



THE BLACK WOMEN'S INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



BUILDING THE FUTURE BEGINS WITH DATA



JOINT LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear community, partners, and those who continue to walk with us, There is a quiet violence in being unseen.

For too long, Black women in Canada have lived within systems that do not count us, do not name us, and do not design for us. This absence is not neutral. It shapes who receives care, who is believed, and who is left navigating alone.

So this year, we made a decision.

If we are invisible in data, we will build data that makes us undeniable.
2025 became the year we began building the future, and we started with truth, grounded in evidence, carried by lived experience, and translated into action.

Through **Voices Unheard**, we began to interrupt erasure. We created space for Black women across Canada to speak their realities into something that cannot be dismissed. Because without data, there is no policy. Without policy, there is no accountability. And without accountability, inequity continues, quietly, persistently.

But we did not stop at documenting.

We built programs that respond directly to what we heard. We held space for mothers navigating isolation and mental strain. We supported girls at critical moments of identity formation.

We nurtured leadership that is rooted in wellness, clarity, and purpose.
We equipped Black women and girls with knowledge to navigate systems that were never built for them.

This is what it means to build the future.

We are no longer asking to be seen.

We are ensuring we cannot be ignored.

With gratitude and intention,



Kearie Daniel
Executive Director



Shequita Thompson Reid
Board Chair

OUR TEAM - 2025



Kearie Daniel,
Executive Director

Colleen Irowa Abraham,
Director of Programs

Jenieki Young,
Operations and
Administration

Ibadho Ali,
Program and
Administrative Support

Vanessa Ebhohimhen,
Digital Media and
Communications

**Therapists, facilitators, and
community partners across
all programs**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Shequita Thompson-Reid

Dr. Tope Adefarakan

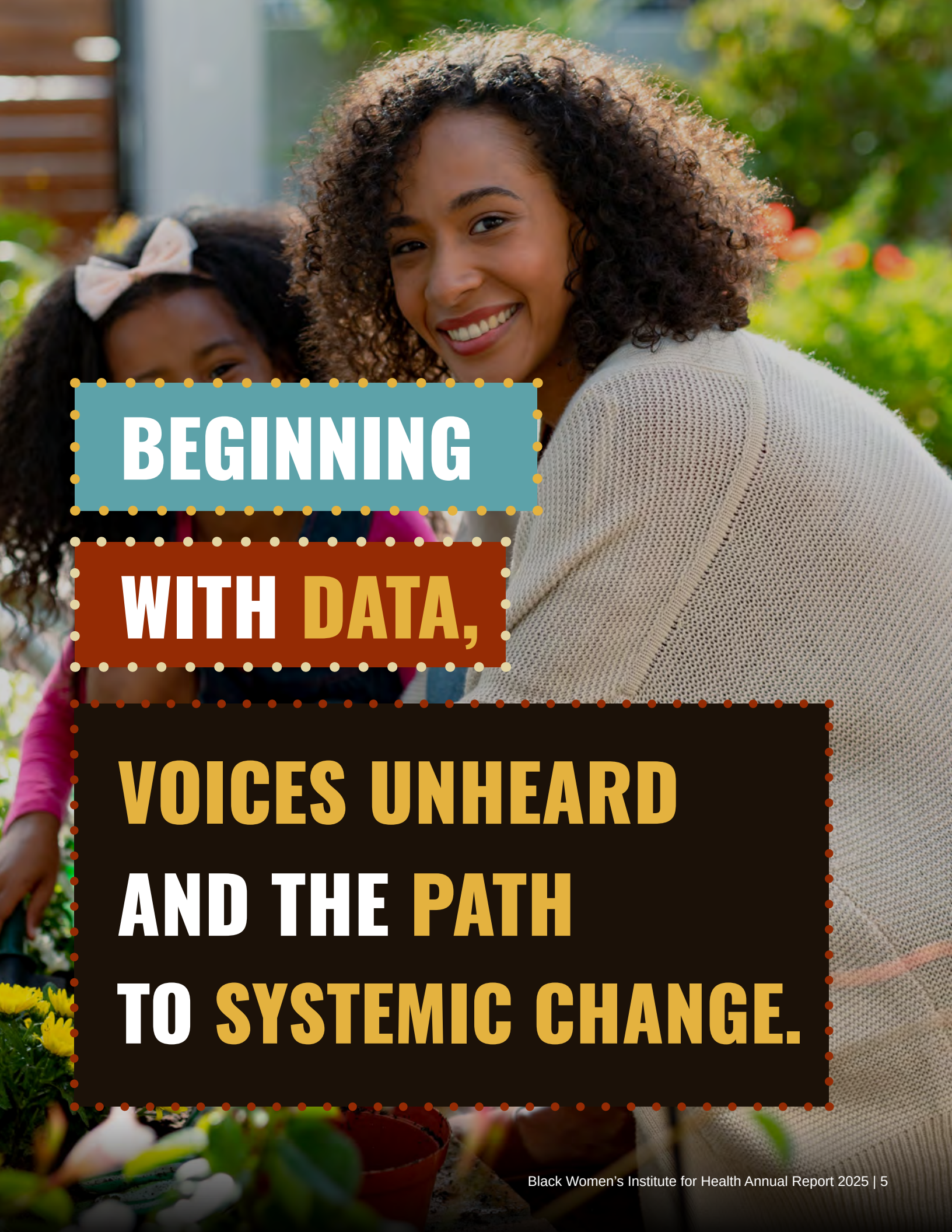
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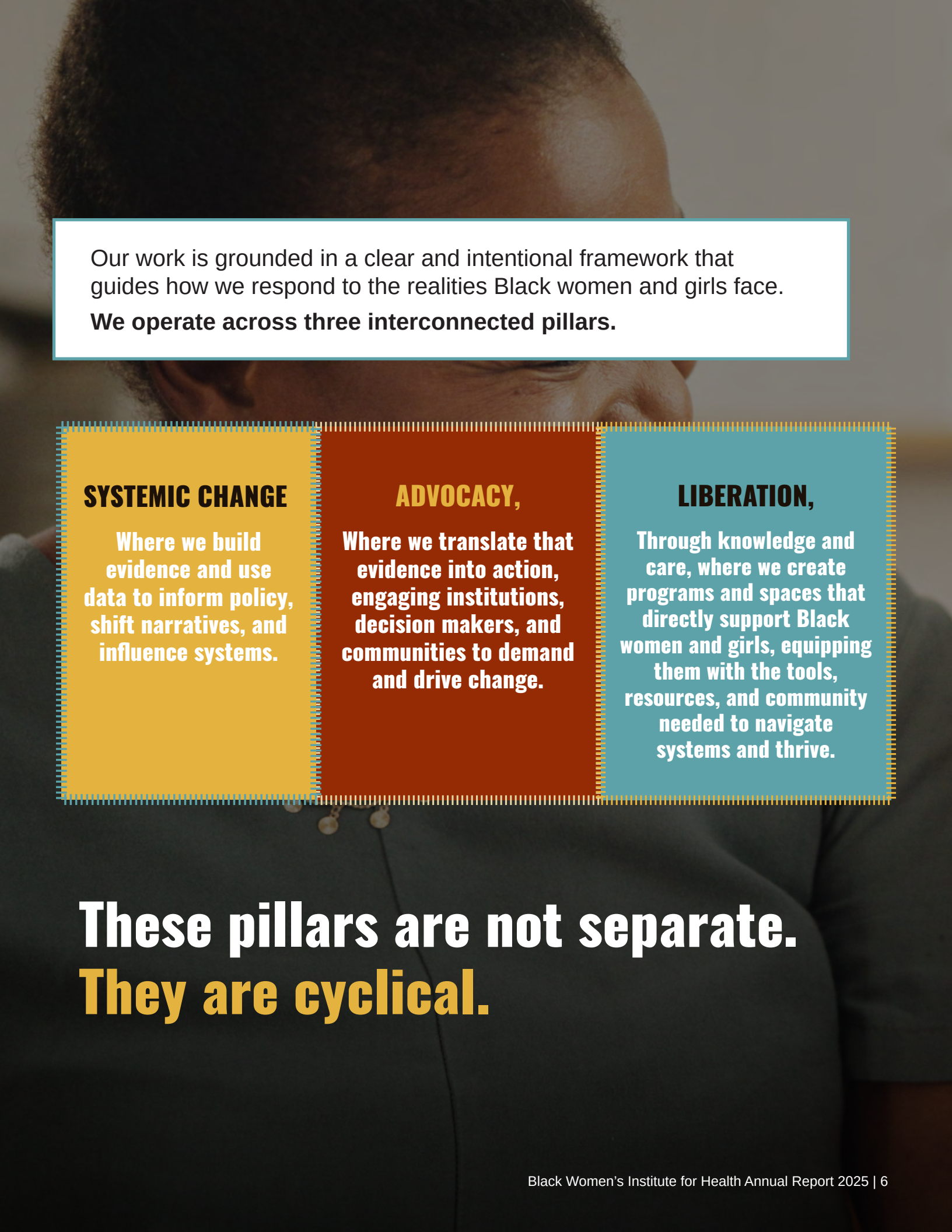
Professor Bukola Salami



BEGINNING

WITH DATA,

**VOICES UNHEARD
AND THE PATH
TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE.**



Our work is grounded in a clear and intentional framework that guides how we respond to the realities Black women and girls face. **We operate across three interconnected pillars.**

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Where we build evidence and use data to inform policy, shift narratives, and influence systems.

