



momentum

Annual Report
2022

Oki! Tansi! Danit'ada! Aba-wath-tech! Welcome!

Reflect & Celebrate



“We know that many small actions contribute to achieving the Enough for All Strategy to reduce poverty in our city. We’re making progress as we work together, and we’ll continue to support efforts that make a meaningful impact for Calgarians living on a low income.”

- Jeff Loomis (He, Him)
Executive Director, Momentum

Momentum started out in Greater Forest Lawn with a shared phone line and one staff person, who was striving to make this city a welcoming place for all. Thirty-two years on, our core purpose hasn't changed, nor has our focus on local impact.

We still call Mohkinstsis home and we acknowledge that we experience tremendous privileges and benefits through living and working here. This land is the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, the Tsuut'ina, Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, and Métis Nation Region 3. We recognize all people who call the special place where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet and all of Treaty 7 territory home. Together we learn, build assets and grow community.

One moment that we did just that was at Momentum's grand opening, when we finally celebrated the opening of our 'new' community space. In 2022, we also celebrated the launch of three new programs, welcomed new faces to our staff team and explored new ways of including equity-deserving groups in our programming and across our organization.

At the same time, we honour long-term work that has made a lasting impact. Trades Training was the very first program started at Momentum and is still successfully helping people gain employment – with 87% of graduates employed, the strongest employment results since 2014. We also worked with eight participants to purchase their first home last year bringing our historic total to 174 homes now owned by savings program graduates.

Whether through new or established initiatives, small changes add up over time.

As we reflect on our shared success and look to what's next, we want to say thank you for your trust, participation, sense of humour and belief in this organization. You might think your part is small, but every action is felt and appreciated. Together, let's be proud of the results that are highlighted in this report.

- Jeff Loomis
Executive Director, Momentum

1,900+
participants

attended a program
delivered by Momentum



11,900
individuals

were reached through organizations
supported by Momentum



92%
of participants

feel more hopeful about their future



Small Steps to Big Saving

Starting small can lead to big things, as Sage knows very well. Participating in Savings Circles gave Sage the confidence boost to tackle the long process of applying for a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). Now her savings are adding up; along with her own savings and the match from Momentum, she's also accessing valuable government benefits.

Matched Savings programs at Momentum boosted the savings of 193 participants, moving them closer to a sustainable livelihood.

When saving is a new habit, even small incentives count. That's why we're proud of trying something new with the Momentum Savings Challenge. Created to expand the reach of Matched Savings opportunities for low-income earners, the app-based saving program is an easy way for participants to build a habit of saving. Even though the number of participants we originally dreamt of reaching was too ambitious, the achievements of these savers are clear. 779 participants in the challenge have collectively set aside over \$800,000 for their futures since late 2020.

Sometimes a participant needs a small financial boost; other times they need a small nudge from a person they trust. Financial Coaching does just that, providing personal support to make immediate and tangible actions that improve financial wellbeing. These days, regular expenses add up fast, which can add a lot of pressure to a household budget. Having a Financial Coach in their corner means participants can take small steps in the right direction and feel more in control of their finances. Last year our coaches delivered 283 financial coaching sessions and 83% of coaching participants reported meeting one or more of their financial goals.

Momentum participants saved for:



8
Homes



81
Education
Assets



10
Tools
for Work



22
RESPs



24
Emergency
Funds

\$800K
saved

saved through the Momentum Savings Challenge, our app-based savings program



“I had feelings of hopelessness around my finances with my cognitive impairment because I couldn't make sense of money the way I used to. I discovered through Momentum that I can take small steps rather than give up when I can't “solve” everything at once. I saw my money growing over the course of six months, and then it was matched! It was proof that I could accomplish saving with simple intention and coordinated effort and it inspired me to address other aspects of my life too.”

- Sage (She, Her)
Savings Circles Graduate

Aspire Across Our City

The Aspire Financial Empowerment Collaborative was just a seed of an idea in 2014, when Momentum joined hands with other community partners to start making city-wide changes for Financial Empowerment. Now 24 community partners make financial education, tools, and behaviour change easier to access for Calgarians. From tax clinics that help participants access over \$3.4M in tax returns, to just-in-time education for Calgarians transitioning out of crisis, to system-wide efforts to improve RESP and Canada Learning Bond uptake, the impact of Aspire is felt across our city.

