, resume building, and public speaking.

58

Youth Participated

# SETTLEMENT SERVICES

## PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

### Orientation and Information Program

Funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Information and Orientation, Settlement Services play a vital role in supporting newcomers as they adjust to life in Canada. At the heart of this work are our dedicated Settlement Workers, who provide newcomers with personalized Information and Orientation services that help them understand how Canadian systems function, from housing and healthcare to education, financial supports, employment pathways, community life, and so much more. Settlement workers also help clients develop personalized settlement plans based on their individual goals. Between April 2024 and March 2025, Settlement Workers provided services to:

1,481

New Clients

1,963

Returning Clients

3,444

Total Clients



CDCD's settlement team supported nearly 30% more clients than the previous year while maintaining high client satisfaction. Despite growing administrative demands, staff organized information and orientation sessions, many in partnership with community organizations and consistently exceeded program targets.

Services were delivered across Ajax, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering, and Whitby by a diverse team of 9 workers who collectively speak 25 languages.

This language diversity fosters trust, improves understanding, and supports informed decision-making for clients and their families. Our client-centred, trauma-informed and culturally responsive approach promotes equity, inclusion, and belonging. Our services provide critical information and also reduce isolation by connecting clients to ethno-specific groups and community supports.

### Mental Health Counselling

In addition to core settlement services, our Mental Health Settlement workers support newcomer clients through short-term mental health counselling services. These services offer a safe and confidential space for clients who may be facing difficult personal circumstances, such as abuse, illness, or stress related to adjusting to life in Canada. Whether someone is feeling overwhelmed, unsure of what to do next, or just needs someone to talk to, our team is there to listen, guide, and connect them to the right supports. By helping clients navigate these challenges, we ensure they can continue to access the broader range of IRCC-funded settlement services and stay on track with their settlement goals. Last fiscal year, the Mental Health Settlement Workers provided services to:

69

New Clients

304

Returning Clients

373

Total Clients

Our services empower newcomers with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to participate fully in Canadian society and build successful lives in their new home.

## Newcomer Settlement Program

The Government of Ontario funds the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP), and it plays a vital role in supporting the social and economic integration of newcomers to Ontario, and more specifically, throughout Durham Region.

Our clients include:

- Naturalized Canadian Citizens
- Visitors
- International Students
- Permanent Residents
- Internationally Trained Professionals
- Convention Refugees
- Work Permit holders
- Caregivers
- Refugees
- Individuals with precarious or non-immigration status

Our NSP Settlement team are experienced system navigators, offering tailored support to help clients access services related to settlement, employment, housing, health and mental health, income support, language assessment and training, childcare, education, and helping individuals and families gain the skills, knowledge, and connections they need to participate fully in their local communities and the labour market.

A key aspect of their service includes working with each client to create a personalized settlement plan based on their goals.

The Newcomer Settlement Program served

**1,181** **639** **1,820**  
New Clients Repeat Clients Total Clients

NSP settlement workers collaborated with a variety of community partners to deliver group information sessions and workshops throughout the year. These partners included the Durham Catholic District School Board, Durham Community Legal Clinic, Durham Tamil Association, Durham Humanitarian Relief Project, Christian Faith Outreach Centre, and the Ajax and Pickering Welcome Centres.

Workshop topics covered a range of settlement-related areas such as:

- Legal Aid
- Accessing relevant community services (including the Durham Welcome Centre, CDCD Newcomer Community Services, and housing support)
- Employment pathways
- Mental health, wellness, and healthy relationships
- Financial literacy

Participant feedback was collected through evaluation forms, and responses from attendees highlighted the value and impact of the sessions.

*"The event was well planned, and the presenter was very clear."*  
*"Very patient and knowledgeable."*

# 1,214

New + Repeat SLM Clients Served

Funded by the Government of Ontario, the Settlement and Labour Market Integration (SLM) Services for Asylum Claimants program was introduced in response to a growing need for targeted support among asylum seekers arriving in Canada, and into Durham Region for a twelve month period, January 2024 to December 2024.

## Settlement Services for Asylum Claimants

This program fulfilled a critical service gap aimed to provide immediate, early-stage assistance to help claimants navigate their new environment, access essential services, and begin building stability while their claims were being processed. Clients received support in understanding Canadian systems, accessing housing, healthcare, education, and legal resources, and participating in orientation and community connection activities, as well as employment-focused services delivered by select community agencies.

# NEWCOMER COMMUNITY SERVICES

## BUILDING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES FOR NEWCOMERS

The focus of Newcomer Community Services is to create welcoming communities for newcomers to Durham Region by offering programs that foster social and professional connections, develop skills and enhance a sense of belonging.

### Newcomer Youth Program



The Newcomer Youth Program empowers youth ages 14–29 to build skills, expand knowledge, and form meaningful connections that support their settlement and success in Canada. In 2024–2025, **114** newcomer youth across Durham Region participated in dynamic workshops and activities designed to strengthen confidence, leadership, and community belonging as follows:

53

Life Skills & Youth  
English Conversation  
Circles

41

Pre-Employment  
and Education  
Workshops

22

Sports and  
Recreation  
Sessions

37

Self-Care, Health  
and Wellness  
Activities



Each year, CDCD collaborates with Youth In Policing Initiative (YIP) to host a Newcomer Youth Soccer Tournament, fostering inclusion, teamwork, and community spirit through sport.

This year, the tournament welcomed over **40** newcomer youth, providing them with an opportunity to connect, engage in healthy recreation, and build relationships with our local police services in a supportive environment.



We look forward to continuing this valuable partnership and expanding opportunities for newcomer youth in Durham Region by delivering inclusive, community-driven events. The Newcomer Youth Services is delivered in partnership with various youth-serving organizations across the Region, including the School Boards, to ensure coordinated support and opportunities for newcomer youth.

*“The program has helped me to feel more confident and prepared for my future in Canada. I’m excited to continue learning and growing. Thank you!” - JJ.*



## Digital Literacy Program

The Digital Literacy Program supports newcomers' integration by building skills for the online world, enhancing digital literacy skills and online navigation skills, and raising awareness of the importance of cybersecurity.



