





## About Umoja Operation Compassion Society

Umoja Operation Compassion Society of British Columbia is a non-profit society formed in 2002 to work with newcomer immigrants and refugees living in the greater Vancouver region, predominately Surrey, BC. Our society seeks to empower immigrants and refugees to successfully integrate into an inclusive Canadian society. New immigrants and refugees can find it difficult to integrate due to obstacles such as poverty, lack of English language comprehension, unemployment, isolation, feelings of hopelessness, parenting in the Canadian context and experiences of trauma. Through Umoja programs and services, we provide a variety of culturally sensitive and trauma-informed programs to help families, children, and youth integrate successfully into their new social environment. Umoja uniquely exists to serve those that are in need and empowers them to transition into main-stream community services while fulfilling its Vision and Mission. Internationally, we support initiatives to improve the quality of life in global communities, specifically the great lakes region of East and Central Africa through education, health initiatives and a micro-finance project for women.

*"Thank you to Umoja for helping me learn English and for supporting my family when we are new to Canada."*

*Umoja Client*

IN THIS ISSUE...

ABOUT UMOJA  
OPERATION

CHAIRPERSON BOARD OF  
DIRECTOR'S REPORT

UMOJA OPERATION  
PROGRAM UPDATES 2021

MEMORABLE QUOTES

PROJECT RESULTS

2021 FINANCIAL REVIEW





## Chairperson Board of Director's Report

*Annette Simbabure, Board Chairperson*

Umoja continued to thrive in 2021, thanks to our loyal staff and volunteers, along with the support of our board members and funders. The board is very thankful for the leadership and commitment shown by our Program Director, Loree McDougall and our Development Director, Jamie Kopp as they stepped up to co-lead Umoja in a revised organization model as we continued to work through the best leadership structure to support our staff, programs and aligned with available funding. Through this co-leadership model, Loree and Jamie were able to effectively support the delivery of Umoja's mandate, while at the same time making improvements to the benefit of staff and clients, including a much-needed technology refresh.

Additional highlights of 2021 included Mental Health and Trauma training for staff, a renewal of our contract with IRCC to deliver the Digital Connect Program, growth in our programming for youth and very successful partnerships with A Rocha and SOURCES to provide veggie/food boxes as a further avenue of support for our clients.

2021 also saw the return of more in person programming and opportunities to connect in person between staff and clients. Umoja also continued to be considered a strategic partner within our community, participating in the Black in BC Needs Assessment Research with ISSAMBA and partnering with the Zimbabwean Community Association to provide office space. Umoja also considered opportunities with organizations such as BCCA to support a Black Student Endowment Fund. This community engagements reflect the role Umoja plays in supporting diversity and inclusion in our local community and enabling our vision to help newcomers become our neighbours and will continue to be an area of focus for 2022. In 2022, we will be saying thank-you to Jamie Kopp, our Development Director, who has been with Umoja for 11 years, steadfastly supporting and enabling Umoja with a strong commitment to securing the required funding for Umoja's programs and successfully negotiating many contracts and partnerships. We are sad to see her leaving Umoja, but wish her every success in the new opportunities in front of her. We are thankful for her commitment to the transition progress and ensuring our new Development Director, Jonathan Cauri, will be successful in the role.

I myself will also be stepping down as Board Chair in 2022. After 7 years in this role I believe it is time to hand over the responsibilities to someone new, to continue to ensure fresh ideas and new energy that drives Umoja forward to maximize the impact Umoja can have. It has been a privilege to serve Umoja over these past years and contribute to the growth and impact Umoja has had. I also sincerely appreciate the opportunity it has provided for my own growth around diversity and inclusion and insights into the challenges for newcomers to Canada. I look forward to continuing to provide my support for Umoja moving forward as an on-going member of the society and am confident the board will be in good hands under a newly elected Board Chair.

In closing, for each of our staff, volunteers, funders and donors, please accept the sincere gratitude of the Board of Directors for ensuring the continued success of Umoja in fulfilling its mission to build strong communities, moving from newcomers to neighbours.

***"Umoja is a place of support, joy, learning, growth and HOPE! To have been a part of this organization for so many years is something I will treasure always."***

*- Jamie Kopp*



# 2021 Program Updates

## Literacy & Life Skills Program:

Literacy and Life Skills was at full capacity with a variety of newcomer clients from countries such as Syria, Columbia, Iraq, Burma, and Eritrea. Umoja provided a hybrid program offering both online as well as in-person programming to our clients. Thanks to a partnership with the Surrey Public Libraries who have graciously provided devices for our clients, allowing us to add a digital literacy component to our sessions. Finally, we introduced one-on-one mentorship for those who are looking to apply for Canadian citizenship, Permanent Residency, etc. on a case-by-case basis.

## First Steps Parenting Program and Umoja Outreach:

With pandemic restrictions in place, the 2021 year was challenging for both clients and staff alike as this program went online. However, we focused on maintaining client connection as we continued virtual program sessions, client referrals and small group outdoor activities in the park. Through Umoja Outreach, we successfully found housing for multiple families in a market that has been extremely challenging to navigate.

## Seeds of Change:

This program was introduced through a partnership with Sources Community Services. Umoja staff worked to develop a rhythm that has provided families with custom, culturally sensitive groceries on a weekly basis providing a huge support to families in need of additional groceries and nutritious foods.

## Digital Connect:

With 4 cohorts offered, this program continued to positively impact newcomer women through training and volunteer work placements supporting each participant in gaining employment skills and experience.

## Youth Outreach

We started this program by recruiting clients through one-on-one mentorship and parent engagement. It wasn't long before we had enough youth to add bi-weekly sessions that promoted community navigation and leadership skills while focusing on social & emotional development.

