



# Abrigo Centre

Cristina Santos

900 Dufferin St. Suite 104

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

[csantos@abrigo.ca](mailto:csantos@abrigo.ca)

- Portuguese speaking immigration to Southern Ontario

- Challenges faced by Lusophone populations

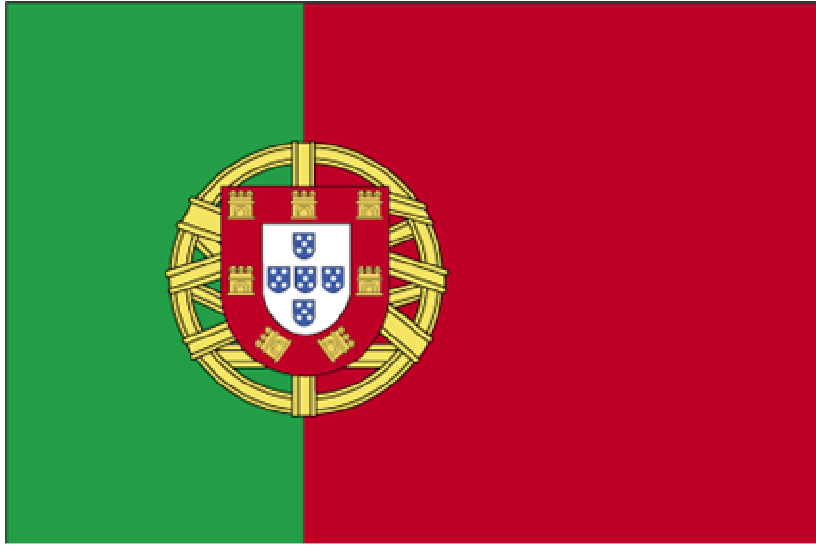
- Description of Abrigo Centre

Not-for-profit social service agency in Toronto

