

2022



Kawartha World Issues  
Centre Presents:



**Advancing Gender  
Equality in  
Nogojiwanong/  
Peterborough  
Project Report**



**EQUALITY FUND** Canada



**Community  
Foundation**  
of Greater Peterborough



**kwic**  
Kawartha World Issues Centre  
Connecting for Change



# Project Team

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We respectfully acknowledge that the Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC) is located in Nogojiwanong (Place at the End of the Rapids), colonially known as Peterborough governed by the Williams Treaties and Treaty 20. This is Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Anishinaabeg territory, Nations collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island. The Williams Treaties First Nations are the caretakers and rightsholders of these territories in perpetuity, and they continue to maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity for generations to come. We honour our treaty responsibilities and the land, air and waters themselves.

Gchi miigwetch, thank you very much to the Project Team, Steering Team, workshop participants and partners. This project was funded by the Fund for Gender Equality with support from the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough (CFGP). The Fund for Gender Equality is supported by a collaboration between Community Foundations of Canada and the Equality Fund, with support from the Government of Canada.

**This report aims to share what we gathered from the project, Advancing Gender Equality in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough from March 2021-2022.**

**This report can be utilized as a resource to learn about, talk about, and support the ongoing gender equality work in our community and beyond.**

## Report Citation (APA):

Kawartha World Issues Centre. (2022). Advancing Gender Equality in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough: Project Report.

# What are the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are a set of 17 interdependent goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that humanity enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030.

Advancing Gender Equality (SDG 5) advances all SDGs because it supports human rights, which provides more peace and prosperity for all. The UN has their own definition of gender equality, as empowering all women and girls. Locally, it means empowering all genders to express their gender identity without discrimination and prejudice and with equitable rights and opportunities. For more information, please visit the [UN SDG website](#).

## Project Context

In 2019, KWIC, GreenUP, Fleming College, and Trent University hosted an [SDG Community Forum](#) where we learned about the SDGs and identified our top five priorities for sustainable development as a community.

From March 2020-2021, KWIC and GreenUP, delivered a project called [Advancing the SDGs in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough](#). Five Action Teams of community leaders led work towards: Indigenous Leadership, No Poverty (SDG 1), Quality Education (SDG 4), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), and Climate Action (SDG 13). The project concluded with a 2021 SDG community forum.

Building upon this work, KWIC led this project [Advancing Gender Equality \(SDG 5\)](#) locally. With the support of community volunteers and partners, we aimed to engage those who are most impacted by gender and left behind to discuss their experiences and perspectives on the current state of gender locally.



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**

# Project Structure

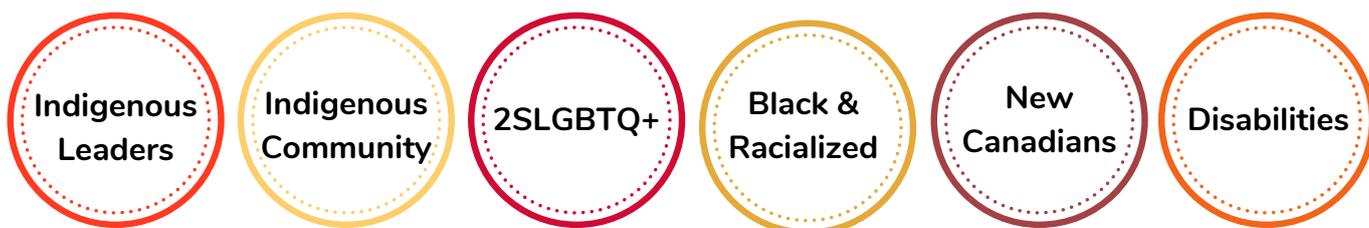
## Project Activities:

- Directly engaged diverse community members in 6 workshop discussions.
- Contributed to the national and virtual [Equal Futures Network Map](#).
- Shared project with the community at [International Women's Day](#) events.
- Created the local [Gender Equality Vital Signs Report](#) with the CFGP.
- Participants shared stories and ideas on gender in/equality and their intersecting identities to inform the state of this issue and what needed locally. Workshop participants learned about the history of gender equality in Canada and the global situation.
- Created a [Project Podcast](#).

## Steering Team:

This project was guided by local gender equality advocates. The steering team made decisions about the project through consensus. They decided to organize the workshops based on demographics of people whose identities are uniquely impacted by gender inequality and its roots. They also identified partner organizations for each workshop who supported in identifying local participants from the communities they serve.

## Gender Equality Workshops:



Each workshop was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and via Zoom for accessibility. Workshops were facilitated by the project coordinator, and a KWIC volunteer, William Ward. They were 2.5 hours long and participants received \$75 honorariums for their time and energy.