## United Way School's Out Umoja Program:

Afterschool programming for children 6-12 years ran at full capacity, adapted in-person program with smaller cohorts and a focus on outdoor play throughout 2021. Through our partnership with United Way, the Stigma-free Society supported our program with opportunities for virtual sessions for children and staff training sessions focusing on mental health and wellbeing.



***“I had a bad day at school but when I come to Umoja, I forget about it and feel supported by my friends and the youth worker!”***

*- Youth Outreach Participant*

# Umoja Annual Highlights

Page 5

# 194

children & Youth served



# 175

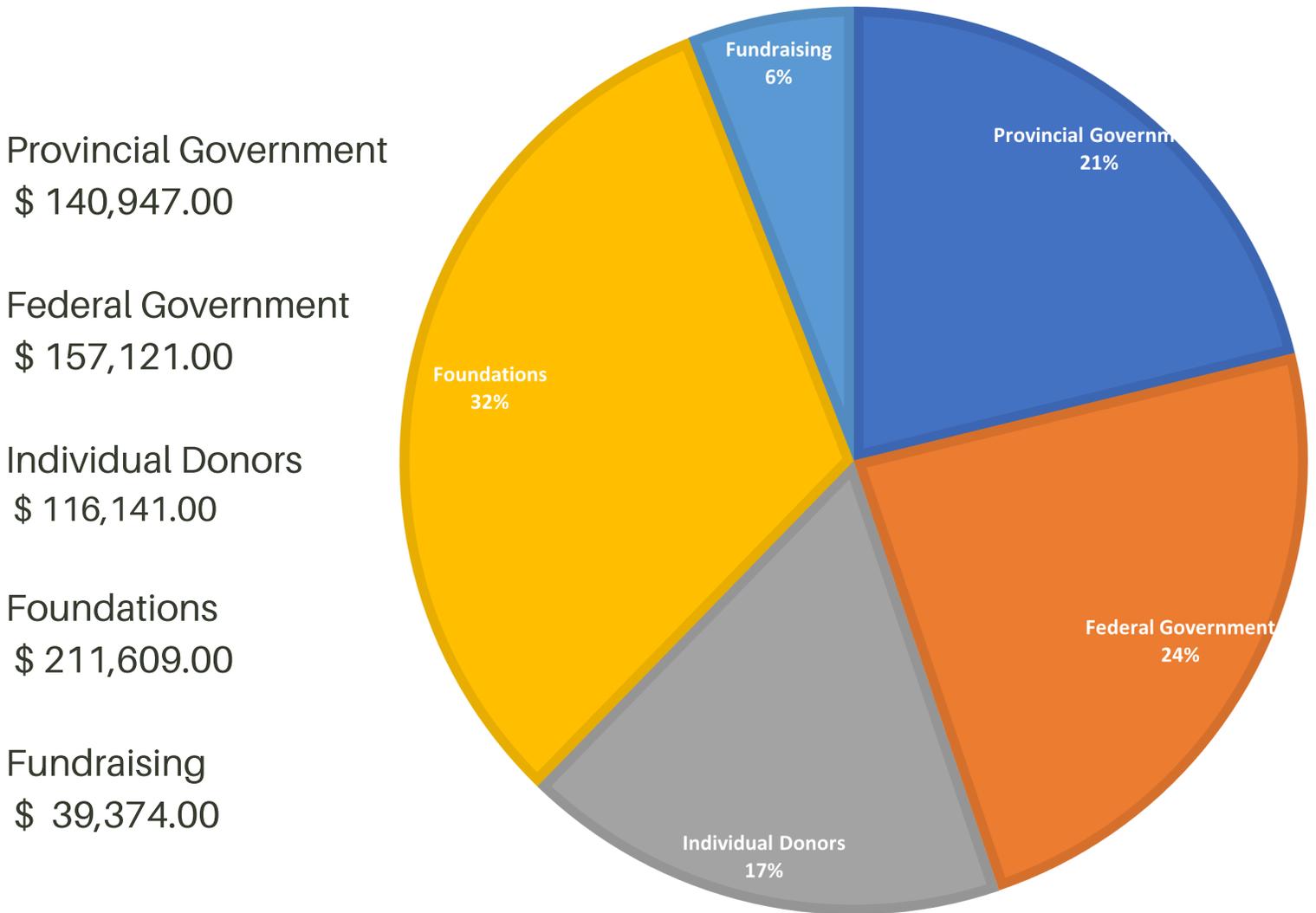
families  
accessed  
programs at  
Umoja

# 1 Tonne

of food delivered to  
families in need



Umoja works tirelessly throughout the year to deliver a variety of important services and programs for newcomer families. Umoja is provided funding from a variety of sources to offer all services free of charge for all participants. Umoja continues to utilize and steward all financial contributions to ensure impactful and effective support services to families. The chart below provides a snapshot of the funding Umoja has received for the 2021 year, with corresponding funding sources.



# Acknowledgement of Funders and Partners

Options Community Services  
 Diversecity Community Resources Society  
 Surrey Food Bank  
 Surrey Libraries  
 City of Surrey  
 School District 36  
 A Rocha  
 Fraser Region  
 Aboriginal Friendship Centre  
 Surrey RCMP  
 Trinity Western University  
 Costco - Newton Location  
 Fraser Health  
 Quest Food Exchange  
 Progressive Intercultural Community Services  
 St. Matthews Church  
 Broadway Church  
 Benefic  
 Chippendale Foundation  
 Sources Community Resource Centre  
 Douglas College  
 Individual Donors and Supporters



Funded by:

Financé par :



Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada