



# Community Funding

## Annual Report 2024



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## Introduction

### The Community Funding Framework

The City of Ottawa's Community Funding Framework (CFF) aims to improve community well-being by investing financial and capacity building resources in the non-profit social services sector to address the root causes of poverty and increase equitable access to services for the most vulnerable residents.

These investments in long-term prevention and a wide range of programs and services increase the City's capacity to keep responding to complex social challenges by sustaining a strong social infrastructure.

In 2024, Community Funding allocated \$34 million of municipal money to 140 non-profit organizations through the following funding streams: Sustainability Fund, Community Safety and

Well-Being Fund, Project Funding, Civic Events, Emerging Community Need Funding, and Emergency Funding. More details on the Community Funding Framework can be found on [ottawa.ca/communityfunding](https://ottawa.ca/communityfunding).

The CFF contributes to key City's strategies, including the [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#), the [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), and the [Anti-Racism Strategy](#).



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## The Community Funding Evaluation Framework – Measuring impact

In 2022, the City of Ottawa developed a new Community Funding Framework (CFF) with the goal of improving community well-being by investing financial and capacity building resources in the non-profit social services sector. Focus was placed on addressing the root causes of poverty and increasing equitable access to services for residents facing the greatest needs and barriers in our community.

The Community Funding Evaluation Framework (CFEF) was created together with non-profit social service organizations as a platform for funded organizations to collect, monitor, and display organization and program evaluation data. The Framework ensures greater accountability and transparency of funding allocated through the CFF.

The CFEF was fully implemented for the first time in 2024. Only organizations funded through the **Sustainability Fund** reported under the CFEF for 2024. This represents 84% of the funds allocated through the CFF in 2024. This report presents the benchmarking data with the potential to be analyzed and evaluated for trends in the coming years.

All reporting requirements for the Sustainability Fund were completed through our online Impact Evaluation Platform, operated by Context Research Group (CRG), a Canadian owned and operated research firm.





## Overview of the Sustainability Fund

The purpose of the Sustainability Fund is to maintain a strong and sustainable social sector that ensures equitable provision of services for residents facing the greatest barriers and challenges. It provides five years (2022–2026) of steady funding for core operations and certain programs that support residents facing the biggest challenges.

Core funding allows organizations to deliver on their mission. This is key for organizations because it provides flexible, stable financial support that enables them to operate effectively and sustainably. It helps organizations keep their doors open and staff paid, so they can focus on serving their communities by giving them the flexibility to plan, respond to urgent needs, and improve their programs without being tied to specific projects.

Program funding on the other hand, is tailored directly to the delivery of a specific program.

In 2024, **\$28.3 million** was invested in **94 organizations**, including **\$20.6 million** allocated as core funding. **75** organizations

received core funding to deliver on their mission and deliver essential services, while **41** organizations received funding dedicated to **71** specific programs. Some organizations received both core and program funding.

In 2024, organizations receiving Sustainability funding reached **577,844 unique clients** across all programs and services, with **7,097,467 client contacts**—the number of times funded organizations connected with their clients.

These organizations' work was supported by **1,937 full-time** and **2,253 part-time staff** who contributed over **4,558,800 hours** to deliver essential community programs and services. **18,265 volunteers** also contributed over **1,022,470 hours** of important support.

Services were delivered in **47 specified languages** (most common are Arabic, Cantonese, English, French, Mandarin, Somali, Spanish, Swahili), and some organizations use interpretation services, providing up to 230 languages.



## About this report

This report gives a clear summary of the City of Ottawa's funding efforts that support non-profit social service agencies. The goal is to work together to build a fair and inclusive city for all residents. Guided by the priorities set out in the City of Ottawa's Community Funding Framework, this report shows how current funded programs and services are making a difference in communities.

### Method

The information in this report comes from client surveys and annual funding reports, collected through the online Impact Evaluation Platform.

All programs funded through the Sustainability Fund were evaluated. Organizations receiving core funding selected a number of programs to evaluate the impact of core funding on clients, to represent their overall impact. An organization receiving core funding may evaluate one to five programs, depending on the amount of core funding received each year. In total, 225 programs were evaluated in 2024.

In 2024, **6,862 client impact surveys** were completed by clients of funded organizations. Depending on program structure and scope (ongoing or cohort-based), surveys were distributed to clients for either a set period (for example 2 weeks), or to clients from a predetermined number of cohorts, for example, a 12-week group counselling or pre-employment program that runs multiple times throughout the year.

The surveys provide important feedback on funded organizations' work and the impact it has on residents. This helps make ongoing improvements and ensures the programs align with identified priorities. Through both qualitative and quantitative data, the report demonstrates how funding is helping residents and the progress made toward key outcomes. This includes increased community well-being, improved access to services, mitigation of the effects of poverty, and stronger community engagement.

By using these evaluation methods, this report shares both results and real-life stories. It also acts as a reflection of the City's commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous learning, working toward a healthier and more equitable community for all.

## Limitations

Although client impact surveys and annual reporting data for program-specific funding provide a comprehensive picture of their impact in the community, the data provided through the evaluation of programs for core funding only provide a limited view of what core funding really allows organizations to do. Evaluating programs demonstrates how these financial resources have an impact on clients but does not measure the impact it has on internal capacity and sustainability of the organizations.

It is also worth noting that while this funding is important in supporting non-profit organizations, the City's Sustainability Fund is not their only source of financial support. Many of these organizations also rely on other funders such as provincial or federal government programs, private foundations, corporate sponsors, fundraising efforts, and donations from individuals. The City's contribution is part of a broader network of support that helps these organizations deliver valuable services to the community.







## Impact by priority areas

The Community Funding Evaluation Framework (CFEF) brings together the three funding priorities of the CFF—poverty reduction, community development and social infrastructure—into one clear picture to show the overall value of the investments.

