



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Empowering women to build  
sustainable communities

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# WEC AT A GLANCE

## VISION

**Economic security for every woman**

## MISSION

To advance every woman's participation in building resilient and inclusive economies, especially women who experience systemic barriers.

We achieve our mission through consultation, networking, research and advocacy to understand and address the challenges women experience creating sustainable livelihoods.



# OUR IMPACT

## Mentorship and Employment Outcomes for Racialized Newcomer Women (RNW)



**92%**

reported that mentorship was tailored to their needs.



**97.5%**

felt they were empowered during the mentorship sessions.

**82.5%**

experienced increased confidence and connections.



## Organizational Capacity Building and Sector Empowerment



**294**

organizations received consultancy to improve their GEDI



**76.5%**

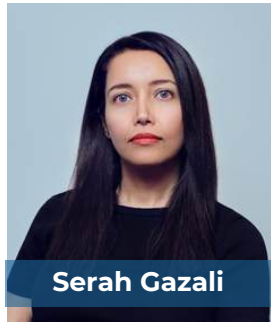
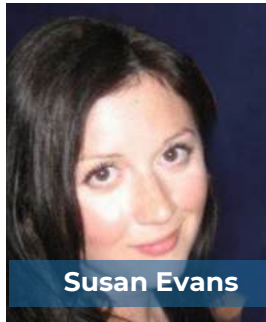
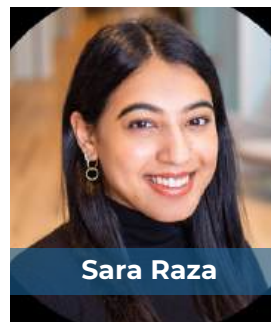
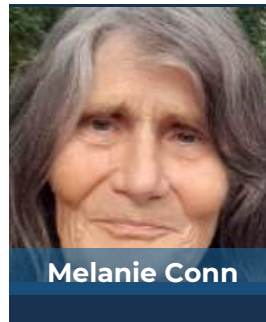
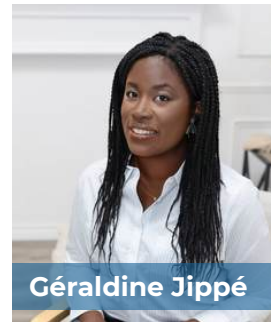
confirmed that their organization had added representatives from equity deserving groups to their board or senior management positions



**56.3%**

of these organizations met the 50-30 diversity targets

# MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



*Here are our volunteer board of directors and dedicated senior leadership team, who have contributed their expertise and passion to drive WEC's success.*



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Women participation rate within the Canadian labor force continues to decrease annually. Most women falling through the Canadian labor force and economic cracks are racialized Canadians and newcomers to Canada, most of whom are highly educated and skilled. Yet research shows that systemic gender-based barriers continue to be the singular factor driving the decreasing number of women achieving economic security for themselves, their families, their communities, and Canada at large. Coupled with the economic downturn of this year, these numbers continued its upward trajectory up from 60.9% in 2022 to 61.1% in 2023.

This is the gap that the Women's Economic Council (WEC) strives to address. WEC's commitment to building attainable and secured economic future for women remains as we continue to actively advocate for and create solutions that remove gender-based barriers to all women, particularly racialized newcomer women. We achieved this by building and leveraging trusted partnerships with various partners and developing innovative programs that address the challenges racialized and newcomer women face.

Throughout the year, we reaffirmed our unwavering commitment to fostering inclusion, equity, and leadership for women across Canada through the implementation of initiatives such as "Accelerating Inclusion Towards 50-30", "Think Women", and "Her Mentors". These programs will continue to play pivotal roles in shaping a more inclusive and equitable Canadian labor force as we are poised to set new standards for gender parity and provide employment training and mentorship sessions as well as support employers in Gender Equity Diversity and Inclusion training to foster inclusive workplaces where women can work and thrive.

Initiatives such as ours have contributed positively addressing the gap. You will see in this report the significant impacts that our revised Theory of Change has helped us to achieve for women.

Thank you to WEC staff and the senior leadership team who are a dedicated force to implementing the many programs and projects with excellence and commitment. In addition, thank you to our esteemed Board of volunteer Directors who continue to provide unwavering leadership and guidance. As well, thank you to our community of partners and sponsors — we could not do our work without you. We look forward to your continued support to deliver our focused advocacy for the economic security of every woman in Canada.

