CITY OF SALMON ARM

Embracing Equity and Inclusivity:
Anti-Racism Strategy for the Shuswap

Through collective action, we can create lasting change.

"" Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization."
Mahatma Gandhi

Interior Health   SD83   Shuswap IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY   Rise Up INDIGENOUS WELLNESS   SYSC

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Salmon Arm is situated on the unceded and Ancestral territory of the Secwépemc People, with whom we share these lands and where we live and work together. Through our strategy, we are committed to actively addressing Truth and Reconciliation.

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Sxwetsméllp Bay (Salmon Arm Bay)

Place name transcription by Chief Atahm School as part of the Landmarks project.

Theory of Change Statement

If....then....because

If we center lived experiences, uphold Indigenous and newcomer leadership, and foster collaborative, trauma-informed, and culturally grounded engagement across sectors,

then we will build inclusive policies, empower racialized and Indigenous communities, and dismantle systemic racism in the Shuswap region,

because meaningful change requires sustained education, equitable representation, respectful relationships, and long-term funding to address historical and contemporary injustices and promote reconciliation, equity, and belonging for all.
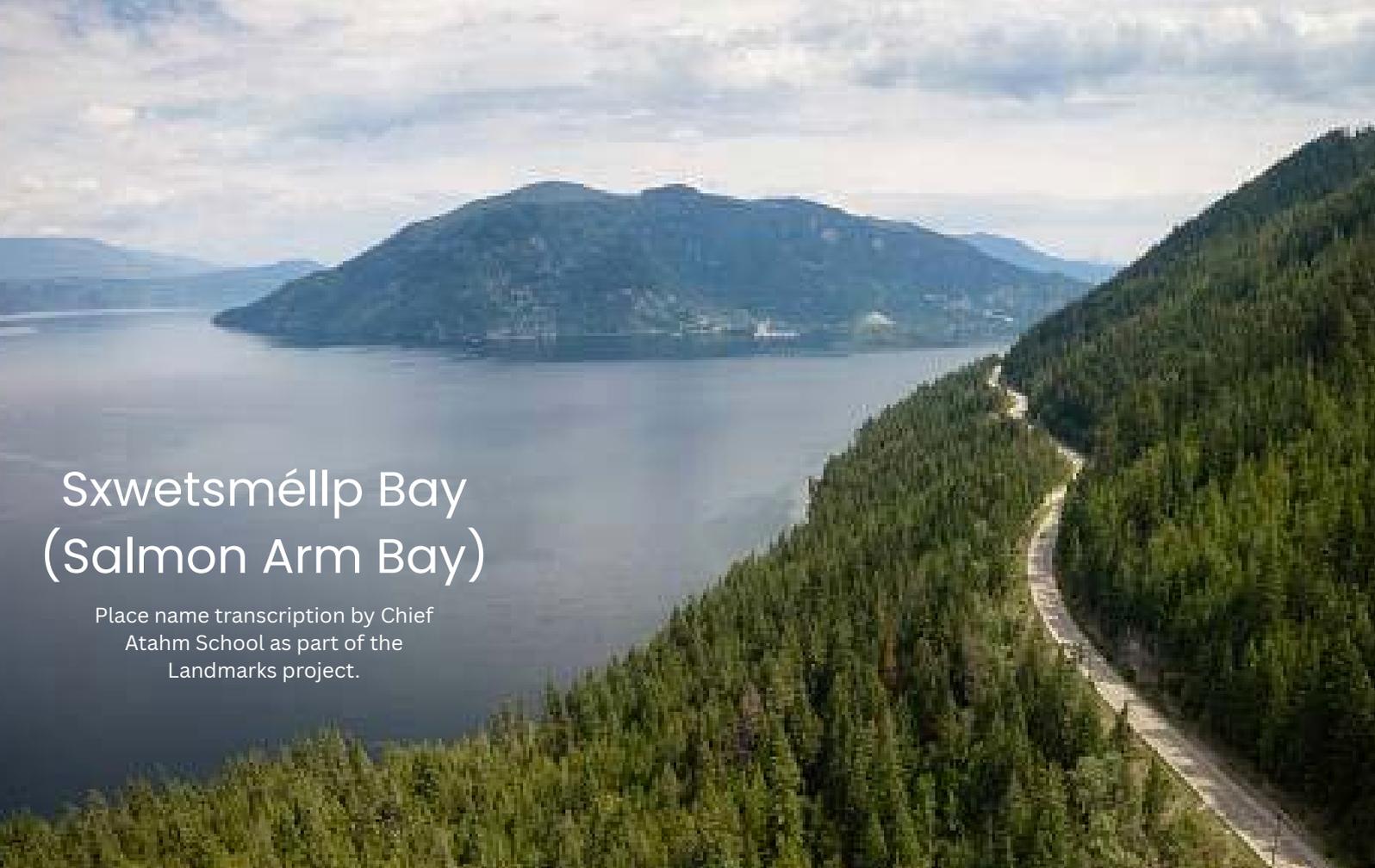
Sxwetsméllp Bay
(Salmon Arm Bay)

Place name transcription by Chief Atahm School as part of the Landmarks project.

Part 1: Executive Summary

"This Strategy is a collaborative, action-oriented initiative designed to confront and dismantle systemic racism. It was developed in response to the region's increasing diversity and ongoing experiences of racism within the community. The strategy reflects the shared vision and collective commitment of five key partners:

- Interior Health (Integrated Child and Youth Team and Healthy Community Development)
- Ḱwsaltktnéws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw School District (SD83)
- City of Salmon Arm
- Shuswap Immigrant Services Society and
- Rise Up Indigenous Wellness.

Central to the strategy is an acknowledgement that Salmon Arm is located on the unceded territory of the Secwépemc People. It affirms the lasting impacts of colonialism and the responsibility of settlers to actively advance reconciliation, justice, and equity (TRC 43, 57 & 93).

Grounded in extensive community engagement, consultation, and evidence-informed research, two core values guided the development of the strategy:

- centering lived and living experience and
- upholding Indigenous leadership.

Executive Summary Cont...

Insights were gathered through engagement with Indigenous Elders, an Equity Advisory Council, and a Community Scan. Arts-based research sessions were also organized with both youth and adults.