To better show what the funded programs and services have achieved, the CFF uses several Impact Areas. These are groups of similar activities within each funding priority that work toward the same intended impact.

The CFEF includes three Priorities and ten Impact Areas:

Priorities	Impact Area
Poverty Reduction	Basic Needs
	Food Insecurity
	Mental Well-Being
	Skill Development
	Social Inclusion
	System Navigation
Community Development	Community Development
Social Infrastructure	Program, Organizations, Networks and Coalition Capacity
	System Planning and Change



The section below presents results in relation to the priorities and impact areas outlined in the Community Funding Evaluation Framework (CFEF). For each section, the report includes:

- A brief overview of what the impact area aims to address
- Key impact in numbers
- Key impact metrics from client surveys, with a focus on Community Funding Framework priority groups (Francophones; immigrants; Indigenous peoples; 2SLGBTQIA+ community members; older adults; people living in poverty; people with disabilities; racialized people; rural residents; women; and youth)
- Client impact stories

Understanding significant differences

In this report, you’ll sometimes see that one group was “significantly more likely” or “significantly less likely” to answer a question a certain way. This means that the difference is statistically significant based on the comparison of proportions using non-parametric tests with a confidence level of 95%. It helps better understand how different groups are experiencing programs. Even smaller differences can be important. For example, 75% of people aged 30–64 said they had enough food when using the program, compared to the overall average of 78%. A 3% difference may seem small, but because of the high number of people who responded to the survey, we can be confident that it reflects a real difference in experience.

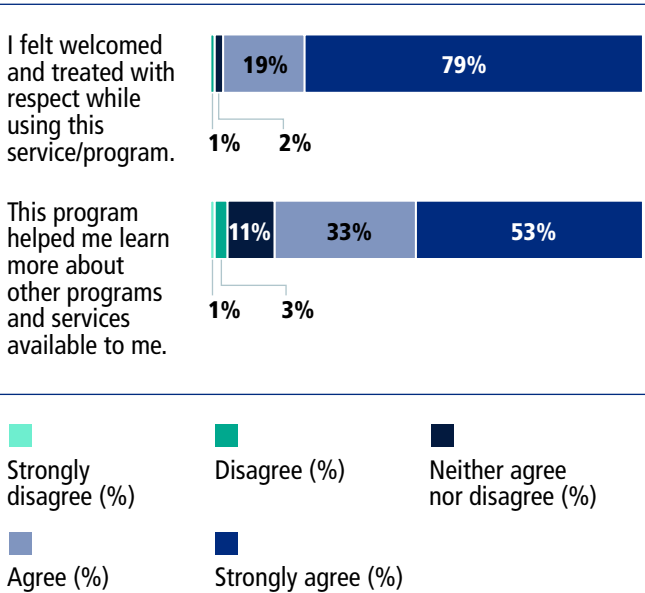
Priority – Poverty reduction

Poverty means not having the resources, opportunities, or power needed to fully take part in society. Coinciding with the end of temporary pandemic benefits and high inflation in the Ottawa-Gatineau region, the poverty rate increased to 9.1% in 2022, from 6.5% in 2021, according to the Government of Canada’s official poverty line, the Market Basket Measure (Statistics Canada, 2024).

Reducing poverty includes working to address the social determinants of health, such as income, unemployment, food insecurity, and social exclusion, while helping to ease its immediate effects in the community.

All Client Impact Surveys for the Poverty Reduction priority (5,995 surveys completed) included two questions in relation to clients’ overall experience using these programs.

Results from the surveys indicate that clients felt welcome and were treated with respect, and that the programs helped them learn more about programs and services available to them.





## Impact area – Basic needs

**Basic needs programs** provide residents with essential items or help necessary for them to have and keep a basic, decent quality of life. This includes essential items and services, such as access to washrooms, showers, and furniture, and independence supports such as snow clearing, transportation to necessary appointments, and at-home support for tasks that the resident could not complete on their own. "Poverty reduction efforts that target basic needs help make life more stable by reducing daily financial pressures. Co-locating services in one place such as a community hub may reduce structural barriers and make it easier for the community to meet people's basic needs" (City of Ottawa, 2024).

### Impact by the numbers



**12,581**  
care packages  
provided



**238**  
emergency moves  
supported



**2,280**  
large furniture and bikes  
provided or repaired



**1,088**  
income tax filed  
or supported



**3,892**  
adults or people with  
disabilities better able  
to remain in their  
homes because of  
the services provided



**499**  
driveways shoveled  
for older adults and  
people with disabilities



**6,304**  
foot care clinics

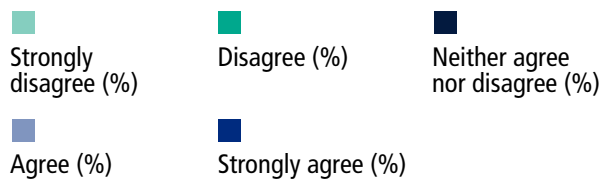
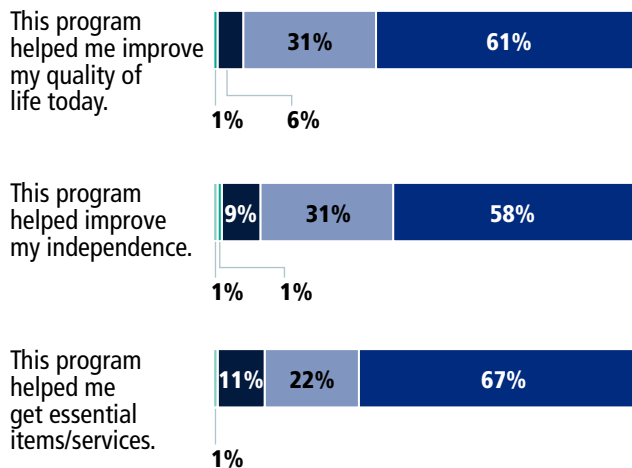


**35,349**  
trips to appointments  
provided



## Client impact surveys (757 surveys completed)

Results from the surveys indicate that basic needs programs benefit older adults greatly. Adults aged 65+ (17%) were significantly more likely to access basic needs programs compared to the average for all age groups combined (8%).



