

MOVEMENT WEAVING: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY

2019 GATHERING FINAL REPORT



Canadian
CED Network
Réseau canadien
de DÉC



*Building Collaborative Capacity Towards
Greater Collective Impact*

Hosted by the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet), The Gathering is an annual pay-what-you-can conference for Manitoba's community builders to connect, learn, and celebrate the work in our sector. Created to be an accessible and largely barrier-free event, it is open to everyone: staff from community organizations, funders, academics, students and community members broadly interested in community economic development.

In its' 18th year, The Gathering has become a touchstone event in the calendar for our sector. Affectionately referred to by some as "Christmas," it accomplishes a similar feeling of homecoming and celebration for our corner of Manitoba's community-serving sector.

Guided by input from our planning team, community stakeholders, and fresh on the heels of CCEDNet-Manitoba's recent Strategic Check-Up, we set out to transform this beloved event into one with a stronger, more meaningful, tie to the work we do all year round. We asked: *is the Gathering still accomplishing what it set out to do? In a climate of political uncertainty and economic scarcity, what type of learning does the sector need most? Finally, how can we create a conference with community participation for community benefit?*

The theme that emerged through community consultation, was "Movement Weaving: Building Collaborative Capacity." Held on Friday, October 25, 2019, at St. John's High School, 400 people showed up to practice collaboration for greater collective impact. Participants attended a morning plenary featuring local leaders, 10 workshops that targeted the skills, practices and capacities of collaboration, afternoon "movement weaving" sessions organized by sector leaders to address the key policy areas facing our sector, and enjoyed a lunch catered by local social enterprises.

This Movement Weaving resulted in new collaborative partnerships in topic areas of poverty reduction, composting and organics ban, and healthy independence for kids (see Post-Gathering Ripples in Community-Engaged Planning & Results).

Statement

Shifting the Intent and Structure of the Gathering

Re-visioning the Gathering was a big task that required the consideration, effort, and imagination of our entire sector. The reason behind this shift, and the hopes therein, were articulated in the welcome message of our program:



Welcome to an entire day focused on building skills & connection for collaboration and exploring how to weave movements together to create a Manitoba where there is enough, for all, forever!

For 18 years, Manitoba community builders have gathered every October to connect over a shared meal, to learn from one another's work, and to celebrate the challenging but necessary practice of building stronger communities.

It has been a privilege to host this container, and to hold the stories and history of our community sector. Thank you to every single person who has participated, volunteered, coordinated, presented, worked, sponsored, provided feedback or contributed energy to this event. It continues to exist because of you.

Throughout 2019, network staff have been listening -- we have a responsibility to grow with, and adapt alongside, our members who are calling for collaboration, leadership, and a greater shared sense of meaning in our work.

We hear how urgent the need is for change - to dramatically shift our way of doing economy for the sake of people and planet, to address and right the relationships damaged in colonization, and to ensure the voices of all Manitobans are heard in our institutions, governments, and systems. We hear how we're all called to collaborate: with our colleagues, stakeholders, funders, community members, or across movements. We also hear how challenging it can be to work together in collaborative arrangements or across issues, even though most people believe that joint action would benefit us, particularly in the current environment.

In meetings with our own collaborative Planning Team, this theme of weaving and the challenges of collaboration kept coming up, so we decided to offer The Gathering to this challenge.

It will be an experiment and a risk, as all worthwhile work requires. We are excited to explore something new together, in hopes of weaving our movements together towards stronger collective power.

Sarah Leeson-Klym, Regional Networks Director

Dunja Kovačević, Learning and Communications Coordinator

Community-Engaged Planning & Results

2019 Gathering Survey Quick Facts

- 15% response rate
- 96% of attendees had a Very Good or Good experience
- 87% reported it increased their sense of collaboration
- 93% found the learning useful
- 77% of participants reported that movement weaving sessions built relationships for collaboration in their work.
- 89% found accessibility measures at the Gathering Very Good or Good



A fresh approach to Gathering planning also reverberated through our evaluation and feedback collection. In addition to monthly planning team meetings with a variety of community stakeholder groups, time was built in to contact and connect with a variety of sector leaders individually to learn about which challenges to collaboration exist in their organizations, and work with other groups and movements.

This early-stage feedback created an opportunity to develop the conference around community concerns and capacity-building needs, rather than simply collecting responses following the event.

