

# IMPACT REPORT

2021

#UnitedWeAreStronger



United Way  
Central Alberta

United Way Central Alberta is committed to continuing building stronger relationships with Indigenous, Métis and Inuit Peoples in this region to ensure that we contribute to meaningful, lasting change. We know we have work to do as individuals and as an organization. In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that the communities we serve are located in the Indigenous traditional territories represented by Treaties 6 and 7 and an historic Métis gathering site. We offer respect to this land, its 21 First Nations and all Indigenous, Métis and Inuit Peoples.



We invest donor dollars in programs that impact our community. We partner with other organizations to address the underlying issues that impact residents. And, we advocate for the needs and interests of our more vulnerable citizens.

## **VISION**

A resilient and caring community where everyone thrives.

## **MISSION**

To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action.

# Chelsea's Message

If 2020 was about collaboration throughout the first waves of the pandemic, then 2021 has been about designing a new way forward. In addition to the funding we give out every year and the ways we collaborate in community, which you can read more about in the pages that follow, we have been taking steps to revise our community impact strategy with the intention to place equity at the centre of how we collaborate to improve lives.

Why equity? Historical and persistent discrimination continues to negatively affect some citizens and communities more than others. Ultimately, equity is about communities where everyone thrives, while recognizing that each person or group of people will need different things to reach their potential. Consider that mental health supports for youth are different than programs for people experiencing addiction, and both are

different from traditional healing practices of Indigenous People. As we know more about the injustices faced by citizens, we must do better.

There are three key aspects to this work.

## Looking Inward

We began this work by looking inward at ourselves and our structures to ensure we have diverse voices and representation in decision-making. Since 2019, staff and volunteers have been building a shared understanding of the concepts of privilege, power and oppression, and uncovering the systems and structures that influence our everyday experiences. In 2021, a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) committee was formed to provide learning opportunities throughout the year. We thank our chairpersons, Ron Sauve and LeeAnne Shinski for their leadership and the commitment of members on the

committee. We are grateful for the individuals who have shared their stories and provided insight into ensuring all people experience a sense of belonging.

In 2021, thanks to a grant we received, a consultant was hired to complete an audit of our diversity, equity and inclusion practices with recommendations for change. One long-term change that we are actively striving towards, is better representation in all aspects of the organization as key to addressing inequities within our United Way.

### **Looking Outward**

We focused our efforts last year on looking outward to learn from the community about local aspirations, inequities and challenges. While the 4th wave of the pandemic prevented us from being in-person to listen and learn, we were able to connect with 11 groups around the region. We created an online engagement portal that received 102 contributions that included a broad array of data that was recent and available to us.

We acknowledge that this is just a starting point and we are committed to growing our understanding and relationships with individuals and groups advocating for social justice.

### **Looking Beyond**

We are looking beyond our current way of working in community to consider how to become fairer. We are reflecting on the data we collect and the inferences we make about it. We are considering how priorities are chosen and who has influence in those decisions. We are looking at how we can best partner with the community on the aspirations they look for and use our connections to advance lasting change. Lastly, we are exploring what grants we can offer that address new and emerging needs, alongside longer term funding for vital community programs that align with our priorities.

Collectively, the information in these three areas will inform not only a new community investment strategy, how we collaborate in community and our advocacy efforts, but shift our internal operations, volunteer engagement and granting processes.