This strategy is a living document, meant to evolve through ongoing evaluation, community feedback, and a shared commitment to justice, equity, and reconciliation. It outlines 7 Strategic Goals:
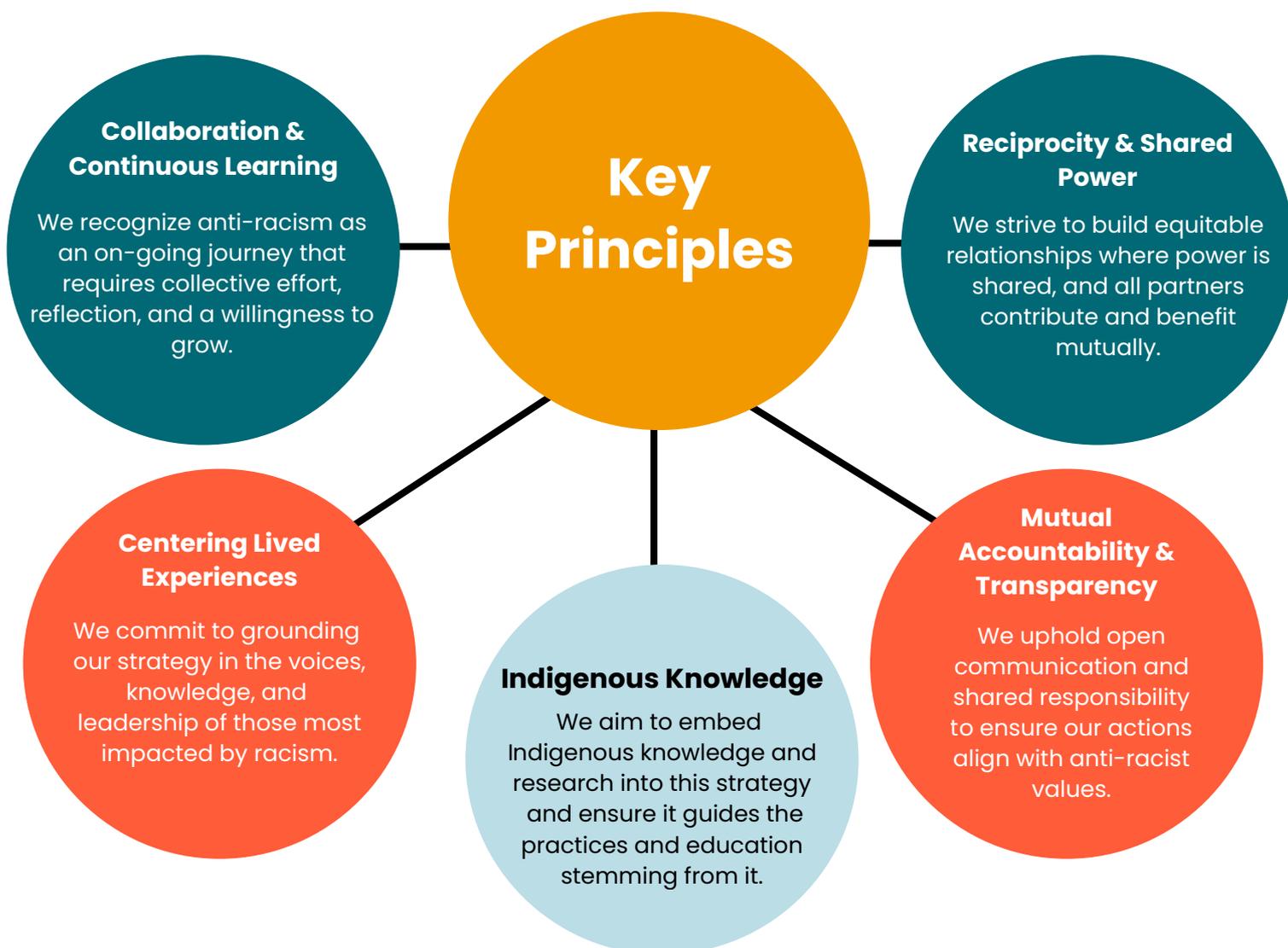
1. **Respectful Engagement with Indigenous Communities** (ensuring Indigenous leadership is upheld).

2. **Education and Literacy** (implementing joint equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and Truth and Reconciliation training across partner organizations).

3. **Representation and Voice** (continuing to use advisory groups and arts-based methods to amplify systemically excluded voices).

4. **Policy and Practice** (supporting organizations in developing inclusive policies and safe reporting mechanisms).

5. **Community Engagement** (promoting cultural awareness through events, festivals and school-based initiatives).

6. **Support and Empowerment** (providing tools and resources to help newcomers and racialized individuals navigate discrimination).

7. **Sustainable Funding** (securing long-term financial support to ensure the Strategy's implementation and growth).

"I was told not to drum and sing until my people were happy."

Louis Thomas, 2019

Part 2: Guiding Values and Principles

These principles are not static, they are living commitments that will evolve through ongoing reflection, community feedback and action.

Key Principles

Collaboration & Continuous Learning

We recognize anti-racism as an on-going journey that requires collective effort, reflection, and a willingness to grow.

Reciprocity & Shared Power

We strive to build equitable relationships where power is shared, and all partners contribute and benefit mutually.

Centering Lived Experiences

We commit to grounding our strategy in the voices, knowledge, and leadership of those most impacted by racism.

Indigenous Knowledge

We aim to embed Indigenous knowledge and research into this strategy and ensure it guides the practices and education stemming from it.

Mutual Accountability & Transparency

We uphold open communication and shared responsibility to ensure our actions align with anti-racist values.

Part 3: Background Research

Historical Context

The Shuswap region, traditionally inhabited by the Secwépemc People, has a rich history that is deeply rooted in Indigenous culture and stewardship of the land. The arrival of settlers in 1886, coinciding with the completion of the railway, marked the onset of significant changes. This period saw the beginning of the disruption of Indigenous ways of life and led to the marginalization of the Secwépemc people. Over the last 50 years, racialized people have continued to face racism and marginalization in the Shuswap region(Globe and Mail, 2021), (Salmon Arm Observer, 2021), (Salmon Arm Observer, 2024).

Demographic Changes

The Shuswap region has seen a significant increase in immigration in recent years, primarily driven by the need to address labor shortages in key sectors. Programs like the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) have facilitated this growth, with 118 people moving to Shuswap Communities and Enderby between 2019 and 2024 (Community Futures, North Okanagan, 2024). Many additional individuals have arrived through various immigration pathways. The upcoming Rural Community Immigration Pilot (RCIP) is anticipated to double the number of newcomers settling in participating communities (IRCC, 2025).

Immigration plays a crucial role in sustaining the Canadian economy, yet its contributions are often undervalued. Retaining immigrants remains a significant concern, especially as Canada currently faces historically low retention rates, with British Columbia among the provinces experiencing the lowest rates (Statistics Canada, 2024). In many small and mid-sized cities, including in Salmon Arm, businesses continue to report ongoing skill shortages and are increasingly relying on immigrants to fill these essential roles (Conference Board of Canada, 2024).

Settlement agencies are under increasing pressure to address this growing demand. For instance, client numbers at the Shuswap Immigrant Services Society have surged by over 76% in the last four years. There is an urgent need for municipalities and local organizations across Canada to adapt their policies and services to support this expanding demographic, as settlement agencies cannot manage this challenge alone (Conference Board of Canada, 2022). These demographic shifts highlight the necessity for inclusive policies and community support that not only attract newcomers but also foster their sense of belonging and empowerment.

Recent Growth at Shuswap Immigrant Services Society
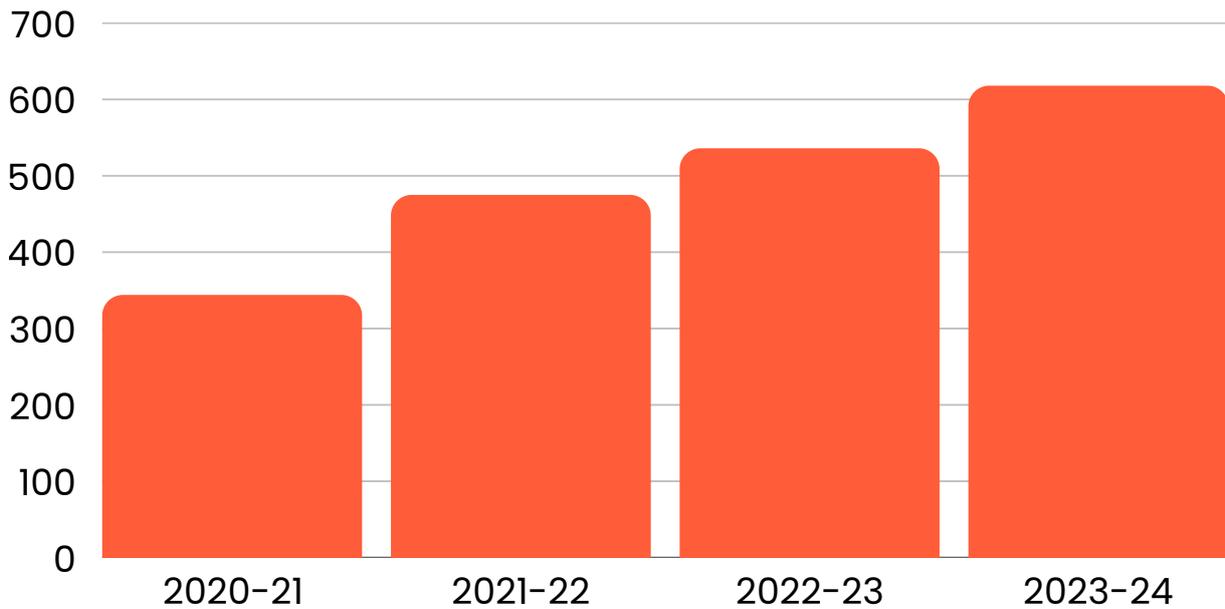
Increase in client numbers at Shuswap Immigrant Service Society
over the last four fiscal years

Contemporary Issues

Salmon Arm, a key community within the Shuswap region has a history shaped by systemic racism. The legacy of colonialism continues to impact the community, necessitating ongoing efforts to address and combat racism and promote reconciliation. Over the last half-century, numerous events and incidents have highlighted the need for a comprehensive anti-racism strategy. Feedback from frontline workers and the Racialized Voices Advisory Council has also indicated that racism is on the rise within the community, underscoring the urgency of these efforts.