ADVOCACY,

Where we translate that evidence into action, engaging institutions, decision makers, and communities to demand and drive change.

LIBERATION,

Through knowledge and care, where we create programs and spaces that directly support Black women and girls, equipping them with the tools, resources, and community needed to navigate systems and thrive.

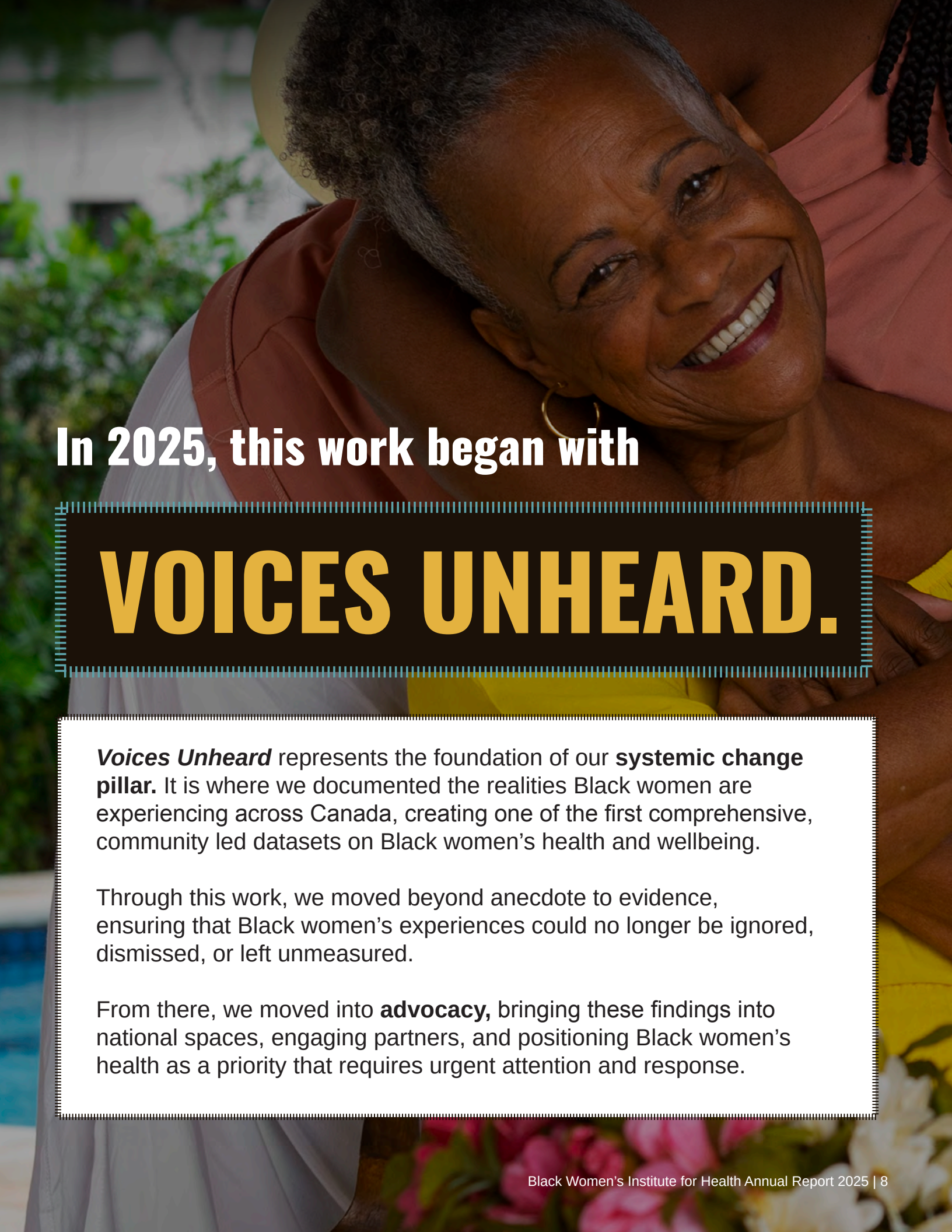
**These pillars are not separate.
They are cyclical.**



**We began by listening.
We gather data and build evidence.**

**We use that evidence to
advocate and push for change.**

**We respond through programs
that meet immediate needs while
continuing to inform broader
systems change.**



In 2025, this work began with

VOICES UNHEARD.

Voices Unheard represents the foundation of our **systemic change pillar**. It is where we documented the realities Black women are experiencing across Canada, creating one of the first comprehensive, community led datasets on Black women's health and wellbeing.

Through this work, we moved beyond anecdote to evidence, ensuring that Black women's experiences could no longer be ignored, dismissed, or left unmeasured.

From there, we moved into **advocacy**, bringing these findings into national spaces, engaging partners, and positioning Black women's health as a priority that requires urgent attention and response.



At the same time, we continued to build and deliver programs that respond directly to what we heard. Our programming reflects the realities captured through ***Voices Unheard***, addressing mental health, leadership, legal access, financial literacy, and community connection.

**Together, this work represents
a continuum.**

**Voices Unheard captures
the truth.**

Advocacy amplifies it.

Programs respond to it.

What follows in this report reflects that journey, beginning with a summary of *Voices Unheard* and the data that now anchors our work, followed by an overview of the programs that bring that data to life through direct support and community impact.



Beginning with Voice, Building with Evidence

We began 2025 with intention.

To build a future where Black women are seen, supported, and prioritized, we knew we had to begin where the absence has been most profound, with voice.

For generations, Black women in Canada have navigated systems that have not consistently captured, measured, or responded to their lived experiences.

This absence in data has contributed to gaps in policy, inequitable access to care, and a lack of targeted investment in Black women's health and wellbeing.

Voices Unheard was created to address this gap.

