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Barriers and Outcomes in the Housing
Search for New Immigrants and Refugees



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**BARRIERS AND OUTCOMES IN THE HOUSING SEARCH FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS
AND REFUGEES: A CASE STUDY OF BLACK AFRICANS IN TORONTO'S RENTAL
MARKET**

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June 2007

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Acknowledgements

Financial support for this study was provided by CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation). The author would like to express his appreciation to all members of the Cape Verdean, Angolan and Mozambican communities for sharing with us their housing experiences in Toronto. The author also wishes to thank Julia Sanca, Esperanca Panzo and Inacio de Natividade from these study communities for their advice and for helping in the data collection. Appreciation is also extended to Robert A. Murdie and Denis Losier for their helpful comments and criticism, on an earlier version of this paper.

This project was funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) under the terms of the External Research Program, but the views expressed are the personal views of the author and do not represent the official views of CMHC.

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

While Toronto is Canada's traditional main "port of entry" for new immigrants as well as the country's largest and most culturally diverse city, it is also one of the most expensive housing markets in Canada. Studies have found that new immigrants to Canada are likely to face the greatest affordability problems in this housing market. To date, many of the complex housing experiences of immigrants and visible minorities – including the processes involved in gathering information about vacancies – remain unclear and unstudied. At the same time, scholars have identified access to housing as one of the primary routes for immigrants and refugees in achieving social and economic integration into the host society. However, given both economic and discriminatory barriers, new immigrants and visible minorities may be directed into low-cost housing that, when clustered, can become urban or suburban "ghettoes."

The housing search strategies and adaptations to barriers adopted by new immigrants in Toronto's housing market thus have great significance for the future social well-being and growth of the city. Moreover, since the constraints – economic barriers, linguistic or cultural differences, or discrimination by landlords and real estate agents – may help create and maintain racial and ethnic segregation in urban housing, the study of these constraints, and the outcomes for these groups, has direct policy implications for government, business, and community leaders.

This study looked at three groups of Black, Portuguese-speaking immigrants and refugees – from the former Portuguese African colonies of Angola, Mozambique and the Cape Verde Islands – who arrived in Toronto between 1990 and 2006. The key questions in this study were: What barriers do these groups face in the private rental housing market? Does race or skin colour matter in looking for and locating rental housing in Toronto?

METHODOLOGY

The two-part research strategy consisted of a literature review and a questionnaire survey that was administered in Toronto to immigrants and refugees who were born in Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands.

Literature Review

Scholars recognized that the integration of new immigrants and refugees into a new society is based on the successful attainment of several basic needs. With respect to these needs, the access to a neighbourhood where the newcomer feels comfortable, and to housing that is adequate, suitable, and affordable, are particularly important, especially in the initial stages of settlement. Scholars have also recognized that success in the search for adequate and affordable housing is one of the most important steps towards the integration of immigrants into a new society. Nevertheless, research has revealed that new immigrants and refugees settling in major Canadian cities frequently encounter obstacles to securing housing in the private rental market. Despite multicultural and anti-discrimination policies developed by Canadian federal, provincial, and municipal governments, newcomers still face significant barriers in locating and obtaining housing. In this context, greater knowledge of the barriers faced by immigrants and visible minorities in Canada's housing markets can help policymakers and business leaders promote a more responsive and equitable housing sector.

At this stage still, little is known about ethnic and racial differences in access to housing in Canada's urban rental housing markets, and the Black African housing experience in large urban areas has been largely ignored. Recent research suggests that new immigrants, refugees,

and visible minorities tend to cluster spatially and to live in poor-quality housing, usually in low-income neighbourhoods in which they rent rather than own residences. These groups also tend to be marginalized economically and socially. In general, studies in Canada have attempted to account for the under-representation of new immigrants and refugees in the rental housing market without paying enough attention to the role of racial discrimination. Also, few researchers have studied the housing careers of immigrants after they become established in Canada's major urban centres.

Questionnaire Survey

The main source of data for this study was a questionnaire that was administered in Toronto in summer 2006. The questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions, within the following main categories:

1. The “migratory trajectory” of the respondents, including their move to Canada/Toronto.
2. The respondents’ settlement experiences in Toronto.
3. The respondents’ “housing experiences” in Toronto’s rental market. Special attention was paid here to the first permanent residence and the current residence in which the respondents had lived since their arrival in Toronto and the difficulty of the housing search process.
4. The outcomes of these experiences in terms of position in the housing market and satisfaction with housing and neighbourhood.
5. The discrimination, if any, faced by respondents in Toronto’s housing system, and their suggestions as to how to improve housing access in Toronto’s rental market.
6. Information about the socio-economic characteristics of the participants in the survey.

To be eligible for the survey, respondents had to have been born in Angola, Mozambique or Cape Verde Islands (all are first-generation immigrants), be Portuguese-speaking (mother tongue), have arrived in Canada between 1990 and 2006, currently live in rental accommodation in the City of Toronto, and have moved at least twice since arriving in the city.

FINDINGS

Settlement Experiences in Toronto

Black Africans from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands living in Canada represent three relatively small, largely unknown and unstudied immigrant groups. The majority of these immigrants/refugees have tended to settle in the “immigrant corridor” – including the area of “Little Portugal” – of the City of Toronto.

While none of the groups had a well-established co-ethnic community within which to settle upon arrival in Toronto, all three had close links with another long-established immigrant group in Canada – the Portuguese – given that Portugal was once a European colonizer of their parts of Africa. All respondents were fluent in Portuguese (their mother tongue) and had cultural connections with Portugal, given Portugal’s long colonial rule of their countries. The respondents were asked about the role and impact of the Portuguese community on their housing search and settlement. Did the Portuguese community play an important role in the successful reception or social inclusion of Angolan, Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans into Toronto’s society?

When respondents were asked if on first arrival in Toronto they had settled in the Portuguese community, only 43.3% of the Angolans and 16.7% of the Mozambicans answered yes. In contrast, the majority of the Cape Verdeans (70%) were more prone to settle on arrival in and/or around the Portuguese community. Those respondents who initially settled in the Portuguese community received help on arrival from different sources, including Portuguese civic organizations, social agencies and churches.

The three study groups – but particularly the Angolans and Cape Verdeans – also relied extensively on Portuguese organizations/social agencies. While they found these organizations helpful, they complained about the lack of Black Africans working for them. They also share the view that Portuguese social agencies/organizations in Toronto should have more members of their backgrounds working for them in order to provide a better settlement services and to cope

with the issue of “mistrust” that still exists between Black African groups and the Portuguese (White) workers.

When asked how they would rate the importance of the Portuguese community in helping them adjust to their new environment, only 41.7% of respondents from Angola and 11.7% from Mozambique said the Portuguese community was “very important” or “important”. Cape Verde Islanders had a different opinion, and praised more the importance of the Portuguese community (60%) in helping them adjust to a new milieu. Thus, for Cape Verdeans, it seems that the Portuguese community established in Toronto had a stronger and a more positive impact on this group’s settlement/adjustment to a new life in Toronto. In some of the Cape Verdean responses it seems that there was a much easier integration/adjustment due to the cultural connection to the Portuguese community at the early stages of settlement in Toronto.

Residential Mobility and the Housing Search Process

The questionnaire asked respondents about their housing searches – for both their first permanent residence as well as their current residence – in Toronto’s rental market. Results were presented separately for the following interrelated aspects of the relocation process:

- a) the most important reasons for moving;
- b) information sources used in the search process;
- c) difficulties experienced in the housing search and reasons for the difficulties;
- d) searching for housing in the Portuguese community;
- e) the housing outcome and levels of satisfaction with present dwelling-neighbourhood.

Most Important Reasons for Moving

The settlement patterns of recent immigrants and refugees in Toronto are characterized by high residential mobility caused partly by the need to move frequently in search of more affordable and better housing conditions in Toronto’s expensive private rental market. The study results indicate that both Angolans and Mozambicans sought better condition after a short time (less than three months) living on a temporary basis in a shelter (78.3% versus 15%) or sharing

space with friends or relatives (13.3% for Angolans and 68.3% for Mozambicans). In contrast to the other two groups, Cape Verdeans' initial housing experiences (temporary) were mainly with relatives and/or friends (93.3%), with very few of them looking for shelters upon arrival. For all these three groups, the primary goal was to rent on their own accommodation in the private sector: "a place to call home."

Respondents were also asked for the main "push" and "pull" factors behind the decision to move. Only responses for two moves were recorded – the first permanent residence in Toronto and the current residence. For the Angolan group, "rents too expensive" (50.0%) and "overcrowding" (40.0%) were by far the most important reasons for moving from their first permanent residence in Toronto. For the Mozambican group, "housing conditions/facilities" (40.0%) and "size/number-rooms" (30.0%) were the most important factors in their decision to relocate. In contrast, for the Cape Verdean group "overcrowding" (sharing with relatives) (63.3%) and thus the wish to live in their own place – privacy – were by far the most important reason for moving from their first permanent residence.

With regard to the most important reasons for moving out of their last residence to their current residence (the one in which they were living at the time of the interview) – Angolans again cited the high rents (41.7%) and "problems with landlords" (increases in rents and/or landowners sold the house/apartment) (16.7%) as the primary reasons for moving. For the Mozambican respondents "better housing conditions" (45%) and "proximity to the workplace" (41.7%) were the two most important reasons, while Cape Verdeans moved mainly in search of "better housing conditions/quality" (53.3) in a "better/safe neighbourhood" (20%) which was "close to the work place" (20%). Thus, in general the respondents' reasons for moving reflect the reality of Toronto's rental housing market: lack of affordable rental housing/high rents, low vacancy rates, and poor-quality housing in certain areas of the City of Toronto.

Search Effort and Information Sources Used in the Search Process

Gathering information about vacancies in Canada's largest and most diverse housing markets can be very stressful, costly, and time-consuming for new immigrants and refugees,

most of whom have little money to spare when they first arrive. Members of the Angolan, Mozambican and Cape Verdean communities are no exception.

How time-consuming was the search for rental housing? In this study, the housing search effort of our respondents was measured by time spent searching and the number of dwellings inspected. The first measure of search effort to be considered is the duration of the renter's active search. Respondents were asked to indicate the approximate amount of time they spent looking for housing (for both first permanent residence and current residence) in Toronto's rental housing market. Results shows that almost two thirds (65.0%) of Angolans spent more than one month looking for their first permanent residence in Toronto, compared to 40.0% for Mozambicans and only 13.3% for Cape Verdeans. The data reveals that Angolans by far invested much more time searching for first permanent residence than the other two groups. The minimal time invested in searching and inspecting dwellings by the Cape Verdeans is not surprising given the high reliance of this group on their own "ethnic" (community) networks of contact once they arrived in Canada. However, with regard to the amount of time searching for the current residence (the one they live on at the time of the interviews), results show only slight differences between the three groups. At this stage we can speculate that as time of residence in Toronto increased for all three groups, they became more familiar with the intricacies of the rental real estate market, including its geography, and thus decided to spent more time looking for more options – housing types/quality and neighbourhoods in the city. Another explanation may be that the housing needs and preferences (housing choices) of our study groups, particularly the Mozambicans and the Cape Verdeans, increased with time thus contributing for a more detailed/in-depth (in terms of time) search for housing in order to satisfy their housing needs and preferences.

The other important element in the renter's search effort is the total number of dwelling inspected. Results shows that Angolans differ from Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans with respect to the number of dwellings inspected when looking for their first permanent residence. While half (51.7%) of Angolans inspected more than ten dwellings in their search, only 20.0% of Cape Verdeans and 16.7% of Mozambicans limited themselves to this range. The average

number of 8.1 dwellings inspected by Angolans, compared to an average of 4.3 dwellings by Mozambicans and only 1.3 dwellings by Cape Verdeans, illustrates these marked differences.

Respondents from the three study groups used a variety of information sources when looking for and locating their first permanent residence, as well as for the residence in which they now live. With regard to the most important source used in locating their first permanent residence (F.P.R.) and their present residence (P.R.), results reveals that Angolan respondents relied more extensively on Portuguese newspapers/bulletins (50.0%), Canadian newspapers/magazines (18.3%) and friends and relatives (15%) – when looking for and locating their first permanent residence in Toronto. For these respondents, reliance on Portuguese newspapers remained important in locating their current residence as well (35%).

In general, a defining characteristic of these study groups is their reliance on informal and inexpensive access to housing information in their housing search. Few Angolan, Mozambican or Cape Verdean respondents used mainstream private or non-private market organizations or institutions, including the numerous Portuguese social agencies or organizations available in Toronto, which could have provided these groups with assistance on housing-related issues.

The Difficulty of the Housing Search and Reasons for the Difficulty

The nature and frequency of barriers encountered in the housing search can be indicative of these new immigrants' ability to access housing and their choice of neighbourhood. Canada, in contrast with other industrialized countries such as the U.S. or U.K., appears to offer a more “open” and less constrained housing market. The extent to which this image of Canada's housing market as being more open to minorities holds true today remains to be studied. However, evidence exists that in Toronto's rental housing market, prejudice and discrimination by landlords is a common practice.

Results show that for two of the three study groups – particularly Angolans, most of whom arrived as refugees, and to a lesser degree Mozambicans – their search for housing in Toronto's tight rental market was not easy. The majority of the Angolan (85%), and almost half

(48.3%) of the Mozambican, respondents found the search for the first permanent residence “very difficult” or “somewhat difficult.” It seems that over time the housing search improved for the Mozambican group, while the Angolans continued to face difficulty. For example, with regard to the current residence, only 35% of Mozambicans compared to 75% of Angolans found their search “very difficult.” or “somewhat difficult”. In contrast, the Cape Verdean group showed overall less difficulty in searching for housing in Toronto’s rental housing market. The extensive use of social networks – friends and relatives – that characterizes the Cape Verdean group may, in part, explain their lower level of difficulty in their housing search over time (30% for the first permanent residence versus 26.6% for the current residence).

Respondents were also asked the level of difficulty in searching for their “first permanent residence” and/or their “current residence”. The majority of Angolans and Mozambicans identified the two most important reasons for their search difficulties as being: (i) race (being a black person) and (ii) source of income/income level versus housing costs. In contrast, the Cape Verdeans cited more often one reason only – their “income level.”

There were numerous “forces” impacting (negatively) the housing search process and outcomes. Among Angolans and Mozambicans in particular, there is agreement that the use of “race” by some landlords (Portuguese and “non-Portuguese”/white) ultimately determined what they found in terms of quality of housing, price and location/neighbourhood. Most of these respondents also agree that landlords in Toronto’s rental housing market quite often lie in not providing full information about the vacancies, utilities and/or prices. Others simply refuse to rent to Blacks by using subtle strategies – such as asking for extra money for first/last months to raise the financial bar, or lying in stating that the accommodation was already rented – which are not legal but difficult to prove, largely contribute to their housing search barriers in Toronto’s rental housing market.

Given the number and complexity of the barriers encountered by the study groups, respondents were also asked a more general question as to whether they experienced discrimination against them and against their group in Toronto’s rental housing market. The results suggest that Angolans experience more personal and group discrimination in Toronto’s

rental market than Mozambicans. In general, Angolans reported “quite a bit” and “very much” personal and group discrimination, especially on the basis of “race” (being a black person), “refugee status”, and “source of income.” Most Mozambicans reported “quite a bit” and “very much” of personal and group discrimination, especially on the basis of “source of income”, “race” and “family size.” In contrast, most Cape Verdeans indicated “quite a bit” on the basis of “ethnic/cultural/national background”, “language accent” and “race”.

These findings indicate that “race” (skin colour) greatly affects housing searches, particularly of Black immigrants from Angola and Mozambique. While it must be noted that the racism cited by respondents may be more “perceived” than “real” in some cases, numerous studies have shown racism to be a major barrier in Canada’s urban housing market.

Toronto’s Portuguese Community’s Response to Black African Housing Needs

Since immigrants from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands speak Portuguese fluently, a primary question is: to what extent does the Portuguese community, a group characterized by having a visible and strong ethnic enclave in Toronto, as well as by high levels of homeownership (85% of Portuguese households in the city own a dwelling), facilitate the housing search process of Angolans, Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans in Toronto?

When respondents were asked whether they had looked for permanent housing in Toronto’s Portuguese community, 55% of Angolans, 40% of Mozambicans and 63.3% of Cape Verdeans declared that on one or more occasions they had searched for permanent housing in Little Portugal. When invited to comment upon their housing search experiences in the Portuguese community, the responses from Angolans and Mozambicans were a mixture of positive and negative. Some respondents felt the Portuguese community was welcoming and helpful in their housing search, while others were not happy at all and referred to discrimination by some Portuguese landlords based mainly on their race (being a Black person) and/or on the source of their income/income level.

Overall, results seem to indicate that a shared language (fluency in Portuguese) did not help Angolans and Mozambicans as much as it did Cape Verdeans, who had an easier housing

search experience and felt more at “home” in the Portuguese community. In the case of the Angolans and Mozambicans, the advantage of a shared language is offset by some prejudice and discrimination on the basis of race – colour of skin – by some Portuguese landlords. Even if, as suggested above, this racism is “perceived” more than “real,” nonetheless even the perception of racism – especially among Angolans and Mozambicans – becomes “real” to the extent that it becomes a factor shaping the housing search process.

A shared language – which should have been an important bridge between Portuguese landlords and the respondents – seems to have worked only for Cape Verdean group. In contrast to most Angolans and Mozambican respondents, who felt “lost” in their housing search experiences in the Portuguese community, Cape Verdean respondents benefited from the “cultural comfort” and support they needed in the Portuguese community. Thus, being members of a former Portuguese colony and speaking the same language did not serve as cultural tools, to the same degree, for the three study groups. Within this context, it seems that the “race” factor – Angolans and Mozambican being more Black (darker colour of skin) than Cape Verdeans – seems to make a difference. Thus, the latest group seems to be more favoured than the previous two when looking for housing and getting rental housing from Portuguese landlords.

With regard to their involvement and participation in the life of the Portuguese community results indicate that Cape Verdeans (56.7%) more often than Angolans (48.3%) and Mozambicans (28.3%) participate in the “life” of the Portuguese community in terms of living within the community, or by working or shopping in Portuguese stores. However, in terms of participating in the life of the Portuguese community in cultural and social ways, the levels of participation of all three study groups are much lower (20.0% for Angolans, 18.7% for Mozambicans and 36.7% for Cape Verdeans). “Cultural” barriers – partly as a legacy of Portugal’s turbulent colonial history in Africa – seem to separate the Portuguese from the Black Africans, and particularly from Angolans and Mozambicans.

Based on these results it seems that much more work needs to be done by the established (first generation) Portuguese community of Toronto. More “dialogue” is also needed in order to eliminate the “social/cultural” distance that seems to separate the Portuguese white community

(the former colonizer) from the emergent Black African communities of Toronto (formerly the colonized). There is a feeling among respondents that Portuguese and the Black African immigrants and refugees presently live in two ‘worlds’.

In general, more research is needed on the role and impact of well-established ethnic communities in the social inclusion of newcomers. Given the social distance between the Portuguese-speaking Black Africans – particularly the ones from Angola and Mozambique – and Toronto’s Portuguese community, further research is needed to understand the complexities of culture, language, and racial prejudice in shaping the settlement of immigrant communities in Canadian cities.

The Housing Search Outcome and Levels of Satisfaction with Present Dwelling and Neighbourhood

Results from this study show that some respondents faced major barriers/obstacles in Toronto’s tight rental housing market. Whether some respondents had a “choice” (or not) in their last move – moved “voluntarily” or “involuntarily” (forced) from their last residence to the present one – was the focus of our attention here. Respondents were asked if they wanted to move or if they were forced to move when they decided to move to their current place – that is, did they choose to move, or did they have to move? Results show that Angolans (21.7%) more often than Mozambicans (8.3%) and Cape Verdeans (3.3%) were “forced” to leave their last residence.

