



COMMUNITYBASEDRESEARCH.CA

BUILDING RESPONSIVE, SUPPORTIVE, AND EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023-2024**



CENTRE FOR
COMMUNITY
BASED RESEARCH



The Centre for
Community
Based Research
is a non-profit
social enterprise
established
in 1982.

OUR MISSION:

The Centre for Community Based Research is committed to *social justice* and to collaboratively building communities that are *responsive and supportive*, especially for people with limited access to power and opportunity.

We conduct and promote research that is *community-driven, participatory, and action-oriented* and that combines *research with education and community involvement*.

Our work builds on community strengths to create *awareness, policies, and practices* that advance *equitable participation and inclusion* of all community members.

Land Acknowledgment

The Centre for Community Based Research acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnawbe, and the Haudenosaunee Indigenous peoples who continue to have an unresolved interest in the lands within 6 miles of the Grand River, an area that includes our location at the University of Waterloo. We continue to work for justice and reconciliation.

A RETROSPECTIVE ON OUR MISSION

Letter from the Executive Director & Board Chair

As the Centre for Community Based Research (CCBR) moves into our 43rd year, we want to shine a light on the theme of this report, **Building Responsive, Supportive, and Equitable Communities**. Everything we do at CCBR involves putting the power of research into the hands of those who are most impacted by its outcomes — our communities.

Though we are now based at the University of Waterloo, CCBR was launched in 1982 as a reaction to academic research. Much of the research at the time was top down and researcher-driven. Our founders saw a better way to conduct research by incorporating local community voices, organizations, and other stakeholders, and allowing them to drive the research process and agenda. You could say, CCBR was established to conduct research **with** people, not **on** people, especially those with limited access to power and opportunity.

The pushback we received at the beginning was significant. Many deemed this approach with suspicion — too grassroots and too unacademic. But we stayed focused. Gradually it has become more and more apparent that community-based research is very effective at unveiling root causes of inequity and helping to co-create concrete and transformative solutions. This approach to research is now embraced by many institutions (academic and otherwise), community organizations, and governments, not only in Canada, but around the globe.

Today, we like to say that CCBR not only **conducts** community-based research, but we also **promote** it.

Yes, we continue to conduct various types of research, such as needs and resource assessments, program and system change evaluations, and policy research. Yes, we continue to collaborate with our many partners in conducting research on a range of societal issues, both on long-standing as well as newer topics (such as climate change, harm reduction, and gender-based violence). And yes, we continue to explore new ways to amplify and share community stories, particularly through arts-based methods such as photovoice, cellfilms, and digital storytelling.

But increasingly we're being asked to do something else as well. We are being asked to draw on our 40+ years of experience to promote this community-based approach through training, coaching, mentoring, and other capacity-building activities. In this annual report, we highlight some of the ways that we have responded to this call. You can expect to hear more about this expanding dimension of CCBR in the near future, as we continue to respond to the growing requests for more tailored training and coaching.

We want to thank all our community partners, funders, students, staff, and board members who helped to make this past year such a success. As we look forward to another year, we remain committed to our core mission. We continue to invite you to come **partner** with us in conducting community-based research, and to come **learn** with us as, together, we promote this community-based research approach.

Together we can collaboratively build communities that are more responsive, supportive, and equitable.

Sincerely,



Hsiao d'Ailly
Hsiao d'Ailly, President



Rich Janzen
Rich Janzen, Executive Director

Our Approach to Research

CCBR is a pioneer and leader in community-based research in Canada. But what does community-based research mean?

At CCBR we take this question seriously. We regularly discuss this with our partners. We consider literature from diverse global research traditions. And over four decades we've honed an approach to research that we conduct and promote across Canada and internationally.

Four Phases of Community-Based Research



Learn more about community-based research at communitybasedresearch.ca/our-approach.

Three Hallmarks of Community-Based Research

▶ Community-Driven:

The research is practically relevant to those most affected by the issue under study and leads to their self-determination.

▶ Participatory:

Community members and researchers equitably share control of the research process through active and reciprocal involvement in the research design, implementation, and dissemination.

▶ Action-Oriented:

The process and results are useful to community members in collaboratively building more responsive, supportive, and equitable communities, especially for those with limited access to power and opportunity.

Three Goals of Community-Based Research

▶ Learn Together:

Gaining new insights through systematic and rigorous research

▶ Share Results:

Communicating what has been learned in ways that helps people to use the research results

▶ Engage People:

Building trusting and reciprocal relationships so that people are able to work together to address pressing societal issues

Doing Settlement Differently: Regional Accountability Model for Settlement (RAMS) in Peel Region

Imagine being invited to re-think how Canada makes decisions about settlement services for immigrant and refugee newcomers. What would it look like if, rather than those decisions residing in Ottawa (as they do now), they were the responsibility of local communities where those settlement organizations are actually based?