Racism exerts significant and widespread effects on both individuals and communities, adversely impacting mental, emotional, social and physical health. Individuals facing racism experience a markedly higher risk of negative mental health outcomes, including depression, anxiety, and psychological distress (Islam et al., 2017; McKenzie, 2003). Additionally, the ongoing stress related to racism can result in long-term physical health issues, such as increased blood pressure and cardiovascular problems (Lewsley, 2020).

In Canada, national statistics support these findings. The Public Health Agency of Canada (2022) reports that racialized adults, especially those from Black, South Asian, and Arab/ West Asian communities, show elevated prevalence of chronic illnesses like diabetes and cardiovascular disease, alongside poorer self-rated mental and physical health compared to white adults. These disparities are deeply intertwined with systemic discrimination and limited access to health-promoting resources. Such inequities are not only unfair but also preventable, highlighting the pressing need for systemic reforms to tackle racism as a crucial factor affecting health.

Recent Federally Funded Research

Addressing racism from both humanist and economic perspectives is essential. The moral obligation emphasizes the protection of human dignity and equal rights, while the economic argument illustrates how inclusion fosters innovation, productivity, and sustainable growth across all communities. The following quotes from federally funded studies reveal the persistent issues related to immigrant retention. These insights highlight the need for targeted strategies to support their long-term integration and success. This is especially relevant given that racism significantly influences individuals' choices to migrate.

"These are not desperate people fleeing destitution for the comfort of Canada's generosity. Rather, they are a globally coveted talent pool with global options. When we fail to retain newcomers, we are essentially helping them to contribute to another country's success" (Daniel Bernhard, 2024).

"There's a lot of work that we need to do, deconstructing racism and xenophobia." Several research participants described situations in which an immigrant family was recruited to the community only to leave again after being treated poorly. The availability of a good job and a good home was not enough to retain the newcomer" (Conference Board of Canada, 2022).

Landmarks Project, Shuswap Trail Alliance, 2025

Toby Smith

Sxwetsméllp (Salmon Arm Bay) with Kwellḱémt (Bastion Mountain) to the right.

Place name transcription by Chief Atahm School as part of the Landmarks project.

Ross St Mosaic

Part 4: Community Based Research

Two core values guided the development of the strategy: centering lived and living experience, and upholding Indigenous leadership. Appendix A, B and C summarize insights gathered through engagement with Indigenous Elders, an Equity Advisory Council and the Community Scan completed by Rise Up Indigenous Wellness. The engagement sessions sought to surface and categorize experiences of racism and discrimination, followed by in-depth, collaborative dialogues focused on co-creating community-driven solutions.
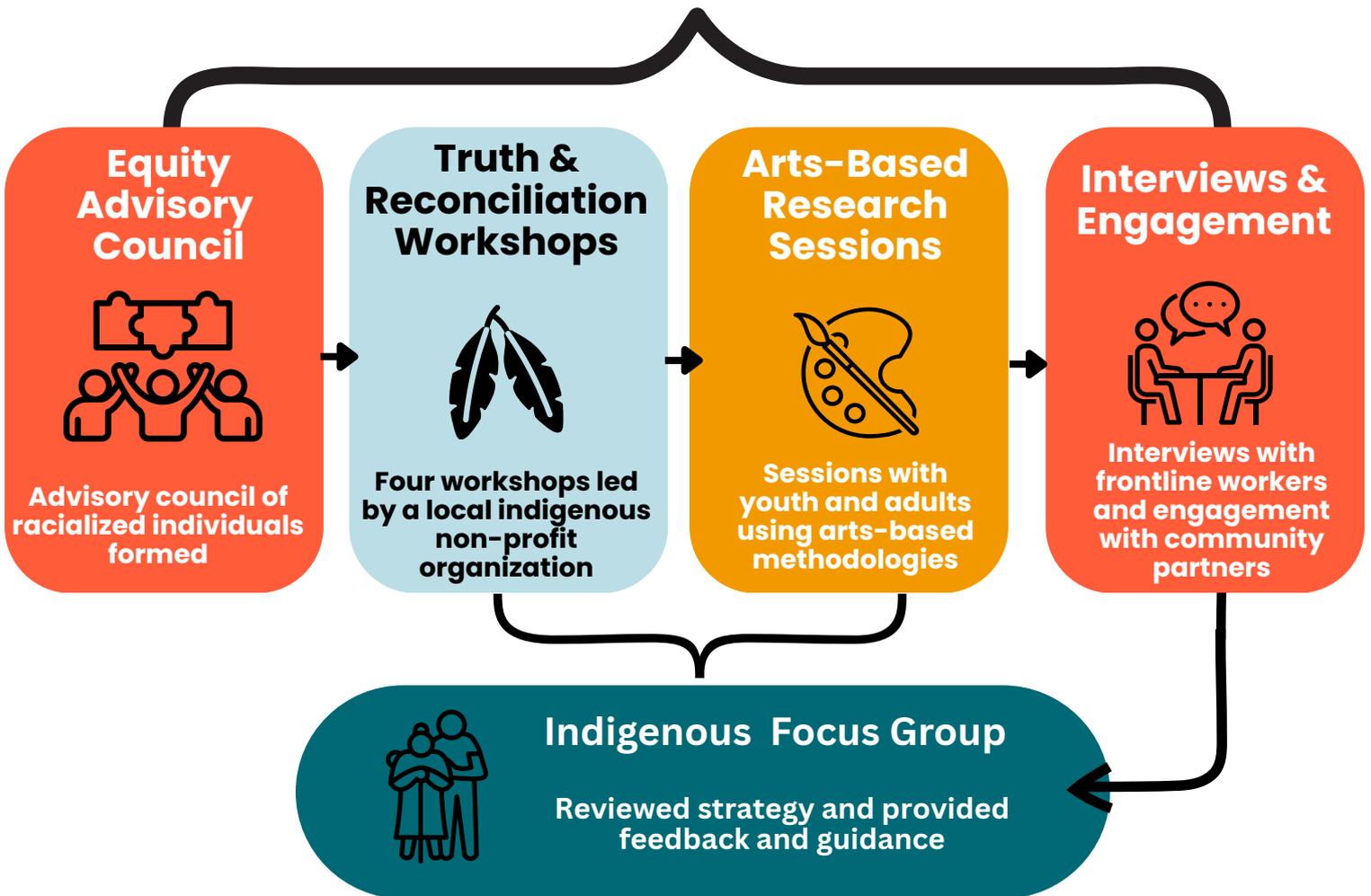
To deepen understanding and create space for meaningful expression, arts-based research sessions were also organized with both youth and adults. These sessions provided creative, culturally grounded avenues for sharing experiences and insights, which have been shown to be particularly effective in enhancing racialized groups' ability to communicate issues surrounding inclusion (Fenge, 2022). A trauma-informed and culturally sensitive approach was prioritized throughout, employing a diverse range of methodologies, including arts-based practices and Margaret Kovach's conversational method (Kovach, 2021).

Additionally, interviews with frontline workers were conducted to capture their perspectives and living realities. The engagement with community partners revealed several key themes: the persistence of systemic barriers, the importance of centering lived experience, the need for accountability and transparency, a preference for collaborative and co-designed solutions, and a strong commitment to long-term, sustainable change.

Community Anti-Racism Strategy Process

Lived & Living Experience

Indigenous Leadership

Equity Advisory Council

Advisory council of racialized individuals formed

Truth & Reconciliation Workshops

Four workshops led by a local indigenous non-profit organization

Arts-Based Research Sessions

Sessions with youth and adults using arts-based methodologies

Interviews & Engagement

Interviews with frontline workers and engagement with community partners

Indigenous Focus Group

Reviewed strategy and provided feedback and guidance

Seven Strategic Goals

1 Respectful Engagement with Indigenous Communities:

Ensuring Indigenous leadership and voice is upheld throughout this work.

2 Education and Literacy:

Implementing joint Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Truth and Reconciliation training across partner organizations.

3 Representation and Voice:

Continuing to use advisory groups and arts-based methods to amplify systemically excluded voices.