Most respondents from the study groups are currently renting an apartment or flat in the private sector (53.3% of the Angolans, 81.7% of the Mozambicans and 70% of the Cape Verdeans). Very few (4 Angolans, 1 Mozambican and 1 Cape Verdean) lived in public housing. This is probably due to the shortage of public housing units available in Toronto, and the long waiting lists for affordable housing. For almost all respondents, the ultimate goal is to own a home of their own, with 93.3% of Angolans, 96.7% of Mozambicans and all (100%) Cape Verdeans expressing a strong desire to own property. Respondents from the three study groups are unanimous that owning property on Canadian soil would give them more privacy,

equity/credit in the new society and some form of control of their own destiny. Many of these respondents also expressed a desire to live in neighbourhoods with people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. For some of those respondents it is very important to avoid living in areas with high concentrations of people of the same ethnic background/colour, and/or areas where the language used by most residents is not English (e.g., Portuguese).

With regard to their levels of satisfaction with their present residence and neighbourhood, most Angolans, Mozambican and Cape Verdean renters were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with what they have now. However, when questioned about their “house as home” and their “neighbourhood as a community” respondents were less positive. With regard to “house as home” almost one third of Angolans (31.6%), 13.4% of Mozambicans and 21.6% of Cape Verdeans answered that in their present residence they do not feel at home, citing poor quality of the dwelling, size/overcrowding or tensions with landlords.

On the question of the “neighbourhood as a community,” the respondents in general – and Angolans and Mozambicans in particular – were less positive. Half (50%) of Mozambicans and almost one third (30%) of Angolans answered that they do not think the neighbourhood they now live in is an area with a “sense of community” – citing as major reasons for this dissatisfaction (“feeling”) issues such as safety, crime, drugs, cleanliness, noise, lack of services and bad neighbours. In contrast, Cape Verdeans show higher levels of satisfaction than their counterparts – Angolans and Mozambicans – with both “house as home” and their neighbourhood as “community”.

Recommendations

With regard to recommendations for the future, respondents were asked for their advice on improving housing for newcomers. More specifically, we asked questions about what changes need to be made to improve the housing options and housing conditions for newcomers: a) What do you think should be done to improve housing opportunities for immigrants and refugees? b) What housing types or options should be more available? c) What aspects of landlord procedures or policies should be changed? d) What would improve your neighbourhood? and e) If you lived

in public housing (government housing, such as MTHA – Metro Toronto Housing Authority), how can the housing authority and staff better serve newcomers to Canada?

With regard to the question asking what they think should be done to improve housing opportunities for immigrants and refugees, respondents suggest that more funding be available for affordable housing, which would ease their dependence upon sub-standard housing in Toronto. As well, some respondents cited regulatory changes to better enforce the law in such areas as discrimination in rental housing.

In response to the question asking what housing types or options should be more available, respondents cited public governance (including both subsidized government housing as well as non-profit/co-operative housing) as a key issue. It was felt that this would minimize the role of racial discrimination in housing, as respondents feel the private sector will not resolve this problem on its own.

With regard to the question asking what aspects of landlord procedures or policies should be changed, there was again a focus on preventing discrimination in Toronto's rental market. Respondents suggest some regulatory body or a better means of oversight of the rental market may be effective in preventing this from occurring in future.

In response to the question asking what would improve their neighbourhood, respondents focused again on addressing the issue of racial discrimination as well as on the need for more policing to reduce crime.

Finally, in regard to the question asking how can the housing authority and staff better serve newcomers to Canada if they lived in public housing (government housing, such as MTHA), respondents emphasized the need for respect and professionalism in the training of staff vis-à-vis their interactions with tenants as key in fostering better relations between public housing authority and new immigrants to Canada.

These responses serve as key recommendations from this study that would be of interest for policy makers and civic and business leaders given how the study groups allow us insights into the reactions of Canada's growing and increasingly diverse immigrant populations to our country's complex and challenging urban housing markets.

CONCLUSION

Since the end of the Second World War, immigration has played a significant role in the demographic, economic, social and cultural transformation of Canadian society. The City of Toronto – Canada's largest urban area and its primary historical "port of entry" for immigrants – has felt the primary impact of these changes. With changes to Canada's immigration policy in the 1960s, the "internationalization" of immigration to Canada has radically increased the cultural, linguistic, religious and racial heterogeneity of Toronto's population. In this context, it has been widely recognized by scholars and policymakers that this immigration has been a significant engine of economic growth for Toronto. However, one of the ironies of this process has been that immigration has contributed to Toronto becoming the most expensive housing market in Canada where new immigrants face the greatest affordability problems.

This study investigated the housing experiences of three relatively recent African immigrant groups – the Angolans, Mozambicans and the Cape Verdeans – in Toronto's rental market by examining their settlement experiences and housing search processes, as well as their ultimate outcomes. Finding initial temporary accommodation was not an easy task particularly for Angolans and Mozambicans. Upon arrival in Canada, respondents from Angola – most of whom were refugee claimants – relied almost exclusively on government programs (including shelters) to "survive" the first weeks or months. Cape Verde Islanders and to a lesser degree Mozambicans were more fortunate in having friends and relatives already established in Toronto. However, for these groups there were feelings of considerable discontent and frustration regarding the housing options available to them. These study groups had high housing

expectations prior to their arrival, and did not expect to encounter the low-quality housing that they found, nor the uncongenial neighbourhoods in which they settled.

As these African Portuguese-speaking groups lacked a well-established co-ethnic community in the city to help them get settled, the question of the role of the older, institutionally complete Portuguese community (i.e., a community with a significant number of ethnically-oriented institutions, businesses, and religious organizations) in Toronto in these immigrants' settlement is an important one. In contrast to the experiences of the Cape Verdeans, the Portuguese community did not play an important role in the reception or social inclusion of Angolans and Mozambicans into Toronto's housing market. In general, the initial housing choices of these two Black African groups seem to have been determined more by their group characteristics (age on arrival, immigration status, levels of education, and knowledge of English) than by cultural forces (the need to live close to people who shared the same language – Portuguese).

For Angolan respondents, moving did not always result in improved housing conditions. More Angolans than Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans shared residences with friends as a survival strategy. The three groups also differed in the main motivating factors (push-pull) behind their decision to move. In their housing searches, the three groups also followed different strategies in the sources of information used to locate their first permanent residence as well as their current residence.

With regard to the barriers encountered by the respondents when looking for housing, results echo earlier research in Canada. Searching for affordable and adequate housing in Toronto's rental market is a task rendered particularly difficult when the home seeker is a new immigrant, refugee, or member of a visible minority group. Evidence from this study suggests that discrimination by landlords is common in Toronto's rental market. However, more research is needed on landlords' behaviour in the rental market, and on the role of race and discrimination in the allocation of housing in Canada. Nonetheless, it is clear that discrimination is a barrier recognized by most of the respondents (with the notable exception of the Cape Verdeans) in their housing search. Members of both the Angolan and the Mozambican groups expressed some form

of dissatisfaction with their present dwelling (“not feeling at home”) and the neighbourhood (“not a real community”), and with discrimination in the rental housing market. As has been noted, racism – whether “real” or “perceived” – can result in social exclusion and housing segregation in low-income neighbourhoods, and thus to a slower integration of newcomers into a new society.

This issue of discrimination must be understood in the context of the complex and somewhat conflicted relationship between the Angolan and Mozambican respondents and Toronto’s well-established Portuguese community. With the abundance of vacancies in the Portuguese community and the respondents’ knowledge of the Portuguese language, it might be expected that both these groups would gravitate to the Portuguese community for advice and support. However, while the two groups sought housing in the Portuguese community, it is clear that there was considerable “social distance” between the Portuguese and these Black African immigrants; a fact that some respondents attribute to racially-based discrimination. In contrast, Cape Verdeans feel more at “home” in the Portuguese community, and thus showed higher levels of participation in the “life” of the Portuguese community.

FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings suggest complex interactions among race/group characteristics, including immigration status on arrival, the housing search process, landlords’ discriminatory practices/behaviour, and the housing strategies adopted by immigrants. However, many of the details of the housing experiences of visible minorities in Toronto, including new immigrants and refugees, remain unclear. More comparative studies are needed on visible and non-visible minorities, including newcomers from the new African diaspora in Canada (e.g., from Francophone, Anglophone, Spanish and Portuguese-speaking Africa), to understand why certain groups are more successful than others in finding affordable housing in a neighbourhood of their choice. Further research is also needed into housing discrimination by the diverse urban social gatekeepers involved in the production and allocation of housing, which seems to have limited new immigrants’ and visible minorities’ access to affordable housing in Toronto.

Sommaire

INTRODUCTION

Depuis longtemps le principal point d'entrée des immigrants au Canada, Toronto se distingue des autres villes canadiennes par l'importance et la diversité culturelle de sa population, mais aussi par son marché de l'habitation, l'un des plus chers au pays. Selon plusieurs études, c'est à Toronto que les nouveaux arrivants ont le plus souvent du mal à se loger convenablement avec les moyens à leur disposition. Jusqu'à présent, les méandres qu'empruntent les nouveaux arrivants et les minorités visibles pour trouver un toit, et en particulier leurs façons de se renseigner sur les logements disponibles, n'ont guère été étudiés ni élucidés. Ceci étant dit, la recherche a confirmé que le logement est l'une des principales voies d'intégration économique et sociale des immigrants et des réfugiés. Or, confrontées à des difficultés financières et à des attitudes discriminatoires, ces personnes sont portées à s'installer dans des habitations à prix modéré qui, pour peu qu'elles soient regroupées, peuvent prendre l'allure de « ghettos » en pleine ville comme en banlieue.

Les méthodes que les nouveaux immigrants adoptent pour composer avec leurs contraintes et trouver à se loger à Toronto sont donc d'une importance capitale tant pour la croissance que pour la future harmonie sociale de la ville. Qu'elles soient liées à des facteurs économiques, à des différences linguistiques ou culturelles, ou encore aux attitudes discriminatoires de certains propriétaires ou agents immobiliers, ces contraintes peuvent contribuer à engendrer et faire perdurer une ségrégation raciale et ethnique au niveau du logement urbain. De ce fait, leur étude et les conclusions qui en seront tirées en regard de ces divers groupes seront d'une pertinence immédiate pour les lignes de conduite des gouvernements, du milieu des affaires et des dirigeants communautaires.

La présente étude s'est penchée sur la situation de trois groupes d'immigrants et de réfugiés de langues portugaise, originaires des anciennes colonies portugaises en Afrique que sont l'Angola, le Mozambique et les îles du Cap-Vert, arrivés à Toronto entre 1990 et 2006. Elle a examiné deux questions clés, à savoir : Quels sont les obstacles auxquels se heurtent ces

groupes sur le marché locatif privé? La race ou la couleur de la peau influent-elles sur la recherche et l'obtention d'un logement locatif à Toronto?

MÉTHODOLOGIE

Cette étude en deux volets a pris la forme d'une analyse documentaire et d'une enquête par questionnaire effectuée à Toronto auprès de personnes immigrantes et réfugiées nées en Angola, au Mozambique ou aux îles du Cap-Vert.

Analyse documentaire

La recherche existante confirme que l'intégration des immigrants et réfugiés dans la société qui les accueille dépend avant tout de la satisfaction de certains de leurs besoins essentiels. D'une importance capitale à cet égard, surtout dans un premier temps, est pour ces nouveaux venus de pouvoir s'établir dans un quartier où ils se sentent à l'aise et d'y trouver un logement abordable, de taille et de qualité convenables. Il est entendu au même titre que l'obtention d'un tel logement est l'une des principales étapes de l'intégration réussie dans une nouvelle société. Néanmoins, il est reconnu que les nouveaux immigrants et les réfugiés qui s'établissent dans les grands centres urbains du Canada se heurtent souvent à des difficultés particulières sur le marché locatif privé. Partout au pays, malgré les politiques gouvernementales adoptées à l'échelle fédérale, provinciale et municipale pour promouvoir le multiculturalisme et interdire la discrimination, les nouveaux arrivants continuent de faire face à d'importants obstacles pour trouver et obtenir un logement. Une meilleure compréhension de ces obstacles pourrait donc aider les responsables des orientations politiques et du milieu des affaires à favoriser plus de souplesse et d'équité dans le secteur de l'habitation.

Jusqu'à ce jour, très peu de données ont été recueillies concernant l'accès de divers groupes ethniques et raciaux à un logement locatif dans les grands centres urbains du Canada, et le vécu à cet égard des Noirs d'origine africaine a été largement passé sous silence. D'après les recherches récentes, les nouveaux immigrants, les réfugiés et les minorités visibles tendent à

occuper des habitations de piètre qualité, à proximité de leurs semblables, généralement comme locataires et non comme propriétaires, dans des quartiers plutôt défavorisés. Ces groupes vivent aussi fréquemment en marge de la société sur le plan économique et social. Les études canadiennes ont dans l'ensemble tenté de rendre compte de la sous-représentation des nouveaux immigrants et des réfugiés sur le marché locatif sans vraiment se préoccuper de l'impact de la discrimination raciale. Peu de recherches ont examiné le cheminement des immigrants sur le marché de l'habitation des grands centres urbains du pays après qu'ils s'y soient véritablement établis.

Enquête par questionnaire

Les données recueillies pour les besoins de la présente étude proviennent pour l'essentiel d'un questionnaire administré à Toronto durant l'été 2006. Ce questionnaire incluait à la fois des questions fermées et ouvertes, portant sur les grands thèmes suivants :

7. Le « trajet migratoire » des personnes interrogées, y compris leur déménagement au Canada et à Toronto.
8. Les expériences vécues par ces personnes lors de leur établissement à Toronto.
9. Les expériences qu'elles ont vécues sur le marché locatif de Toronto, en particulier en ce qui concerne le logement qui a été leur premier domicile fixe après leur arrivée dans la ville, leur logement actuel et les difficultés que la recherche d'un logement a présenté pour elles.
10. Leur position sur le marché de l'habitation suite à ces expériences et leur degré de satisfaction avec leur logement et leur quartier.
11. La discrimination à laquelle les personnes interrogées ont fait face en matière d'habitation à Toronto, et leurs suggestions quant à la manière d'améliorer l'accès au marché locatif torontois.
12. Les particularités socio-économiques des personnes interrogées.

La participation à cette enquête était réservée à des personnes nées en Angola, au Mozambique ou dans les îles de Cap-Vert, ayant le portugais pour langue maternelle et le parlant toujours, qui sont arrivées au Canada entre 1990 et 2006 (première génération d'immigrants), qui

étaient locataires à Toronto même au moment de l'enquête et qui avaient déménagé au moins deux fois depuis leur arrivée dans cette ville.

CONCLUSIONS TIRÉES DE L'ENQUÊTE

Expériences liées à l'établissement à Toronto

Les Noirs africains originaires de l'Angola, du Mozambique et des îles du Cap-Vert qui ont choisi de venir vivre au Canada forment trois groupes assez peu nombreux qui n'ont guère été étudiés et qui restent largement méconnus. La majorité de ces personnes, immigrantes ou réfugiées, se sont établies dans un des quartiers torontois qu'on appelle le descriptif de « corridor des immigrants » et dont fait partie celui communément appelé le « petit Portugal ».

Bien qu'aucun de ces groupes n'ait donné naissance à une véritable communauté ethnique à Toronto susceptible d'accueillir leurs nouveaux arrivants, leurs membres ont sans exception des liens étroits avec une communauté d'immigrants établis au Canada depuis bien longtemps, les Portugais, vu que le Portugal fait partie des pays européens qui avaient colonisé leurs coins de l'Afrique. Les personnes interrogées parlent couramment le portugais (leur langue maternelle) et se sentent proches de la culture portugaise, étant donné la longue occupation de leur pays par le Portugal. Elles ont été invitées à dire si la communauté portugaise avait joué un rôle dans leur recherche d'un logement et leur établissement en général, et si oui, lequel. L'enquête cherchait ainsi à déterminer si la communauté portugaise avait contribué de façon importante à la qualité de l'accueil ou de l'intégration dans la société torontoise des personnes originaires de l'Angola, du Mozambique ou des îles du Cap-Vert.

À la question de savoir si après leur arrivée à Toronto, elles s'étaient initialement établies dans la communauté portugaise, seulement 43,3 % personnes d'origine angolaise et 16,7 % des personnes d'origine mozambicaine ont répondu que oui. Ceci contraste avec les réponses des Capverdiens, dont 70 % ont dit s'être logés au cœur ou à proximité de cette communauté. Les répondants qui ont au départ choisi la communauté portugaise comme point de chute ont obtenu

de l'aide de sources variées à leur arrivée, y compris d'églises portugaises et d'organismes communautaires ou sociaux axés sur cette communauté.

Les membres des trois groupes à l'étude, mais surtout les Angolais et les Capverdiens, comptent beaucoup sur l'assistance des organismes communautaires et sociaux de la communauté portugaise. L'ensemble des répondants reconnaissent l'utilité de ces organismes. Ils déplorent toutefois le manque de Noirs africains parmi leur personnel : leurs voix se sont levées de façon unanime pour souhaiter que ces organismes recrutent davantage de personnes ayant des antécédents similaires aux leurs, afin d'améliorer leurs services d'établissement et d'atténuer la méfiance qui existe encore de nos jours entre les groupes noirs africains et les travailleuses ou travailleurs portugais (blancs).

Lorsqu'on leur a demandé de se prononcer sur le rôle qu'a joué l'aide de la communauté portugaise dans leur adaptation à leur nouveau cadre de vie, tout juste 41,7 % des Angolais et à peine 11,7 % des Mozambicains ont répondu qu'elle avait été « très importante » ou « importante ». Les Capverdiens ont été plus généreux d'éloges à l'endroit de la communauté portugaise, 60 % d'entre eux déclarant qu'elle avait facilité leur adaptation. Il semblerait donc que la communauté portugaise de Toronto ait eu une influence plus marquée et plus favorable sur l'établissement des Capverdiens à Toronto et leur intégration dans leur nouveau milieu; certaines des réponses recueillies donnent à penser que ce groupe a bénéficié d'une intégration et d'une adaptation initiales à Toronto bien plus aisées qu'elles ne l'auraient été autrement grâce à ses liens culturels avec la communauté portugaise.

Mobilité résidentielle et mode de recherche d'un logement

Le questionnaire incluait plusieurs questions sur la façon dont les personnes interrogées avaient trouvé sur le marché locatif de Toronto aussi bien le premier logement leur ayant servi de domicile fixe que leur logement actuel. Les réponses à ces questions sont présentées séparément en ce qui concerne :

- f) les principales raisons des déménagements;
- g) les sources d'information utilisées dans la recherche d'un logement;

- h) la nature et l'origine des difficultés rencontrées dans la recherche d'un logement;
- i) la recherche d'un logement dans la communauté portugaise;
- j) les logements trouvés et le degré de satisfaction à l'égard du logement actuel et de son quartier.

Les principales raisons des déménagements

On constate qu'au début, les immigrants et les réfugiés qui s'établissent à Toronto changent souvent de lieu de résidence, déménageant entre autres souvent en quête d'un logement plus abordable et de meilleure qualité sur le marché locatif privé très coûteux de cette ville. Selon les résultats de notre enquête, les Angolais et les Mozambicains recherchent vite de meilleures conditions d'habitation (en l'espace de moins de trois mois) après avoir d'abord trouvé un hébergement provisoire dans un refuge (78,3 % et 15 %, respectivement) ou encore chez des amis ou de la parenté (13,3 % pour les Angolais et 68,3 % pour les Mozambicains). Les Capverdiens, eux, ont pour la plupart pu compter sur l'hospitalité temporaire de membres de leur parenté ou d'amis, voire les deux (93,3 %), très peu d'entre eux ayant donc eu à chercher un hébergement à leur arrivée. Pour les uns comme pour les autres, le but premier était de louer leur propre logement dans le secteur privé, autrement dit d'avoir un véritable « chez-soi ».

