

ANNUAL REPORT 2023–2024

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS

Dear CAWI Members and Supporters:

We are very pleased to welcome you all to CAWI's 2023/2024 Annual Report. This is CAWI's 20th year of existence and we are planning celebrations for later on in 2024.

Each year of CAWI's existence has brought new challenges and new developments and we continue to grow as a strong and effective organization, working together with diverse communities to better understand and better address the issues affecting the quality of our lives.

It has been a priority over the past two years to increase the age diversity among Board members. We have successfully recruited younger directors from the community and we believe that this course of action has greatly strengthened our Board. Our discussion and decision-making can only benefit from a continuum of wisdom and experience and an attunement to new and emerging social trends and issues as well as new schools of thought.

Another exciting development is that we have welcomed Stephanie Peltier, an Indigenous activist from Wiikwemikoong Unceded Territory on Manitoulin Island, as our CAWI Knowledge Keeper, an advisory role to the Board and staff. With Stephanie's support, CAWI will work to build better relationships of trust with our Indigenous members and broader Indigenous communities in Ottawa-Gatineau. Our goal is to integrate a decolonization perspective into our work so that we can more effectively address our common issues.

We would like to thank Pascasie Minani Passy, our former co-chair, who had to leave us during the year. It was a pleasure working with you and we wish you all the best.



» CAWI Board and Staff - Left to right, Front row Deborah Sogelola, Jenny Gullen, Darlene Kaboni, Andrea Balfour | Second row Morissa-Dalia Ellis, Khrystal Sturridge, Nene Salimatou Barry, Valerie Stam, Nayeli Sosa, Delores Peltier-Corkey, Rashedaht Sulaiman, Suzanne Doerge (previous CAWI ED), Claudia Lahaie, Sado Ibrahim, Pascasie Minanai Passy, Hana Aman

There is plenty more for CAWI to report on, so we invite you to read through our Annual Report at your leisure. We want to thank all our members and supporters for your strong support over the past year. We are a community-based organization, accountable to our members and the wider Ottawa-Gatineau community. We welcome your participation in and feedback on our work.

Sincerely,



Delores Peltier-Corkey and **Jenny Gullen** Co-Chairs, CAWI Board of Directors

LETTER FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

Dear CAWI Members and Supporters:

The last year has been financially challenging for CAWI and many of our partners. The nonprofit sector is seeing increasing needs, funding shortages and rising costs. The Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) has been raising alarm bells about this for a while now, and Women's Shelters Canada recently documented a feminist brain drain in the gender based violence (GBV) sector. We know that care economy workers, including the nonprofit sector, are poorly compensated and feeling increasingly drained, especially as our society has not yet healed from - or grieved - the pandemic. This context makes CAWI's



» CAWI team - Left to right, first row Hana Aman, Catalina Jurado, Hidaya Boudali, Emma Irving | Second row Abigail Jackson, Morissa Dalia-Ellis, Valerie Stam, Sweta Daboo, Kassidy Ransom

work even more urgent and relevant. Our internal transition to distributed leadership, co-directing, and a 4-day work week are some of the ways we try to honour and nurture our staff team. And our external advocacy work is also timely: last year saw us design a new Theory of Change and three-year strategic plan. This year we started implementing our long-term goal of policy change for gender equity with the launch of our Caring Cities Initiative. Caring Cities incorporate paid and unpaid care workers' needs into urban design. We feel this approach to urban planning is needed more than ever in a post-COVID world.

Despite these challenges, our staff and student team has thrived. Our co-director model flourished this year, which is positively reflected in our small but mighty team. Placement students made up fifty percent of our staff team this year; they loved the connections and experiences they made, and CAWI really benefited from their knowledge and enthusiasm. We continue to learn about, and practice, distributed leadership; our CAWI book club spent half the year working with adrienne maree brown's book on Emergent Strategies. We reconnected with CAWI members and partners at our annual summer bash, grew our partnerships with the 2SLGBTQIIA+ and GBV sectors, and expanded WeaveChange's client base. Overall, 2023-2024 has been a year of connections and partnerships.

Despite a tough financial landscape in the nonprofit sector, it is feminism that helps us to thrive and make dynamic strides in these difficult times. Our intersectional feminist lens gives us a different way of looking at the world, problem-solving, and being in relationship with others. We are excited to work with you in 2024 to bring a care lens to policy advocacy. The future is feminist!



Morissa-Dalia Ellis and ***Valerie Stam***

CAWI Co-Directors

CAWI Stories

When Adversity Meets Advocacy

Zeinab Mohamed is a remarkable, compassionate woman with a strong desire to help and support others. Whether sharing her food, starting a homework club, or empowering and encouraging her community, she prioritizes the well-being of those around her. In 2014, Zeinab participated in CAWI's Neighbourhood Civic Engagement Training and became an active CAWI member.

