

# Land Acknowledgement

United Way Greater Toronto humbly acknowledges that it operates on the traditional territory of many Indigenous nations, such as the Wendat, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee. We recognize and uphold the rights of Indigenous communities, acknowledging the ancestral and unceded territories of the Inuit, Métis and First Nations peoples throughout Turtle Island. Tkaronto is home to a growing community of urban Indigenous peoples, including those from the Inuit, Métis and First Nations. We recognize that the Greater Toronto Area is covered by several treaties, such as Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Williams Treaties with seven First Nations, including the Chippewas of Georgina Island. We respect Indigenous teachings and commit to fulfilling our obligations to the land and one another. Our commitment is grounded in the principles of Truth and Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



# Message from Daniele

Where do you live? The quick answer may be Mississauga or Vaughan or Toronto. But the truth is, the place our hearts and minds go when we think about where we actually live is likely a neighbourhood.

It is our home, be it an apartment or house, rented or owned, and so much more. The school our children attend and the place where we worship or volunteer. The corner store where we pick up milk or chapati. The park where we play basketball. The stop where we catch the bus or GO train to work. The hub where we get counselling, take mom for her seniors' social or learn English.

It's a simple ideal. Yet for far too many, that home, that neighbourhood, is simply unattainable.

We know that because for 67 years, United Way has been supporting people through daily challenges. More recently through a once-in-a-generation pandemic. And since, through the sustained urgent needs and multiple crises—in affordability, housing, mental health and more—that have become emblematic of this post-pandemic malaise.

We have learned how broken so many of the systems we have lived by are. And how for many, particularly those from Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, they never worked at all, but only reinforced barriers to opportunity and those basic building blocks of a good life.

And we've come to understand that it is incumbent on all of us not just to care, but to act to fix those systems so that everyone enjoys a fair chance. Because while poverty impacts those experiencing it most, it costs us all: taxing our economy, social and health services; undermining the collective livability of our communities; and eroding our sense of stability, social cohesion, even democracy. That is what is at stake.

We have seen the cracks in our community become crevices. Tragically, hunger and homelessness on the streets where we live have become commonplace. And while we know it is not who we are, it is indeed where we are today. We cannot linger here.

Nor have we.

At United Way Greater Toronto, we are deepening our efforts and evolving our focus to address inequities and build a more just future. We are leaning into the neighbourhoods where we've always worked, building on decades of meeting urgent needs. And we are leading local solutions that drive systemic and structural change. At the neighbourhood level. And on a human scale.

Our mission is to make those basics that foster well-being and belonging—safe housing; stable income and employment; local services, recreation and opportunities for engagement—accessible to everyone.

On the streets where we live—wherever we live. All of us.

Always and only,

Daniele Zanotti

President & CEO

**United Way Greater Toronto** 



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So many in our community continue to struggle. With perennial challenges like homelessness, food security and mental health issues sharper and more entrenched, life is not just tough, but tougher than it's ever been—pandemic included.

## We know:



In February 2023, the Mississauga Food Bank served 13,850 people, more than any other single month in its history and a 44 per cent increase over February 2022. And in 2022 it distributed 5.2 million pounds of food, four times the 1.3 million pounds it distributed in 2014.



The demand for adult mental health services in Ontario increased by 47 per cent between 2021 and 2022, while the demand for children and youth services grew by 104 per cent.



The Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy says an estimated 28,000 families live on ODSP, or \$1,228 per month. When a one-bedroom listing is going for close to \$3,000 and a living wage is considered \$23.15, that is a math problem with no answer.



This past February, 72 people on average were turned away from a Toronto shelter each night.



The rates of mental health issues among people experiencing homelessness have increased during the pandemic. Almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of people surveyed through I Count 2021 reported having a mental health issue, compared to 48 per cent in 2018.



And community members aren't the only ones hurting. Strain on the sector persists, and while the extraordinary contribution of front-line workers has been recognized—now with the province's Non-profit Week of Appreciation, championed by United Way—we all understand that is no replacement for the public investment necessary to reinforce it so that we are equipped to support our communities now and into the future.

United Way continues to step up, funding and strengthening a crucial network of 300 agencies across 13 service areas so they can chip away at these challenges, providing:



Central food access through initiatives like the Black Creek Humber Summit food portal led by Jane/ Finch Centre; the York Region Food Council, housed within York Region Food Network; and Eden Food for Change's employment training in the culinary arts.



Mental health supports from a variety of programs, including Punjabi Community Health Centre's SAHARA Family Enhancement service and The 519's Counselling and Mental Health for Individuals and Families, as well as the Canadian Mental Health Association's Youth Wellness program in York Region.



Meaningful employment for individuals facing barriers: through one of the Toronto Enterprise Fund's newest employment social enterprises, RAINscape TO for Indigenous youth, or Career Navigator pathways—training, placements and wrap-around supports—with organizations such as Building Up, NPower Canada and the Labour Education Centre.



**Vital shelter and homelessness** services from agencies like The Neighbourhood Group, Blue Door and Our Place Peel.



**Settlement support** for our newest neighbours, like the 720 people placed with host families, thanks to the COSTI Ukrainian Host program, operating in Peel, Toronto and York Region. Or the 5,600 individuals who have been served through the Afghan Resettlement Fund, a partnership between the City of Toronto, Lifeline Afghanistan and United Way.



And across it all, **Findhelp 211**, connecting people in need to the non-emergency government and community services that can support them.

We know we are reaching people. Last year, funding dollars made it possible for United Way Greater Toronto's network to ensure that:

17,000

Almost 17,000 people accessed healthy and culturally appropriate food across the region.

13,800

Nearly 13,800 people received assistance in improving their employment opportunities and financial security.

46,000+

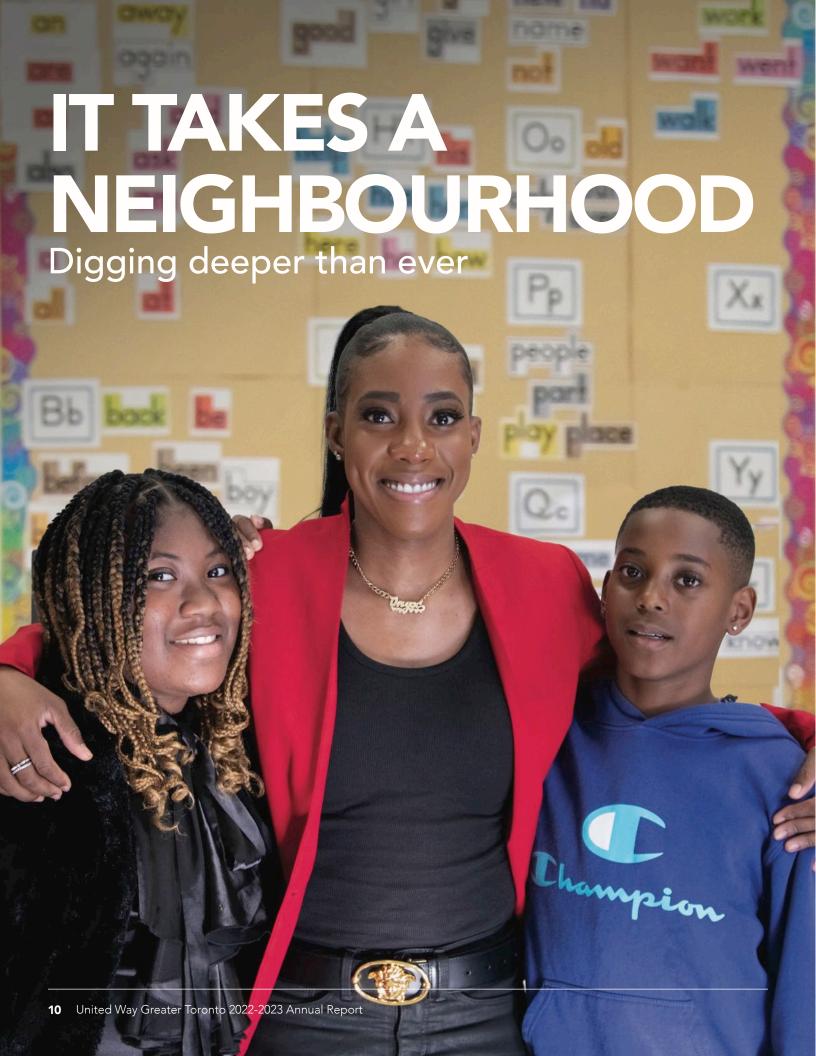
More than 46,000 people gained the tools and resources to effectively manage mental health or substance use challenges.

20,000

Over 20,000 people who are at risk of homelessness, or precariously housed, maintained their housing.



And that is an achievement. For some, help at a moment in time is all that is required; for others, support in dire need can be transformational. But for our society writ large, those programs, services and supports are not enough. Alone, they will not move our community along to where we need to go. Only a reimagining of what community means—what it should provide and what we all can contribute—will do that. And that requires systems change for lasting impact. Right here. Right now. In the communities in which we live.



With almost two decades of place-based work behind us, neighbourhoods are what we at United Way Greater Toronto know best. It is where our network of local agencies offers the programs, services and space people need most. And it's where we delve into research, build strong partnerships and pilot progressive models for community prosperity that are to everyone's benefit.

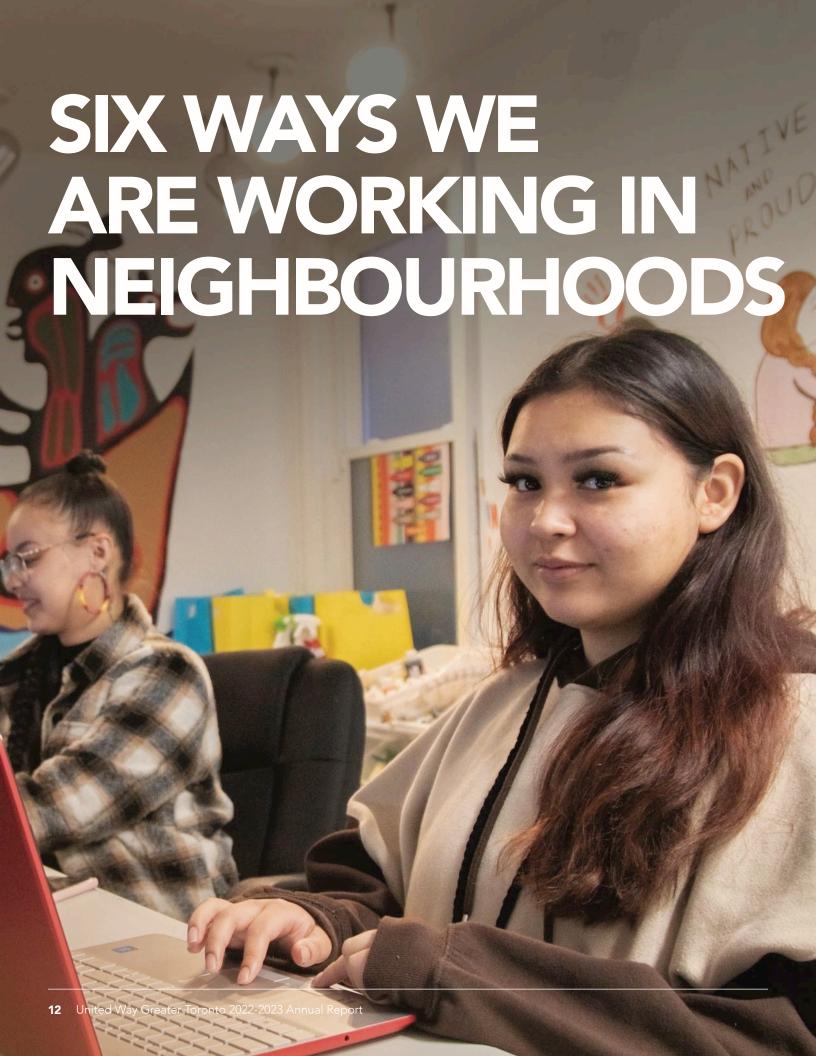
### What does that look like?



The same on-the-ground experience has taught us that truly inclusive communities have:

- A strong network of community services
- Engaged and connected residents
- Financial stability
- Housing stability

The time to double down on neighbourhoods is now. We are experiencing rapid growth. With that comes added pressures on our infrastructure and communities—for housing and transit, for government and social services. We know that change is not neutral. United Way is working to avoid the pitfalls of gentrification and displacement that reinforce inequalities, and instead accommodate and leverage that growth, protecting and strengthening neighbourhoods, and directing development and revitalization so that they lead to greater inclusion. We believe that the solutions to our communities' greatest challenges can be found in our neighbourhoods and in the residents who call them home.



Across our region, we are advancing our mission, work that has always had its roots deep in community, deep in the neighbourhoods in which we live. We are collaborating with residents, agencies, corporate, civic and government partners to leverage local assets, as well as current and future opportunities. Together, we're taking aim at local challenges and developing system solutions that can move us all forward. And we're using these tools for change—some familiar, some new—to buttress and build more inclusive neighbourhoods:



Investment



Local co-ordination for solutions and system change



Social purpose real estate



Social impact investment funds



Inclusive local economic opportunities



Public affairs, research and community mobilization



# INVESTMENT

Across Toronto, Peel and York Region, United Way Greater Toronto funds and partners with a balanced portfolio of poverty-fighting agencies. This ecosystem approach—always being refined to address our diverse region, populations and issues—is a thoughtful strategy that enables us to meet needs where they are greatest, respond to changes in our community and build lasting solutions to critical issues at the intersection of poverty, equity and geography.

# **Anchor Funding**

Just renewed for five years, this investment in social service infrastructure and long-term capacity is a unique-to-United-Way model that provides core operational support to 60-plus foundational partners. While they collectively deliver more than 200 essential programs, we also count on them to engage residents, conduct research and be strong voices for systems change.



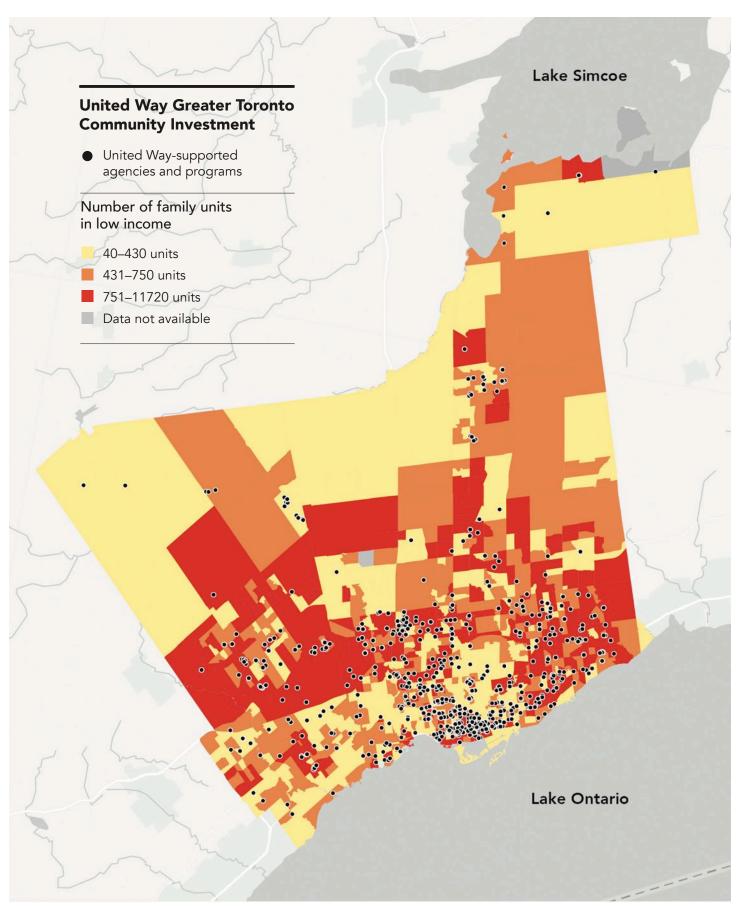
Multi-service **Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre** is a true community anchor, providing a comprehensive array of programs to support families dealing with issues from early learning and parenting to mental illness. Stepping up to meet emerging needs, the agency directed grocery cards to community members unable to access food supports during the pandemic, and more recently is assisting Ukrainian newcomers as they settle.