On a par ailleurs interrogé les répondants sur les facteurs qui les ont poussés ou incités à déménager. Deux déménagements seulement étaient visés : celui vers leur premier domicile fixe à Toronto et celui vers leur logement actuel. Les deux principales raisons, et de loin, pour lesquelles les répondants angolais ont quitté leur premier domicile étaient son loyer trop élevé (50 %) et son surpeuplement (40 %). Les Mozambicains, quant à eux, ont surtout évoqué l'état du logement ou ses installations (40 %), de même que la taille du logement ou le nombre de chambres (30 %). La raison donnée par la vaste majorité des Capverdiens, soit 63,3 %, était par contre le surpeuplement (logement partagé avec de la parenté), autrement dit le désir d'avoir un chez-soi.

En ce qui a trait aux principales raisons de leur plus récent déménagement (celui vers leur logement au moment de l'enquête), les Angolais ont mentionné encore une fois le niveau trop

élevé du loyer (41,7 %), de même que des problèmes avec le propriétaire, par exemple la décision par celui-ci d'augmenter le loyer ou de vendre l'habitation (16,7 %). Les Mozambicains ont avant tout évoqué le souhait de trouver de meilleures conditions de logement (45 %) et de se rapprocher de leur lieu de travail (41,7 %), tandis que les Capverdiens recherchaient une qualité ou des conditions de logement meilleures (53,3 %), un quartier plus agréable ou plus sécuritaire (20 %) et la proximité de leur lieu de travail (20 %). Dans l'ensemble, les raisons des déménagements reflètent la réalité torontoise : les loyers y sont élevés, les logements abordables insuffisants et les taux d'inoccupation faibles, à quoi s'ajoute la mauvaise qualité du parc locatif dans plusieurs coins de la ville.

Les sources d'information utilisées dans la recherche d'un logement

Se renseigner sur les logements à louer sur les marchés de l'habitation les plus vastes et les plus complexes du Canada peut s'avérer très prenant, coûteux et stressant pour les nouveaux immigrants et les réfugiés, dont les moyens financiers sont au départ généralement limités. Les personnes originaires de l'Angola, du Mozambique et de Cap-Vert ne font pas exception à cette règle.

Combien de temps a-t-il fallu aux répondants pour trouver un logement locatif? Dans le cadre de la présente étude, nous avons mesuré les efforts déployés pour se loger en tenant compte du temps passé à chercher un logement et du nombre de logements visités. La première mesure de ces efforts était donc la période de recherche active. Les personnes interrogées ont été invitées à dire combien de temps elles avaient consacré, approximativement, à leur recherche d'un logement (aussi bien le premier logement leur ayant servi de domicile fixe que leur logement actuel) sur le marché locatif de Toronto. Il ressort des réponses recueillies que près des deux tiers (65 %) des Angolais ont passé plus d'un mois à chercher leur premier logement à Toronto, contre 40 % des Mozambicains et seulement 13,3 % des Capverdiens. La recherche d'un premier domicile fixe a donc été nettement plus longue pour les Angolais que pour les membres des deux autres groupes. Les Capverdiens n'ont eu à consacrer que peu de temps à la recherche et aux visites avant de trouver leur premier logement, ce qui n'est guère surprenant, vu à quel point les membres de ce groupe s'appuient, dès leur arrivée au Canada, sur les réseaux de

contacts de « leur » propre communauté ethnique (la communauté portugaise). La durée de la recherche du logement qu'ils occupaient au moment de l'enquête était toutefois assez similaire pour les trois groupes. Il est possible qu'après une certaine période de résidence à Toronto, les répondants se soient suffisamment familiarisés avec le marché locatif de la ville, y compris ce qui le distingue d'un coin de la ville à l'autre, et qu'ils aient de ce fait décidé de prendre leur temps pour faire leur choix, en fonction des types de logements disponibles, de leur qualité et des quartiers où ils étaient situés. Une autre explication possible est une progression des besoins et des préférences des groupes à l'étude en matière d'habitation (et donc de l'éventail de logements qu'ils ont pris en considération), surtout en ce qui concerne les Mozambicains et les Capverdiens, ce qui a pu mener à une recherche plus minutieuse (et plus longue) pour s'assurer de faire le bon choix.

Le second élément retenu aux fins de la présente étude comme mesure des efforts déployés pour trouver à se loger est le nombre de logements visités. Les résultats de notre enquête font à nouveau ressortir une nette différence entre l'expérience des Angolais lors de la recherche d'un premier logement et celle des Mozambicains ou des Capverdiens. En effet, plus de la moitié (51,7 %) des Angolais ont fait au-delà de dix visites dans le cadre de leur recherche, par comparaison à seulement 20 % des Capverdiens et 16,7 % des Mozambicains. Cette différence apparaît plus frappante encore vue sous l'angle du nombre moyen de logements visités : il était de 8,1 pour les Angolais, contre seulement 4,3 pour les Mozambicains et à peine 1,3 pour les Capverdiens.

Les répondants des trois groupes à l'étude se sont tournés vers un vaste éventail de sources d'information, aussi bien lors de la recherche de leur premier logement que de celle de leur logement actuel. Il s'avère que les Angolais s'en sont remis en plus grand nombre à la presse et aux bulletins de la communauté portugaise (50 %), aux revues et quotidiens canadiens (18,3 %), de même qu'à leurs amis et à leur parenté (15 %) lors de la recherche du logement qui a été leur premier domicile fixe à Toronto et que les membres de ce groupe s'en sont également remis de façon importante à la presse portugaise (35 %) pour trouver leur logement actuel.

Une particularité que les trois groupes ont en commun est qu'ils se tournent surtout vers des sources de renseignements parallèles et peu coûteuses lorsqu'ils cherchent un logement. Peu de personnes interrogées, qu'elles soient angolaises, mozambicaines ou capverdiennes, ont dit avoir eu recours aux organismes grand public du secteur privé ou autres existant à Toronto pour obtenir de l'aide avec leur recherche, même pas aux nombreux organismes portugais de services sociaux et communautaires que compte la ville.

La nature et l'origine des difficultés rencontrées dans la recherche d'un logement

Deux des facteurs qui influent sur la capacité des nouveaux immigrants à l'étude à se loger, et ce dans un quartier de leur choix, sont la nature et la fréquence des obstacles auxquels ils sont confrontés lors de la recherche d'un logement. Le marché de l'habitation du Canada a la réputation d'être plus « ouvert », moins difficile d'accès, que celui d'autres pays industrialisés, tels que les États-Unis ou le Royaume-Uni; reste à savoir – car aucune étude n'a été faite sur le sujet – s'il mérite toujours cette réputation, en particulier sur le plan de son accessibilité aux minorités. Ce qui a été établi, par contre, c'est que les propriétaires de logements locatifs à Toronto ont souvent des attitudes a priori défavorables, voire discriminatoires, envers certains locataires.

Les résultats de la présente enquête montrent que pour deux des trois groupes à l'étude, surtout les Angolais, qui étaient majoritairement des demandeurs d'asile, et dans une moindre mesure les Mozambicains, la recherche d'un logement sur le marché locatif serré de Toronto n'a pas été une mince affaire. La plupart des Angolais (85 %) et près de la moitié (48,3 %) des Mozambicains interrogés ont dit que la recherche du logement qui leur a servi de premier domicile fixe avait été très difficile ou assez difficile. Il semblerait qu'avec le temps, la recherche d'un logement se soit un peu simplifiée pour les personnes originaires du Mozambique, mais pas pour les personnes originaires de l'Angola. La proportion de Mozambicains qui ont rapporté que la recherche de leur logement actuel avait été très difficile ou assez difficile n'était par exemple plus que de 35 %, alors qu'elle était toujours de 75 % chez les répondants angolais. Les Capverdiens ont dans l'ensemble eu beaucoup moins de mal à se loger sur le marché locatif torontois : la facilité relative et croissante avec laquelle les membres de ce groupe ont toujours

trouvé un toit peut s'expliquer par leur tendance à faire jouer leurs relations sociales (amis et parenté) : 30 % seulement des Capverdiens ont évoqué des difficultés dans la recherche de leur premier logement et 26,6 % dans la recherche de leur logement actuel.

En plus des questions sur le degré de difficulté de la recherche du premier logement et du logement actuel, le questionnaire visait aussi à recueillir des données sur la nature des difficultés rencontrées. La majorité des Angolais et des Mozambicains ont cité les deux mêmes raisons principales comme étant à l'origine de leurs difficultés, à savoir leur race (le fait d'être Noirs) et l'insuffisance de leurs sources ou de leur niveau de revenu par rapport au coût des loyers. Les Capverdiens, par comparaison, n'ont en général évoqué qu'une seule raison, leur niveau de revenu.

Les personnes interrogées ont énuméré de nombreux facteurs ayant exercé une influence (négative) sur leur recherche de logement et ses résultats. Les Angolais et les Mozambicains en particulier s'entendent pour dire que la distinction de race faite par certains propriétaires (Portugais et non-Portugais mais Blancs) a été déterminante pour ce qui est de la qualité du logement qu'ils ont trouvé, de son prix et de son emplacement ou quartier. La plupart de ces répondants estiment par ailleurs que les propriétaires de logements locatifs à Toronto mentent bien souvent ou ne dévoilent pas toute la vérité sur les logements disponibles, les loyers ou les services compris dans la location. D'autres écartent tout simplement les Noirs en leur refusant un logement par des moyens déguisés, consistant par exemple à le rendre moins abordable en exigeant un montant accru comme dépôt de garantie ou encore en prétendant qu'il a déjà été loué à quelqu'un d'autre, deux pratiques illégales difficiles à prouver qui ont contribué dans une large mesure aux difficultés que les répondants ont rencontrées sur le marché locatif torontois.

Vu la quantité et la complexité des obstacles auxquels les groupes à l'étude se sont heurtés, une question plus générale a par ailleurs été soumise aux personnes interrogées, celle de savoir si elles considèrent qu'elles-mêmes et leurs semblables font l'objet de discrimination sur le marché locatif de Toronto. D'après les réponses recueillies, les personnes originaires de l'Angola, individuellement et en tant que groupe, sont plus souvent victimes d'attitudes discriminatoires par les propriétaires torontois de logements locatifs que les personnes

originaires du Mozambique. Dans l'ensemble, les Angolais ont dit avoir été l'objet d'un niveau de discrimination très important ou assez important, à titre personnel et en qualité de membres d'un groupe particulier, notamment de par leur race (étant Noirs), leur statut de réfugié et leur source de revenu. La plupart des Mozambicains ont aussi dit avoir fait l'objet d'une discrimination personnelle et collective très importante ou assez importante, principalement en raison de leur source de revenu, de leur race et de la taille de leur famille. Quant à eux, la majorité des Capverdiens ont dit avoir subi des attitudes discriminatoires assez importantes en raison de leurs antécédents ethniques, culturels ou nationaux, de leur accent et de leur race.

Ces constatations confirment que la race (la couleur de la peau) a une grande influence sur la recherche d'un logement, en particulier pour les immigrants Noirs de l'Angola et du Mozambique. Même s'il importe de noter que dans certains cas, le racisme rapporté a pu être « perçu » plus que « réel », bon nombre d'études ont conclu que le racisme constitue en effet un obstacle majeur à l'accès au marché de l'habitation en milieu urbain au Canada.

La recherche d'un logement dans la communauté portugaise et la réponse de celle-ci aux besoins des Noirs africains

Étant donné que les immigrants de l'Angola, du Mozambique et du Cap-Vert parlent couramment le portugais, une question importante qui se pose est celle-ci : jusqu'à quel point la communauté portugaise, qui est reconnue comme formant une enclave ethnique très visible et bien solide au cœur de la ville et qui se caractérise de surcroît par un taux de propriété immobilière très élevé (85 % des ménages portugais torontois sont propriétaires), facilite-t-elle la recherche d'un logement par les Angolais, les Mozambicains et les Capverdiens qui viennent s'installer à Toronto?

À la question de savoir si elles avaient cherché un logement permanent dans la communauté portugaise de Toronto, 55 % des personnes originaires de l'Angola, 40 % des personnes originaires du Mozambique et 63,3 % des personnes originaires des îles du Cap-Vert ont répondu qu'à une ou plusieurs occasions, elles avaient regardé du côté du petit Portugal. Interrogées sur leurs expériences liées à la recherche d'un logement dans la communauté

portugaise, les personnes d'origine angolaise et mozambicaine ont donné des réponses mitigées. Certaines d'entre elles estiment que la communauté portugaise s'est montrée accueillante et bienveillante, tandis que d'autres étaient bien plus amères, faisant état d'attitudes discriminatoires de la part de certains propriétaires portugais basées principalement sur leur race (le fait qu'elles soient Noires) ou encore sur leur source ou leur niveau de revenu, voire une combinaison de ces facteurs.

Dans l'ensemble, les résultats semblent indiquer qu'une langue commune (le portugais) n'a pas aidé les Angolais ni les Mozambicains autant que les Capverdiens, pour lesquels la recherche d'un logement a été plus facile et qui se sont d'emblée sentis plus « chez eux » dans la communauté portugaise. Pour les Angolais et les Mozambicains, l'avantage que pouvait présenter la langue commune a été annulé par les partis pris défavorables et les attitudes discriminatoires fondées sur la race qu'ont manifesté certains propriétaires portugais. Même en admettant, comme nous le faisons un peu plus tôt, que le racisme évoqué ait pu être en grande partie « perçu » plutôt que « réel », il n'empêche que la simple perception de racisme, surtout à l'endroit des Angolais et des Mozambicains, prend un aspect très « réel » par ses retombées sur la recherche d'un logement.

La langue commune, dont on pouvait s'attendre à ce qu'elle crée un lien important entre les répondants et les propriétaires portugais, semble avoir seulement présenté un avantage pour les Capverdiens. Contrairement à la plupart des Angolais et des Mozambicains, qui ont dit s'être sentis « perdus » lors de la recherche d'un logement dans la communauté portugaise, les personnes originaires du Cap-Vert ont ressenti une familiarité culturelle avec la communauté portugaise, qui leur a accordé son soutien. Ainsi, le fait d'être originaires d'une ancienne colonie portugaise et de parler la même langue n'a pas été de la même utilité pour les trois groupes à l'étude. Il y a lieu de penser à cet égard que le facteur de « race » a été déterminant, car les Angolais et les Mozambicains ont une peau plus foncée que les Capverdiens. Ainsi, il semblerait que les propriétaires fassent un meilleur accueil aux locataires potentiels venant des îles du Cap-Vert qu'aux membres des deux autres groupes.

Pour ce qui est de l'intégration dans la communauté portugaise, les résultats de l'enquête montrent que les Capverdiens sont plus nombreux (56,7 %) que les Angolais (48,3 %) et les Mozambicains (28,3 %) à participer à la « vie » de la communauté portugaise pour ce qui est d'habiter dans le petit Portugal, de fréquenter ses commerces ou d'y travailler. Ceci étant dit, en ce qui concerne la vie sociale et culturelle de la communauté portugaise, les taux de participation des trois groupes à l'étude sont bien plus faibles (20 % pour les Angolais, 18,7 % pour les Mozambicains et 36,7 % pour les Capverdiens). Un fossé culturel, séquelle de la turbulente histoire du colonialisme portugais en Afrique, semble séparer les Portugais des Noirs africains, en particulier ceux originaires de l'Angola et du Mozambique.

À en croire les résultats de cette enquête, la communauté portugaise (de première génération) établie à Toronto a encore beaucoup de chemin à faire. Il s'agirait aussi d'accroître le dialogue entre les membres de race blanche de la communauté portugaise (les anciens colons) et les membres des communautés noires africaines qui sont en train de se former à Toronto (les anciens colonisés), afin de réduire la distance qui les sépare. Les réponses recueillies donnent à penser qu'à l'heure actuelle, les Portugais et les immigrants ou réfugiés Noirs africains vivent dans deux mondes à part.

Une recherche plus poussée serait de mise quant au rôle que les communautés ethniques reconnues jouent dans l'intégration sociale des nouveaux arrivants. Étant donné la distance sociale qui sépare les Noirs africains parlant portugais, en particulier les Angolais et les Mozambicains, et la communauté portugaise de Toronto, il s'agirait d'examiner de plus près les complexités de la culture, de la langue et des préjugés raciaux qui influent sur l'établissement des communautés d'immigrants dans les villes canadiennes.

Les logements trouvés et le degré de satisfaction à l'égard du logement actuel et de son quartier

La présente enquête a mis en lumière d'importants obstacles auxquels certains répondants se sont heurtés sur le marché locatif serré de Toronto. Cette partie cherchait spécifiquement à savoir si leur déménagement vers leur logement actuel avait eu lieu par choix ou par nécessité, autrement dit s'il avait été volontaire ou non. Les répondants ont été invités à dire s'ils avaient

souhaité faire ce déménagement ou s'ils y avaient été contraints. Il s'avère que la dernière fois qu'ils ont déménagé, les Angolais (21,7 %) ont été « forcés » à le faire plus souvent que les Mozambicains (8,3 %) et les Capverdiens (3,3 %).

Au moment de l'enquête, la plupart des personnes interrogées louaient un appartement dans le secteur privé : c'était le cas pour 53,3 % des Angolais, 81,7 % des Mozambicains et 70 % des Capverdiens. Très peu de répondants (4 personnes d'origine angolaise, 1 personne d'origine mozambicaine et 1 personne d'origine cap-verdienne) occupaient un logement public. Les raisons en sont sans doute la pénurie de logements publics à Toronto et les longues listes d'attente pour des logements abordables. La quasi-totalité des répondants espèrent un jour pouvoir acheter une habitation, 93,3 % des Angolais, 96,7 % des Mozambicains et l'ensemble (100 %) des Capverdiens exprimant une forte aspiration à la propriété. Les membres des trois groupes à l'étude étaient d'avis unanime qu'être propriétaires d'un bien immobilier au Canada améliorerait leur vie privée, leur donnerait de meilleures assises financières et donc plus de considération par le reste de la société canadienne, et qu'ils y gagneraient le sentiment d'avoir leur avenir un peu mieux en mains. Bon nombre de personnes ont aussi exprimé le souhait de vivre dans un quartier dont les habitants sont d'origines variées : certaines d'entre elles attachent même beaucoup d'importance à éviter les coins de la ville qui ont une forte concentration d'habitants partageant la même ethnicité ou parlant en général une langue autre que l'anglais (p. ex., le portugais).

En ce qui a trait à leur logement actuel, la plupart des locataires angolais, mozambicains et cap-verdiens s'en sont dits satisfaits, voire très satisfaits. Les réactions recueillies ont toutefois été moins positives pour ce qui était de savoir si leur logement était un chez-soi agréable et leur quartier, une communauté qui leur convient vraiment. Près d'un tiers des Angolais (31,6 %), 13,4 % des Mozambicains et 21,6 % des Capverdiens ont dit qu'ils ne se sentaient pas vraiment chez eux dans leur logement actuel, et ce en raison de sa qualité inférieure, de sa taille trop réduite par rapport au nombre d'occupants ou de relations tendues avec leur propriétaire.

En ce qui a trait à leur sentiment d'appartenance à leur quartier, les répondants, et en particulier les Angolais et les Mozambicains, n'étaient pas très enthousiastes. La moitié (50 %)

des Mozambicains et près d'un tiers (30 %) des Angolais ont répondu qu'à leurs yeux, leur quartier actuel ne forme pas une véritable « communauté », leur insatisfaction (« sentiment ») à cet égard étant liée à des problèmes d'insécurité, de criminalité, de drogues, de saleté, de bruit, de pénurie de services et de mauvais rapports de voisinage. Les Capverdiens se sont encore une fois distingués des deux autres groupes dans la mesure où leurs réponses dénotent un plus grand degré de satisfaction vis-à-vis de leur logement en tant que chez-soi et de leur quartier en tant que communauté.

Recommandations

L'un des buts de la présente enquête étant d'arriver à des recommandations pour l'avenir, on a donc sollicité des suggestions sur la manière d'améliorer le logement pour les nouveaux arrivants. Les répondants ont été plus précisément interrogés sur ce qui devrait selon eux changer pour que ces personnes trouvent un plus grand choix et de meilleures conditions en matière de logement à leur arrivée au pays : a) Que faudrait-il à votre avis faire pour multiplier les possibilités de logement des immigrants et des réfugiés? b) Quels sont les types de logements dont il faudrait accroître l'offre? c) Quels sont les aspects de la réglementation ou les façons de faire des propriétaires qui devraient changer? d) Quelles mesures pourraient améliorer votre quartier? e) Si vous avez déjà vécu dans un logement public (subventionné par le gouvernement, comme par exemple les habitations de la Commission de logement de la communauté urbaine de Toronto ou CLCUT), avez-vous des idées sur la manière dont la commission de logement et son personnel pourraient mieux servir les nouveaux arrivants au Canada?

