

# Canada Without Poverty Annual Report

April 2017 ~ March 2018

# Mission Statement

Canada Without Poverty seeks to eradicate poverty in Canada for the benefit of all by educating Canadians about the human and financial cost of poverty, and by identifying public policy solutions.

## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We are at a moment of both crisis and great change. Census data released last year illustrates how Canada's poverty rate has not budged in ten years - and we can see in both statistics and our everyday lives that income inequality, housing insecurity, food insecurity and job precarity are growing. People in Canada, particularly women, Indigenous peoples, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, and a growing number of seniors are living in the gap and are unable to meet their basic needs.

Despite this, we have reasons to hope. Over the past fiscal year for Canada Without Poverty, we've seen movement our communities have long been calling for, including the launch of Canada's first National Housing Strategy, which espouses a human rights approach. There is still much work to be done to ensure that we are moving to a place where economic and social rights are a reality in Canada and where people living in poverty can truly access their rights. But we're witnessing a sea change and it is a critical time for us to capitalize on the opportunity for progress.

Thank you for helping us reach this point of change.

In gratitude,



Leilani Farha  
Executive Director



# About Canada Without Poverty

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[www.cwp-csp.ca](http://www.cwp-csp.ca)

## Staff

**Executive Director:** Leilani Farha

**Deputy Director:** Megan Hooft (on maternity leave)

**Deputy Director - interim:** Harriett McLachlan

**Communications & Development Coordinator:** Laura Neidhart

**Legal Outreach & Education Coordinator:** Michele Biss (on maternity leave)

**Legal Outreach & Education Coordinator - interim:** Liz Majic

## Board of Directors

*Canada Without Poverty has always been governed by a Board of Directors with a lived experience of poverty.*

Laura Cattari (P)	ON	Meris K. Brookland (S)	NB
Wayne MacNaughton	NS	Norm Skelton	At-Large
Reanna Osbourne	BC	Bonnie Morton	SK
Derek Cook	AB	Rose Ing	At-Large
George Lessard (VP)	NWT	Amanda Ens	West
Kate Mechan	YK	Ruth MacDonald (T)	NL

## Honorary Board

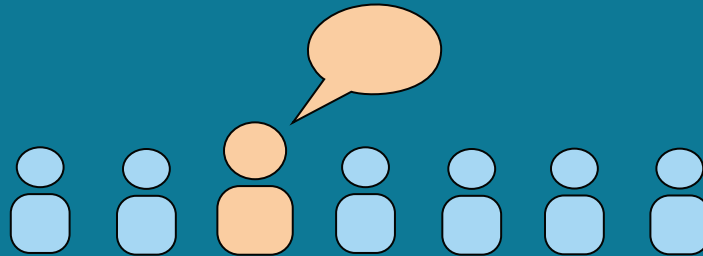
Right Hon. Joe Clark, PC, CC, AOE  
Hon. Louise Arbour, CC, GOQ  
Hon. Monique Bégin, PC, OC, FRSC  
Hon. Ed Broadbent, PC, CC  
Ovide Mercredi, OM

## Students & Volunteers

Rosemary Spendlove	Michel Hogan
Cara Bally	Suraiya Jinah
Austin Daly	Konica Kochar
Sarah DelVillano	Roshney Kurian
Tamar Harris	Hannah MacDonald

# What We've Done

## Facilitating the First Voice Perspective with the CPRS



The federal government opened a public consultation for the forthcoming Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy (CPRS), Canada's first national anti-poverty plan. Knowing that the first voice perspective of people who have a lived experience of poverty is critical for an effective plan, CWP launched our This is Poverty campaign to strengthen the consultation process for the CPRS and make it accessible to people with lived experience. The campaign asked people with lived experiences of poverty to share their testimonies in order to bring the reality of poverty in Canada out of the shadows and dismantle the myths that persist about poverty, hunger, and homelessness. Through This is Poverty, people across Canada shared their stories and recommendations in video and written submissions, which guided the development of CWP's formal report for the consultation.

## Growing Engagement in the North

In May and June, we took our unique economic and social rights workshops to Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories for the first time. Working with local grassroots organizations in urban and rural centres from Whitehorse to Behchokq, our courses and public



events addressed the context of the particular challenges of ending poverty in the North and featured "listening circles", culturally-responsive materials, and self-advocacy approaches to allow participants to build partnerships and establish plans to engage with their governments. CWP staff also met with local policymakers in diverse communities and created opportunities for participants to share their first voice perspectives at the national level.

