



In 2018, M'Wikwedong led the implementation of Giiwe, a new inter-agency collaboration in Grey County, ON.

Giiwe aimed to reduce Indigenous homelessness by:

- 1) Fostering increased coordination among local organizations
- 2) Strengthening organizational capacity to respond Indigenous-specific needs

WHY WAS GIIWE NEEDED?

- Staff reported discomfort in undertaking collaborative work between Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations
- Limited collaboration among social service agencies hinders Indigenous people's access to the supports needed to secure and maintain housing
- Best practices for ending Indigenous homelessness stress the need for Indigenous leadership in the area of homelessness and housing

HOW DID GIIWE WORK?

- Local organizations participated in eight monthly inter-agency meetings named 'Giiwe Circles'
- Indigenous leaders shared traditional knowledge and lived experiences of homelessness
- Giiwe Circles ensured all attendees had a voice to:
 - 1) Discuss collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous agencies
 - 2) Co-create ideas for reducing homelessness
 - 3) Undertake collaborative case-management

THIS IS WHAT GIIWE ACHIEVED

IMPROVED INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION ON INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS



Successfully established and sustained the only Indigenous-led inter-agency collaboration in Grey Bruce

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Involved 11 core organizations and occasional guests



Facilitated referral process by providing a trusted go-to-person in each organization

Established formal inter-agency agreements to better serve Indigenous peoples

ENHANCED CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO INDIGENOUS-SPECIFIC NEEDS

- Increased knowledge of Indigenous history and current contexts
- Raised awareness of programming available to support Indigenous home-seekers
- Contributed to implementing Indigenous-specific procedures for service delivery
- Built momentum among participants to advocate within their own organizations for improved services for Indigenous peoples

Giiwe

EXECUTIVE EVALUATION SUMMARY

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The Centre for Environmental Health Equity evaluated Giiwe through a developmental evaluation approach. The evaluation was designed to support M'Wikwedong's decision-making over project design and facilitation. Carlos Sanchez-Pimienta, MSc., was responsible for in-person evaluation activities, and Dr. Jeffrey Masuda oversaw the evaluation. The developmental evaluation of Giiwe generated qualitative knowledge about:

- 1) The priorities of inter-sectoral collaboration on Indigenous homelessness reduction
- 2) The degree of perceived competency and comfort in addressing Indigenous-specific housing needs

The evaluation combined ongoing and pre/post activities. Ongoing activities included the attendance of an evaluator at all Giiwe Circles, minute-making, and monthly feedback to M'Wikwedong. Pre/post activities included a total of 13 interviews and 2 sharing circles with Giiwe participants.

WHY DID GIWE WORK?

Participants characterized Giiwe as an innovative process for addressing Indigenous-specific issues in Grey County. When asked what made Giiwe innovative, participants highlighted:

- 1) M'Wikwedong's leadership in orienting the project
- 2) The use of Indigenous approaches for project facilitation, such as smudging, sharing traditional knowledge, working in a circle, and using unstructured time to strengthen bonds and trust among participants
- 3) The creation of an intimate learning process that focused on building trusting relationships first

WHO MADE GIWE POSSIBLE?



Southwest Ontario
Aboriginal Health
Access Centre

Métis Nation
of Ontario



YMCA of
Owen Sound Grey Bruce

the centre for
Environmental Health Equity

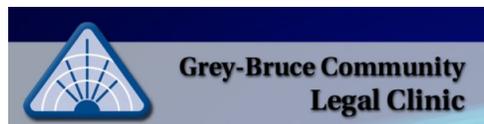
Grey County
Colour It Your Way



canadian partnership for
children's
health & environment



United Way
Bruce Grey
Change starts here.



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Grey Bruce
Mental Health and Addiction Services

'Giiwe' is an Anishinaabemowin word that can be translated as "s/he goes home"

SELECTED EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) ***Continue Giiwe, sustain Indigenous leadership, and involve relevant organizations***
Findings demonstrate that Giiwe is a unique opportunity to mobilize initiatives that respond to Indigenous-specific issues in Grey County

FOR THE SECOND PHASE OF GIIWE

2) ***Determine a preferred scope and breadth for Giiwe***

Participants affirmed that Giiwe was successful because it was Indigenous-led. M'Wikwedong should identify the preferred scope and breadth of Giiwe's next phase. That said, Giiwe participants suggested:

- a) Seeking the involvement of other relevant organizations
- b) Expanding the focus of Giiwe to address additional Indigenous-specific issues

3) ***Allocate funds for project development***

This will enable Giiwe to hire skilled workers to undertake any required technical tasks, such as proposal-writing or consultancy

4) ***Prepare an adequate evaluation design***

Should Giiwe's focus shift from relationship building and education to more instrumental initiatives to reduce homelessness (e.g. supportive housing, hiring housing emergency workers), a new evaluation design will be required

FOR GIIWE PARTNERS

5) ***Hire Indigenous staff***

Indigenous participants made a call for non-Indigenous agencies to recruit more Indigenous peoples and to enable these workers and managers to advocate for further organizational change

6) ***Establish or revise Indigenous-specific policies***

The evaluator observed that the agencies that incorporated or adapted internal Indigenous-specific policies reported greater benefits from their participation in Giiwe

7) ***Find equitable partnership workloads on reconciliation work***

To reach equity in the distribution of reconciliation work, non-Indigenous organizations should consider allocating greater economic, human and organizational resources to Indigenous-specific work