

2024 / 25



# ANNUAL REPORT



**Sinkunia**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

# Greetings from the Board Chair - Ms. Funke Smith



This past year has been one of meaningful growth and deepened impact for the Sinkunia Community. It has been a year in which our work resonated more strongly within the community, strengthened trust, and expanded our ability to reach those who are often hardest to engage.

Sinkunia's presence within ethnocultural communities has continued to grow not only through programs and services, but through meaningful relationships. By listening, showing up consistently, and responding with care and listening ears, Sinkunia has earned increased confidence from community members who see the organization as a trusted partner in improving lives and creating opportunity. This trust has enabled us to engage individuals and families who are too often left at the margins, ensuring they are seen, supported, and included.

Guided by a renewed vision and mission, the organization sharpened its strategic direction with a clear focus on strengthening its systems and broadening its impact. This clarity has helped align efforts, deepen partnerships, and ensure that our growth is purposeful and community-centered.

The year also marked a turning point in our organizational sustainability. Sinkunia gained the confidence of new and returning supporters and funders who invested more deeply and committed additional resources in recognition of the organization's credibility, effectiveness, and promise. Their trust is both an affirmation of our progress and a responsibility we carry with care.

We are grateful to the many community members, partners, volunteers, and supporters who have witnessed and contributed to this year of growth and strengthening. Together, we are building an organization that is resilient, responsive, and increasingly impactful in the lives of the communities we serve.

Ubuntu!

# Message from the Executive Director - Mr. Issa Kamara



As we reflect on the year under review, I am filled with deep gratitude and pride in what Sinkunia Community Development Organization has accomplished alongside our community, partners, volunteers, and supporters. This year was one of growth, resilience, and renewed purpose rooted in our shared commitment to uplifting newcomers, youth, seniors, and families across Edmonton.

Throughout the year, Sinkunia remained a trusted space of belonging and opportunity. Our programs addressed critical needs while strengthening community connections. From our Emergency Food Support Program to our Community Gardening Project, which produced fresh, culturally relevant food and fostered intergenerational engagement, we continued to respond to food insecurity with dignity and innovation. These efforts were strengthened through valued partnerships with the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Food Bank, Bosco Foundation, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, HT-SACA, Rotary, and academic collaborators, including the University of Ottawa and Bruyère Health Research Institute.

Our commitment to youth empowerment remained central. Through summer camps serving over 200 children and youth, anti-racism education, leadership development initiatives, crime prevention workshops, sports and recreation programs, and youth-led projects, our young adults are equipped with confidence, skills, and a sense of purpose. These initiatives demonstrated what is possible when youth are trusted, mentored, and supported to lead.

Equally important was our work with seniors and families. Programs such as the Seniors Quilting and Intergenerational Heritage Initiative, Drop-In Computer Literacy Classes, mental health dialogues, swimming and fitness sessions, and cultural celebrations reduced isolation, bridged generational gaps, and strengthened overall well-being. Our quilting, storytelling, and cultural heritage programs reminded us that healing, learning, and belonging are deeply interconnected.

Community engagement remained a cornerstone of our work. Events such as the Cultural Heritage Festival, Black History Month celebrations, Spring Community Clean-Ups, and neighborhood revitalization activities brought people together across cultures and backgrounds, fostering unity, pride, and shared responsibility for our communities.

None of this would be possible without our exceptional team staff, volunteers, board members, partners, and sponsors, whose dedication continues to be the heartbeat of Sinkunia. Your commitment, compassion, and belief in our mission transform ideas into impact and ensure our programs remain accessible, relevant, and community-led.

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# Who We Are

This Annual Report presents the impact of Sinkunia Community Development Organization's programs and services during the 2024–2025 fiscal year, marking nearly two decades of sustained community service since our establishment in 2007. Throughout the year, Sinkunia continued to support new immigrant families, Black youth, seniors, and vulnerable community members through inclusive, community-driven initiatives that promote integration, wellbeing, and active participation in society.

Our work in 2024/2025 focused on addressing critical community needs, including food security, youth development, mental wellness, anti-racism education, cultural preservation, and community engagement. Through strategic partnerships and grassroots programming, we strengthened social connections, built leadership capacity, and created safe spaces for learning, healing, and empowerment.

This report reflects Sinkunia's ongoing commitment to equity, collaboration, and sustainable impact, as we continue to build resilient communities and expand opportunities for those we serve.

## Vision

We envision strong African-descent communities fully integrated and flourishing in Canada.

## Mission

SCDO empowers African-descent families in Canada through culturally responsive programs and services that promote holistic well-being, community connection, and self-sufficiency.

## Values

At Sinkunia Community Development Organization, our values guide every aspect of our work, shaping our mission and interactions.

- Respect for the worth and dignity of the people we work with
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust
- Responsible stewardship of resources
- Honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior at all times
- Commitment to diversity in staff, volunteers, board, and the people we work with
- Approach all our work with a collectivist community development focus

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*Our partners from Rotary and members of the community working on sinkunia community garden*



University of Ottawa, Bruyere Research Institute, and University of Alberta Research team with Community Partners at the first project team gathering, Ottawa, ON August 18-21, 2025.



## Land Acknowledgement

Sinkunia Community Development Organization humbly acknowledges that the land on which we gather, work, and build community in Treaty Six Territory, is the traditional and ancestral gathering place of many Indigenous Peoples. This territory is home to the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, whose rich histories, languages, ceremonies, and cultures continue to shape and inspire the fabric of this land.

We recognize the deep connection and stewardship Indigenous Peoples have maintained with these lands for generations and honor their resilience and contributions. As settlers and immigrants to Turtle Island, we understand our responsibility to learn from and engage meaningfully with Indigenous Peoples.

