



# Restorative Inquiry

Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children



## The Apology – Oct. 10, 2014

“

On behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia, I apologize to those who suffered abuse and neglect at the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children. It is one of the great tragedies in our province's history that your cries for help were greeted with silence for so long.

...

We thank you for showing such courage and perseverance in telling your stories. Your strength, your resilience, and your desire for healing and reconciliation should be an inspiration to all Nova Scotians. To the African Nova Scotian community: we are sorry. The struggle of the Home is only one chapter in a history of systemic racism and inequality that has scarred our province for generations.

...

We must acknowledge that in many ways, and for many years, we as a province have not adequately met the needs of African Nova Scotian children and their families. We are sorry. As Nova Scotians—as a people, walking together—we must do better.

...

We are sorry for your suffering, we are grateful for your courage,  
and we welcome your help in building a healthier future for all of us.”

# Restorative Inquiry – A Big-Picture Approach

- Former residents at the centre; NSHCC as a lens on broader issues of systemic racism and its effects
- Mandate to examine how barriers affect African Nova Scotians in key institutions—child and family services, justice, education, health
- RI is focused on building partnerships – not just recommendations on policy or programs, but strengthening relationships that will lead to lasting change

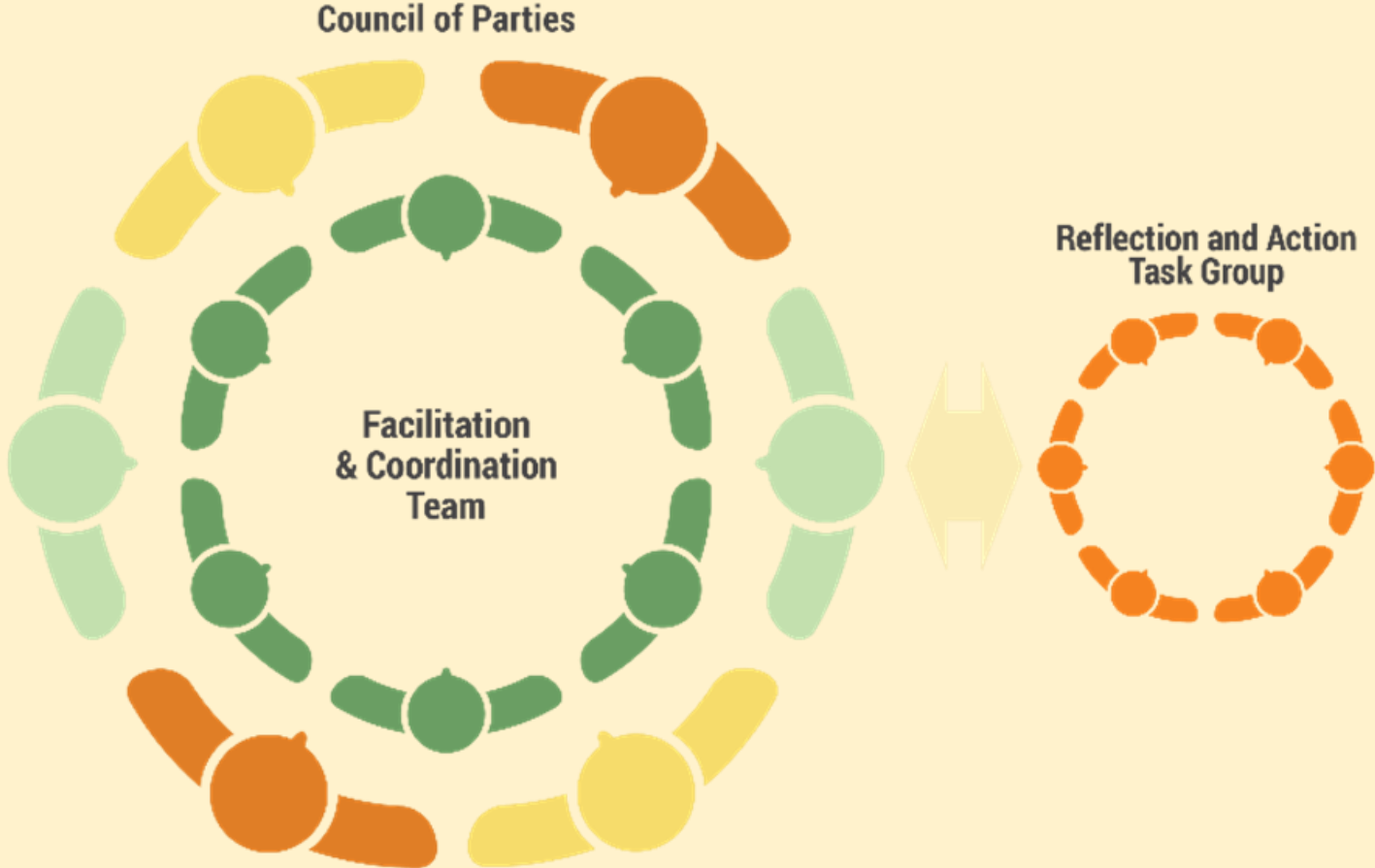


# How Does it Operate?

**Council of Parties:**  
governance, strategic  
direction

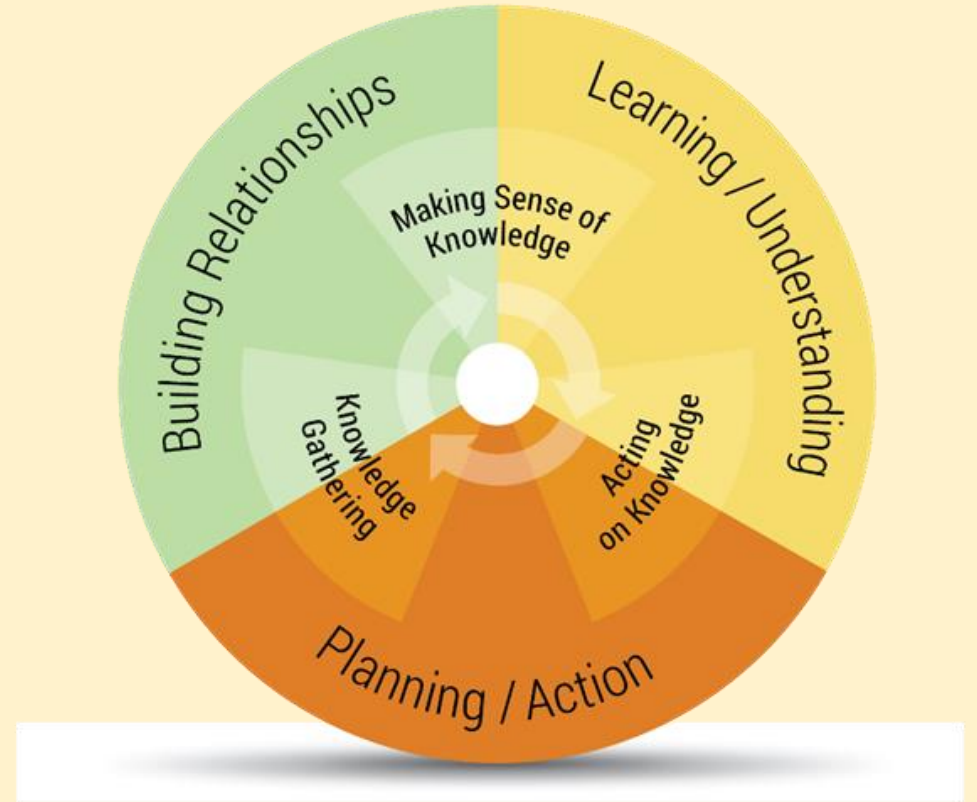
**Facilitation &  
Coordination Team:**  
day-to-day operations

**Reflection & Action  
Task Group:** actions,  
recommendations, next  
steps



# Restorative Inquiry process

- Build just and respectful relationships
- Develop knowledge and understanding
- Develop plans and take action
- Establish shared understanding and seek just social change