The **For Youth Initiative** began as a grassroots pilot partnership between eight organizations in response to the lack of services for racialized young people in the former City of York. Today, as a part of our anchor agency network, it is just as passionate about delivering on its mandate to serve youth in York South-Weston.



The Centre for Immigrant and Community Services is an anchor agency and one-stop shop for newcomers, offering language, education, training and employment supports, as well as other settlement services and a community food program.



Source: Province of Ontario, York Region, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, NRCan, Parks Canada

# **Program Funding**

Three-year Community Program Grants, allocated last year, support 300 high-impact programs that address service gaps, as well as varied and developing needs across our region.



The Journey Neighbourhood Centre champions hope and transformation in Brampton's Ardglen and Orenda communities – and United Way is part of that work through its support for the Healthy Communities program.



**Inn from the Cold Inc.** helps people experiencing homelessness and poverty in York Region through outreach and programs strengthening individual plans for achieving stability.



The Centre for Independent Living in Toronto, led by and for people with disabilities, offers independent living skills training, peer support, service navigation and more. Program grant-funded, the Centre also receives an Organizational Infrastructure Grant, a pathway for Indigenous, Black and equity-led organizations to build greater internal capacity and stronger ties to United Way's network, and part of our commitment to Reconciliation and equity.

# **Partnership and Systems Grants**

Collaboration is in our DNA, and it animates this entire grant stream, supporting close to 20 innovative and strategic projects that are bringing the savviest combos together—be they multiple agencies, corporate and government partners or civic institutions—to advance local solutions on the toughest issues.

With funding through a Partnership and Systems Grant, York Region's Community Action Tables in Northern Georgina, South Markham, South-Central Richmond Hill and Central Newmarket, together with lead agencies Agincourt Community Services Association, Routes Connecting Communities, and Family Services York, are working with York University to map and enhance mental health services.

The Homelessness Working Group of the **South Etobicoke Cluster Table**, a coordination table led by United Way and the City of Toronto—including LAMP Community Health Centre, John Howard Society of Toronto, Storefront Humber and Haven on the Queensway—is equipping an emergency community support centre established during the pandemic for continued service at St. Margaret's Anglican Church, New Toronto in South Etobicoke, thanks to a Partnership and Systems Grant.

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) is leading efforts to assist Tigrayan refugees in the GTA, coordinating with health centres, language program providers and other partners to provide settlement support and other wrap-around services. Another one of our Partnership and Systems Grants in action.

## Youth School Success Initiative

This tailored academic and culturally relevant program first developed in Peel and supported by Scotiabank is designed for youth that self-identify as Black or as part of the African diaspora. Combining in-person and online supports as well as specialized programming-Musical Story featuring Afro-Jamaican sounds, Black Excellence in STEM, Career Night with Black Professionals, African drumming sessions — it has now reached 230 middle school students in Toronto and York Region, building self-confidence, enhancing a sense of belonging and connecting youth and their parents to broader community supports.

Led by local agencies like Delta Family Resource Centre, the Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association and BGC East Scarborough, and in cooperation with the Toronto District School Board and York Region School Board, the Youth School Success Initiative, supported by Scotiabank, is assisting youth in grades 6 to 8 to prepare for high school, working out of 11 schools across York and Toronto, as well as two community locations, including the Richmond Hill Library.

# **Government Funding Partners**

United Way is proud to work in lockstep with government partners, using our granting expertise and deep community knowledge to ensure financial resources are strategically deployed. For years, we have played a key role in working with the Regional Municipality of York to administer federal Reaching Home dollars. With the pandemic and growing need, that responsibility has expanded significantly, from a \$500,000 investment in 2012 to almost \$6M in disbursements last year, with a greater emphasis on capital projects and systems-change investments, including permanent supportive housing.

With so many in our community still recovering from the lasting impacts of the pandemic, and agencies struggling to support them, the federal government also recently introduced the Community Services Recovery Fund, earmarked for adaptation and modernization within the charitable sector. Along with partners across the country—

United Way Centraide Canada, Canadian Red Cross and Community Foundations of Canada—we are working to deliver over \$13 million towards program and service innovation and redesign in the GTA alone. And we are using this opportunity to build in systems change in keep ing with our Reconciliation and Equity Action Plan, ensuring we engage people with lived experience in design and delivery of programs, and working alongside Indigenous-led agencies throughout the application process.

Last year, federal Reaching Home dollars administered by United Way added 10 new permanent supportive units to the affordable housing stock in York Region. Additionally, two shelter units were renovated to make them accessible for women experiencing violence.

# **Slaight Family Foundation**

Targeting the monumental issue of food security, the Slaight Family Foundation looked to United Way Greater Toronto to convene national organizations — Daily Bread, Second Harvest, Community Food Centres Canada, Breakfast Club of Canada and Food Banks Canada — to distribute \$7.5 million to food-focused community agencies grappling with rising need throughout the holiday season. Within United Way's own network, 15 programs facilitated access to healthy and culturally relevant foods through meals and packages, coordinated purchase and distribution of bulk food, as well as unique initiatives that also provide employment and income generating opportunities.

Thanks to the Slaight Family Foundation, Malvern Family Resource Centre is supporting multiple food security initiatives, including a hydroponics program, development of a food strategy and a sustainable future for the flagship Malvern Urban Farm. Additionally, the Farm has benefited from the North Scarborough Cluster Table's advocacy, receiving support through the City of Toronto's Climate Action Fund, which has enabled the Farm to expand its reach into local schools and markets.



# LOCAL COORDINATION FOR SOLUTIONS AND SYSTEM CHANGE

At United Way, we know that silos can derail the best intentions and plans, so whenever possible we collaborate with partners to align our efforts for maximum impact. Always a key part of how we work, it is an approach that proved its worth during the height of the pandemic and continues to play an important part in our efforts to drive long-lasting change.

## **FOCUS**

Just renewed for five years, this investment in social service infrastructure and long-term In June 2023, FOCUS marked 10 years of supporting individuals and communities in avoiding and minimizing crises. What started in Rexdale as an alternative approach to managing escalating issues rooted in mental illness, housing and employment problems, has now expanded to six tables. Last year alone, FOCUS intervened in over 1,000 situations, reducing the overall risk in 82 per cent of them. What is learned along the way is tracked and shared at events like the Collaborative Risk Driven Approach Annual Conference, deepening understanding of systemic barriers to effective service delivery, including technological challenges, financial issues and systemic discrimination.



https://vimeo.com/unitedwaygt/focustoronto

Championed by United Way, the City of Toronto, Toronto Police Service, and partner agencies, FOCUS situation tables operate in Rexdale and five other neighbourhoods across the city—Scarborough, Downtown West, Black Creek, York and Downtown East—calling on the expertise and skills of more than 225 local social service agencies, government divisions, health planning organizations and community legal services. FOCUS has also received a Partnership and Systems Grant for the Toward Peace project, leveraging the lived experience of local residents to disrupt violence in the community.

## Social Medicine Initiative

The first of its kind to be built in Canada, these 50+ new units for unhoused individuals facing chronic and complex health conditions are a big step in a positive new direction. Simply put, when they open in fall 2023, they will provide a continuum of care in community, so that as people are discharged from health services, they are connected to housing and other supports they need to stay healthier and maintain their housing long-term.



Bringing the commitment and diverse expertise of the City of Toronto, University Health Network, United Way, and local agencies like West Neighbourhood House together, the Social Medicine Initiative is delivering over 50 supportive housing units in Parkdale, bringing community care to individuals experiencing chronic and complex health challenges in addition to homelessness and poverty.