À la question de savoir comment multiplier les possibilités de logement des immigrants et des réfugiés, les personnes interrogées ont répondu qu'il faudrait consacrer davantage de fonds au logement abordable, pour que les nouveaux arrivants à Toronto se retrouvent moins souvent dans des habitations d'une qualité inacceptable. Plusieurs répondants ont aussi suggéré des modifications aux règlements d'application des lois régissant certains aspects tels que la discrimination dans le domaine du logement locatif.

En ce qui a trait aux types de logements dont il faudrait accroître l'offre, les personnes interrogées ont surtout parlé de créer davantage de logements en régie publique (aussi bien des logements publics subventionnés par le gouvernement que des coopératives ou d'autres formes de logement sans but lucratif). Elles voient là un moyen de minimiser l'influence de la discrimination raciale sur l'attribution des logements, considérant que sans autre intervention, ce problème perdurera dans le secteur privé.

La question concernant les aspects de la réglementation ou les façons de faire des propriétaires qu'il y aurait lieu de changer a elle aussi surtout suscité des réponses visant la lutte contre la discrimination sur le marché locatif de Toronto. Les répondants ont laissé entendre que la création d'un organe de réglementation ou la mise en place de meilleurs mécanismes de surveillance du marché locatif pourraient être des moyens efficaces de prévenir cette discrimination.

Quant aux mesures qui pourraient améliorer leur quartier, les personnes interrogées ont encore une fois principalement évoqué la lutte contre la discrimination raciale, ajoutant qu'il y aurait lieu de renforcer les services de police pour réduire la criminalité.

Enfin, à la question de savoir comment la commission de logement et son personnel pourraient mieux servir les nouveaux arrivants au Canada, les répondants qui ont déjà vécu dans un logement public (subventionné par le gouvernement, comme par exemple les habitations de la CLCUT) ont insisté sur la nécessité de faire avant tout preuve de plus de professionnalisme et de respect envers les locataires dans les interactions avec ceux-ci, afin d'améliorer les relations entre la commission de logement et les nouveaux immigrants au Canada.

La présente étude a permis de sonder les réactions des populations de plus en plus nombreuses et diverses qui immigreront au Canada face à la complexité et aux difficultés que présentent les marchés de l'habitation de nos grands centres urbains. Les responsables des orientations politiques et du milieu des affaires, de même que les dirigeants communautaires, auraient donc tout intérêt à tenir compte des recommandations clés formulées dans les réponses ci-dessus.

CONCLUSION

Depuis la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, l'immigration exerce une influence dominante sur l'évolution démographique, économique, sociale et culturelle de la société canadienne. Toronto, le plus vaste centre urbain du Canada et depuis longtemps le principal point d'entrée des immigrants, ressent cette influence plus que toute autre ville au pays. Dans les années 1960, le Canada a modifié sa politique en matière d'immigration pour attirer des nouveaux venus d'un plus grand nombre de pays. Depuis, l'hétérogénéité culturelle, linguistique, religieuse et raciale de la population de Toronto n'a cessé d'augmenter. Les chercheurs et les responsables des orientations politiques s'accordent à reconnaître que les immigrants internationaux sont un important moteur de l'expansion économique de cette ville. Ironie du sort, cet afflux de nouveaux arrivants a toutefois fait du marché de l'habitation de Toronto le plus cher au Canada, à tel point qu'ici plus qu'ailleurs, les logements ne sont souvent plus à la portée des nouveaux immigrants.

La présente étude a examiné les expériences vécues dans le cadre de leur établissement par trois groupes d'immigrants africains assez récents originaires de l'Angola, du Mozambique et des îles du Cap-Vert, et plus exactement le déroulement et l'aboutissement de leurs recherches de logements sur le marché locatif de Toronto. Ces groupes, surtout les Angolais et les Mozambicains, ont au départ eu du mal à trouver un hébergement temporaire. Les répondants angolais, pour la plupart des demandeurs d'asile, s'en sont remis presque exclusivement aux programmes gouvernementaux (y compris les foyers d'hébergement) pour « survivre » dans les semaines ou les mois qui ont suivi leur arrivée au Canada. Les Capverdiens, et dans une moindre mesure les Mozambicains, ont été mieux lotis grâce à des contacts avec des amis ou de la parenté déjà installés à Toronto. Les trois groupes à l'étude partagent toutefois un profond mécontentement et une grande frustration face aux choix de logement limités qui s'offraient à eux. Les personnes interrogées s'imaginaient qu'elles seraient bien logées à leur arrivée et ne s'attendaient pas du tout à la mauvaise qualité des habitations qu'elles ont trouvées, ni à l'atmosphère déplaisante qui règne dans les quartiers où elles se sont établies.

Comme il n'existe pas à Toronto de véritable communauté afro-portugaise qui aurait pu les aider à s'établir, l'étude a jugé important d'examiner le rôle de la communauté portugaise établie de longue date à Toronto et qui dispose d'une gamme complète de services axés sur ses membres (organisations religieuses, entreprises et institutions diverses). L'existence de la communauté portugaise s'est avérée avantageuse pour les Capverdiens, mais elle a été insignifiante en ce qui concerne l'accueil des Angolais et des Mozambicains, leur intégration sociale ou leur accès au marché de l'habitation de Toronto : les choix en matière de logement de ces deux groupes de Noirs africains semblent avoir été davantage fonction de leurs caractéristiques personnelles (âge et situation vis-à-vis de l'immigration à l'arrivée, niveau de scolarité et maîtrise de l'anglais) que de facteurs culturels (propension à vivre à proximité de personnes parlant la même langue, en l'occurrence le portugais).

Pour les personnes originaires de l'Angola, un déménagement ne s'est pas toujours traduit par l'obtention de meilleures conditions de logement. Les Angolais ont été plus nombreux que les Mozambicains et les Capverdiens à partager un logement avec des amis pour réussir à tenir le coup après leur arrivée. Les trois groupes à l'étude n'ont par ailleurs pas eu la même motivation (positive ou négative) au moment de déménager. Ils ont aussi utilisé des sources d'information différentes dans la recherche du premier logement qui leur a servi de domicile fixe et de leur logement actuel.

Pour ce qui est des obstacles auxquels les répondants se sont heurtés lors de la recherche d'un logement, les constatations découlant de cette enquête rejoignent les conclusions d'études antérieures faites au Canada. Trouver un logement abordable et convenable sur le marché locatif de Toronto est doublement difficile pour les nouveaux immigrants, les réfugiés et les membres d'une minorité visible. La présente enquête apporte de nouveaux éléments de preuve selon lesquels la discrimination est chose courante chez les propriétaires de logements locatifs à Toronto. Une étude plus poussée s'impose toutefois au sujet des attitudes des propriétaires qui louent des logements et des retombées de la race et de la discrimination sur l'attribution de logements au Canada. Quoi qu'il en soit, la plupart des répondants (excepté parmi les Capverdiens) ont fait mention de la discrimination comme ayant rendu leur recherche d'un logement plus difficile. Les personnes originaires de l'Angola et du Mozambique, qui se

plaignent de discrimination sur le marché de l'habitation, ont déclaré qu'elles sont plus ou moins satisfaites de leur logement actuel (disant qu'elles ne s'y sentent pas vraiment bien) et du quartier où il se situe (déplorant que ses habitants ne forment pas une véritable communauté). Tel que noté plus haut, le racisme, qu'il soit « réel » ou « perçu », peut entraîner l'exclusion sociale et la ségrégation en matière d'habitation, avec pour résultat la mise à l'écart des nouveaux arrivants dans des quartiers défavorisés et donc leur plus lente intégration à la ville et au pays où ils ont choisi de vivre.

Il importe de replacer le problème de discrimination soulevé par la présente étude dans le contexte des relations complexes et relativement conflictuelles entre les répondants d'origine angolaise ou mozambicaine et la communauté portugaise bien établie de Toronto. Compte tenu de leur maîtrise du portugais et du taux d'inoccupation plutôt élevé dans la communauté portugaise, on pouvait s'attendre à ce que les Angolais et les Mozambicains se tournent tout naturellement vers cette communauté pour obtenir de l'aide et des conseils. Or, bien que ces deux groupes aient cherché à se loger dans la communauté portugaise, le fait est qu'il y a un vaste « fossé social » entre les Portugais et ces immigrants Noirs africains, ce que certains répondants attribuent à une discrimination fondée sur la race. Par contraste, les personnes originaires du Cap-Vert se sentent plus à l'aise dans la communauté portugaise et manifestent de ce fait une plus grande participation à la vie de cette communauté.

FUTURE RECHERCHE

Les conclusions de la présente étude laissent entrevoir des interactions complexes basées sur des caractéristiques individuelles et collectives, raciales ou autres, notamment la situation vis-à-vis de l'immigration à l'arrivée au pays, la façon dont les immigrants cherchent un logement et les solutions qu'ils adoptent pour se loger, ou encore les attitudes et pratiques discriminatoires des propriétaires de logements locatifs. Toutefois, à bien des égards, les expériences vécues par les minorités visibles, nouveaux immigrants et réfugiés ou autres, sur le marché de l'habitation de Toronto, sont encore trop peu connues. Des études plus poussées s'imposent pour comparer le vécu des minorités visibles et invisibles, entre autres celui de la

nouvelle diaspora africaine au Canada (personnes originaires d'Afrique qui parlent par exemple le français, l'anglais, l'espagnol ou le portugais), afin de comprendre pourquoi certains groupes ont moins de mal que d'autres à trouver un logement abordable dans un quartier de leur choix. La recherche mérite aussi d'être approfondie concernant la discrimination que pratiquent les personnes qui, dans notre société, interviennent à différents niveaux dans la production et l'attribution d'habitations et qui détiennent de ce fait la clé de l'accès au logement abordable des nouveaux immigrants et des minorités visibles de Toronto, accès qu'elles semblent jusqu'ici trop souvent leur refuser.



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1 - Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of recent immigration to Canada has been its cultural and racial heterogeneity. Not only have the source countries of immigrants to Toronto changed, from predominantly Britain and continental Europe to a greater proportion of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and South America, but the recent immigrants also come from a wider spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds – including refugees admitted on humanitarian grounds, business immigrants with economic resources to invest in Canada’s economy, independent immigrants, and those who come to join members of their families already established in Canada (Bourne and Rose, 2001; Murdie and Teixeira, 2003).

Toronto’s Black community represents the heterogeneity of migrant communities in Canada. For example, although the mass media routinely tends to portray Blacks as a cohesive group, it is a very diverse population (Opuku-Dapaah, 2006). The Black community includes Black Canadians and Americans, Black South Americans, Black Africans, and Blacks from the Caribbean. Immigration has contributed to the growth of this population in recent years. Statistics Canada records that in 2001, Canada’s Black population was 622,210, making it the third-largest visible minority group in the country, after Chinese and South Asians. Most members of this group have settled in Canada’s two largest urban centres: 46.8% live in Toronto and 21% in Montreal. About half of the Black population (52%) consists of immigrants to Canada, most of whom have arrived since the early 1980s (Mensah, 2005).

Black immigration from Africa to Canada is a relatively recent phenomenon. Canadian immigration policies have not historically favoured immigration from Africa because of prejudice and general discrimination based on race, nor encouraged the resettlement of African refugees in Canada. Today, even after immigration policy has been liberalized, through the adoption of more objective criteria in the selection of immigrants to Canada, immigration from Africa tends to be very low relative to other so-called “non-traditional” sources of Canadian immigration. For example, currently Africa as a whole contributes merely 5 to 7.5% of all immigrants to Canada, although this number has been increasing over the last 10 to 15 years. (Danso and Grant, 2000; Mensah, 2005). Moreover, despite the liberalization of immigration

policy, African immigrants to Canada encounter longer delays and reduced prospects in comparison to immigrants from Europe or East Asia. As a result of these blocked immigration channels, most Africans in Canada have come as refugee claimants (Opoku-Dapahh, 2006).

While Toronto is Canada's traditional main "port of entry" for new immigrants as well as the country's largest and most culturally diverse city, it is also one of the most expensive housing markets in Canada. Studies have found that new immigrants to Canada are likely to face the greatest affordability problems in this housing market (Hulchanski, 2001; Murdie, 2003). The same processes of immigration that have boosted the Toronto economy – as immigrants have contributed to the city's growth through participation in both paid and self-employment – have also increased the demand for housing. The settlement of immigrants in metropolitan Toronto, and the corresponding transformation of the city's ethnocultural mosaic, has been paralleled by increases in segregation and poverty levels in certain areas of the city, as well as by high levels of residential mobility (sometimes "forced" relocation) and suburbanization. However, evidence also shows that for some long-established immigrant groups in Toronto (e.g., Jews, Italians, and Portuguese) their levels of residential concentration have slightly decreased over time. Moreover, today the distribution of ethnic enclaves is mainly a suburban phenomenon (Qadeer and Kumar, 2006).

The settlement patterns (choices made by groups of people/immigrants in terms of residence, neighbourhood and city in which to live) of new immigrants have also changed. For example, business immigrants from Asian countries have been settling in the suburbs in relatively high-priced, single detached dwellings, while refugees are forced into lower-rent, private-sector apartments, many of which have poor maintenance standards. Recent evidence suggests that new immigrant groups and visible minorities, including Black Africans, are more likely than non-immigrants to live in poor-quality housing and in neighbourhoods with high rates of poverty (Kazemipur and Halli, 2000; Opoku-Dapahh, 2006). Indeed, in the early 21st century, extreme poverty among some immigrant groups is becoming a troubling reality. Recent research shows that "immigrants and refugees are increasingly falling under the category of absolute homelessness," and that these groups are "now part of the new face of homelessness" in Toronto (Ballay and Bulthuis, 2004, p. 119).

Many factors limit access to housing for recent immigrants and refugees. For example, reduce federal commitment to new affordable housing during the 1990s, and reductions in the commitments of many provincial governments during this same period (there being notable exceptions, such as Quebec which remained active in supporting non-profit housing), have contributed in Canada today having the smallest non-market housing sector of any major Western nation except for the U.S. Relatively few new rental units have been built in Toronto since the mid-1990s, and rents for existing units have increased at approximately twice the rate of inflation. For many new immigrants and visible minorities, these economic factors are aggravated by barriers such as discriminatory practices in the private rental market (Dion, 2001; Novac et al., 2004). Scholars have concluded that race remains an important barrier to equal treatment in Canada's housing market (Danso and Grant, 2000; Murdie 2003, 2002; Darden, 2004; Hulchanski and Shapcott, 2004).

To date, many of the complex housing experiences of immigrants and visible minorities – including the processes involved in gathering information about vacancies – remain unclear and unstudied. At the same time, scholars have identified access to housing as one of the primary routes for immigrants and refugees in achieving social and economic integration into the host society (Rose and Ray, 2000; Murdie and Teixeira, 2003). Because of economic and discriminatory barriers, new immigrants and visible minorities may be directed into low-cost housing that, when clustered, can become urban or suburban “ghettoes” (Pruegger, Cook, and Hawskworth, 2004).

The housing search strategies and adaptations to barriers adopted by new immigrants in Toronto's housing market have great significance for the future social well-being and growth of the city (Murdie, 2003). Moreover, since the constraints – economic barriers, linguistic or cultural differences, or discrimination by landlords and real estate agents – may help create and maintain racial and ethnic segregation in urban housing (Qadeer, 2004; Preston and Murnaghan, 2005), the study of these constraints, and the outcomes for these groups, has direct policy implications for government, business, and community leaders.

This study looks at three groups of Portuguese-speaking immigrants and refugees – from the former Portuguese African colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands – who arrived in Toronto between 1990 and 2006 (Figure 1). The key questions in this study are: What barriers do they face in the private rental housing market? Does race or skin colour matter in looking for and locating rental housing in Toronto? Given the importance of immigration to the city’s economic and social growth and development, the answers to these questions are important.

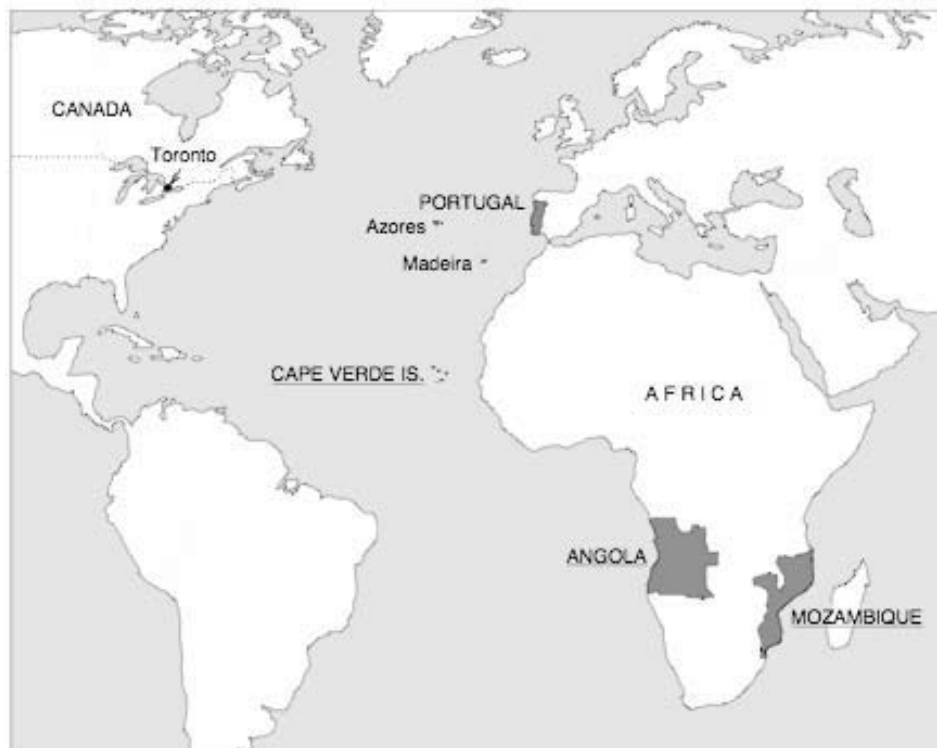


Figure 1. Toronto and the source areas of the immigrant communities in the study (Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands).

The section that follows provides an overview of the literature on the housing experiences of immigrants and refugees in Canada. Section Three presents the research design and details of the questionnaire. The main findings from the survey are laid out in Sections Four and Five. The fourth section focuses on the settlement experiences of our respondents upon arrival in Toronto, and the fifth explores their residential mobility and housing search processes in Toronto’s private rental market. Finally, Section Six provides a concluding summary of the major findings from the study.

2 - Housing Experiences of New Immigrants and Refugees

The integration of new immigrants and refugees into a new society is based on the successful attainment of several basic needs (Figure 2). With respect to these needs, the access to a neighbourhood where the newcomer feels comfortable, and to housing that is adequate, suitable, and affordable, are particularly important, especially in the initial stages of settlement (Murdie et al., 1996; Murdie and Teixeira, 2003). Scholars have also recognized that success in the search for adequate and affordable housing is one of the most important steps towards the integration of immigrants into a new society. Nevertheless, research has revealed that new immigrants and refugees settling in major Canadian cities frequently encounter obstacles to securing housing in the private rental market. Despite multicultural and anti-discrimination policies developed by Canadian federal, provincial, and municipal governments, newcomers still face significant barriers in locating and obtaining housing (Rose and Ray, 2000; Murdie and Teixeira, 2003).

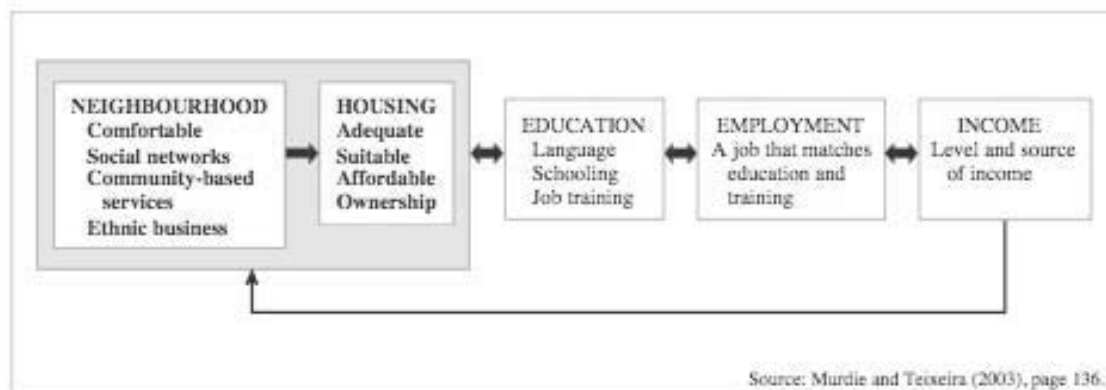


Figure 2. The importance of neighbourhood and housing in immigrant and refugee integration.

Several factors affect the search processes and settlement patterns of immigrants in Canada's housing markets – economic disadvantages and housing costs, a lack of knowledge about the functioning of the housing market, a lack of fluency in English or French, as well as racism and discrimination by landlords, private and non-private housing agencies, and real estate agents. Even the housing information available to newcomers is subject to biases and constraints (Newburger, 1995; Teixeira and Murdie, 1997). However, while discrimination and prejudice are recognized as a barrier to equal access in the housing market (Darden, 2004; Novac et al., 2004), the issue of discrimination in Canada's housing market remains largely unstudied. Greater

knowledge of the barriers faced by immigrants and visible minorities in Canada's housing markets can help policymakers and business leaders promote a more responsive and equitable housing sector.

Most scholarly research in the area of housing and immigration has focused on community formation and the process of assimilation and adjustment to Canadian life, including integration into the labour market, educational attainment, and social mobility (Reitz, 2003). In contrast to the United States, where extensive empirical and theoretical work has been done on the settlement and housing experiences of immigrants in the U.S., including their housing search and the role of information in the relocation decision-making process (see Palm, 1985; Cadwallader, 1992; Turner and Wienk, 1993; Clark and Dieleman, 1996; Golledge and Stimson, 1997; Kaplan and Woodhouse, 2004; Pamuk, 2004), access to housing has received little attention from Canadian scholars (Murdie et al., 1996; Hiebert, 2000; Teixeira and Estaville, 2004).

Evidence from the U.S. literature indicates that new immigrant groups, particularly visible minorities, face major barriers in the rental housing market and tend to show high levels of segregation or clustering in low-income neighbourhoods. Immigrants and visible minorities (particularly Blacks and Hispanics) are systematically shown fewer housing units and are steered towards housing of lower quality, often in predominantly Black or "ethnic" neighbourhoods (Schill, Friedman, and Rosenbaum, 1998; Yinger, 1998). These barriers may contribute to constrained housing searches as well as to the concentration of visible minorities in poor-quality housing, lower levels of homeownership among these groups, and the segmentation of housing markets (Galster, 1992; Listokin and Listokin, 2001).

In Canada, despite recognition of the influential role of "urban gatekeepers" (landlords, real estate agents, and housing agencies) as information providers in the housing market, their impact in shaping the social fabric of our communities remains only vaguely understood (Teixeira and Murdie, 1997). However, since the mid 1990s Canadian scholars have taken an increasing interest in the housing experiences of immigrants and refugees in Canada (see, for

example, Murdie et al., 1996; Teixeira and Murdie, 1997; Ray, 1998; Owusu, 1999, 1998; Danso and Grant, 2000; Miraftab, 2000; Murdie, 2002, 2003).

Within this context, it is important to underline the pioneering work done by Murdie and his colleagues Chambon, Hulchanski, and Teixeira (see Murdie et al., 1996) on the housing experiences of new Canadians in Toronto's tight rental market. This research compared the experiences of three recent immigrant groups – Jamaicans, Poles and Somalis – and found that the two visible minority groups – Somalis and Jamaicans – experienced more personal discrimination than the Poles (white) group. Skin colour or race was stated as a primary barrier in the housing search process. However, income was the most important indicator of perceived discrimination for the Polish and Somali group and second highest for the Jamaican group. Results from this study suggest that affordability is a major problem for the three study groups, and that landlords in Toronto may use income as a predictor of the ability to pay rent. The present case study extends a similar research approach to three new and under-researched African groups in Toronto – Angolans, Mozambicans and Cape Verde Islands.

Still, little is known about ethnic and racial differences in access to housing in Canada's urban rental housing markets, and the Black African housing experience in large urban areas has been largely ignored (Danso and Grant, 2000; Mensah, 2005; Owusu, 2006). Recent research suggests that new immigrants, refugees, and visible minorities tend to cluster spatially and to live in poor-quality housing, usually in low-income neighbourhoods in which they rent rather than own residences. These groups also tend to be marginalized economically and socially (Ballay and Bulthuis, 2004; Preston and Murnaghan, 2005; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006). Studies by Renaud et al., (2006), and by Mendez, Hiebert and Wyly (2006) – which examine different housing components of the “Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada” – fill gaps in the Canadian literature by looking at the initial housing experiences of new immigrants after their first six months on Canadian soil. Evidence from these studies demonstrates that members of visible minorities, and particularly Blacks, face more barriers when searching for housing than white immigrants (Mendez, Hiebert and Wyly, 2006). Visible minorities are also more prone to have higher levels of residential mobility as they move more frequently than do white immigrants (Renaud et al., 2006). Beyond this fact, still little is known about the barriers faced by recent

immigrants and visible minorities, or the coping strategies they use to deal with these challenges. In general, studies in Canada have attempted to account for the under-representation of new immigrants and refugees in the rental housing market without paying enough attention to the role of racial discrimination. Also, few researchers have studied the housing careers of immigrants after they become established in Canada's major urban centres. More research is needed on immigrants' and refugees' housing careers over longer periods of time.

While some good research has been done on the housing experiences of immigrants and visible minorities in Canada, at this stage it is clear that more work is needed in order to better understand: a) why certain immigrant and refugee groups are more successful than others in locating appropriate housing in a suitable or comfortable neighbourhood; and b) the factors that facilitate or prevent this phenomenon. Comparative studies within and between ethnic groups, and within and between cities in Canada, need to be conducted. This study is intended to add to the empirical knowledge on this topic.

3 - Research Design

The main source of data for this study was a questionnaire that was administered in Toronto in summer 2006. The questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions, within the following main categories:

1. The "migratory trajectory" of the respondents, including their move to Canada/Toronto.
2. The respondents' settlement experiences in Toronto.
3. The respondents' "housing experiences" in Toronto's rental market. Special attention was paid here to the first permanent residence and the current residence in which the respondents had lived since their arrival in Toronto and the difficulty of the housing search process.
4. The outcomes of these experiences in terms of position in the housing market and satisfaction with housing and neighbourhood.
5. The discrimination, if any, faced by respondents in Toronto's housing system, and their suggestions as to how to improve housing access in Toronto's rental market.
6. Information about the socio-economic characteristics of the participants in the survey.

To be eligible for the survey, respondents had to have been born in Angola, Mozambique or Cape Verde Islands (all are first-generation immigrants), be Portuguese-speaking (mother tongue), have arrived in Canada between 1990 and 2006, currently live in rental accommodation in the City of Toronto, and have moved at least twice since arriving in the city. The selection of respondents for the three samples occurred in several steps. Since community-based agencies serving the study groups do not have comprehensive lists of members of these communities, and as the communities themselves do not have “ethnic” telephone directories, the respondents were identified using a “snowball” technique in relying on information provided by leaders in each of the study communities. The author’s familiarity and previous contacts (via research) in these communities (the summers of 2004 and 2005) proved very helpful in identifying potential respondents for the research conducted in the summer of 2006. In order to get as much exposure as possible for the study, the Portuguese media, including newspapers (e.g., *Sol Portugues/Portuguese Sun* and *Correio Canadiano – Nove Ilhas/Nine Islands*) and one of the local TV stations (Program – “Angolanidade TV-Rodgers Television-Channel 10) announced the study and encouraged the participation of community members. The study was also announced in one of the Sunday masses of a Portuguese Catholic church in Toronto.

The next step consisted of sending – by mail or by hand, with the help of two research assistants and community leaders – the questionnaire, with a letter explaining the objectives of the study, to potential respondents and asking for their participation. On some occasions (when requested) the research assistants visited potential respondents at their residences or at a place of their choice in order to explain in a more in-depth way the structure of the questionnaire as well as the main goals and importance of the study. Also, as a token of appreciation for their participation in the study, each respondent received a gift certificate (\$25) which seemed to be generally appreciated. Given the exploratory nature of the study, which focuses on understanding the housing experiences rather than generalizing to the entire population of each study group, it was decided to collect 60 questionnaires per group from respondents from Angola and Mozambique (the two largest groups in Toronto), and 30 questionnaires from the Cape Verde Islander group, for a total of 150 questionnaires (Figure 3).

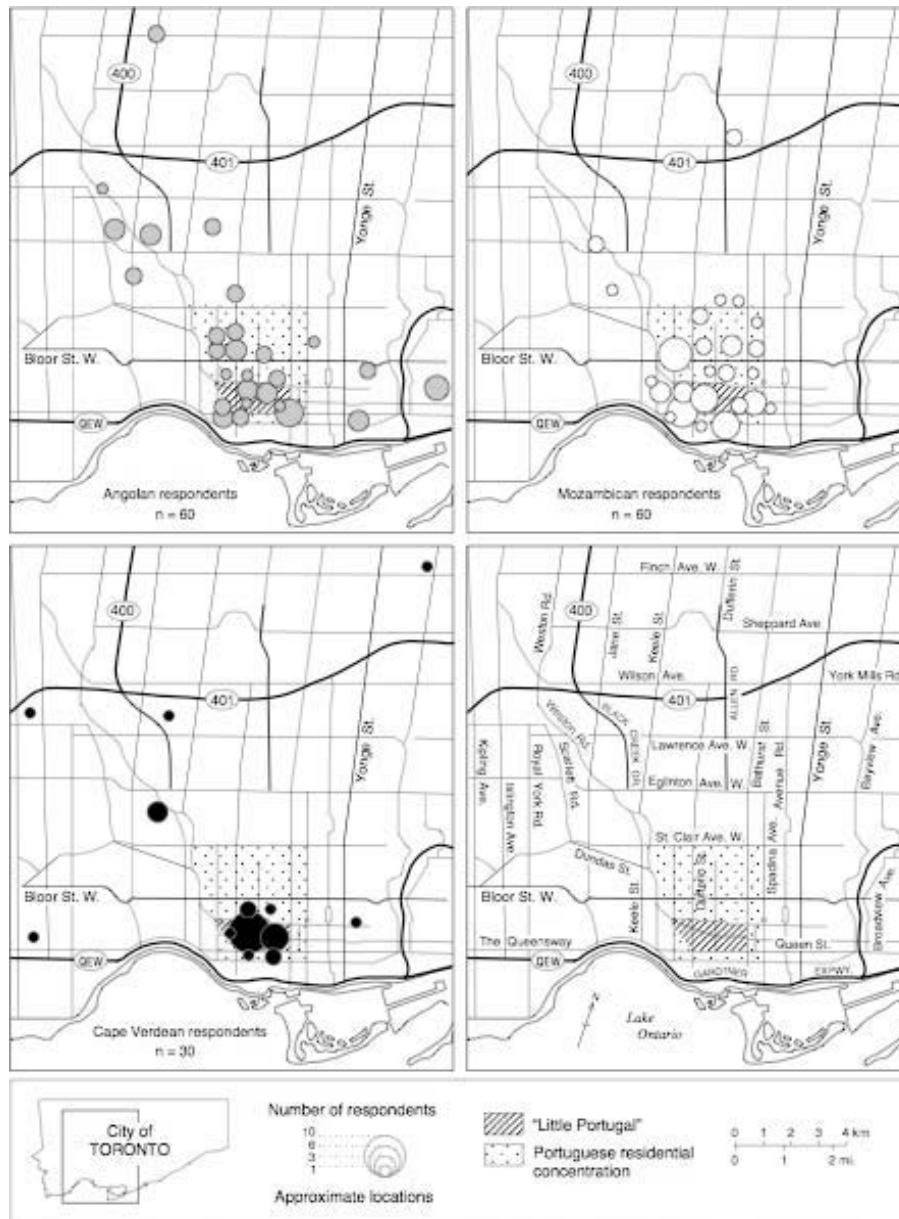


Figure 3. Angolan, Mozambican and Cape Verdean respondents in the City of Toronto, 2006

4 - From Africa to Canada: Settlement Experiences in Toronto

Black Africans from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands living in Canada represent three relatively small, largely unknown and unstudied immigrant groups. According to the 2001 Census, about 2,500 members of these communities are living in Canada. Of this total, the Angolan group comprises 60.8%, the Mozambican group 33.2%, and the Cape Verde Islands group 6.0%. Ontario is home to the largest concentrations of Angolans (904), Mozambicans (535) and Cape Verdeans (114); the majority of whom live in the Toronto Census Metropolitan

Area. However, conversations with key members of these groups suggest that the actual sizes of these communities are much larger. Given the substantial number of illegal immigrants/refugees from these communities residing in Toronto, a more accurate estimate of the total population of the three groups would be between 4,000 and 5,000 people. As such, these groups represent a cross-section of the Black African population residing in Toronto in general and, in particular, of those who are living in Toronto illegally. The majority of these immigrants/refugees have tended to settle in the “immigrant corridor” – including the area of “Little Portugal” – of the City of Toronto.

Of the respondents, most Cape Verdeans (76.7%) and Mozambicans (65%) arrived in Toronto in the early 1990s (1990-1995), while most Angolans (60.0%) arrived in the late 1990s (1995-2000). More than two-thirds (88.3% of the Angolans and 78.3% of the Mozambicans) came from urban areas (“big cities”) compared to only 16.7% for the Cape Verde Islanders (Table 1, see Appendix). Most of these respondents emigrated to Canada in search of a “better living environment/economic opportunities” (80.0% for Cape Verde Islanders, 50.0% for Angolans and 75.0% for Mozambicans) and in search of “physical safety or political freedom” (68.3% for Angolans, 43.3% for Mozambicans but only 1.8% for Cape Verdean immigrants). In contrast to Cape Verdeans, for both Angolans and Mozambicans, the political instability in their countries following independence from Portugal (which both countries achieved in 1975) was a major “push” factor for their migration to Canada.

The three groups of respondents differ with regard to their immigration status and average age upon arrival in Canada. While most Angolans (85%) arrived in Canada as refugee claimants, most Cape Verde Islanders (70%) and Mozambicans (65%) arrived as temporary visa holders. The average Angolan respondent was 27 years old, and the average Mozambican and Cape Verde Islander 31 and 30 years old respectively. Based upon this, we can speculate that Angolans (most of whom arrived as refugees and at a younger age) might take longer than Mozambicans and Cape Verde Islanders to adjust to the new environment and might face more barriers in the housing search for adequate and affordable housing. Thus, as well as period of arrival in Canada, differences in immigration status and average age can have implications for their housing experiences in Toronto’s rental market.

In general, Angolan, Mozambican and Cape Verde Islander migration to Canada is characterized by some household fragmentation, with many family members left behind in Africa – or in Portugal where important Black African communities from the former Portuguese colonies migrated and continue to reside – waiting for an opportunity to join their families in Canada. Almost half of the respondents from the three groups arrived in Canada alone (46.7% for Cape Verdeans, 45.0% for Angolans, 41.7% for Mozambicans).

For the study groups, immigration status upon arrival, the fragmentation of the household and extended family, and the lack of an existing community in Toronto, all influenced where they looked first for help in finding housing. Most of the Angolans arrived in Canada as refugee claimants, and they accordingly showed a greater reliance on non-ethnic organizations and government programs (60.0%) than the Mozambicans (26.7%) and Cape Verde Islanders (23.3%) (Table 1, see Appendix).

Prior acquaintance with people already established in the host country or city – especially people from the same ethnic background – is of particular importance in the initial search for housing. Many more Cape Verdeans (76.7%) and Mozambicans (70.0%) knew someone in the Toronto area before arriving in the city than Angolans (31.7%). The Angolans – most of whom arrived in Toronto as refugees – lacked social networks and ethnic sources of housing information, and thus had fewer housing choices and may have faced more barriers in securing housing. Not surprisingly, some 47 out of 60 of Angolan respondents (78.3%) stayed temporarily in shelters upon their arrival in Toronto. Only nine Mozambicans (15%) and two Cape Verdeans (6.7%) stayed in shelters. Pre-existing social networks among Cape Verde Islander and Mozambican immigrants seem to have helped the initial settlement of respondents from these groups.

Most respondents from the three study groups seem to have experienced some form of disappointment and/or “culture shock” on arrival in Toronto with respect to finding affordable and good quality rental housing. The fact that a majority of the three groups of respondents – Angolan (66.7%), Mozambican (85%) and Cape Verde Islander (70%) – had owned an

apartment/townhouse or single family dwelling in their home countries (Table 1, see Appendix) may explain their frustration during the initial settlement period. When respondents were asked about their housing expectations before coming to Canada, they described a wide gap between their expectations and the reality they found. Many Angolans (40.7%) and Cape Verdeans (50%) thought it would be relatively easy to find affordable housing in Canada's largest and most multicultural city. Similarly, half of Mozambicans (50.0%) were expecting better housing conditions/quality. Moreover, the three groups seem to have expected that Canada, as one of the richest countries in the world, would have better quality housing stock/supply as well as better government programs to accommodate new immigrants' and refugees' housing needs/preferences (Table 1, see Appendix). With regard to their expectations upon arrival in Canada, some respondents observed:

I had very high expectations... Canada is known around the world as the best place to live in and it was a shock for me to see that affordable housing is rare here...

You know at that time Canada was ranked #1 in the world. I was very disappointed with what I found.... very expensive housing and I had to stay living with my friend for two years until I could afford to rent a place of my own.

The Portuguese Community (“Little Portugal”) of Toronto: Settlement Reception Area?

While none of the groups had a well-established co-ethnic community within which to settle upon arrival in Toronto, all three had close links with another long-established immigrant group in Canada – the Portuguese – given that Portugal was once a European colonizer of their parts of Africa. In the last five decades, the Portuguese have constructed a thriving and institutionally complete community by setting up civic organizations, businesses, religious organizations and services in their own language in the City of Toronto (“Little Portugal”). The Portuguese group is also known for their high levels of homeownership in Toronto's housing market. Many of these homes possess rooms/flats and sometimes a finished basement (quite common in a Portuguese house) used for “informal renting” (illegal/renting without papers).

All respondents were fluent in Portuguese (their mother tongue) and had cultural connections with Portugal, given Portugal's long colonial rule of their countries. The respondents were asked about the role and impact of the Portuguese community on their housing search and settlement. Did the Portuguese community play an important role in the successful reception or social inclusion of Angolan, Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans into Toronto's society?

When respondents were asked if on first arrival in Toronto they had settled in the Portuguese community, only 43.3% of the Angolans and 16.7% of the Mozambicans answered yes. In contrast, the majority of the Cape Verdeans (70%) were more prone to settle on arrival in and/or around the Portuguese community. Those respondents who initially settled in the Portuguese community received help on arrival from different sources, including Portuguese civic organizations, social agencies and churches.

In the case of the Angolans, they relied particularly heavily on the Portuguese Catholic Churches in Toronto. Some of the Portuguese priests serving in these Churches had served as priests during the colonial wars in Africa, and thus were highly sensitive to the needs of Black Africans from the former Portuguese colonies living in Toronto. Given this background, it is not surprising that several respondents from the Angolan community highly praised the work of Portuguese priests and the church in helping them get adjusted to their new environment (e.g., providing food, some money, and space in the Church Hall to meet and socialize, etc.). Since the independence of the former Portuguese colonies, the Portuguese Church in Toronto has been highly active in fund-raising to support causes in Africa. In these appeals, Toronto's Portuguese community has always participated generously in terms of donations.

