

Federal action plan to eradicate poverty ^[1]

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Full report PDF ^[2]

Canada's chance to make good on broken promises to end poverty

The Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy (CPRS) is Canada's chance to make good on broken promises to end poverty. Campaign 2000 and its partners have been calling for the federal government to develop a pan-Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy for decades to formalize an action plan to eradicate poverty in Canada. While parliamentarians committed to eliminate poverty among children in 1989 by the year 2000, in 2009 for all persons and in 2015 among children, the necessary action plans have never materialized. That is why we have insisted on targets regarding reductions in the rate and depth of poverty that are attached to timelines. The government has promised targets; but has been silent on timelines.

Canada is a wealthy but deeply unequal country – we need strong federal leadership to help turn the tide against the poverty that robs 4.9 million Canadians of dignity, well-being, opportunity and success; and places children at elevated risk of child maltreatment, school failure, and recruitment into crime and sexual exploitation. The CPRS has the ability to create a new foundation for Canada built on equity and dignity whereby no Canadian no matter their age, ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation and education should live in poverty in the country.

To be successful, the CPRS must be a shared, cross Canada priority with the Federal Government taking a substantial leadership role providing vision, taking accountability for progress and, maintaining investment, and enabling provinces, territories and First Nations governments to play active roles. The guiding targets and timelines must be bold, comprehensive and unrelenting. To do this, the objective of reducing and eradicating poverty must guide all economic, fiscal, taxation and social policy decision-making and budgetary priorities in the short and long term. We call on all parties in the House of Commons to support substantive and comprehensive action to end poverty.

With the CPRS, Canada must move pledges to eliminate poverty from rhetoric to reality. We must finally put people in poverty first. After decades of waiting, there is no choice – we must act now and get this strategy right.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: poverty ^[4]

government ^[5]

funding ^[6]

social services ^[7]

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Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/17/06/federal-action-plan-eradicate-poverty> [2] http://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/PovertyReductionStrategy_June9_2017.pdf [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/poverty> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8941> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/social-services>