## Story – The Good Companions

"A senior client, a 78-year-old lady preparing for a knee replacement surgery, depends on multiple Community Support Services to maintain her independence. Living alone in Centertown with no family support in Ottawa and a limited income, she describes our Grocery Bus program as a "lifeline". Without it, she wouldn't be able to get groceries. Beyond ensuring access to food, this program has helped her form new friendships and feel more connected to her community. She is also deeply grateful for the transportation we provide to her many medical appointments, especially as she prepares for surgery. These rides offer her reassurance that she will always have a way to access the care she needs, easing her worries during a stressful time."





## Impact area – Food insecurity

**Food insecurity** means not having enough safe and healthy food because of a lack of money. It can range from worrying about running out of food, to not being able to eat a balanced diet, to going without food. “As with other dimensions of poverty, food insecurity is not experienced in isolation. Access to adequate affordable, culturally appropriate, and nutritious foods can be closely linked to physical and mental health outcomes” (Canada Without Poverty, 2025). In Ottawa, close to 1 in 4 households (23.7%) experienced food insecurity in 2023, which has significantly increased since 2022, when 1 in 7 households (14.8%) experienced food insecurity (Public Health Ontario, 2023).

Food insecurity programming provides food to residents in need, either through meal programs, food banks, grocery cards, or food education. This includes emergency food banks, such as programs and services that provide food to food insecure residents, and meal programs, such as programs and services that provide hot, cold or frozen meals to food insecure residents.

### Impact by the numbers



**\$17,270,442**

of food distributed through emergency food banks  
(Estimated dollar value reported by food banks)



**2,395,861**

full meals provided



**978,145**

light meals or  
snacks provided





## Client impact surveys (1,431 surveys completed)

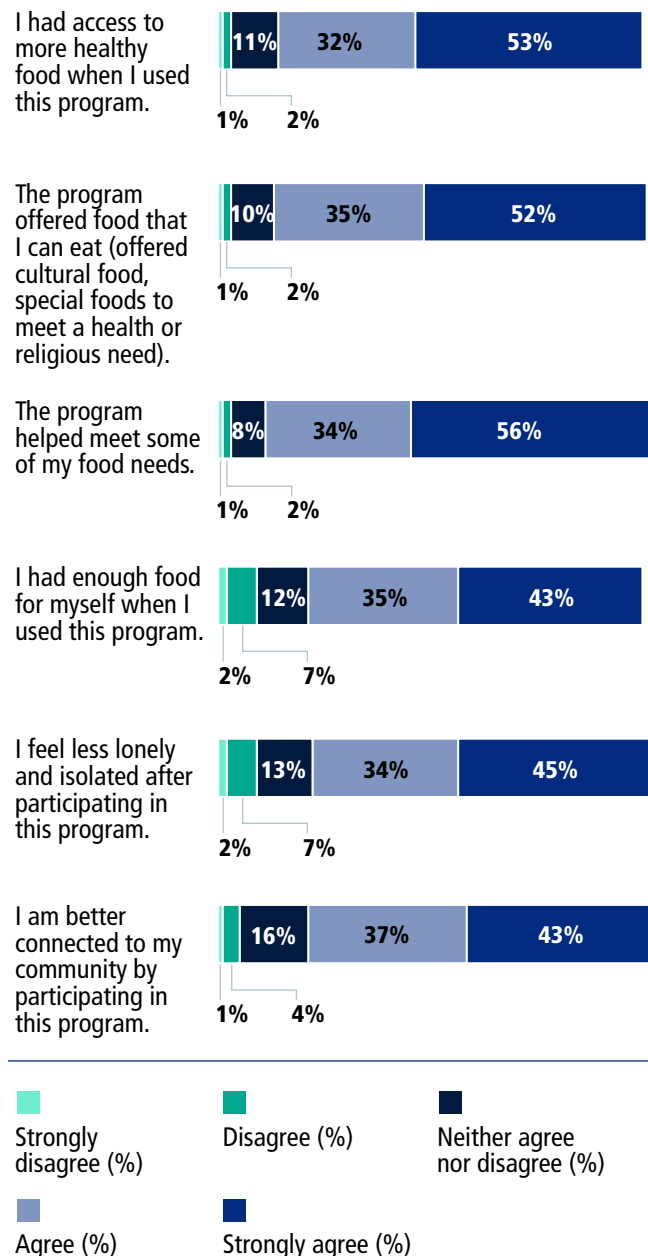
Results from the surveys indicate that 85% of respondents had access to more healthy food. Meanwhile, inequities remain for some priority groups and clients' experiences vary significantly across different demographic groups.

Black and Indigenous communities are facing deeper challenges, pointing to ongoing inequities that the Sustainability Fund is working to address. A higher proportion of Black (28%) and Indigenous (25%) respondents reported using food insecurity programs, compared to 16% of White respondents.

Survey responses also indicate that clients' experience of food security programs can vary depending on their age. This information is important to help tailor programs to some residents' needs. Adults (aged 30–64) were significantly more likely than other age groups to find that programs offer food they can eat (89%) and that the programs are meeting their food needs (93%). Youth aged 10–19 were significantly less likely than other age groups to agree to having access to more healthy food while using the program (73%) and to the program helping them meet their food needs (71%). Interestingly, they agreed that they had enough food for themselves while using this program (79%).