Sinkunia is committed to fostering understanding, building respectful relationships, and contributing to the journey of reconciliation. Through ongoing education, collaboration, and action, we aim to support the vision of a shared future rooted in equity, mutual respect, and healing.

## Our Programs

- **Community Gardening Project**
  - Preparing nursery beds
  - Planting, Watering and Harvesting
- **Building Safer Communities (BSC) Project**
  - A Gun and Gang Violence Prevention
  - Youth Education and Counselling
- **Seniors Engagement Project**
  - Quilting Designs
  - Safe Interactive Spaces
  - Seniors Trip
- **Community Engagement & Neighborhood Revitalization**
  - Cultural Heritage Festival
  - Black History Month
  - Spring Community Cleaning
  - End-of-year get-together
- **Anti-Racism Programs**
  - An intergenerational conversation on Anti-Racism
  - Interpersonal Racism and Impact on Mental Health
  - Inter-Cultural Heritage Initiative
  - Seniors and Youth Interactions
  - Back to School Initiative
- **Computer Literacy Drop-in**
  - Drop-in Computer Classes
- **Summer Camp**
  - Youth and Children Camp Activities
  - Park Activities and Games
- **Emergency Food Support**
  - Trips to Wetaskiwin
  - Foodbank Volunteering and Support

# Our Impact

**More than 400** participants are involved in our annual Community Gardening Program

**More than 200** youth participated annually in our Building Safer Communities programs

**An average of 40 Seniors participate** in our weekly quilting and engagement program

**More than 450** seniors and youth are involved in the community engagement and neighborhood revitalization initiative

**More than 200 seniors and youth** are involved in our annual Anti-Racism campaigns

**An average of 150 participants** in all our Awareness Creation and Community Sensitization Programs

**Over 20 Seniors and Youth** are involved in our Computer literacy program every week

**An average of over 210** Kids, Youth, and Seniors are involved in the annual Summer-camp Program

**Over 500** families are served through the emergency food support program annually.



# Programs Update

## Community Gardening Project

Sinkunia Community Development Organization's Community Gardening Project continues to stand as a powerful example of how grassroots action can drive food security, cultural connection, and national collaboration. On September 27, community members, youth, seniors, volunteers, and partners came together for a successful harvest, yielding an abundance of fresh produce, including potatoes, tomatoes, kale, peppers, beans, pumpkin, and corn, among others. The harvest was made possible through strong partnerships with the City of Edmonton, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, HT-SACA, Bosco Foundation, and the Edmonton Food Bank, whose collective support strengthened both the reach and impact of the initiative.

The fresh produce harvested from the garden was shared directly with youth, adults, seniors, and the communities who actively participated in the project, reinforcing Sinkunia's model of dignity-centered food access, shared ownership, and community reciprocity. Beyond providing nutritious food, the garden served as a vibrant space for intergenerational learning, social connection, and physical wellbeing.

What began as a local food security initiative has now gained national recognition, with Sinkunia's community-centered approach attracting collaborative partnerships beyond Edmonton. In 2024-25, Sinkunia entered into a groundbreaking collaboration with the University of Ottawa and the Bruyère Health Research Institute, working together to co-design roadmaps for promoting culturally relevant food in long-term care homes across Canada. This work directly addresses modifiable risk factors associated with poor health outcomes among African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) populations, particularly seniors.

A significant milestone in this national collaboration occurred between September 24-28, 2025, when researchers from the University of Ottawa and Bruyère Health Research Institute conducted an in-depth site visit to Sinkunia's facilities. During the visit, the research team observed and documented Sinkunia's culturally responsive food programs in action, including collective gardening, community food access, and seniors' engagement initiatives. The visit featured kitchen-table conversations with ACB community members, one-on-one interviews with staff and volunteers, and immersive participation in the Community Harvest Festival on September 27.

Sinkunia's leadership in culturally grounded food access continues to position the organization as a trusted partner in advancing equitable food systems, community-led research, and health innovation. As this collaboration progresses, Sinkunia remains committed to sharing knowledge, strengthening partnerships, and expanding the impact of culturally relevant food initiatives across communities and care systems in Canada.

Stay tuned for continued updates as Sinkunia and its partners advance this transformative work.



## Building Safer Communities Program

At Sinkunia, fostering safe, informed, and resilient communities remains central to our mission. As part of the Building Safer Communities Program, 2024-25 featured a series of targeted activities focused on gun and gang violence prevention, youth empowerment, family engagement, and organizational capacity building.

In March, Sinkunia hosted a youth-focused gun and gang violence prevention workshop led by Mr. Abdul Abdi, in collaboration with FOCAS Canada and KULAN. This session created a safe and engaging space for young people to openly discuss the realities of gang recruitment, peer pressure, and community violence, while equipping them with practical tools to recognize risks and make informed, positive choices.

Building on this momentum, a second prevention session was held at Sinkunia's premises for youth and parents together, again facilitated by Mr. Abdul Abdi. This intergenerational dialogue strengthened family awareness, encouraged open communication, and empowered parents with strategies to support and guide their children through challenges related to safety, belonging, and decision-making.

In addition to community-facing programming, Sinkunia also facilitated an internal staff development and prevention training during this period. This initiative strengthened staff capacity, enhanced trauma-informed practice, and ensured that our team is well-equipped to support youth and families through prevention-focused programming.

Complementing these efforts, the Building Safer Communities initiative was further reinforced by a community dinner and dialogue held on December 20, in partnership with FOCAS Canada and KULAN. The event brought together youth, parents, community members, and leaders, including MLA David Shepherd and other distinguished guests, for meaningful conversations on community safety, leadership, and collective responsibility. This gathering underscored the importance of collaboration between community organizations, families, and policymakers in addressing violence prevention holistically.

Together, these activities demonstrate Sinkunia's comprehensive approach to community safety, combining education, dialogue, prevention, and capacity building. Through strong partnerships and community trust, the Building Safer Communities Program continues to empower youth, strengthen families, and contribute to safer, more connected neighborhoods.



## Seniors Quilting Project

Anti-Racism & Intercultural Heritage Initiative – 2024/25

The Seniors Quilting Program is a cornerstone of Sinkunia's Anti-Racism and Intercultural Heritage Initiative, intentionally designed to bring seniors from diverse cultural backgrounds together to connect, create, and learn from one another. Through the shared art of quilting, the program fosters intercultural dialogue, mutual respect, and understanding while celebrating the rich histories and lived experiences of participants.

Held every Wednesday, the program welcomes an average of 40 seniors weekly, creating a safe and inclusive space for creativity, storytelling, and relationship-building. Each quilt produced becomes a powerful narrative woven with memories, traditions, and cultural identity, transforming fabric into living stories of resilience, migration, and heritage. These shared creations encourage meaningful conversations that challenge stereotypes, reduce cultural isolation, and strengthen community bonds.

Beyond artistic expression, the program serves as an important platform for intergenerational engagement, where seniors mentor youth through storytelling and skill-sharing, passing on wisdom while fostering empathy and cross-cultural awareness. At the same time, the initiative addresses social isolation often experienced by seniors by promoting belonging, purpose, and emotional well-being.

The Seniors Quilting Program continues to demonstrate how creativity can serve as a tool for anti-racism, inclusion, and community healing. By honoring cultural diversity and amplifying lived experiences, the program strengthens social cohesion and contributes to building more connected, compassionate, and inclusive communities.



## Community Engagement & Neighbourhood Revitalization

Sinkunia's Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Revitalization Programs are rooted in building strong, inclusive, and connected communities where residents feel a sense of belonging, pride, and shared responsibility. Through culturally responsive programming and strategic partnerships, Sinkunia creates spaces that celebrate diversity, strengthen social cohesion, and revitalize neighbourhoods, particularly for new immigrant families, Black communities, youth, and seniors.

Throughout the year, Sinkunia delivered impactful community-driven initiatives, including the Cultural Heritage Festival, Black History Month celebrations, Spring Community Cleaning, and our End-of-Year Community Get-Together. These programs brought together residents from diverse cultural backgrounds to celebrate shared values, honor histories, and collectively contribute to safer, cleaner, and more vibrant neighbourhoods.

The Cultural Heritage Festival served as a powerful platform for intercultural dialogue, showcasing music, food, storytelling, and traditions that bridged cultures and fostered mutual understanding.

Black History Month programming provided opportunities for learning, reflection, and celebration, highlighting the contributions of Black communities while advancing conversations on equity and inclusion.

Our Spring Community Cleaning initiative mobilized volunteers to take collective ownership of public spaces, reinforcing civic pride and environmental stewardship.

The End-of-Year Get-Together offered a moment of reflection, gratitude, and connection, strengthening relationships across the community.

These initiatives were delivered in collaboration with valued partners, including HT-SACA, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Bosco Foundation, Edmonton Food Bank, Rotary, and other community organizations whose contributions were instrumental to the programs' success. Together, these partnerships amplified impact, expanded reach, and ensured programming was inclusive, accessible, and responsive to community needs.

Through these engagement efforts, Sinkunia not only revitalizes neighbourhoods but also nurtures trust, resilience, and belonging, ensuring communities are empowered to thrive together.



# An Intergenerational Conversations on Anti-Racism: 2024-25 Impact Report

The ongoing anti-racism and cultural heritage project supports Edmonton's Anti-Black Racism Action Plan priorities by fostering spaces where Black youth and seniors connect, learn, heal, and lead. The project engaged over 300 participants through community gardening, quilting, storytelling, cooking, and cultural celebrations. These activities produced transformative outcomes, including increased connectedness, collective memory, and critical consciousness among participants.

Between January and August 2025, we conducted community-based research funded by the City of Edmonton's Anti-Racism Participatory Action Research Grant. We spoke with Black youth and program facilitators, guided by a Community Advisory Committee, to document the processes behind the transformations. The project applied the Community Healing and Resistance Through Arts and Storytelling (C-HeARTS) framework, a transformative approach to addressing racial trauma in Africana communities that promotes collective healing and reconciliation.

Many youth told us they had experienced racism in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, and often felt isolated and unwelcome. When elders and peers shared similar experiences, this changed. Participants learned to understand racism as systemic rather than personal fault. They gained practical strategies for navigating discrimination and building resilience. Most importantly, they moved from coping to critical consciousness and leadership —creating presentations in schools, leading their own projects, and speaking up against injustice.

The project outcome evaluation survey confirmed these outcomes. Participants reported increased pride in their culture, greater comfort interacting across different communities, and better knowledge of how to respond to racism. They described feeling stronger connections to their identity and community, and becoming kinder to themselves and others.

This community-led intergenerational approach to programming, grounded in culturally responsive processes, is what produced such transformative results. As part of our commitment to continuous learning, we evaluate our programs, document our processes, and lead community-based research to amplify community voices and share knowledge with organizations working toward an inclusive, welcoming community where everyone feels heard, valued, and empowered to thrive and contribute to building a safer, more inclusive community.

*Ref Graph on Page 22*





## Sinkunia Drop-In Computer Literacy Program

The Sinkunia Drop-In Computer Literacy Program continues to play a vital role in bridging the digital divide for newcomers, youth, and most notably seniors seeking to build essential digital skills.

