2025 TO 2026

Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA)

Annual Report · Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026





MISSION & VISION

MISSION STATEMENT

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To inspire and value Eeyou-Eenou Iskweu through healing, culture, and socio-economic development.

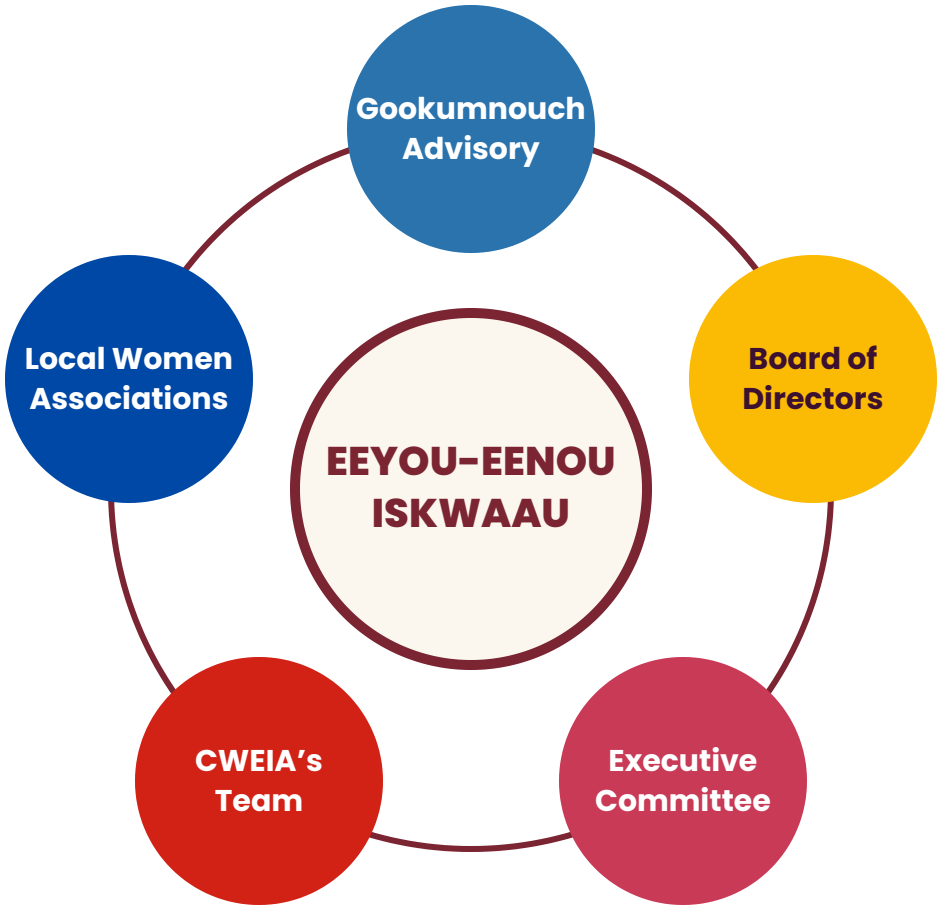
VISION STATEMENT

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We are strong, united, and resilient Eeyou-Eenou Iskwaauch as we embrace our nurturing roles in sustaining harmonious families,

communities, and our nation.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CWEIA STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

Four orientations, set within the outer rings of cultural safety, capacity building, traditional social structures, good communication, strategic partnerships, social innovation, closeness with Mother Earth, and connection to each other and creation.



DAB EEYOU

- Share traditional knowledge relevant to Cree women
- Develop healing programs
- Provide educational opportunities to transfer traditional knowledge

ADVOCACY

- Gender equity within Cree institutions
- Develop self-help resources
- Reduce violence against women

EMPOWERMENT

- Support local chapters
- Develop and support women's entrepreneurship
- Organize networking events
- Training and leadership development

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Expand internal team
- Diversify funding
- Secure permanent operational budget
- Increase social media and public presence



MANAGEMENT TEAM

PRESIDENT

- Corporate Officer
- Public relations
- Advocacy
- Oversee Director
- Partnerships & Network

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Manage the operations

- Human resources
- Corporate Bylaws & Policies
- Research & Development
- Proposal Writing

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

- Monitor Agreements
- Oversee Corporate minutes & Resolutions
- Finance
- Proposal Writing

OPERATIONAL TEAM

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Memberships

- Support LWA
- Liaise with LWA's

Programs

- MEEN
- Women's Award
- MMIWG
- 2-Spirit
- Local Training & Workshops

Proposal Development

WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Domestic Family Violence agreement

Outreach Workers

Lead on Cultural Healing

Adjuck committee

Other

- Environment

- Social
- Health
- Proposal Writing

MEN'S COORDINATOR

Establish Men's Association - Register & By-Laws

Men's Community Tour

Local Mens' Associations

Proposal Writing

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Entrepreneurship Strategy & Marketing plan

Solidarity Coop

Niikasschuho uunan

Leadership Forum

Proposal writing

COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS COORDINATOR

Social Media & Website & Radio

Assist in Event logistics & Venues

Communications

- Press Releases
- Annual Report
- Newsletter
- Mailchimp
- AGA planning

GAP COORDINATOR

Coordinate Logistics of GAP meetings & events

Establish GAP - Register & By-laws

Research & Development

Proposal Writing

REPORT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Tina Mark-Ottereyes | President

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & OPENING ADDRESS

It is my pleasure to present this report for the 2025–2026 fiscal year. This year was one of transition, growth, and renewed leadership for the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA). The fiscal year was unique for me personally and professionally, as I had the privilege of serving in two leadership roles within our organization. From April to November 2025, I served as Executive Director, working closely with then-President Charlotte Ottereyes to support the Board of Directors, advance organizational priorities, and ensure continuity during an important leadership transition. In November 2025, I was honoured to be elected President of CWEIA. This transition provided valuable insight into both the operational and governance aspects of our organization and strengthened my commitment to advancing the priorities of Cree women throughout Eeyou Istchee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (APRIL – NOVEMBER 2025)

As Executive Director, my primary responsibility was supporting the President, Board of Directors, staff, and partner organizations while ensuring the effective day-to-day operation of CWEIA. During this period, I travelled extensively throughout Eeyou Istchee and beyond, attending meetings alongside President Charlotte Ottereyes and, on several occasions, representing her and the organization when she was unavailable. These meetings strengthened relationships with government representatives, Indigenous organizations, funding partners, and community stakeholders while ensuring CWEIA maintained a strong and consistent presence.

Priorities included supporting the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, maintaining operations during the leadership transition, representing CWEIA at meetings, conferences, and community events, building partnerships, supporting advocacy on Cree women's health, safety, leadership, and community development, and preparing for the transition to a newly elected President following the Annual General Assembly.

TRANSITION TO PRESIDENT

In November 2025, I was honoured to be elected President of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association. Assuming this role marked the beginning of a new chapter for both myself and the organization. Working alongside our newly hired Executive Director, Board of Directors, and dedicated staff, we focused on strengthening governance, building relationships, and establishing priorities that reflect the voices and needs of Cree women across our communities.



HIGHLIGHTS AS PRESIDENT (DECEMBER 2025 – MARCH 2026)

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of our first priorities was strengthening our internal capacity. Staff participated in a retreat focused on wellness, emotional intelligence, team building, and organizational development. We also welcomed our new Executive Director and held strategic planning sessions to evaluate current programs, identify future initiatives, and strengthen collaboration between staff and the Board.

ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS

CWEIA continued to strengthen relationships with provincial and Indigenous partners, including participation in consultation tables addressing Calls to Justice #5, #8, and #11; ongoing collaboration with Quebec Native Women, Saturviit Inuit Women's Association, and other Indigenous women's organizations; meetings with provincial ministers and government representatives; and participation in the Native Women's Committee. These collaborations ensure that the voices of Cree women continue to influence policies and programs at regional, provincial, and national levels.

WOMEN'S WELLNESS GATHERING

One of the most meaningful events of the year was the Women's Wellness Gathering held in March under the theme "Planting a Seed for a Safer and Better Tomorrow." The gathering brought together women from across Eeyou Istchee for workshops, presentations, healing activities, and opportunities to build meaningful relationships.

MMIWG

CWEIA participated in the announcement and continued development of the MMIWG Mapping Project, reinforcing our commitment to raising awareness, supporting families, and advocating for safer communities for Indigenous women and girls.



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Throughout the reporting period I had the privilege of chairing Board of Directors meetings, leading Executive Committee meetings, participating in finance and governance meetings, working closely with staff to strengthen organizational planning, and supporting the recruitment and onboarding of organizational leadership. Strong governance continues to be essential as CWEIA grows and expands its services.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our priorities for the coming year include strengthening Local Women's Associations throughout Eeyou Istchee, expanding leadership development opportunities, continuing advocacy on Gender-Based Violence and MMIWG, enhancing communication with our members and communities, building stronger partnerships with Indigenous and governmental organizations, and developing sustainable programs that respond to the needs identified by Cree women.

APPRECIATION

I extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors, Executive Committee, staff, Local Women's Associations, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, partners, and community members for their continued support throughout this transition year. I also wish to acknowledge former President Charlotte Ottereyes for her leadership and dedication during the time we worked together; her guidance contributed to a smooth transition and positioned our organization well for the future. Finally, I thank the women of Eeyou Istchee for placing

their trust in me to serve as President. It is an honour and privilege to advocate on your behalf.

Respectfully submitted,

TINA MARK-OTTEREYES

President, Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association

REPORT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Trudy Longchap | Executive Director

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & OPENING ADDRESS

The 2025–2026 fiscal year marked a significant chapter in CWEIA's governance, positioning the organization for sustained regional impact. Trudy Longchap assumed the role of Executive Director starting January 2026, continuing the vision, strategic management, and team-driven leadership to bring programs and initiatives to the community and region. Following her impactful tenure as Executive Director, Tina Mark-Ottereyes transitioned to a vital governance role, stepping into office as the President of the CWEIA Board of Directors in November 2025. Guided by this unified leadership team,

our report highlights ongoing work to support the advancement, healing, and self-determination of Cree women, men, and families across Eeyou Istchee. Ultimately, this fiscal year was defined by organizational resilience, seamless leadership transitions, and an expanded program reach.

GROWTH & PROGRAM MILESTONES

This period was highlighted by significant milestones in community engagement and structural growth. CWEIA successfully delivered vital community programming across the territory. We completed a regional Gender-Based Violence roundtable and community tour led by Rita Sheshamush. The Gookumnouch Advisory Paataksuun held a memorable “Honoring Our Elders” Gathering, coordinated by GAP Coordinator Sarah Moar. Cultural pride and youth leadership were celebrated during the Miss Eeyou Istchee Pageant, spearheaded by former Princess Jade Mukash and Program Coordinator Josephine Sheshamush. Physical safety and empowerment were promoted through a regional wellness self-defence tour featuring Melissa Montour, led by Wellness Coordinator Crissie Martinhunter. Business Development Coordinator Julie Ann Cooper coordinated professional development training with HEC Montréal, resulting in 11 participants advancing their executive skills through First Nations Executive Education. The team hosted an integrated Wellness Gathering combined with our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls initiative, organized by Crissie Martinhunter and Josephine Sheshamush. The Men’s Association concluded its tenure under the CWEIA umbrella by hosting the Rise Up Conference and its final internal Annual General Assembly at the end of March 2026, officially transitioning into a fully separate, independent organization on April 1, 2026.

ORGANIZATIONAL & CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

To ensure operational excellence during our executive transitions, our dedicated coordination teams worked diligently to keep programs and initiatives running smoothly. CWEIA implemented strategic structural updates to maximize internal capacity: we created and filled a vital new position, Director of Finance, while officially making the Assistant Director position obsolete to establish a leaner, more direct reporting structure. We maintained continuous investment in staff professional growth, including advanced financial literacy training in general finance and the SAGE Accounting Program tailored for the Executive Director, the newly appointed Director of Finance, and the Finance Clerk.

We also held a staff team-building and planning session for the future of the organization and internal organizational growth.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

$2,504,634.61
TOTAL SECURED REVENUE

$2,375,511.76
TOTAL RESOURCE EXPENSES

$129,122.85
NET SURPLUS

- **Total Secured Revenue:** Successfully secured $2,504,634.61 in active funding across our multiple partner pipelines.
- **Total Resource Expenses:** Allocated and spent $2,375,511.76 to cover regional operations, project expenses, and assembly events.
- **Net Surplus:** Maintained excellent fiscal health, concluding the year with a net positive income of $129,122.85 to ensure operational sustainability.