While survey results indicate that 78% of respondents had enough food for themselves when using food insecurity programs, the impact varies across priority groups. Those aged 30–64 (75%), racialized (71%), and those that felt that they did not have enough income to meet their basic needs (75%) were significantly less likely to agree that they had enough food for themselves when they used the program compared to the average (78%).

Survey results indicate that food insecurity programs helped clients from priority groups be more aware of other resources available to them. Those who identified as Black (89%), racialized (93%), Francophones (90%), those born outside of Canada (89%) were significantly more likely to agree that the programs helped them learn more about other programs and services available to them compared to the average (83%).





## Story – The Ottawa Network for Education

“One of our Indigenous students (10 years old, grade 5), used to struggle to focus in class because he often came to school without having eaten breakfast nor having brought a lunch. With access to nutritious snacks and lunch provided at the school, he no longer worries about going hungry during the day. As a result, his energy levels have increased, and he is able to engage in classroom activities. Not only has his academic performance improved, but he has also become more involved in extracurricular activities.”





## Impact area – Mental well-being

**Mental well-being** means feeling good emotionally and mentally. It helps people handle life's challenges, do their work well, and take part in their communities. In 2023, over a third (37%) of Ottawa residents self-reported fair to poor mental health (Ottawa Public Health, 2025). "Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world" (World Health Organization, 2025).

Mental well-being programming includes crisis intervention programs and services that provide short-term help to deal with urgent problems, crisis phone lines available for residents in need of immediate support, professional counseling provided by a registered or certified professional, and informal counseling where participants can get help or advice.

### Impact by the numbers



**18,768**  
interventions



**3,159**  
referrals



**6,407**  
brief counselling  
sessions



**2,557**  
harm reduction  
interventions



**19,653**  
emergency supplies  
distributed



**41,172**  
calls to crisis lines



**31,154**  
hours of professional  
counselling provided



**107,920**  
informal counselling  
interactions



## Client impact surveys (828 surveys completed)

Results from the surveys indicate that mental well-being programs are supporting residents living in poverty. This shows that the programs are reaching those with greater financial need and are having a real impact in helping them navigate important challenges.

Those who said they didn't have enough income to cover their basic needs were significantly more likely to use these programs (13%) compared to those that felt that they had enough income (8%). 90% of them said the program helped them with an important life issue, compared to 82% of those that felt that they had enough income.

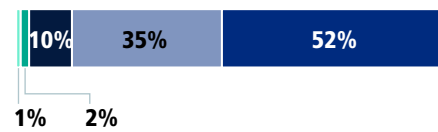
Results from the surveys indicate that older adults are improving their mental health skills and knowledge the most. People aged over 65 (96%) were significantly more likely to have improved skills or knowledge by participating in the program compared to the average of all age groups (88%).

Results from the surveys also demonstrate that mental well-being programs had a larger impact on immigrants. These programs may be especially important as many immigrants face challenges like social isolation, stress from major life transitions, and difficulty finding culturally appropriate services. Immigrants were significantly more likely than people born in Canada to say the program helped them increase skills or knowledge (95% vs. 83%), handle life challenges (94% vs. 84%), get help with an important issue (91% vs. 82%), and feel more hopeful (95% vs. 83%).

I have increased my skills or knowledge by participating in this program.



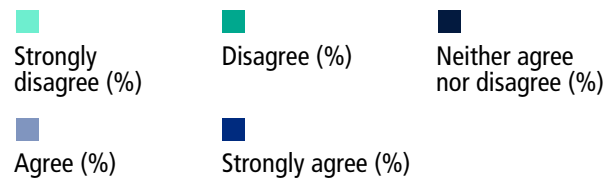
I have increased my ability to deal with challenges in my life by participating in this program.



I feel more hopeful after participating in this program.



I got help with an important issue in my life when I participated in this program.







## Story – Serenity Renewal

“Marianka, a recovered addict and an active member of a 12-step support group, shared her powerful story of addiction, recovery, and healing with the support of Serenity Renewal for Families. After struggling with a severe cocaine addiction that impacted her health, family, and career, she completed a 30-day inpatient rehab program and began the difficult journey of rebuilding her life. Through subsidized counselling services offered by Serenity Renewal, Marianka and her husband were able to access couples and individual therapy, while their young sons participated in the BABES program and then the family participated in the Strengthening Families for the Future program. The support they received helped them navigate the emotional toll of addiction and begin healing together as a family. Marianka credits Serenity Renewal for Families as a cornerstone of her and her family’s recovery and expresses her deep gratitude for the donor-supported services that made it all possible.”





## Impact area – Skill development

**Skill development** means identifying what skills a person needs and helping them build those skills to reach their goals. “In a community where individuals feel supported, they can focus on personal growth and development. Education and skills training have become more accessible, helping people build better futures for themselves and their families. This growth uplifts the entire community, creating a positive cycle of progress” (Keam, 2023).

Municipal skill development programs include homework supports where residents can access technology and tutors/staff/peers to help them be successful in school, pre-employment supports to help people get the skills they need to find a job, and soft skills development supports to help people build important personal and social skills they need to do well in school and succeed at most jobs.