# **Peel Newcomer Strategy Group**

Hosted by United Way, the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, which acts as the Local Immigration Partnership for Peel region, continues to support newcomers through collaboration, research, and navigation and service delivery. Co-chairing the Refugee Resettlement Working Group with the Region of Peel and over 30 agencies, they have supported coordination of settlement services for refugees, displaced Ukrainians and asylum seekers. Specific initiatives underway focus on digital equity to ensure newcomers can connect to services, including through <a href="https://www.lmmigrationPeel.ca">www.lmmigrationPeel.ca</a> with an audience that has grown by almost 15 per cent; a micro-credential course for settlement sector staff in collaboration with Sheridan College; and continuing to track emerging issues.



Newcomer Mental Health and Wellness Through a Settlement Sector Lens, published by the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group in summer 2023 takes a closer look at mental health in the context of settlement and factors such as culture, language and migration stressors. It also provides seven recommendations to enhance mental health supports, including increasing collaboration between mental health and settlement sectors to ensure programs and services are culturally responsive, and improving supports for those working in the field, susceptible to burnout and compassion fatigue.

## Cluster Tables

Born out of necessity during the first days of the pandemic, these tables across Toronto, York Region and Peel were indispensable in bringing local government and agencies together to deliver services quickly and equitably under crisis. And frankly, with strong relationships and protocols now connecting 400 organizations in Toronto alone, we cannot imagine doing without them. Today, 15 active tables provide ongoing opportunities to strengthen service coordination, adaptation and responsiveness and enable us to deliver system solutions at the neighbourhood level.

Operating deep in neighbourhoods, Cluster Tables lead innovative and super-local initiatives for change. In North Scarborough, new collaborations have led to the development of a community volunteer income tax program and benefits outreach, resulting in greater financial stability for local seniors living on a fixed income.

### **Peel Region**

Community Response Table

#### York Region

- Service Partner Table
- Community Action Table

### **Toronto**

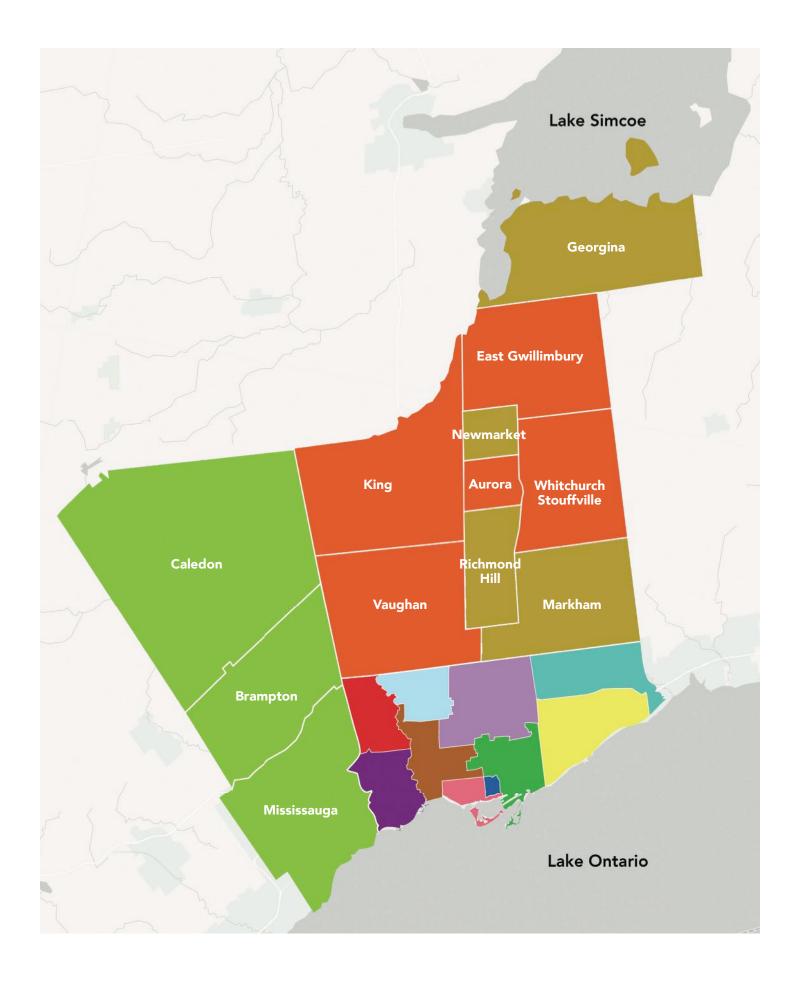
- Downtown East Cluster
- Downtown West Cluster
- Black Creek/Humber Summit Cluster
- North Etobicoke Cluster
- South Etobicoke Cluster
- York/Weston/Pelham Cluster
- East York/Don Valley Cluster
- North Scarborough Cluster
- South Scarborough Cluster
- North York Cluster

Also active across Toronto are the Newcomer Cluster and Black Resilience Cluster.

## **Quick Action Grants** at Community Action Tables

On the ground in York Region, Community Action Tables are where agencies, government, residents, stakeholders and United Way are working together to make progress on local priorities aligned with The Region's Community Safety and Well-being Plan in four distinct neighbourhoods. Focused action plans related to mental well-being, housing stability and economic stability guide communities in directing Quick Action Grant investments. This is placed-based work and resident engagement at its best, resulting in 50 resident-led initiatives and more than 10 agency-partner projects this past year.

WELLcome to the Lake Simcoe Public School Neighbourhood, a special residentled event, was designed to engage community members, parents and extended families in a face-to-face welcoming activity after a two-year absence of opportunities for social connection. And that it did, promoting mental well-being, selfcare and community building—thanks to a United Way Quick Action Grant awarded through the Regional Municipality of York's Community Action Table, and just one of 60 resident or agency-led projects.





# **SOCIAL PURPOSE REAL ESTATE**

United Way recognizes that secure and stable access to property in public spaces is crucial when it comes to ensuring that essential community services are available to low-income residents right where they live. That's why we provide general operating support to community agencies and fund community groups that advocate for critical community spaces as neighbourhoods change, as the Golden Mile Impact Network and Parkdale People's Economy do. But our biggest contribution to precious community space has been through the creation and continued support of community hubs in traditionally underserved neighbourhoods.

And we continue to look to the future, to ensure that this vital community glue is not lost. Last year, the Social Purpose Real Estate Reference Group—initially born out of conversations co-led by the City of Toronto and United Way Greater Toronto and now chaired by University of Toronto's Infrastructure Institute in the School of Cities—conducted the Greater Toronto Nonprofit Community Space Survey. This pulse check examines the challenges community organizations are facing as they grapple with the same financial and real estate trends that are driving increased demand for their services. And it makes recommendations on how to leverage existing assets and ways government and community organizations can work together to make more space available for non-profits.



Rendering of Bridletowne Hub from ReNew Canada

Community hubs at eight locations—AccessPoint on Danforth, Bay Mills, Dorset Park, Rexdale, Mid-Scarborough, Bathurst-Finch, Jane Street, and Victoria Park—have been making a difference for close to a decade, providing access to services, community space and collaboration close to home. But never more than through the pandemic when local agencies led emergency supports from food distribution to vaccination centres. Last year more than 511,000 visits were made; and cumulatively four million since they opened their doors. Now, we are building on that success. Literally, with Bridletowne Neighbourhood Centre, in partnership with Scarborough Hospital and the YMCA of Greater Toronto, breaking ground this summer and Thorncliffe Park Hub due to open in 2023/24.





# SOCIAL IMPACT INVESTMENT FUND

Over the last few years Regent Park has, together with partners, led a different approach to grant making. Rooted in place-based work, this model for raising and distributing targeted funds, and supporting participatory grant-making, looked to residents and stakeholders to connect priorities from their Social Development Plan to projects that would benefit from a local fund. Since 2019, more than \$950,000 has been distributed to support both grassroots initiatives and collaborative agency projects.

This past year, much of the investment directed through Regent Park's Social Impact Investment Fund focused on community building and safety projects for youth, with the NextGen soccer league, Healing as One, and Knowledge2Wisdom mentorship and leadership development programs reaching hundreds of youth and their families. Longer term collaborative agency initiatives increased access to youth outreach supports and after-school programming for middle-school students.