Training topics include:

- Microsoft Office training (Word/PowerPoint/ Excel)
- Internet privacy and security (safe password creation, phishing)
- Social media and email use (two-factor authentication/safe)
- Password use/creating accounts)
- Cyber Security /Online banking and shopping (safety tips for financial transactions on-line)
- One-on-one training as per client needs

*"I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my wonderful instructor for her dedication and exceptional teaching. Through her guidance, I have learned a great deal about Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Her explanations were always clear and easy to follow, making it much easier for me to understand the fundamentals of these programs.*

*Thanks to her patience and effective teaching methods, I now feel confident using these essential tools. I truly appreciate her efforts and the knowledge she has shared with me. Thank you, Sharmeen, for everything! - EL*

# 134

Clients Served

# 16

Volunteers  
Trained

# 48

Workshops Held

## Newcomer Wellness Navigation Program



The Wellness Program ensures newcomer seniors, youth, individuals and families have equitable and guided access to health and wellness supports through a culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and GBA+ approach. **Services include: Wellness Checks, Peer Support Activities, Workshops and sessions**

CDCCD proudly hosted its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Wellness Event and 1<sup>st</sup> Family Fun Day at the Ajax Welcome Centre, celebrating community, connection, and centering well-being as the theme, attracting over **300** participants.

These vibrant events welcomed people of all ages, each for a day filled with engaging activities, interactive games, music, and access to wellness resources.

The goal is to foster a sense of belonging and promote holistic wellness through inclusive, family-friendly programming. They offered an opportunity for community members to connect, unwind, and enjoy meaningful time together.

## Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship Program (NWEP)



NWEP's remarkable achievements for 2024 - 2025:

**Empowering Entrepreneurs:** delivered **31** business workshops, successfully graduating **48** newcomer women and equipping them with essential skills to build and sustain their businesses.

**Expanding Skills Training:** in July 2024, it launched its **first-ever sewing classes** in partnership with the **Town of Ajax**, providing newcomer women with hands-on training and new entrepreneurial opportunities.

**Creating Market Opportunities:** hosted its inaugural Holiday Women's Market. **16** graduates showcased and sold their products at the event. Over **60** attendees supported small businesses and fostered community connections.

**Strengthening Regional Impact:** for the first time, played a key role in the regional planning of the **Durham Region International Women's Day event**, significantly increasing awareness, networking opportunities, and visibility for newcomer women and our partners, including CDCD.

**Establishing Key Partnerships:** This year, a partnership was established with **Durham College's Founder's Drive program**. Their team collaborated with us at the Holiday Women's Market. NWEP was featured on their podcast, and we continue to work together on upcoming events to further support newcomer women entrepreneurs.



## CDCD Volunteer Services

CDCD's Volunteer Services continues to be a vital part of our mission to empower and support communities across Durham Region. **In 2024–2025, we are focused on fostering inclusive, skills-based volunteer opportunities that promote community engagement, leadership development, and meaningful connections.** Our dedicated volunteers play a crucial role in enhancing programs that support newcomers, youth, seniors, and vulnerable populations.

By generously offering their time, talents, and passion, they help create a more welcoming and resilient community by supporting others through mentorship, wellness initiatives, employment support, and our community events. With expanded training, new placement opportunities, and a strong focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion, CDCD Volunteer Services is committed to ensuring all volunteers feel valued, supported, and empowered to make a difference.





## Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)



For over ten years, the SWIS program has been helping newcomer families in Durham build strong, inclusive communities. CDCD, in partnership with the Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB), the Durham District School Board (DDSB), and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), SWIS provides essential supports to students and their families as they navigate the Canadian school system.

123

Youth and Parent  
Workshops

7,142

Service Engagements

1,511

Workshop Participants

2,685

Unique Clients Served

SWIS serves **183** schools, offering a range of services to ensure students succeed both academically and socially. Through workshops and community connections, families are empowered to feel more at home and confident in their new environment.

Initiatives like the Youth Advisory Committee and Peer Leader Program have allowed students to develop leadership skills and mentor others, while also staying engaged with their education.

This year, SWIS introduced a professional development workshop for DCDSB teachers, giving them tools to create inclusive classrooms for newcomer students. This effort helped make schools more welcoming and culturally responsive.

Another standout initiative was the launch of Chai and Chat. This program created a space for newcomer parents to connect with each other, share experiences, and access helpful settlement resources. It has strengthened the relationship between parents and school staff, improving communication and support for students.

SWIS also offered two impactful summer programs. The Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW) at Pickering High School helped newcomer high school students adjust to Canadian school culture through icebreakers and team-building activities. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many students feeling better prepared for high school.

The Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN) program provided a one-day orientation for newcomer families, introducing them to the elementary school system. This year, **47** families participated, receiving backpacks full of school supplies from the United Way.



*One parent shared, "This is the kind of start we want in our new country."*

Through these programs, SWIS continues to make a positive impact on newcomers, helping them feel supported, connected, and empowered.

## Community Connections Program (CC)



The Community Connections Program had a remarkable year, empowering newcomers to feel welcomed, supported, and more connected to their new communities. By providing a wide range of services, the program fostered social inclusion, built relationships, and created opportunities for skill development.

### Programs Offered:

- Canada Connects community mentoring
- English and French Conversation Circles
- Women's, Men's, and Seniors' Groups
- Community Kitchen and Garden Programs
- Local trips and cultural events

# 388

Group Sessions

# 204

English Conversation Circles



Community Connections programs reduced isolation, increased confidence, and helped newcomers develop a strong sense of belonging. Activities like the Newcomer Community Kitchen, Newcomer Garden Programs, and community mentoring through *Canada Connects* helped clients actively engage in their new community. *Thanks to partnerships with local libraries and volunteers, we consistently offered accessible programs across Durham Region.*

We are proud to have supported hundreds of newcomers this year with **1,496** service engagements. The program continues to play a key role in building lasting, welcoming community spaces for all.

## Building Bridges Program

This year, the Building Bridges Program made significant strides in fostering understanding between newcomer communities and Indigenous Peoples. Through cultural activities, participants gained valuable insights into Indigenous culture, history, and traditions, promoting empathy and connection.

### Key Achievements:

- **Virtual Book Club:** participants explored themes of family, spirituality, and cultural identity in *Waiting for the Long Night Moon* by Amanda Peters.
- **Orange Shirt Day:** over **80** participants joined an event with Indigenous Health Promoter James Costello, where they learned about the legacy of residential schools and urban Indigenous experiences.

These initiatives promoted reconciliation, shared learning, and cultural appreciation, fostering stronger relationships and mutual respect. The Building Bridges Program remains central to our commitment to creating a thriving, inclusive community for all.



*"The book club was a great experience. This is my first book club, I really enjoyed and learn a lot, thanks to you Community Connections for this opportunity. The best thing about the book club, was sharing ideas differing viewpoints on the same topic and getting to learn from each other" - CC Client*



# WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES - AJAX (AWC)

## A SAFE, WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT



Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Ajax Welcome Centre has, for over a decade, served as Durham Region's one-stop hub for newcomer settlement and integration.

The Centre offers a safe, inclusive space where newcomers receive free, holistic, flexible, coordinated and integrated supports to navigate complex needs and build strong foundations for success in Canada.

The Ajax Welcome Centre brings together **5** core services and more than **40** associate partners to deliver customized, value-added programs both onsite and virtually. This unique model places a broad range of cross-sectoral services under one roof, giving newcomers seamless access to the supports they need to settle, integrate, and thrive.

Core services and partners include:

- Settlement and Integration services by Community Development Council Durham
- English Language Assessment by Achev
- English-Language Training by Durham Catholic District School Board
- Employment Supports by Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre and
- Accreditation and Qualifications Information by Social Enterprise Canada
- The Resource Centre

Associate Partners' services and programs complement the core services, such as mental health counselling, Primary Health mobile clinic, Housing, Legal services, Youth program, Digital Literacy, and much more.

# 44,821

AWC Services Accessed

# 3,070

Unique Service Users Served

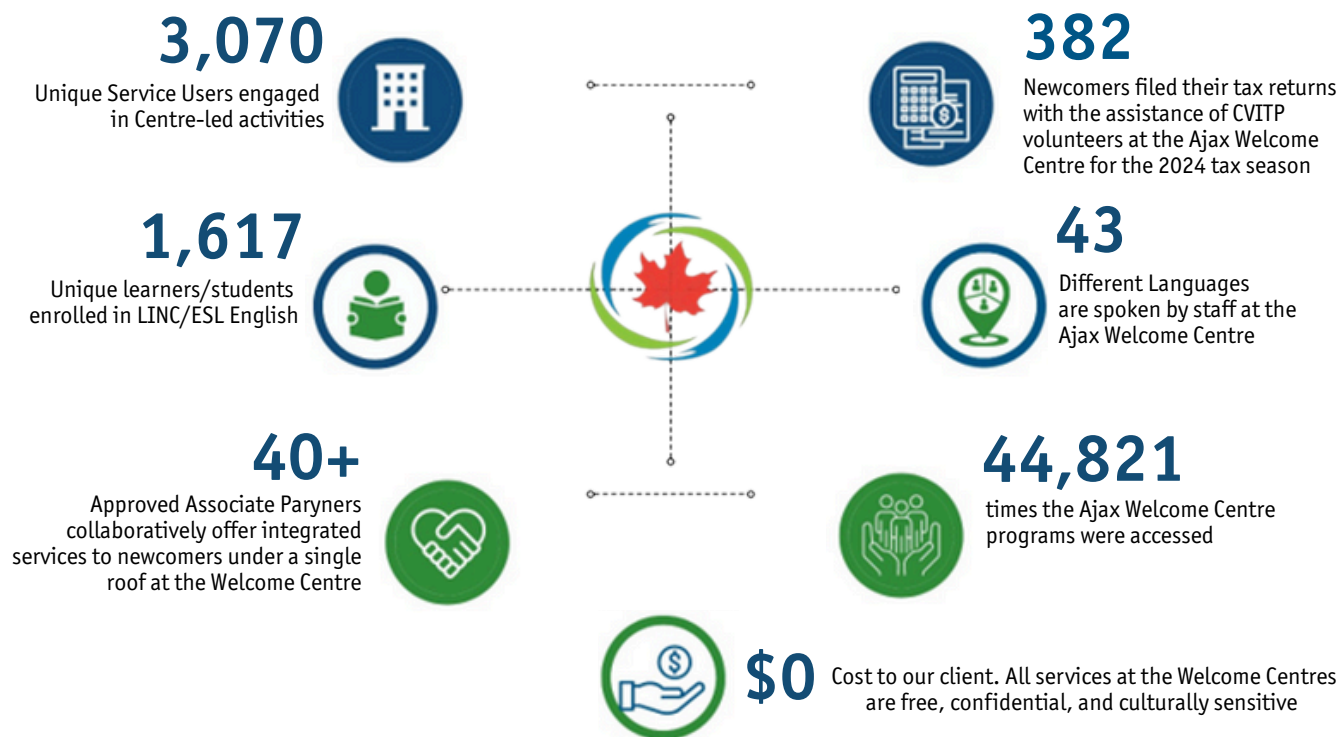
### Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP)

The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) has been in operation for over 12 years at the AWC. During the 2024 filing season, **382** returns were filed, resulting in **\$2,827,992.59** in government benefits returned to clients. The consistent popularity of this free program highlights its significance to the most vulnerable members of the community.

With flexible appointment options to accommodate client schedules, the tax clinic was accessible through in-person, remote, and drop-off/pick-up methods.

The clinic is powered entirely by volunteers, whose dedication and commitment are essential to its success and sustainability.

## Ajax Welcome Centre Impact



## Oshawa/Clarington Welcome Centre



Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the **Oshawa/Clarington Welcome Centre** will be the newest addition to a network of **8** Centres across Durham and York Region.