DATA COLLECTION AND NATIONAL REACH

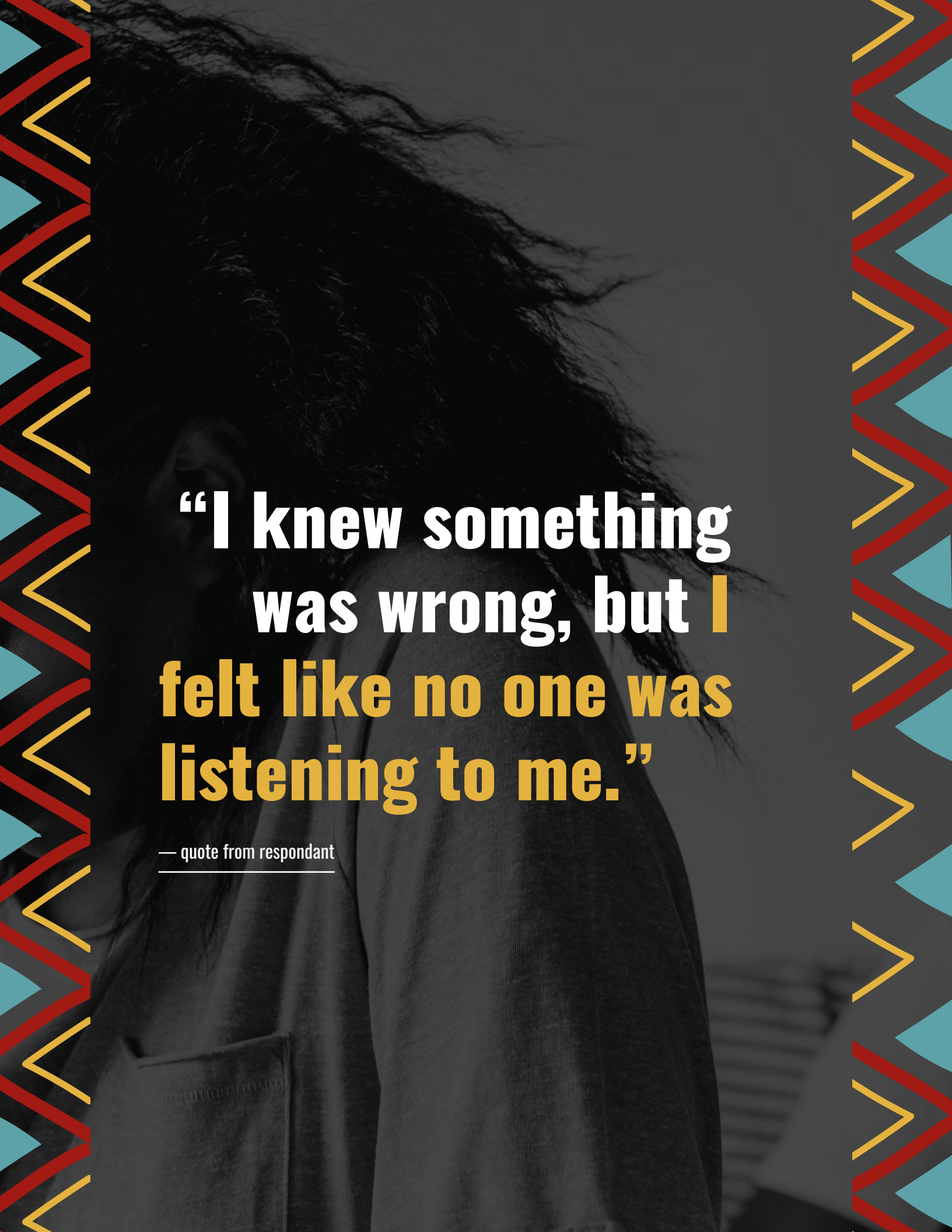
In **January 2025**, we completed the national data collection phase of **Voices Unheard, Vital Signs Survey for Black Women**.

This initiative engaged:

- Over **1300** Black women and girls across Canada who completed the survey.
- More than **600** participants who contributed through focus groups and community conversations.

Participants represented **diverse geographies, ages, and lived experiences**, ensuring that the data reflects a broad and inclusive **national perspective**.

This work represents one of the first comprehensive, community led efforts to collect disaggregated data on Black women's health outcomes in Canada.



**“I knew something
was wrong, but I
felt like no one was
listening to me.”**

— quote from respondent

ANALYSIS AND LEARNING

Throughout 2025, we undertook a rigorous and intentional analysis process.

This included:

- Reviewing quantitative survey data across multiple health and social indicators.
- Analyzing qualitative insights from focus groups and community discussions.
- Identifying key trends across healthcare access, mental health, employment, and social determinants.
- Engaging community voices to ensure findings were grounded in lived experience.
- This approach ensured that the data was not only collected, but understood in context.

KEY FINDINGS

The findings from Voices Unheard highlight significant and systemic challenges impacting Black women's health and wellbeing:

- **66%** of respondents reported feeling dismissed by a healthcare provider.
- **42%** delayed or avoided seeking care due to fear of negative treatment.
- Over **90%** reported experiencing emotional exhaustion or burnout.
- Mental health, hypertension, and fibroids were among the most commonly reported health concerns.
- **27.6%** of respondents reported experiencing thoughts of self harm.
- These findings underscore the urgent need for systemic change and targeted interventions.



REPORT **LAUNCH** AND NATIONAL **ENGAGEMENT**

The report was presented at The Empire Club of Canada through a session titled Whose Health Matters followed by an evening community celebration.



**“I delayed getting
help because I was
afraid of how I would
be treated.”**

— quote from respondent



A NATIONAL MOMENT, NOVEMBER 4, 2025

UPCOMING EVENT | JOIN US IN PERSON
Getting the Basics Right: A Conversation with
Bradford, City Councillor for Black
Tuesday, November 25, 2025



Brad Bradford
Toronto City Councillor
Black 15 Leadership Task Force



John Moore
Mayor
Mayor of the City of Toronto





EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA, WHOSE HEALTH MATTERS

The panel, *Whose Health Matters*, marked a historic moment. It was not symbolic. It was substantive. It challenged the absence of Black women in national health discourse and positioned our realities as urgent, measurable, and deserving of response.

The conversation brought together leaders, advocates, and experts across sectors to confront the question directly, whose health is prioritized in this country, and whose is not.

This moment signalled a shift.

Black women's health is no longer a niche issue.

It is a national one.



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION, AN EVENING OF VOICE AND VISIBILITY

That same evening, the work returned to where it belongs, community. We hosted a powerful gathering that brought together partners, participants, and supporters to honour the women behind the data. The evening was hosted by Andrea Bain, whose presence grounded the event in care, storytelling, and connection.

The space was filled with reflection, recognition, and celebration. Special musical guest Jully Black brought a depth of emotion and resonance that held the room, reminding us that this work is not only analytical, it is human, it is cultural, it is lived.

This was not a closing moment.

IT WAS A BEGINNING.

tute

WHY THIS **MATTERS**

Voices Unheard is building something that has never existed before in Canada.

- A national dataset centred on Black women's health.
- A platform that connects lived experience to policy change.
- A tool that holds systems accountable with evidence.

**THIS IS HOW WE MOVE FROM
INVISIBILITY TO IMPACT.**

**We gather.
We name.
We build.**

And we ensure that Black women
are no longer missing from the data,
the decisions, or the future.



A VISUAL

LANGUAGE

FOR VOICES

UNHEARD

As part of the **Voices Unheard** initiative, we commissioned a custom artwork by Canadian artist **Nicole Alexander**, whose work is known for its ability to hold story, identity, and cultural memory in deeply evocative ways. Nicole's practice explores Black womanhood, ancestry, and the emotional landscapes carried across generations. Her work does not simply represent, it translates, giving visual form to experiences that are often felt but not always spoken.



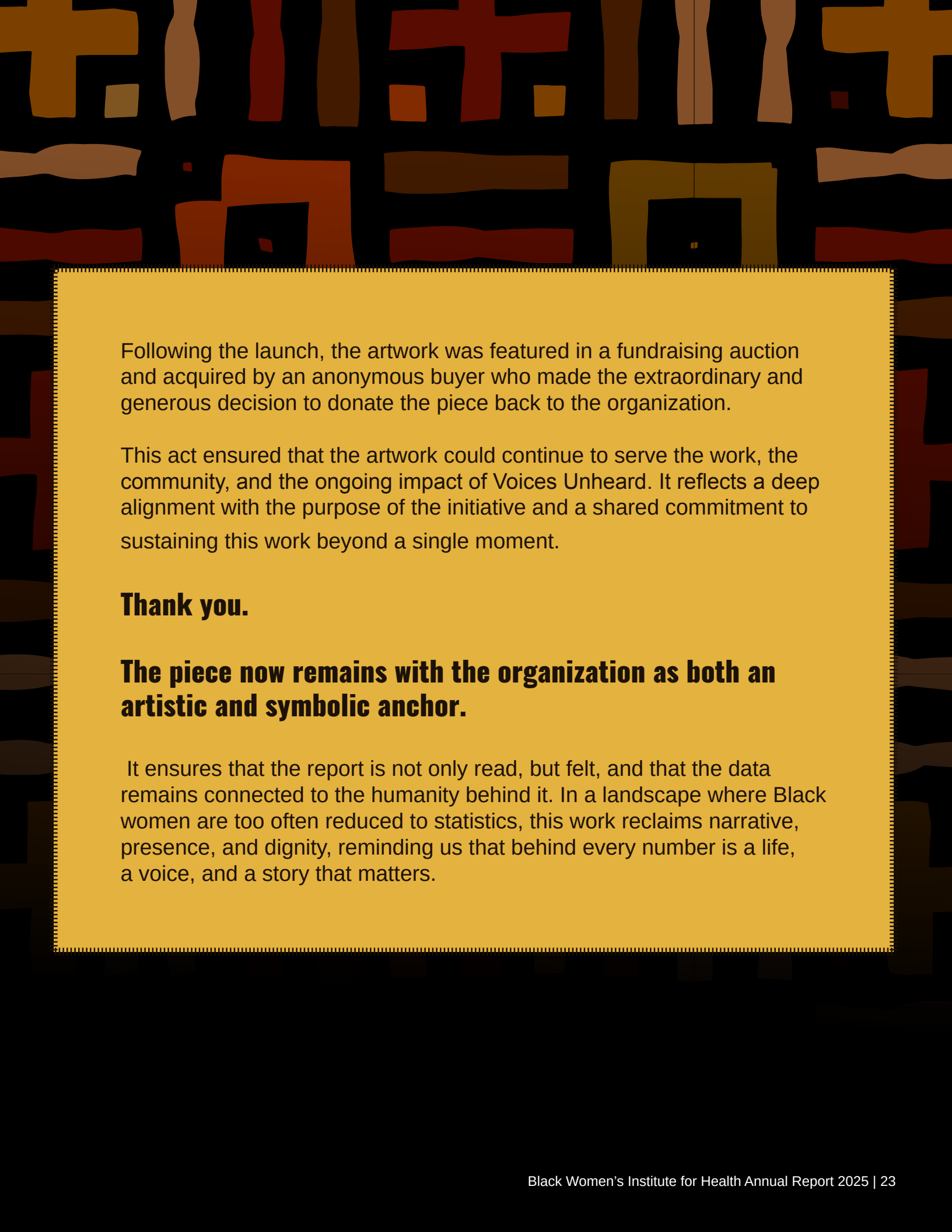
This was especially significant for Voices Unheard. While the report is grounded in data, it is ultimately shaped by lived experience, by the voices of almost 2,000 Black women and girls across Canada who shared their realities. The commissioned piece was created as a visual embodiment of those voices. Rather than illustrating statistics, it reflects the layered nature of Black women's experiences, the intersections of health, identity, and care, and the tension between visibility and invisibility within systems that have historically overlooked them. The figures within the work evoke both individuality and collective experience, holding space for the thousands of women whose stories informed this initiative. There is both softness and strength in the piece, a quiet resistance that speaks to survival, presence, and continuity.





