

NORTH SHORE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

MARCH 2023



**Skwxwú7mesh
Úxwumixw**
Squamish Nation



Tsleil-Waututh Nation
PEOPLE OF THE INLET

CONTENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT	1
APPRECIATION	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	5
UNDERSTANDING POVERTY	6
What is poverty?	6
What causes poverty?	7
Who is responsible for addressing poverty?	9
POVERTY ON THE NORTH SHORE	11
Cost of living and homelessness	12
Income inequality	14
Lived experiences of poverty	15
COVID-19 and poverty	17
Measuring poverty	18
Community strengths and challenges	18
Existing local policies and programs that may support poverty reduction efforts	19
Who is leading the charge to address poverty on the North Shore?	20
How can we address poverty?	22
VISION	23
PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	24
Priority 1: Continue to Work Together	24
Priority 2: Enhance Access to Services	25
Priority 3: Create a More Inclusive North Shore	27
Priority 4: Address the Cost of Living	28
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND MONITORING	30
JOIN THE MOVEMENT	33
APPENDIX A GLOSSARY	34
APPENDIX B ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	38
APPENDIX C ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY	41



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, and District of West Vancouver are on the traditional and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). The North Shore local governments are committed to reconciliation with these Nations, who have lived on these lands since time immemorial. Discriminatory, racist, and colonial practices have had a lasting legacy and continue to create barriers for Indigenous people on the North Shore.

Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səliwətaʔ are partners in this work and key members of the project's Steering Committee. This involvement has helped to ground this strategy in truth, creating space for learning and healing. The work on reconciliation continues and this document will help to advance the conversation of poverty reduction on the North Shore.



APPRECIATION

The people who work in the local and public services sector are acknowledged for their commitment to delivering services and programs to reduce poverty on the North Shore. Local governments continue to play a role in supporting service providers by creating an environment that fosters partnerships and collaboration.

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy was made possible by the participation from people and organizations across the North Shore. Thank you to everyone who shared their personal stories and experiences of living in poverty. Thank you to the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force members for providing input into the Strategy, and to the Steering Committee who worked together throughout the process.

NORTH SHORE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY TASK FORCE

Organizations

Canadian Mental Health Association
Hollyburn Community Services Society
Impact North Shore
Lookout Housing and Health Society
North Shore Crisis Services Society
North Shore Disability Resource Centre Association
North Shore Neighborhood House
North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Silver Harbour Centre
West Vancouver Community Foundation

Provincial and municipal-level support

District of West Vancouver
(Youth and Seniors services)
North Vancouver City Library
North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission
North Vancouver School District
Vancouver Coastal Health
West Vancouver Memorial Library
West Vancouver Police Department
West Vancouver Schools

Community Networks

North Shore Table Matters

THE NORTH SHORE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY STEERING COMMITTEE

District of West Vancouver
City of North Vancouver
District of North Vancouver
səlilwətaɬ
Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw

THE CONSULTANT TEAM

CitySpaces Consulting

THE GRANT FUNDER

This work was funded by the Province through the Union of BC Municipalities' **Poverty Reduction Planning and Action program**. The intent of the program was to support local governments in reducing poverty at the local level and to support the Province's poverty reduction strategy, **TogetherBC**.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 10-year Poverty Reduction Strategy is a first for the North Shore. Its purpose is to build a movement to address poverty at the local level so residents can experience abundance in all areas of their lives. While many not-for-profit organizations and public service agencies have been working to support the community, this strategy represents a multi-jurisdictional approach that aims to support and enhance efforts on the North Shore, and how we can all work together to reduce poverty.

WHAT WE DID

With financial support from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, səilwətał, and the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force worked together to create this Poverty Reduction Strategy.

To inform the strategy, the project team researched existing policies and initiatives, and conducted targeted engagement. Over 200 participants were engaged, including representatives from the social services sector and people with lived experience with poverty.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Poverty is when someone does not have enough money to pay for necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and housing. Poverty also means not being able to have opportunities to be part of a community. There is no singular experience of poverty and poverty on the North Shore is not always visible. Poverty on the North Shore can look like someone experiencing homelessness, or people living in houses without enough money for their rent, food, and social activities. Poverty can also look like a new Canadian not able to find a job because they are still learning English or a single parent challenged to leave work on time to pick up their kids from daycare. Many circumstances may lead to people experiencing poverty.

Central findings from the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy process are as follows:

- On the North Shore, 10.4% of the population (19,545 people) is living below the poverty line compared to 10.8% in B.C.¹
- Based on income measures, 40% of people living below the poverty line in B.C. are working.²
- Structural barriers and systemic issues create additional challenges for people with intersecting identities (e.g. race, class, gender) leading to experiencing higher rates of poverty.
- Households with low income are experiencing significant barriers to stay on the North Shore and are using social service programs to a greater degree than in previous years.

Poverty is when someone does not have enough money to pay for necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and housing. Poverty also means not being able to have opportunities to be part of a community.

¹ Statistics Canada. 2022. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 30, 2022

² TogetherBC, British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2018

- Cost of living increases are affecting a wide range of households, especially the cost of housing, transportation, and food. People with lived experience highlighted the community’s strengths and the desire to continue living on the North Shore, while recognizing the challenges in doing so from an affordability perspective.
- Residents feel a sense of belonging when accessing local services. However, the need for help is surpassing the capacity and resources available to the organizations that deliver these services.
- Because the North Shore is perceived as a wealthy community, people experiencing poverty can feel intense shame, stigma, and isolation.
- COVID-19 highlighted the impact of government income support in reducing poverty. On the North Shore, the proportion of people living in poverty declined between 2016 and 2021 from 13.8% to 10.4%, principally because 67% of North Shore residents received some form of COVID-19 pandemic benefit.^{3,4} The uptake of benefits provides further evidence that providing income support to households with lower incomes has a direct positive impact on reducing poverty.

WHAT'S NEXT

The vision is to build a movement that reduces poverty and removes barriers to services, based on the values of creating an inclusive, equitable, anti-racist, thriving, and just community. Guided by the 10-year strategy, collaboration will help achieve this strategy’s vision to enhance access to services, address the cost of living, reduce barriers, and provide equitable opportunities. The four priorities of this strategy are:

PRIORITY 1: CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER

Build on established relationships on the North Shore. Collaborate in key areas to address poverty at a local level, take action on opportunities to formalize ways of working together, take action on reconciliation, and advocate to other levels of government for broader program and system changes.

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ACCESS TO SERVICES

Create opportunities to support the social services sector, increase the provision of services, and enhance navigation services to help residents access the services they need.

PRIORITY 3: CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE NORTH SHORE

Reduce barriers for people living in poverty to participate in civic life, build intergenerational connections, and nurture relationships. Generate awareness and educate the broader public on poverty, fostering a culture of compassion and allyship, build social connections, and create opportunities for everyone to participate in civic life.

PRIORITY 4: ADDRESS THE COST OF LIVING

Build on existing strengths and explore actions focused on the most acute cost of living issues such as housing, transportation, food, health care, and technology. While these topics are outside the jurisdiction of local governments and Nations, there is a role in advocacy, partnership, and influencing the local conditions to support systemic change.

³ Scott, “An unexpected consequence of the pandemic: Poverty declined sharply in Canada”, *The Monitor, An unexpected consequence of the pandemic: Poverty...* | [The Monitor \(monitormag.ca\)](http://The Monitor (monitormag.ca)).

⁴ For this statistic, the number of North Shore residents does not include residents living on-reserve as low-income data for 2016 was suppressed for on-reserve populations for privacy reasons.

INTRODUCTION

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy was created with financial support from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), and in collaboration with the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, səlilwətaɬ, and the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force. The strategy outlines what we know about local poverty and identifies priorities and actions to guide future initiatives. A glossary of key terms used throughout this strategy can be found in Appendix A.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

To develop the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Steering Committee and North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force met regularly from October 2021 to October 2022.

The Steering Committee was comprised of representatives from the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səlilwətaɬ. The Steering Committee provided direction to the project team on the overall process and content of this strategy.

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force was comprised of representatives from organizations across the North Shore with mandates relevant to poverty reduction. The role of the task force was to provide strategic advice and input into the process, including suggestions for people and groups to engage.

The process to develop the strategy involved the following key components:

INFORMATION MAPPING ON POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

underway or completed on the North Shore, such as housing strategies, Housing Needs Reports, Child Care Action Plans, and transportation planning. Key indicators of poverty on the North Shore were also researched.

TARGETED ENGAGEMENT

was a focus of the process. A total of 205 people, including people with lived experience, participated through sensitive listening interviews, workshops, focus groups, a questionnaire, and telephone calls.

This strategy summarizes the contributing factors of poverty on the North Shore and presents strategies and actions informed by the above noted research and engagement process.

UNDERSTANDING POVERTY

WHAT IS POVERTY?

Poverty is when someone does not have enough money to pay for necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter. However, poverty is about much more than not having enough money.

The provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy, TogetherBC, outlines four guiding principles to consider in poverty reduction efforts – affordability, opportunity, reconciliation, and social inclusion. When people are excluded within a society, prevented from accessing education and employment opportunities, or have a higher incidence of illness, there are negative consequences for society. Everyone pays the price of poverty due to the increased costs on the healthcare system, justice system, and other institutions that provide support to those living in poverty. Society benefits by providing opportunities for everyone to reach their full potential. Isolated seniors, children without lunch, and families without shelter have deep and long-lasting impacts on the individual, as well as families, friends, neighbours, and society as a whole.

Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time.

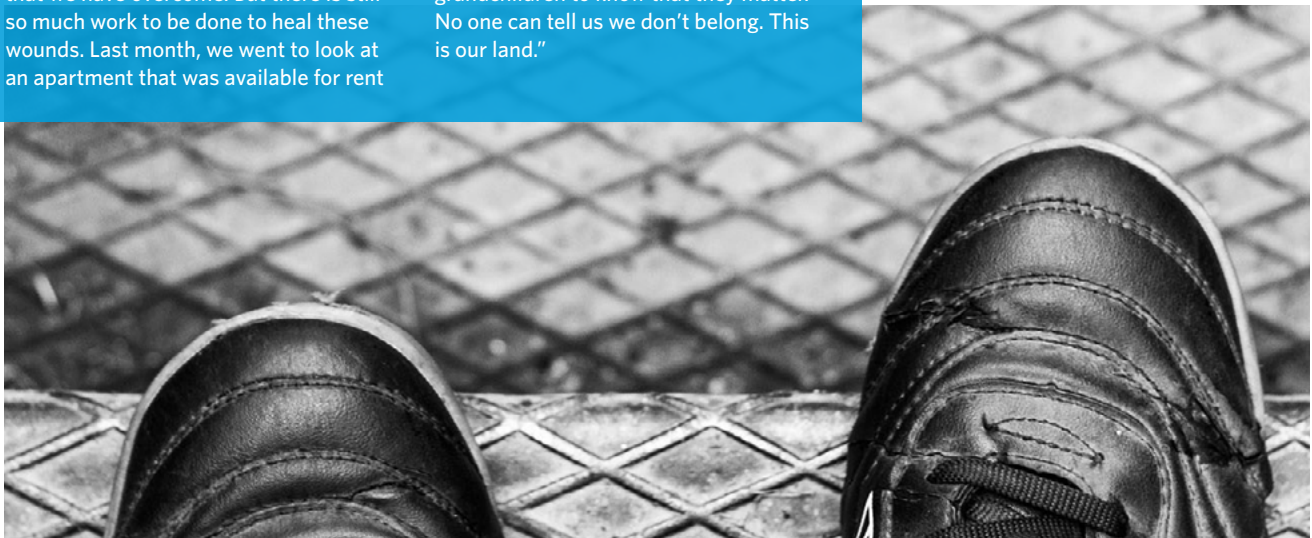
Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action – for the poor and the wealthy alike – a call to change the world so that many more have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities.

The World Bank Organization

NORA AND ROY'S EXPERIENCE

"We are a resilient people. My husband and I are Squamish and Elders in our community. We are both residential school survivors and have lived through many traumas since childhood. But what keeps me angry is that this trauma does not stop. We are still treated differently because of who we are. And my husband also has a disability, so it is even more difficult for us to access services. We are strong and capable and need to be recognized for all that we can do and all that we have overcome. But there is still so much work to be done to heal these wounds. Last month, we went to look at an apartment that was available for rent

off-reserve. As soon as we got to the building, the property manager told us the units weren't available. She looked us up and down and I could tell in her eyes she did not trust us because of who we are. This isn't fair. It is racism, pure and simple. But what can we do? It's so hard to prove these things. And these experiences aren't uncommon – many of our relatives struggle to access housing and healthcare because of our identity. I am proud to be Squamish and I want my grandchildren to know that they matter. No one can tell us we don't belong. This is our land."



WHAT CAUSES POVERTY?

Poverty could be the result of a single or many contributing factors, and the outward expressions are different in every instance. Generally, there are four factors that can make someone susceptible to experiencing poverty: disruptive events, personal vulnerabilities, systemic barriers, and life stages.

Poverty doesn't affect all people equally. Indigenous people and visible minorities experience poverty at greater rates due to structural barriers and systemic issues related to race in society. The relationship between colonization and poverty can be described as "poverty by design" as the displacement of Indigenous people from their lands and forced assimilation through residential schools have led to their dependency on the state.⁵ Chronic underfunding and lack of investment in reserves continue to perpetuate poverty among Indigenous communities. Stereotypes, bias, and discrimination also present barriers and can prevent Indigenous people and visible minorities from excelling at school, being hired or promoted, and finding housing.⁶


People with disabilities are more likely to be living in poverty because of ableism. People with disabilities have experienced, and continue to experience abuse, neglect, exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination.




DISRUPTIVE EVENTS
Job loss, eviction, health crisis, family breakdown, homelessness



PERSONAL VULNERABILITIES
Trauma, normalized violence, language barriers, learning disability, mental health issues, substance use



LIFE STAGES
Transitioning into adulthood, new parent, aging, caregiver duties



SYSTEMIC BARRIERS
Colonization, discrimination, racism, intergenerational cycles of poverty, costs of living, limited capacity

The links between poverty, risk of homelessness, and living with disabilities are well documented and many people experiencing homelessness are disabled or diagnosed with a mental illness.⁷ In addition to housing insecurity, employment can be a major challenge for people with disabilities because of discrimination and barriers.

There is no singular experience of being poor. Legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" in 1989 to describe how systems of oppression overlap to create distinct experiences for people with multiple identity categories. Intersectionality means that social identities work on many levels, resulting in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers for each person.

For a single parent living in poverty, there can be additional challenges or barriers based on gender identity or expression, ethnicity, education, religion, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, and many other intersecting identities. Navigating social programs and government policy comes with its own set of challenges, distinct from the experience of someone with a different gender or without children.

To effectively address poverty, strategies must recognize structural barriers and systemic issues by applying an equity-centred lens.

⁵ Brittain, Melisa and Blackstock, Cindy; First Nations Child Poverty: A Literature Review and Analysis, 2015.

⁶ Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, Library Guides: Poverty in Indigenous and Racialized Communities.

⁷ Homeless Hub, [People with Disabilities](#)



WILLIAM JR'S EXPERIENCE

"You can really feel the connection we have to this place. My grandfather is a residential school survivor. Because of the abuse he experienced as a kid, he started drinking as an adult and wasn't really there for my dad, William.

My dad ended up leaving school early to work construction and make a living. He was doing pretty good but then his leg got crushed at work and he went on long-term disability. This is when things got tough for us...the disability payments weren't enough and my dad started using drugs because of his pain. My mom got another job, but it was hard and sometimes we didn't have enough food. But my dad got better...he met some friends at the rez and started helping in community.

I think culture is important because I've seen how much it helped my dad. Being with our people, the People of the Inlet, is so powerful. You can really feel the connection we have to this place. I am the first person in my family to finish high school and I want to keep helping my community and make it better for our people."

Photo © Japheth Mast, Unsplash

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADDRESSING POVERTY?

The path to addressing poverty is complex and no government, public agency, or not-for-profit organization can do it alone.

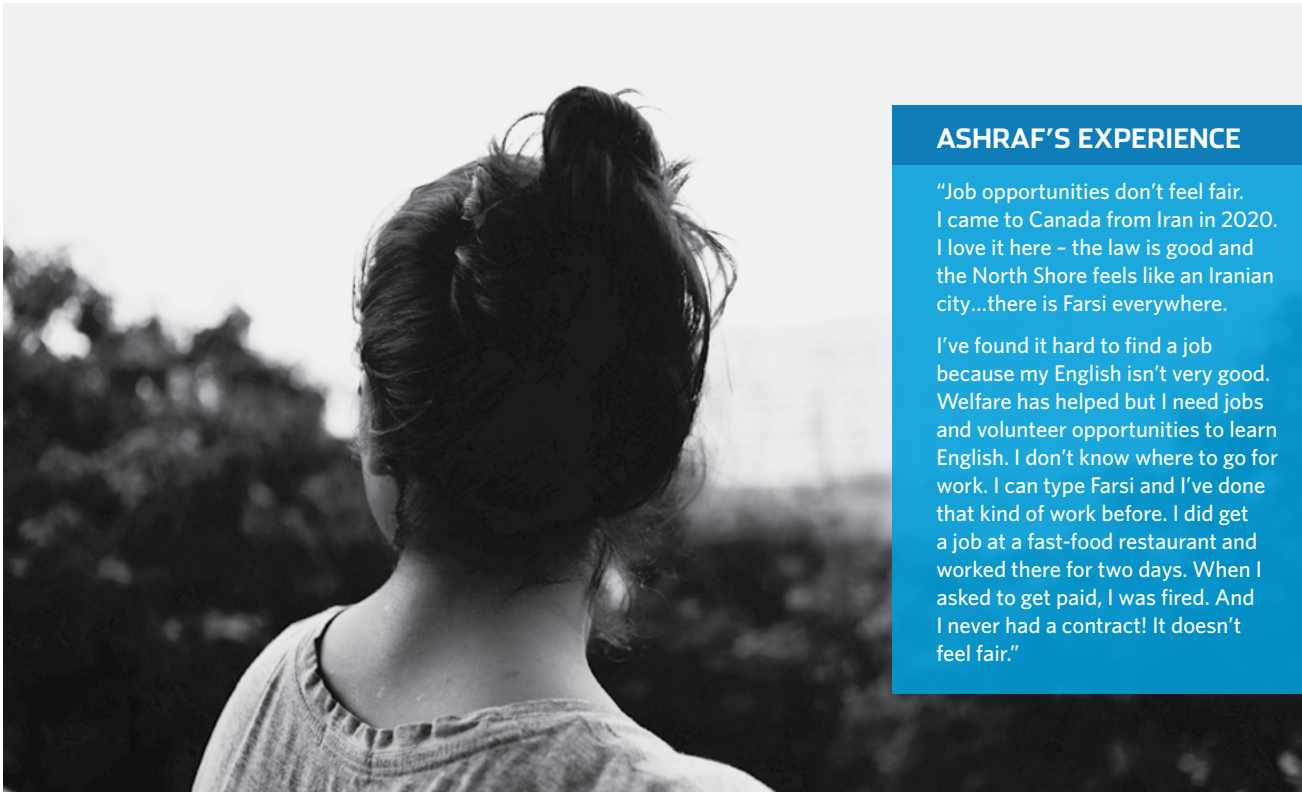
The social services sector (e.g. not-for-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and registered societies) and public agencies do much of the important daily work with residents and the community to reduce and mitigate poverty. This group is essential in shaping the response to reduce poverty. By advocating for change and highlighting where resources should be focused, service providers and public agencies can help define priority areas for policy development and programming focus.

It is also important to have diverse community representation of people to inform the direction of poverty reduction approaches, including Indigenous voices, persons with lived experience, racialized groups, youth, new Canadians, business organizations, and not-for-profit organizations, given how wide the spectrum of impact can be.

Given that each level of government has different responsibilities and jurisdiction, coordination is needed to ensure governments are working together to solve the root causes of poverty.

“I have difficulty making ends meet – I have to make decisions about what to eat.”

Quote from person with lived experience



ASHRAF'S EXPERIENCE

“Job opportunities don't feel fair. I came to Canada from Iran in 2020. I love it here – the law is good and the North Shore feels like an Iranian city...there is Farsi everywhere.

I've found it hard to find a job because my English isn't very good. Welfare has helped but I need jobs and volunteer opportunities to learn English. I don't know where to go for work. I can type Farsi and I've done that kind of work before. I did get a job at a fast-food restaurant and worked there for two days. When I asked to get paid, I was fired. And I never had a contract! It doesn't feel fair.”



Photo © Nico Smit, Unsplash

The roles and responsibilities for poverty reduction among the various levels of government can be strategically coordinated with the understanding of local needs in order to advance purposeful and meaningful action for poverty reduction on the North Shore. This strategy, and ongoing collaborative work, clarifies the areas for priority, action, and advocacy on the North Shore.

- The Federal Government creates macro-level economic policies and social programs and is responsible for transferring funding for provincial programs.
- The Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səilwətał can share diverse indigenous perspectives and inform culturally safe and relevant actions, advice, and participation.

- The Provincial Government oversees social programs including healthcare, social housing, education, and income and disability assistance. It has significant influence on how funding is provided and directed.
- The Local Government role complements senior government roles through advocacy, delivery of accessible and inclusive programs and services, creation of an environment to address poverty at the local level through strategies, plans, land use, and collaboration with partners, and offering of grants to support local initiatives.

The roles and responsibilities of government, public agencies, and the social service sector are further explored in Appendix B: Roles and responsibilities.

POVERTY ON THE NORTH SHORE

WHO IS EXPERIENCING POVERTY ON THE NORTH SHORE?

On the North Shore, 10.4% of the population is living below the poverty line compared to 10.8% across B.C.⁸ Certain groups are more at risk of living in poverty because of structural barriers and systemic issues.

On this page are some statistics about poverty on the North Shore (data for B.C. is referenced if North Shore specific data was unavailable).

Local service providers observed that poverty on the North Shore is increasingly visible, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, challenging the assumption of it being an affluent area. In addition to people experiencing homelessness, there are also people living in houses without enough money for their rent, food, and social activities.

LIVING IN POVERTY ON THE NORTH SHORE



12.1% Children
Compared to 11.4% in B.C.

11.6% Seniors
Slightly less than 13.7% in B.C.

B.C. has one of the highest child poverty rates in the country, with approximately 99,000 children living in poverty.¹⁰

Children in single parent families are three times more likely to live in poverty than children in two parent families in B.C.¹²



1100 Youth
46% of whom are Indigenous¹³
transition to adulthood from government care each year in B.C.

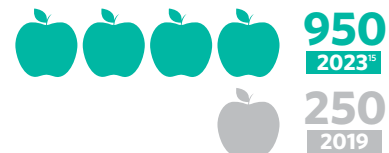
17%
or, approx
800,000
people are experiencing a mental illness or substance use issue today.¹⁶

Illicit drug toxicity is the leading cause of unnatural death in British Columbia.¹⁷ Those experiencing substance abuse disorders, or other personal vulnerabilities, can be more susceptible to experiencing poverty.

Indigenous peoples and people with disabilities are **2x** as likely to live in poverty in B.C.¹¹

40%
of people living below the poverty line in B.C. are working.⁹
People affected by poverty come from all walks of life.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ACCESSING THE FOOD BANK PER WEEK
at the North Shore Neighbourhood House



⁸ Statistics Canada. 2022. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 30, 2022

⁹ TogetherBC, British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2018

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ [Historic help for youth from care will support strong transitions to adulthood | BC Gov News](#)

¹⁴ Statistics Canada. 2022. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 30, 2022

¹⁵ Communication with Executive Director, North Shore Neighbourhood House, January 17, 2023

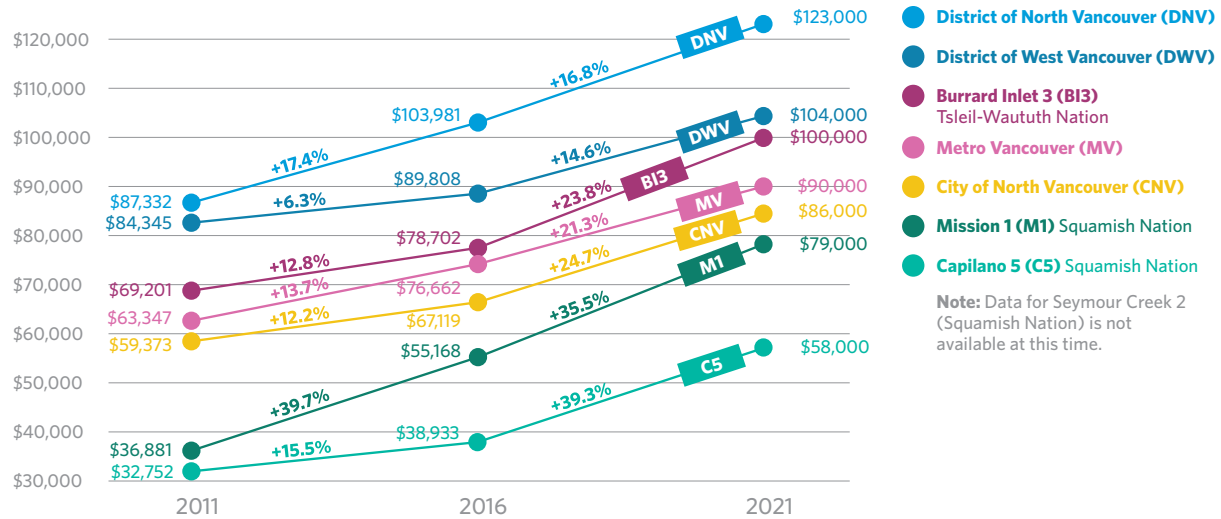
¹⁶ [Facts and Figures \(cmha.bc.ca\)](#)

¹⁷ [At least 179 lives lost to toxic drugs in B.C. in October 2022 | BC Gov News](#)

COST OF LIVING AND HOMELESSNESS

The cost of living on the North Shore is becoming increasingly unaffordable. The median total household income on the North Shore varies by geographical area with the City of North Vancouver and Squamish Nation (Mission 1 and Capilano 5) below the regional average. Despite some areas having household incomes well above the regional average, the perception of the North Shore as an exclusively higher-income community is not representative of the data on inequity and the lived experiences of local residents. Plus, a person's income can only go so far when combined with high inflation (a 6.9% increase from October 2021 to October 2022).¹⁸

Figure 1: Median Total Household Incomes (Before Tax) on the North Shore, 2021 Census
 Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2016, 2021 & National Household Survey, 2011

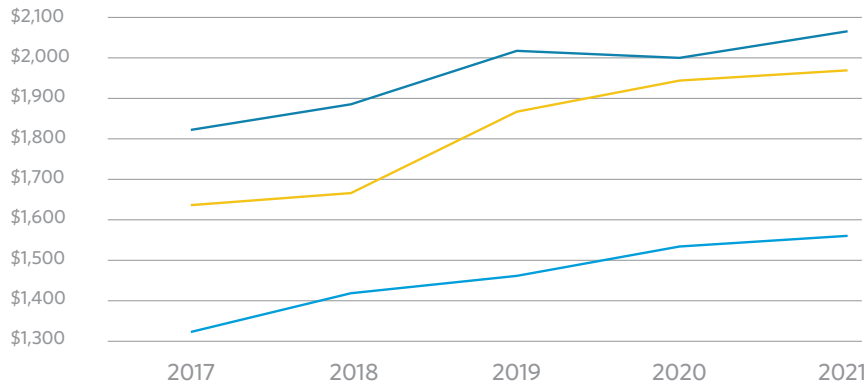


In 2021, the median bench sale price of a single detached dwelling was over 1.5 million dollars¹⁹, making home ownership out of reach for many. The average cost of rent is also steadily increasing (Figure 2, next page).

¹⁸ Consumer Price Index, Statistics Canada, 2022
¹⁹ Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, 2017-2021

Figure 2: Average Rent (All Bedrooms), 2011-2021

Source: CMHC Rental Market Reports, 2017-2021



District of West Vancouver (DWV)

City of North Vancouver (CNV)

District of North Vancouver (DNV)

West Vancouver Foundation’s 2022 Vital Signs report provides grades for different aspects of community life in West Vancouver based on survey data. Housing in West Vancouver received an “F” for having housing choices that meet the needs of different types of residents and housing situations. Housing continues to be a crisis issue and impacts many of the other elements of a livable community.

The rising cost of living, especially housing, may be contributing to the increase in homelessness on the North Shore. Homeless count data indicates the number of people experiencing homelessness has increased between 2017 and 2020²⁰. During the most recent homeless count (2020), an extended count was held that found 212 people experiencing homelessness on the North Shore.²¹

Through the engagement process, service providers and people with lived experience expressed how challenging

it has become to afford to live on the North Shore, especially for someone earning less than the median income. As people can no longer afford to stay in a community, gentrification may occur (when more affluent people move to or invest in historically less affluent neighbourhoods). Gentrification frequently leads to negative impacts such as forced displacement, a fostering of discriminatory behaviour by people in power, and a focus on spaces that exclude low-income individuals and visible minorities.²² While poverty has existed on the North Shore for decades, households with low income are now experiencing significant barriers to stay on the North Shore and are using social service programs to a greater degree. For example, the number of families accessing the food bank has increased significantly from approximately 250 people per week in 2019 (pre-Covid) to over 950 people per week in 2023.²³

WILLOW’S EXPERIENCE

“I feel stuck. I don’t like living in shelters. I’m treated as a child and management doesn’t like me. But I don’t have enough money to live anywhere else. I don’t like being here. I get sick coming home just thinking about it. What are you supposed to do with \$375 a month? I cried for three hours when the coordinator was mean to me. I’m bipolar. I just want my own home.

I was a foster kid and have been homeless for so long. Housing is the answer but there is nothing anywhere. I also have PTSD from an abusive relationship. I don’t want to leave the North Shore because my community is here. But the community is changing. There are too many people here now. We need more housing on the North Shore! I just get so frustrated there is nowhere else I can go.”

²⁰ Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver, 2020

²¹ Ibid

²² Chong, “Examining the Negative Impacts of Gentrification”, Georgetown Law, 2017

²³ Communication with Executive Director, North Shore Neighbourhood House, January 17, 2023

My biggest issue is housing.
The North Shore rental market
is so crazy...

INCOME INEQUALITY

Based on data from 2020, the three North Shore municipalities have more inequality than regional, provincial, and national values (Figure 3). The Gini index is one way to measure inequality, where a value of 0 represents a society with no discrepancy in income, and a value of 1 represents total inequality (e.g. a society where one individual has all the income).

Figure 3: A Comparison of Gini Indexes (Total Income) in the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, and Canada, 2020
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021

Geography	Gini Index 2020 (Total Income)
City of North Vancouver	0.369
District of North Vancouver	0.402
District of West Vancouver	0.574
Metro Vancouver	0.366
British Columbia	0.346
Canada	0.347

ALEX'S EXPERIENCE

"I need housing before I can work. I was living in a shelter in Burnaby, but it wasn't working for me. There was too much drug use and partying...I didn't feel safe there.

Since I left that shelter, I've been living in my car and I have my dog with me which makes it difficult. There was even ice inside the car earlier this year! It's really tough. And how do you cook when you're living in a car? I don't have a stove or a kitchen so I'm always buying food which is expensive.

My biggest issue is housing. The North Shore rental market is so crazy - and things got even crazier with Airbnb. It is nice being back on the North Shore - all my friends are here. I want to stay here! I just don't know how I'll find a home I can afford. I want part time work but it's hard to get a job because I don't have a house. I'm not sleeping very well in my car so I'm worried I might not be a good staff person. You really need a home base before you can get a job."



Photo © Tyler Rutherford, Unsplash

“95% of my income goes to rent. It’s almost impossible.”

Quote from person with lived experience

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF POVERTY

North Shore residents graciously shared their lived experiences with poverty to help inform this strategy (refer to Appendix C for more information on engagement). Some challenges that were shared include:

- Seniors finding it difficult to afford food and medication with the rising cost of living.
- Intergenerational trauma and residential schools undermining the Indigenous way of life, disrupting families, and contributing to a general loss of language and culture.
- Young people unable to stay on the North Shore given the cost of housing.
- Single parent families feeling excluded from the community.
- Single adults struggling and not always served by government programs that focus on priority populations (e.g. families).
- Newcomers having difficulties navigating a new city and finding employment.
- Experiencing shame and stigma for accessing support.
- Long line ups at food banks.
- Wait lists for BC Housing units.
- Difficulty finding and affording mental health services.

During one of the engagement sessions at the West Vancouver Youth Hub²⁴, participants explained they do not see themselves living on the North Shore once they grow up due to the cost of housing.

The biggest barrier and challenge of living on the North Shore referenced in most conversations was unaffordable housing. When asked what people need to thrive, more affordable housing was the most frequent answer provided.

From a local Indigenous perspective, the experience of poverty is a loss of spirit and disconnection from the land, family, food, and culture. It is also the experience of continuously losing important cultural sites because of growth and development on the North Shore – a loss that may never be regained. The experience of poverty is a source of immense grief for members of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səilwətał.

Some people experiencing poverty shared they feel intense shame and stigma for accessing services. The North Shore Women’s Centre has a weekly food program run out of the rear of their building. When interviewing clients at that centre, several people indicated they would not access this service if food was distributed from the street entrance because they do not want to be seen accessing a food bank. Among these clients and other people with lived experience there was a feeling that they no longer belong on the North Shore.

SANDRA’S EXPERIENCE

“I have some money, but not enough. I’m 85 years old. I’ve been a single mother since my kids were little. But I’ve never been on welfare. I worked as a nurse for 40 years and I’ve done fairly well up until recently. But I was evicted from my apartment a few years ago and became homeless. I can’t believe it happened to me, but it did. I stayed with my daughter but it wasn’t ideal. I tried so hard to find a place but nothing is affordable. And I couldn’t qualify for SAFER even though I can’t afford rent. It’s like you need to be making no money at all to qualify for help...but what about people with a little bit of money who still can’t afford anything in the market?”

I have a very small pension, but I still can’t afford housing. I’m working odd jobs here and there and I volunteer pretty often. Why don’t we create a system where parents can drop their kids off with seniors at the mall when they do their errands and us seniors can watch their kids and make a bit of money?

People just really don’t understand that low-income people exist. Especially when you have kids and one working parent. There just wasn’t much money. And I had a good job.”

²⁴ West Vancouver Youth Hub



SERVICE PROVIDER'S EXPERIENCE

City Library staff do their best to assist patrons who are struggling with issues related to poverty, whether it is helping with finding housing or emergency shelter, connecting people with community resources, or simply providing a space for people to get out of adverse weather. With the Open Door Community Hub (ODCH) program, funded by the *Strengthening Communities* grant, the library has been able to be more intentional with support with a dedicated, staffed space and specialized programming for individuals experiencing homelessness or who are in vulnerable housing situations.

In the first ten months since it began in November 2021, there have been 1,604 visits to the ODCH. Visitors are provided with snacks, care packages, opportunities to connect and socialize, or simply a comfortable place to sit. In addition, attendees of the ODCH have participated in programming such as foot care clinics, and are regularly connected with community resources for employment, housing, and mental health support. Some success stories we've seen through ODCH programming include:

- Staff assisted an attendee with applying for social assistance. The individual returned a few months

later to let staff know that he had secured full-time employment due to the stability that social assistance had provided.

- Staff helped reconnect a couple who had become separated from one another. Staff were able to assist the couple in obtaining cell phones so they wouldn't have to worry about becoming separated again.
- Staff provided basic first aid for an attendee who had cut his finger. The individual later shared that the kind attention shown to him by library staff helped him get through a tough time he was having.

Photo © Monica Melton, Unsplash



COVID-19 AND POVERTY

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force emphasized the impact of COVID-19 in bringing experiences of poverty to the surface. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated how close many North Shore residents are to not being able to afford housing or other essential costs of living. Service providers acknowledged the impacts of COVID-19 on poverty, but stressed that poverty was already a growing issue before the pandemic.

Recent Census data indicates the rate of poverty has declined on the North Shore (Figure 4). This is likely in large part due to COVID-19 pandemic benefits, as support provided to Canadians during COVID-19 contributed to the largest one-year reduction in poverty in nearly 50 years.²⁵ Similar trends were seen across Canada, with poverty declining in every province – the largest reductions were in Manitoba and B.C.

COVID-19 pandemic benefits are highlighted below:

- Working-age adults and families with children were a primary focus of federal government support, including two Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payments.
- Emergency benefits (mostly federal) reached two-thirds of adults (aged 15+) across Canada.
- Households received an average of \$8,920 in federal emergency benefits and \$560 in top-ups, while the provinces sent out an average of \$520 per household.²⁶

B.C. had the second highest reduction in poverty and highest take-up of benefits: 75% of B.C. residents received some form of COVID-19 pandemic support, with 56% receiving one or more provincial benefits – the highest level in the country – illustrating the impact of government income support

in reducing poverty and the potential challenges in maintaining a decline in poverty without continued COVID-19 pandemic benefit programs.²⁷

For comparison, on the North Shore, 67% of residents received some form of COVID-19 pandemic support, with 48% receiving one or more provincial benefits²⁸.