The Oshawa/Clarington Welcome Centre will respond to the growing needs of newcomers in Durham Region. As the number of arrivals continues to rise, this new location ensures individuals and families can access settlement supports close to home, without the barrier of long travel. By meeting people where they are, the Centre strengthens inclusion and underscores the value of community-based settlement services that help newcomers thrive.

## Donations Program

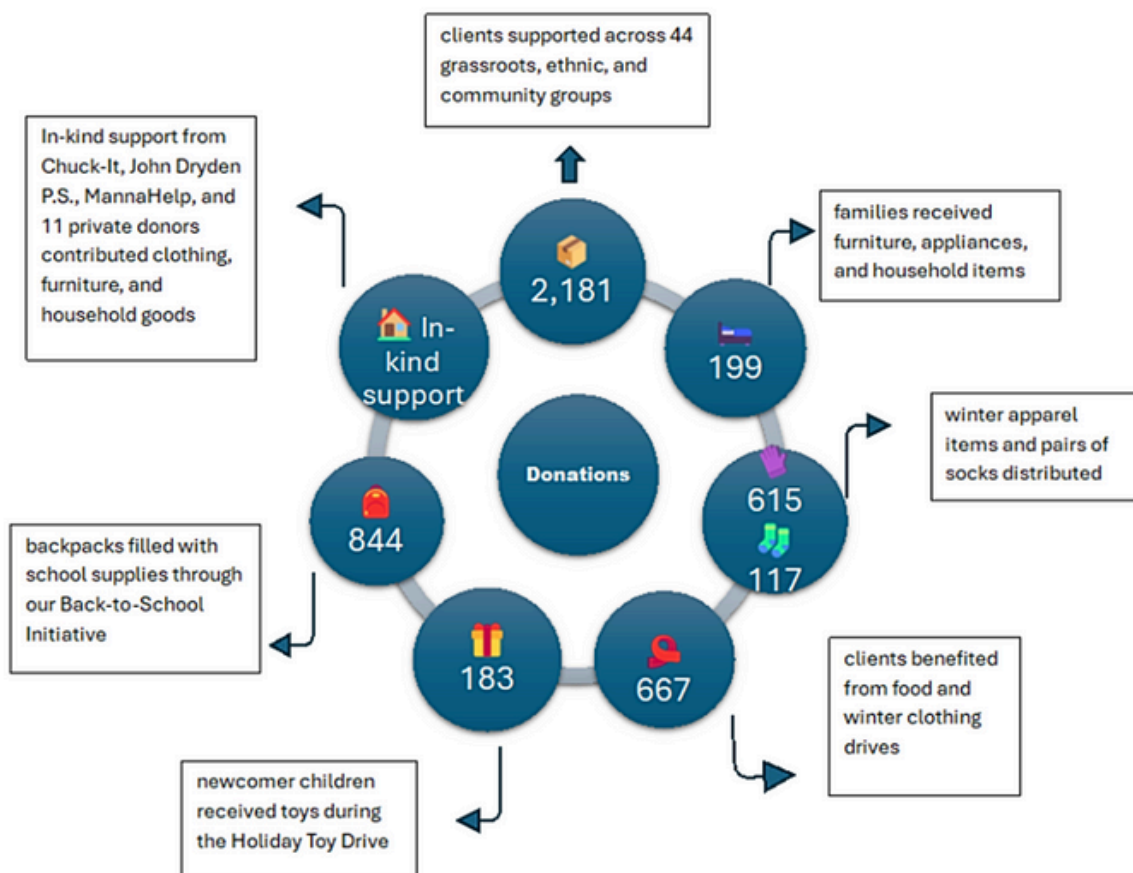
CDCD is dedicated to supporting grassroots groups, ethnocultural communities, and vulnerable populations across Durham Region.

Our Donations Program assists newcomers, low-income individuals, at-risk families, unsheltered clients, and those without stable housing in accessing essential items for daily living, particularly during their early (re) settlement journey and when moving to their new unit.

CDCD's Donations Program connects generous community donors with clients in need, ensuring household goods are distributed fairly and promptly. Coordinated through our Donations Coordinator, the program facilitates the distribution of clothing, food, toys, furniture, small appliances, cribs, and more. Beyond household items, clients also receive additional supports such as food vouchers when donor resources allow.



### Key Program Highlights (2024–2025):



## With Deepest Gratitude From CDCD

In 2024 - 2025 **44** grassroots, ethnic, and community groups contributed, resulting in donations being provided to **2,181** clients.



Special thank you to:

- Montessori Learning Centre of Pickering,
- St. Francis de Sales Catholic School,
- Trafalgar Castle School,
- Ajax Library,
- Town of Ajax,
- Bayfair Baptist Church,
- United Way Durham
- Durham Police Services
- BeepnbellsCorp
- and many others not listed here

### Heartfelt Thanks to Our Donors

On behalf of CDCD's board, staff, volunteers and clients, we extend our deepest gratitude to all who generously donated items for our clients. Your kindness has provided families and individuals with more than just essentials like food, clothing, and household goods. You've given them dignity, comfort, and hope during challenging times.

Each gift, whether big or small, makes a meaningful difference. Because of you, parents are better able to provide for their children, seniors feel cared for, and newcomers know they are welcomed into a community that values them.

Your generosity is a beautiful reminder that when we come together, we build stronger, more compassionate communities. Thank you for walking alongside us in this work.

With gratitude,  
Community Development Council Durham

## With Deepest Gratitude From Clients



*"Thank you so much for your help. We received three beds today, two singles and one queen-size—which are perfect for my family. I'm so grateful for your support."*

*"I picked up the couches yesterday and they are so beautiful. My boys were so happy to see them. Thank you so much." - Donations Program Clients*

Through this work, CDCD continues to identify gaps in service and respond to the urgent needs of the community, particularly regarding housing, food and furniture insecurity, and integration support.

Our Donations program stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, compassion, and community action.