- How Abrigo Centre has responded to the various needs of these communities – the Successes and Challenges

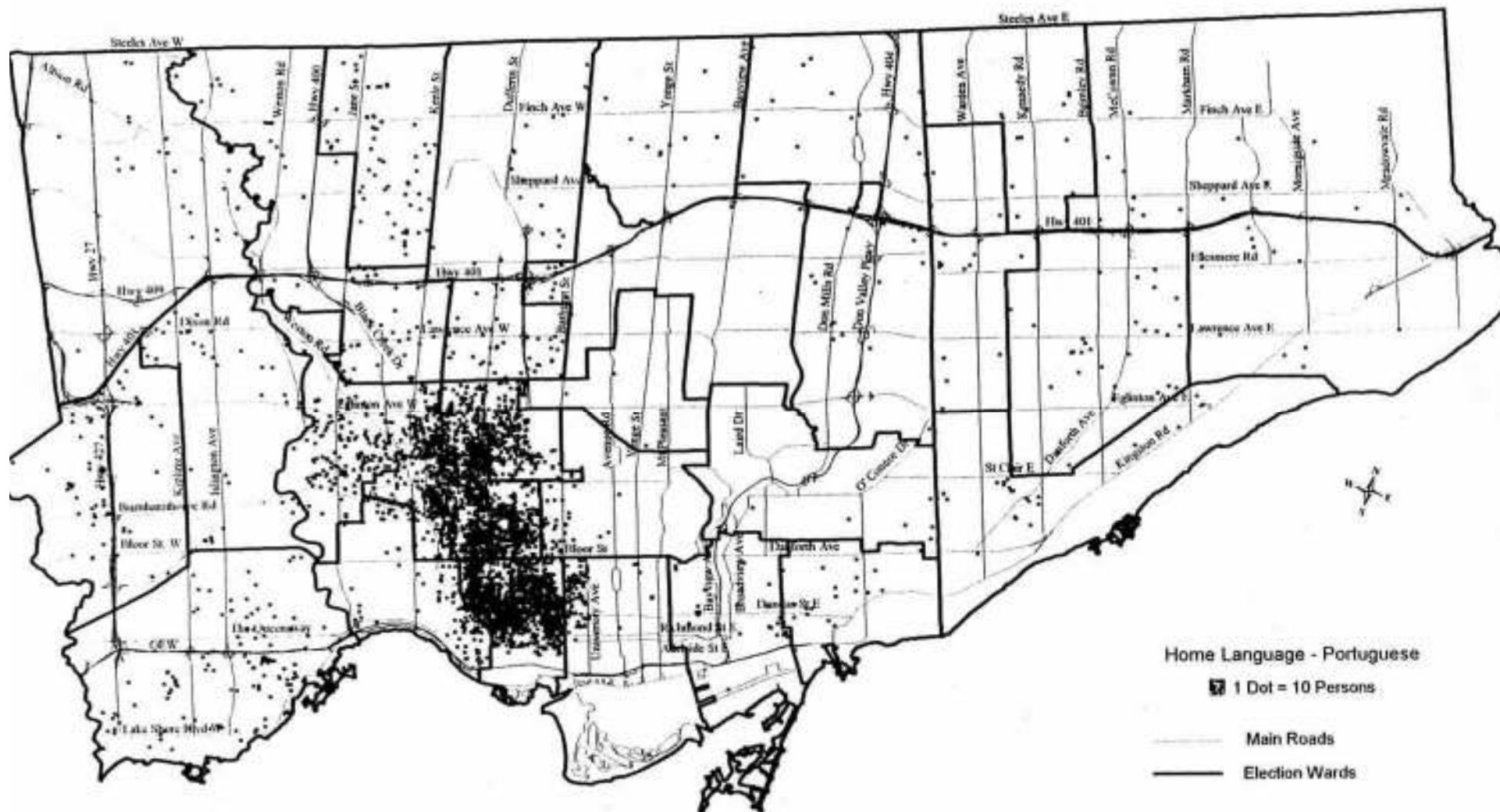
- Conclusion I will be describing to you our perspective on where policy has hindered our communities and what are the ongoing needs for our newcomers, youth, seniors and our second and third generations.