Each workshop had the following structure:

- Project context setting presentation: SDGs, principles, and protocols.
- Opening circle: What aspects of your identity intersect with gender?
- Group discussions on four questions:
  - What does gender equality mean?
  - How do you experience gender?
  - What are the gaps and challenges to achieving gender equality?
  - What are the foundations of a gender equal community?
- Two 10 minute presentations on the national and global contexts.
- Closing circle and next steps.

# Project Principles

1. **Centering Indigenous Leadership** - in the entire project. Decolonizing gender and removing harmful stigmas placed on gender roles is an essential step towards gender justice. Indigenous representation on the project team, steering team, and throughout the workshops was crucial.
2. **Leaving No One Behind** - those who face discrimination & disadvantage at different intersections of their identities were engaged in the workshops. We aimed to empower those who are who are affected most by the issues but are often left out of decision-making process.
3. **Intersectionality** - "is the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups." (Merriam-Webster). A term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, American civil rights advocate and law professor. This principle emerged during this project as the lens through which we must approach advancing gender equality. Everyone's experiences and impacts of gender inequality are different based on one's identity.



## Report Structure

- The following pages are organized based on the questions about gender equality that were discussed during the workshops.
- The responses that emerged are summarized on each page.
- To exemplify that we are centering Indigenous leadership in this work, responses from these workshops are uniquely highlighted on each page.
- On some pages, the responses from the Indigenous Leadership and Indigenous Community workshops are combined due to the similarities of their collective experiences and responses.

# Workshop Summaries

This section outlines the specific dates, times, number of participants, and the partner organizations involved in and invited to each workshop. Following each workshop, participants provided feedback through Google Forms which we used to improve the next workshops. Project partners assisted with finding participants for their workshop. Participants from multiple gender identities attended each workshop. Additionally, many participants self-identified as having intersectional identities.



## Indigenous Leadership

Tuesday, November 9, 2021. 2-4:30pm. 7 Participants. We partnered with TRACKS Youth Program and the Indigenous Leadership Action Team Members from the local SDG Project from March 2020-2021.



## Indigenous Community

Friday, November 26, 2021. 9-11:30am. 6 Participants. We partnered with TRACKS Youth Program. Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre and Nijkiwendidaa Anishinaabekwewaag Services Circle were also invited.



## 2SLGBTQ+

Thursday, January 6, 2022. 9:30-12:00pm. 9 Participants. We partnered with the Trent Centre for Women and Trans People. Trans Peer Outreach in Peterborough was also invited.



## Black and Racialized

Thursday, January 20, 2022. 12-2:30pm. 9 Participants. We partnered with Black Lives Matter Nogojiwanong, OPIRG (Ontario Public Interest Research Group) Peterborough, and Trent Association of Black Students.



## New Canadian

Thursday, February 3, 2022. 12:00-2:30pm. 8 Participants. We partnered with the New Canadians Centre and their Peterborough Immigration Partnership.



## Disabilities

Saturday, March 26, 2022. 10-12:30pm. 7 Participants. We partnered with the CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind). Peterborough Council for Persons with Disabilities was also invited.

# Intersectionality and Gender



## How does gender intersect with your Indigenous identity?

### Indigenous Leadership and Indigenous Community workshops:

Indigenous understandings of gender continue to be impacted by harmful gender roles imposed through colonization. Voices, resources, opportunities, futures, and connections to community, culture and language continue to be impacted. The freedoms, rights, identities, and expressions of Indigenous gender are also oppressed.

Indigenous gender diverse, trans and two-spirit peoples experience lack of visibility, participation and representation on many levels due to patriarchal governance structures. There is a deep need to foster empowerment and safety of all Indigenous peoples and their unique expressions and understandings of gender to support community healing.