## Care For Newcomer Children

The Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) Program started its operations on May 16, 2022, and offers free on-site childminding for a maximum of 10 children ages 19 months to 6 years, whose parents or guardians are eligible to attend an in-person IRCC-funded program at the Ajax Welcome Centre, such as:



- Language Assessments (Achev)
- Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)
- Settlement Services
- Job Search Workshops
- Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship Workshops
- Digital Literacy Workshops
- Community Connection Activities
- Wellness Activities
- Ajax Welcome Centre Forums and Events
- Volunteer Activities

Our team of experienced Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) staff provide fun and educational activities to support children's settlement and integration in Canada. While children learn a new language and culture, CNC staff understand each child's individual needs and celebrate their uniqueness. Children are given opportunities to grow in all developmental areas at their own pace.

The CNC space is organized into designated play areas, which foster children's physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and language development. The curriculum and activities are tailored to the children's interests, age group and skill level.

### Program Highlights:

- partnered with Family and Community Action Program (FCAP) to bring their Play to Learn program to our clients. It ran once a week in July and August 2024
- contributed to the success of the Family Fun Day event during March Break by arranging a soft play area specifically designed for children aged 1 to 5.
- completed CMAS's annual site assessment and successfully fulfilled all the requirements.

# 1,079

Group Session Delivered

# 182

Newcomer Children  
Served



## Events & Outreach Initiatives



CDCD's Event Planning and Outreach work plays a vital role in strengthening community connections, building organizational visibility, and creating spaces where residents, partners, and clients feel a sense of belonging.

From planning large-scale celebrations to engaging in grassroots outreach, these initiatives foster inclusion and showcase CDCD's commitment to building stronger communities together.

### Highlights of 2024–2025 include:

- **Signature Events:** Coordinated the Volunteer Appreciation Gala, Staff Appreciation initiatives, Seniors Game Day, the Annual General Meeting, the Multicultural Celebration, Clients' Thanksgiving Potluck, Family Fun Day, and commemorative events such as Remembrance Day and Black History Month.
- **Community Outreach:** Partnered with Durham Region Libraries and Public Schools to expand access to programs, supported newcomer and youth outreach, and participated in regional and municipal events such as Canada Day, Emancipation Day, and Culture Fusion.
- **Local Partnerships:** Collaborated with municipalities including Ajax, Pickering, Bowmanville, and Courtice, as well as community agencies across Durham, to amplify services and build awareness.

Through these events and outreach efforts, CDCD brings people together, celebrates diversity, and strengthens the fabric of community life in Durham Region.

CDCD staff and volunteers proudly supported partner-led outreach events across Durham, promoting free programs and services in at-risk and underserved neighbourhoods to ensure greater access and inclusion.

### Some of the events and initiatives included:

- Canada Day Celebrations
- Emancipation Day Events
- Culture Fusion Festival
- Partnerships with Durham Region Libraries

## CDCD Represented at 2024 Conferences and Events



*Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants Conference*



*Pathway to Prosperity Conference*



*BHM Award Ceremony*



*Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association Conference*



*City of Oshawa: Celebrating 100+ Years*

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH



*Backpack Day*



*Emancipation Day*



*Canada Day Event*



*Durham Region Multicultural Event*



# HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PROGRAMS

## PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE IN CRISIS

In 2022, the Region of Durham launched the [Durham Humanitarian Response Project \(DHRP\)](#) to support newly arrived Ukrainians fleeing the war. In 2023, the program expanded to assist all asylum-seeking individuals and families arriving in Durham Region. In Fall 2023, the DHRP grew to three sites, offering support to individuals and families representing over 24 countries. Residents across all three hotel sites received housing and resettlement services, along with community.

### Successes for April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

- 751 individuals (452 households) were welcomed into three temporary hotel sites through the DHRP initiative.
- 1,022 individuals (652 households) were served from April 2024 to March 2025.
- 599 individuals (392 households) successfully transitioned into long-term, affordable housing or sustainable alternatives
- Upon arrival, clients received immediate orientations, comprehensive intake assessments, and personalized housing action plans.
- Regular one-on-one appointments were delivered across all sites, using a trauma-informed approach to ensure wraparound support.
- The resettlement and housing teams prioritized urgent housing needs, built trust, and coordinated timely referrals. Each client also received a detailed Welcome Package with key housing and community resources.
- In partnership with CDCD departments and external agencies, DHRP hosted weekly on-site sessions covering critical topics including housing pathways, tenancy rights, employment, immigration, education, mental health, healthcare access, and financial literacy.

Some of the challenges faced by DHRP were:

- Assistance with the refugee application process, including access to legal aid and medical examinations
- Support with children's education and school enrollment
- Help with locating and securing appropriate housing, including landlord engagement
- Guidance in finding local medical clinics and family doctors, as well as accessing coverage through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)
- Access to mental health support services
- Support with employment searches and navigating job market challenges

To better support families in meeting their needs, DHRP collaborated with CDCD departments and various community partner organizations. Through this partnership, we implemented a range of initiatives, including:

- Children's activities, social events for families and children
- Connection to Mental Health and Medical support agencies
- As one of the leading community partners, the DHRP team helped to plan and organize the **First Ever Refugee Hiring Event in Durham Region.**
- Took part in a Family Fun Day celebration
- Hosted an International Women's Day, Kids and Craft Event, St. Valentine's Day, and a New Year's Eve celebration



Monthly events and workshops were facilitated. This included:

- Monthly orientation and housing sessions for all individuals and families
- Education sessions with onsite SWIS workers supporting parents and children
- Financial Support Workshops with topics that include the Canadian banking system, financial literacy, a financial fraud prevention session, and available financial aid programs
- Immigration information sessions for Asylum Claimants
- Mental health and wellness workshops
- Celebration of multicultural holidays and Canada Day, and the birth of new babies.