Throughout this process, we realized that CCEDNet could not hold the “movement weaving” portion of our afternoon program on our own if it was to be truly representative, and relevant, to the sector.

In response, we asked 25 sector leaders from different community stakeholder groups (community organizations, steering committees, working groups, and activist movements) to decide the content, and facilitate, discussion groups alongside five facilitators with experience in large group settings.

Through independently organized weekly meetings, check-ins from CCEDNet staff, and a large video call with all stakeholders, feedback was integrated throughout the entire conference planning process.

POST-GATHERING RIPPLES

We asked how the learning seeded at the Gathering had rippled out into their broader work, and lives.

Some ripples include:

- MPHM and United Way Winnipeg/Wpg Poverty Reduction Council are collaborating on a workshop for high school youth (part of UWW's Youth program) around the MPHM concert. This idea was raised at the Gathering, as was the decision to collaborate more intentionally
- The Canadian CED Network's annual Policy Summit expanded on the Road Map themes introduced to our membership at the Gathering. The Policy Summit further weaves movements together and determines our collective vision
- A conversation on a Composting and Organics Disposal Ban resolution led to a decision between Green Action Centre, WCWRC, Klinik, and Food Matters MB to collaborate on this issue.
- A conversation about the Healthy Independence for Kids resolution led to collaboration on this issue between Green Action Centre, WCWRC, SNA, Klinik, and MANSO.



From the Movement Weaving stream on Local & Fair Economies, the We Want to Work group has started talking about collaboration, and will be inviting more people to join the coalition to participate.

SURVEY RESPONSE

Every year, we ask participants to complete a survey following the Gathering. Feedback gathered from the survey helps our Planning Team improve the Gathering to ensure it remains a relevant and responsive learning opportunity to support community builders.

This year, survey response was lower than expected with 15% (50) of participants reporting. We encountered challenges with both our website and survey development platform that likely impacted the response rate. Despite this, feedback received demonstrated that changes made to the Gathering format did contribute to greater impact and learning value for participants.

A driving factor in revisiting the Gathering format was a growing question among our planning committee around the continued relevancy of the learning at the Gathering. This led to the decision to focus the learning at the Gathering.

The Audience

Total attendance for the Gathering this year was exactly 400. As in previous years, the numbers have been slowly dropping but we anticipated this, and planned accordingly, due to our change in format.

During our planning, we identified a focus to recapture and to retain the sector leaders and community workers for whom the event was created, and to work towards building a deeper learning focused conference that would add more value and impact to their work. Those who pre-registered were asked to self-identify based on some broad identity categories, and the results were as follows:

Indigenous	Youth (Under 30)	Newcomer, Immigrant, Refugee	Persons living with disabilities	Rural/Northern	LGBTTOQIA*	Visible/Linguistic Minority
90	70	59	27	11	48	50

Increasingly committed to accessibility, the Gathering operates from a “barrier-free” perspective by offering pay-what-you-can registration system. This model allows for some cost recovery, while also creating financial accessibility to enable a greater diversity of attendance. Those who do choose to pay can contribute amounts ranging from \$10-\$140.

2019 Program: Building Collaborative Capacity

The Gathering also included a morning plenary session featuring three local Indigenous leaders and moderator in our sector, a facilitated group reflection, a stream of 10 collaboration tailored workshops in the morning, five movement weaving discussion streams in the afternoon, representatives from 25 different community organizations leading workshops or movement weaving sessions, over 40 volunteers from community organizations, non-profits and social enterprises.

PLENARY: THE FUTURE IS COLLABORATIVE

- Melissa Chung, United Way Winnipeg - Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council
- Sadie-Phoenix Lavoie, Wa Ni Ska Tan: An Alliance of Hydro-Impacted Communities
- Annetta Armstrong, Indigenous Women's Healing Centre



We know that achieving our collective vision of sustainable, inclusive communities directing our own economic, social, and environmental futures requires deep collaboration. We are called to collaborate with colleagues, community members, stakeholders, funders, friends, and even those we've faced conflict with in the past. We are called to collaborate within our organizations, within our movements, but also across movements and communities.

Our Opening Plenary grounded our day of movement weaving by exploring the cornerstone of collaborative practice, with teachings from leaders throughout our communities.