Moving into the next cycle, we are actively applying lessons from past financial periods to enhance our resource development strategy through funder collaboration, targeted regional messaging, and continued financial responsibility.

MEETINGS & GOVERNANCE

As Executive Director, I worked in close alignment with the Executive Committee and the CWEIA Board of Directors to navigate the leadership transition, monitor internal staff projects and initiatives, and support the working group reviewing the organizational governance structure. Under the leadership of President Tina Mark Ottereyes, strategic oversight was carefully maintained through regular and in-person planning sessions. These meetings provided the critical oversight necessary to approve annual operational

plans, manage the leadership handovers, oversee structural staff updates, and legally authorize all necessary transitions and changes within the organization.

REPRESENTATION & ADVOCACY

The Executive Director and the CWEIA President jointly attended the Quebec Native Women MMIWG Mapping Press Release, focusing on regional solidarity and tracking systemic data. We maintained an active seat on the Native Women's Committee to advocate for policy-driven workshops and plans to assist Native women across Quebec. Finally, the organization solidified its strategic coalitions through active representation by President Tina Mark Ottereyes and Executive Director Trudy Longchap in the planning and targeted focus group and alliance of Quebec Native Women and the Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik.

TRUDY LONGCHAP

Executive Director, Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association

REPORT

PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Josephine Sheshamush | Program Coordinator

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026



INTRODUCTION

Wachyia, my name is Josephine Sheshamush, and I am from Whapmagoostui. This year marks my seventh year as Program Coordinator for the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA). In my role, I coordinate recurring programs and serve as a liaison with the Local Women's Associations across the 10 Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee, including Senneterre's Local Cree Women.

YEAR IN REVIEW

This was another successful and busy year for CWEIA. We planned and delivered numerous projects, often within short timelines and sometimes with back-to-back events, remaining focused on careful coordination and avoiding scheduling conflicts with local community events. CWEIA was pleased to support many Local Women's Association projects in communities across Eeyou Istchee, reflecting our continued commitment to meaningful programming for women, families, and communities.

MISS EEYOU/EENOU ISKWAAU PAGEANT 2026–2028

The 5th Miss Eeyou/Eenou Iskwaau Pageant for the 2026–2028 term was held in Nemaska on March 21, 2026. This year marked the first time CWEIA included award categories for the MEEI Pageant contestants: Leadership, Artist, Education, Healthy Lifestyle, Miss Congeniality, 2nd Runner Up, 1st Runner Up, and the Miss Eeyou/Eenou Iskwaau Award. Seven contestants participated, each representing her community:

Esther Bosum

Layla Orr

Joni Boudrais

Miss Oujé-Bougoumou

Miss Eeyou/Eenou Iskwaau

Miss Nemaska

1st Runner Up

Miss Whapmagoostui

2nd Runner Up

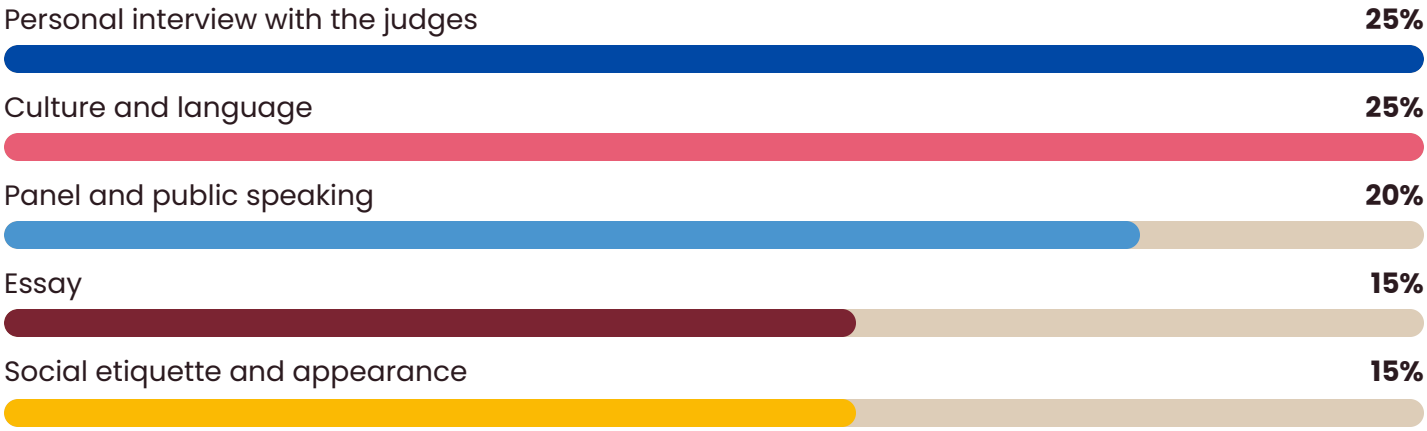
Danielle Sealhunter
Miss Chisasibi
Artist

Gillian Blackned
Miss Wemindji
Leadership

Valerie Neeposh
Miss Waswanipi
Education

Kristen Quinn
Miss Mistissini
Healthy Lifestyle

HOW CONTESTANTS WERE SCORED



Esther Bosum of Oujé-Bougoumou was crowned Miss Eeyou/Eenou Iskwaau and will hold the MEEI title for a two-year term from 2026 to 2028. Since her crowning, Esther has spoken at and attended numerous events throughout Eeyou Istchee. The pageant judges were Gena Boubard of Calgary, Alberta (Miss Indigenous Canada); Emma Morrison of Winnipeg, Manitoba (former Miss World Canada); and Andrea McLeod of Waskaganish (former Miss Eeyou/Eenou Nation). CWEIA thanks the outgoing MEEI 2025–2026 titleholder, Miss Jade Mukash of Whapmagoostui, for stepping up to complete the 2025–2026 term. Our next MEEI pageant will be in March 2028 in either Mistissini or Washaw Sibi.