4 Policy and Practice:

Supporting organizations in developing inclusive policies and safe reporting mechanisms.

5 Community Engagement:

Promoting cultural awareness through events, festivals, and school-based initiatives.

6 Support and Empowerment:

Providing tools and resources to help newcomers and racialized individuals navigate discrimination.

7 Sustainable Funding:

Securing long-term financial support to ensure the strategy's implementation and growth.

1

Respectful Engagement with Indigenous Communities:

Ensuring Indigenous leadership and voice throughout this work.

Activities

- Elders assess the Strategy.
- Indigenous Engagement Protocol.
- Cultural safety training.
- Respectful, Indigenous representation.
- Support Indigenous initiatives.

Inputs

- Collaborate with Elders and Indigenous leaders.
- Fund training and engagement initiatives.
- Provide protocol resources and policy templates.
- Venues and materials for events.

Outputs

- Training sessions and participant count.
- Indigenous-led projects and events supported.
- Public spaces with Indigenous representation.
- Community feedback on engagement efforts.

Outcomes

- Stronger relationships with Indigenous communities.
- Increased cultural safety and awareness.
- Greater Indigenous visibility and inclusion.
- Improved trust and collaboration.

Impact

- A more inclusive and respectful community that honors Indigenous rights, history, and culture.
- Sustainable partnerships with Indigenous communities.
- Systemic changes that reflect the values of reconciliation and equity.

Activities:
- Ensure Indigenous Focus Groups are consulted yearly to assess and improve the strategy.
- Establish a formal protocol for engaging with Indigenous communities, guided by Elders and local Knowledge Holders. Encourage organizations to adopt a policy in addition to the protocol.
- Provide unconscious bias and cultural safety training for staff across organizations.
- Increase Indigenous representation in public spaces through art, signage, truth telling and storytelling.
- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to ensure accurate and respectful representation in tourism and education.
- Support Indigenous-led initiatives and ensure inclusive participation in cultural events.
- Create a policy template for organizations to develop an Indigenous Engagement policy.

Input:
- Collaboration with Elders, Indigenous leaders, and local bands.
- Funding for training, art installations, and community engagement.
- Existing resources for developing and implementing engagement protocols.
- Venues and materials for training and cultural events.

Output:
- Number of training sessions conducted and participants trained.
- Number of Indigenous-led projects and events supported.
- Number of public spaces updated with Indigenous representation.
- Feedback from Indigenous communities on engagement efforts.

Outcomes:
- Strengthened relationships between organizations and Indigenous communities.
- Increased cultural safety and awareness among staff and community members.
- Greater visibility and inclusion of Indigenous voices in public life.
- Improved trust and collaboration with Indigenous partners.

Impact:
- A more inclusive and respectful community that honors Indigenous rights, and culture.
- Sustainable partnerships with Indigenous communities.
- Systemic changes that reflect the values of reconciliation and equity.

Data Sources:
- Training and event records.
- Community feedback and surveys.
- Documentation of public space updates and protocol implementation.

Organizations Involved:
- SD83, Interior Health (Healthy Community Development), SISS, Rise Up Indigenous Wellness, City of Salmon Arm.

2

Education and Literacy:

Implementing joint Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Truth and Reconciliation training across partner organizations.

Activities

- Truth & Reconciliation and EDI training.
- Partner with EDI educators.
- Secure funding for educators like Rise Up.
- Host two Indigenous Education workshops at SISS for newcomers.

Inputs

- Fund EDI and TRC facilitators.
- Coordinate with SD83, Interior Health, SISS, and Rise Up.
- Provide training materials and venues.

Outputs

- Number of training sessions held.
- Participant attendance and evaluation.
- EDI-related policy and practice changes.

Outcomes

- Completed EDI and reconciliation trainings.
- Positive participant feedback.
- Improved EDI practices.
- Stronger organizational relationships.

Impact

- Greater awareness of EDI and Truth & Reconciliation.
- Increased newcomer understanding of Truth & Reconciliation.
- Improved EDI culture and practices.
- Stronger collaboration on anti-racism efforts.

2

Activities:
- Implement joint Truth and Reconciliation and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training across organizations (2 trainings/ organization/ year).
- Connect with funded EDI educators such as the Human Rights Commission and Kamloops Immigrant Services.
- Secure funding for other educators like Rise Up.
- Organize two workshops at SISS to increase newcomers knowledge of Indigenous history.

Input:
- Funding for EDI educators and Truth and Reconciliation workshop facilitators.
- Collaboration and coordination between SD83, Interior Health, SISS, and Rise Up.
- Resources and materials for training sessions.
- Venues for conducting training sessions.

Output:
- Number of training sessions conducted.
- Number of participants attending each session.
- Participant satisfaction and feedback scores.
- Changes in organizational policies and practices related to EDI.

Outcomes:
- Successful completion of EDI and reconciliation training sessions.
- Positive feedback from participants.
- Measurable improvements in EDI practices within involved organizations.
- Enhanced relationships with the organizations involved.

Impact:
- Increased awareness and understanding of EDI principles and Truth and Reconciliation among participants.
- Increased awareness and understanding of Truth and Reconciliation among newcomers.
- Improved organizational culture and practices regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Strengthened collaboration between organizations in promoting anti-racism literacy.

Data Sources:
Training Records: Documentation of training sessions, including attendance and materials used.
Participant Surveys: Feedback forms and surveys from participants after each training session.

Organizations Involved:
- SD83, Interior Health(Healthy Community Development), SISS, Rise Up Indigenous Wellness, City of Salmon Arm.
- In addition: Kamloops Immigrant Services, Human Rights Commission.

3

Representation and Voice:
Continuing to use advisory groups and arts-based methods to amplify systemically excluded voices.

Activities

- Create a permanent Equity Advisory group.
- Partner with Rise Up Youth Advisory Group.
- Amplify underrepresented voices through arts-based research.

Inputs

- Coordinate with Rise Up, SISS, and local bands.
- Provide resources for the Advisory group.
- Fund arts-based research and materials.
- Secure venues and honoraria funding.

Outputs

- Advisory meetings held.
- Racialized and Indigenous participants involved.
- Participant feedback on group effectiveness.
- Arts-based research projects completed.

Outcomes

- More racialized and Indigenous peoples' participation in decisions.
- New methods to amplify marginalized voices.
- Positive feedback and engagement from members.

Impact

- Enhanced representation and voice for racialized and Indigenous communities in decision-making.
- Improved policies and practices that reflect the needs and perspectives of marginalized groups.
- Strengthened community relationships and trust.

Activities:
- Create a permanent Equity Advisory group that convenes three times annually.
- Work together with Rise Up to incorporate perspectives from their Youth Advisory group.
- Partner with Runaway Moon Theatre to leverage arts-based research for innovative methods of amplifying underrepresented voices. Organize activities in schools to ensure that the voices of racialized youth are encorporated.

Input:
- Collaboration and coordination between Rise Up, SISS and local bands.
- Resources for establishing and maintaining the Equity Advisory group.
- Funding and materials for arts-based research initiatives.
- Venues for meetings and research activities.
- Funding for honoraria.

Output:
- Number of advisory group meetings held.
- Number of participants from racialized and Indigenous communities.
- Feedback from participants on the effectiveness of the advisory group.
- Number of arts-based research projects completed.

Outcomes:
- Increased participation of racialized and Indigenous peoples in decision-making processes.
- Development of innovative methods to amplify marginalized voices.
- Positive feedback and engagement from advisory group members.

Impact:
- Enhanced representation and voice for racialized and Indigenous communities in decision-making.
- Improved policies and practices that reflect the needs and perspectives of marginalized groups.
- Strengthened community relationships and trust.

Data Sources:
- Attendance and summary from Equity Advisory Council Meetings.

Organizations Involved:
- Rise Up, SISS, SD83, City of Salmon Arm.

4

Policy and Practice:

Supporting organizations in developing inclusive policies and safe reporting mechanisms.

Activities

- Develop an anti-discrimination policy toolkit.
- Create a checklist to identify policy gaps.
- Hold regular goal-setting and support meetings.
- Collaborate to ensure services meet the diverse needs of the community.

Inputs

- Collaboration from community.
- Provide resources for policy checklist creation and distribution.
- Supply venues and materials for meetings.
- Offer tools for collecting accessibility feedback.

