

# Green Communities CANADA



2022  
-  
2023

**COLLECTIVE  
IMPACT REPORT**





## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The climate crisis is deepening, and communities across Canada are experiencing the acute impacts of more frequent fires, floods, heat waves, and other devastating events.

We know that climate change is a crisis of inequity and disparity, and we also know that **communities are at the heart of climate justice solutions**. At Green Communities Canada, it is our privilege to work with non-profit and Indigenous organizations across the country to enable grassroots action projects that increase resilience, address vulnerabilities, and protect human and ecosystem health. Local action is vital, and with this - our first collective impact report - we are excited to benchmark, recognize, and celebrate the tremendous work that is happening within and across communities.

In late 2023, I will be stepping away from Green Communities Canada for a year as my partner and I welcome our first child. When I think about the future - their future - it is the creativity and perseverance of our member and partner organizations that gives me hope. This is a pivotal time for humanity and the planet, and our collective impact matters: now and always.

Brianna Salmon  
Executive Director



Green Communities Canada acknowledges the treaty and traditional territories of Indigenous Nations throughout Canada.

We are grateful for the continued work of many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who are the original caretakers of the Land and Waters.

In our work, we have a responsibility and a desire to respect Indigenous perspectives and elevate Indigenous voices.

As Treaty People, we will acknowledge our histories, honour our commitments and sovereignty, and do our best to care for each other and for all of creation.

## OUR PROGRAMS



## ABOUT GREEN COMMUNITIES CANADA

The scale and complexity of the climate crisis requires that we work together. Grassroots action is vital, and local organizations are stronger when they can share resources, knowledge, and a sense of purpose. At Green Communities Canada, we connect community-based climate groups through a national network to build capacity for action and elevate our collective impact. We also work to ensure that local organizations can build and maintain the capacity required for transformative change by providing essential funding. To do this, we collaborate with our members to secure shared grant funds and also work with governments and charitable foundations to deliver strategic funding programs that support our local partners. Finally, building upon our organizational expertise, we offer our community partners the training services, delivery scaffolding, peer learning opportunities, and evaluation supports they need to accelerate change.

The need for Green Communities Canada to propel communities toward a just and resilient future has never been greater and we are thrilled to share the impact of our network in this report.

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

Local organizations are best positioned to deliver equitable climate solutions that address the vulnerabilities and opportunities in their communities. The cumulative impact of local initiatives coast to coast to coast is and should be an essential part of our national climate narrative, but these stories often remain local. In 2022, we worked with our 22 member organizations (listed on the back cover of this report) to establish key metrics that we could collectively share. Using data provided by organizations from across the country, this report begins to tell the story of grassroots impact on a national scale: showcasing vital progress and conveying the urgent need to accelerate this work. Indicators are organized based on the three key goals outlined in our [2022 Strategic Plan](#).



# STRENGTHENING OUR VIBRANT COLLECTIVE

## 2022 IMPACT

Local climate organizations have strong relationships with their communities and can mobilize meaningful citizen action.

Last year, our members coordinated

**1,250** 

distinct events to engage people in their communities in direct action

Green Communities Canada and our members reached

**2M+** 

people through social, online, and print media

Across the country,

**250,000**

people took part in climate action initiatives led by our members. Of these, **40% were children or youth**

Our members operate in 325 cities across Canada and serve

**70%**   
of the national population

## 2023 INVESTMENTS IN GRASSROOTS CAPACITY

This year, Green Communities Canada will grant more than

**\$1.25M**

to our local members and partners to enable their climate action and organizational development activities.

This includes green infrastructure, sustainable mobility, and residential energy programs, as well as a new Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigenization initiative to advance justice in the environmental sector.





# ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

## CLIMATE MITIGATION

In Canada, household energy use and transportation are significant sources of GHG emissions. Our programs target these high emitting sectors and offer supports that enable measurable carbon reductions.

Our members coordinate programs that promote active transportation. Last year, participants walked or biked the equivalent of

115

trips from the coasts of BC to Newfoundland, resulting in

216,700

kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e reductions/yr

In 2022, our members directly delivered

6,580 **EnerGuide Audits**

to homeowners across Ontario & BC. Completed retrofits resulted in

2,175,000

kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e reductions/yr



Two of our members led large-scale composting programs that resulted in the diversion of

1,053,750 kg

of organic waste from landfill in 2022. This prevented

983,000

kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

**Deshkan Zibiing Retrofit:** London Environment Network and Chippewas of the Thames First Nation partnered to complete a deep energy retrofit project.

**Future Homes Ottawa:** EnviroCentre is catalyzing mass retrofit projects to accelerate low-carbon homes, starting with townhouse model homes in 2023.