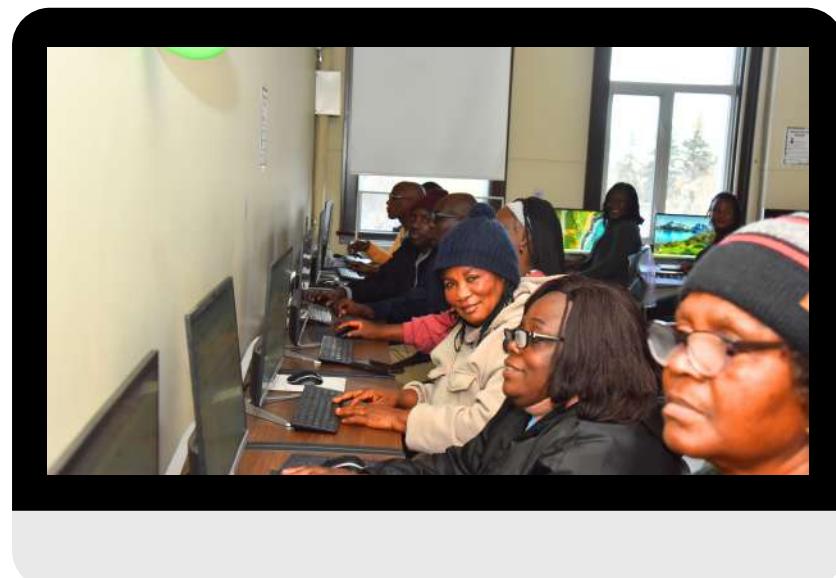
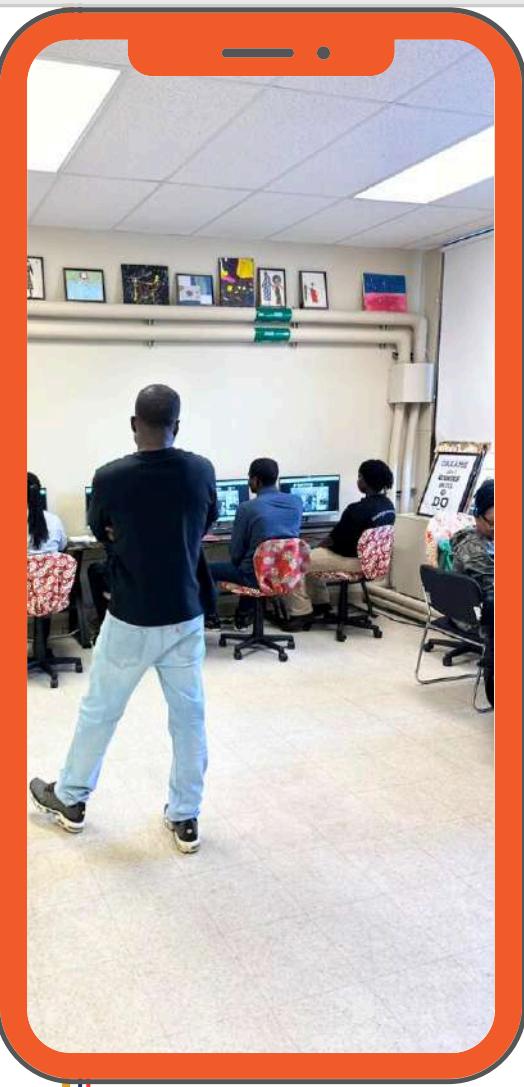
In response to the growing reliance on technology for employment, services, and daily life, the program has seen a significant increase in participation, particularly among seniors eager to gain confidence and access opportunities within today's digital economy.



Delivered as a free, open-door, walk-in program, the classes provide hands-on, practical training in core digital skills, including Microsoft Office applications, word processing, spreadsheets, email navigation, online research, Canva design, social media use, and basic internet safety, artificial intelligence (AI), among others. These competencies are critical for job searching, resume preparation, online applications, and effective communication in the modern workplace.

Held weekly, the program attracts an average of 20 participants every week, creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that encourages intergenerational exchange and peer support. Participants not only develop technical skills but also build confidence, independence, and a stronger sense of belonging as they navigate digital platforms with ease.

Through this initiative, Sinkunia is empowering individuals to overcome technological barriers, improve employability, and remain active participants in an increasingly digital society. The Drop-In Computer Literacy Program reflects Sinkunia's commitment to equity, lifelong learning, and ensuring that no community member is left behind in the digital age.





## Sinkunia Summer Camp 2024-25: A Season of Fun, Discovery, and Community

This year's Sinkunia Summer Camp was nothing short of extraordinary. With over 200 children and youth participating, the program came alive with energy, laughter, and unforgettable experiences that made summer both meaningful and fun for every child involved. Supported by dedicated staff and enthusiastic parent volunteers, the camp created a safe, vibrant space where learning, play, and connection thrived.

Throughout the summer, participants enjoyed a dynamic mix of activities designed to inspire creativity, teamwork, and active living. From park outings, indoor and outdoor games, scavenger hunts, swimming, arts and painting, to library visits and gym sessions, each day brought new adventures. Campers also explored the city through exciting field trips to museums, community centers, zoos, train rides, and other iconic Edmonton landmarks, expanding their curiosity and sense of belonging.

The camp experience was made even more memorable with nutritious meals, engaging facilitators, and a welcoming environment where every child felt seen, supported, and encouraged to shine. The enthusiasm of instructors and volunteers transformed each activity into an opportunity for confidence-building, friendship, and personal growth.

Sinkunia's Summer Camp is more than a seasonal program it is a celebration of community, resilience, and joy. By bringing together children, youth, families, and volunteers, the camp continues to create lasting memories while nurturing future leaders and strengthening the bonds that make our community thrive.

Our partners included Bosco Foundation, Balwin Community, John Humphery Center for Human Rights, REACH Edmonton, Edmonton Foodbank, among others

## Emergency Food Support Program: Nourishing Hope and Strengthening Communities

In 2024-25, Sinkunia's Emergency Food Support Program made a profound impact by supporting over 500 newcomer and vulnerable families, ensuring access to nutritious food during times of economic hardship. Delivered in close collaboration with Edmonton's Food Bank, this vital initiative continues to serve as a lifeline for families facing food insecurity, displacement, and rising living costs.

Through the Food Bank Hamper Program and community-based distributions, families received essential food supplies that not only met immediate needs but also restored dignity and stability during challenging periods. The program provided relief to parents, seniors, and children alike, allowing households to focus on settlement, employment, and well-being without the added burden of hunger.

Beyond Edmonton, Sinkunia extended its commitment to food justice through donations to the Green Soup Food Bank in Wetaskiwin, sharing food, clothing, and household items to support rural and underserved communities. These outreach efforts reinforced a spirit of solidarity, ensuring that support reached beyond city boundaries.

The success of this initiative reflects the strength of collaboration powered by dedicated volunteers, community partners, and the unwavering support of Edmonton's Food Bank. Together, we continue to build resilient communities where compassion, care, and collective responsibility guide our response to urgent needs. Sinkunia remains deeply committed to expanding this program, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that no family is left behind when support is needed most.



# Our Team

At the core of Sinkunia's success is an exceptional team whose passion, dedication, and collective spirit bring our mission to life. Our full-time and part-time staff, supported by an inspiring network of volunteers, work together as one community committed, compassionate, and driven by purpose.

It is this shared commitment that transforms ideas into impactful programs and meaningful change.

You will find the Sinkunia team at the heart of every initiative, planning, delivering, supporting, and uplifting communities with care and professionalism. Their ability to collaborate seamlessly ensures that each program is executed with excellence, responsiveness, and integrity.

Our volunteers are truly the lifeblood of Sinkunia. From energetic youth animators and engaged seniors to university and college practicum students, Rotary members, parents, and community neighbours, each volunteer plays a vital role.

Their generosity of time, skills, and heart continues to shape the success of our work year after year.

We are deeply grateful to every individual who contributes to Sinkunia's journey. Your dedication, resilience, and belief in our mission make our impact possible and our community stronger. Together, we are building lasting change one program, one connection, and one act of service at a time.



Mr. Kamara Issa  
Executive Director



Ms. Agnes Somuah  
Programs Manager



Mr. Luri Joseph  
Community Engagement Coord.



Ms. Feimata Bangura  
Youth Facilitator



Mr. Mensah N.B Theophilus  
Marketing & Comm. Coord

# Our Team



Mr. Destiny Otoadese  
Project Lead Anti-Racism



Miss. Antwi Obaa Yaa  
Youth Animator



Miss. Patricia Sesay  
Mental Health Specialist



Ms. Fatima Nassar



Grandma Janet



Ms. Fofie Afua Vero



## The Fun Part



*Sinkunia Community Gardening in Photos: Volunteers in Actions*

## The Fun Part



*Sinkunia Board of Directors*



*Sinkunia Black History Month Celebration*



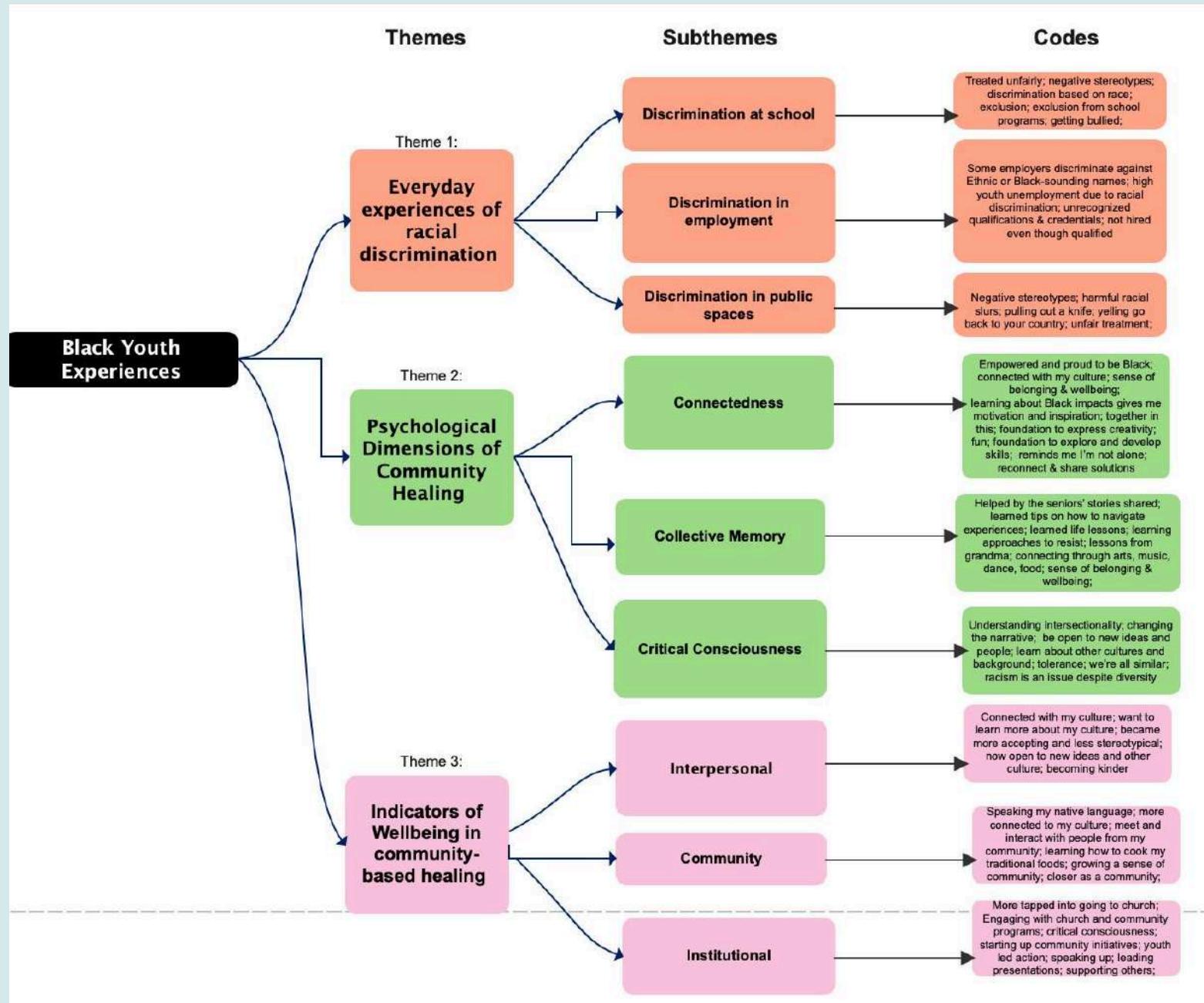
*Sinkunia Building Safer Communities  
and Youth Events*