DHRP maintains ongoing support for clients as they transition out of the program and secure stable, affordable housing by:

- Providing Exit packages to families transitioning from the DHRP to permanent housing. The package contains relevant social and community resources that exist near their new residence
- Warm referrals to local community partners
- Start-up financial assistance
- and follows up with clients through an exit survey

*"I express my heartfelt gratitude towards each and each thing you have done for me and my son. Your organization is a greatly distinguished and I will forever appreciate your kindness."*

*To be cared for like a child is to be remembered for the "rest of my life, the first of it's kind ever since I left childhood. The warmth, love care and compassion I received is beyond human understanding. Thank you*

*"When we came here, we were not sure what the future holds and how our lives will be like. For the first time we were accepted for who we are."*

## Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)

CDCD is proud to announce the upcoming launch of the first **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)** in the Durham Region, set to open in April 2025. This significant initiative is made possible through funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and marks an important step in expanding settlement supports for Government-Assisted Refugees in our community.

Coming  
Soon

The Reception House (RAP) will provide comprehensive, short-term settlement support to Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) upon arrival in Canada. Core service areas include:

- Intake Services and Needs Assessments
- Comprehensive Housing Support
- Focused Resettlement Orientations
- Personalized Skills Development

We anticipate serving up to 100 clients annually, with each individual or family residing in temporary accommodations for approximately 21 days during their initial resettlement period.

*"Our team has laid the essential groundwork to bring the RAP Oshawa Centre to life."*

- RAP Supervisor

Key milestones include:

- securing office and temporary housing facilities
- onboarding qualified staff
- procuring essential supplies
- establishing collaborative partnerships to ensure seamless, coordinated service delivery.



With these critical components in place, CDCD's RAP team is fully prepared to deliver high-quality, trauma-informed, anti-racist, and client-centered supports, in alignment with our mission to meet the evolving needs of the community through effective and responsive service delivery.



# STAFF TRIBUTE

## CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE!

Every success at CDCD begins with the people who make our mission come alive each day. Our staff are not only the heart of our organization, they are the spark that fuels innovation, compassion, and lasting impact across the Durham Region. This year, we've witnessed extraordinary dedication: colleagues stepping in for one another, teams finding creative solutions to new challenges, and individuals going above and beyond to ensure that our clients feel supported and valued. These everyday moments of care and collaboration define who we are as an organization. To our current team and to those who have contributed in years past, we thank you. Your resilience and commitment continue to remind us that meaningful change happens when people work together with purpose. At CDCD, we are more than co-workers; we are a community, united in service and hope.

*Together, we are more than an organization, we are a community. With every act of service, every moment of care, and every shared goal, our staff are building stronger communities where everyone belongs.*



## CURRENT STAFF MEMBERS

### EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Hermia Corbette, Executive Director  
Sanjay Sarkar, Finance Manager  
Stephanie Innocent, People, Culture & Engagement Manager  
Sana Sakurai, HR Manager  
Erick Sanchez, IT Team Lead  
Priyank Mantha, IT Technician  
Bhaskara Pothuri, Team Lead, Financial Analyst  
Richelle Bornolla, Staff Accountant - (on leave)  
Marjorie Castillejo, Accounting Clerk  
Kapil Luha, Accounting Assistant  
Marvelous Jose, Digital Marketing & Fundraising Coordinator

### PROGRAM MANAGERS

Alison Baxter, Manager, Social Planning and Research  
Monica Tembo, Acting Housing Manager  
Catherine McNeely, Newcomer Community Services Manager - (on leave)  
Patricia Liang, Manager, DHRP  
Wosen Beyene, Manager - Ajax Welcome Centre  
Dilenia Teaz, Manager - Oshawa/Clarington Welcome Centre  
Sobia Ahmed, Co-Manager, Newcomer Community Services  
Vicki Kerr, Co-Manager, Newcomer Community Services  
Kelly Dinis-Reid, RAP Supervisor

### TEAM LEADS

Edna Ucanda, Team Lead - LEAP and Admin Services  
Clinton Taylor, Team Lead - Welcome Centre & Settlement Services  
Pachee Vang, Team Lead - Care for Newcomer Children  
Sayed Saeed, Team Lead - Case Management and Housing First  
Lisa Sklar, Team Lead - Opening Doors Durham  
May Toma, Team Lead - Newcomer Community Services  
Valeria Pekarski, Team Lead - Information & Program Engagement Support  
Padmini Roberts, Team Lead - Community Planner  
Parastou Saberi, Team Lead - Social researcher

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Daniel Cullen, GAP Committee Facilitator  
Niomie Jex, GAP Coordinator  
Kamal Mollah, DNN Coordinator  
Victoria Guimaraes, Leadership Program Coordinator

### RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RAP)

Mian Saad Ahmad, Skills Development Worker  
Romal Mangal, Resettlement Worker  
Nazita Zamani, Intake/Housing Worker

### WELCOME CENTRE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES – AJAX & OSHAWA/CLARINGTON

Shohreh Kehtari, AWC Receptionist  
Sumintra Rampersad, AWC Receptionist  
Nashrur Rudaba, AWC Receptionist - (on leave)  
Emmanuel Fashogbon, AWC Receptionist  
Awo Abdi, AWC Receptionist  
Madiha Kamran, OCWC Receptionist  
Mohammad Elham Walizad, OCWC Receptionist

### CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN (CNC) PROGRAM

Uzma Khanum, Early Childhood Educator

### IMMIGRANT AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Maliha Sobani, Donations Coordinator  
Sadaf Parweez, Outreach and Event Planner

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

Katelin Grant, Community Connections Worker  
Mishal Abdulla, Community Connections Worker  
Tasnuba Rahman, Community Connections Worker  
Saghana Shurenthiran, Community Connections Worker

### NEWCOMER COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM

Kim Harris-Eccleston, Newcomer Child and Youth Services Worker  
Henry Kasule, Newcomer Youth Services Worker  
Sharmeen Akhtar, Computer & Internet Coordinator  
Shaista Shahid, Volunteer Coordinator  
Rafiah Shaikh, Wellness Navigator