Thank you to

**Anonymous
Supporter**



Following the launch, the artwork was featured in a fundraising auction and acquired by an anonymous buyer who made the extraordinary and generous decision to donate the piece back to the organization.

This act ensured that the artwork could continue to serve the work, the community, and the ongoing impact of Voices Unheard. It reflects a deep alignment with the purpose of the initiative and a shared commitment to sustaining this work beyond a single moment.

Thank you.

The piece now remains with the organization as both an artistic and symbolic anchor.

It ensures that the report is not only read, but felt, and that the data remains connected to the humanity behind it. In a landscape where Black women are too often reduced to statistics, this work reclaims narrative, presence, and dignity, reminding us that behind every number is a life, a voice, and a story that matters.

**PROGRAMS,
WHERE EVIDENCE
BECOMES ACTION**

The programs we have built are not incidental. They are intentional responses to what Black women and girls have shared, through data, through dialogue, and through lived experience. Voices Unheard gave us clarity. It named patterns that have long existed but were rarely captured. It affirmed what Black women have always known about their health, their access to care, and the weight they carry across systems. Our responsibility was to respond.

Each program reflects that response.

In 2025, our programs were designed and delivered to meet Black women and girls where they are, across different stages of life, with supports that are culturally grounded, trauma informed, and rooted in community.

ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS IN 2025:

- Over **1400** Black women and girls were directly supported.
- Participants consistently reported increased confidence, connection, and overall wellbeing.
- High levels of trust and psychological safety were sustained across all program spaces.
- Demand exceeded capacity in multiple areas, highlighting the urgent need for expansion.

These outcomes are not accidental. They are the result of building spaces where Black women and girls are understood without explanation, where care is not conditional, and where support is designed with them, not for them.

This work is also made possible through partnership.

Our programs exist because of funders and partners who believe in the vision, who understand the urgency, and who are willing to invest in community led solutions. These relationships are not transactional. They are grounded in trust, alignment, and a shared commitment to building something that is both responsive and sustainable.

Together, we are not only delivering programs. We are building infrastructure for care, for connection, and for long term change.



HEALING PATHWAYS

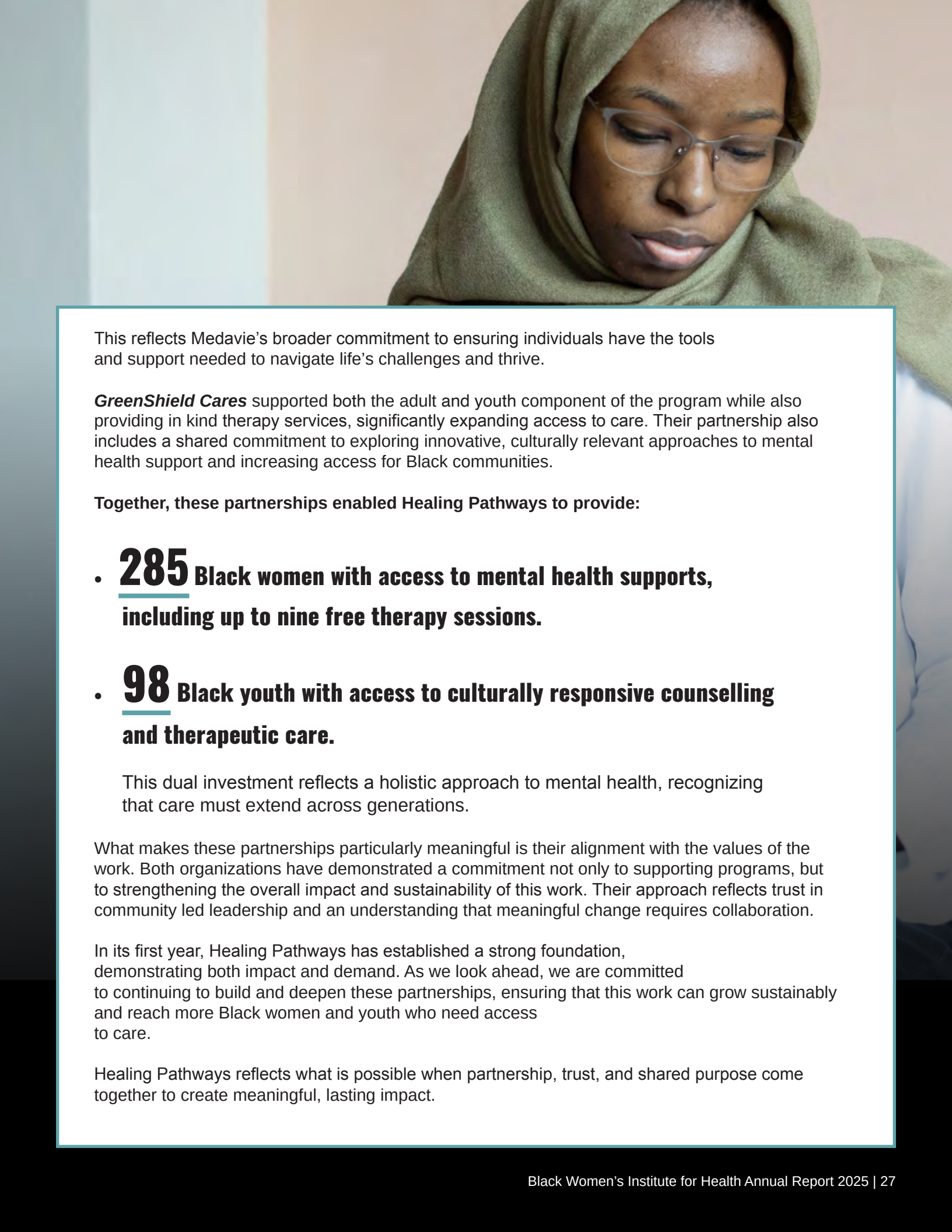
HEALING PATHWAYS

**SUPPORTED BY GREENSHIELD
CARES AND MEDAVIE FOUNDATION**



Healing Pathways was launched in 2025 as a direct response to what we heard through Voices Unheard, where Black women shared experiences of emotional exhaustion, barriers to care, and in many cases, crisis without adequate support. Most critically, 27.6 percent of respondents reported experiencing thoughts of self harm, underscoring the urgent need for accessible, culturally responsive mental health services.

This work was made possible through the partnerships of **GreenShield Cares** and the **Medavie Foundation**, whose combined support has been foundational in the program's first year. The Medavie Foundation supported the youth component of Healing Pathways, investing in counselling services designed to strengthen self esteem, build coping skills, and improve overall mental wellbeing for Black youth.



This reflects Medavie's broader commitment to ensuring individuals have the tools and support needed to navigate life's challenges and thrive.

GreenShield Cares supported both the adult and youth component of the program while also providing in kind therapy services, significantly expanding access to care. Their partnership also includes a shared commitment to exploring innovative, culturally relevant approaches to mental health support and increasing access for Black communities.

Together, these partnerships enabled Healing Pathways to provide:

- **285** Black women with access to mental health supports, including up to nine free therapy sessions.
- **98** Black youth with access to culturally responsive counselling and therapeutic care.

This dual investment reflects a holistic approach to mental health, recognizing that care must extend across generations.

What makes these partnerships particularly meaningful is their alignment with the values of the work. Both organizations have demonstrated a commitment not only to supporting programs, but to strengthening the overall impact and sustainability of this work. Their approach reflects trust in community led leadership and an understanding that meaningful change requires collaboration.

In its first year, Healing Pathways has established a strong foundation, demonstrating both impact and demand. As we look ahead, we are committed to continuing to build and deepen these partnerships, ensuring that this work can grow sustainably and reach more Black women and youth who need access to care.

Healing Pathways reflects what is possible when partnership, trust, and shared purpose come together to create meaningful, lasting impact.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



CATHERINE
DONNELLY
FOUNDATION

EDUCATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In 2025, with the support of the Catherine Donnelly Foundation, we advanced a critical area of our work, civic engagement and education as essential pathways to improving the health and wellbeing of Black women.

For Black women, civic engagement is not separate from health. It is directly connected.

The ability to understand systems, to navigate them, and to advocate within them shapes access to care, employment opportunities, financial stability, and overall wellbeing. Yet, Black women are often required to navigate complex systems, including healthcare, legal, and financial institutions, without clear, accessible, or culturally relevant information.

**Education, in this context, becomes a tool for agency.
Civic engagement becomes a form of protection.**

Through this lens, the ***Wisdom Workshops series*** was designed to equip Black women and girls with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to engage with systems in informed and meaningful ways.

PROGRAM REACH AND IMPACT

In 2025, the Wisdom Workshops engaged **901** participants, making it one of the most far reaching initiatives within our programming.

Outcomes from the workshops demonstrate both the demand for and the impact of this work:

- **97%** of participants rated their overall experience as good or excellent.
- **81%** would recommend the workshops to others.
- **81%** identified understanding how to navigate the healthcare system as the most valuable outcome.
- **56%** reported an improvement in their mental health following participation.
- **66%** expressed interest in continued learning on managing stress and anxiety.

These results reflect more than engagement. They reflect increased confidence, awareness, and capacity to make informed decisions.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: NAVIGATING THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AS BLACK WOMEN



Throughout the year, workshops were delivered across a range of topics that directly impact the lives of Black women and girls, including mental health, reproductive health, healthcare navigation, financial literacy, and legal rights.

Each session was designed to move beyond information sharing, creating space for dialogue, reflection, and connection, while ensuring participants left with practical tools they could apply in their daily lives.

WORKSHOPS DELIVERED IN 2025 INCLUDED:

Breaking the Silence, Navigating Mental Health as a Black Woman, led by Roxanne Francis, Introduction to Women's Risk Factors, led by the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Fertility 101, Supporting Black Women on Their Fertility Journey, led by Black Fertility Agency nurses Claire and Yvette.

**Unfiltered, A Mental Health Workshop for Black Girls, led by Amma Gyamfowa
Ask a Doctor, Menopause, Preventive Care, and Sexual Health, led by Imana Health, Duante and Nena.**

**Financial Literacy, Generational Wealth and Investment, led by Flow Management
Know Your Rights, Navigating the Healthcare System as Black Women, led by Pinta McGuire.**



SUPPORTING

VOICES UNHEARD

The support from the Catherine Donnelly Foundation extended beyond workshop delivery.

Their investment also contributed to creating the conditions necessary to advance Voices Unheard, including supporting community engagement, knowledge mobilization, and the broader infrastructure required to carry this work forward.

This alignment between civic engagement, education, and research reflects a shared understanding that meaningful change requires both data and the ability for communities to engage with and act on that data.

WHY THIS WORK

MATTERS

For Black women, navigating systems without access to information can have direct and lasting consequences.

When women understand their rights within healthcare, they are better able to advocate for appropriate care.

When they understand financial systems, they are better positioned to build stability and generational wealth.

When they are informed, they are able to participate more fully in decisions that affect their lives and communities.

Civic engagement, in this context, is not abstract.

It is lived.

It is necessary.

It is protective.

Through the support of the Catherine Donnelly Foundation, we have been able to strengthen this area of work, ensuring that Black women and girls are not only informed, but equipped to navigate, challenge, and shape the systems around them. This is how knowledge becomes action.

Supporting Black Women and Girls

OUR GIRLS:



BLOOM AND BECOME



PARTICIPANTS SERVED IN 2025, 10 BLACK GIRLS

Bloom and Become is a youth centred pilot program designed to support Black girls in building emotional wellness, leadership skills, financial confidence, and self advocacy through culturally responsive programming. Launched in 2025 through funding from the City of Toronto, the program was developed as a direct response to the gaps we have identified in how Black girls are supported within existing systems.



This first year marked an important step in creating space where Black girls could come together in an environment intentionally designed for them, one that centres their experiences, affirms their identities, and supports their growth.

Over the course of the year, participants engaged in a mix of virtual and in person sessions, including mentorship, workshops, creative activities, and experiential learning. These experiences created opportunities for participants to explore identity, build confidence, and develop skills while forming meaningful connections with one another.

A key milestone in 2025 was the integration of holistic wellness activities. A guided community hike, supported by a certified athletic therapist, encouraged movement, grounding, and connection with nature, reinforcing the program's commitment to supporting both emotional and physical wellbeing.

What became clear over the year was the importance of creating spaces where Black girls feel a sense of belonging. Participants showed up with openness, supported one another, and engaged deeply in the program.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES REFLECT THIS:

✓ **80 %** of participants
felt comfortable sharing their
thoughts and participating.

✓ **100 %** of participants
reported feeling included in all sessions.



Participants shared:

“I really enjoyed hearing everyone share their experiences. It made me feel seen and reminded me that I’m not alone.”

“It was truly an honour to be part of this experience. The support, encouragement, and strong sense of community created an environment that had a lasting impact on me. I grew in confidence, self awareness, and built meaningful connections that I will carry with me moving forward.”

“Getting to know everyone’s backgrounds and experiences created a strong sense of connection and shared learning.”

The success of Bloom and Become was made possible through the contributions of dedicated partners and facilitators who brought both expertise and lived experience into the program.

WE EXTEND OUR APPRECIATION TO:

WORKSHOP LEADS

Saran James Vaughan,
YCDSB Black Excellence
Graduation Coach

Tyanna Browne,
TCDSB Graduation Coach
for Black Students

Jada Brown,
TCDSB Graduation
Coach for Black Students

FACILITATORS AND PROGRAM PARTNERS

Flo Management,
a Black led organization
advancing financial literacy and
economic empowerment for
equity deserving youth.

Fresh Paint Studio and Café,
a creative community space
fostering connection and
expression through art.

PROGRAM THERAPIST

Amma Gyamfowa,
— RSW, MSW

As a pilot, ***Bloom and Become*** provided important insight into the types of supports Black girls are seeking and the impact of creating spaces that centre their voices and experiences.

The strong engagement and positive feedback from participants highlight the need for continued investment and expansion of this work in the years ahead.

LEADERSHIP for Black Women

ROOTED AND RISING



Participants served in 2025, **10 BLACK WOMEN**

In 2025, Rooted and Rising continued to deepen its role as a space for Black women to explore leadership through a lens that centres wellness, reflection, and lived experience. The program is designed as a holistic leadership and personal development initiative, supporting Black women to strengthen their capacity to lead and create change while remaining grounded in their own wellbeing.

Through an approach that integrates mental wellness, advocacy, financial literacy, and leadership development, Rooted and Rising recognizes that sustainable leadership begins with self awareness, clarity, and support.