²⁵ Scott, “An unexpected consequence of the pandemic: Poverty declined sharply in Canada”, [The Monitor, An unexpected consequence of the pandemic: Poverty... | The Monitor \(monitormag.ca\)](#).

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0093-01 Distribution of COVID-19 reliefs to Canadians: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions.

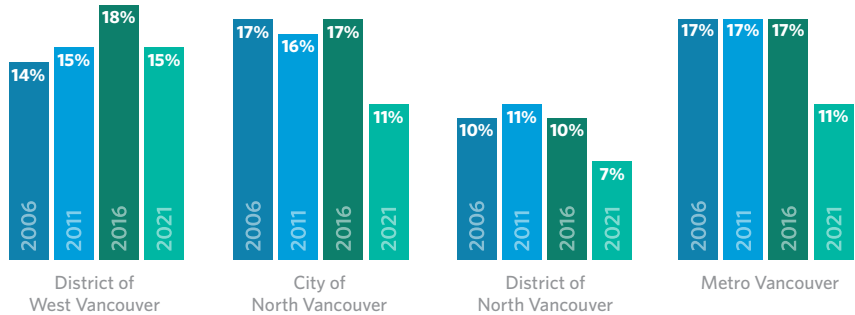
MEASURING POVERTY

Figure 4 explores the percentage of the population living in low income based on Low Income Measure-Based Households (LIM), which is an internationally used measurement based on 50% of the median family income. In Canada, the federal government publishes LIM based on 50% of median income after tax and adjusts this measurement according to household size. In addition to LIM, Low Income Cut-Off and the Market Basket Measure are common metrics used to define poverty.

- Low Income Cut-off (LICO):** identifies the income level at which a household spends significantly more disposable income on basic goods in comparison to the average household. The basis of LICO has not been updated since 1992.
- Market Basket Measure (MBM):** refers to the measure of low income based on the cost of a specific basket of goods and services (e.g. food, clothing, shelter, transportation) that individuals

Figure 4: Percentage of Population Living in Low Income (LIM-AT), 2006-2020

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006, 2016, 2021 & National Household Survey, 2011



and families require to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living across 53 communities. These costs are compared to the disposable income of families to determine whether or not they fall below the poverty line.

Income-based measures of poverty all provide a limited understanding of poverty but can be used to interpret some trends over time. For this strategy, the LIM (after tax)

is referenced to demonstrate the relationship between low-income and poverty. When monitoring the outcomes of the implementation of this strategy, a different metric to measure poverty may be considered.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The North Shore is a place of opportunity, with many social service programs, beautiful natural amenities, and strong social networks. Through the engagement, participants noted the social services sector has many strengths, but would benefit from a more centralized approach to service delivery. People with lived experience with poverty shared a desire to continue living on the North

Shore, because of family, friends, and connection to the outdoors, while also recognizing the challenges in doing so from an affordability perspective. While many people recognized the community's strengths, there is also stress and pessimism about the future. Concerns about traffic congestion, reduced quality of life, affordability (housing/taxes), and negative social change were highlighted.

“The safety I feel living on the North Shore... so safe in my community. There is still a small community feeling about it.”

Quote from person with lived experience

EXISTING LOCAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT MAY SUPPORT POVERTY REDUCTION EFFORTS

Although this is the North Shore's first Poverty Reduction Strategy, there are many existing policies and programs which future poverty reduction efforts can build from:

- All three North Shore municipalities have completed Housing Needs Reports. These reports build from previous housing work such as Housing Action Plans and associated policy initiatives to highlight particular areas of housing need such as tenant assistance programs. Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw prepared "Bringing Our People Home", a summary of recent initiatives the Nation has taken to bring members back to the community.

In 2021, the North Shore Homelessness Task Force released the Homelessness Community Action Strategy, a community-informed plan outlining an approach to reduce the impacts of poverty and homelessness on the North Shore.
- All three North Shore municipalities have completed Child Care Action Plans. At Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, Ayás Mełmen provides proactive prevention and education strategies to all Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw families with children aged 0-6. The Child and Family Development Centre at səliłwətał provides holistic, quality care for children from six months to five years old.
- Official Community Plans and Strategic Plans outline municipal and Nation priorities and the associated policies and land use framework that will help to achieve listed objectives.
- The three North Shore municipalities collaborated on the Dementia-Friendly North Shore Action Plan to facilitate and provide more dementia-friendly policies, resources, programs, and services. Related policy work was recently completed in the City of North Vancouver around integrating multicultural seniors in an age-friendly community.
- The three North Shore municipalities applied for and received funding from UBCM for the Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program to support the creation of two North Shore Solutions Navigator positions to provide individuals experiencing poverty one-to-one support in navigating resources and support services.
- The three North Shore municipalities, in partnership with Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, səliłwətał, Lookout Housing and Health Society, City Library, and the North Shore Neighbourhood House, received funding through the Strengthening Community's Services Program to support unsheltered homeless populations and address related community impacts by providing people-centred regional programs and services across the North Shore.
- There are a multitude of programs provided by local governments, service providers, and the Nations that help to reduce poverty on the North Shore, some of which are listed in the table on the following page.
- North Shore Connects (formerly, integrated North Shore Transportation Planning Project) outlines findings and recommendations for improving mobility and access for the North Shore.
- Other areas of policy development include arts and cultural planning, child care planning, regional planning, economic development, sustainability, and technology. Many of these policy documents contain strategies that overlap and complement the actions outlined in this Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The priority areas identified in this strategy build from a strong policy foundation already in-place on the North Shore. This strategy will enhance and strengthen initiatives that may be already underway, while suggesting new areas of focus.

WHO IS LEADING THE CHARGE TO ADDRESS POVERTY ON THE NORTH SHORE?

Poverty reduction work is already underway on the North Shore. Tackling poverty is a shared responsibility between the social services sector, faith-based organizations, public agencies, all levels of government, Nations, and the private sector. Much of the work related to poverty reduction currently rests with the social services sector (e.g. not-for-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and registered societies) and public agencies. These organizations can access government and other types of grants to support their programming needs. With over 60 social service agencies on the North Shore, there are many programs and services available to people with low incomes experiencing affordability challenges.

While it is not possible to highlight the extent of the North Shore social services sector within this report, several organizations centrally involved in poverty reduction are profiled below. In addition to the social services sector, poverty reduction work and related initiatives are being led by the North Shore public service agencies including school districts, libraries, Vancouver Coastal Health, District of West Vancouver (youth, seniors, and recreation services), and community centres, as well as close collaboration with the North Shore Chambers of Commerce, North Vancouver RCMP, and West Vancouver Police.

With over 60 social service agencies on the North Shore, there are many programs and services available to people with low incomes experiencing affordability challenges.

SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR ON THE NORTH SHORE	
Canadian Mental Health Association	A nationwide organization that promotes mental health and supports people recovering from mental illness.
Capilano Community Services Society	Offers outreach and onsite programs and support services for people of all ages to increase social connections, stay active, and improve health and wellbeing.
Family Services of the North Shore	A not-for-profit accredited organization committed to providing compassionate, professional, and affordable social services to those who live or work on the North Shore.
Harvest Project	An urban relief organization that assists residents challenged by family breakdown, illness, job-loss, and poverty – providing coaching and counsel, a rent bank, groceries, and clothing support, along with a social-enterprise thrift shop.
Hollyburn Community Services Society	Provides a range of professional counselling services to individuals, couples, and families, support to families of children with autism spectrum disorder and other pervasive developmental disorders, residential care for children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges, and training and support to foster parents and extended families.

SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR ON THE NORTH SHORE *continued*

Impact North Shore	A for-purpose, social impact organization creating opportunities for success for immigrants and newcomers.
Lookout Housing and Health Society	A not-for-profit charitable organization that offers a range of programs, housing, and health solutions to vulnerable adults living with multiple challenges. They operate the North Shore shelter.
North Shore Community Resources	A registered not-for-profit that designs and delivers programs and services to enhance individual and community well-being, social connections, empowerment, and community participation.
North Shore Crisis Services Society	Provides shelter and support services to women and their children experiencing abuse.
North Shore Disability Resource Centre Association	Provides assistance to anyone, regardless of age, with any kind of disability.
North Shore Neighbourhood House	A registered not-for-profit charity with a goal to work together to enhance the lives of our neighbours, especially the most vulnerable.
North Shore Table Matters Network	Has been building relationships between local governments and community groups with interests in food security, urban agriculture, and local food systems since 2005.
North Shore Women's Centre	Dedicated to improving the social, economic, legal, and political status of women and encourages and supports self-empowerment by acting as a resource and catalyst for change, from a feminist perspective.
North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission	Improves the health and well-being of all North Vancouver individuals, families, and communities, inspiring residents through quality recreation and arts opportunities.
District of West Vancouver - Community Services	Offers a range of youth, seniors, and recreation services.
Parkgate Society	Provides community-inspired and community-supported low-cost and no-cost programs and services.
Silver Harbour Centre	Their vision is a community that honours and celebrates aging and mission is to collaborate in offering adults 55+ social, creative, physical, and learning opportunities in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

HOW CAN WE ADDRESS POVERTY?

Multi-faceted solutions are needed to reduce poverty. Addressing affordability challenges is paramount, particularly in urban centres where the cost of food and shelter can be quite high. Reducing poverty also requires systems, programs, and support services that provide people experiencing poverty with the tools and services they need. This may include counselling and healing programs to process trauma, and health services to combat illness and promote healthy living. It may also include community programming and spaces for intergenerational connection to build community, and courses and training that provide a pathway to sustainable employment opportunities. This Poverty Reduction Strategy outlines a framework to work collaboratively on addressing poverty on the North Shore.