The three study groups – but particularly the Angolans and Cape Verdeans – also relied extensively on Portuguese organizations/social agencies. While they found these organizations helpful, they complained about the lack of Black Africans working for them. For example, one Angolan respondent observed:

They [Portuguese social workers] helped us a lot... the employees speak Portuguese and this makes our lives much easier... However, there is room to improve the services provided by hiring more

Angolans, Mozambicans... otherwise it is “us” versus “them” again... you know some of us don’t trust them [Portuguese social workers]... the resentment is still there and we feel uncomfortable dealing with them... you know it has a lot to do with the colonial wars...

Interestingly, Mozambicans and to a lesser degree Cape Verdeans also share this view that Portuguese social agencies/organizations in Toronto should have more members of their backgrounds working for them in order to provide a better settlement services and to cope with the issue of “mistrust” that still exists between Black African groups and the Portuguese (White) workers. With regard to this point, Mozambicans generally had stronger opinions, with some respondents declaring that without more Black Africans working for Portuguese agencies they would not use their services, preferring a “non-Portuguese” agency as they would feel more comfortable dealing with people who were “Canadians” (non-Portuguese).

When asked how they would rate the importance of the Portuguese community in helping them adjust to their new environment, only 41.7% of respondents from Angola and 11.7% from Mozambique said the Portuguese community was “very important” or “important”. Cape Verde Islanders had a different opinion, and praised more the importance of the Portuguese community (60%) in helping them adjust to a new milieu (Table 1, see Appendix). Thus, for Cape Verdeans, it seems that the Portuguese community established in Toronto had a stronger and a more positive impact on this group’s settlement/adjustment to a new life in Toronto. In some of the Cape Verdean responses it seems that there was a much easier integration/adjustment due to the cultural connection to the Portuguese community at the early stages of settlement in Toronto. As some Cape Verdean respondents explain:

First of all we speak the same language [Portuguese]... and we didn’t have the colonial wars that they had in Angola and Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau... Our relationship with the Portuguese and Portugal was different... a closer one, we had more contacts with them... a lot of our families got established there [Portugal]... so the Portuguese community here was very helpful to me and my family. Some Portuguese friends found me affordable housing and a job on arrival... I have no reasons to complain at all...

Culturally speaking we are the closest group from Africa to Portugal and the Portuguese culture...They [Portuguese landlord] were helpful to my family....but in my case I think he rented me a place in 'Little Portugal' simply because he didn't want a renter more Black than me.

It seems that the absence of a colonial war in the Cape Verde Islands, as well as more exposure to Portuguese culture, and ultimately more socialization with individual Portuguese, may explain this closer “cultural proximity” between the Cape Verdeans and the Portuguese community in Toronto. After all, in Portugal the oldest and most important immigrant group from the former African Portuguese colonies is the Cape Verdeans (Fonseca, 2005). Not surprisingly, here in Toronto and according to “key” informants, between 65 to 75% of all Cape Verdeans living in Toronto reside in “Little Portugal” and/or in neighbourhoods close to it. Thus among the three study groups, Cape Verdeans “social/cultural” proximity to the Portuguese community seems to be the strongest in Toronto’s “Little Portugal”.

The existence of a strong network of contacts (e.g., friends – Portuguese and Non-Portuguese – and relatives already established in Toronto) that characterize the Cape Verdean group in Toronto may also explain their settlement experiences and social proximity to the Portuguese community. These “ethnic” networks were very important for this group of newcomers in providing them with accommodation on arrival, sometimes on a temporary basis, as well as in helping them finding jobs. As one Cape Verdean describes the situation:

You know Cape Verde is a small country... highly divided in islands [10] which makes it even smaller... but when one Cape Verdean from one island comes to Canada [even before leaving] he knew already somebody from the same island already established here [Toronto]... contacts are very important there and here... contacts for us means everything... first we start with family members still living in the island[s]... so it become much easier once here [Toronto] to find jobs and housing to live.

In contrast, Angolans and to a large degree Mozambicans, see their relationship with the Portuguese community differently than the Cape Verdeans. As one Angolan respondent explained:

Like in Portugal there are a lot of Portuguese here, some of whom lived in the colonies before, who simply don't like us because we are Blacks... I mean Blacks from Angola and Mozambique. We

are too Black for them.... not like Cape Verdeans. They [Cape Verdeans] are different... they are “mesticos”... you know they have a lighter skin than us. You see life [finding housing and jobs] is easier for them here [Little Portugal]... When we look for housing in the Portuguese community they ask you more questions and always find an excuse not to rent or give you a job. Look around... how many of us [Angolans and Mozambicans] work in Portuguese banks, Portuguese businesses, agencies... how many? You can count them... they... both Cape Verdeans and Brazilians are more accepted than us and thus more ‘visible’ in the [life] Portuguese community.

Of the three groups, Mozambicans seem to be by far the most “socially/culturally” distant group from the Portuguese community. Respondents from this group declare that they are not interested (for political and/or cultural reasons) in having close dealings with the Portuguese community of Toronto. Some noted:

Our contact with the Portuguese community is minimal... culturally we don't have too much in common other than the language... Also the colonial war didn't help... I had some friends who used to live in the Portuguese community, therefore I could be aware of the importance of the Portuguese community in my integration... but unfortunately no one helped me. The few contacts I had with the community did not influence [positively] my integration. The only cultural commitment I have with the Portuguese community is doing shopping there – Portuguese grocery stores...

Look where Mozambique is in an African map... we are far... far away from Portugal... I never felt I belonged there [Portuguese community]... moreover I came to Canada not to ‘Little Portugal’. I am more interested in my integration into Canadian society... and I wanted to improve my English.

Beyond the relationships of the Angolans, Mozambicans and Cape Verde Islanders with the Portuguese community, a number of other factors may explain the particular search behaviour and housing choices of the three study groups on their arrival in Toronto. For example, the generally high education levels attained by respondents from Angola (50%) and Mozambique (75%) before emigration to Canada (went to and/or completed college, or university), as well as their ability to speak and read English upon their arrival (70% of the Angolans and 80% of the Mozambicans could speak English “a little” or “very well”) may help explain their autonomy in their initial housing search and choice. In contrast, most Cape

Verdeans attained only the primary school level and/or high school (70%), and thus had a lower knowledge of the English language (speak/read 30%). Also, the closer geographical proximity of the Cape Verde Island Archipelago to Portugal, where the Cape Verdeans already form one of the most important immigrant communities in Portugal, may explain this closer “social/cultural proximity” between the Cape Verdeans and the Portuguese community of Toronto. In this context, one question that deserves further research is: Does this “social/cultural” proximity – or lack of same – between groups translate into more acceptance by Portuguese landlords in terms of facilitating access to rental housing in “Little Portugal”? This complex issue requires more study before we can reach definitive conclusions about “race” and discrimination in the Portuguese rental housing market.

With regard to other characteristics of our study groups, most respondents were working full time (68.3% for Angolans, 86.7% for Mozambicans and 93.3% for Cape Verde Islanders) at the time of the interviews. While none of the Cape Verdean respondents declared were receiving an income from social assistance, only a few Angolans (23.3%) and very few Mozambicans (13.3%) were receiving an income from social assistance. Also, the majority of the respondents had already attained landed immigrant status or Canadian citizenship (78.3% for Angolans, 90% for Mozambicans and 96.7% for Cape Verde Islanders). Both Angolans and Mozambicans have also plans of retiring one day in Africa (50.0% versus 88.3%). In contrast, Cape Verdeans came to stay in Canada (Table 1, see Appendix), with only 30.0% of the respondents showing an interest in returning one day. Thus, these findings indicate that members of these groups were working hard to integrate quickly into mainstream Canadian society, rather than establishing their own institutionally complete immigrant communities. Ultimately, the individual and household characteristics highlighted here have implications for their settlement location choices, housing experiences in Toronto’s housing market, and their adaptation/integration to Canadian society.

5 - Residential Mobility and the Housing Search Process

The questionnaire asked respondents about their housing searches – for both their first permanent residence as well as their current residence – in Toronto’s rental market. Results are presented separately for the following interrelated aspects of the relocation process:

- k) the most important reasons for moving;
- l) information sources used in the search process;
- m) difficulties experienced in the housing search and reasons for the difficulties;
- n) searching for housing in the Portuguese community;
- o) the housing outcome and levels of satisfaction with present dwelling-neighbourhood.

Most Important Reasons for Moving

The settlement patterns of recent immigrants and refugees in Toronto are characterized by high residential mobility caused partly by the need to move frequently in search of more affordable and better housing conditions in Toronto’s expensive private rental market. The study results indicate that both Angolans and Mozambicans sought better condition after a short time (less than three months) living on a temporary basis in a shelter (78.3% versus 15%) or sharing space with friends or relatives (13.3% for Angolans and 68.3% for Mozambicans). In contrast to the other two groups, Cape Verdeans’ initial housing experiences (temporary) were mainly with relatives and/or friends (93.3%), with very few of them looking for shelters upon arrival. For all these three groups, the primary goal was to rent on their own accommodation in the private sector: “a place to call home.”

Also, in contrast to Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans, who after their first move considerably improved their housing conditions by renting their own place, most Angolans – even after a few moves – continued to share apartments with Angolan friends. Thus, overcrowding (four or five people living in the same apartment) was much more common among the Angolans than among the Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans. For Angolans, group housing seems to have become a common practice; a survival strategy in Toronto’s expensive rental market. In part, the Angolans’ refugee status on arrival as well as their average youth – the

median age of Angolan respondents being 27 years, while that of the Mozambicans and Cape Verde Islanders was 31 and 30 years respectively – may explain this reliance on co-ethnics to share an apartment in order to pay the rent. In “Little Portugal” and surrounding neighbourhoods there exist affordable apartment complexes that have become “magnets” for young newcomers from Africa and, in particular, from Angola. For example, a rental housing complex in Parkdale – “WestLodge” (Lansdowne and Queen St.), better known among Angolans as “Bairro da Cuca” – became a very popular destination and thus reception area for members of this group in search of affordable rental housing in Toronto. There, often overcrowded conditions became the norm among Angolans, and the bad quality of housing made of this housing complex a symbol (and source of complaint) of “bad housing”.

As well, several rental housing complexes located along the “immigrant corridor” became major “meeting points” for African newcomers to settle. The experience of sharing a room or flat/apartment with other members of the same ethnic background and/or other groups in order to save money has not always been a positive housing experience. As one Angolan respondent explains:

The major difficulties in this type of living [overcrowding] in the same flat is the cultural shock... Why?... I remember of a flat that I rented with other Angolans, Brazilians and one Chinese guy. It was an authentic confusion... because we have different cultural habits completely different from one group to another. We used to live in the same flat... what a confusion... cooking... which one of us used to cook his own food in his own way... yes the smells and people started complaining... each one has its own music preferences, TV channels... others used to receive a lot of guests who stayed until late in the evening... no privacy at all... this created a lot of conflicts...

This being said, the lack of affordable housing (lack of choices) often pushes immigrants and refugees into such housing conditions. One Angolan, who first arrived in Canada as a refugee, comments:

The rents increased considerably in ‘Little Portugal’. Ten years ago [1996] housing rents were between \$275 and \$350... today [summer 2006] one room costs around \$450 to \$500. Yes one room... the kitchen, bathroom has to be shared with others... sometimes 5, 6, 7... up to 10 people there... if you want the basement with bathroom you pay \$700 to \$900... In the last few years we

Angolans started looking elsewhere [outside “Little Portugal”] where housing is cheaper. I know an Angolan who started first by renting a house and after that he started renting rooms to other Angolans to make money and help pay the rent and the bills... thus, overcrowding becomes part of our lives in Toronto.

At the same time, the frequency of overcrowding among Black Africans in Toronto, and particularly among the Angolan group, seems to have become a source of friction with their landlords. For example, fourteen Angolan respondents (23.3%) said that they were forced to move at least once from an apartment because of “problems with the landlords,” who wanted to raise the rents because of “overcrowding.” In contrast, only six Mozambicans (10.0%) and one Cape Verdean (3.3%) moved for the same reasons – an “involuntary move.” These results echo earlier research in Canada about how overcrowding is common among some new immigrant groups, especially refugees, in expensive urban rental markets. In the case of the Angolan group, overcrowding is related more to the high rents than to a preference for group living as an extended family (see, Mendez, Hiebert and Wyly, 2006).

Respondents were also asked for the main “push” and “pull” factors behind the decision to move. Only responses for two moves were recorded – the first permanent residence in Toronto and the current residence. For the Angolan group, “rents too expensive” (50.0%) and “overcrowding” (40.0%) were by far the most important reasons for moving from their first permanent residence in Toronto. For the Mozambican group, “housing conditions/facilities” (40.0%) and “size/number-rooms” (30.0%) were the most important factors in their decision to relocate. In contrast, for the Cape Verdean group “overcrowding” (sharing with relatives) (63.3%) and thus the wish to live in their own place – privacy – were by far the most important reason for moving from their first permanent residence.

With regard to the most important reasons for moving out of their last residence to their current residence (the one in which they were living at the time of the interview) – Angolans again cited the high rents (41.7%) and “problems with landlords” (increases in rents and/or landowners sold the house/apartment) (16.7%) as the primary reasons for moving. For the Mozambican respondents “better housing conditions” (45%) and “proximity to the workplace” (41.7%) were the two most important reasons, while Cape Verdeans moved mainly in search of

“better housing conditions/quality” (53.3) in a “better/safe neighbourhood” (20%) which was “close to the work place” (20%). Thus, in general the respondents’ reasons for moving reflect the reality of Toronto’s rental housing market: lack of affordable rental housing/high rents, low vacancy rates, and poor-quality housing in certain areas of the City of Toronto.

Search Effort and Information Sources Used in the Search Process

Gathering information about vacancies in Canada’s largest and most diverse housing markets can be very stressful, costly, and time-consuming for new immigrants and refugees, most of whom have little money to spare when they first arrive. Members of the Angolan, Mozambican and Cape Verdean communities are no exception.

How time-consuming was the search for rental housing? In this study the housing search effort of our respondents was measured by time spent searching and the number of dwellings inspected. The first measure of search effort to be considered is the duration of the renter’s active search. Respondents were asked to indicate the approximate amount of time they spent looking for housing (for both first permanent residence and current residence) in Toronto’s rental housing market. Results from Table 2 shows that almost two thirds (65.0%) of Angolans spent more than one month looking for their first permanent residence in Toronto, compared to 40.0% for Mozambicans and only 13.3% for Cape Verdeans. The data reveals that Angolans by far invested much more time searching for first permanent residence than the other two groups. The minimal time invested in searching and inspecting dwellings by the Cape Verdeans is not surprising given the high reliance of this group on their own “ethnic” (community) networks of contact once they arrived in Canada. However, with regard to the amount of time searching for the current residence (the one they live on at the time of the interviews), results show only slight differences between the three groups (Table 2, see Appendix). At this stage we can speculate that as time of residence in Toronto increased for all three groups, they became more familiar with the intricacies of the rental real estate market, including its geography, and thus decided to spent more time looking for more options – housing types/quality and neighbourhoods in the city. Another explanation may be that the housing needs and preferences (housing choices) of our study groups, particularly the Mozambicans and the Cape Verdeans, increased with time thus

contributing for a more detailed/in-depth (in terms of time) search for housing in order to satisfy their housing needs and preferences.

The other important element in the renter's search effort is the total number of dwelling inspected. Table 2 (see Appendix) clearly shows that Angolans differ from Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans with respect to the number of dwellings inspected when looking for their first permanent residence. While half (51.7%) of Angolans inspected more than ten dwellings in their search, only 20.0% of Cape Verdeans and 16.7% of Mozambicans limited themselves to this range. The average number of 8.1 dwellings inspected by Angolans, compared to an average of 4.3 dwellings by Mozambicans and only 1.3 dwellings by Cape Verdeans, illustrates these marked differences (Table 2, see Appendix). Differences between the three groups persisted with time with respect to the number/average of dwelling inspected when looking for their current residence. Angolans by far inspected more dwellings than the other two groups (Table 2, see Appendix). These noticeable differences in search effort/behaviour by our respondents may be explained, at least in part, by different "forces" at play in the rental housing market: the discriminatory behavior by some landlords/housing agencies and/or on the reliance (or not) upon certain types information sources (ethnic/community networks) used in their housing search process. The role of information sources in the search process is the focus of our next question – Which sources did they use and how helpful were they?

Respondents from the three study groups used a variety of information sources when looking for and locating their first permanent residence, as well as for the residence in which they now live. With regard to the most important source used in locating their first permanent residence (F.P.R.) and their present residence (P.R.), Table 2 (see Appendix) reveals that Angolan respondents relied more extensively on Portuguese newspapers/bulletins (50.0%), Canadian newspapers/magazines (18.3%) and friends and relatives (15%) – when looking for and locating their first permanent residence in Toronto. For these respondents, reliance on Portuguese newspapers remained important in locating their current residence as well (35%).

To Angolan respondents, Portuguese newspapers were very helpful in their housing search process. For example, most Portuguese newspapers published in Toronto (around 10 in

the summer of 2006) are freely distributed to the public in general and thus also are widely accessible to the Portuguese-speaking communities in Toronto. In most Portuguese businesses in Toronto, as well as in clubs/associations, churches and social service agencies we can find Portuguese newspapers (most published weekly). These newspapers also provide important information concerning the locations (most of the time in the core of “Little Portugal” and/or in the “immigrant corridor” of Toronto, where the majority of Portuguese homeowners live), prices, number of rooms, proximity to public transportation, facilities and telephone numbers of landowners. It seems that this rich (and free) housing information source was of crucial importance in helping Angolans looking and locating rental housing in Toronto.

In contrast to Angolans, very few Mozambicans relied on Portuguese newspapers as a source of housing information. Instead, respondents from Mozambique relied most often on their own friends and relatives when looking for and locating their first permanent residence (50%), followed by “Canadian newspapers/magazines” (30%). These two sources were also used extensively by Mozambican respondents when looking for and locating their current dwelling (30% and 38.3% respectively) (Table 2, see Appendix).

With regard to Cape Verdeans, they were by far the group that relied more extensively on their own “ethnic” network of contacts, particularly relatives and friends from the same ethnic background when looking for and locating both the first permanent residence (56.7%) as well as their present residence (43.3%) respectively. However, it is also important to note that “driving/looking around” for rent signs became a popular method in looking for and locating their current residence (36.7%) (Table 2, see Appendix). Reliance on this “informal” source may be an indication of greater mobility (car ownership?) in their housing search process. In sum, for both Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans, friends and relatives became important cultural intermediaries – “bridges” – facilitating their housing search process. These “ethnic” (community) sources provided valuable housing information to respondents from both groups, mainly with regard to prices, what type/quality of housing to rent, and where to live (location/neighbourhood). These “ethnic” sources were familiar with the cultural needs and housing preferences of these groups and thus, as sources of information, they helped ease

newcomers' housing search process in complex and expensive Toronto's rental housing market. As some respondents noted:

My friends had contacts and knew some [Portuguese] landlords who had places to rent... they presented me to the landlord...

When I arrived in Toronto I didn't speak one word in English... I depended totally on my relatives. I lived with them for a few months and when I left they were there to help me finding housing... not too far from them.

My friend provided me with all support [housing] I needed... all kinds of information about rents, location and kind of apartment to rent...

In general, a defining characteristic of these study groups is their reliance on informal and inexpensive access to housing information in their housing search. Few Angolan, Mozambican or Cape Verdean respondents used mainstream private or non-private market organizations or institutions, including the numerous Portuguese social agencies or organizations available in Toronto, which could have provided these groups with assistance on housing-related issues.