### Impact by the numbers



**18,561**  
unique client contacts



**1,170**  
trainings and  
workshops given



**1,920**  
1:1 tutoring sessions



**1,331**  
unique youth accessed  
the tutoring sessions



**604**  
resumes formally reviewed



**397**  
entrepreneurship  
supports provided



**645**  
workshops delivered



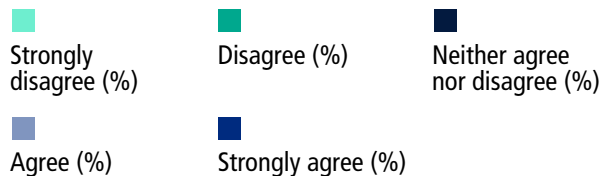
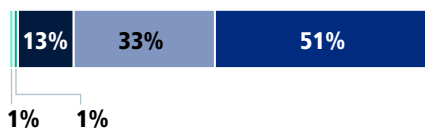
**326**  
general life skills and  
wrap around sessions



## Client impact surveys (401 surveys completed)

Youth (ages 10–29) are participating in skill development programs the most. In today's world, where jobs often require specific experience or training, these programs give youth a stronger foundation. Whether it's building confidence, gaining practical skills, or preparing for school or work, this support is helping youth take important steps toward their goals. Youth (17%) were significantly more likely to access skill development programs compared to the average of all age groups combined (9%).

I feel better prepared for school/workforce/ life by participating in this program.



## Story – The Door Youth Centre

“Through workshops, mentorship, volunteer opportunities, and creative programming, The Door helps youth build confidence, leadership abilities, and the skills they need to thrive both personally and within their communities.

One of many success stories is of a young female member, Soliana. Since joining The Door Youth Centre in 2022, 15-year-old Soliana has shown remarkable growth through participation in skill development programs.

In 2024, she played a leading role in transforming the Girls' Night Program. Drawing on insights gained from the Black Youth Leadership Program, Anti-Human Trafficking workshops, and various career talks and information sessions, she assisted in designing inclusive activities, proposed various peer discussions, and ensured all participants felt empowered and heard. Furthermore, Soliana developed practical life skills through programs such as Club Nourish, Multicultural Young Chefs sessions, and Youth Initiative Fundraisers. These experiences strengthened her teamwork, problem-solving, and organizational abilities, which she applied to support major community events.

Her exceptional contributions were recognized when she received the Art Stinson Award, highlighting her leadership, initiative, and commitment. Soliana's experience demonstrates how The Door's skill development programming equips youth with the confidence, knowledge, and leadership abilities to make meaningful contributions to their communities while fostering personal growth.”



## Impact area – Social inclusion

**Social inclusion** means helping people who face the biggest challenges have the chances, support, and respect they need to participate fully in society. “Humans are social beings. Making connections with one another and maintaining relationships with family and peers is vital. The ability to connect and socialize with one another can have a positive impact on our overall health. Human connection can fuel one’s sense of belonging, build confidence, and improve overall well-being” (Keam, 2023). Social inclusion programs and activities offer residents opportunities to connect with others and feel like they belong.

### Impact by the numbers



**24,725**  
unique client contacts



**36,101**  
opportunities for participation, social belonging and social connection – including physical, recreational, social, educational, and creative activities





## Client impact surveys (1,665 surveys completed)

The survey results showed that some priority groups had a higher sense of social inclusion by participating in programs. These results show that social inclusion programs are making a real difference by helping people feel more connected, less isolated, and more supported in their communities — especially those who may face greater barriers to inclusion.

Francophones (56%) were significantly more likely to access social inclusion programs compared to Anglophones (23%).

These demographic groups were significantly more likely to agree that they were better connected to their community after participating in the program:

- Those aged 65 and older (90%) compared to the average (88%)
- Francophones (91%) compared to Anglophones (86%)

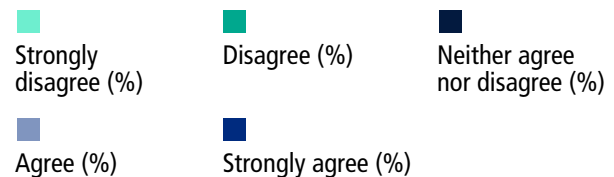
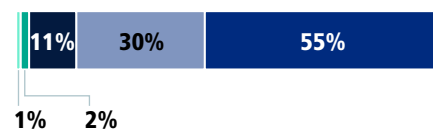
These demographic groups were significantly more likely to agree that they felt less lonely after participating in the program:

- Those aged 65+ (90%) compared to the average of all age groups combined (84%)
- Francophones (91%) compared to Anglophones (86%)
- Those who felt that they had enough income to meet their basic needs (87%) compared to those who felt that they did not have enough income to meet their basic needs (84%)

I am better connected to my community after participating in this program.



I feel less lonely after participating in this program.



## Story – Le Rendez-vous des aînés francophones d'Ottawa (RAFO)

"I joined the RAFO in the fall of 2023 following the death of my husband and feeling the need to socialize with Ottawa's francophone community. I first signed up for the walking club and then for several other activities. I must say that this socialization and participation in the RAFO's activities has helped me enormously. It's a welcoming place where you can have fun and meet lots of people looking for fun in a pleasant, friendly French-speaking environment."



## Impact area – System navigation

**System navigation supports** help individuals understand and access the social service system more effectively, particularly when facing complex or fragmented pathways. Delivered by existing service providers and community partners, these supports reduce barriers, improve outcomes, and promote more equitable access to programs and services.