9,700
Calgarians

participated in Financial Empowerment programs through the Aspire Collaborative



of which

8,134
people

participated in free tax clinics hosted by Aspire partners, receiving an estimated \$3.4 million in tax returns



Small, Beautiful Business

Profit & Purpose



“Building a business is a learning experience. I’m lucky to have people who are rallying around me, telling me to be myself. I’m drawing on every connection I have and building a solid base. My business is growing – I wish I had a hundred clients, but I just need to relax! It takes time.”

- Thelia (She, Her)
Self-Employment graduate and Microloan recipient, Owner of Soul Studio

444
people participated in business training 

400+
businesses in the Be Local Network 

19
microloans paid in full, and 66 jobs created by microloan recipients

\$26K
returned to the local economy through Be Local initiatives

Thelia is right. Starting and building a business takes time. Each great customer experience, new marketing idea or revenue stream takes a lot of work – for small businesses, small steps are the only way to go the long haul. And in Thelia’s case, small business really is beautiful. Her art therapy practice opens up the world of art to give people with a history of trauma or a disability a moment of peace and clarity.

Momentum knows that small businesses create big benefits for our communities and that training, coaching, and microloans are a smart investment in entrepreneurs. When small business owners take their ideas to market, not only can they earn a sustainable income, they buy local supplies, offer high value products and services, and create meaningful work for others. Every \$1 spent locally re-circulates, creating \$7 of local economic activity.

Taking business and community benefit up a notch, the **Be Local Network** is intent on supporting social entrepreneurs. It’s all about finding the sweet spot where doing good is good for business. Peer learning and networking are two ways that Be Local makes finding that sweet spot easier. It’s easy to be inspired by Be Local members, 94% of whom are working towards a positive social impact.

Big Dreams. Better Jobs.



“I applied for Momentum’s training, still asking myself, could I do that? I have a small stature and I was concerned because I didn’t do [carpentry] before. But the Momentum Facilitator encouraged me. I decided to make this change, that’s what makes life interesting – it’s a new adventure for me!”

- Lexi (She, Her)
Carpentry Graduate



“I wanted something more than just a job – I wanted to make a career so I could start helping [my family]. It’s different every day, and there’s always going to be work.”

- Joseph (He, Him)
Automotive & Heavy Duty Graduate

Photo credit: Aryn Toombs of Livewire Calgary

Joseph and Lexi are taking brave and adventurous steps towards their future. Lexi immigrated from China so that she and her wife could legally marry, while Joseph came to Canada after escaping the Sudanese Civil War and being separated from his family.

Over 1,500 Calgarians like Joseph and Lexi have found good jobs and career paths since Momentum started Trades and Tech training. And the ingredients that help them be successful have not changed much. Workplace skills and technical training, along with real-world work experience is a powerful combination. What has changed is expanded opportunities in Calgary’s growing technology sector. It’s also time for us all to rethink who can do the job—including more women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in Trades and Tech training opportunities will only make workplaces stronger.

 <p>87% of Trades and Tech participants were employed in their field after 90 days</p>	 <p>2 new Tech Training programs launched, with a focus on women and Indigenous learners</p>	 <p>new funding for Trades programming to be more inclusive for women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people</p>
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Momentum offered training in...

 <p>Carpentry</p>	 <p>Plumbing & Pipefitting</p>	 <p>Automotive & Heavy Duty</p>	 <p>Information Technology</p>	 <p>Digital Marketing</p>
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Closer to a Sustainable Livelihood