Outputs

- Checklists distributed.
- Meetings held.
- Participating organizations.
- Accessibility and inclusion feedback scores.

Outcomes

- Organizations understand the gaps in their policies and move towards changing them.
- Regular goal-setting and progress tracking.
- Improved services meeting diverse needs.

Impact

- Sustainable and inclusive organizational policy development.
- Increased accessibility and satisfaction among diverse populations.
- Strengthened commitment to preventing discrimination.

Activities:
- Provide tools for organizations to develop policies that support inclusion and prevent discrimination.
- Create a simple checklist for organizations to identify areas for improvement in their policies and practices.
- Hold regular meetings to set goals and support changes.
- Collaborate to ensure services meet the diverse needs of the population, with continued feedback on accessibility.

Input:
- Collaboration and coordination between community partners.
- Resources for creating and distributing the policy checklist.
- Venues and materials for regular meetings.
- Tools and platforms for collecting feedback on accessibility.

Output:
- Number of checklists distributed.
- Number of meetings held.
- Number of organizations participating.
- Feedback scores on accessibility and inclusion.

Outcomes:
- First step in the process to improve policies and practices that support inclusion and prevent discrimination.
- Regular goal-setting and progress tracking within organizations.
- Enhanced services that meet the diverse needs of the population.

Impact:
- Sustainable and inclusive organizational policies.
- Increased accessibility and satisfaction among diverse populations.
- Strengthened commitment to preventing discrimination.

Data Sources:
- Participant Surveys: Feedback forms and surveys from organizations on the effectiveness of the tools and meetings.
- Policy Documents: Changes and updates to organizational policies reflecting inclusion and anti-discrimination principles.

Organizations Involved:
- SISS, SD83, The City of Salmon Arm, Rise Up Indigenous Wellness, Interior Health (Healthy Community Development).

5

Community Engagement:
Promoting cultural awareness through events, festivals, and school-based initiatives.

Activities

- Engage community in Diversity & Inclusion events.
- Promote cultural awareness through school food programs.
- Encourage annual participation in Gathering Together Festival.
- Continue collaboration with Shuswap Food Action, SISS, and SD83.

Inputs

- Collaborate among Runaway Moon, SISS, SD83, City of Salmon Arm, and Shuswap Food Action.
- Provide resources for event organization and promotion.
- Fund food-based workshops and cultural events.

Outputs

- Events and workshops held.
- Participant numbers.
- Participant feedback.
- Schools involved in food-based workshops.

Outcomes

- Greater community engagement in intercultural and Indigenous events.
- Stronger organizational collaboration on promoting cultural awareness.
- Positive participant feedback and engagement.

Impact

- Strengthened community relationships and cultural understanding.
- Improved cultural awareness and inclusion within schools and the broader community.
- Sustained interest and participation in cultural events and initiatives.

Activities:
- Engage the community in Diversity and Inclusion events and projects (e.g. The Gathering Together Festival and the Where on Earth Are We project)
- Promote awareness of different cultures through food in schools.
- Schedule workshops in schools, SISS, SD83, and the community as part of the 'Where on Earth Are We?' project.
- Encourage all organizations to promote and attend the Gathering Together Festival on Multicultural Day every year.
- Continue the collaboration between Shuswap Food Action, SISS, and SD83.
- Develop more food-based workshops within the schools and encourage schools to choose intercultural foods for fun food days.

Input:
- Collaboration and coordination between Runaway Moon, SISS, SD83, City of Salmon Arm, and Shuswap Food Action.
- Resources for organizing and promoting events and workshops (eg. art supplies from Run Away Moon Theatre).
- Funding for food-based workshops and cultural events.

Output:
- Number of events and workshops held.
- Number of participants attending each event.
- Feedback from participants on the effectiveness of the events and workshops.
- Number of schools participating in food-based workshops.

Outcomes:
- Increased community engagement in Intercultural/ Indigenous events.
- Enhanced collaboration between organizations in promoting cultural awareness.
- Positive feedback and engagement from participants in events and workshops.

Impact:
- Strengthened community relationships and cultural understanding.
- Improved cultural awareness and inclusion within schools and the broader community.
- Sustained interest and participation in cultural events and initiatives.

Data Sources:
- Event Records: Documentation of events and workshops, including attendance and materials used.
- Participant Surveys: Feedback forms and surveys from participants after each event and workshop.

Organizations Involved:
- SISS, SD83, The City of Salmon Arm, Rise Up Indigenous Wellness, Interior Health (Healthy Community Development).

6

Support and Empowerment:

Providing tools and resources to help newcomers and racialized individuals navigate discrimination.

Activities

- Create and share a racism navigation infographic.
- Continue the community response Protocol with RCMP and partners.
- Provide newcomers resources on racism and reporting,
- Educate community on reporting tools.

Inputs

- Coordinate among SISS, SD83, IH, and City of Salmon Arm.
- Provide resources for infographic creation and distribution.
- Offer tools for community education on racism reporting.

Outputs

- Number of infographics distributed.
- Feedback from the community on the effectiveness of the support and educational resources.

Outcomes

- Greater awareness and use of racism reporting tools.
- Improved newcomer support.
- Positive community feedback and engagement.

Impact

- Empowered newcomers with the tools and resources to address racism and discrimination.
- Strengthened community support systems.
- Improved community awareness and responsiveness to issues of racism and discrimination.

Activities:
- Create an infographic to help people understand and navigate racism, to be distributed by all the organizations.
- Continue the community response Protocol to respond to racism in the community (RCMP, five community partners).
- Provide resources to newcomers to help them navigate challenging situations and address racism and discrimination. Ensuring they understand their right to report racism at work.
- Educate the community on racism reporting tools and resources.

Input:
- Collaboration and coordination between SISS, SD83, IH, and City of Salmon Arm.
- Resources for creating and distributing the infographic.
- Tools and platforms for educating the community on racism reporting.

Output:
- Number of infographics distributed.
- Feedback from the community on the effectiveness of the support and educational resources.

Outcomes:
- Increased awareness and use of racism reporting tools and resources.
- Enhanced support for newcomers in navigating challenging situations.
- Positive feedback and engagement from the community.

Impact:
- Empowered newcomers with the tools and resources to address racism and discrimination.
- Strengthened community support systems.
- Improved community awareness and responsiveness to issues of racism and discrimination.

Data Sources:
- Support Records: Documentation of support provided to newcomers.
- Number of organizations using the infographic.

Organizations Involved:
- SISS, SD83, The City of Salmon Arm, Rise Up Indigenous Wellness, Interior Health (Healthy Community Development)

7 Sustainable Funding:

Securing long-term financial support to ensure the strategy's implementation and growth.

Activities

- Secure ongoing funding for anti-racism strategy.
- Research and apply for grants to support implementation.

Inputs

- Coordination from community partners and the City of Salmon Arm.
- Provide resources for grant research and applications.
- Use tools to track funding applications and outcomes.

Outputs

- Grants applications.
- Funding secured.
- Applications approved.
- Feedback from funders.

Outcomes

- Secured ongoing funding for the anti-racism strategy.
- Sustained implementation and effectiveness of the strategy.
- Positive feedback from funding bodies.

Impact

- Long-term sustainability of the anti-racism strategy.
- Continued support for anti-racism initiatives.
- Strengthened financial stability for implementing the strategy.

Activities:
- Secure ongoing funding to support the implementation and sustainability of the anti-racism strategy.
- Research and apply for grants to ensure the strategy can be implemented effectively.

Input:
- Collaboration and coordination with community partners and the City of Salmon Arm.
- Resources for researching and applying for grants.
- Tools for tracking funding applications and outcomes.

Output:
- Number of grants applied for.
- Amount of funding secured.
- Number of funding applications approved.
- Feedback from funding bodies on the applications.

Outcomes:
- Secured ongoing funding for the anti-racism strategy.
- Sustained implementation and effectiveness of the strategy.
- Positive feedback from funding bodies.

Impact:
- Long-term sustainability of the anti-racism strategy.
- Continued support for anti-racism initiatives.
- Strengthened financial stability for implementing the strategy.

Data Sources:
- Grant Application Records: Documentation of grants applied for and their outcomes.