### Impact by the numbers



**68,590**  
unique client contacts



**51,108**  
referrals made



**9,164**  
follow ups



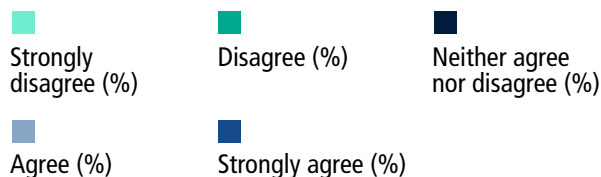
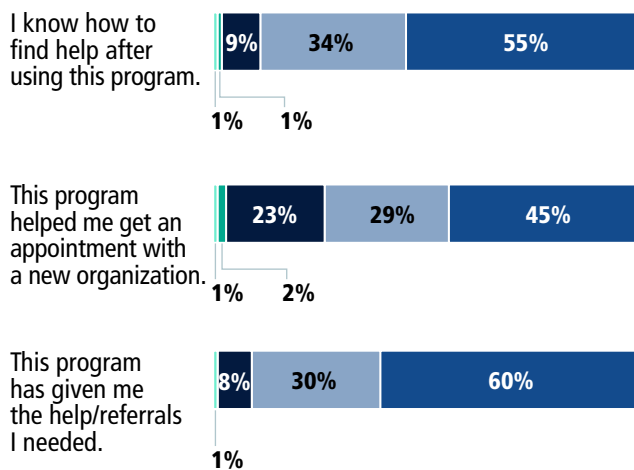
**2,501**  
warm hand offs



## Client impact surveys (322 surveys completed)

Survey results indicate that system navigation programs are especially important for helping newcomers find and access the services they need. Immigrants (6%) were significantly more likely to use system navigation programs compared to non-immigrants (3%).

Results also indicate that these programs have a greater impact in helping Black residents successfully access other services. Black participants (89%) were significantly more likely than average of all respondents (74%) to say the program helped them get an appointment with a new organization.



## Story – Community Navigation of Eastern Ontario (2-1-1)

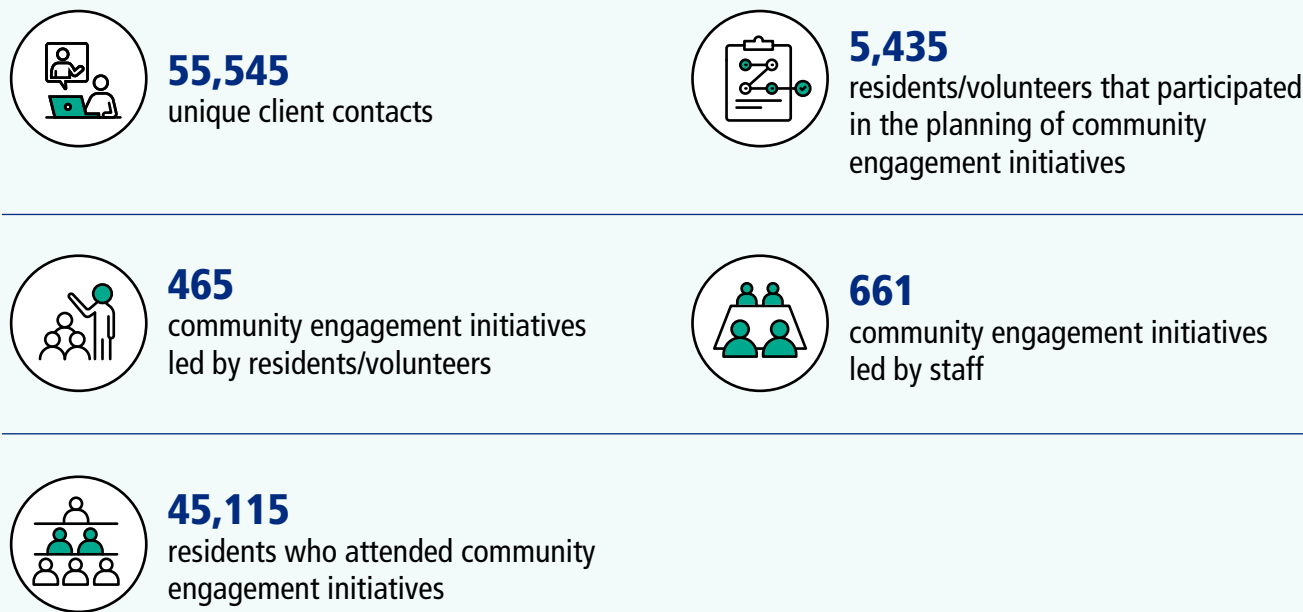
"Increasingly, people do not know where to turn to find solutions to their life challenges. They get bounced around from place to place. By calling 211, they get a full assessment of their issues, and they get connected to the best potential resource. When speaking with our community navigators, callers get an empathetic ear to listen, and for the vast majority, a potential solution to their challenge. This benefits them greatly. We help seniors who call because they are lonely, students looking for mental health support, women fleeing an abusive situation, newcomers just arriving in Ottawa, and anyone who doesn't know where to turn. For our team, there is nothing better than making lives better by connecting people to the help they need."



## Priority – Community development

**Community development** is an inclusive process that helps residents get involved, stay informed, and work together to solve common problems. This includes community engagement, the process of residents coming together for events and activities to help improve their community, and capacity to address local issues so that residents learn, get involved, and lead projects in their neighbourhood. “Community Development has immense potential to improve the lives of those living in our community, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable, by building on strengths and assets, increasing community to address challenges, and advocating for system level change.” (Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres Community Developers Network, 2018)

