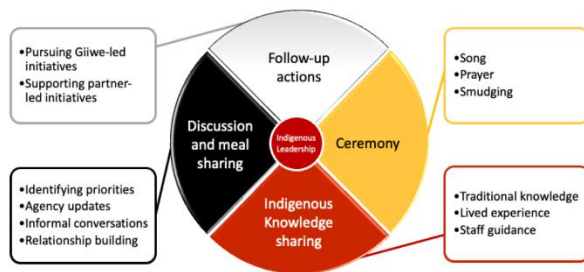


Joined via Zoom Meeting

10am-11:00 am

• Land Acknowledgement

- We need to remind ourselves of why we make land acknowledgements – it is for the recognition of and respect for Indigenous peoples. Recognition of their presence both in the past and the present. Recognition and respect are essential elements of establishing healthy, reciprocal relations. These relationships are key to reconciliation.
- We acknowledge the Territory of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. We give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, known collectively as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land and the Metis Nation.



The next Giive Sharing Circle will be on March 22nd, 2024 at 10 am at M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre in Owen Sound. Lunch will be provided for those in attendance and a remote link available. Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/850860325137?aff=oddtcreator>

We began Giive with the coming together of Housing partners to respond to Indigenous people experiencing homelessness and discrimination in finding housing. Our first cultural retreat with Housing partners had snowed in and without heat/electricity. We bonded on that weekend. Our professional lives mixed with our personal lives; as we looked at how we respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action. The seeds were planted and we sought to undo historical segregation and come together as a community.

After 6 years of fostering relationships, building trust, and bringing much-needed healing to Grey and Bruce Counties, the M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre is no longer able to fund this particular project. Even though M'Wikwedong wishes to build upon the work already started, it will be dependent on finding the right fit and funding stream. Giive responded as a community in healing and taking a lead on mending relationships. Diane Giroux remains available for future collaborations or consultancy services for cultural mindfulness awareness. diane@asharedjourney.ca

- **Poverty Task Force – Moving Forward in 2024 – Jill Umbach, PTF**

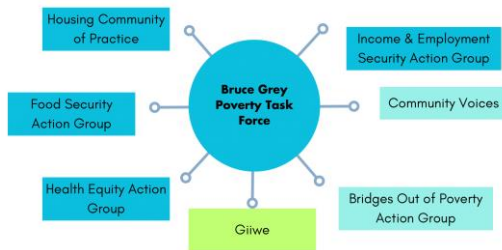
Goal: resiliency, holding space and collaboration

- **Giiwe Sharing Circles:** One of our major strategies was to hold space and promote collaboration with Indigenous partners; and to support the Giiwe Sharing Circle model. Diane Giroux spoke to the plans for Giiwe Sharing Circles in 2024. The Indigenous community is healing from so much. During COVID, there were a lot of losses including knowledge keepers. There was the discovery of residential school graves. And we also saw on Saugeen First Nation, one of the highest number of fatal overdoses in Ontario. Breaking the cycle of inter-generational trauma and at the same time responding to solicitations from non-Indigenous organizations has resulted in a lot of giving from M'WIKwedong IFC staff. Diane has passed the feather back to us to shift the tide in our relations. We thank Diane and Carlos for being an excellent resource to everyone, for their leadership and we look forward to new opportunities to work together.



TAKING ACTION

Pre-pandemic we had 5 Action Groups and Community Voices that led our work. Giiwe Sharing Circles was a key component of our action.



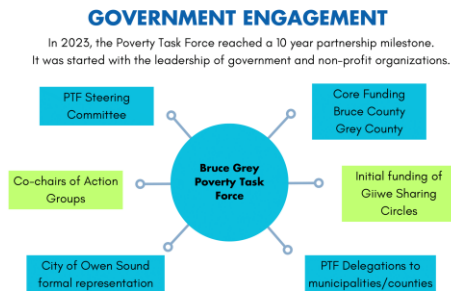
We took a brief view of our current structures for coming together to build resiliency, create safe spaces to discuss issues and promote collective action. In 2020, pre-pandemic, we had 5 active Action Groups and Community Voices.

- Our Housing Action Group transformed into a weekly Community of Practice.
- The last Getting Ahead session finished on August 2021. The program was not renewed, and the Bridges Out of Poverty Action Group became an Ad Hoc group. Our Community Voices stopped meeting monthly and became an ad hoc group. Individual members have participated in projects in an advisory capacity.
- Our Health Equity Action Group was strong throughout the pandemic but is now looking at its composition with the development of the Ontario Health Team action tables.
-

What has been your experience of being in an Action Groups or a Community of Practice?