- How would local funding decisions be made?
- What could be done to ensure that there was system-wide planning at the local level?
- How could the settlement journey of newcomers be at the centre of this local decision-making process?

These questions were the focus of a two-and-a-half-year project in Peel Region funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. **Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG), a community collaborative that engages service providers and stakeholders to facilitate newcomer settlement and integration**, was ideally suited to lead this initiative.

From the beginning, PNSG wanted the project to involve broad-based community consultation that engaged many groups in Peel Region. It was for this reason that PNSG reached out to CCBR. They previously worked with CCBR on

community-based research projects. And now they wanted to implement this engaging approach to research in bringing together the community to co-create a new regional accountability model for settlement (RAMS).

Jessica Kwik is Director at PNSG. **“We all worked together through what the model could look like so that it was really clear for people,”** says Jessica. **“CCBR supported research, focus groups and key informant interviews, and the consolidation of literature.”** CCBR also helped to organize a number of community forums where elements of the model were presented and tested before being finalized.

The result? The RAMS model could contribute to a new way of doing settlement in Canada. Jessica says the model succeeded in foregrounding **“a seamless journey for newcomers who are settling in the community.”** It further solidifies this ethos by advocating for resources that newcomers actually need based on specific demographic vulnerabilities, such as healthcare for refugees, mental health supports for young adults and students, and uplifting digital literacy.

Jessica is pleased to have partnered with CCBR in conducting this groundbreaking research. **“CCBR provides opportunity for organizations of various sizes to engage by providing the forum to have their voices heard,”** says Jessica.



Centring Communities in Healthcare: The Family and Child Health Initiative

When the Family and Child Health Initiative (FCHI) at Trillium Health Partners in Mississauga was founded in 2018, project co-lead and researcher, Dianne Fierheller and Dr. Ian Zenlea knew they didn't want to build something that followed the same traditional medical model. Dianne shares, **"I have worked at healthcare institutions for many years prior to coming to FCHI, and what always stood out to me is that the voices of children, youth, and families are rarely listened to."**

Dianne saw this trickle out throughout all aspects of healthcare and wanted to find a way to centre lived experiences and narratives from a systems level. At the time, she was completing her PhD in social work and learning about working alongside communities in the research world. **"I came across a journal article by Rich Janzen and the team at CCBR. The work they were doing really excited us. What really stood out as a clinician was trying to create solutions alongside families,"** she says.

When FCHI, alongside community partners in Peel, received funding for four projects from the Community and Canadian Institute of Health Research grants in 2021/2022, the key was turned to begin building the community-based participatory research program that FCHI envisioned. Dianne and Ian immediately reached out to Rich to create a mentorship process that

would support the vision to establish a community-based research program within the hospital and alongside the community. As opposed to conducting research for them, the CCBR team (led by Sarah Switzer) mentored Dianne and the FCHI team to engage in their own community-based research and build a centre that could facilitate this type of work. As part of this work, CCBR conducted customized pieces of training and provided informal coaching to FCHI leadership, research staff, and even project-specific community advisory boards.



Throughout the four projects, CCBR was there as a guiding hand. **"CCBR has decades of experience. So, to be able to really talk through each step with the group over a two-year period was invaluable,"** says Dianne.

This mentorship process has helped the FCHI team think creatively and engage with communities in meaningful authentic ways, such as putting together photovoice exhibits and knowledge translation events that showcase self-led photographs and recordings from community members experiencing difficult issues, such as family violence, chronic disease, and social isolation.

"I can't imagine doing research in any other way," says Dianne. **"I feel like if we're not including lived experience in medical research and co-designing solutions and interventions, we're really doing a disservice to our communities."**