**Chelsea O'Donoghue,  
United Way Central  
Alberta CEO**

# Our Community - Overall

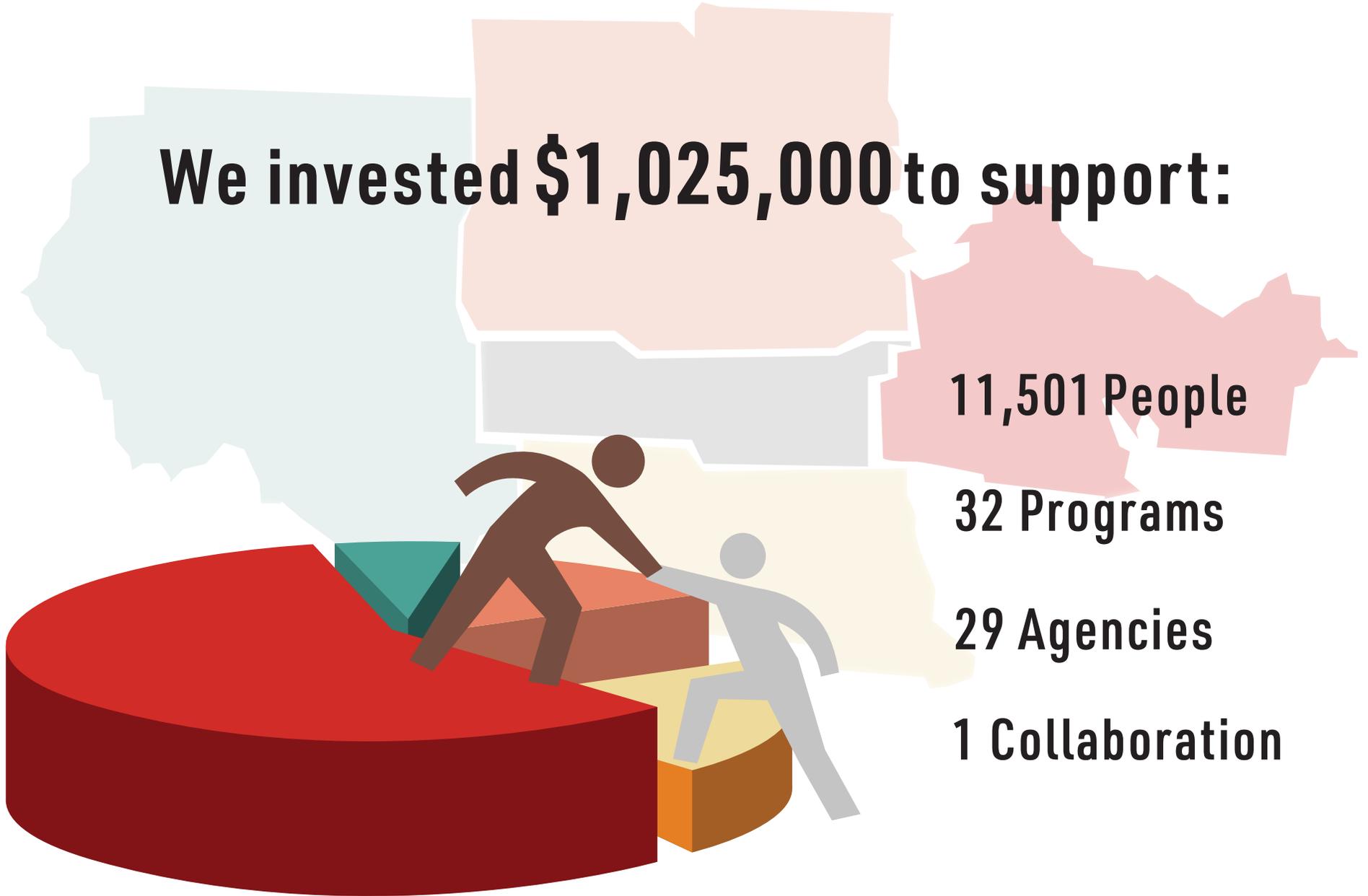
**We invested \$1,025,000 to support:**

**11,501 People**

**32 Programs**

**29 Agencies**

**1 Collaboration**



# YOUTH

**We invest in youth programs to help build confidence in tomorrow's adults.**

**I don't think I would be doing what I love today if it wasn't for the United Way.**

*- Sylvanna, Program Beneficiary*



# YOUTH

We invested \$275,063 and supported: 2,933 children and youth  
9 agencies  
11 programs



## Opportunity Gap

We closed the widening opportunity gap by removing financial barriers for families, impacting more than 2,000 kids.



## Basic Needs

We ensured access to healthy food for 860 children at school.



## Future Potential

We enabled 580 youth to receive support and guidance from a mentor.



## Mental Health

We increased access to mental health supports in communities across the region.

# MENTAL HEALTH



"I have depression and anxiety, but I'm not those labels. I think I'm capable of being much more."

*- Laura, Program Beneficiary*



**Everyone deserves access to mental health supports.**

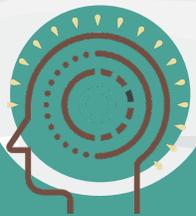
# MENTAL HEALTH

We invested **\$448,600** and supported: **3,556 people**

We improved access to mental health supports to 1331 people.

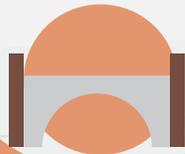
**13 agencies**

**1 collaboration**



## Mental Health

We support traditional healing practices and ceremony for indigenous community members through the Many Healing Blankets Program.



## Opportunity Gap

We helped 870 people and persons living with a disability to remain in their homes and thrive in their community.



## Basic Needs

We ensured access to healthy food for 1053 people.



## Outreach

We improved access to harm reduction supports for 144 people.



## Future Potential

We improved future possibilities for 26 young parents by supporting them through their pregnancy and first months of their child's life.