MMIWG: YOU ARE NOT ALONE PROJECT

This was our final year of the three-year MMIWG funding from Indigenous Services Canada. We utilized the funds in three areas focusing on MMIWG activities.

PATHWAYS TO HEALING GATHERING — JULY 9–11, 2025

Sponsored in collaboration with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB), the Maanuuhiikuu department, and CWEIA, the gathering focused on intergenerational trauma and welcomed many Eeyou women, men, and youth of all ages. It provided space for healing, reflection, and the sharing of lived experiences, with workshops centred on education and understanding intergenerational trauma. Participants spoke openly about the impacts of MMIWG on their lives, and evening activities supported reflection, connection, cultural learning, and healing — including sharing circles, sewing and beading sessions, drum-making, and youth entertainment with Philip “Breeze” Brien of Nemaska.

SELF-CARE FOR CWEIA FRONTLINE STAFF (DECEMBER 2025)

Our frontline workers regularly host healing gatherings for women and girls across Eeyou Istchee — meaningful work, but staff also carry their own experiences and responsibilities. As the saying reminds us, “You cannot pour from an empty cup.” CWEIA hosted a one-and-a-half-day gathering for frontline workers, including a one-day Emotional Intelligence training workshop, providing space for learning, reflection, connection, and renewal.

COMMUNITY COMMEMORATIONS

CWEIA distributed MMIWG funds to the Local Women's Associations in each community to support local projects and initiatives. Many communities hold candlelight vigils and community walks each year on October 5 to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, often followed by a feast, with members encouraged to wear red. Communities also organized ribbon skirt-making workshops, sharing circles focused on MMIWG stories, and community-based awareness and remembrance activities.



LOCAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION INITIATIVES

FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

The program supported low-income families by teaching practical ways to prepare nutritious, affordable meals using traditional foods — fish, ptarmigan, rabbit, caribou, and moose meat — alongside store-bought side dishes. Participants learned to prepare and store traditional foods safely, create dishes that complement Eeyou meechum meals, and stretch their food budgets. CWEIA distributed funds to the Whapmagoostui, Chisasibi, Nemaska, Oujé-Bougoumou, and Senneterre Local Women's Associations to hold food security workshops.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Looking ahead, we plan to host more regional events in partnership with organizations across Eeyou Istchee — through collaboration we can create stronger, more meaningful gatherings that better respond to the needs of our people. Future events will include more activities and workshops, with our focus remaining on bringing healing resources to our communities.

CONCLUSION

The achievements of the past year are a testament to the dedication and hard work of our CWEIA team. We are grateful for the support of our stakeholders and look forward to continuing our journey of healing. I hope we will continue to bring joy and enlightenment to all we cross paths with.

Ginskoomitnawaw.

JOSEPHINE SHESHAMUSH

Program Coordinator, Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association

REPORT

WELLNESS REPORT

Crissie Martinhunter | Wellness Coordinator

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS INITIATIVE

In collaboration with Melissa Montour, the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA) continued to lead the Sexual Assault Awareness Initiative in response to the increasing concerns surrounding sexual violence, human trafficking, and gender-based violence affecting Cree communities. With the support of our funders, CWEIA and Melissa Montour delivered a travelling workshop series throughout Eeyou Istchee and key urban centres, including Senneterre, Val-d'Or, Ottawa, and Montreal. These locations were intentionally included to reach Cree and other Indigenous community members who frequently travel or reside in urban areas for education, employment, healthcare, sports, and family connections. The initiative focused on raising awareness, promoting prevention, and providing participants with knowledge and resources to recognize, respond to, and prevent sexual violence and human trafficking.

SELF-DEFENCE TRAINING

Between February and August 2025, self-defence training sessions were delivered across five locations: Mistissini, Chisasibi, Montreal, Waskaganish, and Val-d'Or. A total of 13 training sessions were conducted:

5 Montreal	**3** Mistissini	**3** Chisasibi	**1** Waskaganish
1 Val-d'Or			

- **Mistissini (3 sessions):** Delivered in collaboration with Youth Healing Services, providing self-defence training for youth participants.
- **Chisasibi (3 sessions):** Partnered with the Chisasibi Group Home, Big River High School, and the Local Women's Association to offer training for youth and community members.
- **Montreal (5 sessions):** Facilitated multiple sessions with Espresso Patients, and with women accessing services through the Women's Shelter and Miyoskamin Women's Safe Home.
- **Waskaganish (1 session):** Conducted training in partnership with the Women's Shelter, supporting women with practical personal safety skills.
- **Val-d'Or (1 session):** Delivered a self-defence workshop for participants at the Homeless Shelter, promoting safety, confidence, and empowerment.

IMPACT

Overall, the program strengthened participants' knowledge of personal safety, situational awareness, and self-protection while fostering confidence and resilience through community-based partnerships. The broad geographic reach and collaboration with local organizations ensured that culturally relevant and accessible training was available to women, youth, and vulnerable populations across Eeyou Istchee and urban service centres.

PROJECT REPORT

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CAPACITY BUILDING

Rita Sheshamush | Violence Prevention Coordinator

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

PROJECT OVERVIEW

$620,000
PROJECT FUNDING

39 months
FUNDING PERIOD

5
TRAINING ROUNDS

The Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA) received $620,000 in funding over a 39-month period to increase the organization's capacity to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Eeyou Istchee. The objective was to strengthen CWEIA's knowledge, understanding, leadership capacity, and ability to advocate for and address issues related to gender-based violence affecting Cree women, girls, families, and communities. Through research, community engagement, training, and collaboration, the project provided a strong foundation for future GBV initiatives and advocacy efforts.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The project began with the development and implementation of a Gender-Based Violence Survey designed to gauge community members' knowledge, understanding,

and awareness of GBV issues. Following the survey launch, Violence Prevention Coordinator Harriet Petawabano and CWEIA President Charlotte Ottereyes conducted a community tour throughout Eeyou Istchee, meeting with each Local Women's Association to introduce the project, discuss the purpose of the survey, raise awareness about GBV, and gather community perspectives. These consultations ensured that community voices helped guide the direction of the project and identified areas where additional education and support were needed.

CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH TRAINING

A major focus of the project was increasing organizational and community capacity through education, awareness, and professional development. Throughout the 39-month project, CWEIA staff, Board members, Gookumnouch Advisors, conference participants, and community representatives took part in specialized workshops and training sessions, including:

MARCH 2024 · MONTREAL

GBV Awareness Workshop — Jade Mukash; Intergenerational Trauma Training and GBV Training — Nikki Baribeau.

SEPTEMBER 2024 · KANATA, ON

Domestic Violence Workshop — Elsie Neeposh, and Sexual Violence Workshop — Rosemary Thomas.

JANUARY 2025 · GATINEAU

Domestic Violence Training — Brenda Combs, and 2SLGBTQIA+ Sensitivity Training — Annie Decontie, CBHSSJB.

MARCH 2025 · AMOS, QC

Breaking Barriers: Understanding and Addressing GBV in Cree Communities — Sky Development, Ancita Bugden.

OCTOBER 2025 · GATINEAU

Understanding 2SLGBTQIA+ Identity & Revitalization / Coming Home to Self: Decolonizing Confidence & Identity — Jo-Marie Einish.

Collectively, these opportunities strengthened CWEIA's capacity to address Gender-Based Violence through a trauma-informed, culturally grounded, and community-

focused approach — practical knowledge and tools that will continue to support advocacy, prevention, and community engagement long after the project's conclusion.



NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

In November 2025, Violence Prevention Coordinator Robyn Tomatuk and Program Coordinator Josephine Sheshamush attended the National Summit on Gender-Based Violence on behalf of the organization — a valuable opportunity to learn from leading experts, share Indigenous perspectives, and strengthen connections with organizations working to prevent and address GBV across Canada.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ROUNDTABLE

The final major activity of the project was the Gender-Based Violence Roundtable held in March 2026 in Val-d'Or, Quebec, coordinated by Rita Sheshamush. The event brought together organizations, partners, and stakeholders to discuss gender-based violence and explore opportunities for collaboration and future action. Presentations included the GBV Survey Results; Understanding Gender-Based Violence, presented by CWEIA President Tina Mark Ottereyes; and MMIWG Awareness, presented by Josephine Sheshamush. In addition, Rita Sheshamush visited Chisasibi to present the survey results to the Local Women's Association and facilitate discussions on the impacts of gender-based violence and potential community responses.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION

Over the 39-month funding period, CWEIA successfully increased its organizational capacity to address GBV: increased awareness and understanding among staff, Board

members, and community participants; enhanced capacity to respond to violence prevention issues; greater understanding of community needs and priorities; strengthened relationships with local, regional, and national organizations; and a stronger foundation for future GBV programming. The knowledge, partnerships, and resources developed through this project will continue to guide CWEIA's efforts to promote safety, healing, and well-being for Cree women and families throughout Eeyou Istchee.

REPORT

GUUKUMNOUCH ADVISORY PAATAKSUUN

Sarah Moar | GAP Coordinator

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

MANDATE AND MEMBERSHIP

As Guukumnouch Advisory Paataksuun (GAP) Coordinator, I transfer communications between members, support initiatives, and facilitate meetings. Members serve as spiritual and cultural mentors, guiding CWEIA and other Cree institutions with elder traditions. The GAP consists of seven members — four coastal: Maria Kawapit of Whapmagoostui, Irene B. House of Chisasibi, and Marjorie Mark and Emily Whiskeychan of Eastmain; and three inland: Marlene I. Kitchen and Irene Otter of Waswanipi, and Evadney Mettaweskum of Nemaska. Guukumnouch meet regularly via Zoom to plan their projects, and meet in person twice within the year.

MARIA KAWAPIT
Whapmagoostui · Coastal

IRENE B. HOUSE
Chisasibi · Coastal

MARJORIE MARK
Eastmain · Coastal

EMILY WHISKEYCHAN
Eastmain · Coastal

MARLENE I. KITCHEN
Waswanipi · Inland

IRENE OTTER
Waswanipi · Inland

EVADNEY METTAWESKUM
Nemaska · Inland

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURAL GUIDANCE

Throughout the reporting period, Guukumnouch Advisory Paataksuun remained committed to strengthening community wellness, supporting CWEIA, and preserving and sharing traditional Cree knowledge and culture. The organization responded to numerous invitations from communities and partner organizations, providing cultural guidance, support, and wellness services. Members participated in community events and gatherings where they shared traditional knowledge, cultural teachings, and land-based perspectives — strengthening community connections and ensuring Indigenous knowledge continues to be passed on to younger generations. Guukumnouch also served as support workers during Gender-Based Violence initiatives, MMIWG events, and other community and regional gatherings, offering cultural support, guidance, and safe spaces that fostered healing, resilience, and culturally grounded approaches to wellness and recovery.

ELDERS WELLBEING GATHERING

With funding provided through CNG, Guukumnouch successfully hosted an Elders Wellbeing Gathering in Chisasibi. The gathering brought Elders together to promote physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wellness while creating opportunities for social connection, cultural activities, and the sharing of traditional knowledge. Participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to reconnect with one another and strengthen community relationships.

TRADITIONAL FOOD PROGRAM

Guukumnouch continued its Traditional Food Program by preparing and distributing traditional food packages to Elders. The program helped improve access to culturally important foods while honouring the role of Elders within the community, and reinforced traditional harvesting practices, food sharing, and community care.

SUPPORT TO CWEIA

Throughout the reporting period, Guukumnouch provided ongoing support to CWEIA and its Board across all areas of work — program delivery, community engagement, cultural guidance, event participation, planning, and organizational activities. Their work demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting community wellness, preserving Cree culture and traditions, and responding to community needs. These activities have

strengthened cultural identity, promoted healing, and reinforced the importance of Elders and traditional knowledge in building healthy and resilient communities.

REPORT

MISS EEYOU EENOU ISKWAAU REPORT

Jade Mukash | Miss Eeyou Eenou Iskwaau 2025–2026

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026



REPRESENTING OUR WOMEN: A MESSAGE FROM JADE MUKASH

My name is Jade Mukash. I am 26 years old, carrying Cree, Algonquin, and Abenaki heritage, and I am the proud mother of my son, Slash. My journey in leadership began in community arts and youth advocacy over a decade ago, eventually leading me into pageantry where I carried the title of Miss Whapmagoostui before being crowned Miss Eeyou Eenou 2025–2026 in Whapmagoostui through a traditional blanket ceremony. Among my highest achievements are my lifelong sobriety, receiving the Traditional Knowledge Award at the Miss Indigenous Canada pageant in 2024, and earning the

2025 Leadership Award from the Whapmagoostui Youth Council. Above all, my main priority is to remain a strong role model for my son, my family, and our communities.