- 1953-present
- 80% Azorean
- One of the most common languages in Toronto
- Coming from an oppressive political background
- No investment is made in the community to integrate into larger Canadian society

# The City of Toronto - Non-Official Home Language - Portuguese



Dots are randomly distributed within enumeration areas and do not represent actual points of population

Scale: 1 cm = 1.65 km



Source: Statistics Canada, Enumeration Area Level, 1996  
 Mapped by: Toronto Community & Neighbourhood Services Department  
 Social Development & Administration Division



- Large number of immigrants arriving since the early 1980's
- Change in Canadian immigration law changed the make up of Brazilians who could immigrate
- Able to learn English
- Suffer many forms of social isolation



- Arriving since the early 90's
- Very young population with no extended family
- Limited personal resources at a crucial life stage
- Coming from a very complicated and dangerous political climate
- Not well received by established Portuguese community
- No natural connection to other African communities due to language



# 3 Communities Connecting?

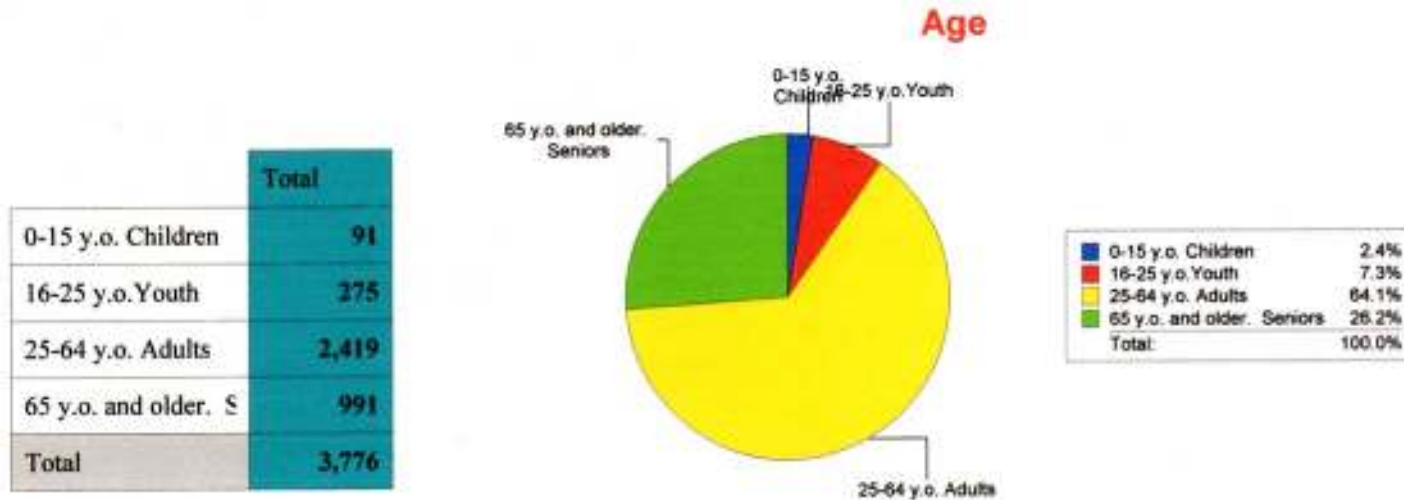
- Racial & age discrimination
- Portuguese occupation of Brazil 500 yrs ago
- Portuguese occupation of Angola 30 years ago
- Brazilians – intact nuclear families
- Popular well established Brazilian media
- Limited media coverage of Angola

# Abrigo Centre

## 1990 to present

- Staff are diverse Lusofones
- Serving the needier members of the communities

## Demographic report for clients served in the period April 1, 2005 - March 31, 2006



	Total
0-15 y.o. Children	91
16-25 y.o. Youth	275
25-64 y.o. Adults	2,419
65 y.o. and older. S	991
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,776</b>

	Community	Family Counsellin	Men in Transition	Violence Against	Wage Subsidy	Youth Outreach	Total
0-15 y.o. Children	37	10	1	15	0	41	91
16-25 y.o. Youth	137	12	24	27	1	92	275
25-64 y.o. Adults	1,607	179	279	463	0	7	2,419
65 y.o. and older. S	889	11	9	108	0	9	991
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,670</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>3,776</b>

**April 01, 2005 - March 31, 2006**

N= 3,776

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Percentage of total %</b>
Angolan	186	4.93
Asia	36	0.95
Azores	1799	47.65
Brazil	436	11.56
Canada	276	7.32
Caribbean	41	1.08
Guinea Bissau	1	0.02
South & Central America	60	1.58
Europe	33	0.87
Madeira	20	0.52
Mozambique	1	0.02
Other	343	9.08
Portugal Continent	544	14.42
Totals	3,776	100

# Abrigo Centre

- Violence Against Women
- Youth Outreach and counselling Services
- Family support Services
- Partner Assault Response / Homens Em Transição
- EmployLink
- Community Development & Integration Program

# Abrigo Centre Success

- Hiring practices
- Open to constant change & remaining Flexible
- Confronting Racism and Classism
- Outreach via TV & radio

# Abrigo Centre Challenges

- Decreasing resources – Increasing needs
- Ever changing client community
- Recognizing & Understanding important cultural and political nuances of our clients
- Outreach, Outreach, Outreach
- Division of resources
- Racism

# Community Challenge

- How do we advocate on behalf of a group of communities that indeed need assistance but are not recognized by our federal government as a significant or “sexy” population



# Imminent community Challenges

- large aging population
- We see second & third generation members experiencing reverberating effect of neglectful past immigration practices
- Will the same be true for our Angolan and Brazilian communities?

# Who will take the challenge?

- Need for interest in Portuguese communities by host society and homelands.
- What of communities that have been conditioned to be self-reliant and quiet or who do not have the means or credibility to demand policy change?
- What of the impact & consequences to the host society when immigrant populations remain isolated from mainstream society?