Over the course of the year, participants engaged in programming that emphasized both personal growth and collective connection. Sessions created intentional space for reflection, dialogue, and skill building, allowing participants to explore their leadership journeys while learning from one another. A consistent focus on psychological safety, trust, and culturally responsive facilitation ensured that participants could engage openly and authentically.

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES REFLECT THE VALUE
AND IMPACT OF THIS APPROACH:**

100% of participants reported
learning something from each session.

83% indicated they would
choose to participate again.

PARTICIPANTS HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONNECTION AND SHARED EXPERIENCE:

“I really enjoyed the moments we got to connect in person. This allowed for deeper connections.”

“Getting to know everyone’s work backgrounds and experiences was one of the most meaningful parts of the session.”

A key strength of the program in 2025 was the strong sense of community that developed among participants.

Through shared learning and dialogue, participants built meaningful relationships and reported increased confidence in their leadership abilities and advocacy skills.

THE PROGRAM WAS ENRICHED BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EXPERIENCED LEADERS AND FACILITATORS WHO BROUGHT BOTH EXPERTISE AND LIVED EXPERIENCE INTO THE SPACE.

WE EXTEND OUR APPRECIATION TO:

Mitzie Hunter,
former MPP and CEO of the
Canadian Women's Foundation.

Sandy Hudson,
founder of
Black Lives Matter Canada.

Sukai Jeng,
Certified Athletic Therapist.

The year concluded with a reflective and celebratory gathering in partnership with Fresh Paint Studio and Café, a Black led creative space in Toronto. This event provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on their growth, engage in creative expression, and strengthen connections in a supportive and affirming environment.

Learnings from 2025 highlighted the importance of grounding leadership development in mental wellness and trauma informed practice. Participants also identified opportunities to deepen the program in future iterations, including extended session time, increased in person engagement, and additional career focused supports such as mentorship and professional exposure.

Rooted and Rising continues to demonstrate the importance of creating intentional spaces where Black women can develop as leaders while being supported, resourced, and connected.



MOTHERING MINDS

**SHOPPERS
FOUNDATION
FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH**



Motherhood is often spoken about as a universal experience. What is less often acknowledged is how deeply it is shaped by race, by access, and by the systems that surround and, at times, fail Black women.

***Mothering Minds* was created in response to that reality.**

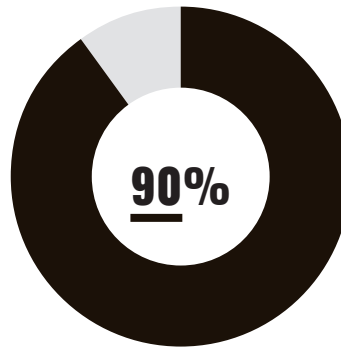
In 2025, the program completed its first full year, holding space for **201** Black mothers navigating the complexities of parenting, mental health, identity, and care. Designed by Black mothers, for Black mothers, the program offers something that is still far too rare, a space where women do not have to explain themselves in order to be understood.

Throughout the year, mothers gathered in group sessions centred on emotional wellness, peer connection, and mentorship. These were not clinical spaces detached from reality. They were spaces of honesty, where women could speak openly about exhaustion, isolation, fear, and the invisible labour of carrying both family and community.

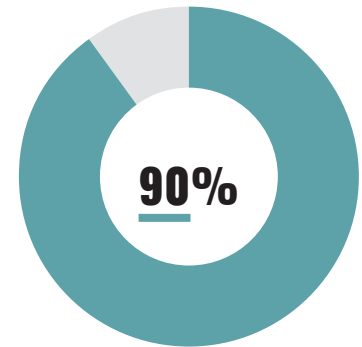
AND THE IMPACT WAS CLEAR.



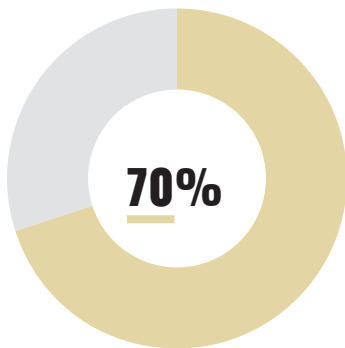
of participants reported feeling fully supported in their motherhood journey.



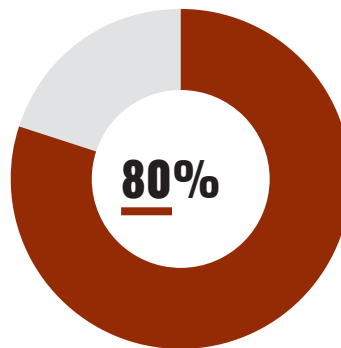
reported increased confidence in their ability to show up for their children.



felt comfortable discussing their mental health and experiences.



reported reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation.



identified significant personal reflection and growth.

These outcomes reflect more than participation. They reflect trust.



PARTICIPANTS SHARED:

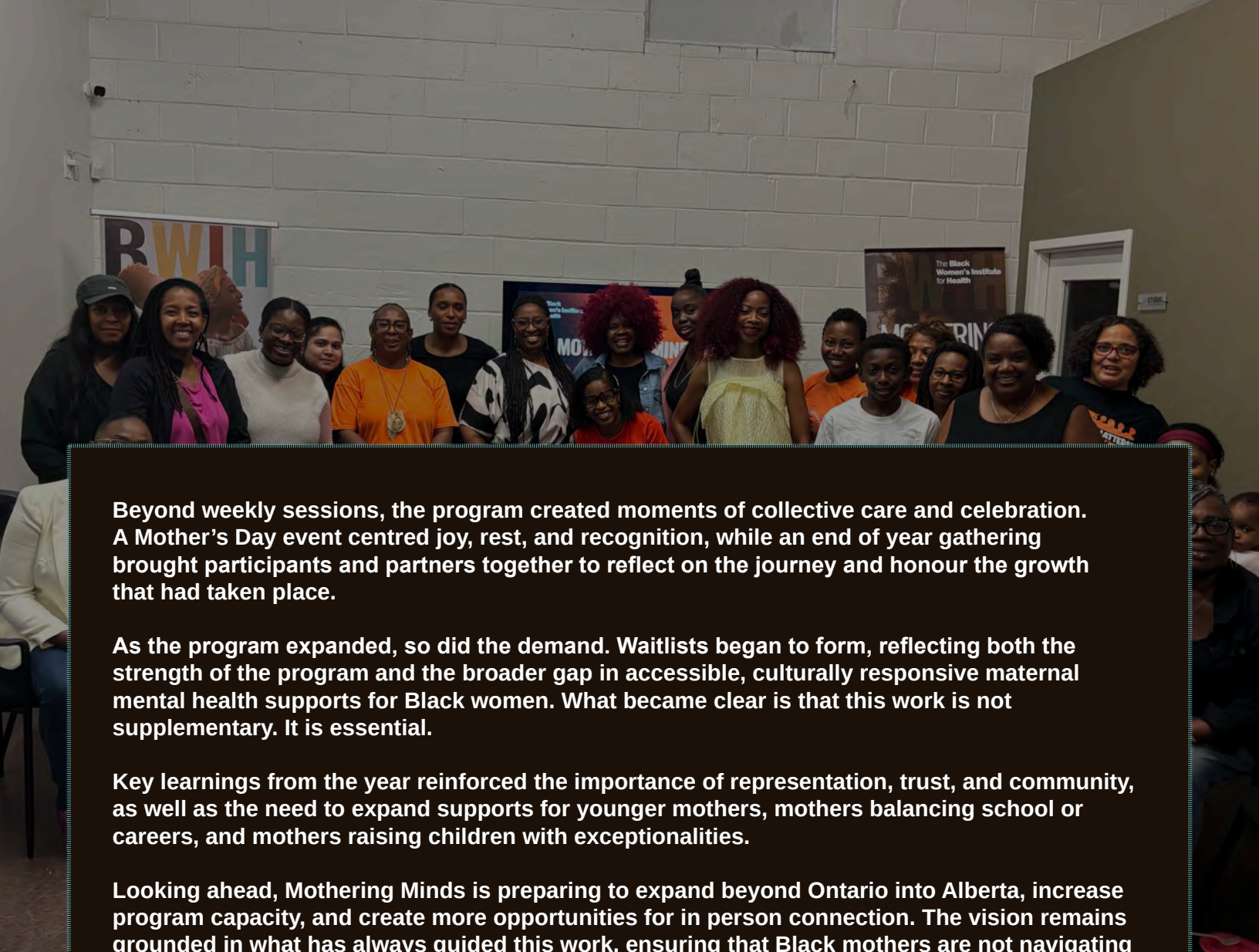
“I’ve always been embarrassed about the challenges I am facing with my child. I can now release that pain here. Crying helped me get my feelings out and let go of that embarrassment.”