GROUNDED IN LIVED EXPERIENCE: HEALTHCARE ADVOCACY

My commitment to healthcare advocacy stems directly from my lived experience. As a young mother at 21, I had to fiercely advocate for my son when he struggled with his health as a baby, turning a terrifying experience into a lifelong passion for patient rights. Later, at age 25, I served as a primary caregiver for my grandfather following his cancer diagnosis — navigating the healthcare system alongside him exposed both the strengths and the critical gaps in our regional medical care. Over the past year, I served as a Youth Consultant on the Cultural Advisory Team for the new Chisasibi CMC hospital, ensuring cultural safety is built directly into new healthcare infrastructure. I delivered the opening remarks and song to over 300 healthcare professionals at the Cree Health Board's 2025 Annual Nurses Training, and through interviews with CBC North I have continued to bring regional awareness to healthcare access and the ongoing mission of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee.

EMPOWERING YOUTH & UPLIFTING COMMUNITIES

Youth leadership and healing have been central pillars of my term. At the Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC) Inspire Hope Conference 2025, I delivered a keynote address on youth leadership and facilitated a painting workshop to encourage creative expression. As an observer on the CNYC Board of Directors, I regularly represented CWEIA to ensure young women's voices are included in regional programming. At the 2025 Healing Gathering, I served as a keynote speaker and workshop facilitator addressing domestic violence and self-confidence, and I stood as a keynote speaker at the MMIWG Gathering to honour our stolen sisters and support families seeking justice.



MENTORSHIP & STRENGTHENING PAGEANTRY

Pageantry in our nation is a tool for self-confidence, cultural pride, and community development. As former Miss Whapmagoostui, I supported local contestants with training and self-care kits before passing on my title, and I extended pageant coaching to young women preparing for the Miss Oujé-Bougoumou 2025 pageant. For the Miss Eeyou Eenou Iskwaau Pageant 2026, I stepped into the role of Volunteer Coordinator, structuring comprehensive programming that brought together iconic Indigenous titleholders from across Canada to mentor our contestants in public speaking, leadership, and personal growth.

WORDS OF GRATITUDE & LOOKING FORWARD

As I reflect on this transformative chapter, my heart is filled with immense gratitude. I extend a deep, heartfelt thank you to my family, my community, the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee, and every single person who supported me throughout my princess and pageant journey. To our newly crowned Miss Eeyou Eenou Iskwaau: I wish you the absolute best on your upcoming journey. May you lead with grace, strength, and love for our people, knowing that you have an entire nation standing behind you.

With deep gratitude,

JADE MUKASH

Miss Eeyou Eenou Iskwaau (2025–2026)

REPORT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Julie Ann Cooper | Business Development Coordinator

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

OVERVIEW

This reporting year focused on advancing the Cree Women Experiences Research Initiative, entrepreneurship and business development, partnership development, organizational capacity, and initiatives that contribute to the overall wellness of Eeyou Iskwaau — Cree Women — and communities. Collectively, these efforts strengthened relationships, expanded collaborative opportunities, enhanced organizational capacity, and advanced CWEIA's mission of empowering Eeyou Iskwaau.

CREE WOMEN EXPERIENCES RESEARCH INITIATIVE

One of the year's most significant accomplishments was the successful completion of the Cree Women Experiences Research Initiative Community Tour in November 2025. This major undertaking involved visiting ten Cree communities across Eeyou Istchee and one urban community over a period of two years and seven months, creating meaningful opportunities to hear directly from Cree women about their experiences, aspirations, strengths, and challenges. The research findings will guide the development of future programs, services, strategies, and initiatives that support Cree women in leadership, education, employment, entrepreneurship, and economic development. The final research report will be released to the communities and the Nation during the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

NIIMUUDAAN MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Niimuudaan Mentorship Program for Cree Entrepreneurs continued to be an important initiative supporting Cree entrepreneurs. CWEIA played an important role in the program's co-development, providing cultural insight and supporting the design and delivery of a mentorship model that reflects the realities and needs of Cree entrepreneurs. This is a collaborative effort with the Secretariat to the Cree Nation Economic Alliance Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Réseau Mentorat, Community Economic Development Officers, and the Cree Nation Head Mentors.

FIRST NATION EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

The fourth cohort of the First Nation Executive Education Entrepreneurship Program was offered through HEC Montréal. CWEIA invited 11 Cree women entrepreneurs to participate in this intensive program from November 2025 to April 2026, drawn from the Aspiring Women Entrepreneurs selected at the 1st Cree Business Conference in May 2023. The program strengthened participants' business knowledge, strategic thinking, leadership abilities, and entrepreneurial capacity.

MCGILL EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE — MICRO MBA PROGRAM

As Business Development Coordinator, I was invited by Eeyou Economic Group to participate in the McGill Executive Institute's Micro MBA Program — a valuable learning opportunity focused on strategic leadership, business and financial management, innovation and entrepreneurship, and organizational effectiveness.



PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Partnership development continued to be an important component of our work. Throughout the year, our engagement included educational institutions such as UQAT,

McGill University, and First Nation Executive Education; Cree funding organizations such as the Cree Nation Government, Eeyou Economic Group, and Apatisiiwin Skills Development; and businesses and development organizations such as the Waswanipi Development Corporation and ShipNorth, along with consultants and other external partners. These partnerships contribute to new opportunities, knowledge sharing, capacity building, entrepreneurship, research, and economic development initiatives that support Cree women and communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Organizational growth and staff development remained important priorities. Management and staff worked collaboratively on organizational wellness and capacity-building initiatives, including the Gender-Based Violence Conference, Women's Wellness Gathering, team-building activities, and CWEIA's first Staff Retreat, which included Emotional Intelligence training. CWEIA's socio-economic development mandate extends beyond business development to include initiatives that promote healing, wellness, empowerment, and personal growth — recognizing that personal well-being and economic empowerment are closely connected. When women are supported in their wellness and personal development, they are better positioned to lead, build businesses, contribute to their families, participate in the workforce, and strengthen their communities and the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee. Participation in annual general and governance-related meetings further supported accountability, planning, collaboration, and strategic decision-making.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Our Eeyou Iskwaau are strong, resilient, courageous, and inspiring. They are true pillars of our families, communities, organizations, businesses, and Nation. I am grateful to be part of an organization committed to empowering Eeyou Iskwaau and creating opportunities for women to grow, lead, heal, build businesses, and contribute to the continued strength and development of our communities. As we move forward, the knowledge gained through research, the partnerships we have strengthened, and the investments made in entrepreneurship and organizational capacity provide a strong foundation for future initiatives.