During the pandemic, Zeinab and her family experienced a traumatic home invasion in their Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) apartment. This incident resulted in severe injuries to Zainab's 12-year-old daughter, Sumaya, as well as ongoing safety and housing concerns for the family, as they could not return to their home. The City of Ottawa relocated the family to a small hotel room where they could not cook and their living space was limited, making Sumaya's recovery difficult. CAWI, along with Zeinab's sister and friends, advocated safe and accessible housing for the family.

While these efforts were important for Zeinab and her family, she also wanted to make sure this kind of situation did not happen to other people. Alongside CAWI, Zeinab and her family and friends used her story to advocate with OCH, city councillors, and the media to raise awareness about safety in social housing and the need for more deeply affordable housing.

When asked about the impact that CAWI has had on her life, she said: "This is an organization that is open to everyone, no matter their background. I wouldn't be here without them." She has a message of hope and

empowerment for people facing difficult situations: “You have a voice, and your voice can create.” She also advises people to seek community support early on: “Before you face challenges, come connect with the community, volunteer, and become a CAWI member.” Zeinab believes these connections and resources can help individuals navigate obstacles and find the support they need.

Via Habitat for Humanity, the family is now the proud owner of a safe and accessible home. Throughout Sumaya’s recovery, Zeinab and her husband have been a strong team. Now in ninth grade, Sumaya is recovering well. Zeinab and Sumaya continue to give back to their community. You can often find them at the Rideau Community Hub, volunteering with CAWI and the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre. Their story demonstrates how important it is to counter adversity with advocacy, and how effective advocacy can be when done in community with organizations like CAWI.





bash



» CAWI Summer Bash, July 2023

summer



LAUNCHING CAWI'S CARING CITIES INITIATIVE

This year, we launched our Caring Cities Initiative! Caring Cities are municipalities that center paid and unpaid care work in urban planning and design. This feminist take on urban planning is popular in Spanish-speaking cities such as Barcelona and Bogota, which demonstrate how to implement a care lens into city planning through SuperBlocks, Care Hubs, mobile Care Buses and more.

In March we held our first Women's Action Forum since the pandemic. It was a huge success. At our Action Forum, we introduced our first Caring Cities policy paper and launched the Caring City as a feminist CAWI policy change tool that will guide our work for years to come. Our goal is to spread excitement for this innovative approach to city-building in Ottawa and beyond to create cities that are truly cities for all!

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

This year saw us make more connections in the west end of Ottawa! We tabled at the inaugural West Side Pride event in Stittsville - we're hoping to make an annual trek to Stittsville for this joyful event. Thanks to an invitation from Councillor Glen Gower, we also spoke with the Stittsville Diversity Committee about our civic engagement work. We love Stittsville!

Members of Making Voices Count (MVC) worked hard this year to develop an advocacy action plan. With ambitious goals to move the dial on transit, housing, and snow clearing, stay tuned for action and recommendations from this dynamic and dedicated group.

This year saw the renaissance of our Women's Action Circle and through that our first Women's Action Forum since the pandemic. The Women's Action Circle met every other week to learn civic engagement skills and apply the Caring Cities framework to the community. The Circle was a beautiful experience of community building among like-minded feminists of various and diverse backgrounds all wanting to make meaningful change in their communities.

The Women's Action Circle's civic engagement work gave life to our first in-person Women's Action Forum post-pandemic - a true highlight for CAWI and all members of the community that attended. We introduced the meaning and function of Caring Cities through a panel of knowledgeable speakers that have worked with CAWI: Carleton University students Jhil Mistry and Mik Lochbihler who worked on research on caring cities, Maria Bedoya of the Ottawa Community Benefits Network (OCBN) and CAWI's very own Valerie Stam. Everyone spoke to the principles of a Caring City which



» Caring Cities, A CAWI Women's Action Forum March 2024



would better integrate and respond to the needs of people that provide care, people that are marginalized and people that need more resources. This forum was not only attended by Mayor Mark Suttcliffe and Councillor Rawlson King, but it also was one of our highest attended events this year!

Funding from WAGE for our Maamawe: Women Reducing Poverty Together project wrapped up in November 2023; however, the group continues to meet monthly and is more committed than ever to advocating for food security and affordable housing.

With our Circle and Action Forum having new life in 2023, our goal and hope for 2024 is to find ways to integrate the Caring Cities framework not only in policy and urban planning but continuously in our community endeavors and civic engagement roundtables.