“Group therapy isn’t something I thought about, but wow. My mental health is thanking you for this opportunity.”

“As a Black mom, it’s hard to get through the day without support and community. This program has become the community I have been seeking.”

“Having a space where I don’t have to explain my experience as a Black mom has been such a relief. I feel safe here. It has given me back some of my mental energy.”

“The mental load of motherhood can feel overwhelming. Here, I’m finally able to release some of that pressure.”



Beyond weekly sessions, the program created moments of collective care and celebration. A Mother's Day event centred joy, rest, and recognition, while an end of year gathering brought participants and partners together to reflect on the journey and honour the growth that had taken place.

As the program expanded, so did the demand. Waitlists began to form, reflecting both the strength of the program and the broader gap in accessible, culturally responsive maternal mental health supports for Black women. What became clear is that this work is not supplementary. It is essential.

Key learnings from the year reinforced the importance of representation, trust, and community, as well as the need to expand supports for younger mothers, mothers balancing school or careers, and mothers raising children with exceptionalities.

Looking ahead, Mothering Minds is preparing to expand beyond Ontario into Alberta, increase program capacity, and create more opportunities for in person connection. The vision remains grounded in what has always guided this work, ensuring that Black mothers are not navigating alone, and that they have access to spaces that see them, support them, and sustain them. This is not simply a program.

It is a reimagining of what support can look like when it is built with intention, with care, and with a deep understanding of the realities Black mothers face.

PROGRAM THERAPISTS:

Shanna-Kay Stephe

— MSW, RSW

Denise Reid

— RSW

Marsha Hibbert

— RSW, MSW, Dip. CICAPP

Valerie Williams

— CYW, PE



Supported by the Law Foundation of Ontario

LEGAL PATHWAYS, ADVANCING ACCESS TO JUSTICE



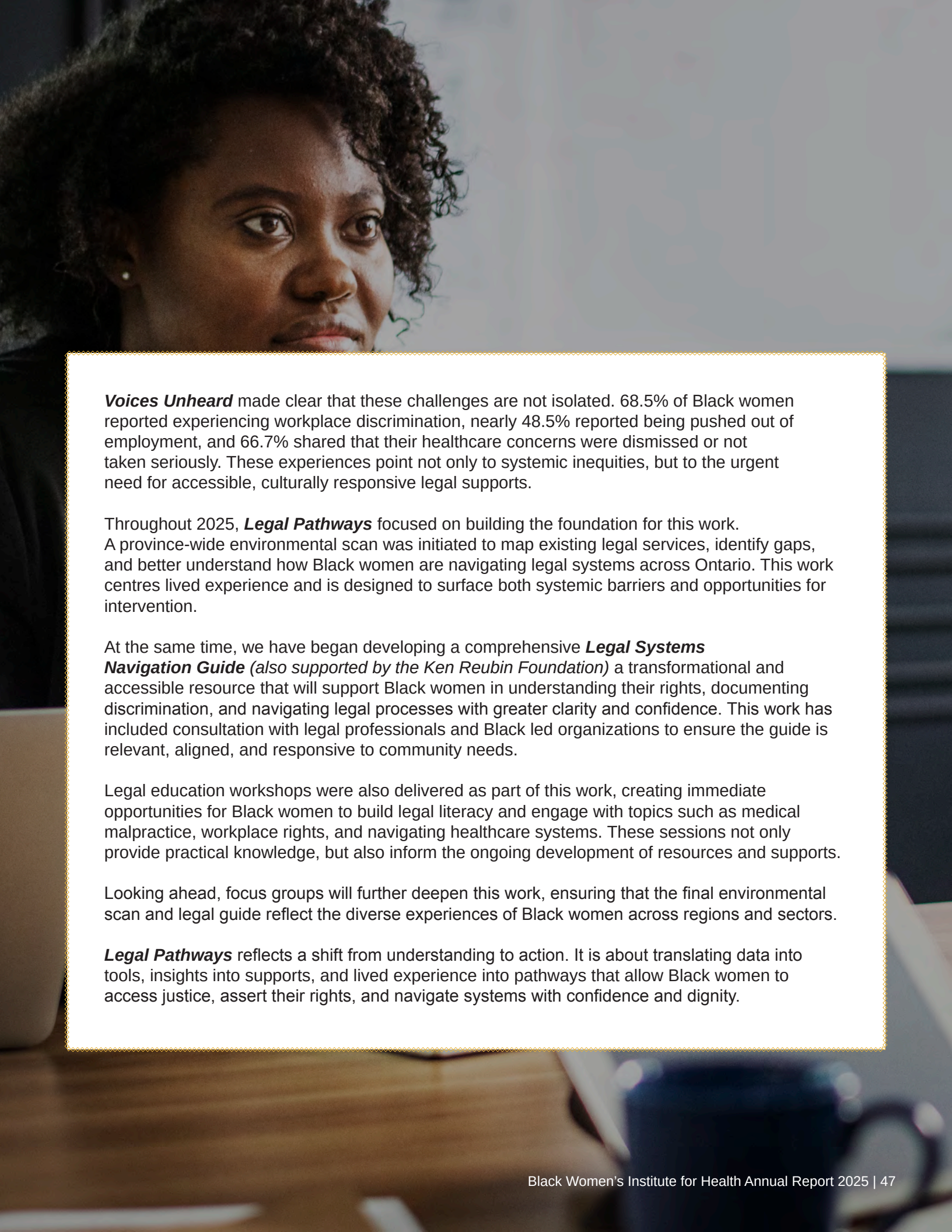
The Law
Foundation
of Ontario



CANADA'S INFORMATION WARRIOR

kenrubin.ca

In 2025, *Legal Pathways* emerged as a critical next step in our work, building directly on the findings of *Voices Unheard*. While the survey provided a national baseline of Black women's experiences, it also revealed significant gaps in access to legal knowledge, protections, and support. Legal Pathways was developed to go deeper, to better understand and respond to the legal realities Black women face across healthcare, employment, child welfare, and other systems.



Voices Unheard made clear that these challenges are not isolated. 68.5% of Black women reported experiencing workplace discrimination, nearly 48.5% reported being pushed out of employment, and 66.7% shared that their healthcare concerns were dismissed or not taken seriously. These experiences point not only to systemic inequities, but to the urgent need for accessible, culturally responsive legal supports.

Throughout 2025, **Legal Pathways** focused on building the foundation for this work. A province-wide environmental scan was initiated to map existing legal services, identify gaps, and better understand how Black women are navigating legal systems across Ontario. This work centres lived experience and is designed to surface both systemic barriers and opportunities for intervention.

At the same time, we have begun developing a comprehensive **Legal Systems Navigation Guide** (also supported by the Ken Reubin Foundation) a transformational and accessible resource that will support Black women in understanding their rights, documenting discrimination, and navigating legal processes with greater clarity and confidence. This work has included consultation with legal professionals and Black led organizations to ensure the guide is relevant, aligned, and responsive to community needs.

Legal education workshops were also delivered as part of this work, creating immediate opportunities for Black women to build legal literacy and engage with topics such as medical malpractice, workplace rights, and navigating healthcare systems. These sessions not only provide practical knowledge, but also inform the ongoing development of resources and supports.

Looking ahead, focus groups will further deepen this work, ensuring that the final environmental scan and legal guide reflect the diverse experiences of Black women across regions and sectors.

Legal Pathways reflects a shift from understanding to action. It is about translating data into tools, insights into supports, and lived experience into pathways that allow Black women to access justice, assert their rights, and navigate systems with confidence and dignity.

Voices Unheard Sponsors and Partners

We extend our gratitude to the organizations and partners who supported the development and launch of *Voices Unheard*:



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Partners and Supporters of the work



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CANADA'S INFORMATION WARRIOR

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Individual Contributors and Community Champions

**This work was also strengthened by individuals
who contributed their time, expertise,
and commitment:**

**Kike Ojo Thompson
Christine Massoda, French translation**

2025 Funders



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CATHERINE
DONNELLY
FOUNDATION



The Law
Foundation
of Ontario

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

INVESTING IN COMMUNITY, BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2025, the Black Women's Institute for Health moved from early stage development into sustained program delivery and national impact.