# COMMUNITY

I started out delivering goods to six homes, but with United Way's help, I can now help make sure 23 households have enough to eat. It was so uplifting to be able to do that, because not only did I get to help, but I also got to know the families. Some were elders, some were big families, some were single people taking care of an ill parent.

– Travis & Chad, Program Beneficiary



No one should have to go without food.

# COMMUNITY

We invested **\$301,337** and supported: **5,012 people**

We helped 904 people navigate complex systems to ensure they could meet their basic needs.

**7 agencies**

**11 programs**



## Opportunity Gap

We closed the widening opportunity gap through programs that helped 82 people find employment.



## Future Potential

4000 youth and adults participated in financial empowerment programs, helping them strive for a better future.



## Mental Health

We are addressing domestic violence by investing in supportive housing for 26 women and children at Julietta's Place and enabling inter-agency collaboration which impacted 512 clients.



## Basic Needs

We supported access to basic needs through Basic Needs Collection Drives, Tools for School, and we partnered with Enmax to help clients avoid utility disconnection.



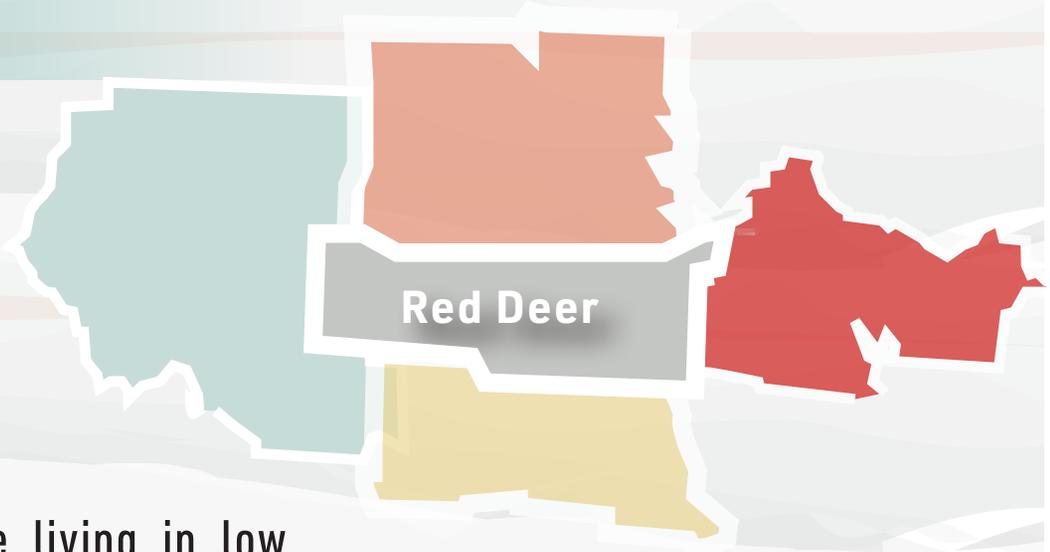
## Period Promise

We partnered with 30 organizations to ensure period products were available to anyone free of cost.

# Red Deer - 5,766 People Helped



We've invested in 22 programs that are making a difference in your community.



11.8% of children and youth are living in low income households in Red Deer. We are helping families meet their basic needs.



More than 9,500 people are living in low income households in our community, we are focused on addressing challenges that will improve lives locally.



One in five people will struggle with their mental health. That is more than 20,000 people in Red Deer. We have increased access to mental health supports in communities across the region.

**UNITED WE ARE STRONGER**



# Central Alberta West - 1,129 People Helped



We've invested in 2 programs that are making a difference in your community.



There are 20 outreach programs that supported 848 people in your community.



With 5,700 people experiencing poverty, we are focused on helping people meet their basic needs.



One in five people will struggle with their mental health. That is more than 10,400 people in communities west of Red Deer. We have increased access to mental health supports in communities across the region.



**UNITED WE ARE STRONGER**



# Central Alberta South - 1,722 People Helped



There are 18 outreach programs that supported 862 people in your community.



We invested in 1 program that provides access to healthy food for 860 students.