- There has always been an ebb-and-flow within Action Groups with collective action. It is good to transition and be flexible with more Community of Practice (CoP) style meetings.
- Community of Practice meetings do not come with set Agendas but act as a collective think tank in response to immediate issues. The Housing CoP supports an out-of-the-box thinking and immediate response to needs. The group is busy solving day-to-day problems and it has been hard to look at system-level change. What began as a sprint in Feb 2020, turned into a marathon and “now we are on our 3rd marathon”. The demand for services is not returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- Some of the collective housing work i.e. Home Take Over Project, has moved into awareness programming with the Elder Abuse Network.
- The PTF continues to look at intersectoral work with other tables i.e. CDAS, CSWBP, etc.
- There is a demand for our Bridges Out of Poverty AG to come back together to respond to requests for training. Recently training was provided to Safe N Sound Overnight Shelter staff. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is being added to the training with the United Way having 2 certified trainers and a new Bridges certified trainer.

Goal: increase in municipalities taking leadership roles in poverty reduction.



We reviewed the current government engagement and was that we could do more. Our Annual Report looks at game changers and an example of the SOS Mobile Outreach which meets people where they are at is a shift in collaboration and service model. A guaranteed basic income approved in PEI is a game changer. Leading on game changers is where we want to move with our political leadership.

We have designated representation from Bruce and Grey Counties and they sit on our PTF Steering Committee. We have core financial support from both Counties. Wardens attend meetings. We have formal representation from the City of Owen Sound. We have had good poverty reduction advocacy by both Counties as they engage at ROMA. Strong partnership with MP Alex Ruff's office on income tax filing and budget consultations with MPP Rick Byers and MPP Lisa Thompson's office. We have been partnering with the local government for the past 10 years.

What has been your experience of being as a government representative? What more could we do to increase leadership on poverty reduction?

- There is a need to bring training and awareness raising to elected officials at both upper and lower tiers as we often make decisions that impact access to service but without a shared understanding of the disproportionate impacts those changes can have on folks' lives.
- Recognize that the PTF does enjoy a tremendous amount of support and we do have allies in the elected sector after 10 years of working together. Regular presentations to councils really help build connectivity because many times people don't know what is being done because they are new to council, regardless of tier. Recommend seeking formal council representation to the PTF. Increase in-person presentations. Delegation to County Councils and lower tier councils on the 2023 Annual Report and include report in correspondence.
- Owen Sound will be launching its public consultation for a 25 year strategic plan with the first phase launching March to June. It will be an important opportunity to amplify the vision and values of the PTF for organizations connected to and working in Owen Sound. Community Voices have been asked to participate in a Owen Sound Police Study and the 25 year Strategic Planning for the City.
- Offer Bridges Out of Poverty training to councillors as part of an orientation package to new council members.

Action Group/Partner Updates:

- **Food Security Action Group:** next meeting is 1 March 2024, 10am. Contact Robin Cork food@unitedway.com for an invitation. A new report is out from Public Health: Food Affordability and Food Insecurity (publichealthgreybruce.on.ca) [Monitoring Food Affordability - FINAL DRAFT 3 \(publichealthgreybruce.on.ca\)](#)
- **Housing CoP:** new changes to LEAP with an increase up to \$650/year towards energy supports. [Low-income Energy Assistance Program | Ontario Energy Board \(oeb.ca\)](#)
- Grey County has purchased the Diamond Motel in Owen Sound. 22 units that can support 30 people. Hoping for an opening date in March.
- Tent encampment and human rights policy and procedures are being discussed locally.
- Opioid Alerts: concern about the recent number of overdoses in Belleville and in Grey Bruce.

- SOS Mobile Outreach toured London's Safe Use Site which is not necessarily a rural solution but showed the team how integrated they were and how siloed things were in an urban centre. SOS standing market in Owen Sound will move to OSHaRE in March. They will share the space after lunch.
- **Human Trafficking Education events** are happening next week in Grey and Bruce: Human Trafficking Awareness Day Community Panel Feb 20th (Kincardine) and Feb 22nd (Owen Sound). PTF Coordinator will be moderating both events.

Next meeting: March 15th, 10am

In attendance:

Chief Ambrose, OS Police
 Paul Wagenaar
 Jon Farmer, City of Owen Sound
 Robin Cork, United Way BG
 Amanda Wright, Owen Sound Family Health Team
 Jan Chamberlain
 Alexis Cook, CSWBP
 Paula Luce, Grey County OW
 Dana Soucie, Four County Labour Market Planning Board
 Roni Delleman, Warton Salvation Army
 Laura Needham, Grey Bruce Public Health
 Diane Giroux, Giiwe - M'Wikwedong
 Aryn Becker, Bruce County
 Nadia Danyluk, Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library
 Elaine Bumstead, Meaford Foodbank and Outreach
 Melissa McCulloch, Grey County Social Services
 Crystal Ferguson, South East Grey Community Health Centre
 Selwyn "Buck" Hicks
 Sarah Cowley, YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce
 Erica Phipps, RentSafe
 Francesca Dobbyn, United Way BG
 Lindsay Huff, Bruce County
 Geoff Van Geem, SEGCHC
 Scott McKay, CMHA
 Jill Umbach, PTF