This growth is reflected in our financials.

According to our audited financial statements, the organization generated

\$497,120

in total revenue, primarily through grants and community aligned funding partnerships.

This represents a significant increase from the previous year and reflects both the scale of the work and the trust placed in the organization to de

WHERE

RESOURCES

WERE DIRECTED

FROM FUNDING TO IMPACT

In 2025,

\$466,831

was directly invested into program delivery, research, and community based work.

**This is not administrative spending.
This is mission delivery.**

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT BREAKDOWN

**Program Delivery and
Community Supports**

\$69,289

Funds supported workshops, events, health education, and direct community engagement initiatives.

RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION, VOICES UNHEARD

\$89,508

Investment in national data collection, community engagement, and analysis to build the first of its kind dataset on Black women's health in Canada.

PEOPLE AND PROGRAM DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE

\$224,329

This includes salaries and benefits for staff delivering programs, coordinating services, managing community relationships, and advancing advocacy work.
This is not overhead.

This is the team that makes the work possible. Without people, there is no program delivery, no data collection, no community engagement, and no systems change.

OPERATIONS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

\$64,485

Includes the essential infrastructure required to deliver programming, manage operations, and maintain organizational stability.

PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

\$19,220

Specialized expertise supporting research, financial management, and organizational governance.

FINANCIAL POSITION STABILITY AND GROWTH AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025:

- Total assets were

\$55,708

- Net assets increased to

\$32,750,

reflecting organizational growth and sustainability.

- The organization maintained a positive operating position, with a

\$30,289

surplus reinvested into future work

This growth reflects careful stewardship of resources and a commitment to building long term infrastructure.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Traditional narratives often separate “program” from “administration.”
We reject that framing.

At the Black Women’s Institute for Health:

- ✓ Staff are program delivery
- ✓ Operations are access
- ✓ Research is advocacy
- ✓ Infrastructure is impact

Every dollar invested is a dollar working toward improving the health and wellbeing of Black women and girls.

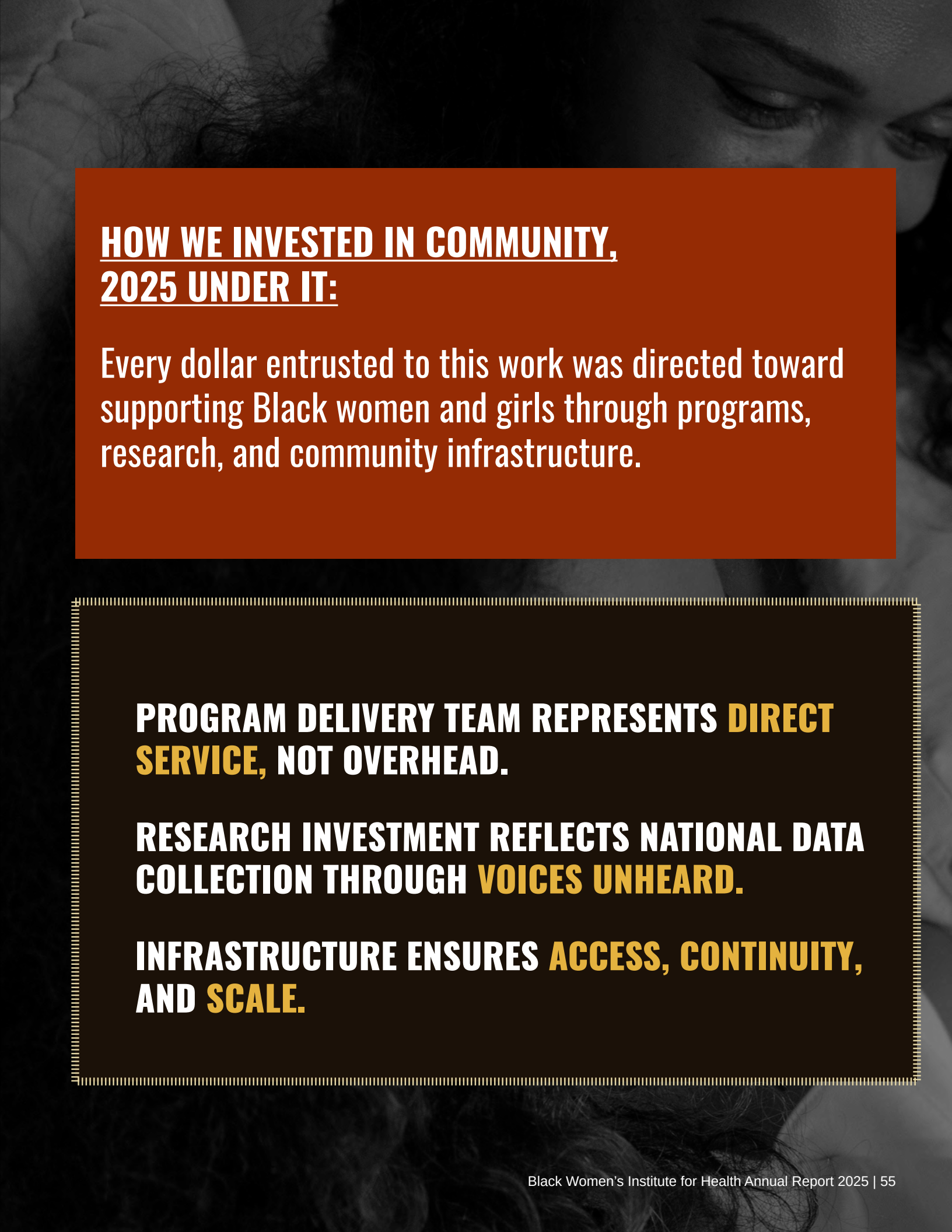
FINANCIAL REALITY WITHIN A BROADER CONTEXT

This work is being delivered within a funding ecosystem where Black led organizations receive approximately 0.7 percent of philanthropic funding in Canada, as highlighted in the Unfunded report.

And yet, in 2025:

- ✓ We built a national dataset
- ✓ We supported over 1,100 participants
- ✓ We delivered programming across multiple life stages
- ✓ We advanced national conversations on Black women’s health

This is what community driven investment makes possible.



HOW WE INVESTED IN COMMUNITY, 2025 UNDER IT:

Every dollar entrusted to this work was directed toward supporting Black women and girls through programs, research, and community infrastructure.

PROGRAM DELIVERY TEAM REPRESENTS DIRECT SERVICE, NOT OVERHEAD.

RESEARCH INVESTMENT REFLECTS NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION THROUGH VOICES UNHEARD.

INFRASTRUCTURE ENSURES ACCESS, CONTINUITY, AND SCALE.

LOOKING AHEAD

Continuing to Build the Future

The path forward is clear and grounded in what we now know.

Sustaining and Scaling Impact

Our financial position in 2025 reflects both growth and responsibility.

As we move forward, our priorities include:

- **Expanding program reach across provinces**
- **Scaling Voices Unheard into policy and advocacy**
- **Increasing access to mental health supports**
- **Building long term, sustainable funding partnerships**

Because building the future requires more than funding.
It requires investment in people, in data, and in community.
We are building a future that did not previously exist.

One where Black women are counted, heard, and supported, not occasionally, but consistently, structurally, and intentionally.

We began with data.

We are building with purpose.

And we are moving toward change that cannot be undone.

There is no version of this work that exists without community.

In 2025, we were not simply running programs, we were building something that did not exist, something that has been needed for generations.

Every contribution carried meaning. It was not just financial support, it was a statement of trust, a validation of the work, and a decision to stand with us in building something that challenges systems while caring for community.

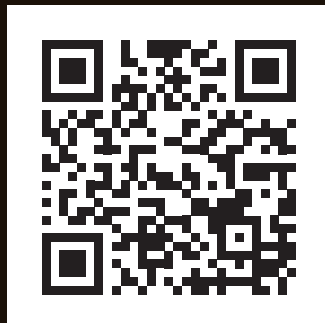
We are deeply grateful to those who made this work possible

DONATE TODAY.



We invite you to be a part of this journey. Together, we will create a future where Black women's health is seen, valued, and protected.

<https://bwhealthinstitute.com/donate/>



Building the future did not begin
with permission.

It began with truth.

www.healthforallblackwomen.com

info@healthforallBlackwomen.com