The importance of ethnic networks for the Cape Verdeans, and to a lesser degree to Mozambicans and Angolans, parallels other findings for recent immigrant groups in Toronto's rental market (Murdie 2003; Owusu, 1999). Clearly, more research is needed in Canada on the role and impact of ethnic networks of friends and relatives (social networks) in facilitating the settlement and housing search experiences by newcomers. The quantity and quality of housing information provided to newcomers by these ethnic sources, as well as the extent to which reliance on these sources increases or decreases with subsequent searches, needs to be studied in more depth.

The Difficulty of the Housing Search and Reasons for the Difficulty

The nature and frequency of barriers encountered in the housing search can be indicative of these new immigrants' ability to access housing and their choice of neighbourhood. Canada,

in contrast with other industrialized countries such as the U.S. or U.K., appears to offer a more “open” and less constrained housing market (Hulchanski and Shapcott, 2004; Murdie 2003). The extent to which this image of Canada’s housing market as being more open to minorities holds true today remains to be studied. However, evidence exists that in Toronto’s rental housing market, prejudice and discrimination by landlords is a common practice (Dixon, 2001; Darden, 2004; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006).

Table 2 (see Appendix) indicates that for two of the three study groups – particularly Angolans, most of whom arrived as refugees, and to a lesser degree Mozambicans – their search for housing in Toronto’s tight rental market was not easy. The majority of the Angolan (85%), and almost half (48.3%) of the Mozambican, respondents found the search for the first permanent residence “very difficult” or “somewhat difficult.” It seems that over time the housing search improved for the Mozambican group, while the Angolans continued to face difficulty. For example, with regard to the current residence, only 35% of Mozambicans compared to 75% of Angolans found their search “very difficult.” or “somewhat difficult”. In contrast, the Cape Verdean group showed overall less difficulty in searching for housing in Toronto’s rental housing market. The extensive use of social networks – friends and relatives – that characterizes the Cape Verdean group may, in part, explain their lower level of difficulty in their housing search over time (30% for the first permanent residence versus 26.6% for the current residence) (Table 2, see Appendix).

Respondents were also asked the level of difficulty in searching for their “first permanent residence” and/or their “current residence”, as well as to identify the major reasons for their search difficulty. The majority of Angolans and Mozambicans identified the two most important reasons for their search difficulties as being: (i) race (being a black person) and (ii) source of income/income level versus housing costs. In contrast, the Cape Verdean cited more often one reason only – their “income level.” (Table 3, see Appendix).

As highlighted in Table 3 (see Appendix), there were numerous “forces” impacting (negatively) the housing search process and outcomes. Among Angolans and Mozambicans in particular, there is agreement that the use of “race” by some landlords (Portuguese and “non-Portuguese”/white) ultimately determined what they found in terms of quality of housing, price

and location/neighbourhood. Most of these respondents also agree that landlords in Toronto's rental housing market quite often lie in not providing full information about the vacancies, utilities and/or prices. Others simply refuse to rent to Blacks by using subtle strategies – such as asking for extra money for first/last months to raise the financial bar, or lying in stating that the accommodation was already rented – which are not legal but difficult to prove, largely contribute to their housing search barriers in Toronto's rental housing market.

Given the number and complexity of the barriers encountered by the study groups, respondents were also asked a more general question as to whether they experienced discrimination against them and against their group in Toronto's rental housing market. The results suggest that Angolans experience more personal and group discrimination in Toronto's rental market than Mozambicans. In general, Angolans reported “quite a bit” and “very much” personal and group discrimination, especially on the basis of “race” (being a black person), “refugee status”, and “source of income.” Most Mozambicans reported “quite a bit” and “very much” of personal and group discrimination, especially on the basis of “source of income”, “race” and “family size.” In contrast, most Cape Verdeans indicated “quite a bit” on the basis of “ethnic/cultural/national background”, “language accent” and “race”.

These findings indicate that “race” (colour of your skin) greatly affects the housing searches, particularly of Black immigrants from Angola and Mozambique. While it must be noted that the racism cited by respondents may be more “perceived” than “real” in some cases, numerous studies have shown racism to be a major barrier in Canada's urban housing markets (Darden, 2004; Hulchanski and Shapcott 2004). Thus, there is the possibility that this type of discrimination will shape urban space by promoting social exclusion and the direction of certain visible minorities to low-quality housing in poorer neighbourhoods, thereby reinforcing even more segregation than already characterizes in some areas/neighbourhoods of Toronto.

Toronto's Portuguese Community's Response to Black African Housing Needs

Since immigrants from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde Islands speak Portuguese fluently, a primary question is: To what extent does the Portuguese community, a group

characterized by having a visible and strong ethnic enclave in Toronto, as well as by high levels of homeownership (85% of Portuguese households in the city own a dwelling), facilitate the housing search process of Angolans, Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans in Toronto?

When respondents were asked whether they had looked for permanent housing in Toronto's Portuguese community, 55% of Angolans, 40% of Mozambicans and 63.3% of Cape Verdeans declared that on one or more occasions they had searched for permanent housing in Little Portugal (Table 2 see Appendix). When invited to comment upon their housing search experiences in the Portuguese community, the responses from Angolans and Mozambicans were a mixture of positive and negative. Some respondents felt the Portuguese community was welcoming and helpful in their housing search, while others were not happy at all and referred to discrimination by some Portuguese landlords based mainly on their race (being a Black person) and/or on the source of their income/income level. For some Angolan and Mozambican respondents the Portuguese community welcomed them with "open arms" and thus greatly facilitated their housing search and locating housing in Toronto:

It was not difficult because we speak the same language [Portuguese], thus we can communicate...
They helped me find affordable housing...

According to my income the Portuguese community was my first choice. The Portuguese landlord understood my situation [newcomer to Toronto] and rented me a place... very helpful.

My first housing search in the Portuguese community was an easy one. Since I had Portuguese friends that knew the landlord [Portuguese] and this fact was enough to get my first place in the Portuguese community. Since then we already moved three times and it has been easy for us to find housing in the Portuguese community...

Other respondents were more critical (negative) in their comments regarding the way they were received by the Portuguese community and, particularly, by some Portuguese landlords. As some respondents noted:

There was a time that I had to use the pay phone to find out about the house seen on Portuguese

newspapers. After a few conversation with the landlord the man come to the point he said: You know what? The only people that I really do not rent my house is to Black people. There was a gap silence on the line like someone just give me a knock out. Then because I have no any accent when I speak Portuguese, the man asked are you there? Yes I am I replied. But you know sir? You are talking just to a Black [Angolan] man! I said... ho, ho he said. But you should be one of our Blacks from the colonies, and I'm talking about those... Jamaican blacks... and I said you know sir Black is Black don't matter what. Thanks very much for your time but I am going to look somewhere else.

Not good experience... because I do not have a Portuguese accent the landlord gave me a good price for the apartment [on the phone] but as soon as they saw me they increased the rent... I felt bad...

Other Angolan and Mozambican respondents also severely criticized the way some Portuguese landlords (particularly the ones that live in the same house alongside their tenants) for their “amadorismo” (amateurishness) regarding the way they do “business” (informal housing renting) in Toronto. On this issue some respondents complained:

Very easy to find... the houses are in a good state of repair, pleasant but with it came unexpected 'policies' I have never heard in my whole life... The landlord seem to like to know too much about my life and control who comes to see me... too controlling, violated my privacy several times...

Somehow I don't know if it is better or worse to look for housing in the Portuguese community. They [Portuguese landlords] can be very helpful to you... if you have problems in your apartment you just call the landlord and they will be there to do the job... but they are also very choosing... picky and ask too many questions – your income, are you married, do you have kids... your lifestyle before they rent their properties.

In contrast, Cape Verdeans had fewer (negative) reasons to complain about the Portuguese community and Portuguese landlords. In fact, with a few exceptions, the majority of respondents from this group felt they had a good relationship with the Portuguese community by residing in “Little Portugal” or in its vicinity and renting from Portuguese landlords. Quite often we find Cape Verdeans working for Portuguese entrepreneurs (e.g., in construction, restaurants). As some respondents noted: “They helped me... I work for a Portuguese boss and live in close

proximity to the Portuguese community”; “I had no problems finding housing”; “I always felt at home in the Portuguese community. My wife is Portuguese...we have a lot of friends there and I shop there.” The fact that some of them found work in the Portuguese community and participate more actively than Angolans and Mozambicans in the “life” of the Portuguese community of Toronto (Table 2, see Appendix) may explain the differences in the Cape Verdean responses from those of the other two groups.

Thus, results seem to indicate that a shared language (fluency in Portuguese) did not help Angolans and Mozambicans as much as it did Cape Verdeans, who had an easier housing search experience and felt more at “home” in the Portuguese community. In the case of the Angolans and Mozambicans, the advantage of a shared language is offset by some prejudice and discrimination on the basis of race – colour of skin – by some Portuguese landlords. Even if, as suggested above, this racism is “perceived” more than “real,” nonetheless even the perception of racism – especially among Angolans and Mozambicans – becomes “real” to the extent that it becomes a factor shaping the housing search process.

A shared language – which should have been an important bridge between Portuguese landlords and the respondents – seems to have worked only for Cape Verdean group. In contrast to most Angolans and Mozambican respondents, who felt “lost” in their housing search experiences in the Portuguese community, Cape Verdean respondents benefited from the “cultural comfort” and support they needed in the Portuguese community. Thus, being members of a former Portuguese colony and speaking the same language did not serve as cultural tools, to the same degree, for the three study groups. Within this context, it seems that the “race” factor – Angolans and Mozambican being more Black (darker colour of skin) than Cape Verdeans – seems to make a difference. Thus, the latest group seems to be more favoured than the previous two when looking for housing and getting rental housing from Portuguese landlords.

To better understand the complex relationship between the Portuguese community in Toronto and Portuguese-speaking Black Africans, the Angolan, Mozambican and Cape Verdean respondents were asked about their involvement and participation in the life of the Portuguese community. Results indicate that Cape Verdeans (56.7%) more often than Angolans (48.3%) and

Mozambicans (28.3%) participate in the “life” of the Portuguese community in terms of living within the community, or by working or shopping in Portuguese stores (Table 2, see Appendix). However, in terms of participating in the life of the Portuguese community in cultural and social ways, the levels of participation of all three study groups are much lower (20.0% for Angolans, 18.7% for Mozambicans and 36.7% for Cape Verdeans). “Cultural” barriers – partly as a legacy of Portugal’s turbulent colonial history in Africa – seem to separate the Portuguese from the Black Africans, and particularly from Angolans and Mozambicans.

For those members of the groups who cited their participation in the Portuguese community, the Angolans and Mozambicans saw this mainly in terms of shopping and some social interaction, while the Cape Verdeans were more actively engaged:

Angolans:

I work [Grocery] in the Portuguese community...

I am involved in the Portuguese church and I volunteered to a Portuguese community program.

Mozambicans:

I buy from Portuguese stores, go to church...

Lack of time...but I participate on the Portuguese parade and I go to Portuguese restaurants.

Cape Verdeans:

Because most of my friends are Portuguese and I live in the Portuguese community.

I read Portuguese [local] newspapers and watch Portuguese TV programs. I have Portuguese friends and I attend Portuguese community functions. I also shop in the Portuguese community.

In contrast, with regard to those respondents who cited a lack of participation in the community, the comments of the Angolans and Mozambicans are clearly more heated than those of the Cape Verdeans:

Angolans:

Not interested... nothing relates us in the life of the Portuguese community.

Because of my skin color I am not welcome there...

I am not Portuguese and I don't feel welcome there.

Why should I? ...for them [Portuguese] to look at me like an alien. I do not even speak Portuguese anymore...

Mozambicans:

I like to live far away from the Portuguese community...

I don't have Portuguese friends...difficult to relate to them.

Cape Verdeans:

I am looking for other cultures...

To further learn about the role of the Portuguese community, one more question was asked of all respondents regarding their opinion on how immigrants and refugees from Angola, Mozambique, and Cape Verde Islands are being received by the established Portuguese community.

With regard to this question, no consensus exists among the three study groups, suggesting this is a sensitive and controversial issue for all groups, with opinions differing

greatly. For example, approximately two thirds of Cape Verdeans said that Black Africans from the former Portuguese colonies have, in general, been well received by the Portuguese community of Toronto. Some respondents noted:

I think these immigrants and refugees are well received since they speak the same language [Portuguese]. I think a lot of people find work and get a lot of support from the Portuguese community...

The Cape Verdean people here are not considered refugees [like Angolans or Mozambicans] and they get along with the Portuguese very well...

However, some Cape Verdean respondents also recognized that some groups from the former Portuguese colonies (e.g., Angolans, Mozambicans, Guinea-Bissau...) are less welcomed than others (e.g., Brazilians) by the Portuguese community. They recognize that Cape Verdeans receive a different (more positive) treatment from Portuguese. One respondent noted:

Everyone that I know from some of these communities [Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau] are not the favorites of the Portuguese community... Look at the way Brazilians are integrated in the Portuguese community... Even living in Canada for a long time some Portuguese do not change... too bad because they were once new immigrants like us.

In contrast to Cape Verdeans, Angolans and Mozambicans were more critical vis-à-vis the reception they have had in the past by the Portuguese community. Approximately half (46.7%) of the Angolans and 25.0% of the Mozambican respondents noted that the Portuguese community could have been more helpful to them. Some respondents complained:

In my view there is no friendship among these communities [Black Africans and the Portuguese community]. Based on what I have seen only the Brazilians fit there [in "Little Portugal"]... The Portuguese community seems far away from Angola... Africa... years of distance. The distance among all these communities is noticed on the streets, workplace and more and more where they live...

The established Portuguese community in Toronto, to some extent, understands the reasons behind

the exodus of Angolans to Canada and elsewhere in the world and they received us with sympathy... but that's it. We need more help... we feel like outsiders all the time, no opportunities at all [Portuguese community]... but if you lived in Portugal or you speak Portuguese with some [good] accent they accept you better.

I normally feel that no matter where you are from the former Portuguese colonies there is resentment from some Portuguese immigrants, particularly the ones that once lived in the colonies... the 'retornados' [Portuguese living in Africa who forced to return back to Portugal after the independence of the Portuguese colonies]... they from one form or another... some of them were forced to leave the colonies and they strongly resent that... They ['retornados'] tend not to like us... the relationship between us and them is almost non-existent.

We [Mozambicans] are totally ignored... I am not sure. I think it exists... resentment... but may be also mistrust between us [Mozambicans] and them [Portuguese]...

Based on the above responses it seems that much more work needs to be done by the established (first generation) Portuguese community of Toronto. More “dialogue” is also needed in order to eliminate the “social/cultural” distance that seems to separate the Portuguese white community (the former colonizer) from the emergent Black African communities of Toronto (formerly the colonized). There is a feeling among respondents that Portuguese and the Black African immigrants and refugees presently live in two ‘worlds’.

However, there are positive signs that the new Portuguese Canadians (born in Canada) have a different attitude than their parents (first generation born in Portugal, some of them with a long experience of Portuguese military service in Africa where they fought the colonial wars) in accepting and participating more actively in Toronto’s multicultural and multiracial society. For this new generation of Portuguese Canadians, those newcomers – Black Africans – are welcome and appreciated for their social/cultural contributions (e.g., the language (Portuguese), folklore, music, food...) to the Portuguese community of Toronto as well as to Toronto’s society in general. Mixed marriages between Portuguese youth and Black Africans are just the beginning of this “pacific” (first step) co-existence between these groups (see, Oliveira and Teixeira, 2003).

In general, more research is needed on the role and impact of well-established ethnic communities in the social inclusion of newcomers. Given the social distance between the Portuguese-speaking Black Africans – particularly the ones from Angola and Mozambique and Toronto’s Portuguese community – further research is needed to understand the complexities of culture, language, and racial prejudice in shaping the settlement of immigrant communities in Canadian cities.

The Housing Search Outcome and Levels of Satisfaction with Present Dwelling and Neighbourhood

As noted in the previous section, some respondents faced major barriers/obstacles in Toronto’s tight rental housing market. Whether some respondents had a “choice” (or not) in their last move – moved “voluntarily” or “involuntarily” (forced) from their last residence to the present one – was the focus of our attention here. Respondents were asked if they wanted to move or if they were forced to move when they decided to move to their current place – that is, did they choose to move, or did they have to move? Results show that Angolans (21.7%) more often than Mozambicans (8.3%) and Cape Verdeans (3.3%) were “forced” to leave their last residence (Table 4). Some of the respondents affected by this “involuntary” move blamed the landlords, and explained how and why it happened:

The landlord was [White] and was a racist...and I argued with him.

The landlord had to sell the house and I was left without any choice... Later on I realized that he didn’t sell it... he wanted me and my friends out of the apartment...

The landlord raised the rents... a high rent and the landlord didn’t care at any problems [repairs] in the house... it was too much for me to pay. I had to leave...

The homeowner pretended to sell the house... I tried to fight back... it was his word against mine.

Most respondents from the study groups are currently renting an apartment or flat in the private sector (53.3% of the Angolans, 81.7% of the Mozambicans and 70% of the Cape Verdeans) (Table 4, see Appendix). Very few (4 Angolans, 1 Mozambican and 1 Cape Verdean) lived in public housing. This is probably due to the shortage of public housing units available in Toronto, and the long waiting lists for affordable housing.

For almost all respondents, the ultimate goal is to own a home of their own, with 93.3% of Angolans, 96.7% of Mozambicans and all (100%) Cape Verdeans expressing a strong desire to own property. Respondents from the three study groups are unanimous that owning property on Canadian soil would give them more privacy, equity/credit in the new society and some form of control of their own destiny. However, owning a home also has a range of different meanings for our respondents (Table 5, see Appendix).

Many of these respondents also expressed a desire to live in neighbourhoods with people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (Table 4, see Appendix). For some of those respondents it is very important to avoid living in areas with high concentrations of people of the same ethnic background/colour, and/or areas where the language used by most residents is not English (e.g., Portuguese). Some respondents noted:

I think people should move to neighbourhoods that are mixed... not keep one group so concentrated in one area. I would not lump Black people with Black people irrespective of where they come from.

Avoid areas in the City with people of the same ethnic background... color... so that it is easier to fit in the Canadian community.

I am Black but I don't want to live in a Black neighbourhood. Some people [Blacks] are really bad and they [Canadians] generalize all. I am Black but I am different from other Black people. Please don't think I am racist.... Sorry.

Avoid Portuguese areas... College/Dundas [West]... because you will never be able to

communicate in English.

With regard to their levels of satisfaction with their present residence and neighbourhood, most Angolans, Mozambican and Cape Verdean renters were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with what they have now (Table 4, see Appendix). With regard to their present residence they expressed satisfaction, while still looking to the future:

I feel OK... but in the near future I want to buy my own house.

Its ‘home’ to some extent because we do not actually own. If we owned our own home we could feel more relaxed and better about it.

I will be very satisfied the day I can afford to buy my own home... all my payments (rents) would be going towards my house.

In regard to the neighbourhood, there was also a general feeling of satisfaction:

There are some people in my neighbourhood who speak Portuguese and this alone make me happy, because I still have some problems with English.

In my neighbourhood there are a lot of people that gather in the park and the children are always playing on the street which reminds me of home. It is a relaxed neighbourhood... a lot of Blacks from various parts of the world and the islands of the Caribbean.

My neighbours are nice... There is always something here.... nobody is perfect. Sometimes they [neighbours] look at me like an angel, other times like an alien. All depends on the mood... but overall I feel fine here.

However, when questioned about their “house as home” and their “neighbourhood as a community” respondents were less positive (Table 4, see Appendix). With regard to “house as home” almost one third of Angolans (31.6%), 13.4% of Mozambicans and 21.6% of Cape Verdeans answered that in their present residence they do not feel at home, citing poor quality of the dwelling, size/overcrowding or tensions with landlords. Some respondents noted:

I have to share the kitchen and washrooms... sometimes that makes me feel uncomfortable.

Its dirty... too much insects, stink... it's awful.

My house have many things to fix and the landlord always postponed...

The place I live [St. Clair/Dufferin] is not too high, it's something like a 'shack'. I hate the place, but I don't have a choice. I am a student and I don't have money to afford a more expensive apartment. I am almost as tall as the roof of the apartment [attic]. The roof is four inches higher than myself. I just hate this place. There is no closet to keep my clothes, the area of 15m square represents my living room, my kitchen, my area of study and my closet... but it is located in an area close to everything [public transportation, stores...]