Organizations Involved:
- SISS, The City of Salmon Arm, SD83, Interior Health(Healthy Community Development).

Tradtional Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony- Gathering Together Festival, Salmon Arm, June 2025

Picture showing the foothills of Kwelésce7 (Mount Ida)
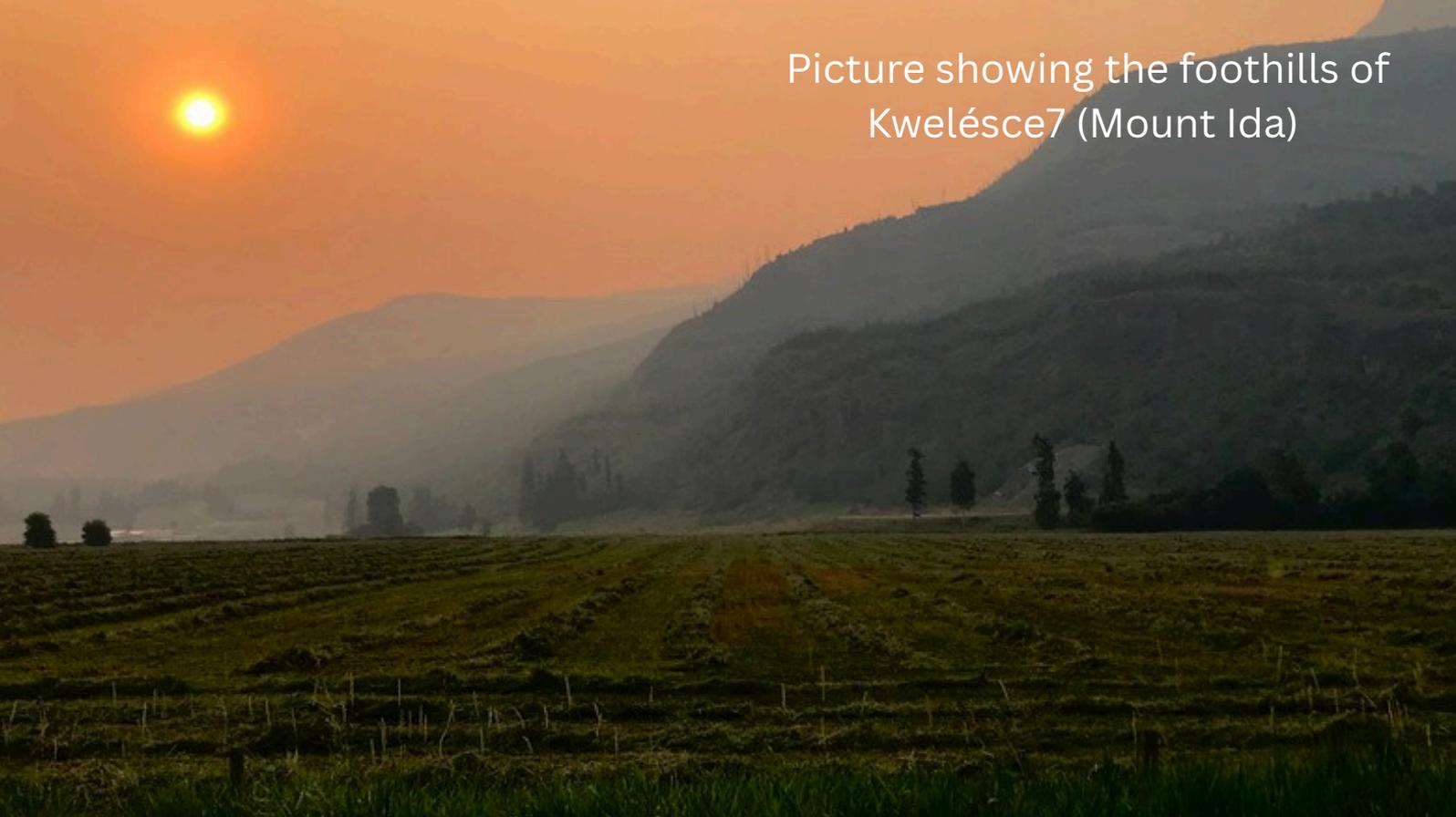
Place name transcription by Chief Atahm School as part of the Landmarks project.

Part 6: Appendices

CMHA Mural Art, Hudson Thrift Shop, Made with Indigenous Youth, Sept 2025

Elders Council Engagement: Key Issues Raised During the Elders Council Meeting

1. Education and Schools

- Indigenous students faced disproportionate disciplinary actions partly due to unconscious bias from teachers, partly due to overt racism.
- Indigenous students consistently received lower grades (in local post-secondary education) than their white peers. External review confirmed these disparities.
- Indigenous teachers reported frequent instances of verbal and physical abuse, which were often dismissed or not taken seriously.

2. Lack of Engagement with Indigenous Communities

- Educational institutions have not made adequate efforts to engage respectfully with local bands.
- Individuals were asked to perform land acknowledgements without proper recognition or compensation for their time and knowledge.
- Métis individuals were excluded from leading Aboriginal Day events, being told they were "not Indigenous enough."

3. Discrimination in Hiring and Curriculum

- The hiring process is perceived as unfair to Indigenous educators.
- At the post-secondary level, misinformation was being taught, including denial of both the Holocaust and the cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples.
- Indigenous students were segregated, and harmful stereotypes were perpetuated, such as the false claim that First Nations people receive "free money."

Spel_qwéqs (Eagle)
The messenger

Transcription of the Secwépemc taken from Diane Jules descriptions as part of the 7 Grandfather Teachings Project

Toby Smith

Recommendations from the Indigenous Council:

City Initiatives

- Reorder flags to place the Secwépemc flag first.
- Install a land acknowledgement and Indigenous artwork at the city building entrance.
- Develop and implement a policy and protocol to educate city staff and ensure respectful relationships are developed with Indigenous communities.

Tourism and Public Spaces

- Update the electronic notice board at the wharf to include Indigenous heritage.
- Provide an explanation for the stone monument at the wharf, detailing its meaning and historical significance.

Visual Representation and Inclusion

- Increase Indigenous visibility in community planning and decision-making.
- Employ more Indigenous people across sectors.
- Document and display more Indigenous art, culture, and history throughout the community.

Relationship Building, Education, and Protocol

- Create a formal protocol to guide organizations in building respectful relationships with Indigenous communities.
- Provide unconscious bias training for staff across all organizations.

Key Issues Raised During Equity Advisory Council and Community Engagement Sessions

Housing

- Racialized individuals and families reported facing discrimination when seeking housing, including being denied rentals based on appearance or background.
- Tenants experienced hostility and harassment from neighbours, often escalating to threats or verbal abuse.
- Law enforcement responses to these incidents were often inadequate, leaving families feeling unsafe and unsupported.

Child and Youth Experiences in Educational and Extracurricular Settings

- Racialized children and youth encountered exclusion and stereotyping.
- Harmful assumptions were made about students' abilities, language skills, and cultural practices.
- Many students experienced bullying, name-calling, and cultural shaming, both in and outside of school.
- A lack of culturally appropriate food options and understanding of dietary needs contributed to feelings of exclusion.
- Educators were often unprepared to address racism or support students from diverse backgrounds.

Workplace Discrimination

- Racialized workers reported being assigned more difficult or undesirable tasks and receiving unequal treatment compared to their peers.
- Discriminatory comments and practices were common, including stereotyping and denial of basic rights or support.
- Some workers faced exploitative conditions, including restrictions on movement, withheld documents, and lack of access to language or support services.
- Pay disparities and unjust accusations further contributed to a sense of marginalization.

Community and Social Life

- Racialized individuals frequently encountered microaggressions, such as intrusive questions about their identity or language.
- Cultural and religious differences were often misunderstood or disrespected, leading to social exclusion.
- Islamophobia and other forms of racism sometimes escalated into public harassment or violence.
- Law enforcement responses to community-level racism were often perceived as dismissive or ineffective.
- Children and youth struggled with cultural identity due to peer pressure and a lack of cultural education in schools.

The Hive
(After-School group for Youth)
April 2025

Health Care

- Racialized patients reported feeling dismissed or not taken seriously by health care providers.
- Communication barriers and lack of awareness about interpretation services led to confusion and mistrust.
- Cultural insensitivity in care delivery contributed to negative health experiences and outcomes.