### Impact by the numbers

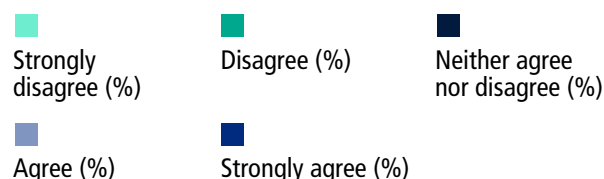
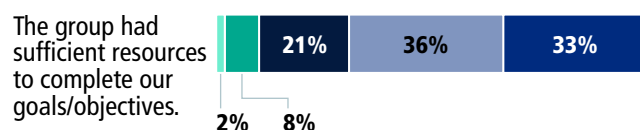
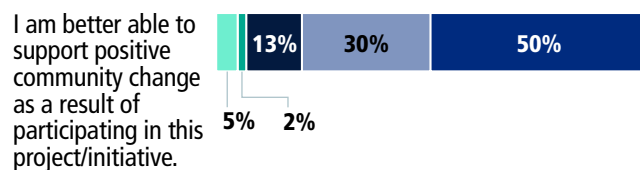
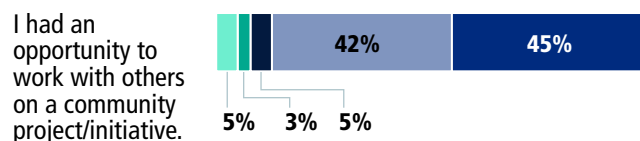
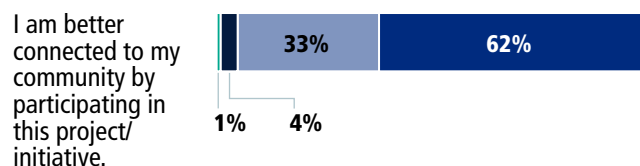
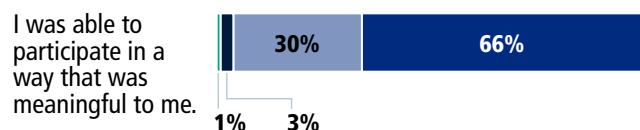




## Client impact surveys (555 surveys completed)

Community development programs are providing important spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals to connect and engage. Individuals identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+ (11%) were significantly more likely to access community development programs compared to those who identified as heterosexual (8%).

There were no other significant differences between demographic groups taking part in Community development programs, which means clients generally had similar experiences, which is a good sign that the programs are creating meaningful connections in the community.



## Story – City for All Women Initiative (CAWI)

“Through Training in Civic Engagement, Peggy, an active CAWI member, was able to successfully advocate for a designated Para Transpo sign by their apartment building so that Para drivers didn’t have to wait for other parked vehicles to move before they could lower the ramp for riders. In their own words: “It has taken me 2 years of advocating and lots of “No that is not possible”. All people’s time is important. Without this new sign I and others have been living with Time Poverty as a big barrier. I didn’t even know what Time Poverty meant and the recognition I was living with it as a barrier. No longer am I greeted with angry Para Transpo drivers worried about running late for their next pick up or drop off. I love advocating for others. Making changes to help remove barriers makes our city a better place for all.”



## Priority – Social infrastructure

**Social infrastructure** includes the places, resources, and services that help people and communities meet their social needs, grow, and enhance community resilience and well-being.

In 2024, **183 partners** collaborated towards Social Infrastructure programs focused on strengthening Ottawa's support systems through collaboration, equity, and resilience.

By strengthening organizational capacity, Ottawa's social infrastructure becomes better equipped to:

- Ensure equitable access to services for Francophone, racialized, 2SLGBTQQIA+, newcomer, and rural communities

- Prevent service disruptions in critical areas like mental health, food security, youth support, and gender-based violence
- Promote social cohesion by reducing isolation and fostering belonging through inclusive, community-driven programming
- Support upstream solutions, such as policy advocacy, system change, and collaborative planning that tackle root causes of inequities

Please note that because of the nature of the work, Client Impact Surveys were not distributed for this impact area.





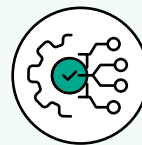
## Impact area – Program, organizations, networks and coalition capacity

By working together, organizations and their staff share skills, knowledge, and resources to support an effective, sustainable, and equitable non-profit sector.

Programs evaluated under this Impact Area work towards these primary objectives:



**12%**  
better service or  
product delivery



**18%**  
improved cross-sector  
coordination



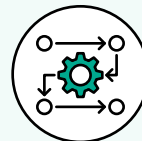
**12%**  
improved Equity and  
Inclusion initiatives



**24%**  
improved responsiveness  
to emerging needs



**24%**  
organization service  
capacity improvement



**12%**  
organizations efficiency  
improvement



### Story – The Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses

“Community Houses are an important part of Ottawa’s social infrastructure. They are trusted local centers that serve children, youth, and other underserved groups. By providing support that respects culture and past experiences, they help with serious issues like food insecurity, mental health, youth support, and poverty. Community Houses are also important because they help connect services that often work in silos. By taking part in City-wide committees and partnerships, they speak up for local needs, help with planning, and make sure services are fair and based on what communities really need.

The Coalition brings together 16 Community Houses to work as a team and help strengthen Ottawa’s support system for residents. Supporting the capacity of the Coalition of Community Houses is a cost-effective way to make sure the knowledge and experience of all 16 Community Houses are included in finding problems and creating solutions.

In 2024, this teamwork led to significant progress in improving food security and making services more connected and coordinated. The Coalition developed a Community House Wraparound Supports Framework and conducted a funding gap analysis to better understand resource needs. They played an active role on City-wide tables, including the Ottawa Community Food Partnership and the Community Development Framework Mental Wellbeing Working Group, to make sure community voices are included in larger planning efforts.

Because of their advocacy, funding was secured to support local food programs and help Community House food banks grow stronger. This led to better access to healthy food for underserved communities and made it easier for people with complex needs to find the help they need.”



### Story – Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres

“The Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres (CHRCs) is a group of 13 multi-service hubs that are deeply connected to rural, urban, and suburban communities across Ottawa. CHRCs support residents who face barriers to meeting their basic needs.

CHRCs work alongside communities. In the East end, community developers from the Eastern Ottawa Community Resource Centre (EOCRC) spent many months talking with residents and local partners to learn about their needs. Together, they found that people needed access to healthy, culturally appropriate food support. In response, the EOCRC supported residents to start two new food security programs that do more than give food, they also help reduce loneliness, connect people to culture, build community pride and navigate to other services to meet basic needs. This work is now being shared with other CHRCs through the Coalition and the program is being used as a model across the City to build similar programs.