Photo © Sincerely Media, Unsplash

VISION

Now is the time to take action on reducing poverty.

This requires the whole community to work together under a shared vision and a commitment to make a collective impact.

The vision is to build a movement that reduces poverty and enhances access to services, based on the values of creating an inclusive, equitable, anti-racist, thriving, and just community.

The movement will also work towards building a complete service continuum: integrated local services designed to meet the needs of people on the North Shore. Figure 5 illustrates the values that can be considered to

develop a strong service continuum to ensure no one is left behind and everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Building from existing relationships, the North Shore social services sector will work closely together to connect people experiencing challenges with the support they need. Barriers and gaps will be identified and discussed as a group and highlighted to senior government when further assistance is required.

Working towards a complete service continuum will require input from a range of social service organizations, faith-based groups, local governments, the two Nations, private sector businesses, and public agencies involved in poverty reduction and feedback from people with lived experience. Poverty reduction efforts will continually centre the perspective of Indigenous people and visible minorities who are disproportionately represented among people experiencing poverty because of structural barriers.

The vision translates to four priority areas, which incorporate the 10 strategies, described in further detail on the following pages:

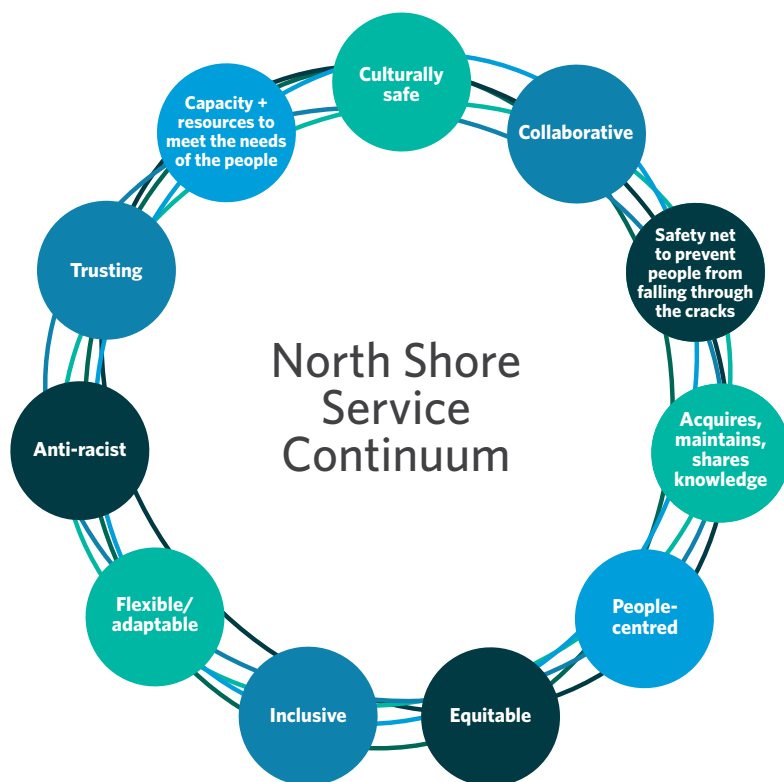
Priority 1:
Continue to Work Together

Priority 2:
Enhance Access to Services

Priority 3:
Create a More Inclusive North Shore

Priority 4:
Address the Cost of Living

Figure 5: Core values of a complete service continuum



PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

PRIORITY 1: CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER

The two Nations, three local governments, public agencies, and social services sector already collaborate to address poverty at the local level. However, the implementation of programs and services to address poverty are largely delivered by the social services sector, often with the financial support from the local, provincial, and federal governments, foundations, charities, and private donors.

Building on the established relationships that exist on the North Shore, this priority continues collaboration in areas such as affordable housing, reconciliation, child care, food security, and transportation. Emerging opportunities include creating a structure to strengthen and formalize ways of working together, taking action on reconciliation, and advocating to other levels of government for broader program and system changes.

PRIORITY 1: CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER			
STRATEGIES		ACTIONS	
1	Create a structure to work together	1.1	Create a structure to work together to evolve the actions and the implementation plan. Ensure the structure has administrative support and includes diverse community representation such as Indigenous voices, persons with lived experience, racialized groups, youth, new Canadians, business organizations, and not-for-profit organizations.
		1.2	Create opportunities for the two Nations, three local governments, public agencies, and social services sector to network, learn about each others' services and programs, and collect and share data.
		1.3	Support the use of an equity framework to ensure ongoing and future initiatives unfold through an equity lens to ensure fairness and opportunities for all community members.
2	Take action on reconciliation	2.1	Identify ways to advance the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action through poverty reduction initiatives.
3	Continue to work on key policy areas	3.1	Using the structure developed under Action 1.1, identify and prioritize key policy areas and invest in opportunities that allow for collaboration between local governments, Nations, and the social services sector.

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ACCESS TO SERVICES


The North Shore has a strong public agency and social services sector that delivers a wide range of programs to people in need. North Shore residents feel a sense of community when they access services and are grateful for the support they receive from a compassionate and caring social services sector.

The need for help, however, is surpassing the capacity and resources available to organizations that deliver services. The sector is chronically under-resourced, resulting in issues such as underpaid staff, burnout, and turnover. Funding streams favour short-term programs, which limits continuity of services. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in the number of people needing help, placing further pressure on an already overstretched sector. While the social services sector pivoted its operations and demonstrated resiliency and a strong ability to collaborate, more funding is required to increase staffing levels to meet the growing demand for services.

At the same time, some residents are not aware of existing programs and services because there is not one direct resource or hub that provides this information. This points to the need to generate awareness about the services available on the North Shore. The three North Shore municipalities applied for and received one year of funding from UBCM to create two North Shore Solutions Navigator positions to provide individuals experiencing poverty free one-to-one support in navigating resources and support services.

This approach is distinctly different from the majority of existing support programs available as most require individuals to meet certain criteria to be able to access services (e.g. be a certain age, family situation, type of issue).

This priority strives to create opportunities to support the social services sector, increase the provision of services, and enhance navigation services to help residents access the services they need.



"I thought about moving to a different community, but I can't move. All my supports are on the North Shore."

Quote from person with lived experience

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ACCESS TO SERVICES cont.

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ACCESS TO SERVICES			
STRATEGIES		ACTIONS	
4	Increase awareness of services	4.1	In partnership with the social services sector, build awareness about the Solutions Navigator Program and other initiatives that support people and service providers with navigating local systems, programs, and services.
		4.2	Work with local service providers to create and enhance communication material to educate the community on available services.
5	Increase capacity to deliver services	5.1	Create a flexible framework to document and track gaps along the service continuum.
		5.2	Support service providers with collaborating on shared grant writing and joint applications to funding opportunities.
		5.3	Advocate to funders to align grants, core funding, and other financial investments with poverty reduction initiatives such as the strategies and actions outlined in this Poverty Reduction Strategy.
		5.4	To build capacity of service providers to meet the needs of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səlilwətaʔ consider a human-centred design approach that could better reflect the interests and cultures of these Nations.



PRIORITY 3: CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE NORTH SHORE

The experience of poverty can lead to residents not having the opportunity to engage with their community. Disconnection can be traumatic and dispiriting, causing harm, and bringing about isolation and loneliness. A best practice in addressing poverty includes reducing barriers to participating in civic life, building intergenerational connections, and nurturing relationships.

A barrier to creating a more inclusive North Shore is the stigma, stereotypes, isolation, and poverty myths that exist in the community. This priority looks to address these misconceptions. It involves generating awareness and educating the broader public on poverty, fostering a culture of compassion and allyship, building social connections, and creating opportunities for everyone to participate in civic life.

PRIORITY 3: CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE NORTH SHORE			
STRATEGIES		ACTIONS	
6	Inspire the broader community to take action	6.1	Create North Shore Community Profiles with baseline indicators that can be monitored and evaluated over time. Share these profiles with the community to help foster an understanding of poverty on the North Shore.
		6.2	Explore opportunities to establish a granting program for clients/members of service providers and Nations aimed at removing barriers (e.g. provide training) to participating at advisory or decision-making tables such as Council committees or not-for-profit boards.
7	Expand awareness of Indigenous culture and support cross-cultural relationship building	7.1	Explore opportunities to facilitate community discussions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents to increase understanding and improve relationships.
		7.2	Support cultural learning opportunities that showcase the traditions of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səlilwətaʔ.
8	Increase access to low-barrier facilities ²⁹	8.1	Explore opportunities to create inclusive community gathering facilities that provide washrooms, showers, laundry, cooking facilities, and other support services.
		8.2	Strive for low-barrier facilities to be safe and welcoming spaces, free of discrimination (e.g. sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, and drug use) and racism.

²⁹ Low-barrier facilities encourage individuals to seek resources by eliminating obstacles (e.g. no identification required, assistance with cumbersome paperwork, sobriety not required)

PRIORITY 4: ADDRESS THE COST OF LIVING

The cost of living is increasing and residents are feeling the effects. Paying for basic necessities is a source of stress for many households due to the rising prices of goods at an accelerating rate, combined with insufficient incomes to cover costs. Households with low income are less likely to access personal services, recreational activities, and educational opportunities because it is too expensive. Many North Shore residents are unable to afford health services including prescription medication, mental health services, and dental care.