Gaps in service delivery remain a challenge, including confusion about where and how to report incidents of racism and a lack of awareness around what constitutes racism and how it can be addressed.

Summary of Recommendations: Equity Advisory Community Engagement Sessions

Policy and Organizational Culture

- Integrate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles into the core policies and cultures of all organizations and institutions.
- Ensure that EDI is not treated as a one-time initiative but as an ongoing commitment embedded in daily operations and decision-making.

Reporting and Support Systems

- Implement anonymous reporting tools that allow individuals to safely report incidents of racism without fear of retaliation.
- Establish clear support systems for individuals who experience racism, including access to counseling and advocacy services.
- Provide training for bystanders on how to safely and effectively intervene in instances of racism or discrimination.

Cultural and Religious Inclusion

- Recognize and accommodate cultural and religious observances by allowing racialized students and employees to take time off for holidays and celebrations.
- Promote inclusive calendars and scheduling practices that reflect the diversity of the community.
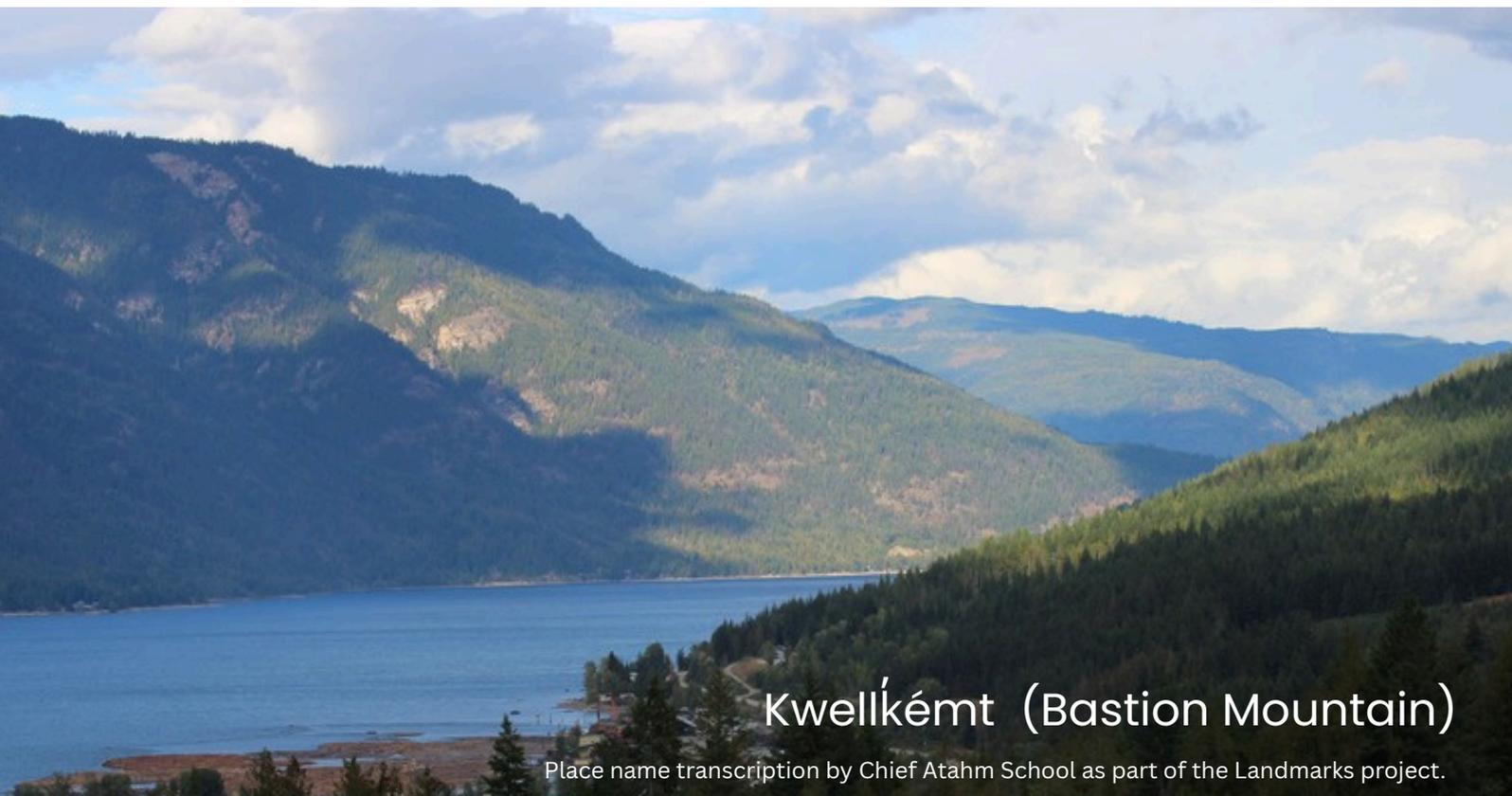
Public Safety and Representation

- Develop and enforce bylaws to prevent street harassment and ensure public spaces are safe for all.
- Actively include racialized voices in planning, policy-making, and leadership roles across sectors.

Education and Accountability

- Provide education on the nature and impact of racism for educators, employers, and community leaders.
- Ensure that those in leadership positions are equipped and expected to address incidents of racism directly and effectively.

Respectful Engagement and Compensation

- When collecting stories or experiences from racialized individuals, prioritize emotional safety and avoid pressuring individuals to share traumatic experiences.
- Offer honorariums or fair compensation and acknowledge the time, knowledge, and emotional labor contributed by participants.

Kwellḱémt (Bastion Mountain)

Place name transcription by Chief Atahm School as part of the Landmarks project.
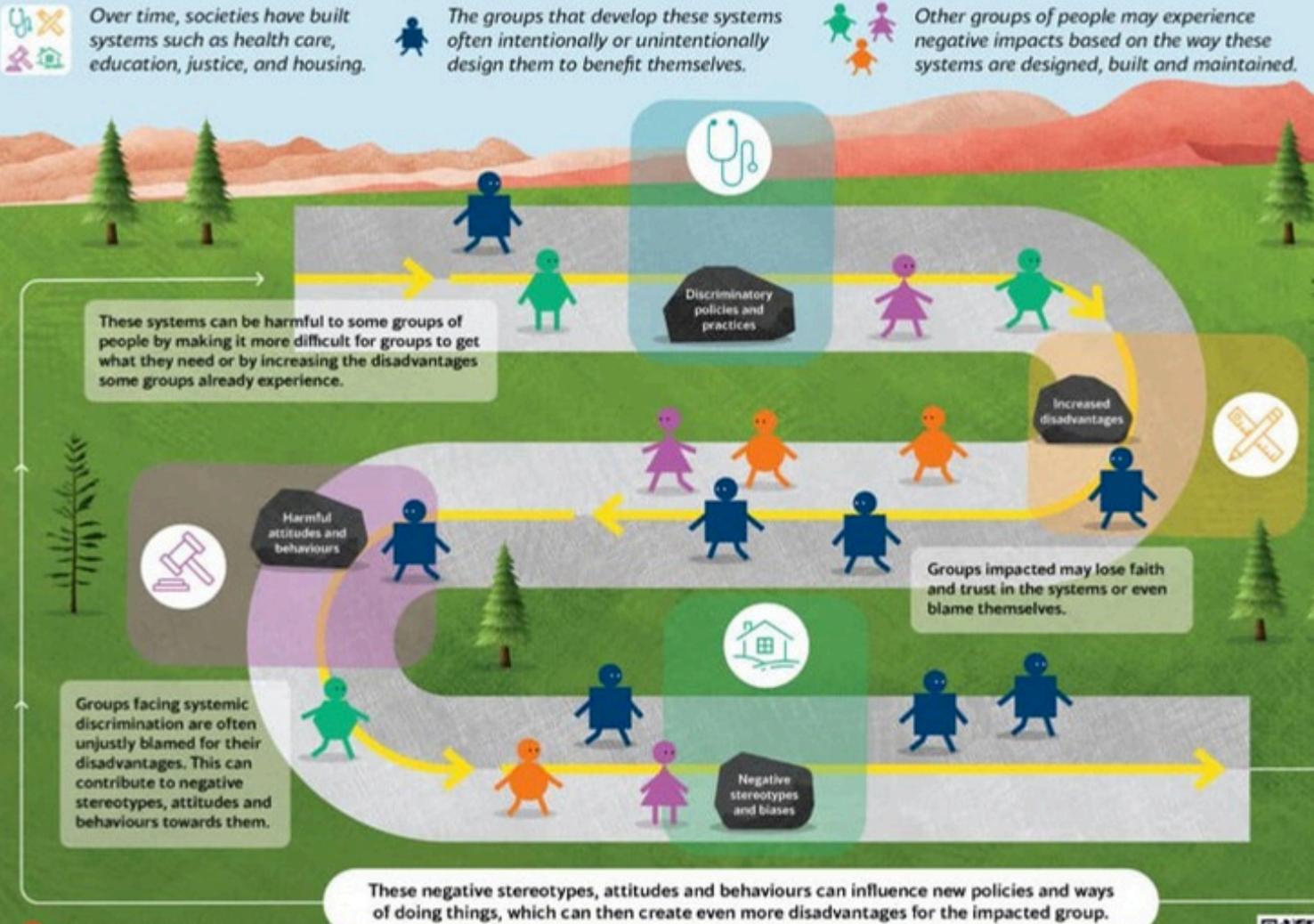
Findings from the Rise Up Community Scan