On the question of the “neighbourhood as a community,” the respondents in general – and Angolans and Mozambicans in particular – were less positive (Table 4, see Appendix). Half (50%) of Mozambicans and almost one third (30%) of Angolans answered that they do not think the neighbourhood they now live is an area with a “sense of community” – citing as major reasons for this dissatisfaction (“feeling”) issues such as safety, crime, drugs, cleanliness, noise, lack of services and bad neighbours. They noted:

They brought a pitbull to scare me...because the colour of my skin.

Too much [Brock/Queen St] drug dealers, prostitution and grow-ops.

I don't talk with my neighbours and they don't talk with me... Also increased violence, ongoing robbery in the apartments [Eglinton/Don Mills], vandalism/sabotage of cars in parking lots...

Sometimes I just want to leave because the neighbourhood [Spadina/Dundas] is full of undesirable actions, fighting, drunkenness, drugs. But for the moment I have to stay until my financial situation improves.

Because I [female respondent] am living at Jameson/Lansdowne an area that I found to be a drug

area – I am afraid to walk in the evening.

In contrast, Cape Verdeans show higher levels of satisfaction than their counterparts – Angolans and Mozambicans – with both “house as home” and their neighbourhood as “community” (Table 4, see Appendix).

With regard to recommendations for the future, respondents were asked for their advice on improving housing for newcomers. More specifically, we asked questions about what changes need to be made to improve the housing options and housing conditions to newcomers: a) What do you think should be done to improve housing opportunities for immigrants and refugees? b) What housing types or options should be more available? c) What aspects of landlord procedures or policies should be changed? d) What would improve your neighbourhood? and e) If you lived in public housing (government housing, such as MTHA – Metro Toronto Housing Authority), how can the housing authority and staff better serve newcomers to Canada?

With regard to the question of what they think should be done to improve housing opportunities for immigrants and refugees, the respondents suggest that more funding be available for affordable housing, which would ease their dependence upon sub-standard housing in Toronto. As well, some respondents cited regulatory changes to better enforce the law in such areas as discrimination in rental housing. Respondents observe:

The Federal government in partnership with the Provincial government should put more money for building affordable housing especially for new immigrants. They will be allowed to stay for at least two years and after that immigrants are required to vacate the place.

At least for the first year upon arrival a new immigrant or refugee should be given priority in the waiting list for subsidized housing due to the market constraints that they face (guarantor, earned income, references, etc...). There is need of a government agency to assist those new immigrants and refugees to find and to negotiate what you call F.P.R. as well as monitoring and enforcing the existing leasing laws as many landlords tend to abuse the tenant's rights especially when they know

that you are new in the country, don't speak well English and receiving social assistance.

Any newcomer or refugee should be advised before hand about their rights as tenants. This could be done through agencies, community centers, shelters, etc. A special and very specify list of rules to private landlords should be given to the newcomers or refugees as to bring awareness for the landlord.

Government should take more initiatives in building more affordable housing. There are so many people sleeping and dying on the streets especially during the winter time. I lived four months in different shelters it is very uncomfortable living in a place where you have to share everything.

Creation of open policy about housing. Many of us know very little about procedures and policies and this is a hurdle for many of us to overcome discrimination. Social workers, community organizations, churches should be able to help us learn about our own rights [as tenants].

I think the government should crackdown on landlords that discriminate against new immigrants for the simple reason because of them being people of colour and poor.

Tougher laws against all kinds of discrimination... create better mechanism to mix more the areas... not only people form one group.

More laws against discrimination in the housing market...

With regard to what housing types or options should be more available, respondents noted that affordability was a key issue, as was public governance (including both subsidized government housing as well as non-profit/co-operative housing) to avoid discrimination, as respondents feel the private sector will not resolve this problem on its own. In the respondents' words:

I do believe Toronto Metro Houses should be more available to those in need. This ways private landlords will not abuse so much to those who don't know much about their rights... in this case refugees and newcomers.

Non-profit or co-operative housing.

Any type of housing is necessary as long they are livable and affordable for families or singles.

Like the one in Holland – they have the best low income housing system – it looks like townhouses and with good conditions first and second floor townhouses...

Good housing, with park, gardens, townhouses, low rise buildings, houses like the ones made by Habitat.

Subsidized government housing...

In terms of what aspects of landlord procedures or policies should be changed, there was again a focus on preventing discrimination in Toronto's rental market. Respondents suggest some regulatory body or means of oversight to prevent this from occurring. In their words:

Being accepted as of people from around the world... not judged by color, race or ethnicity.

The curfew policy must be changed. Some landlords... love to play Mom and Dad... The aspect of utilities should be changed too. Most landlords like to add the utilities so as to rip us off... Many basements are rented in Toronto, but by law they're not supposed to be rented. They are not high enough to live a person...ust like my shack...

A body to oversee the landlord – tenant relationship should be created to ensure that fairness and justice will result from this relationship. Landlords would not be dishonest with their tenants and vice versa...

No discrimination based on colour, language accent, immigration/refugee status...

Landlords should replace or repair old stuff immediately in the absence of the tenant. Landlords should not go inside of the house without the renter's permission... particularly the Portuguese have this bad habit, as well as Italians.

Increasing the rent without any advance note, visiting the tenant when they want.

In response to the question regarding what would improve their neighbourhood, the respondents focused again on the question of discrimination as well as on the need for more policing to reduce crime. In respondents' words:

More policing. My current neighbourhood needs a constant police presence to help clean the messy situation such as drugs, domestic violence which is destroying the entire community.

Stop discrimination no matter your colour, status or accent.

Policing to protect the kids and built parking for recreation so the parents can play with their kids...

Respect each other... no discrimination... everybody is the same whether is the colour or language accent.

More green spaces... gardens – parks, better policing and better schools.

No racial discrimination... no violence.

With regard to the question concerning if they lived in public housing (government housing, such as MTHA), how can the housing authority and staff better serve newcomers to Canada, respondents emphasized not only respect but also professionalism. They observed:

Give them dignity. I have a friend that is constantly complaining that the staff are constantly harassing her – she has to provide constantly papers, source of income. school documents, cheques from employment, etc... there is no end to the harassment and abuse...

Zero tolerance... I believe that lack of serious policies that govern the public housing are ruining this noble concept.

Do the necessary service to newcomers...don't undermine newcomers...respect our claims.

I live in public housing [Spadina/Dundas] and it seems like no one comes about the place. Housing authority and staff should get closer and interact with residents. If they take this approach together we will be able to clean up the community. Interaction makes communication easier.

Equal treatment ... be more helpful.

Do the repairs sooner than later.

6 – Conclusion

Since the end of the Second World War, immigration has played a significant role in the demographic, economic, social and cultural transformation of Canadian society. The City of Toronto – Canada’s largest urban area and its primary historical “port of entry” for immigrants – has felt the primary impact of these changes. With changes to Canada’s immigration policy in the 1960s, the “internationalization” of immigration to Canada has radically increased the cultural, linguistic, religious and racial heterogeneity of Toronto’s population. In this context, it has been widely recognized by scholars and policymakers that this immigration has been a significant engine of economic growth for Toronto. However, one of the ironies of this process has been that immigration has contributed to Toronto becoming the most expensive housing market in Canada where new immigrants face the greatest affordability problems.

This study investigated the housing experiences of three relatively recent African immigrant groups – the Angolans, Mozambicans and the Cape Verdeans – in Toronto’s rental market by examining their settlement experiences and housing search processes, as well as their ultimate outcomes. Finding initial temporary accommodation was not an easy task particularly for Angolans and Mozambicans. Upon arrival in Canada, respondents from Angola – most of whom were refugee claimants – relied almost exclusively on government programs (including shelters) to “survive” the first weeks or months. Cape Verde Islanders and to a lesser degree Mozambicans were more fortunate in having friends and relatives already established in Toronto. However, for these groups there were feelings of considerable discontent and frustration

regarding the housing options available to them. These study groups had high housing expectations prior to their arrival, and did not expect to encounter the low-quality housing that they found, nor the uncongenial neighbourhoods in which they settled.

As these African Portuguese-speaking groups lacked a well-established co-ethnic community in the city to help them get settled, the question of the role of the older, institutionally complete Portuguese community (i.e., a community with a significant number of ethnically-oriented institutions, businesses, and religious organizations) in Toronto in these immigrants' settlement is an important one. In contrast to the experiences of the Cape Verdeans, the Portuguese community did not play an important role in the reception or social inclusion of Angolans and Mozambicans into Toronto's housing market. In general, the initial housing choices of these two Black African groups seem to have been determined more by their group characteristics (age on arrival, immigration status, levels of education, and knowledge of English) than by cultural forces (the need to live close to people who shared the same language – Portuguese).

For Angolan respondents, moving did not always result in improved housing conditions. More Angolans than Mozambicans and Cape Verdeans shared residences with friends as a survival strategy. The three groups also differed in the main motivating factors (push-pull) behind their decision to move. In their housing searches, the three groups also followed different strategies in the sources of information used to locate their first permanent residence as well as their current residence.

With regard to the barriers encountered by the respondents when looking for housing, results echo earlier research in Canada. Searching for affordable and adequate housing in Toronto's rental market is a task rendered particularly difficult when the home seeker is a new immigrant, refugee, or member of a visible minority group. Evidence from this study suggests that discrimination by landlords is common in Toronto's rental market. However, more research is needed on landlords' behaviour in the rental market, and on the role of race and discrimination in the allocation of housing in Canada. Nonetheless, it is clear that discrimination is a barrier recognized by most of the respondents (with the notable exception of the Cape Verdeans) in their

housing search. Members of both the Angolan and the Mozambican groups expressed some form of dissatisfaction with their present dwelling (“not feeling at home”) and the neighbourhood (“not a real community”), and with discrimination in the rental housing market. As has been noted, racism – whether “real” or “perceived” – can result in social exclusion and housing segregation in low-income neighbourhoods, and thus to a slower integration of newcomers into a new society.

This issue of discrimination must be understood in the context of the complex and somewhat conflicted relationship between the Angolan and Mozambican respondents and Toronto’s well-established Portuguese community. With the abundance of vacancies in the Portuguese community and the respondents’ knowledge of the Portuguese language, it might be expected that both these groups would gravitate to the Portuguese community for advice and support. However, while the two groups sought housing in the Portuguese community, it is clear that there was considerable “social distance” between the Portuguese and these Black African immigrants; a fact that some respondents attribute to racially-based discrimination. In contrast, Cape Verdeans feel more at “home” in the Portuguese community, and thus showed higher levels of participation in the “life” of the Portuguese community.

The findings suggest complex interactions among race/group characteristics, including immigration status on arrival, the housing search process, landlords’ discriminatory practices/behaviour, and the housing strategies adopted by immigrants. However, many of the details of the housing experiences of visible minorities in Toronto, including new immigrants and refugees, remain unclear. More comparative studies are needed on visible and non-visible minorities, including newcomers from the new African diaspora in Canada (e.g., from Francophone, Anglophone, Spanish and Portuguese-speaking Africa), to understand why certain groups are more successful than others in finding affordable housing in a neighbourhood of their choice. Further research is also needed into housing discrimination by the diverse urban social gatekeepers involved in the production and allocation of housing, which seems to have limited new immigrants’ and visible minorities’ access to affordable housing in Toronto.

APPENDIX

Tables 1-5

Table 1
Housing Situation/Expectations Before Coming to Canada
and Settlement Experiences in Toronto

	Angolans (N=60) %	Mozambicans (N=60) %	Cape V. Isl. (N=30) %
<i>Housing Situations Prior</i>			
<i>Coming to Canada</i>			
Location:			
Big city	88.3	78.3	16.7
Rural area/Village/Town	1.7	11.7	23.3
Small city	10.0	10.0	60.0
Structure:			
Single detached house	56.7	30.0	66.7
Apartment building/townhouse	36.7	63.3	33.3
Tenure:			
Own	66.7	85.0	70.0
<i>Housing Expectations Prior</i>			
<i>Coming to Canada</i>			
Affordable housing	40.7	28.3	50.0
Housing conditions/quality/size	35.2	50.0	26.7
Supply of housing/Gov. programs	20.9	16.7	13.3
Other	3.3	5.0	10.0
<i>Immigration Status on Arrival:</i>			
Temporary visa holder	3.3	65.0	70.0
Refugee claimant	85.0	16.7	6.6
Landed immigrant, including approved Refugee	11.7	18.3	23.4
<i>Plans of Returning one day to Africa/Homecountry</i>			
Yes	50.0	88.3	30.0
No	30.0	5.0	53.3
D.K.	20.0	6.7	16.7
<i>Community Resources</i>			
Knew someone in Toronto	31.7	70.0	76.7
<i>Community Organizations (Non-Ethnic)</i>			
<i>Helped on Arrival</i>			
	60.0	26.7	23.3
<i>Portuguese Community/Organizations</i>			
<i>Helped on Arrival</i>			
	43.3	16.7	70.0
<i>Overall Importance of the Portuguese Community</i>			
<i>In Helping Adjusting on Arrival to a New Environment</i>			
Very important/Important	41.7	11.7	60.0

Source: Questionnaire

Table 2
The Housing Search Process

	Angolans (N=60)		Mozambicans (N=60)		Cape V. Isl. (N=30)	
	First perm. residence	Current residence	First perm. residence	Current residence	First perm. residence	Current residence
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Number of Dwellings Inspected:</i>						
Less than 10 dwellings	#29	#34	#50	#54	#24	#22
More than 10 dwellings	31	26	10	6	6	8
<i>Average Number of Dwellings Inspected:</i>	8.1	6.0	4	4.3	1.3	2.1
<i>Length of Search:</i>						
One month or less	35.0	48.3	60.0	40.0	86.7	43.3
More than one month	65.0	51.7	40.0	60.0	13.3	56.7
<i>Most Important Information Sources:</i>						
Friends/relatives	15.0	28.3	50.0	30.0	56.7	43.3
Portuguese newspapers/bulletins	50.0	35.0	8.3	10.0	30.0	13.3
Canadian newspapers/magazines	18.3	18.3	30.0	38.3	3.3	3.3
Driving/looking around/signs for rent	11.7	16.7	10.0	20.0	10.0	36.7
Other	5.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	-	3.3
<i>Housing Search Difficulty</i>						
Very difficult	66.7	50.0	8.3	5.0	6.7	3.3
Somewhat difficult	18.3	25.0	40.0	30.0	23.3	13.3
Somewhat easy/Very easy	13.3	21.7	48.3	60.0	66.7	80.0
D.K.	1.7	3.3	3.3	5.0	3.3	3.3
<i>Search for Permanent Housing in the Portuguese Community</i>						
	55.0		40.0		63.3	
<i>Participation in the "life" of the Portuguese Community of Toronto</i>						
	48.3		28.3		56.7	

Source: Questionnaire

Table 3
Major Reasons for Housing Search Difficult

ANGOLANS

Race:

Because of my skin color – dark – I was being treated like a thug or criminal of some kind and I would be asked to pay more rent than originally asked.

People would tell me the apartment is no longer vacant, but in reality the landlords didn't want people of my background... blacks... renting their apartments. This situation was really frustrating and very difficult to bear.

Source of income/income level versus housing costs:

Finding a guarantor due to the fact that we were receiving social assistance at that time [first permanent residence] and most landlords were reluctant to offer us an apartment.

My big problem was my income. It was not enough for renting a decent basement much less an apartment or a house.

MOZAMBICANS

Race :

Some landlords are not comfortable renting to a black person...he asked for two months rent paid in advance...

The first encounter with the landlord and people would judge me because I am black: whether I had money to pay the rent; whether I would be able to keep the apartment clean; if I had children – how well behaved they were; what kind of food I will be cooking, etc... I gave up looking for housing...finally I found one building with people from my background [visible minorities] living there.

Source of income/income level versus housing costs:

I didn't have financial stability, therefore I had to spend more time searching for cheaper housing...

Being a female and single mother with few money...not easy.

CAPE VERDEANS

Income:

I consider my situation very lucky because I know people from other countries...they have big problems, especially if they are blacks...easy for me I had references from my uncle.

My income was the major issue... I went through many housing searches before I found the apartment I could afford... I could see... some [landlords] refuse right away because they were not comfortable... they would ask the question if I had enough money to pay the rent...

My income was not enough but I found housing in the Portuguese community... The landlord was a good Portuguese person. Helped me a lot.

Source: Questionnaire

Table 4
The Housing Search Outcome: Neighbourhood, Housing Situation and Levels of Satisfaction with Present Dwelling/Neighbourhood

	Angolans (N=60) %	Mozambicans (N=60) %	Cape V. Isl. (N=30) %
<i>Voluntary v.s. Involuntary Move</i>			
<i>Voluntary move/Wanted to move</i>	70.0	90.0	83.3
<i>Involuntary/Had to move (a “forced” move)</i>	21.7	8.3	6.7
<i>Don’t Know</i>	8.3	1.7	10.0
<i>Tenure</i>			
Renter in private sector	53.3	81.7	70.0
Renter in public housing	6.7	1.7	3.3
Renter in non-profit or Co-operative	11.7	13.3	6.7
D.K./No answer	28.3	3.3	20.0
<i>Satisfaction With Current Dwelling</i>			
Very dissatisfied	11.7	6.7	3.3
Dissatisfied	18.3	6.7	6.7
Satisfied	55.0	78.3	66.7
Very satisfied	10.0	3.3	20.0
D.K.	5.0	5.0	3.3
<i>Satisfaction With Neighbourhood</i>			
Very dissatisfied	11.7	1.7	-
Dissatisfied	8.3	8.3	3.3
Satisfied	63.3	66.7	60.0
Very satisfied	11.7	6.7	33.3
D.K.	5.0	16.7	3.3
<i>House as “Home”</i>			
Not at all a “home” (Very dissatisfied)	8.3	1.7	3.3
Not much of a “home” (Dissatisfied)	23.3	11.7	18.3
A “home” to some extent (Satisfied)	40.0	66.7	45.0
Very much a “home” (Very satisfied)	26.7	18.3	33.3
D.K.	1.7	1.7	-
<i>Neighbourhood as “Community”</i>			
Not a “community” at all (Very dissatisfied)	10.0	20.0	-
Not much a “community” (Dissatisfied)	20.0	30.0	6.7
A “community” to some extent (Satisfied)	48.3	41.7	70.0
Very much a “community” (Very Satisfied)	16.7	5.0	20.0
D.K.	5.0	3.3	3.3
<i>Neighbourhood Preference/Ethnic Composition</i>			
To live near members of the same ethnic group	15.0	6.7	20.0
To live in neighbourhood with people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds	43.3	23.3	50.0
No preference/Don’t mind	35.0	53.3	30.0
D.K.	6.7	16.7	-

Source: Questionnaire

Table 5
The Meaning of Homeownership

a) Happiness/privacy:

To feel happy...it's a human dream; something for me and my kids...

When I left the islands [Cape Verde] I had this big dream [homeownership]... to own... nobody can take it away from me. It makes me feel more stable here as an immigrant. It represents success and a stake in a new land.

b) Owning something they can call "home"/control:

To own my place...it belongs to you. Don't have to pay rents...I can do whatever I want with my house.

Renting is never yours...

One way to have control on my life... destiny in a new land...

c) Some form of recognition/credit by the new society:

It gives me more credit [acceptance/respect] to society and in particular to the credit institutions.

Owning bring great rewards in the future.

Means you have accomplished something here and your life is in the right path.

d) Avoid stereotypes:

I [Angolan] am tired to live around poor people [Black renters] around me... it always made me feel I was born wrong and because of my colour I was less than everyone's else.

The day I buy...I will be free at my own house...

e) *Tradition [back home] in the family to own property:*

In Africa [Mozambique] in my family everyone owns a home...well... is always safe emotionally.

We lived in poor a country [Cape Verde Islands]... Owning back home means you achieved something in your life, that you are proud off... the same here [Canada].

Source: Questionnaire

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