**“There are many moving parts in our identities.”**

## How does gender intersect with other aspects of identity?

| Workshop             | Responses  |
|----------------------|--|
| 2SLGBTQ+             | As soon as you walk through the door, you notice how people gender you, including the way you dress. "It's hard to balance the line of being who I am and others being uncomfortable with who I am". The French language is especially gendered, "This affects how I express my gender in French". Every aspect of life is impacted by gender and sex. There were no conversations about being queer or gendered. It was hard to come out and learn how to explain being non-binary.   |
| Black and Racialized | The constructions of race and gender are inseparable and impacts every aspect of experience. Gender can have many meanings for many people. "My body and the way I present myself are two different things." "Being in lockdown made me reflect on the meaning of gender especially for black women and girls." The English language is gendered and more focused on individualism, whereas other languages, such as Somali, is more communal and inclusive of different genders.  |
| New Canadian         | Experiences of racism and sexism, in Canada and their countries of origin, especially for newcomer women of color who face intersecting inequalities "Qualifications obtained in other countries are often not validated in the Canadian workplace." "I have been affected by my race, by my accent." Another participant stated that she grew up surrounded by sexism in her country but she was fortunate to have strong female voices in her household to challenge patriarchal norms.  |
| Disabilities         | Disability is not a gender-neutral experience and impacts people with different gender identities in different ways. While women and girls face inequality, women and girls with disabilities are likely to face double discrimination due to prejudice and misconceptions of their value and capacity. The double discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities is often compounded by other factors such as age, race, Indigeneity, and social economical status. These factors can have a significant impact in terms of education, employment and living arrangements. |

# Experiences of Gender

## Indigenous Leadership & Indigenous Community

- MMIWG2S: Not feeling safe
- Being excluded from community's Indian Status under the Indian Act
- Two-Spirit erasure in communities
- Gender norms: Men as firekeepers and hunters, women beading and berry picking



## Black and Racialized

- Experience old fashion thinking, racism and discrimination
- Aggression & verbal abuse in public
- No representation in positions of power and if they point it out, they experience backlash

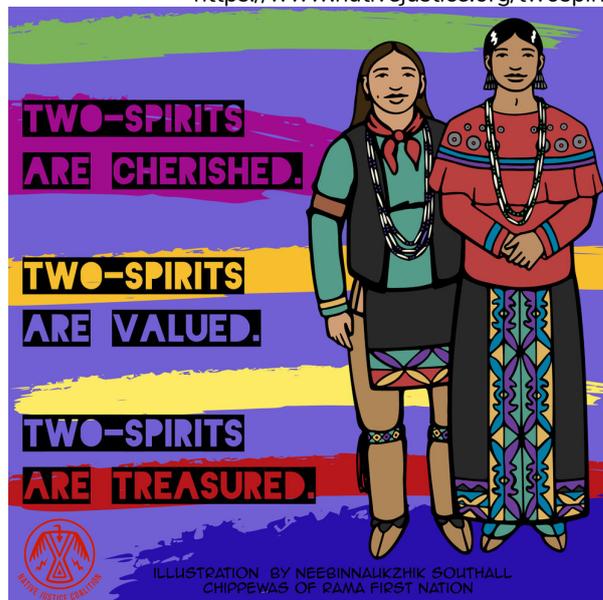


## Disabilities

- Need affordable childcare
- More representation in leadership
- Lack of accommodation, accessibility
- Pay gap for those with disabilities
- Valuing work in the same way



<https://www.nativejustice.org/twospirit>



## 2SLGBTQ+

- Female presenting bodies prone to sexual assault and harassment
- Gender binary only public spaces and dress codes ignore other identities
- Less likely to be promoted and respected than others

## New Canadian

- Need more newcomer services to support their integration
- Effectively communicating what resources are available
- Programs to help skilled immigrants transition to the Canadian workforce

# What is Gender Equality?



## Indigenous Leadership and Community:

There are diverse perspectives between Indigenous nations, communities and individuals in regards to gender identity. In some Indigenous worldviews, there are 13 different genders. Indigenous languages aren't gendered because they understand gender fluidity as a spectrum or circle. Thinking about their traditions and history, roles and responsibilities are not assigned based on gender but based on one's gifts, interests and the needs of the community.

**"Indigenous languages offer different perspectives and narratives of gender."**

## 2SLGBTQ+

Gender is viewed as a social construct. Gender roles are hard to grasp for people who fall outside the norms. "I did not understand gender as a kid, as I grew older I had to conform to a gender." The gender binary (only two categories of gender identities: man or woman) exists in western society. Very strict and conservative definitions of what it means to be gendered, culture and religious backgrounds can impact and define gender.

**"Allowing more conversations like this to happen that aren't shut down as being called 'complaining' or making things 'over complicated' with 'new terminology' because it isn't new."**

## Black and Racialized

Understanding gender inequality and equality is about power. Child care is often viewed as the responsibility of women and this old fashion thinking persists today in many workplaces. Double standards exist in male dominated cultures. Gender is a social construct and performance and gender equality is about respecting people who choose to present themselves in a certain way.

## New Canadian

Gender Equality is a human issue and everyone should be part of the conversation. "People should complement each other in their roles and try to understand each other". It requires compassion, being treated fairly, empowerment of New Canadian voices, the ability to stand up for themselves without fear, being treated as individuals and accepted for who they are. It means being given opportunities to prove themselves and chances to succeed. Gender equality would be achieved if the gender binary didn't exist.