Agoodah! Meegwetch! Thank you! Nii,

JULIE ANN COOPER
Business Development Coordinator

REPORT

MEN'S EEYOU ISTCHEE REGIONAL ASSOCIATION (MEIRA)

Stella Masty | Men's Coordinator
Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Some years are measured in programs delivered and meetings held. This year, for the men of Eeyou Istchee, is better measured in distance travelled. What began years ago as an idea nurtured within the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association — that Cree men needed their own place to heal, to reclaim their roles, and to stand accountable beside the women of the Nation — became, this year, a fully independent regional association walking its own path.



FROM SEED TO STANDING

CWEIA gave birth to the men's association and nurtured it through its early years, guiding it patiently toward operational independence. This year, that work bore fruit. In

November 2025, MEIRA presented its update to the CWEIA Annual General Assembly — no longer a program reporting inward, but a partner reporting alongside. Days later, on November 23, 2025, the two associations signed a historic transition agreement: MEIRA assumed full administration and responsibility for men's programming, including the related assets and funding agreements, with both organizations committing to a seamless continuation of services for families and communities. It is worth pausing on what this represents. Organizational independence is easy to announce and hard to earn. What we observed this year was an association that had done the quiet work — governance, relationships, trust — required to carry its own responsibilities. As the joint statement put it, this is a journey of healing, dignity, responsibility, and rightful voice within the Nation.

NOVEMBER 2025
MEIRA presents its update to the CWEIA Annual General Assembly.

NOVEMBER 22, 2025
CWEIA adopts a resolution endorsing Rise Up as a full partner.

NOVEMBER 23, 2025
The two associations sign the transition agreement.

MARCH 10–12, 2026
Three-day Rise Up regional gathering.

MARCH 29, 2026
MEIRA Annual General Assembly, Ottawa.

RISING UP, TOGETHER

Independence did not mean turning inward. Within a day of the transition, MEIRA was already leading outward. The numbers that demand this work are sobering: the Eeyou Eenou Police Force reported over 1,200 disturbance calls in 2023 — roughly 30% of all police interventions — and a 15% rise in mental-health-related incidents over two years. MEIRA's answer, in partnership with the Department of Justice & Correctional Services, is the Rise Up "Mamoukaaboudaou" Initiative: dialogue, education, and healing in place of silence.

CWEIA did not watch from the sidelines. By resolution adopted November 22, 2025, the women's association formally endorsed Rise Up and committed as a full partner —

designating representatives to the December 2025 consultations, joining the monthly planning meetings through the winter, and contributing to the workshops, circles, storytelling sessions, and action planning at the three-day regional gathering of March 10–12, 2026. The gathering set in motion the development of a Cree Nation–wide Action Plan for the safety, healing, empowerment, and wellbeing of Cree women, children, and families.

That men convened this work, and that women stood in it as full partners, is itself the observation worth recording: balance is not a metaphor in Eeyou Istchee this year. It is a practice.

STANDING BEFORE THEIR MEMBERS

The year closed the way an independent organization's year should — in front of its members. MEIRA held its Annual General Assembly on March 29, 2026, at the Marriott Courtyard in Ottawa, gathering members through their local presidents.

WHAT WE SEE AHEAD

Watching this association grow, three things stand out for the coming year: the completion and implementation of the Cree Nation–wide Action Plan born from Rise Up; the consolidation of independent operations — governance, staffing, and funding — following the transition; and the deepening of local men's engagement in every community.

The partnership between our associations does not end with independence; it matures. Guided by the wisdom of our Elders and the values of respect, reciprocity, and responsibility, CWEIA and MEIRA continue to work as interdependent partners toward the wellbeing of all Eeyou/Eenou families — children, men, women, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse people.

We celebrate the men of Eeyou Istchee, and their continued journey of healing, dignity, responsibility, and rightful voice within the Nation. This year, they rose.

Meegwetch,

STELLA MASTY

Men's Coordinator

REPORT

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Darren Weistche | Communications & Events Coordinator

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026



INTRODUCTION

Communications are central to all activities of CWEIA. When the Association gathers, elects, celebrates, or launches, my role is to ensure it is coordinated, seen, and heard — from the logistics behind our major gatherings to the daily rhythm of our social media channels and the design work that brings our programs to the communities. This report reflects a year spent in that supporting role: sometimes out front at our events, more often behind the scenes, making sure the team had what it needed.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, OUJÉ-BOUGOUMOU

Assisted in coordinating our AGA in Oujé-Bougoumou — a milestone gathering that featured the election of Tina Mark Ottereyes as CWEIA President. Planning began early in

the fiscal year and covered logistics, materials, and communications for the assembly.

STAFF RETREAT, MONT-TREMBLANT

I took part in our staff retreat — a chance to connect with the team outside the office, attend workshops together, and strengthen the working relationships that carry us through the year.

MISS EEYOU EENOU ISKWAAU (MEEI)

I assisted with the MEEI event remotely and led efforts to highlight our new Miss Eenou Eeyou Iskwaau across our platforms, celebrating her and the pageant with our communities. Esther Bosum of Oujé-Bougoumou was crowned on March 21, 2026, at the Nemaska Sports Complex.

HIGHER LEARNING CONFERENCE IN OTTAWA

I attended a higher learning conference in Ottawa, bringing back ideas and connections to strengthen our communications practice. The Building Capacity Conference ran from February 20 to 22, 2026, in Ottawa, Ontario.