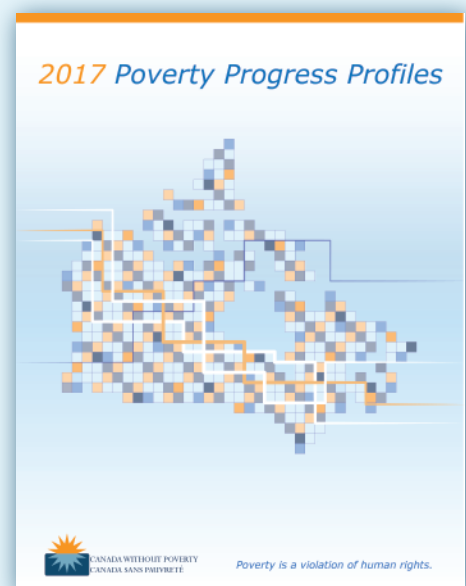
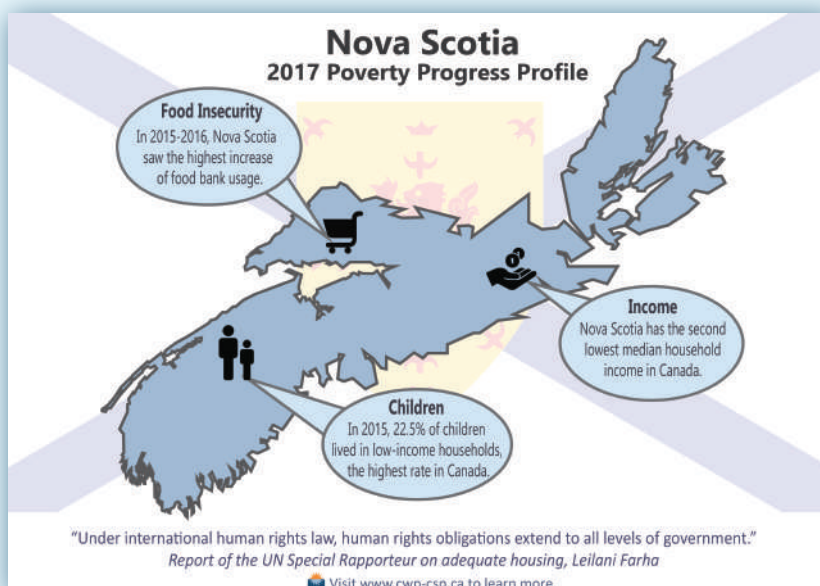
## Mobilizing around Dignity for All and #ChewOnThis!

2017 saw the largest growth of the #ChewOnThis! campaign with over 80 events in every province and territory. For the 5th year in a row, participants talked to thousands in their communities across the country and handed out over 20,000 postcards to send to Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, calling for the CPRS to be fully-funded, based in human rights, and legislated so that it is not subject to changing political climates. #ChewOnThis! is a yearly opportunity for people in communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast to build awareness about poverty and food insecurity, and engage their neighbours to take action to end poverty in Canada.



### Monitoring the Progress of Poverty

In the winter, CWP launched the new format of the Poverty Progress Profile reports. The reports were created in 2012 following the elimination of the National Council of Welfare to provide a method of monitoring the status and effectiveness of provincial and territorial poverty reduction strategies. The new format developed by CWP provides more concise and targeted information on these strategies, evaluating the participation of provincial and territorial governments in human rights processes and whether their strategies meet the essential components of a human rights framework, while also providing a snapshot of the realities of poverty, homelessness, health, and food insecurity in communities around the country.





## Ensuring the Right to Housing in a National Strategy

On November 22nd, groups across Canada marked National Housing Day with the launch of the federal government's National Housing Strategy (NHS), which included significant investment in housing programmes and referenced the right to housing for people in Canada for the first time. Though there is still significant work to do to ensure the policy is attached to enabling legislation, CWP played a leadership role in ensuring a rights framework is the starting point.



## Advancing Rights for Persons with Disabilities



In April 2017, we attended the first review of Canada under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the United Nations in Geneva. Working in partnership with Canadian organizations that serve the disability community, our submission and statements focused on the intersection between poverty and disability – highlighting the reality that persons with disabilities are twice as likely to live below the poverty line and centering the call for a rights-based strategy to eliminate poverty. CWP's Board President Laura Cattari gave powerful statements to the Committee drawing from her personal experiences of living in poverty with disabilities in Canada and sharing the systemic discrimination she has faced.