CAROLINE ANDREW CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AWARD

At our AGM in September 2023, CAWI congratulated Iman Al-Khatib as the first recipient of the annual Caroline Andrew Civic Engagement Award. Caroline Andrew helped found CAWI and contributed to feminist city-building in Ottawa and internationally. She had an unwavering recognition that many women make significant contributions that too often go unnoticed. Caroline loved to help people achieve their goals.

Caroline was surely smiling as Iman listened to the description of the recipient's contributions, then broke into inconsolable tears upon hearing her name read. Iman has been a CAWI member and volunteer for many years. Her enthusiastic commitment to increasing voter turnout and engagement is a shining example of how civic engagement can truly make a difference, inspiring others to work towards a more inclusive and participatory society. As she continues her journey with CAWI, her passion remains an invaluable asset in the ongoing pursuit of a stronger, gender-equitable Ottawa. Congratulations Iman!



» Iman Al-Khatib, first recipient of the Caroline Andrew Civic Engagement Award

WEAVE EQUITY DIVERSITY INCLUSION CHANGE with CAWI

This was WeaveChange's first year operating under our new brand and website! We wrapped up our second round of Investment Readiness Program funding with the Canadian Women's Foundation - this funding supported our branding, new website, as well as training new facilitators in our Introduction to Popular Education and Social Change Facilitation course. While we are still working out how best to operate our social enterprise, provide services to clients all while supporting the professional development of our Facilitators Network, overall, we had a great year. Some highlights were

- welcoming nine new members to our Facilitators Network
- delivering a big contract with CUPE for our facilitation training manuals
- meeting and learning with five new clients
- supporting the learning of three returning clients
- offering our first in-person Facilitators Network training since COVID
- generating over \$45,000 in revenue





» Introduction to Popular Education and Social Change Facilitation course, May 2023

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Revenue

Women and Gender Equality Canada	\$258,696
City of Ottawa	\$104,400
United Way	\$36,438
Canadian Women's Foundation	\$35,069
Ecology Ottawa	\$7,831
Elections Canada	\$4,350
Ottawa Community Housing Foundation	\$3,104
Fees for Service	\$42,593
Book Sales	\$10,217
Other	\$1,524
TOTAL	\$504,222

Expenditures

Salaries and Benefits	\$329,607
Program and Administration	\$213,395
TOTAL	\$543,002
Reserve Fund	\$75,268

PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Alliance to End
Homelessness

Canadian Women's
Foundation
Investment
Readiness Program

City of Ottawa

Coalition of
Community Health
and Resource
Centres

Community
Development
Framework

Cornerstone
Housing for Women

CUPE

Ecology Ottawa

Elections Canada

Gignul Non-Profit
Housing

Horizon Ottawa

Immigrant
Women's Services
of Ottawa

Lowertown
Community
Resource Centre

Nepean, Rideau
Osgoode

Community
Resource Centre

Ottawa ACORN

Ottawa Climate
Action Fund

Ottawa Coalition
to End Violence
Against Women

Ottawa
Community
Foundation

Ottawa
Community
Housing

Ottawa Local
Immigration
Partnership

Ontario Nonprofit
Network

People's Official
Plan (POP Coalition)

Public Service
Alliance of Canada
(PSAC)

Women and Gender
Equality Canada

United Way East
Ontario

Thank you very much to our partners and our donors that make all this possible.



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada



This project is part of the Canadian Women's Foundation Investment Readiness Program, funded by the Government of Canada.



Public Service Alliance of Canada
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada



ABOUT CAWI

As part of our 2023–2027 strategic planning process, we updated our vision, mission and values!

OUR VISION

A safe and equitable city where residents and communities are empowered, engaged, and thriving.

OUR MISSION

CAWI works alongside women of diverse lived experiences and community organizations to build their knowledge, skills and momentum to collectively advocate for economic, political and social justice.

CAWI works with decision-makers and partner organizations to advance public policies and practices that make Ottawa a more inclusive and caring city.

In the spirit of reconciliation with the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island, we strive to work with an inclusive and equitable lens that aligns with our mission and values, we seek to decolonize structures and systems, and we work to support self-determination.

OUR VALUES

- Grassroots
- Collaborative
- Equitable & Inclusive
- Compassionate
- Transformative

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Gullen – CO-CHAIR

Delores Peltier-Corkey – CO-CHAIR

Mary Ellen McDonald – TREASURER

Darlene Kaboni – SECRETARY

Andrea Balfour

Deborah Sogelola

Claudia Lahaie

Khrystal Sturridge

Nayeli Sosa

Nene Salimatou Barry

Rasheedaht Sulaiman

Sado Ibrahim

CITY OF OTTAWA BOARD REPRESENTATIVES (EX-OFFICIO)

Sawsan Al-Refaei

vacant

cawi-ivtf.org

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 CAWI_IVTF