Summary of 2023-2024 Projects

Total Projects

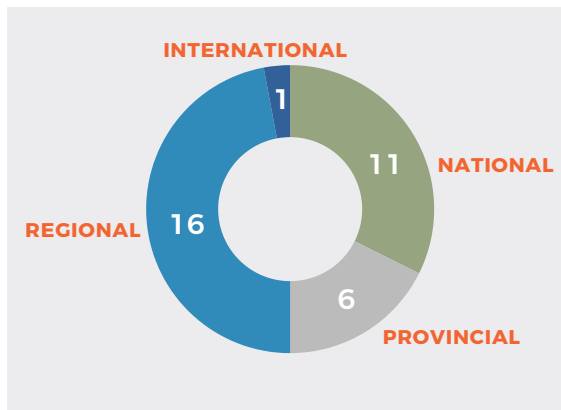
NEW PROJECTS
THIS YEAR

18

CONTINUING
PROJECTS FROM
PREVIOUS YEARS

16

Geographic Scope



Service Area

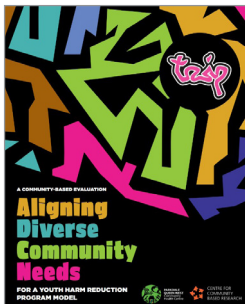


Project Theme Areas

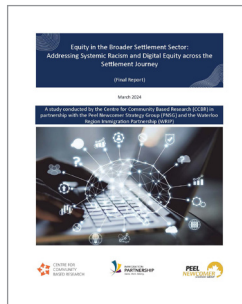
- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| INDIGENOUS JUSTICE | HEALTH PROMOTION | ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING |
| AGING | HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS | WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELLNESS |
| IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES | ECONOMIC AND FOOD SECURITY | YOUTH EMPOWERMENT |
| DISABILITIES | INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT | FAITH AND SOCIETY |
| FAMILY SUPPORT/EARLY CHILDHOOD | MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS | HIV AND HARM REDUCTION |

Featured Reports and Coaching Resource

Aligning Diverse Community Needs for a Youth Harm Reduction Program Model. A Community-Based Evaluation of Trip!



Equity in the Broader Settlement Sector: Addressing Systemic Racism and Digital Equity across the Settlement Journey



E-learning module: The HIV Stigma Positive Actions Development Guide



Featured Academic Publication

Janzen, R., Switzer, S., Basabosa, J., Docherty, M., & Heidebrecht, P. (2023). Community-based evaluation when localizing Sustainable Development Goals. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*, 38(2), 396-407. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cjpe.75810>

In The Field: 2023-2024 Projects

Since our start in 1982, we've completed over 500 projects. On average, we work on 15 to 20 projects at a time. Below are the 34 projects we worked on during the 2023-2024 fiscal year (with funders in brackets).

Conducting Community-Based Research

Continuing Projects from Previous Years
Evaluation Support of the Ontario Network of Community Action Program for Children / Canada Nutrition Program Projects (Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health, previously CARIZON Family and Community Services)
The Community Action Program for Children / Canada Nutrition Program Projects Reflecting Together Towards Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health, previously CARIZON Family and Community Services)
Co-Designing Regional Accountability Model for Settlement in Peel Region (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada via United Way of Greater Toronto / Peel Newcomer Strategy Group)
Supporting Inclusivity: Increasing Capacity of Partner Community Organizations to Serve Newcomers (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada via Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia)
TRIP! Evaluation: Aligning Diverse Community Needs for Youth Harm Reduction (Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre)
Food Bank Canada's After the Bell Program: Evaluation Enhancement (Food Banks Canada)
Two projects with Canadian Mennonite University (Canadian Mennonite University)
Let's Get Sexfluent! Exploring New Models for Modernizing Youth HIV Resources in Canada (Canadian Institutes for Health Research, via York University)
Pedagogies of Community Engagement (Spencer Foundation via Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto)
Adapting Participatory Visual Methods to Online and Hybrid Settings with Diverse Communities (Canadian Institute for Health Research via Trillium Health Partners)

New Projects

Equity in the Broader Settlement Sector: Addressing Systemic Racism and Digital Equity Across the Settlement Journey (Immigrant, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada)
Developing an Evaluation Framework for Reception House Waterloo Region (Reception House Waterloo Region)
Re-thinking How We Support Heritage in Waterloo Region (Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation)
Youth Engagement in the Mennonite Church (Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada)
Researching Barriers to Gender-Based Violence Services for Canadian Muslims Through Community-Driven Knowledge Mobilization (Women and Gender Equality Canada via Muslim Advisory Council of Canada)
Evaluation of the Inner City Family Health Team Substance Use Hub in Toronto (Substance Use and Addictions Program, Health Canada, via Inner City Family Health Team)
Using Community-Based Research to Informing Halton Suicide Prevention Coalition Priorities (Halton Suicide Prevention Coalition)
Evaluation Enhancement for Food Banks Tax Clinics Program (Food Banks Canada)
Community Planning Forum for Newcomer Integration & Belongings (Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council)
Community-Based Theory of Change Study (Food Banks Canada)
Rural and Remote Mental Health Needs Assessment (Canadian Mental Health Association National)

Promoting Community-Based Research

Continuing Projects from Previous Year
Certificate in Program Evaluation as Organizational Development Wilfrid Laurier University (Wilfrid Laurier University Continuing Education)
Evaluation Capacity Network: Collaborating for Community-Driven and Culturally Relevant Early Childhood Practices, Programs, and Policies (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada via University of Alberta)
Community-Based Research Capacity Building with The Family and Child Health Initiative Projects (Canadian Institute for Health Research via Trillium Health Partners)
Consultant for Strategic Evaluation Approaches to Address Policy Gaps and Policy Panel Presentation for Mental Health Promotion (Knowledge Development and Exchange Hub via Public Health Agency of Canada)
Toxic Masculinity Project (The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians)
Consultation on Participatory Photography Design for an Anti-Stigma Project with People Who Use Drugs (Ontario Public Health)