## Strengthening Civil Society



In January 2018, Leilani Farha appeared as a witness and was cross-examined as part of CWP's constitutional challenge to provisions in the Income Tax Act that limit civil society contributions to public discourse and policy development by infringing charitable freedom of expression. While we've since received a judgment in the case which you can read about on our website, we know there is a long road ahead to strengthen democracy and civil society in Canada.

## Knowledge-Building on Human Rights

CWP's Economic and Social Rights education program continued to grow throughout the year, through our in-person workshops at the Canadian Poverty Institute at Ambrose University, our numerous webinars and presentations, and our online course. The 2017 summer online course focused on the realities of poverty in BC, exploring the increasing cost of living, lack of affordable housing, the ongoing criminalization of poverty, and the potential for the development of the province's first anti-poverty strategy in relation to human rights. This past year, CWP also held in-person human rights training workshops with youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness with our partners at Away Home Ottawa.



## Evaluating the Impacts of Precarity

As part of the *Dignity for All* campaign this year, we developed the "Living in the Gap" infographic series featuring profiles of model households in Canada facing economic challenges, like unaffordable childcare, skyrocketing rents, and food insecurity. These

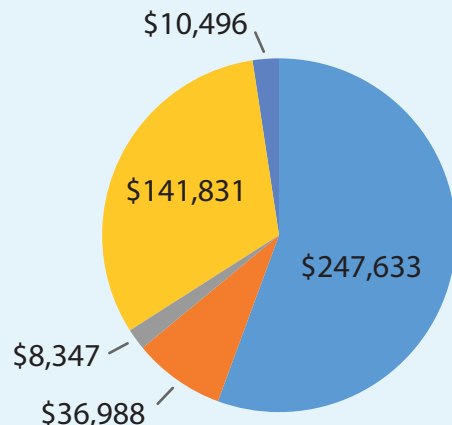
### Living in the Gap: A Snapshot of Precarity in Canada



snapshots of the monthly incomes, expenses, and experiences of six fictitious households in rural and urban communities. The profiles illustrate why it is important to use targeted, evidence-based approaches to tackling precarity and poverty in Canada. CWP also presented to parliamentary committees, including Finance, and participated in the All Party Anti-Poverty Caucus throughout the year to ensure the first voice perspective was at every table.

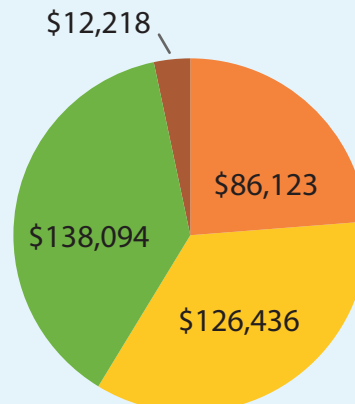
## Snapshot of Finances

### Expenses



- Program and Salary
- Administrative Costs
- Fundraising
- Special Projects (Special Rapporteur)
- Other

### Revenue



- Individual Donations
- Foundations, Unions, and Corporate Support
- Special Projects (Special Rapporteur)
- Course Registration and Other

## Our Supporters

Canada Without Poverty is supported by individuals and organizations from all across the country who are committed to a poverty-free and more socially just Canada. We are so grateful to our community of supporters for believing in our work. Last year's supporting organizations include:

The Daly Foundation ♦ Canadian Union of Public Employees ♦ Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph ♦ Public Service Alliance of Canada ♦ LUSH Charity Pot Program ♦ UNIFOR ♦ Community Foundation of Nova Scotia ♦ Steelworkers Humanity Fund ♦ Canadian Labour Congress ♦ Uniform Garment ♦ Health Sciences Association of British Columbia ♦ Paypal ♦ Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions ♦ Congregation of Notre Dame, Visitation Province ♦ Ontario Teachers' Federation ♦ Victoria Foundation ♦ United Way Centraide Ottawa ♦ The United Church of Canada ♦ United Way of Greater Toronto ♦ Sisters of Saint Ann ♦ Thousand Island Monthly Meeting ♦ Felician Sisters of St. Francis of Canada ♦ British Columbia Teachers' Federation ♦ Nova Scotia Teachers Union ♦ Common Front For Social Justice ♦ Community Food Centres Canada ♦ United Way of the Lower Mainland ♦ OSSTF District 26 ♦ Turcot ♦ Vancouver Island University ♦ The Salvation Army Correctional and Justice Services - Ottawa ♦

*Thank you!*