**Rossbrook House Depave:** Green Action Centre engaged the staff and users of an Indigenous youth drop-in centre to create a beautiful new greenspace.

**Community Orchards and Food Forests:** GreenUP partnered with their municipality and community members to plant and care for 13 mini-orchards.

**Broken Brooks:** Petitcodiac Watershed Alliance is increasing aquatic connectivity for migratory fish. In 2022, they removed nine in-stream structures.





“

At Green Communities Canada, our work moves beyond the question of **‘why’** and focuses on collaborative solutions to the challenge of **‘how’**

”

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Communities across the country are already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Our green infrastructure programs address key risks, reduce local vulnerabilities, and help cities adapt.

In 2022, our members restored

# 15,825<sup>m²</sup>

of urban land through projects such as tree planting, depaving, rain gardens, and riparian zone restorations. **That's more than 40 basketball courts in size!**



Through these projects, we planted more than

# 6,200

urban trees. Once mature, these trees will absorb

# 136,000

kg of CO<sup>2</sup> per year!

## EQUITY FOCUS

Our members support

# 65

community gardens across the country, increasing food security for more than

# 1,500

 households

# 15,850

perennials and shrubs were also planted. These native species create habitat, improve biodiversity, and reduce the risk of flood by absorbing rain where it falls.



# CLIMATE LEADERSHIP AT GCC



**NETWORK**



**FUNDER**



**BACKBONE**



**ACCELERATOR**

## ADVANCING COLLECTIVE CLIMATE IMPACT IN 2023

In 2023, Green Communities Canada significantly expanded our programs, offering more financial support, training sessions, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities to our members and partners.

### SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

**School Travel Planning:** Our 2023 **Equity and Engagement in School Travel Planning Report** provides an updated approach to guide practitioners toward more inclusive participation and just outcomes.

- **National School Travel Data Collection:** To ensure local communities have the data needed to make evidence-informed decisions, we piloted a National School Travel Data Program in Ontario and BC.
- **Canadian Electric School Bus Alliance:** Led in collaboration with Équiterre, this national partnership has published a **Recommendations Report**, to support the transition to electric school buses.

### RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- **Deep Energy Retrofits Canada:** Our **Deep Energy Retrofits Hub** is establishing a clearinghouse of resources to accelerate the impact of residential retrofitting and help achieve Canada's net-zero climate target.
- **EnerGuide Service Organization:** We support our members in Ontario to deliver EnerGuides audits. Last year, 6.1% of our audits resulted in deep energy retrofits (reducing energy usage by 50%+). In 2023, we are on track to complete 50% more audits and to double the GHG reductions.

### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Living Cities Canada Framework:** Our groundbreaking **Pathways to Living Cities Framework** lays out key strategies to help cities accelerate the uptake of abundant, equitable and thriving green infrastructure.
- **Living Cities Canada Fund:** Launched this year, the Fund provides partners with the resources needed to implement green infrastructure. We have supported 28 community-led and equity-focused projects.
- **National Mini Forest Pilot:** Led in partnership with the Network of Nature, this program supported eight successful mini forest plantings in 2023 and is preparing to expand the number of projects in 2024.