## CURRENT STAFF MEMBERS

### HOUSING

Anil Misir-Persaud, Housing Case Manager (on leave)  
Niki Goulden, Housing Case Manager (on leave)  
Marrisa Joseph, Housing Case Manager  
Josephine Afuwape, LEAP and Housing Data Integrity Worker  
Kristyn Raine, Housing First Worker  
Diana Namuyanja, Housing First Worker  
Esther Kasumu Tunde, Landlord Engagement Specialist  
Rahiim Bray, Landlord Engagement Specialist  
Margaret Down, Landlord Engagement Specialist  
Melissa Scott, Housing Retention Worker  
Tolulope Akande, Housing Retention Worker  
Natalie Leger, Housing Retention Worker  
Moazzam Malik, Housing Retention Worker  
Norma-Leigh Mann Housing Intake Worker  
Maria Mansour, Housing Receptionist  
Liju Nair, Housing Settlement Case Manager  
Sharuga Selvakularajah, Housing Settlement Case Manager

### DURHAM HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PROGRAM

Amber Stewart, Snr. Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Agyeiwaa Sarfo, Snr. Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Pavlo Nekrasov, Snr. Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Yemman Sahle, Snr. Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Aaron Oriada, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Ben Kong, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Tewodros Assefa, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Sina Masouleh, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Jimmy Oryema, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Mesfin Admassu, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Winnie Nandudu, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Abdulkader Yassin, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Mariia Pitolai, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Daphne Cheng, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Sreelekshmy Hari, Administrative Assistant  
Zohal Nasrat, Resettlement & Program Engagement Worker  
Michael Johnathan, Resettlement Youth Worker

### SETTLEMENT/INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION (INO) WORKERS

Hanna Siekowski, Snr. Database Mgt. Worker  
Ami Scott, Database Admin, WC Database Mgt. Worker  
Teresita Perera, INO Worker  
Palwasha Wajdi, INO Worker  
Maliha Batool, INO Worker  
Suada Al Busaidi, INO Worker  
Alaa Aldwik, INO Worker – (on leave)  
Sofia Ahmed, Mental Health Settlement Worker – (on leave)  
Broniya Enthumkal, Mental Health Settlement Worker  
Malik Cadircioglu, Mental Health Settlement Worker  
Mohammad Sohail, Case Manager  
Maria Abogado, Case Manager

### NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM (NSP)

Nalayini Ravindranath, Orientation/NSP Worker  
Saadat Qadri, NSP Worker

### SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOLS (SWIS)

Aloma Selvarajha, SWIS Worker  
Carmen Subibi, SWIS Worker  
Ievgeniia Mangones, SWIS Worker  
Joy Zhang, SWIS Worker  
Maribel Cabral de Sousa, SWIS Worker  
Najeeb Nayab, SWIS Worker  
Onur Aygun, SWIS Worker  
Sophie Tome, Administrative Assistant



## CDCD'S STAFF





# HONOURING OUR VOLUNTEERS

## Champions of Service

Volunteering continues to be a cornerstone of CDCD's impact in the community. Beyond strengthening our programs, it provides individuals with valuable opportunities to gain workplace experience, expand networks, and develop new skills while making a meaningful difference. Many of our volunteers also share how their contributions bring a strong sense of fulfillment and purpose, knowing their efforts foster inclusion, belonging, and community connection.

In 2024–2025, volunteers played a vital role across multiple programs and initiatives:

### Ajax Welcome Centre and CDCD Programs:

- **163** volunteers generously gave more than **686.9** hours of support. Their efforts included general administration, sorting donations for food, clothing, and toy drives, and offering onsite assistance such as program room setup.

### Community Connections:

- **49** volunteers dedicated **1,900** hours to activities such as English Conversation Circles and the Canada Connects program. These initiatives are designed to bring newcomers and Canadians together, fostering “two-way integration” and building supportive peer relationships.

### SWIS Durham Program:

- **51** youth volunteers contributed **1,165** hours as Peer Leaders and Youth Advisory Committee members. Through these roles, they gained leadership experience, provided peer mentoring, and built stronger school and community connections.

### Tax Clinic at Ajax Welcome Centre:

- **6** volunteers provided **286.5** hours of service, completing **382** tax returns, the highest number completed to date. **4** placement students contributed **697.5** volunteer hours, strengthened our programs, services and supported Canada Day events in Ajax and Pickering.

### Tax Clinic at CDCD (Housing Department)

- **4** volunteers contributed to the newly launched Tax Clinic at CDCD (Housing Department)

### Board of Directors:

- **9** volunteer Directors gave **196** hours of their time to provide governance, strategic direction, and oversight for the agency.

### Community Development:

- **1** volunteer contributed **54** hours to help guide and inform departmental initiatives.
- Thank you to our partners who supported our work during the 2024–2025 fiscal year:
- Richard DeGaetano (Comm Dev Volunteer Consultant)
- Ajax Homelessness Task Force members
- GAP Committee members
- Durham Non-Profit Network members
- North Durham Social Development Council (NDSDC) members
- Farista Neakzad and Amir Sadiq, CDCD volunteers for DNN work
- Naheed Mokhi, Research Volunteer

CDCD extends heartfelt thanks to all our volunteers for your generosity, dedication, and impact. Your time, talent, and commitment make it possible to serve our community with excellence.





*Volunteers at Family Fun Day*



*Volunteers at Youth Fair*



*Volunteers at Youth Fair*



*National Volunteer Week*



*Volunteer Orientation*



*Garden Rejuvenation Event*



*Volunteer Appreciation Gala*



*Volunteers at Backpack Day*





PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

**Ms. Una Debosky**

Dear Ms. Debosky:

I would like to convey my congratulations to you as you commemorate 20 years of volunteer service with the Community Development Council Durham.

Volunteering is one of the most impactful ways an individual can contribute to their community. Helping others without expectation of reward or recognition is a true mark of selflessness. I hope that you have found your work to be rewarding and that you will continue to find personal satisfaction in your efforts for many years to come.

I would like to thank you for your valuable contributions to our society, and I wish you every future success.

Warmest regards,

A blue ink signature of Mark Carney, consisting of stylized initials "M.C." followed by a long, flowing horizontal stroke.