By combining deep local relationships with City-wide collaboration, the CHRC Coalition works to provide equitable access to services across the city for individuals, families, communities, and organizations.”



## Impact area – System planning and change

**System planning and change** refers to organizations, coalitions and networks working together to improve or redesign how services are planned and delivered to better meet community needs.



### Story – The Ottawa Food Bank

"Food insecurity is often caused by systemic issues such as poverty, unemployment or lack of affordable housing. In Ottawa, this is a growing issue. 1 out of every 4 households cannot afford enough food (Ottawa Food Bank, 2024).

To help, the Ottawa Food Bank began supporting a pilot program in 2019 called the Wrap Around Support Initiative (WASI). We know for many people, a food bank will be their first involvement with social services. The WASI program recognizes food isn't the only answer, it also helps them with other supports and referrals they might need, like employment services, literacy skills, or settlement services.

In 2024, the WASI program provided essential referrals and services, including employment support, literacy development, and settlement assistance through the following actions supported by the Ottawa Food Bank:

- Continued the WASI pilot at two Community Health and Resource Centres (CHRC's) offering support at six network food banks
- Signed one new agreement with another CHRC to provide wrap-around supports at one food bank
- Partnered with six immigrant-serving organizations to help newcomers to Canada access support at food banks participating in WASI.

Finally, to understand WASI's effectiveness, impact, and how it can better serve neighbours struggling to afford enough healthy food, the Ottawa Food Bank involved the University of Ottawa's Social and Health Programs and Policies and their Microprogram Centre for Research on Education and Community Services in various evaluations."



## Story – The Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition

“There are 44 thousand Indigenous Peoples in Ottawa. The OAC provides services and programs to over 20 thousand community members.

“The Coalition, as much as anything, allows us to collaborate with each other and problem-solve with together. I think it is safe to say that Indigenous people don’t find themselves in the situation that they’re in in isolation. So, we are going to identify and implement programs and services and solutions to our challenges, whether it is housing or homelessness, access to appropriate healthcare and education, we’ve got to collaborate... That’s the one gift that we have as human beings that we can give to each other is the gift of time and we’ve invested our own time in each other and on behalf of a community that hasn’t wavered, in fact it’s become even stronger. And if I could equate that to 10 organizations and you are to braid us together, it’s incredibly, incredibly strong.”

One of the Strategic Directions of the OAC in 2024 was to build capacity in the Indigenous community to respond to the needs identified in the Community. This included a wide range of projects. One of the key priorities for the Indigenous Women’s Safety Table was the establishment of the Inuit VAW Shelter. Repeatedly, the OAC heard from its member organizations and partners of the significant vulnerability that Inuit women were facing in the city of Ottawa, particularly the high numbers of Inuit women who were homeless, in unsafe personal relationships and vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

In 2024, the OAC was able to secure \$6.4 million for the building of the Shelter, \$2.8 million for pre-development funding, \$1.8 million annually for 20 years for the operations of the Shelter and the transfer of the land of 250 Forestglade Crescent from the City to the OAC. The OAC selected the architects for this project, including a leading First Nation architect and the Project Development company. Meetings were held regularly to move the project forward and engagement with Inuit women, nearby residents and the City Councillor for Ward 10 was initiated to help build relationships.

This is one example of many projects and initiatives that the OAC has undertaken to support the Indigenous community in Ottawa.”





## Conclusion

This 2024 Community Funding Annual Report reflects both the scale of Ottawa's communities' needs and the City's commitment to meeting them. Together, organizations made over 7 million connections with people, thanks to more than 4,100 staff and 18,000 volunteers offering services in 47 languages, which shows the wide impact of the Sustainability Fund.

Community Funding creates positive change rooted in client experience. With agreement scores ranging from 69% to 98% across Impact Areas, most clients reported feeling more hopeful, treated with respect and dignity, better equipped, and more connected after accessing funded programs. This feedback shows that these programs are not only reaching people, but they are also meaningfully improving their lives.

The City's investments help create strong support systems and services. Behind every positive client outcome is a system of support. The social infrastructure programs strengthened the ability

of organizations, coalitions, and systems to respond effectively to complex challenges from food insecurity to making services more inclusive. Investments in capacity, partnerships, and policy engagement help ensure these positive changes last over time.

These investments position Community Funding as a crucial contributor to key City's strategies, contributing to enhance community well-being, alleviating the impact of poverty, and addressing equity concerns from priority populations.

Everyone has a role in shaping community well-being. Whether it's a volunteer offering their time, an organization shaping local solutions, or a resident accessing support, every action contributes to a more equitable and socially inclusive Ottawa. This report celebrates what is possible when clients, organizations, and systems work together toward a city-wide commitment to community well-being. The work done in 2024 is grounded in deep collaboration and shared care for Ottawa's residents.

While the results are encouraging, there is still more work to do. Not everyone in Ottawa has access to the same opportunities to maintain and improve their well-being. How people feel about their

lives and the conditions that promote satisfaction, happiness, and personal development vary greatly. Social and institutional norms can also operate in ways that give some advantages over others.

The City of Ottawa recognizes those differences and remains committed to strengthening partnerships, addressing root causes of poverty and building community capacity to ensure that all residents can live with dignity, access opportunities, and thrive.





## Acknowledgement

The City of Ottawa would like to sincerely thank all the organizations, staff, volunteers, and residents who contributed to this evaluation. Your commitment shows the strength of Ottawa's non-profit sector and the shared belief that together, we can build a more equitable and inclusive city.

For more information on Community Funding, please visit [ottawa.ca/communityfunding](https://ottawa.ca/communityfunding) or reach out to [CommunityFunding@ottawa.ca](mailto:CommunityFunding@ottawa.ca).



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