EXECUTIVE AND BOARD MEETINGS IN GATINEAU

I conducted meetings in Gatineau with the executive and the Board of Directors, supporting governance work and keeping communications aligned with the Association's direction. Board meetings are held quarterly.

ONGOING WORK

SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL PRESENCE

Throughout the year, I managed day-to-day traffic across our social media channels — we are actively posting, responding, and keeping our members informed and engaged across Eeyou Istchee. Our primary platform remains Facebook, and our follower base continues to grow. Thank you for your likes and engagement across all our platforms; we will keep working to expand our community.

DESIGN AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

I provided graphic design for our Program Coordinators — including posters, promotional materials, and event visuals — and assisted them in coordinating projects

within their communities. This behind-the-scenes support helps every program arrive in the communities looking professional and unmistakably CWEIA.

TEAM COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER TARGETS

I maintained steady communication across the team throughout the year, helping wherever needed and ensuring that targets set with our stakeholders and funders were met and reported on time.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026–2027

- Assist in producing and launching the 2025–2026 Annual Report, including the story of the MEIRA transition
- Updating the CWEIA website and enhancing security across our platforms.
- Concentrating on maintaining engagement after CWEIA events and during follow-up. Expanding outreach while ensuring the CWEIA message remains clear and consistent across all platforms.

CLOSING

It has been a full year — an election, a retreat, a pageant, conferences, and the thousand small daily tasks in between. I am grateful to the executive, the Board, and my colleagues for their trust and collaboration, and I look forward to telling the Association's story even more effectively in the year ahead.

As we reflect on this year's accomplishments, we are reminded that meaningful change is built on collective action. Together, we will continue to champion equity, expand opportunity, and shape a future in which every individual has the chance to thrive.

Meegwetch.

DARREN WEISTCHE

Communications & Events Coordinator

REPORT

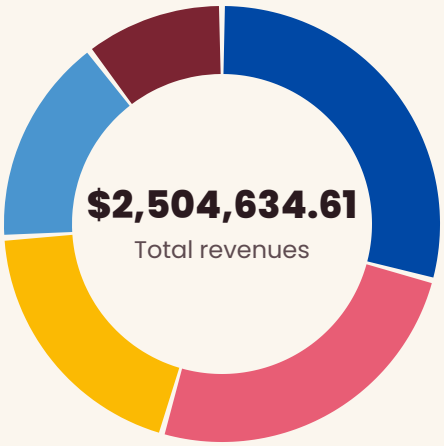
FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal Year April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

OVERVIEW

Total secured revenue for the 2025–2026 fiscal year was $2,504,634.61, with total resource expenses of $2,375,511.76 covering regional operations, project expenses, and assembly events, concluding the year with a net positive income of $129,122.85.

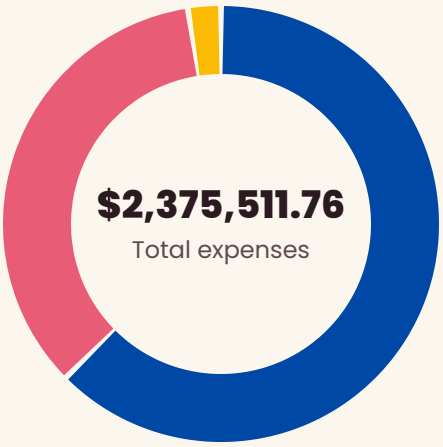
REVENUES 2025–2026



Federal Funding	**$730,451.79**	29.2%
Cree Nation Government	**$633,282.73**	25.3%
Eenou Eeyou Limited Partnership	**$489,573.00**	19.5%
Provincial Funding	**$390,948.38**	15.6%

Other	**$260,378.71** 10.4%	

EXPENSES 2025–2026



Project Expenses	**$1,486,470.27** 62.6%	
Operations	**$831,206.16** 35.0%	
Annual General Assembly	**$57,835.33** 2.4%	

REVENUES

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Cree Nation Government	$633,282.73
Eenou Eeyou Limited Partnership	$489,573.00
Provincial Funding	$390,948.38
Federal Funding	$730,451.79
Other	$260,378.71
Total revenues	**$2,504,634.61**

EXPENSES	
CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Operations	$831,206.16
Annual General Assembly	$57,835.33
Project Expenses	$1,486,470.27
Total expenses	**$2,375,511.76**

NET INCOME	$129,122.85

FUNDERS

On behalf of our Board of Directors, Gookumnouch and Staff, we would like to thank and acknowledge all of our funders and sponsors who have helped us to be where we are today.

- Cree Board of Health and Social Services James Bay (CBHSSJB)
- Cree Nation Government - Apatisiiwin Skills Development Department (CNGASD)
- Cree Nation Government - Eenou Eeyou Limited Partnership (CNG-EELP)
- Cree Nation Government - Social and Cultural Department (CNG-SCD)
- Cree Nation Government – Others (Justice, Social and Cultural Development, Office of the Deputy Grand Chief)
- Cree Nation of Chisasibi
- Cree Nation of Eastmain – Local Women's Association
- Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation (MAMH)
- Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome et aux initiatives sociales (SACAIS)
- Secrétariat à la condition féminine (SCF)
- Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE)

STAFF



TINA MARK-OTTEREYES
President



TRUDY LONGCHAP
Executive Director



JOSEPHINE SHESHAMUSH
Program Coordinator



CRISSIE MARTINHUNTER
Wellness Coordinator



RITA SHESHAMUSH
Violence Prevention Coordinator



SARAH MOAR
GAP Coordinator



JULIE ANN COOPER
Business Development Coordinator



DARREN WEISTCHE
Communications & Events Coordinator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



TINA MARK-OTTEREYES
President

LOCAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

AMY SALT
Whapmagoostui

PAULINE LAMEBOY
Chisasibi

ANGELA STEWART
Wemindji

GERALDINE WEAPENICAPPO
Eastmain

BESSIE GILLIES
Waskaganish

NOREEN MOAR
Nemaska

ALICE PETAWABANO
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KAREN B. HUGHBOY
Ouje-Bougoumou

JAMIE GULL
Waswanipi

ELIZABETH MIANSCUM
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TASHA MOWATT
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JADE MUKASH
Youth Representative



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