# An Intergenerational Conversations on Anti-Racism: 2024-25 Impact Report











# Empowering New Beginnings: Sinkunia's Commitment to Supporting Newcomers

For the past three years, Sinkunia Community Development Organization has strengthened its mission by embedding a focused newcomer support agenda alongside its core programming. This commitment reflects our belief that successful settlement is not only about arrival, but about dignity, stability, and the opportunity to thrive in a new environment.

Through personalized guidance, advocacy, and hands-on support, Sinkunia has helped newcomers navigate complex settlement and immigration processes while building confidence and independence.

A key contributor to this work, Feimata Bangura, has made a profound impact in the lives of over 25 newcomer clients. Her support has included assisting with Basis of Claim applications, editing and organizing immigration narratives, preparing documentation for hearings, supporting permanent residence applications, and providing transportation to critical immigration appointments.

Beyond administrative support, this initiative has offered compassion, reassurance, and continuity during some of the most vulnerable moments in our clients' journeys. Through this work, Sinkunia continues to play a vital role in easing settlement challenges, strengthening integration outcomes, and ensuring that newcomers feel supported, informed, and welcomed as they build new lives in Canada.



# Impact Stories

I am deeply grateful for the time I spent with the Sinkunia organization. The experience played a meaningful role in shaping my professional identity and strengthening the skills I carry forward today.

Through collaborative work, mentorship, and exposure to diverse perspectives, I developed greater confidence in my communication, critical thinking, and ethical decision-making. The organization provided an environment where learning was encouraged, reflection was valued, and growth was possible. Beyond the professional experience and collaborative learning, I especially appreciate the way the organization supported me as an individual with limited mobility. The accessibility, flexibility, and

genuine commitment to inclusion allowed me to participate fully and contribute meaningfully. That support not only removed barriers but also affirmed my dignity and potential, creating an environment where I could grow with confidence.

My involvement there strengthened my communication, critical thinking, and ethical decision-making skills, and it helped shape the professional identity I continue to build today. I remain thankful for the opportunities I was given, the people who invested in my development, and the organization's dedication to creating a space where diverse needs were respected and valued.

I remain appreciative of the opportunities I was given and the people who supported my development along the way.

**Majok Lam Thoan - MacEwan University.**



Some of the things I enjoy most about Sinkunia are how fun, welcoming, and inclusive the environment is. The games and activities keep everyone engaged, excited, and active, and there is always something new to try. Sinkunia creates opportunities for people to make new friends and feel a strong sense of belonging.

The atmosphere is very positive, which makes the summer experience more enjoyable. I especially appreciate how the camp encourages teamwork, builds confidence, and treats everyone with kindness and fairness. This makes it easy to feel comfortable, happy, and supported. Through a mix of games, creative projects, and outdoor activities, each day is both fun and meaningful. Overall, Sinkunia provides a memorable summer experience that is not only enjoyable but also educational, as participants learn valuable skills such as sewing.

**Gina - Sinkunia Youth**

# Impact Stories

When I first arrived in Canada, the experience was both exciting and deeply challenging. Everything around me was unfamiliar: the environment, the systems, and the people. Without a support network, I felt uncertain about where to turn for guidance or connection. Like many newcomers, I was navigating not only a new country but also a new chapter of my life.

My journey with Sinkunia Community Development Organization began when I joined the team as a Career Development Facilitator during the summer of 2025. Walking into my first day of work, I did not know what to expect. However, from the moment I met my supervisors and colleagues, I felt something I had not felt since arriving in Canada: a genuine sense of welcome. The warmth, kindness, and respect shown to me on that very first day made an immediate and lasting impression.

Sinkunia is more than an organization; it is a community. It has a unique way of bringing people together and creating a space where everyone feels valued, heard, and included. The diversity within the organization is not only acknowledged but also celebrated.

Through shared stories, cultures, and even food from different parts of the world, Sinkunia creates an environment that truly reflects the multicultural fabric of Canada.

For me, Sinkunia quickly became a home away from home. It was a place where I felt safe to grow, to learn, and to contribute meaningfully. The support and encouragement I received played a significant role in my personal and professional development, helping me build confidence and a stronger sense of belonging in my new country.

My experience with Sinkunia reflects the organization's broader impact on newcomers and the community it serves. By fostering inclusivity, connection, and empowerment, Sinkunia not only supports individuals in their settlement journeys but also helps them find a place where they truly belong. I am deeply grateful to be part of an organization that transforms lives by building community.