# INCLUSIVE LOCAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY (ILEO)

One of our most ambitious endeavours, ILEO brings not just what we have learned, but who we work with, to a neighbourhood on the cusp of rapid redevelopment and ripe for a better chance. We are laying progressive approaches at the foundation of this project: a community benefits framework, inclusive procurement, a workforce development program and the Aecon-Golden Mile construction joint venture. Majority-owned by community through the Centre for Inclusive Economic Opportunity, this last initiative cycles profits back into the neighbourhood for reinvestment in its future, demonstrating the virtuous circle of prosperity at the heart of the entire project. Altogether, a golden opportunity to build a Golden Mile with strong and lasting employment prospects and other benefits as the community revitalizes. And we are doing that together with residents, agencies and business leaders like BMO Financial Group, including 17 signatories to a paradigm-shifting corporate charter that is all about changing the way we work to generate a fairer future.



https://vimeo.com/unitedwayqt/syed

Headway on our Inclusive Local Economic Opportunity (ILEO) initiative continues. Not only was it recognized as an example of innovative, transformative and sustainable development by the World Urban Pavilion, but its Good Jobs pilot and Aecon-Golden Mile construction joint venture now boast 125 residents from the Greater Golden Mile hired. Together with Storefront Starter, an entrepreneurial pilot, and procurement commitments, revenue to Golden Mile-based businesses generated over \$440,000 last year. Next up: we are turning our attention towards affordable housing, specifically looking at new models for financing, retrofitting of legacy buildings and local asset innovation.



# PUBLIC AFFAIRS, RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Public policy can deepen and sustain inequities built up over generations, or it can shift us into high gear, dismantling those same barriers and ushering in systemic change that has the power to shape the vitality of our communities and the security and well-being of individual lives. But policy is only as responsive and progressive as we make it, exercising all our tools of influence—research, advocacy and community mobilization.

# **Building Inclusive Communities Report**

At a time when our region is growing exponentially, United Way is shining a light on exactly how we can leverage and direct growth so that it nurtures strong neighbourhoods rather than contributing to gentrification and displacement. Together with BGM Strategy Group, we assessed nine program and policy interventions—many already in action across the GTA—that have demonstrated success in promoting social and economic inclusion and creating positive social change amid growth and development. Through measures like rental unit replacement and inclusionary zoning, the report equips community, public and private sector partners with practical insights and actionable steps to create welcoming places that provide equitable access to the resources, programs and services, as well as the opportunities, residents need to participate fully in society and to actualize individual and collective prosperity and well-being.



Workforce agreements are one of nine interventions identified in our Building Inclusive Communities report. During the revitalization of Regent Park, a workforce agreement prioritized local residents for construction and post-construction jobs. United Way anchor agency Dixon Hall supported employment training and apprenticeships by recruiting and preparing residents for these work opportunities. Other initiatives in action include neighbourhood-level workforce development programs like the ILEO Good Jobs pilot and Aecon-Golden Mile joint venture in Scarborough. Community Benefits Agreements are also at work across the region, often used in conjunction with other interventions, and spearheaded by the United Way-funded Toronto Community Benefits Network and Peel Community Benefits Network.

## **Case Studies**

While we look to the future, we are also mindful of not losing the valuable learning we gained during the most difficult days of the pandemic. Across our region, social service agencies and their partners found new ways to serve community. Together with the Canadian Philanthropy Partnership Research Network (PhiLab), United Way documented and unpacked agency innovations so that they can be adapted elsewhere. An inspiring five-part series focuses on areas as diverse as digital program delivery and Indigenous health partnerships—and has been shared widely, including at the Forum on Innovation and Societal Impact: Skills + Knowledge, held at McMaster University and co-presented by The/La Collaborative and the Canadian Science Policy Centre.



A collaboration between United Way anchor agency Na-Me-Res, Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto and Well Living House, Auduzhe Mino Nesewinong Clinic was formed during the pandemic to fill a gap in Indigenous-specific health services, offering culturally safe testing, vaccines and wrap-around supports. Paired with the We Count COVID-19 research and database, this comprehensive response places Indigenous health monitoring in Indigenous hands, constituting an act of sovereignty. A notable learning, it is now captured in our case study collection and ready for investment and replication elsewhere.

# **Community-Based Research**

In partnership with York University, United Way developed a free certificate program to support agencies in sharing their research. Through six sessions, participants from over 120 organizations heard from speakers and learned how to bridge academic and community research. Focusing on partnerships, data equity and communication strategies and evaluation, they covered topics such as the role that people with lived experience can play in communicating research findings and recommendations, and providing real world examples of best practices.

Knowledge mobilization was on the curriculum for agencies seeking best practices in sharing their community-based research. Thanks to a partnership between York University and United Way, representatives from 120 agencies were able to partake in a six-part capacity-building program.

## Community Mobilization in an Election Year

Elections at both provincial and municipal levels provided a unique opportunity to bring our priorities for socially and economically inclusive communities to the attention of candidates and voters:

In advance of the provincial election, together with Ontario for All, Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, Social Planning Toronto and Social Planning York Region, we co-hosted five policy roundtables. About 500 non-profit leaders from more than 300 organizations discussed and debated, ultimately outlining a shared Agenda for Change to create an Ontario that works for everyone. And in July, we led United Ways across Ontario in writing an open letter to Premier Doug Ford, calling for close collaboration and offering solutions to shared challenges, from housing to jobs to services.

At the local level, we developed a municipal election checklist, a simple tool to support civic participation and calling on candidates to pledge to #TakeActionOnPoverty. Together with Social Planning Toronto, we moderated expert panel discussions on affordable housing, food security, the community services sector, community-based alternatives to policing, harm reduction, and mental health. And we participated in a panel discussion on the future of Toronto and our region with civic leaders, moderated by CBC's Ismaila Alfa and hosted by the Democratic Engagement Exchange at Toronto Metropolitan University. In all instances, including the Toronto mayoral race this spring, when we co-hosted a debate with The Toronto Star and Toronto Metropolitan University, we've worked with partners to bring people closer to the issues, fostering greater civic engagement—especially among new electors and those facing barriers, including racialized, low-income and newcomer populations—so that residents are better positioned to exercise their rights and amplify their voice in shaping their community.



https://players.brightcove.net/2226196965001/xj6FdmiBa\_default/index.html?videoId=6328601554112

In an election year, United Way partnered with Toronto Metropolitan University's Democratic Engagement Exchange to promote civic engagement through resources, training and events like the 2023 Toronto Mayoral Debate – Our Future, Our Vote: A Toronto for All.

## **Ongoing Advocacy**

Outside of the election cycle we continued to reach out to government and work closely with partners to influence policy development:

- As part of the provincial government's 2023 pre-budget consultations, United Way Greater Toronto led the development of a joint pre-budget submission from Ontario United Ways. And United Way and Ontario for All, together with the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, Social Planning Toronto and Social Planning Council York Region, hosted 150 leaders from the community services sector to hear from policy researchers and advocates on housing, income supports and social services to craft sector-wide recommendations that were shared with government in a submission under the Ontario for All banner.
- Invited to participate in a consultation with the provincial Portable Benefits Advisory Panel, United Way advocated for all workers in Ontario to receive full and equal employment rights, in addition to access to affordable and comprehensive benefits for all workers and their dependents.
- In response to the Ontario government's More Homes Built Faster Act, United Ways across Ontario, led by United Way Greater Toronto, the Tower Renewal Partnership, and Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership made recommendations on preserving and renewing existing affordable rental stock to keep low-income Ontarians housed, including regulations that support rental unit replacement.

# **Leading Social Justice Fellowship**

A joint effort between United Way Greater Toronto and University of Toronto's School of Cities and Rotman Executive Programs, the Fellowship has now stewarded a second cohort of 18 teams—54 leaders from the private, public and community sectors—committed to addressing enduring challenges, many made more prominent during the pandemic. From taking action on gun violence to supporting people with chronic health conditions, they are determined to advance real systems solutions.



Part of the Leading Social Justice Fellowship a collaboration between United Way Greater Toronto and University of Toronto's School of Cities and Rotman Executive Programs—a team from John Howard Society Ontario is paving a way back into community for justice system involved Black and Indigenous individuals, building out an online directory of employment and wrap-around supports.