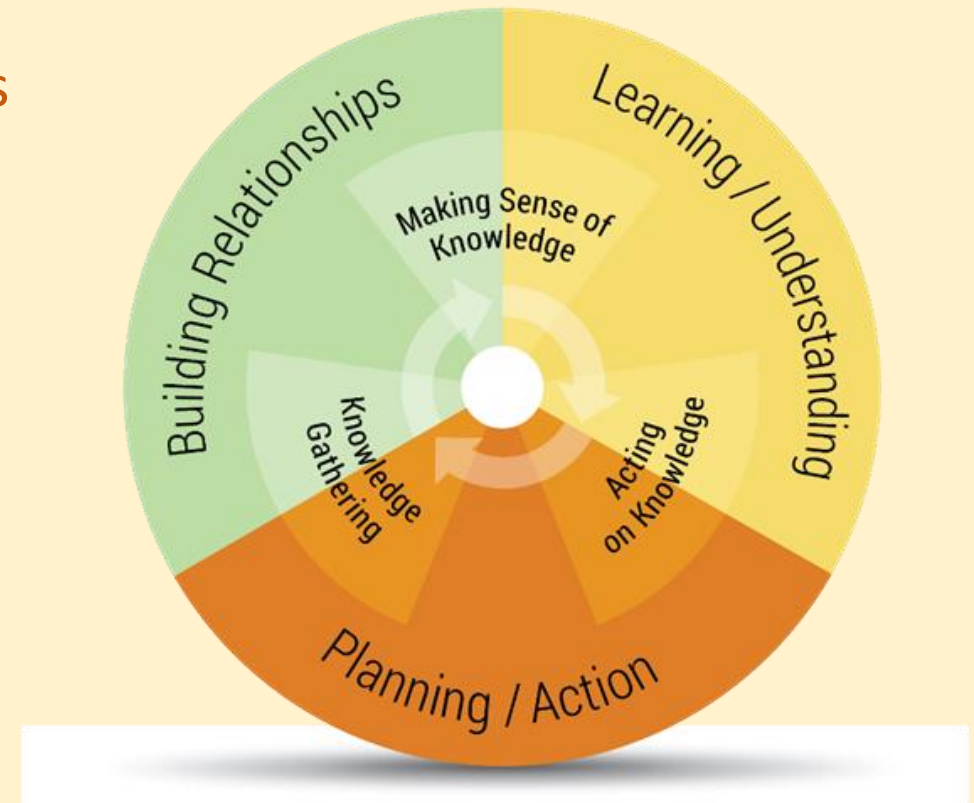


# Work to date

## Building relationships

- Meeting with partners, service providers
- Building connections with former residents
- Hosting community sessions
- Developing support networks

## Research work with NSHCC



# Some of What We've Heard

- Need more support for African Nova Scotian youth
  - “I need the people around me to want to see me win”*
- Systemic racism continues to have a major impact
- ANS communities want better working relationships with institutions
  - Across education, health, justice, community services, etc.
- Ongoing need for better data, resources, recognition

# Next Steps

## Sharing Circles with Former Residents

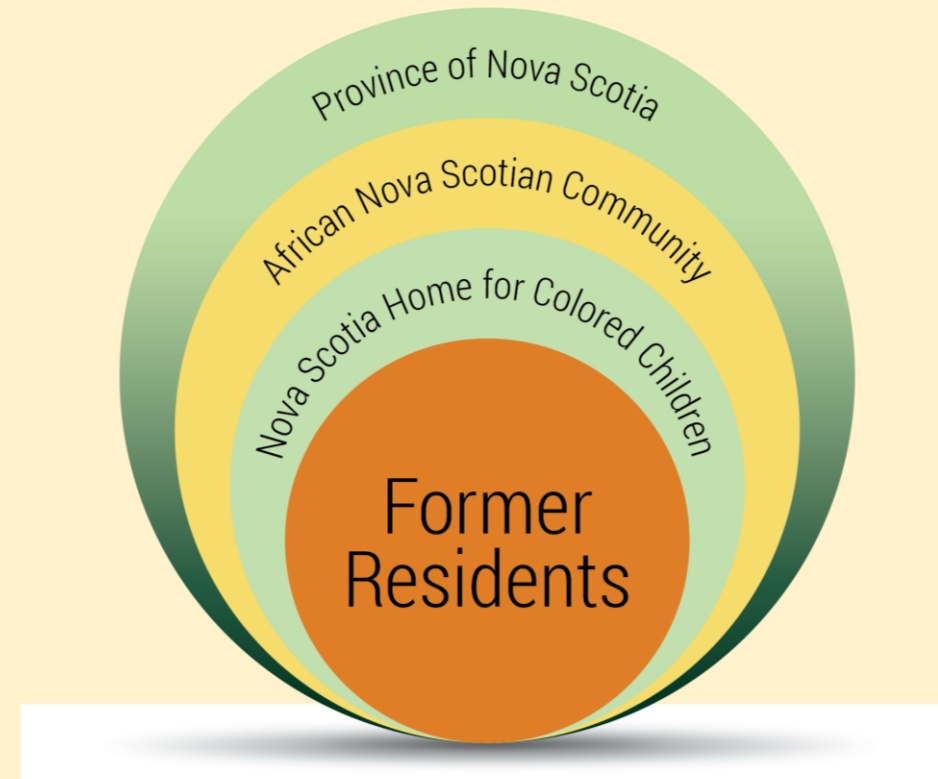
- Around education, justice, caregivers, community

## Partners Circles

- African Nova Scotian communities, public agencies

## Ongoing research

## Moving toward addressing issues together





# Tentative Timeline



Former Residents sharing circles – Winter/Spring 2017

Partners Circles – Winter/Spring 2017

Understanding and Issues Dialogues – Spring/Summer 2017

Focus on Action/Next Steps – Fall 2017/Winter 2018

Research – Ongoing

Restorative Inquiry conclusion – Spring 2018

# Questions?

- What opportunities do you see in this process?
- What could make a difference to your work?