New Projects

Moving Findings to Action: The Supporting Peer Work Project (College and Community Social Innovation Fund via George Brown College)
Determining Research Priorities: Organizational Capacity-Building for Community-Based Research (Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities)
Coaching and Consultation for Positive Actions: Breaking HIV Stigma (REACH Nexus via Public Health Agency of Canada)
Photovoice as a Community-Based Research Technique: Training Series for a Group of Research Assistants at University of Toronto Mississauga (University of Toronto Mississauga)
Supports for Youth Substance Use Prevention Program: Building Capacity for Community-Based Research and Evaluation (Public Health Agency of Canada via the Knowledge Development and Exchange Hub)
Applying GBA+ to Settlement Programming, for the Toronto InterLIP (Immigrant, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada via The Toronto Newcomer Office / InterLIP Council / WoodGreen Community Services)
Advancing Shelter and Supports for Homeless Muslim Women & Children in Canada (Nisa Homes)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A heartfelt thank you to our Board Members, Staff, Students, and Funding Partners for your invaluable support. Your dedication has been essential to our achievements. We are truly grateful for your contributions.

BOARD MEMBERS

Hsiao d'Ailly - President
Daniela Seskar-Hencic - Vice-President/ Secretary
Robert G. Rosehart - Treasurer
Kokila Khanna - Board Member
John Neufeld - Board Member
Jessica Deming - Board Member
Anita Taylor - Board Member

STAFF MEMBERS

Rich Janzen - Executive Director
Sarah Switzer - Senior Researcher
Dina Taha - Senior Researcher
Hani Sadati - Senior Researcher
Lisa Schincariol McMurtry - Senior Researcher
Katie MacEntee - Senior Researcher
Janna Martin - Centre Researcher
Amanda Demmer - Centre Researcher
Dayan De Souza - Centre Researcher
Areej Al Shammiry - Researcher
Jean de Dieu Basabose - Researcher
Sohaila Isaqzai - Researcher
Rawhia Jandali - Administrative Coordinator

STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND COMMUNITY RESEARCHERS

Alex Nsohya
Kate Short
Adam Arca
Ashley Marin
Kendyll Cassels
Liz Weber
Sonia Nwoye-Vincent
Lizzy Berg

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
United Way of Greater Toronto
Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia
Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre
Canadian Mennonite University
Canadian Institutes for Health Research
Wilfrid Laurier University Continuing Education
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
University of Alberta
Ontario Public Health
Trillium Health Partners
Spencer Foundation
The University of Toronto
Women HIV And AIDS Initiative
Knowledge Development and Exchange Hub
The Public Health Agency of Canada
The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
George Brown College
Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities
REACH Nexus
University of Toronto Mississauga
WoodGreen Community Services
Nisa Homes
Reception House Waterloo Region
Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
Women and Gender Equality Canada
Muslim Advisory Council of Canada
Inner City Family Health Team
Halton Suicide Prevention Coalition
Food Banks Canada
Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council
Canadian Mental Health Association National
Family and Child Health Initiative Projects



Inspired by Our Past

We build on the efforts of many in our CCBR history who helped pioneer community-based research in Canada.

These pictures give a glimpse into this past.



Our Finances

CCBR continues to show strong financial health. Our accumulated reserves are significant.

For complete audited financial statements, please visit:
<https://www.communitybasedresearch.ca/full-audited-financial-statements-23-24>



Vision for Tomorrow

CCBR will continue to collaborate with our partners in **Building Responsive, Supportive, and Equitable Communities**. We remain guided by our current strategic plan that emerged from our Staff and Board retreat in 2023. It has five priority areas:

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE CCBR

We will prioritize staff wellness and retention, financial soundness, and the development of new CCBR-wide initiatives that extend beyond individual projects.

EVALUATING OUR OWN ORGANIZATION

We will conduct our own internal evaluation that is framed by our organizational theory of change and that will help fuel our organizational learning.

ADVANCING EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI)

We will critically reflect on our current practices and resources through an EDI lens in order to improve our efforts in promoting and practising EDI.

PROMOTING GREATER VISIBILITY OF CCBR

We will better communicate the value of who are and what we do, both through our website and through other promotional materials.

MOBILIZING OUR LEARNINGS

We will improve how we share what we are learning through our work, via newly developed learning initiatives (e.g., training events) and services (e.g., coaching).

THE CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH OFFICES ARE LOCATED AT CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY (IN THE KINDRED CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT) ON THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO CAMPUS. OUR STAFF LIVE IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS SOUTHERN ONTARIO.



**CENTRE FOR
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**COME PARTNER WITH US.
COME LEARN WITH US.**