# **Indigenous Partnership Council**

Led by Indigenous people, for Indigenous people, with a focus on making recommendations on community investments, fundraising and research, the Indigenous Partnership Council (IPC) is guided by the Seven Grandfather's Teachings and consensus-based decision making. While it has been focused on expanding geographic and sector representation and deepening relationships, the IPC will move forward with an investment plan for \$1.5 million to support system-level initiatives that respond to the needs of urban Indigenous peoples in the region over the next three to five years. Priorities include the development of Indigenous-led social infrastructure in York and Peel Region, and the expansion of culturally responsive mental health and well-being supports in the GTA.



## **Community Advisory Councils**

For more than 15 years, Community Advisory Councils have been instrumental in guiding United Way's work, providing insight on the challenges and opportunities impacting Black, South Asian and Chinese communities across our region. Highlights for last year include the development of an action plan focused on increasing representation of racialized leaders in C-suite positions and hosting hard-hitting panel discussions on women's empowerment and anti-Asian racism.

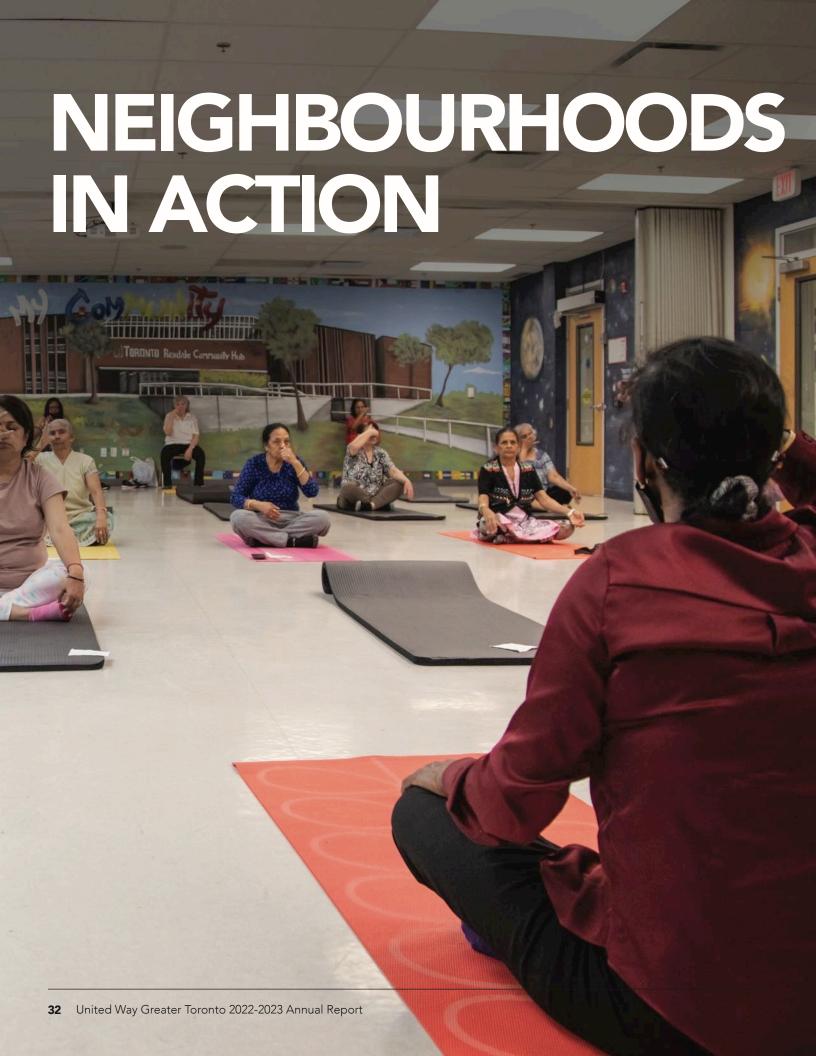
Equality and equity were at the forefront of events hosted by Community Advisory Councils, with the South Asian Advisory Council's Empowering Women: Pathways to Equality and Well-being featuring United Way-funded agency leads Deepa Mattoo of the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic; Deena Ladd of Workers' Action Centre and Jyoti Singh of Nellie's. And United We Stand! An Anti-Asian Racism Forum organized by the Chinese Advisory Council, brought brought together community leaders, including CICS's Alfred Lam to discuss the impacts of anti-Asian racism in the GTA.



https://uwgta.org/sacac



https://uwgta.org/ccac



Cooksville in Peel, Toronto's Rexdale, South Markham in York Region. These are just three of the neighbourhoods we are working in. Each with their own unique assets and challenges, respected civic leaders and strategic community partners. That means the work we're doing in each of them is specific to that neighbourhood and its particular circumstances. But the story does not end there; it is about other neighbourhoods too.

Because we know that if we can advance real change in one neighbourhood, we can do it elsewhere too.

But don't just take our word for it. Hear directly from local residents and leaders, in their own words, about what they're accomplishing with United Way's support and what they believe it means for the future of the place they call home.





### Cooksville

In Cooksville, with Gurpreet Malhotra of Indus Community Services and United Way's Adaoma Patterson.



https://vimeo.com/unitedwaygt/ cooksville

#### Rexdale

In **Rexdale**, with Amra Munawar of the Rexdale Community Hub and United Way's Juneeja Varghese.



https://vimeo.com/unitedwaygt/ rexdale

### **South Markham**

In South Markham with Joseph Silva formerly of The Regional Municipality of York, resident Emily Rong and United Way's Alex Dow.



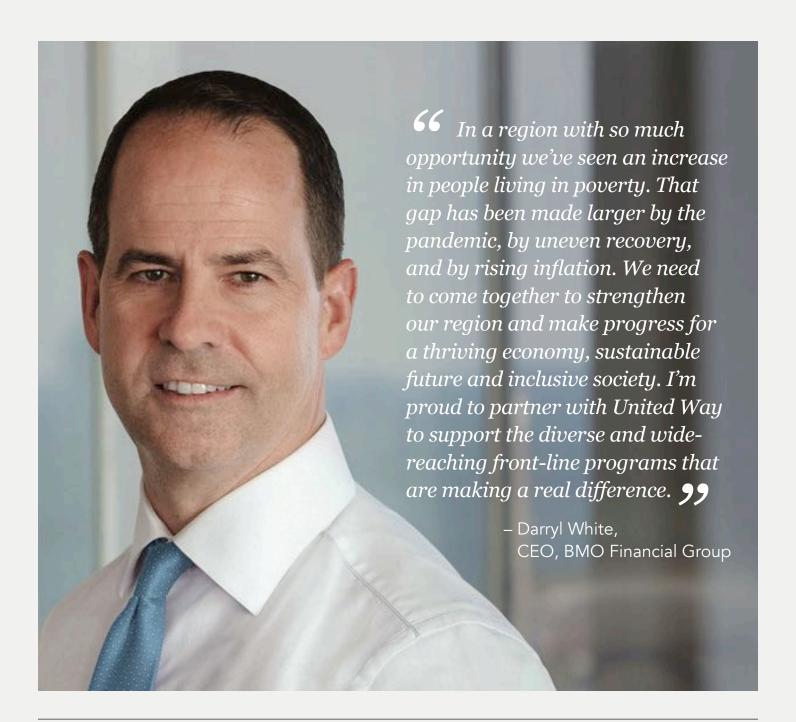
https://vimeo.com/unitedwaygt/ markham

# INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES POWERED BY INCLUSIVE PHILANTHROPY



We have a talented and effective team at United Way and on the ground in neighbourhoods. But only with the support of volunteers and donors, including labour partners, are we able to move from intention to impact.

This past year, the indomitable Darryl White, CEO of BMO Financial Group, took up the challenge of chairing our Community Campaign joined by the similarly resolute Paul Bradley, Operating Partner of Northleaf Capital, as Major Individual Giving (MIG) Cabinet Chair. Their committed leadership inspired a dedicated, steadfast and mission-focused group of Cabinet and MIG Cabinet members that encouraged others not just to care, but to act on their own why—be it social justice-oriented, faith-based, economic or other—and to support our mission: United to meet basic needs. United against inequality. United for change.