*Marie Basse*  
WEC Board President



## MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we present to you the Women's Economic Council (WEC) Annual Report for 2023. This year has been a remarkable journey of progress, collaboration, and impact as we continue to advance our mission of ensuring economic security for every woman, especially those facing systemic barriers.

Our vision remains steadfast: to create a world where women's participation in building resilient and inclusive economies is not only valued but actively promoted. Through our initiatives, we have witnessed the transformative power of women-centered community economic development, and we are committed to furthering this cause.

In 2023, we made significant strides in our key projects. The Accelerating Inclusion towards 50-30 initiative saw great success, with our training pilot equipping participants with the tools and confidence to drive gender equity, diversity, and inclusion within their organizations. Her Mentors, our flagship project, focused on promoting best practices in mentoring racialized newcomer women.

This year, we implemented a revised Theory of Change and realigned our program strategy to ensure it both fills in the gaps in the ecosystem and matches the vision of fostering resilient and inclusive economies. These enhancements increased our strategic clarity, enabling us to more effectively drive meaningful changes for women.

As we reflect on these achievements, we are reminded of the incredible support and trust you, our stakeholders, have placed in us. Your belief in our mission has been the driving force behind our success, and we are deeply grateful for your continued partnership.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our values of women-centredness, community, sustainability, support, accountability, diversity, respect, advocacy, and transparency. These guiding principles will continue to shape our work as we strive to create lasting change in the lives of women across Canada.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our dedicated team, board, and committed partners. Their unwavering support and collaboration have been instrumental in our success. Thank you for being a part of the WEC community. We look forward to continuing our partnership and making even greater strides in the year ahead.

*Susan Evans*  
*Director, Operations and External Relations*

*Serah Gazali*  
*Director, Program and Impact*



# FUNDERS



CANADIAN  
WOMEN'S  
FOUNDATION | FONDATION  
CANADIENNE  
DES FEMMES



Innovation, Science and  
Economic Development Canada



Women and Gender  
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité  
des genres Canada



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada





# PARTNERS



# PARTNERS



The Canadian Centre for Gender + Sexual Diversity  Le Centre Canadien de la Diversité des Genres + de la Sexualité

**ATQ**  
Aide aux Trans du Québec

 **BCCOOP**

  
Conseil québécois de la **coopération** et de la **mutualité**

 Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)  
Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes (CCFM)

  
**NCANL**

  
**COOP**  
canada.

  
**cando**  
Inspiring Success

  
**DAWN** Canada

  
**ALBERTA LGBTQ+**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**e m p o w e r**  
*the disability resource centre*