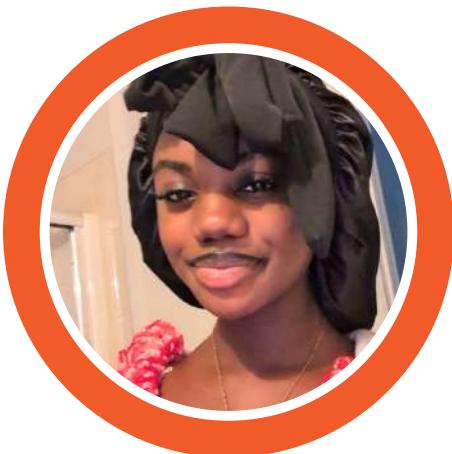
**Sharon Poni**



I love the quilting program because I'm usually at home by myself and since my friend introduced me to the program I fell in love with it. With this program I have something to do instead of being bored at home. The food is very good.

**Ms. Sophie Ndi**

## Impact Stories



Some of the things I really love about Sinkunia are the strong sense of tradition and diversity. I appreciate how much effort is put into celebrating people's cultures and how everyone is welcomed, regardless of race or age. I enjoy that everyone is encouraged to participate in trying new things, and the food is always great and served on time. I also love that Sinkunia promotes kindness through clear rules that encourage respect among everyone. People are always willing to help, especially during setup, which shows strong teamwork and care for one another. The mix of indoor and outdoor activities allows participants to make new friends and create lasting memories. Additionally, having volunteers readily available whenever help is needed makes the environment supportive and welcoming.

**Mary - Sinkunia Youth**



I would just like to say that I truly love everything about Sinkunia. One of my favorite parts is the garden, being able to work in it, take care of it, and eventually harvest what we grow is really special, and I always look forward to that time of the year.

I also really enjoy the summer camp because it introduced me to most of the friends I have today. Sinkunia is honestly one of the best summer camps I have ever attended. It feels like home, and everyone there is so supportive and welcoming. I am very grateful to be part of Sinkunia, and I truly love it.

**Miss. Saajida Saani - Sinkunia Youth**

One thing I admire about Sinkunia is how it creates a strong sense of community and celebrates our cultural values. Additionally, I deeply admire Sinkunia's commitment to uplifting communities and creating growth opportunities, especially through programs that empower youth and celebrate diversity. The activities this year have been outstanding, but what excited me the most was the fall harvest festival because it was such a beautiful celebration, filled with joy, connection, and the spirit of togetherness. I loved seeing everyone come together to celebrate the season. It was inspiring to see how impactful and engaging it was for everyone involved. Truly Sinkunia is home away from home!

**Miss. Najewa Nuntaa Siddique - NAIT**



## Impact Stories



The quilting program has enabled me on how to paddle a sewing machine. I love it because it enabling me to become self employed by quilting beddings to sell so other families benefits from it. The beading program has helped me to design bags in different forms that will not help me in my usage alone but other families in the community. The computer program has showed me how to turn a computer on, design a resume, open different tabs and many more. Sinkunia has helped me embrace love and accept different cultures. I would love the quilting program to stay forever so others coming to Canada will also benefit from it

**Ms. Beatrice Ntifor**

Sinkunia is a very diverse organization that welcomes every individual from all walks of life. This organization is a home for newcomers in Alberta as they help these individuals settle into Albertan life.

My favorite thing about Sinkunia is the way they prioritize the mental health of the community members. They help youth in the community to tackle the problem of racism, and gun and gang violence by hosting programs that are focused on the youth and also doing fun activities.

**Mr. Abdul Hafiz Conteh - Sinkunia Youth**



I like that it teaches us how to develop skills, I'm always happy to attend the quilting program. I also like that I see different people from different cultures. I don't want the quilting program to end.

**Ms. Janet Webosa**



## Impact Stories

I am an immigrant from Sierra Leone who came with high expectations, hoping to get a job as soon as I arrived in Edmonton. Unfortunately, the reverse was the case as some policies had changed and were being implemented in the country when I arrived. It took a toll on me, and I became very worried and sick. A friend, who is more like a sister and a mother to me, took me to Sinkunia on a visit and introduced me to this wonderful family, where I willingly became a volunteer.

They created a platform for me to learn computer, with a wonderful instructor called Theophilus Mensah. I was the first student to start the class, the class increased to 16 students within the shortest period of time, and presently, we are over 20 students. Sinkunia is not just an ORGANISATION but a family home for many people, catering for everyone regardless of their culture and ethnic background. Sinkunia is also notable for its food bank supply, and there is a popular SLOGAN that says “When you are hungry, come to Sinkunia”.

The organization also created a platform, QUILTING, for the Senior Citizens to showcase their skills. They come every Wednesday to keep themselves busy. The organization provided us with everything needed to do their sewing classes, including food and drinks, sewing materials (threads, needles, sewing machines, and other accessories).

Over time, I have observed and seen how powerful teamwork can enhance productivity. When people come together with kindness, respect, and share a common goal, we create and achieve more.

Additionally, I have learned from staff, other volunteers, and community members that strength, patience, and generosity inspire us every day. These experiences have now helped me to be responsible and hard-working.

I am also grateful for the warm welcome I received when I joined the organization, the guardians’ trust and encouragement given to me, which made me feel valued and to be among a team that believes in fairness, respect, and helping others.

I am thankful for the opportunity to volunteer with this great organization, as it has enhanced my skills and given me the opportunity to meet new people and feel welcome as a part of a supportive community.

Many thanks to all the people who are standing by the CEO, Mr. Issa Kamara, popularly called “Boss” making a positive impact in the organization.

I am thankful for the opportunity to volunteer with this organization, as it has enhanced my skills and given me the opportunity to meet new people and feel welcome as a part of a supportive community. Thanks to everyone who has supported me and made this journey meaningful. I looked forward to contributing to the shared mission.

### Ms. Alice Kamara

I am from Cameroon, I have been here for some time and when I was introduced to the quilting program by my friend Pauline. I was happy about the program because being at home without nothing to do causes me stress. Being here makes me happy. This is the only program I have attended since moving to Canada. Being with Sinkunia reminds me of being back home. I don’t want the program to end. I will invite more seniors to attend the program.