**"The issue of equality or inequality relates to choice and consequence. Does everybody have access to choice and do they reap the same consequences from making that choice?"**

## Disabilities

Gender equality means not having to work harder to gain employment and independence compared to those without disabilities. One participant stated that "I have been told by job counselors that I can only get low-income jobs. I can never be a successful rich person." The lack of representation in the workforce made it challenging for individuals with disabilities to find a sense of belonging. We can only achieve equality for all when employers provide adequate accommodation in the workplace. Another issue discussed was limited access to safe spaces in public and the lack of safety in spaces being disabled and a woman, especially at night time.

# Gaps to Advancing Gender Equality



## Indigenous Leadership

- Gender inequality and patriarchy (male dominated power) is institutionalized and built into Canadian society
- Economic inequalities
- Some resistance in putting up pride flags
- Ongoing impacts of colonization, religion, English language, etc.
- The way Indigenous language connects to who you are in doesn't translate to English
- Lack of accountability and transparency

## Indigenous Community

- Limited access to their own Indigenous gender teachings, resources and Elders
- Limited or no understanding of Two-Spirit identities in community
- Lack of representation and erasure of Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary peoples
- Breaking down gender stereotypes of what can or cannot be enjoyed or expressed
- Indigenous-led organizations struggle with limited capacity, funding, and resources

## 2SLGBTQ+

- Gendered institutions: health facilities, school system, washrooms, community centres, etc.
- Difficulty finding a safe space in public (e.g., toilets, health facilities, schools)
- Accessing the same level of care in hospitals and clinics (uninformed professionals)
- Fear expressing oneself in public, including expectations placed on how to dress
- Not being valued for doing "unpaid labour"

## Black and Racialized

- More individual actions - Role of men
- Gender and racial diversity represented by board members and decision makers
- Educating young students and the public
- Funding, resources, organizations need to come together

"Real change takes place under a coalition."



## New Canadian

- Need more organizations serving newcomers
- More workshops and programs to help with their integration into society
- More programs to help skilled immigrants transition to the Canadian workforce
- Limited pace to advocate for what's happening and argue my case
- Not effectively communicating what resources are available to newcomers

## Disabilities

- Lack of accommodation- accessibility
- Unaffordable childcare
- More representation in leadership and decision making positions
- Valuing work in the same way
- Pay gap between those with disabilities and those without

"My gender is not a threat to your understanding of the world."

# How to Achieve Gender Equality?

**Participants envisioned:  
What does achieving  
gender equality look like?  
Where do we go from here?**

Achieving intersectional and equity based gender equality is a complex and layered process due to the history and root causes of gender inequalities and issues.

Below are the structural and societal actions discussed to achieve gender equality.

## 01 Institutional accountability and transparency

- More diverse representation, especially in leadership and decision making.
- Identify causes of harm and hold institutions accountable and responsible for their actions & impacts.
- Ex. equity reports on funding, hiring, populations served, etc.

## 02 Intersectional and informed supports and services

- Decolonial and culturally appropriate services for all to thrive.
- Foster acceptance, understanding and sensitivity for all. Affirm all identities.
- Understand roles and responsibilities in providing life, liberty, safety and security for all.

## 03 Equitable opportunities and resources

- Access to basic needs and rights, then opportunities and resources for all.
- Create space and coalitions for people to come together and address issues.
- Provide all individuals with adequate accommodation for needs with dignity.

## 04 Education, healing and training for the public

- Create a conceptual framework of what gender is through different worldviews.
- Question biases and create acceptance and understanding of gender.
- Prioritizing safety and acceptance in public spaces.

## What can you do individually?

- **LEARN:** Read more about gender equality from different perspectives
- **SUPPORT:** Grassroots movements, community initiatives, larger networks
- **EDUCATE:** Starting with yourself and engaging with those around you
- **GIVE:** Donate to funds and organizations that advance gender equality
- **AMPLIFY:** Share this report and the [Vital Signs Report](#) with your networks

"I envision a more harmonious, peaceful and non-judgmental community where members can fully achieve gender equality however that may be manifested."



# Moving Forward

**Miigwetch, thank you to everyone who contributed to this project. We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to advancing gender justice. While we still have work ahead of us, we are now that much closer to achieving gender equality.**

**“I'm able to achieve many things because of those that came before us. I feel grateful for the experiences that I have now and explore how I can move this forward for others.”**

**We will continue our work towards advancing gender equality and sustainable development through continuing to provide educational opportunities and programming locally. Please connect with us to learn more!**

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## Contact

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