  
**PICS** Free Support to Live & Work in British Columbia  
[www.pics.bc.ca](http://www.pics.bc.ca)

  
**HORIZON**  
TNL

  
**WTC** WOMEN TRANSFORMING CITIES

  
**LiveWorkPlay.ca**  
WHERE POSSIBILITIES TAKE FLIGHT

  
**BCW**

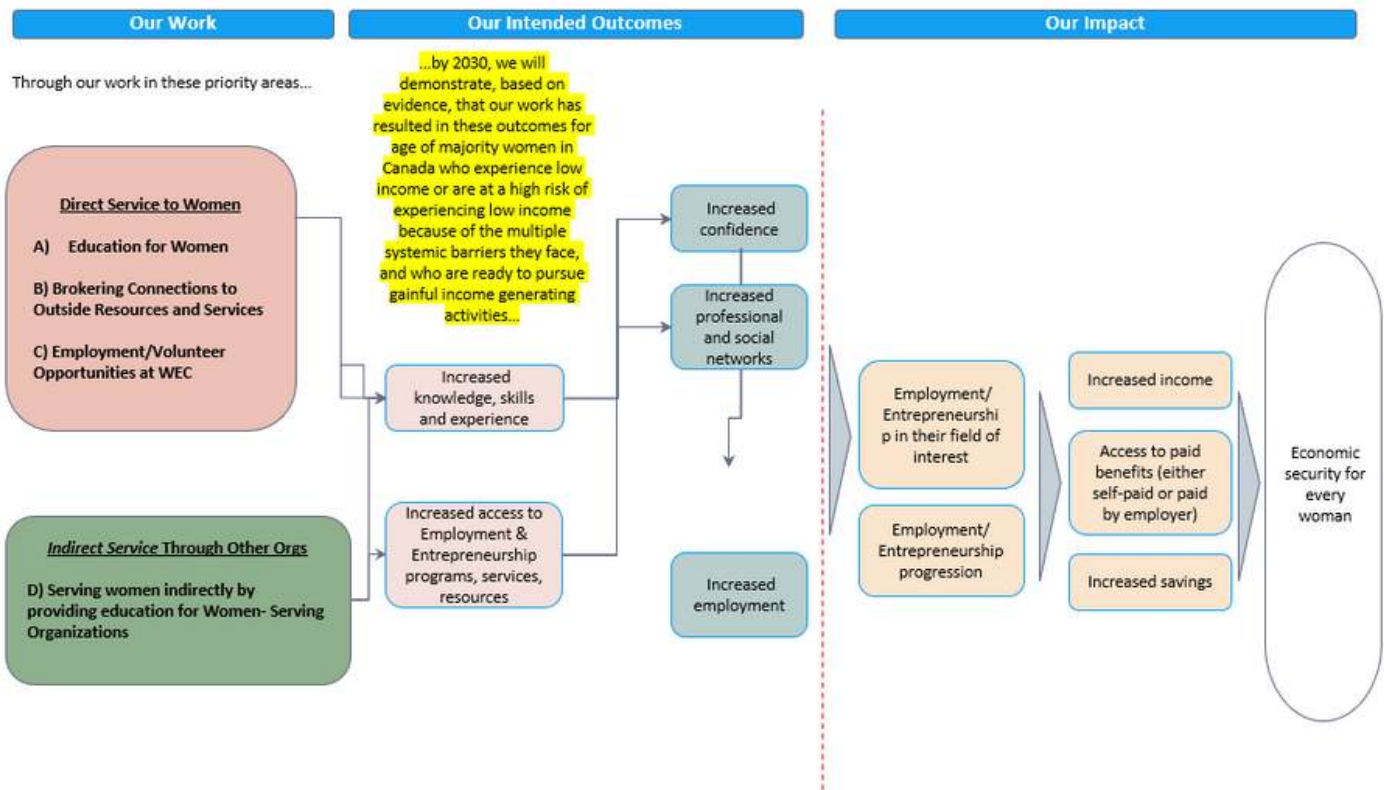
# PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS REPORT





# THEORY OF CHANGE

After a comprehensive review, we have updated our theory of change to better meet the evolving demands and address the gaps in the ecosystem that supports women. Our refined approach aims to enhance services and empower women to achieve economic security.





# ACCELERATING INCLUSION TOWARDS 50 - 30

We continued to support 50 – 30 Challenge participants. This year we created and tested our training pilot in collaboration with 23 organizations. The Gender Equity Diversity and Inclusion pilot offered two targeted streams of training that involved key stakeholders and experts to foster leadership and operational expertise within the scope of GEDI principles.

The outcomes of these training streams have been overwhelmingly positive. A comprehensive evaluation revealed: Significant strides were made towards meeting the 50-30 Challenge, with over half of the organizations reporting they had met these diversity targets.



**100%**

of participants  
participants would  
recommend the  
training to others



**90%**

of participants feel  
equipped to discuss  
and implement  
GEDI principles  
effectively



**85%**

of participants are  
confident in their  
ability to sustain  
conversations on  
GEDI



## THINK WOMEN

This initiative aims to create a peer network for fostering a feminist economy in Canada, focusing on collaboration and capacity building among organizations supporting equity-deserving women.

One of our proudest achievements was the "Breaking Barriers" conference, engaging 437 attendees in workshops and panels to combat systemic oppression and drive inclusive growth.

Through capacity building, we have strengthened the governance, financial development, and strategic planning of small to medium organizations, enhancing their ability to serve their communities.

The Think Women project's impact extends beyond direct participants, leveraging our online community hub, webinars, and national gatherings to facilitate knowledge sharing among hundreds of professionals. Our workshops and resources have reached over 1,200 unique users.



### **3,500 Participants**

Hosted 25 webinars with 3,500 total attendees



### **1,200+ users**

Accessed tools for strategic planning, governance, and financial development



## HER MENTORS

Her Mentors Project (2022-2024), funded by IRCC, focuses on best practices in mentoring racialized newcomer women (RNW) with an emphasis on gender and intersectionality for full inclusion.

