

Changing Tides

*Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign
Campagne des grands-mères à grands-mères*

**Ottawa-Gatineau Region
Région d'Ottawa-Gatineau**

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Editor's Notes

Inside this issue:

It is undeniable that the fall has brought us two unique events to celebrate the work and legacy of the Stephen Lewis Foundation and the grandmothers and grandmothers who make up the G2G Campaign: the 20th Anniversary Commemorative Solidarity Quilt and the International Grandmothers Gathering in Winnipeg and in 11 African countries!

Those of us who have participated in these events can only laud the creative energy and timely gatherings that rejuvenate and renew us as a movement and as communities.

As we take time to reflect on the vital impact these opportunities have on our grandmother communities and our movement, we look forward to be part of the journey of action and outcomes.

Sandi has done an excellent job of sharing her first impression of the power of the IGG. The SLF has indicated that links with videos and resources will be provided for our groups.

Best wishes to all, whether you're staying or departing to warmer climes!

Mia Overduin
Editor

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October 24-26
WINNIPEG

INTERNATIONAL GRANDMOTHERS GATHERING

Remaining in Solidarity

Together, we will...
RENEW our commitment
REFRESH our knowledge
REJUVENATE our spirit



A NOTE – IGG Follow-up

Those of us who attended the International Grandmothers Gathering on October 24-26, 27 received a notice from Meg French and Niambi Martin-John that we will receive links to information, such as videos, resources, and remarks that were shared during various sessions.

Information will be shared with you as it becomes available.

GRL Updates – October 2023

What can I say about the International Grandmothers Gathering in Winnipeg except that it was an amazing experience. It's difficult to find the words to describe what it was like to be in a room with over 100 other grannies, all excited to be part of the first Canadian gathering since 2006, although the words inspiring, invigorating, energetic, hopeful and grateful come to mind. For me, personally, it was wonderful to finally meet the other GRLs that I had come to know only from countless Zoom meetings.

Through the miracle of technology, we were thrilled to be able to see and hear grandmothers meeting in Africa in real time which enhanced the incredible connection we were already feeling. Adding to the experience was the physical presence of Mama Darlina, from South Africa, Mama Edith, from Uganda, and three representatives from SLF partner organizations all of whom were available for hugs, stories and singing and dancing.

Over the 3 days, we heard stories of hope and determination from grandmothers in Africa and the SLF partner organizations. There is much to celebrate in the achievements of the last 20 years, but there is still much to be done. Grandmothers continue to raise grandchildren with limited or no social support. HIV and AIDS are far from eradicated, hampered by stigma, sexism and poverty.

The rally cry from the African grandmothers as they gain power and confidence is *"nothing about us without us"*. They have recognized the strength in numbers and are now fighting for basic human rights. Governments can no longer ignore their voices. There were cheers and applause in the room in Winnipeg as we heard over and over from the Grandmothers meeting in Africa how policy makers had attended their gatherings and listened to what they had to say.

In the words of the indefatigable Mama Darlina, *"Gogos are strong, Gogos are around the corner"*.

At the conclusion of the Gathering, Canadian grandmothers resolutely renewed their commitment to the African grandmothers: *"we will not rest until they rest"*. We look forward to a statement from the Canadian grandmothers along with statements from the grandmothers gathering in Africa.

Looking forward in our own region, we need to start planning our next Grannyfest. I will be reaching out to regional leaders shortly to get the ball rolling.

Additionally, I believe we need to start some serious discussions about the future of our region, how we can support groups that are struggling and how we can reach out to the community to attract new members and strengthen and sustain the Grandmothers movement.

Yours in solidarity,

Sandi

NOTES – International Grandmothers Gathering

NOTES from the stephenlewis.org website:

The IGG (International Grandmothers Gathering) is an opportunity for grandmothers around the world to celebrate and strengthen the grandmothers movement and chart a clear path forward.

What happens at an International Grandmothers Gathering?

The IGG program is by and large for grandmothers. In each region, they design a program that can include national and international workshops, public marches, and meetings with policymakers to advocate for grandmothers' rights. Gatherings raised the visibility of grandmothers mobilizing for a more equitable future, free from AIDS.

Collectively, grandmothers will contribute to an International Grandmothers Statement that will be shared with policymakers across the African continent and in Canada.

We are looking forward to sharing updates as grandmothers rise to new possibilities!

IGG Grandmother activists came together across 11 countries: Canada, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

...grandmothers are celebrating their achievements, engaging in advocacy, developing national plans of action, and making new international connections.

Grandmothers are rising to new possibilities!

Solidarity Quilt Exhibits Follow-up



From the Stephen Lewis
Foundation Website

The 20th Anniversary Commemorative Solidarity Quilt will visit at least 35 communities across Canada where grandmothers groups hosted the quilt for an exciting array of community-building activities.

It will hang in libraries, city halls, quilting shops, museums from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Victoria, British Columbia, and at special signature events in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver.

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Solidarity Quilt Exhibits Follow-up (.../continued)

The quilt will be displayed as centrepiece at quilt shows in Ontario, and at gatherings and celebrations in cities across the country, including: Regina, Calgary, and Fredericton.

The quilt is travelling across Canada. The collective effort of 300+ grandmothers, this remarkable work of textile art will inspire grandmothers, grandothers, and the communities. It holds the story of what becomes possible when women gather, connect, and share their resources, creativity, and compassion.

November 8-14: Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. Display at Conestoga Mall (Nov. 8-11), the Omas Siskona's holiday market (Nov. 12), and the Button Factory Community Arts Centre (Nov. 13-14).

Solidarity in Action (G2G website)

“Through sustained funding of their work, African grandmothers have moved from securing their most basic needs to taking on leadership roles in the community, and starting their own programs for child care, income generation and other support networks. Through National-level Gatherings and mobilizing within their communities, they are pushing their governments to recognize their human rights and enact national policies to support all grandmothers within their country.”

GRASSROOTS EVENTS CALENDAR

Editor's Note: Submissions for the monthly newsletter are due on the 23rd of the month.

	GRANNY GROUP	EVENT/CONTACT	LOCATION/CONTACT
TO BE ANNOUNCED	All Groups	Plans for Grannyfest	

REGIONAL CONTACTS

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