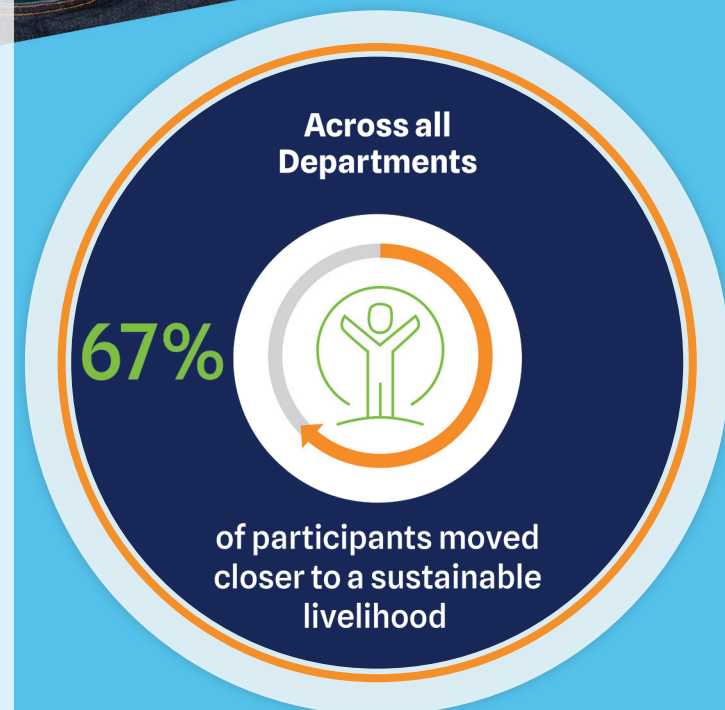
Imagine... every person has a sustainable livelihood and contributes to their community. This is our vision that the Sustainable Livelihoods framework helps us advance.

Momentum wanted to know: Do the changes that participants make in their lives at Momentum make a difference for them long-term? How do they move towards a sustainable livelihood?

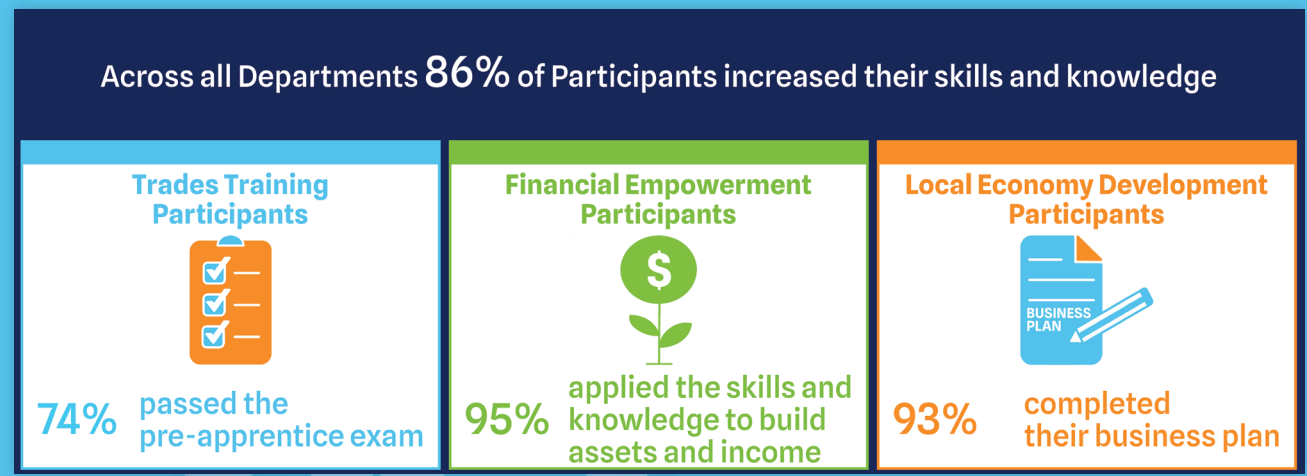
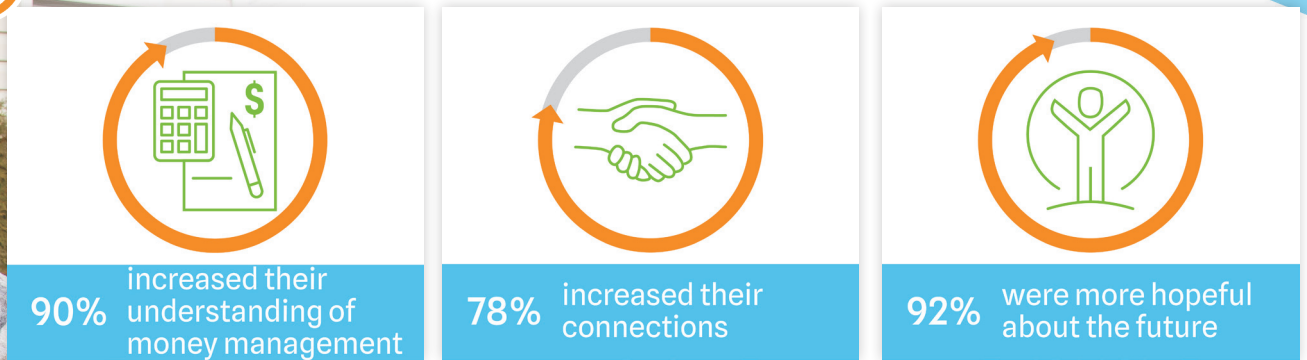
To find out, Momentum conducted a long-term evaluation, engaging 600 participants over a two-year period to explore how they are building a sustainable livelihood.