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., O.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada

Ottawa  
2025



# CDCD'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

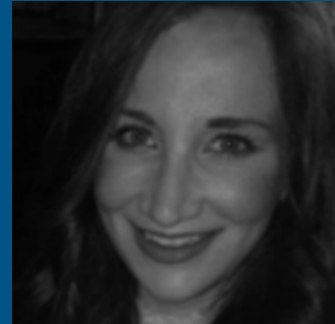
CDCD's Board of Directors is made up of nine dedicated volunteers, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Together, they provide strong governance, thoughtful leadership, and careful oversight to support the agency's mission. We are deeply grateful for their unwavering commitment in guiding CDCD's strategic direction. Meet our exceptional governance team at <https://www.cdcd.org/reports>



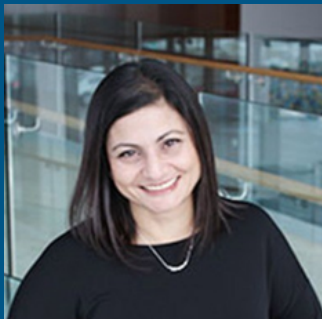
**ROGER RAMKISSOON**  
Chair



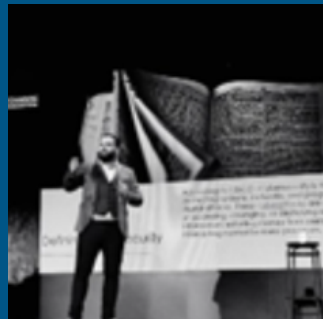
**PORTIA DAISY**  
Vice Chair



**HILLARY SMITH**  
Treasurer



**PINDER DASILVA**  
Secretary



**ALI ABBAS HIJRI**  
Director



**MELISSA MALCOLM**  
Director



**OMAR AIMAJDALAWI**  
Director



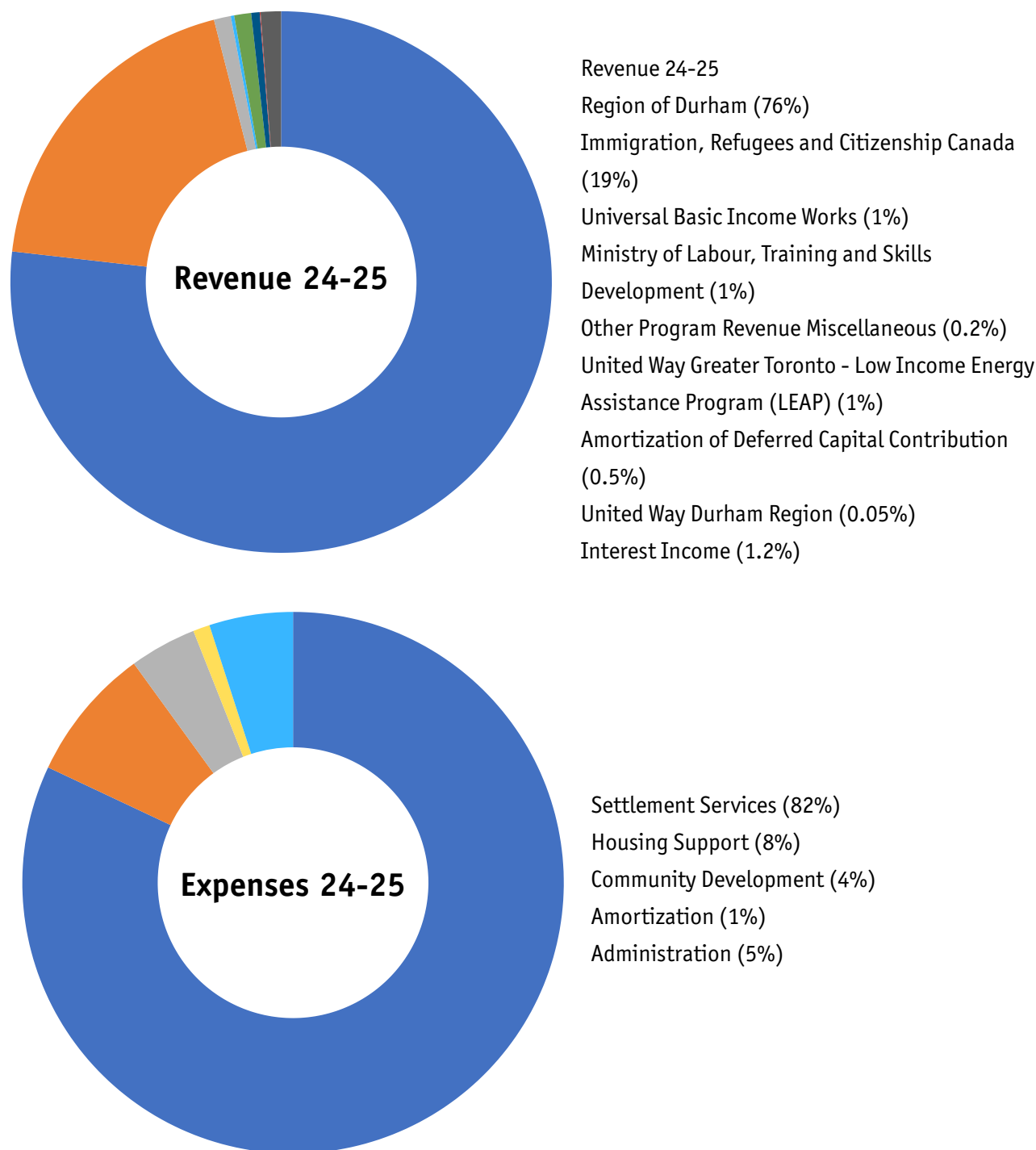
**TARAK AHMED**  
Director



**RISHAB MADHAR**  
Director



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT



Please note the charts presented are based on CDCD’s Audited Financial Statements which were prepared by Murphy & Chung Professional Corporation. To view the full version, please go to [www.cdcd.org](http://www.cdcd.org)



Community Development Council Durham (CDCD)

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✂ (formerly Twitter): [@CDCDurham](https://twitter.com/CDCDurham)

📷 Instagram: [@CDCDurham](https://www.instagram.com/CDCDurham)

Charitable Registration #: 130979826RR0001