Local service providers, public agencies, the two Nations, and three local governments have a variety of programs and services that help residents with accessing basic necessities. However, contributing factors occurring at the national and global scale are creating conditions that make it challenging for local services to keep up – such as inflation which continues to be elevated (6.9% in October 2022)³⁰.

Addressing the cost of living will require advocating to senior levels of government and other agencies to make changes in areas within their jurisdiction. The opportunities are extensive and include consideration to increase the minimum wage to a livable wage, increase income and disability assistance, explore universal basic income, fast-track credential recognition, regulate payday loan institutions, expand Medical Services Plan (MSP) coverage, and expand the \$10 per day child care program.

This priority builds on existing strengths and explores actions focused on the most acute cost of living issues such as housing, transportation, food, health care, and technology. While these topics are outside the jurisdiction of local governments and Nations, there is a role in advocacy, partnership, and influencing the local conditions to support systemic change.

See table next page.

³⁰ Consumer Price Index, Statistics Canada, 2022

PRIORITY 4: ADDRESS THE COST OF LIVING cont.

PRIORITY 4: ADDRESS THE COST OF LIVING			
STRATEGIES		ACTIONS	
9	Increase access to affordable housing, transportation, food, and technology	9.1	Continue to leverage collective capacity by partnering on joint projects, funding applications, and advocating as one voice.
		9.2	Explore additional emergency accommodations that can meet diverse needs, including seniors and families in crisis.
		9.3	Advocate to TransLink to provide free public transit for households with low income, seniors, students, and persons with disabilities.
		9.4	Work with existing providers to support the equitable access and coordination of food to people in need.
		9.5	Explore opportunities and investment options into infrastructure and equipment that creates equitable access to technology, such as free wifi in public spaces, public charging stations, etc.
10	Initiate change to broader systems	10.1	<p>Advocate to senior levels of government for improvements to systems and programs outside of the local government and Nation’s jurisdiction, such as healthcare, education, employment, and training. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the minimum wage to a livable wage ▪ Increase income and disability assistance ▪ Explore universal basic income ▪ Fast-track credential recognition ▪ Regulate payday loan institutions ▪ Expand Medical Services Plan (MSP) coverage (e.g. dental care, pharmacare) ▪ Expand the \$10 per day and fee reduction child care programs
		10.2	Explore opportunities to work with the North Vancouver and West Vancouver Chambers of Commerce to create opportunities to connect employers with under/un-employed residents.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND MONITORING

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy is a first step to addressing poverty at the local level. The community will need to come together to further evolve strategies and actions, integrate new and emerging issues, and build on achievements as progress is made.

The strategy provides the vision and framework to guide future poverty reduction initiatives.

A collective approach frames the process of implementation, meaning that all sectors are invited to come together to build a movement and reduce poverty. This collective approach builds on a shared understanding of what poverty is on the North Shore, fostering a commitment to the implementation and outcomes of the strategy, and continuous collaboration across jurisdictions and sectors.

PRINCIPLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

A common and collaborative approach among the partners will make positive change toward reducing poverty. The Tamarack Institute's collective impact framework includes five "core conditions" that could be referenced by the group implementing this strategy:

- **A common agenda:** All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
- **Shared measurement:** Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.

- **Mutually reinforcing activities:** Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
- **Continuous communication:** Consistent and open communication is needed across the many participants to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation.
- **Backbone support:** Creating and managing collective initiatives requires a dedicated staff and specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Given the multi-jurisdictional nature of this work, staff from the three municipalities and two Nations will continue to work together on poverty reduction efforts and within each jurisdiction. Staff may bring forward budgeting and resourcing requests to their respective Councils to support the implementation of this strategy as needed.

The collaborative and consistent work that is needed to implement this strategy will require administrative support and stewardship from a group of agency and government representatives on the North Shore. Existing North Shore committees with complementary mandates and memberships could be expanded to

include creation and implementation of the poverty reduction strategy.

MONITOR PROGRESS

Three year updates

In order to monitor progress, it is recommended that updates or reports be provided every three years to summarize the implementation progress of the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy. The information will be made available to the local governments, social services sector, and the broader community, and may be used to support strategies related to community education and awareness. Information may include:

- A list of strategies and actions that have been implemented or are in progress;
- A summary of the impact that the Poverty Reduction Strategy has had so far;
- Gaps along the service continuum, based on the ongoing monitoring and tracking form;
- Select number of indicators that could illustrate success and change (or stagnation); and
- Considerations of emergent issues.

Indicators in the reports could include:

INDICATOR	SOURCE	
1	Number of persons experiencing homelessness	<i>Metro Vancouver Point-in-Time Homeless Count (available in 2023 and 2027)</i>
2	Number of affordable housing units - built	<i>BC Housing, municipal, and First Nations records</i>
3	Number of subsidized child care spaces	<i>Child Care Resource and Referral Centre (available monthly)</i>

This list of indicators is a starting point. Additional indicators can be selected and tracked to align with individual jurisdictional needs. Many of the indicators can provide information for multiple priorities. A distribution and balance of indicators that measure progress toward each of the priorities of this strategy should be selected.

Additional longer-term indicators that may be considered include:

INDICATOR	SOURCE	
1	Percentage of population living in low income (LIM-AT) or other appropriate income measure	<i>Census, 2026 (available 2027)</i>
2	Percentage of households by income distribution	
3	Percentage of households in core housing need	
4	Percentage of lone parent led families	
5	Unemployment rate	
6	Percentage of people with a family doctor	<i>Vancouver Coastal Health survey instrument (e.g. My Health, My Community)</i>
7	Percentage of people who experience food insecurity	
8	Children's developmental vulnerability	<i>Human Early Learning Partnership, Early Development Instrument (new data wave every three years)</i>
9	Municipality Health Profiles	<i>Provincial Health Services Authority (updated every few years)</i>
10	Number of approved joint-funding applications	<i>Manual tracking</i>
11	Total dollars secured for poverty reduction actions	
12	Sense of belonging	<i>Vital Signs, West Vancouver Foundation (available annually)</i>
13	Health and wellness	

FUTURE REVIEW

This strategy is intended to cover the next 10 years. In 2033, it is suggested that the strategy is reviewed to broadly evaluate progress based on both quantitative and qualitative indicators, timed with the release of 2031 Census data. The review may involve:

- **Preparing a list of strategies and actions** that have been implemented or are in progress;
- **Preparing a summary of the impact** that the Poverty Reduction Strategy has had so far;
- **Identifying gaps** along the service continuum, based on the ongoing monitoring and tracking form;
- **Engaging** with stakeholders and those with lived experience;
- **Summarizing a select number of indicators** that could illustrate success and change (or stagnation);
- **Considerations** of emergent issues;
- **Reflection** on the capacity, resources, roles, and structure of the Poverty Reduction Plan implementation including the role of the Poverty Reduction Planning Table, the 2022-2023 Community Navigator Team project funded through UBCM, and other coordination efforts; and
- **Recommendations** for the future (e.g. continue the current path, launch a comprehensive update).



Photo © Bruno Kelzer, Unsplash

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

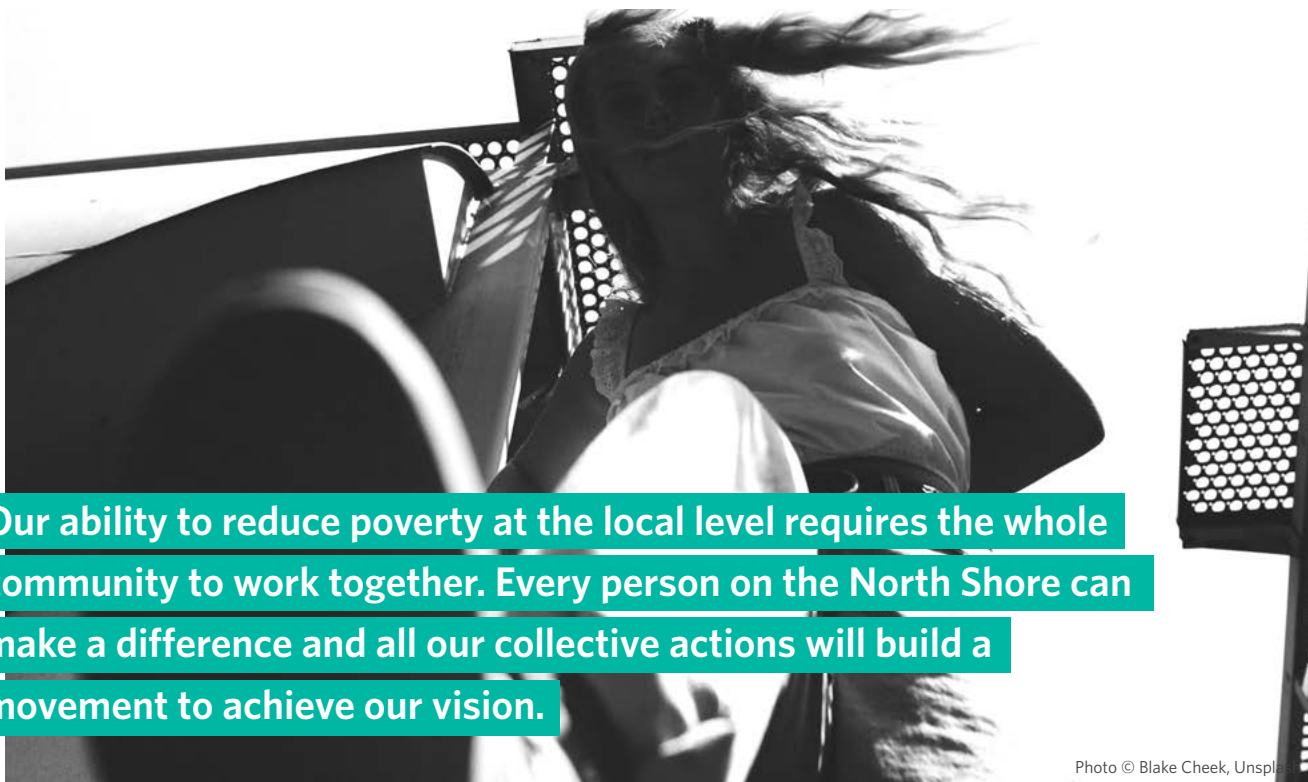


Photo © Blake Cheek, Unsplash

Our ability to reduce poverty at the local level requires the whole community to work together. Every person on the North Shore can make a difference and all our collective actions will build a movement to achieve our vision.