The results are a clear and resounding answer:

Participants found growth in skills and knowledge, self-confidence, money management skills, and income, as well as improved debt management, housing situation, and employment. Overall, the results of the evaluation demonstrate impressive success of participants, while managing the many recent pandemic-related and economic challenges.



The long-term evaluation found the following results across Momentum programs involved in the Sustainable Livelihoods project.



Education Should Be a Safe Bet

This year, Momentum’s Policy, Research and Evaluation team explored consumer protection issues connected to Private Career Colleges (PCCs). The main motivation? Learning from many of our participants who had tens of thousands of dollars in student loan debt, paired with poor job prospects after receiving training at a Private Career College.

After a year of research and community engagement, Momentum published the policy report: **High Hopes, High Costs – Protecting Students at Private Career Colleges**. Through this report, Momentum is shining a light on the risks that students of Private Career Colleges face and proposing policy changes to make this training pathway a safer choice for all students, especially for more vulnerable learners.

Over 1,300 Private Career Colleges (PCCs) across Canada offer career-focused training to students seeking new skills to meet the job market. PCCs offer students convenience, flexibility, smaller class sizes, and intensive programs to enhance their practical skills and become more competitive in the job market. Many colleges are creating great value in our economy and have an important role to play; we have an opportunity to raise the bar and ensure all PCCs offer a high-quality learning experience. Momentum believes that training and education should always be a safe bet—we can’t afford to ignore problematic practices that put students at risk.



“I was scared of the debt, but I was already enrolled [in the PCC program]. I thought, well, if this pans out for a great job then it will be worth it. It wasn’t though. I was left \$20K in debt and still working dead-end jobs. I am still paying off this debt 10 years later. I am in a great job now but after going back to school – this time at a local university and taking on more debt. I would be so much further ahead if I hadn’t done the [PCC] program.”

- Jacklyn (She, Her)
Former PCC Business Administration and Bookkeeping Student

Staying Afloat with Inflation

Momentum also participated in advocacy with Vibrant Communities Calgary and other partners, that contributed to the provincial government re-indexing both Income Support and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) to inflation. This change ensures income supports for vulnerable Albertans keep pace with the rising cost of living. It is a meaningful small policy step that makes a big difference for thousands of Albertans.



800+ downloads of Momentum public policy publications



133 connections with community organizations



32 media stories in 8 outlets

Momentum’s Reconciliation Journey

Momentum knew that too many Indigenous people in Calgary and Treaty 7 were experiencing poverty. What we didn’t know was what role we could play. By launching an Indigenous Strategy and Working Group in 2016, Momentum began the process of opening the door wider for Indigenous people to engage in Momentum’s programs. Slowly but surely, we have learned, listened, and built relationships, and many Indigenous people and communities have opened their doors to us. In 2022 alone, the number of Indigenous people that Momentum works with has almost doubled. It has taken time, but now Indigenous staff facilitate programming for Indigenous learners within Calgary and across Treaty 7.