# Here are just a few highlights from the campaign trail:



The Darryl & Cassandra White \$1 Million Leadership Challenge Grant that served to leverage support from new donors.



The **Donald K. Johnson Major Gift Challenge Grant**, which inspired new major individual gifts to United Way Greater Toronto.



The **Karen Green Legacy Gift of \$2 million** from a lifelong supporter of United Way and true community champion.



Close to **600 speaking engagements** delivered by 150 United Way volunteers.



**125 Day of Caring** projects in community undertaken by enthusiastic corporate account staff members—everything from delivering meals to community gardening initiatives and virtual employment mentoring sessions.



200+ United Way-facilitated learning activities including interactive learning modules and neighbourhood tours.



Long-time engagement from the folks at Canso, enjoying 100% campaign participation by staff since the United Way York Region days and with the personal support and leadership of Heather Mason-Wood.



GetUP go-getters accepted the virtual physical challenge, running, walking, and cycling for 300 minutes and raising almost \$300,000 towards United Way's work—with terrific support from KPMG. But come this fall it is goodbye virtual, with United Way ClimbUP—all 1,776 steps due to make a comeback October 21 and 22, 2023.

# It takes big engagement to have big impact:

950+
committed
workplaces

85K+
generous
donors

2,200

dedicated volunteers raising funds and supporting our work

## And this has made the following possible:

650+

programs delivered by a network of 300 agencies across 13 service areas \$93M

in funding, community services and program support

19

Partnership and Systems initiatives

60+

community and agency-led Quick Action grants

6

FOCUS tables

**15** 

Cluster tables 7

research publications 15

research presentations

300+

community leaders engaged in shared policy advocacy 850+

interactions with elected officials to advance policy priorities 8

community hubs **17** 

signatories to a new corporate charter

# So that United Way Greater Toronto could reach 2 million people and invest in the inclusive neighbourhoods that are our common goal:



Over **68,000 youth** who received support and opportunities to help them achieve their potential.



Almost **14,000 individuals** who received support to improve their employment opportunities and financial security.



More than
21,000 individuals who
received support to live
independently in their homes
and engage with their
communities.



Nearly **20,500 seniors** who received support to connect with others, the community, or needed services.



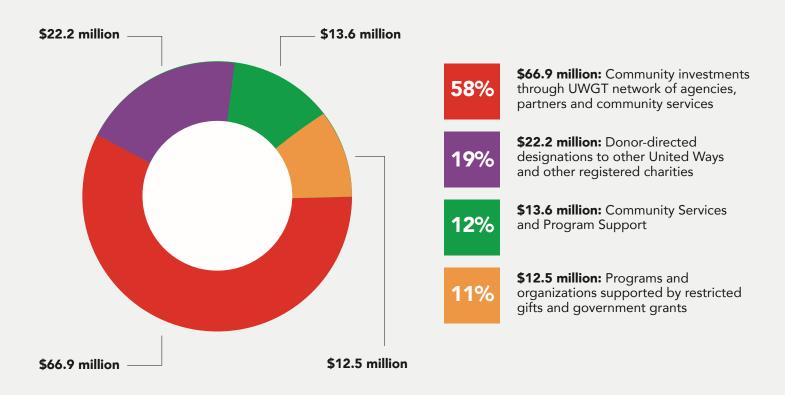
Over **58,000 individuals**who received support to live
free from violence or to
reduce the risk
of violence.

# STEWARDSHIP

# **OUR COMMITMENT** TO YOU

We fight local poverty by supporting people in the neighbourhoods they live in across Peel, Toronto and York Region. We work to ensure that gifts to United Way help meet urgent needs and bring about long-term systemic change so that every person in every community has the opportunities, access and connections they need to build a good life—regardless of their income, the neighbourhood they live in, or their social identity.

In Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (FY 22-23), overall distributions and community programs represented \$115.2 million, per United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) Financial Statements, Statement of Operations. The breakdown is as follows:



# MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

### IMPLEMENTING A MULTI-YEAR FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

In response to the changing philanthropic landscape, UWGT continued the implementation of its Board-Approved Strategic Roadmap, "Now, New, Next," with the following business priorities:

- 1.Become a centre of excellence in inclusive philanthropy
- 2. Develop leading cross-sector solutions
- 3. Use engagement as a tool for change
- 4. Adopt enterprise insight decisions
- 5. Turn outward to work with community

In addition to adapting to the "new normal" resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic environment and financial uncertainties, including fears of a recession, UWGT remained committed to its business priorities, with FY 22-23 being Year 3 of the five-year Board-Approved Strategic Roadmap. In fact, the "new normal" is pushing UWGT to transform at a faster pace.

In FY 22-23, UWGT fulfilled its financial commitments to the Community Investment, Community Services and Program Support streams—working together with its network of agencies and community partners for solutions to meet existing, urgent and emerging community needs. UWGT's unique funding model offers flexible funding for programming and core operational support, ensuring stability to the sector while meeting community and resident needs, and mobilizing solutions. UWGT once again saw the resilience of its donor and volunteer base remain strong throughout the uncertainties of the current environment. And finally, as a trusted partner to all levels of government, UWGT was again the recipient of additional funding from certain government programs to leverage its grant management expertise and knowledge of local community needs.

UWGT remains committed to fiscal prudence as the foundation of the Board-Approved Strategic Roadmap, and even through the COVID-19 pandemic and the financial uncertainties of the current environment, UWGT's financial position remains stable:

- FY 22-23 was the third consecutive year of achieving at least a balanced budget. This financial turnaround has been the result of restructuring and cost-savings initiatives from the past three years.
- Reserves remain at healthy levels and sufficient to backstop the three-year and five-year financial commitments of UWGT to its network of agencies and the ongoing sustainability of its operations when looking forward.
- With liquidity being top of mind in this COVID-19 pandemic environment, UWGT's asset portfolio is primarily held in cash or cash equivalents, thus mitigating any liquidity and price risks due to changes in the market.

Looking ahead to FY 23-24, UWGT will focus on stability and accelerating the implementation of its Board-Approved Strategic Roadmap with a revenue growth mindset and focus.

# FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT

### **GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY**

UWGT has a strong, independent Finance, Audit and Risk Committee comprised of seven members. The Committee meets annually—independent of management—with KPMG, UWGT's auditors.

The Committee oversees the audit and financial controls, budget and financial management, investment management, risk management and digital transformation workplan on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

The UWGT Audited Financial Statements consolidate the financial results of UWGT's operations, capital expenditures and The Tomorrow Fund™. They are prepared in accordance with Canadian Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit (ASNPO) and are also in alignment to United Way Centraide Canada's Transparency, Accountability and Financial Reporting (TAFR) standards.

As United Way adapted to the declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic by the World Health Organization in March 2020 and pivoted to a digital office and remote workforce, KPMG issued an Unqualified Audit Report, and similar to previous years, KPMG concurred with management that UWGT met the requirements of being a going concern for this coming fiscal year, FY 23-24.

Key items in KPMG's audit review and findings included:

- Fraud risk for management override of controls and fraud risk in revenue recognition: no issues or concerns were identified.
- Control deficiencies: no significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting were identified.
- Special purpose audits for five agreements funded by the government for which UWGT is the program administrator and/or service provider:
- 1. Toronto Enterprise Fund
  - Agreement with the City of Toronto: ending in FY 22-23
- 2. Reaching Home, York Region
  - Five-year agreement with The Regional Municipality of York: ending in FY 23-24.
- 3. Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
  - Five-year agreement with Canada-IRCC: ending in FY 24-25
  - Annual Agreement with Region of Peel
- 4. Hydro Settlement Fund
- 5. Youth Challenge Fund

No issues were identified by KPMG when performing the special purpose audits for these five agreements.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

UWGT's continued investments in its network of 300 agencies and community partners was again anchored by the diversification of its fundraising sources—with partners in over 950 workplaces, 2,200 volunteers and over 85,000 workplace, corporate and individual donors that contributed to this robust and sustainable financial health in FY 22-23.

Additional funding from certain government programs and pro-bono support ranging from legal services to donated media advertising space, added to this extraordinary outpouring of generosity in this third unprecedented year of the COVID-19 pandemic environment.

