OLUNDARA FOUNDATION

8-Year Impact Report: Mental Health & Belonging

2017–2025 | Healing in Community, Flourishing Together

1. Our Story and Eight-Year Journey

“Eight years ago, we started with one question: What happens when people don’t just get services, but get belonging?”
Since 2017, Olundara Foundation has worked to build mental wellness and belonging through coaching, counselling and community connection. Olundara has reached more than 1,000 individuals through mental health support and community programming.

Olundara Foundation is a Canadian registered not-for-profit brand that has for the past ten years been working actively with newcomers in Canada. Built on the core values of love and care for newcomers from diverse backgrounds that may or may not be facing any potential barriers to settling down in Canada, Olundara foundation was set up as a beacon to offer timely, customer facing, result driven, and society impacting newcomers settlement services in Ontario, Canada.

Over the years, Olundara foundation has offered timely and immense help to various and diverse categories of newcomers to Canada, covering areas like systematic reduction of barriers to settlement, coaching and training of newcomers, facilitating social and cultural integration of new comers to numerous communities across Ontario, facilitation and assistance with securing employment, accommodation, social services, and benefits among others. At Olundara Foundation, neither race nor color matters, we only hold on tenaciously to these words, “people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

2. Who We Serve and How We Support Belonging

We measure impact not just by symptoms reduced, but by belonging restored.

Women — Needs: burnout, caregiver stress, postpartum challenges, trauma and Tall Poppy Syndrome. Approaches: Flourish Circles, Creating Vessels Coaching, Sisterhood Gatherings.

Men — Needs: isolation, stigma around seeking help, identity and employment. Approaches: Men's Safe Harbour, Purpose & Work Clinics.
New Immigrants — Needs: acculturation stress, loss, discrimination and employment trauma. Approaches: Welcome Wellness, culturally adapted counselling, peer navigators.
International Students — Needs: loneliness, academic pressure, financial stress and visa anxiety. Approaches: Campus-to-Community Bridge, Flourish on Campus.
Families — Needs: intergenerational trauma, cross-cultural parenting and conflict. Approaches: Family Vessel Restoration, Parenting in Two Worlds.
2017–2019 | The Seed Years — Foundation, early listening circles and volunteer-led support.
2020–2021 | The Storm Years — COVID-19 response, virtual Real Contact circles and phone check-ins for seniors and newcomers.
2022–2023 | The Root Years — Formalized newcomer and international-student programming; first Women's Flourish Gala.
2024–2025 | The Flourish Years — Expansion of group-based mental wellness and integrated coaching, counselling and consulting.

3. Impact: Reach and Outcomes

Individuals served: 1,000+.
Service hours:
Improved mental wellness: 78%. Increased belonging: 85%. Newcomer resource connections/retention: 95% at six months.
Women | From Surviving to Flourishing — 72% rated wellbeing at 4/10 or below before participation; average rose to 7.8/10 after an eight-week circle.
Men | Breaking Silence — 58% continued to monthly peer meet-ups.
New Immigrants | Belonging as Medicine — Explore changes in stigma, resource navigation and social connection through culturally matched peer facilitation. Languages supported: [pending].
International Students | From Isolation to Community — loneliness rating decreased from 8.2/10 to 4.1/10 after six weeks.
Families | Healing Together — Document change in parent–youth communication following intergenerational dialogue workshops.

4. Our Approach: Coaching, Counselling and Community

Coaching + Counselling + Community — A combination of individual support, practical skills and sustained peer connection.
Culturally Rooted — Language, lived experience and cultural context shape how participants are welcomed and supported.

5. Community Voices

“As a new immigrant mother, I thought depression was my fault. Olundara gave me sisters.” — A., Kenya, mother of three.
“I was going to go home. This circle became my family in Canada.” — S., international student.
“As a man, I learned wellness isn’t weakness.” — J., men’s group participant.

6. Sustainability, Challenges and Lessons

Total invested in mental health: $32,000.
Sources: donors, grants, events and partnerships.
Annual funding and participation trends, 2017–2025.
Stigma remains a barrier for newcomer men; additional male facilitators may be needed.
Housing insecurity and mental wellness intersect. Demand may exceed capacity.

7. In the Community | Media and Resources

https://www.bradfordtoday.ca/local-news/richness-and-diversity-storytellers-share-african-culture-wisdom-in-bradford-10901265

https://www.olundarafoundation.org/workshops-seminars/