### Ms. Patience Gang



# Volunteer of the Year: Celebrating Grandma Janet

Sinkunia is proud to recognize Grandma Janet as our Volunteer of the Year, in heartfelt appreciation of her extraordinary dedication, generosity, and unwavering commitment to our community.

Grandma Janet has been a constant and dependable presence across nearly all Sinkunia programs. From cooking nourishing meals and organizing activities to planning events and ensuring that both youth and seniors' programs run smoothly, her contributions go far beyond what is expected. She brings care, structure, and calm leadership to every space she enters, making each program more coordinated, welcoming, and impactful.

What truly sets Grandma Janet apart is her spirit. She leads with kindness, patience, and a deep sense of responsibility for the well-being of others. Her ability to connect across generations, supporting youth while uplifting seniors embodies the very heart of Sinkunia's mission. She reminds us that service is not just about what we do, but how we do it: with love, consistency, and purpose.

Grandma Janet's example inspires fellow volunteers to give their best, to show up with compassion, and to believe in the power of community. We are deeply grateful for her time, energy, and heart, and we celebrate her as a true pillar of Sinkunia.

Thank you, Grandma Janet, for being a guiding light and a living reminder that one person's dedication can uplift an entire community.



# Awards-Celebrating Our Graduates of the Year

At Sinkunia, we proudly celebrate the academic excellence, resilience, and personal growth of our young community members and volunteers. This year, we are honored to recognize Theophilus, Destiny, Mariam, Chantelle, and Isaac as our Graduates of the Year, applauding their outstanding academic achievements and their commitment to personal development and community engagement.

Each of these graduates has demonstrated determination, discipline, and a strong work ethic balancing their studies while remaining active contributors within the Sinkunia community. Their achievements reflect not only their individual perseverance but also the supportive environment created through mentorship, programming, and collective encouragement.

Their success stands as a powerful testament to what is possible when young people are equipped with opportunity, guidance, and belief in their potential. We are immensely proud of Theophilus, Destiny, Mariam, Chantelle, and Isaac, and we celebrate this important milestone as the beginning of even greater accomplishments ahead.

Sinkunia remains committed to empowering youth through programs that foster academic excellence, leadership, and community involvement. We encourage all young people to engage in our initiatives designed to support learning, build confidence, and open pathways to success.

Congratulations to our graduates, we look forward to celebrating many more achievements with you and the generations to come.



Theo

Destiny



Isaac



Mariam



Chantelle

# Achievements - Nurturing Youth Leadership and Initiative

Sinkunia is proud to witness the remarkable growth of our youth as they step into leadership and community-building roles. This year, **Raymond (Concordia University)** and **Mariam (University of Alberta)** elevated their responsibilities through a BYLP grant from the Africa Centre and Canada Service Corps, leading a three-part youth gathering series titled Promoting Us.

Designed to strengthen self-love, cultural pride, and historical awareness among Black youth across Edmonton and Alberta, the initiative demonstrated outstanding youth-led impact. The first event, a Paint & Sit gathering at Belvedere Park, attracted over 200 youth participants and featured 10+ young Black entrepreneurs, creating meaningful opportunities for creativity, connection, and economic empowerment. The second gathering centered on healing circles and storytelling, while the final potluck celebration brought together over 150 youth for shared meals, games, and community bonding.

These achievements reflect how far Sinkunia has come in nurturing responsible, confident youth leaders who initiate and deliver impactful programs. This momentum has already inspired more young leaders, including **Obaa Yaa**, who has successfully received the next season of the grant. Her upcoming initiative will use quilting as a storytelling and creative tool to build skills, preserve culture, and open pathways to future careers for the youth.

Together, these milestones affirm Sinkunia's commitment to cultivating youth leadership, creativity, and purposeful action, ensuring the next generation is equipped to lead with confidence and vision.



# Funders, Partners, and Community Support



ACTION FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



# Funders, Partners, and Community Support



THE SUDANESE CULTURAL LEAGUE OF EDMONTON  
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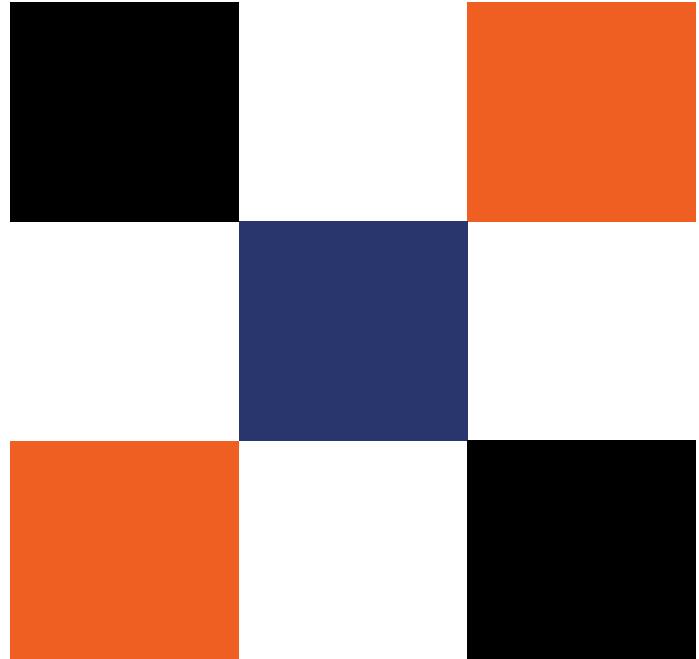
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TD Park People Grants



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[www.sinkuniacommunity.org](http://www.sinkuniacommunity.org)



[info@sinkuniacommunity.org](mailto:info@sinkuniacommunity.org)



780-306-9390

587-599-4980



200, 6770 -129 Ave  
Edmonton, AB T5C 1V7