**WE BUILD GRASSROOTS CAPACITY FOR ACTION**



# BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE AND EQUITY

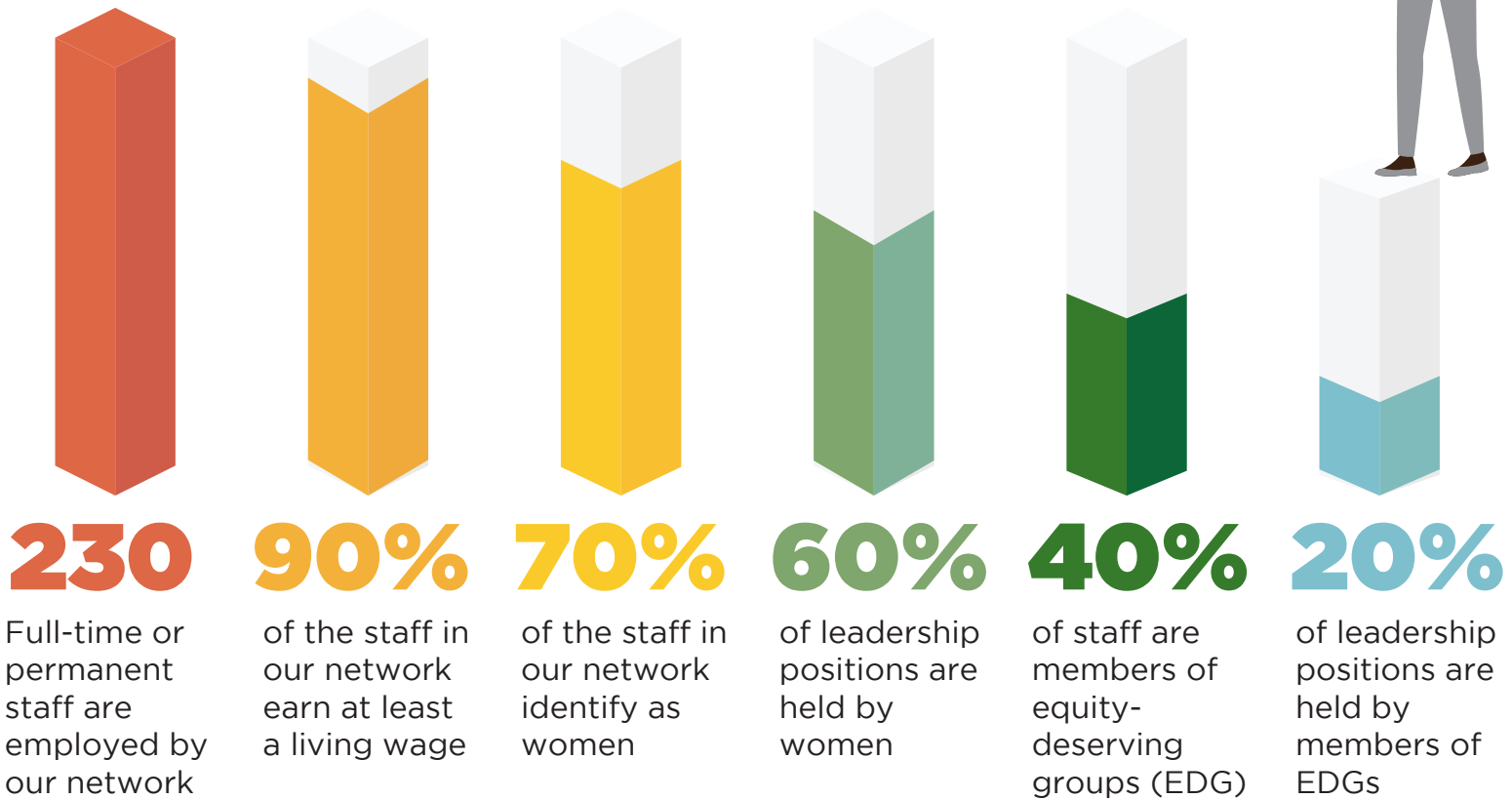
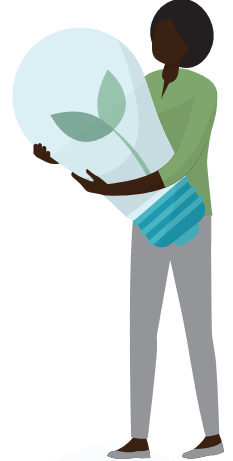
## 2022 PROFILE

**Environmental non-profits can and should be inclusive and thriving agents of change. This starts from within, as we build our capacity and promote just practices.**

In 2022, the organizations in our network had a combined revenue of

**\$25,000,000**

Nearly all of this funding is reinvested directly into local employment and community climate programming.



## 2023 FOCUS

In 2022, Green Communities Canada developed our first Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indiginization (EDII) strategy. The creation of this strategy was led by our staff and board teams. The document identified the specific actions, progress measures, and resources required to advance six key priority areas for our organization.

One of these priority areas is our network. In early 2023, we launched a new collaborative project that engages 20 of our members in a shared, facilitated process to support EDII strategy development, group training, shared resource development, and collective accountability monitoring. Doing this work together will build our network's capacity to accelerate justice-focused solutions that centre and engage those who are most affected by climate change.

# NETWORK MEMBERS



envirocentre



London  
Environmental  
Network



RIDEAU  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACTION LEAGUE



CityGreen



Saskatchewan  
Environmental  
Society



Environment  
Lethbridge



# FUNDING PARTNERS



TD READY  
COMMITMENT

definity.

Canada

McConnell



Peter Gilgan  
Foundation



CANADIAN  
RED CROSS

tdsb

Toronto District School Board



Toronto  
Catholic  
District  
School Board



OTTAWA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

invested for good

BALSAM FOUNDATION



consecon  
foundation



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF CANADA



Our work is made possible thanks to our committed staff and Board of Directors.  
To learn more about our people and our work, visit

[greencommunitiescanada.org](http://greencommunitiescanada.org)