2 new programs piloted for Indigenous learners



349 Indigenous participants reached

Thank You

In the fall of 2022, Momentum received a landmark opportunity to participate in Macquarie Group's annual Brew-Off, one of the largest (and most fun!) industry-driven charitable events in the Calgary area. Thanks to the incredible generosity of Macquarie's staff, our loyal donors, and our community, the Brew-Off was an extraordinary success. Thank you so much to everyone who supported this amazing event!

None of this could have been made possible without the Macquarie Group Foundation, which drives social impact work for Macquarie. Its program to match staff donations and fundraising resulted in a transformational matching gift to Momentum – a gift that will impact thousands of Calgarians building sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families. Enabled through fundraising by Macquarie's people and businesses, we are so proud to welcome this more than \$1M donation! Macquarie's support of Momentum, commitment to building inclusive communities, and creation of such an impactful opportunity to engage Calgarians, are rare and special gifts all on their own. We are deeply grateful to Macquarie and our community of donors for this incredible opportunity.

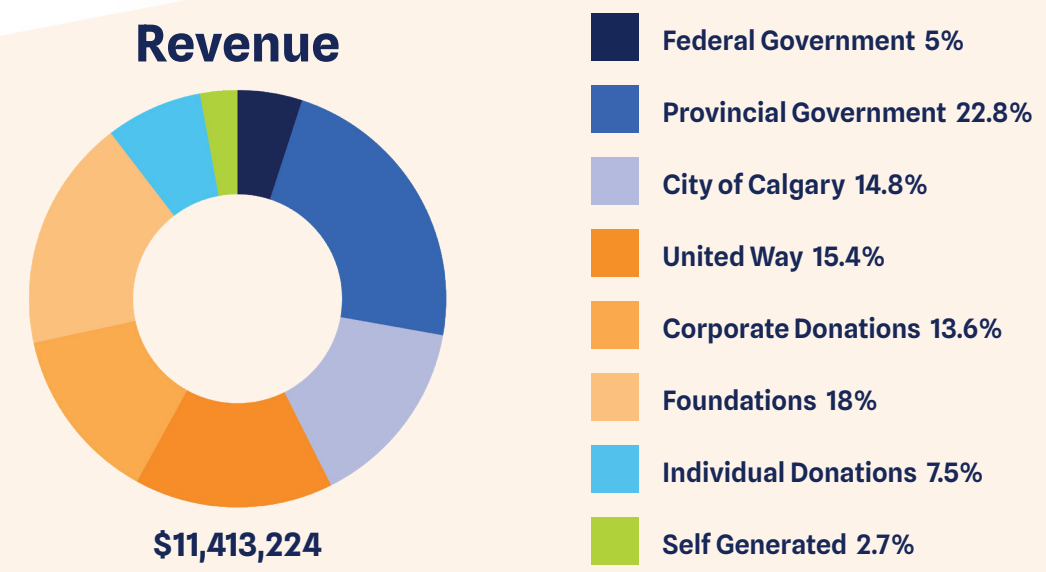
View our Audited Financial Statements at momentum.org/publications/annual-reports/



“Partnering with Momentum and seeing the community impact that is possible is tremendously heartening. The Macquarie Brew-Off is a long-standing staff fundraiser that highlights the impact that can be made by engaging our people, corporate colleagues, and non-profit partners. With the support of the Macquarie Group Foundation, this fundraiser has raised millions to support local organizations and create some much needed good in our community.”

- Aarnoud van Weelderen (He, Him)
Senior Managing Director at Macquarie Group

Thank you to the hundreds of generous donors who contribute to building a thriving community for all. Your investment in Momentum is a big deal. Momentum's largest donors are recognized below.





Momentum is a change-making organization that acts as a bridge by taking an economic approach to poverty reduction and adding a social perspective to economic development initiatives.

Our programs are holistic, covering everything from financial literacy, entrepreneurship and employment training, to developing communication skills, building self-confidence and establishing positive social networks.

We're not doing this alone!

Momentum is committed to reducing poverty in Calgary in partnership with the Enough for All Strategy, Vibrant Communities Calgary, and all our community partners.



For More Information



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