WORKSHOPS: PRACTICES IN COLLABORATION

Workshop Title	Presenter(s)
Power, Leadership, Collective Influence	Gary Loewen
The Power of Story for Movement Building	Cate Friesen, The Story Source
Evaluating Complexity	Erika Wiebe, United Way Winnipeg - Poverty Reduction Schedule
Building Welcoming Communities: A CED Approach to Newcomer Settlement	- Mandela M. Kuet, ACOMI - Anne-Lydie Bolay, Cutting Edge - CMWI - Steve Reynolds, Regional Connections - Nicole Jowett, MANSO
Collaboration and Democracy Between Elections	Marianne Cerilli
Collaborative Decision Making: Steps to Build Consensus	Sue Hemphill, Healthy Hive
Creating our Tool Box: Facilitation for Social Change	Laura Ringaert, Change Weavers

Workshop Title	Presenter(s)
Beyond Business as Usual: Participatory Governance Models in Social Enterprise	- Kalen Taylor, Aki Energy - Darcy Wood, Aki Energy
Community Collaboration for Education	Rhonda Klippenstein, Ka Ni Kanichihk
Indigenous Social Innovation	Diane Roussin, The Winnipeg Boldness Project

MOVEMENT WEAVING IN PRACTICE

Stemming from the CCEDNet Manitoba Public Policy Road Map, the afternoon movement weaving sessions were separated into five groups themed around key policy resolution areas brought forward by our membership. Importantly, these movement exist together and depends on one another to succeed.

We devoted the entire afternoon to "movement weaving" sessions, that were focused on three mains goals: building relationships between groups, organizations, and individuals to support, uplift, and cultivate collective leadership across movements; develop concrete skills to collaborate within and across movements, sectors, and networks; and to consider our shared, bold vision for change, the systems we're resisting, the solutions we're supporting, and some challenges that stand as roadblocks to our vision.

Movement Weaving Session	Participants/Facilitators
Ending Poverty	- Michael Barkman, CCEDNet, Make Poverty History Manitoba - Molly McCracken, CCPA - Manitoba, Make Poverty History Manitoba - Desiree McIvor, Make Poverty History Manitoba - Facilitated by Anny Chen
Local and Fair Economies	- Brendan Reimer, Assiniboine Credit Union - Sean Hogan, BUILD Inc. - Kalen Taylor, Purpose Construction - Facilitated by Margerit Roger
Tackling Climate Change	- Laura Tyler, Sustainable Buildings Manitoba, Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition - Mandalyn Unger, Manitoba Youth for Climate Action - Dennis Cunningham, Assiniboine Credit Union - Heather Mitchell, Green Action Centre - Facilitated by Cate Friesen
Sustainable Community-Led Development	- Sarah Leeson-Klym, CCEDNet - Damon Johnston, Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg and Winnipeg Indigenous Executives Circle - Dawn Sands, North End Community Renewal Corporation - Jesse Gair, Daniel McIntyre/St.Matthews Community Association

Movement Weaving Session	Participants/Facilitators
Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Margo Powell, Abilities Manitoba - Nicole Jowett, MANSO - Hani Ataan, Immigration Partnership Winnipeg - Abdi Ahmed, Immigration Partnership Winnipeg - Sadie-Phoenix Lavoie, Wa Ni Ska Tan: An Alliance of Hydro-Impacted Communities

SYNONYM ART CONSULTATION

The Gathering invited Synonym Art Consultation to partner with us to create a memorable collaborative art work in response to the theme "Movement Weaving: Building Collaborative Capacity."

Synonym Art Consultation provided two artists, Mariana Muñoz Gomez and Jan Castillo to create a collaborative linocut artwork and digital postcard to remember the day. The artists were on-site during the conference, attending workshops and inviting audience participation to interpret the ideas and concepts of the day.

After the gathering, participants were sent a "digital postcard" of this composite and collaborative artwork, and those participants who contributed to the final product were able to pick up their printed linocuts from Martha Street Studio

Synonym Art Consultation is a curatorial collective based in Winnipeg, Manitoba on the original lands of Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation and Treaty 1 Territory. Synonym is committed to providing meaningful employment and mentorship opportunities to artists and to facilitate the celebration of art and culture with unique, inclusive, community-minded events that serve as safer spaces for diverse populations. Through our mural and culture festival, Wall-to-Wall, we strive to cultivate a grassroots contemporary street-art movement in our city and to participate in hyperlocal and international dialogues around important issues, such as Indigenous rights, social responsibility, and innovative economic development, rooted in the arts.