A recent community scan by Rise Up Indigenous Wellness found that 42% of Indigenous participants felt that wellness services were not culturally safe. The scan also exposed systemic access barriers, such as inadequate transportation options, which persistently obstruct equitable service delivery (Rise Up Indigenous Wellness Society, 2025). These results corresponded with several concerns raised by the Advisory Council.

The results from the Rise Up Indigenous Wellness Society's 2025 Community Scan strongly resonate with the recommendations from the community engagement sessions, particularly in the realms of education and leadership. The scan highlighted the necessity for enhanced cultural safety training and increased participation of Indigenous Elders and community members in the planning and delivery of specific services.

How systemic discrimination works

Over time, societies have built systems such as health care, education, justice, and housing.

The groups that develop these systems often intentionally or unintentionally design them to benefit themselves.

Other groups of people may experience negative impacts based on the way these systems are designed, built and maintained.

These systems can be harmful to some groups of people by making it more difficult for groups to get what they need or by increasing the disadvantages some groups already experience.

Discriminatory policies and practices

Increased disadvantages

Harmful attitudes and behaviours

Groups impacted may lose faith and trust in the systems or even blame themselves.

Groups facing systemic discrimination are often unjustly blamed for their disadvantages. This can contribute to negative stereotypes, attitudes and behaviours towards them.

Negative stereotypes and biases

These negative stereotypes, attitudes and behaviours can influence new policies and ways of doing things, which can then create even more disadvantages for the impacted group.

British Columbia's
Office of the Human Rights
Commissioner

To learn more:

Salmon Arm Arts Centre, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Sept 2024

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Anti-Racism: A proactive approach to identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures, policies, and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism and inequality.

Colonialism: A historical and ongoing process where one group dominates and exploits another, often through the occupation of land, suppression of culture, and imposition of foreign governance. In Canada, this refers to the displacement and marginalization of Indigenous Peoples.

Discrimination: Unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, language, or immigration status.

Equity: The fair treatment of individuals by acknowledging and addressing systemic barriers and unequal starting points, rather than treating everyone the same.

Intersectionality: A framework that recognizes how various aspects of a person's identity (e.g., race, gender, class, sexuality) intersect and create unique experiences of discrimination or privilege.

Indigenous Sovereignty: The inherent right of Indigenous Peoples to self-govern, maintain their cultural practices, and steward their lands and communities without external interference.

Microaggressions
Subtle, often unintentional, comments or actions that express prejudice or reinforce stereotypes against marginalized groups.

Racialized Individuals: People who are categorized or treated differently based on perceived racial or ethnic differences, often resulting in systemic disadvantage.

Reconciliation: The ongoing process of establishing respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, grounded in truth, justice, and mutual understanding.

Systemic Racism: Racism that is embedded in the policies, practices, and structures of institutions, resulting in the exclusion or disadvantage of racialized groups.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action: A set of 94 recommendations issued by the TRC to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation.

UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples): An international framework affirming the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, and education.
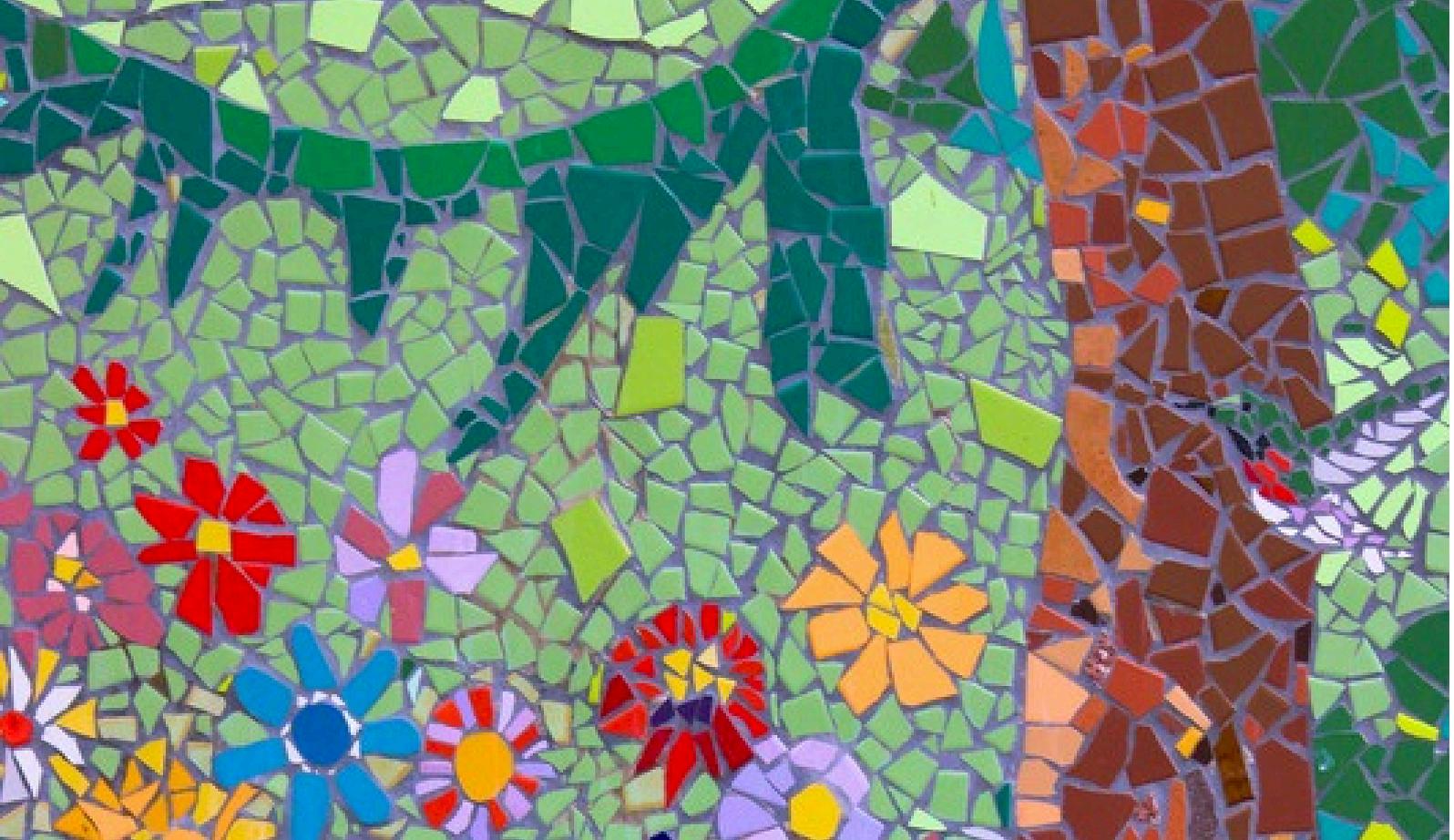
"People are like a mosaic—each piece different, yet each equally important. On our own we are unique, but together we create a beautiful work of art."

Newcomer to Salmon Arm, 2019

Toby Smith