WEC implemented a customized, antiracist, strength-based mentorship model to connect RNW with experienced mentors, enhancing professional opportunities and fostering economic inclusion.

In 2023, WEC held three national hackathons with experts to develop inclusive and effective mentorship strategies. These workshops addressed specific challenges and explored scalable solutions, shaping Her Mentors' strategic direction.

Ongoing research, involving over 100 organizations and participants, deepened our understanding of RNW's labor market barriers. The project provided employment opportunities and mentorship experiences to advance participants' careers.

Moving forward, lessons from this project will guide the evolution of our mentorship program, ensuring it remains adaptive, inclusive, and impactful. WEC is committed to refining these strategies to better serve women in Canada, particularly those from equity-seeking groups.



**97.5%**

Felt they were empowered during the mentorship sessions



**77.5%**

Reported enhanced employment readiness



**32.7%**

Successfully connected with employment or self-employment opportunities in a career of their choice

# OUR STORIES

“

“In just three months in Canada, thanks to the Women's Economic Council and your program, I found a mentor, made friends, and secured a job.” Svetlana Landysheva



“

“I am working in library that my mentor helped me to get it and just today I had interview for higher position.” Touran Nazargahi



“Through Her Mentors, I not only found a mentor who was a perfect fit for my career aspirations, but I also gained valuable insights into the Canadian job market, learned effective networking strategies, and received guidance on professional development.” Vyjaynathi Immanuel



”

“I'd like to express my gratitude for your mentor program, which has been a tremendous learning experience for me.” Emily Tang

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# 2023 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

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**WOMEN'S ECONOMIC COUNCIL/CONSEIL ECONOMIQUE DES FEMMES**

**Statement of Revenues and Expenditures**

**Year Ended December 31, 2023**

	2023	2022
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Burnaby Neighbourhood Funding	\$ -	\$ 7,100
Canada Summer Jobs	-	2,040
Canadian Women Foundation	20,000	20,000
Catherine Donnelly Foundation	-	36,000
Department of Women and Gender Equality	457,828	391,291
Donations	1,234	15,198
Grant - Canadian Women's Foundation Cluster Support	47,500	-
ISED 50/30 Project	1,136,313	579,102
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Project	238,522	298,442
Loran Scholarship	7,000	-
Miscellaneous	3,467	3,960
Work BC Wage subsidy	-	7,426
	<b>1,911,864</b>	<b>1,360,559</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Bank charges	321	1,331
Catherine Donnelly Foundation	-	36,000
Contracted services	329,501	342,134
Equipment costs	8,797	4,018
Honorarium research participant	19,675	140
Insurance	1,540	1,243
Licenses, dues and fees	1,450	107
Miscellaneous	2,796	6,757
Office	27,448	8,280
Professional fees	816,930	458,779
Project supplies and resources	10,577	1,384
Publicity and promotion	74,156	60,404
Recruitment and training	3,856	-
Rent	10,180	5,519
Research	51,644	41,121
Salaries and wages	500,945	345,871
Telephone, fax and internet	6,150	6,472
Travel	41,198	21,961
	<b>1,907,164</b>	<b>1,341,521</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 4,700</b>	<b>\$ 19,038</b>



## LOOKING FORWARD

As we move forward towards achieving our intended Theory of Change outcomes by 2030, the Women's Economic Council remains dedicated to empowering women, especially those facing systemic barriers, to achieve economic security and build resilient communities.

Building on our extensive community-based research, we are expanding our mentorship programs to help women across Canada reach their career objectives and achieve economic security.

Our 50-30 project is crucial in promoting leadership diversity in Canadian organizations by increasing the participation of senior women leaders to drive innovation and systemic change.

In the coming year, we will strengthen partnerships, enhance programs, and advocate for policies that support women's economic security. We are committed to creating an inclusive future where women are key decision-makers.

Thank you to our staff, Board of Directors, funders and partners for your unwavering support. Together, we will continue to drive impactful change for women's economic empowerment across Canada.

# THANK YOU!

## CONTACT US :



1-888-800-8947



[www.womenseconomiccouncil.ca/](http://www.womenseconomiccouncil.ca/)



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