#### FY 22-23 RESULTS & RECENT TRENDS

Fiscal Year	FY 22-23	FY 21-22	FY 20-21
1. \$\$\$ from Campaign Revenue Activities *	\$125.4 million	\$126.1 million	\$121.7 million
2. \$\$\$ from COVID-19 Pandemic & Emergency Revenue Activities	-	\$5.5 million	\$41.8 million
3. \$\$\$ from Government Grants & Other Income	\$9.4 million	\$10.6 million	\$2.8 million
<b>4.</b> \$\$\$ from Investment Activities — Realized & Unrealized Gains	\$3.0 million	\$1.0 million	\$9.4 million
5. Overall Revenue	\$137.8 million	\$143.2 million	\$175.7 million
6. Overall Distributions & Community Programs **	\$115.2 million	\$123.3 million	\$143.3 million
7. Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	\$3.5 million	\$0.2 million	\$11.5 million
8. Fundraising Cost-Revenue Ratio	15.1%	15.4%	15.9%

<sup>\* \$\$\$</sup> from Campaign Revenue Activities at \$125.4 million included \$22.2 million of Donor-Directed Designations to other United Ways and charities – a decrease of (\$2.0M) when compared to the previous year, i.e., FY 21-22.

#### **Overall Revenue**

In this third unprecedented year of the COVID-19 pandemic environment, Overall Revenue was at \$134.8 million [Items 1, 2 & 3] when excluding UWGT's activities for its investment portfolio, i.e., \$3 million [Item 4].

The \$134.8 million for FY 22-23—when excluding \$\$\$ from Investment Activities [Item 4], compares to the previous year of \$142.2 million. This is a decrease of (\$7.4 million), which is driven by:

[Item 1]: Donor-directed designations to other United Ways and charities—year-over-year decrease of (\$2.0 million).

[Item 2]: COVID-19 Pandemic and emergency revenue from government—year-over-year decrease of (\$5.5 million).

[Item 3]: Government grants and disbursements—year-over-year decrease of (\$0.8 million).

When considering the above, "Core" Revenues—also known as Community Investment Revenues—to UWGT were relatively flat.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Overall Distributions & Community Programs at \$115.2 million did not include any Government Emergency Funding for Community in FY 22-23. If comparing to last year's \$123.3 million in Overall Distributions & Community Programs – please see the FY 22-23 Audited Financial Statements-Statement of Operations for a detailed breakdown of the year-over-year decrease.

The Fundraising Cost-Revenue Ratio (CRR) continued to be low at 15.1 per cent with continued focus on operational efficiency and achieving UWGT's objective of being less than 20 per cent.

#### **Overall Distributions & Community Programs**

Total distributions were at \$115.2 million, a decrease from the \$123.3 million from the previous year, when additional one-time investments were funded from the Local Love Fund at the peak of the pandemic. UWGT's investments through the Community Services Sector Strategy to poverty-fighting anchor agencies and Community Program Grants of \$66.9 million is a unique United Way approach to providing stability and flexibility to the network of agencies that support people who are in, or at risk of, falling into poverty.

In addition, UWGT has continued to deepen its investments in Indigenous, Black and other structurally disadvantaged groups. UWGT will also continue to support neighbourhood solutions at the neighbourhood level in partnership with corporate, government and community sectors.

A few highlights to note and which are in alignment with the Board-Approved Strategic Roadmap:

- Delivered over and above the financial commitments of \$66.9 million to its network of agencies and community partners with five-year and three-year investments of stable and flexible funding.
- Decrease year-over-year was driven by the following:
  - Decrease in COVID-19 emergency funding as we moved from emergency to recovery
  - Decrease in donor-directed designations to other United Ways and charities
  - Decrease in government-funded emergency programs associated with COVID-19 Pandemic Revenue

#### **Operating Surplus**

When including UWGT's activities for its investment portfolio, the operating surplus was \$3.5 million—the third consecutive year of achieving at least a balanced budget. The make-up of this operating surplus was \$0.5 million from Operations and \$3 million from investment activities related to the management of the reserves and The Tomorrow Fund<sup>™</sup>, i.e., the investment portfolio for endowments to UWGT. This year's operating surplus enabled UWGT to maintain its liquidity position and reserves at healthy levels. Please refer to the Statement of Operations.

Achieving this financial position has allowed UWGT to commit and confirm community investments of at least \$66.9 million to its network of agencies and community partners for the period of April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. This is an important strategy and commitment to deliver critical services with continued investments in local neighbourhood solutions in partnership with corporate, government and community sectors.

#### **Going Forward**

Prudent financial management at UWGT remains a priority, with its reserves being maintained at healthy levels and sufficient to backstop the three-year and five-year financial commitments of UWGT to its network of agencies and the ongoing sustainability of its operations when looking forward.

Deemed as a going concern for the year ahead, the levels of the reserves are financial indicators of the health and sustainability for UWGT, especially with the financial uncertainties of the macroeconomic environment, including COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, market volatility and fears of recession.

Read our full Audited Financial Statements, FY 22-23 for more details.

# 2022-2023 BOARD AND COMMITTEES

We thank our Board of Trustees and Committee members for their wisdom, commitment and passion to steer our organization in the achievement of our mission.

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

#### **OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION**

Dr. Patricia O'Campo Chair, Board of Trustees Bruce McCuaig Vice Chair, Finance, Audit and Risk & Treasurer

Lisa Gonsalves Vice Chair, Community Impact Nancy McConnell Vice Chair. Strategic Development

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Len Carby IG Wealth Management

**Betsey Chung** TD Bank Group Laura Dottori-Attanasio Element Fleet Management

Katherine Dudtschak Leader, Corporate Director, Advisor and Community Builder

Wayne Halenda Independent Consultant

**Mohammed Hashim** Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Mariam Hashmi Walmart Canada

Ziad Hindo Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

Michelle Johnston Society of United Professionals, IFPTE 160

Islay McGlynn Corporate Director

Kurankye Sekyi-Otu Asset Management Executive

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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Lisa Gonsalves\* The Regional Municipality of York

Nancy McConnell\* Google Canada

Bruce McCuaig\* **AECOM** 

Islay McGlynn\* Corporate Director

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Zakaria Abdulle Somali Cultural and Recreation Centre Steering Committee

Rona Abramovitch University of Toronto (Professor Emeritus)

Giuliana Carbone Former Deputy City Manager, City of Toronto

Wilfred Cheung Ontario Health

Mariam Hashmi\* Walmart Canada

Michelle Johnston\* Society of United Professionals, IFPTE 160

Lubna Khalid Working for Change

Arden Krystal Southlake Regional Health Centre

Jean Lam

Canadian Red Cross

Diana Lee Toronto Dominion Bank

Vanita Varma Centre for Innovation in Health and Wellness (CIHW) at Humber College

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Katherine Dudtschak\* Leader, Corporate Director, Advisor and Community Builder

Wayne Halenda\* Independent Consultant

**Chris Hoffmann** Brompton Corp. **Kevin King** 

Julia Moynihan **CIBC** Capital Markets Jane Rowe Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

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Nancy McConnell\* Google Canada, Committee Chair

Rona Abramovitch University of Toronto (Professor Emeritus)

Len Carby\* IG Wealth Management

Betsey Chung\* TD Bank Group Laura Dottori-Attanasio\* Element Fleet Management

Mohammed Hashim\* Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Kurankye Sekyi-Otu\* Asset Management Executive

**Damon Williams RBC Royal Bank** 

<sup>\*</sup>Indicates that the Committee member also serves on the United Way Greater Toronto Board of Trustees.

#### **About United Way Greater Toronto**

As the largest non-government funder of community services in the GTA, United Way Greater Toronto reinforces a crucial community safety net to support people living in poverty. United Way's network of agencies and initiatives in neighbourhoods across Peel, Toronto and York Region works to ensure that everyone has access to the programs and services they need to thrive. Mobilizing community support, United Way's work is rooted in ground-breaking research, strategic leadership, local advocacy and cross-sectoral partnerships committed to building a more equitable region and lasting solutions to the GTA's greatest challenges.



WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES IN PEEL, TORONTO & YORK REGION

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