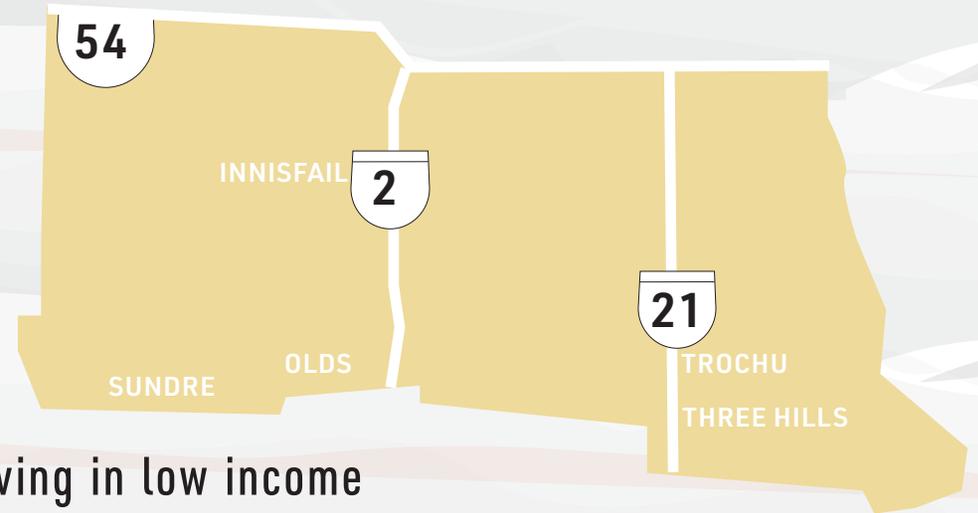
11.7% of children and youth are living in low income housing. We are helping families meet their basic needs.



More than 7,500 people are living in low income households, we are focused on addressing challenges that will improve lives locally.



One in five people will struggle with their mental health. That is more than 15,750 people in communities south of Red Deer. We have increased access to mental health supports in communities across the region.



**UNITED WE ARE STRONGER**



# Central Alberta East - 794 helped



With 5,600 families experiencing poverty in our community, we are focused on challenges that will improve lives locally.



12.2% children and youth are living in low income households. We invested in 2 programs that are making a difference in our community (43 children and youth).



There are 13 outreach programs that supported 751 people in our community.



One in five people will struggle with their mental health. We are supporting the mental health of people across central Alberta.

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# Central Alberta North - 1,887 People Helped



We've invested in 5 programs that are making a difference in your community.



More than 10,000 people are living in low income households in communities north of Red Deer. We are focused on addressing challenges that will improve lives locally.



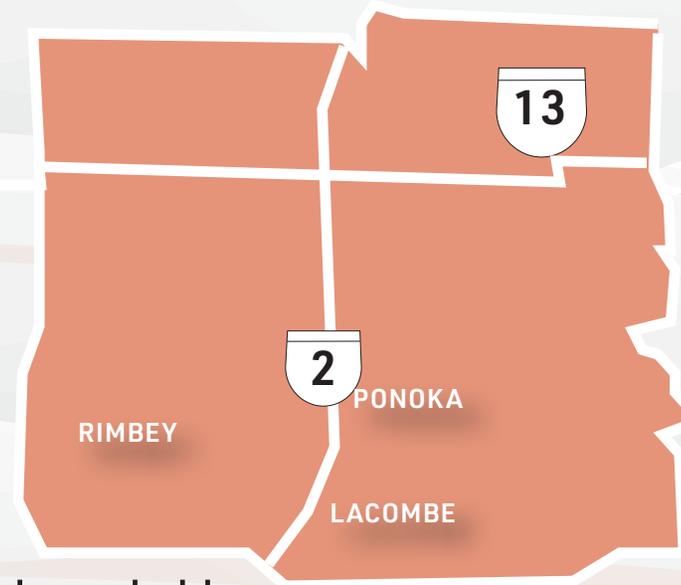
14.4% children and youth are living in low income households in communities north of Red Deer. We are helping youth realize their potential.



There are 18 outreach programs that supported 815 people in your community.



One in five people will struggle with their mental health. We are helping people access mental health support across the region.



**UNITED WE ARE STRONGER**





Improving the integration of immigrants, helping the community better address the needs of newcomers.



United Way's Period Promise is a local response to a global issue. We can reduce the isolation created by period poverty, in our own neighbourhoods



Providing families and individuals who are facing financial challenges with emergency funds to avoid utility disconnection.



Reducing barriers preventing children and youth from successful learning and participation in school.

# OUR COLLABORATIONS



A collaborative group working to find local solutions to make a real difference on poverty.



An information referral service which connects people to local health and social services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in over 200 languages.

## DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Exploring ways of ensuring diverse voices are represented in planning and decision making. Advocating for change. Sharing our platform with people whose voices too often go unheard.



Encouraging people in their 20s and 30s to influence positive change through meaningful volunteering and networking.

"Your hard work and dedication helps me to remain independent in my own home, and you will never know how much that means to me."

Linda Shepherd and Grace.



**United Way**  
Central Alberta