Partners and Sponsors

The Gathering continues to exist because of the generous/consistent support of our diverse community partners and organizations, sponsors, and volunteers. It is because of these contributions of time, resources, and value sharing that makes the Gathering feasible and possible.

VOLUNTEERS & ENGAGING YOUTH

Our Planning Team is made up of representatives from various community organizations in the sector, such as the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations, Assiniboine Credit Union, West Central Women's Resource Centre, United Way Winnipeg/Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council, Health in Common, Volunteer Manitoba and the Manitoba Cooperative Associations. This group guides the development of the Gathering theme and event structure, while also providing leadership in key logistic positions on the day.



Meanwhile, the majority of our event set up, take down, and accessibility support was filled by Wayfinders youth--a program of the Seven Oaks School Division. Over the last couple of years, these youths have grown indispensable to the success of the Gathering. Many of them were returning this year, after having volunteered with us in 2018. We are also grateful for the volunteer contributions of Red River College.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Gathering is made possible by major partner and event founder, United Way Winnipeg, along with a host of other local and national sponsors.

Sponsor contributions allow the Gathering to continue offering a pay-what-you-can registration fee, removing a potential financial barrier for community members and participants interested in deepening their understanding of community development. Many thanks to United Way Winnipeg, The Government of Canada, The Winnipeg Foundation, Assiniboine Credit Union and Social Enterprise Eco-system Project!



SUPPORTING FUTURE LEADERS: CCEDNET COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AWARD

Held once again at St. John's High School, located in Winnipeg's North End on Church Avenue, The Gathering continues to be an event rooted in a sense of community and place.

Hosting this event in the same neighbourhood where much of our community work happens is integral to sustaining the values on which the Gathering is founded. Our partnership with St. John's High School, and the Winnipeg School Division more broadly, allows us to keep offering the pay-what-you-can registration scale, which is essential to our accessibility mandate. These measures factor into making the Gathering a truly unique offering, and ensure the learning and discussions that take place on this day reflect the breadth and perspectives at work in the community sector.

In acknowledgement of this gift, CCEDNet has developed a modest scholarship, valued at \$500, in support of graduating St. John's High School student with a demonstrated interest in community work.

Dunja Kovacevic, Learning and Communications Coordinator, attended St. John's convocation and presented the CCEDNet Community Participation Award to Kyle Courchane. BUY LOCAL: SOCIAL PROCUREMENT

Putting community economic development into practice through local purchasing from businesses, worker co-ops and non-profit social enterprises is central to the mission of the Gathering.

This year, caterers included: Diversity Foods, L'Arché Tova Café, Organic Planet Worker Co-Op, Wolseley Family Place, Lunch Bell Bistro, Bodegoes, Food for Folks, and Café 6.

In an effort towards environmental sustainability, on-site composting services were provided by Compost Winnipeg. Food left over from the day was donated to Main Street Project.

In response to community needs, childcare is also offered to participants and provided through Happy Sprouts Childminding, a social enterprise of West Central Women's Resource Centre.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The Gathering has been, from inception, a community-led and community-aware event.

Local cooperatives, non-profits, and social enterprises have always donated time and resources toward the workshop portion of the day. In addition to that commitment, this year, organizations and working groups worked with experienced facilitators to design the afternoon "movement weaving" portion of our program.

Sharing this work with our community ensures that programming developed and delivered at the Gathering is relevant and responsive to the challenges facing our work. The 2019 Gathering featured input from 25 different community stakeholders.

Moving Forward

"Movement Weaving: Building Collaborative Capacity" was an experiment in testing what kind of learning and action could be generated in a single day of learning.

The question, "what now/next," is the lingering challenge after a large-scale learning event like the Gathering. How do we harness the energy of this day, and our collective learning, into our organizational work and our movements?



PRACTICES IN COLLABORATION WORKSHOP CLUSTER

Decidedly positive responses to the morning learning at the Gathering has inspired the Canadian CED Network's first set of 2020 workshops as part of our Manitoba Learns program, themed: Practices in Collaboration.

Building off the learning and ideas presented at the Gathering, these workshops aim to deepen the understanding that collaboration is a set of skills, practices, and capacities that can be learned and developed.