This Poverty Reduction Strategy is a guiding framework to encourage the entire North Shore community into taking action.

Priority 3 of this strategy outlines directions and actions to engage the community in the movement to reduce poverty. Engagement will be achieved by generating awareness and curiosity among residents, at an individual level, to learn more about poverty and understand the value of inclusion on the North Shore. The points below are part of an inspired call to action to the people who live on the North Shore to support this movement, and will be referenced in community awareness and engagement activities.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Learn

Set aside time to review information about poverty and ask questions to better understand the issues. Become familiar with the local services and programs available on the North Shore – they might help you, or someone you know.

Spread awareness

Share this report and information about local services with your network.

Show up

If and when you have time, consider participating in poverty reduction engagement and awareness activities. Provide feedback on what you are seeing and experiencing that needs to be addressed. Consider volunteering with local services which support people living on the North Shore.

Celebrate

Acknowledge and share any achievement, big or small, that helps reduce poverty and create a more inclusive community on the North Shore. Every achievement adds momentum and encourages others to take action.

There is a lot of ground to cover over the next ten years and creating the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy is the first step. Having the whole community working together can bring about success and positive change. Believe in the vision and join the movement.



APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY



Poverty:

- **From the World Health Organization:** Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So, poverty is a call to action – for the poor and the wealthy alike – a call to change the world so that many more have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities.
- **Local Indigenous Perspective of Poverty:** Poverty is about not having the opportunities to be part of a community. The experience of poverty is a loss of spirit and disconnection from the land, family, food, and culture. It is also the experience of continuously losing important cultural sites because of growth and development on the North Shore – a loss that may never be regained. The experience of poverty is a source of immense grief for members of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səilwətaʔ.
- **Poverty Line:** In this strategy, households with low income as defined by Statistics Canada’s Low Income measure after-tax (LIM-AT) are considered to be living below the poverty line.

Affordable Housing: Housing is considered “affordable” if it costs less than 30% of a household’s before-tax income. Many people think the term “affordable housing” refers only to rental housing that is subsidized by the government. In reality, it’s a very broad term that can include housing provided by the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors. It also includes all forms of housing tenure: rental, ownership, and co-operative ownership, as well as temporary and permanent housing. (CMHC)

Core Housing Need: A household is in core housing need if its housing does not meet one or more of the adequacy, suitability, or affordability standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its before-tax income to pay the median rent (including utility costs) of alternative local market housing that meets all three standards:

- **Affordable housing:** Housing has shelter costs equal to less than 30% of total before-tax household income.
- **Adequate Housing:** Does not require any major repairs, according to residents. Major repairs include those to defective plumbing or electrical wiring, or structural repairs to walls, floors, or ceilings.
- **Suitable:** Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to guidelines outlined in National Occupancy Standard (NOS). For example, enough bedrooms based on NOS means one bedroom for each cohabiting adult couple, one for unattached household member 18 years of age and over, and one for each same-sex pair of children under age 18. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e. a unit with no bedroom) (CMHC).

Cross-Cultural: The interaction, communication, or other processes between people or entities from two or more different cultures.

Cultural Safety: An outcome that results from respectful interactions and engagements that recognize and seek to address social power imbalances. This process creates environments free of racism and discrimination, and participants feel safe.

Equity: Providing support and resources based on an individual's level of need, instead of providing everyone with the same level of support. In both community planning and public health, equity is rooted in social justice and the desire for fairness and equal opportunities for all community members (BC Healthy Communities).

Equity Framework: A frame of reference to navigate the complex territory of equity challenges and to develop the capacity to engage in purposeful action. It can be a set of tools, habits, lenses, and processes to improve equitable outcomes.

Food Security: When people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Health and Well-being: Health refers to a state where the physical body is free from disease, while wellness refers to an overall balance of a person's physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, environmental, and occupational well-being.

Homelessness: Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means, and ability of acquiring it. It is often the result of what is known as systemic or societal barriers, including a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural, or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination (CMHC).

Intergenerational Wealth: The assets that the older generation of the family passes to the younger one. The assets may include family businesses, stocks, bonds, other financial securities, property, and commodities.

Intersectionality: Legal scholar, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" in 1989 to describe how systems of oppression overlap to create distinct experiences for people with multiple identity categories. Intersectionality means that social identities work on many levels, resulting in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers for each person.

Livable Wage: The living wage is the hourly amount that each of two working parents with two young children must earn to meet their basic expenses (including rent, child care, food, and transportation) once government taxes, credits, deductions, and subsidies are taken into account. It does not include debt repayment or savings for future plans (Living Wage for Families BC).

Lived Experience: Expertise and knowledge possessed by those who have had direct, first-hand experience of the issue at hand.



Low Income Cut-off (LICO): Low income cut-offs (LICOs) are income thresholds, determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing than the average family would. To reflect differences in the costs of necessities among different community and family sizes, LICOs are defined for five categories of community size and seven of family size.

Low Income Measure-Based Households (LIM): An internationally used measurement based on 50% of the median family income. In Canada, the federal government publishes LIM based on 50% of median income after tax and adjusts this measurement according to household size. The LIM (after tax) is often referenced to demonstrate the relationship between low income and poverty. The LIM is one measurement that can be used to monitor progress on the strategies and outcomes outlined in this strategy.

Low-Barrier: A way to “meet people where they are,” meaning providing an environment where people can be who they are culturally and emotionally, as well as when there are no or limited requirements for accessing a non-punitive resource or service.

Market Basket Measure (MBM): The MBM refers to the measure of low income based on the cost of a specific basket of goods and services (e.g. food, clothing, shelter, transportation) that individuals and families require to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living across 53 communities. It currently excludes Nations on-reserve and the territories. These costs are compared to the disposable income of families to determine whether or not they fall below the poverty line.

Minimum Wage: The lowest wage permitted by law or by a special agreement (such as a labour union). In British Columbia, the minimum wage is \$15.65 per hour (as of June 1, 2022).

Sense of Belonging: Refers to a human emotional need to gain acceptance, reciprocity, and support from other members of a group.

Stigma or Stigmatization: When people experience judgement or discrimination by others based on perceived differences. Stigma may result in social exclusion, low self-worth or shame, lack of agency, barriers to participation in society, and discourages access to solutions and support that may be available. People experiencing poverty can experience stigmatization when others assume that there is moral or ethical failure causing their experience, without using empathy or recognizing poverty as a systemic issue.

Structural Barriers and Systemic Issues: Obstacles that collectively affect a group disproportionately and perpetuate or maintain stark disparities in outcomes. Structural barriers and systemic issues can be policies, practices, and other norms that favor an advantaged group while systematically disadvantaging a marginalized group.



APPENDIX B

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR POVERTY REDUCTION?

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Government of Canada plays a lead role in addressing poverty by influencing macro-level economic policies and investing in broad social programs such as the Canada Child Benefit and Employment Insurance. The Government of Canada also transfers funding to provincial social programs including market rental and non-market housing projects.

Opportunity for All (2018), Canada's first poverty reduction strategy, aims to reduce poverty by 30% by 2030.

Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səlilwətaʔ

The involvement of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səlilwətaʔ, as well as urban Indigenous communities, provides invaluable insight for reducing poverty on the North Shore. Working with Indigenous partners creates opportunities to learn about diverse Indigenous perspectives and definitions of poverty, the impact of ongoing colonial legacies, and culturally-safe and relevant actions that can be taken together.

Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and səlilwətaʔ have existing programming available to their community members that aim to reduce poverty, such as housing assistance, food programs, employment support, and other initiatives. These programs can also be expanded and strengthened as the need for support is often more than the Nations can provide.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The Province of British Columbia oversees social programs including healthcare, social housing, education, and income and disability assistance. North Shore residents identified opportunities for the Province to take action and address issues that contribute to experiences of poverty including increasing income assistance, improving access to affordable healthcare, integrating support services in the school system, and addressing housing issues.

TogetherBC (2019) targets a 25% reduction in overall poverty and 50% in child poverty rates by 2024.

PUBLIC SERVICE AGENCIES

This includes libraries, school districts, Vancouver Coastal Health, recreation centres, and other publicly funded agencies that deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services to support people experiencing poverty and work to reduce poverty on the North Shore.

SUPPORTING POVERTY REDUCTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, and District of West Vancouver can complement senior government roles through advocacy, delivering accessible and inclusive programs and services, providing grants or supportive funding for services, and creating an enabling environment to address poverty at the local level through strategies, plans, land use, and collaboration with partners. While the local governments do not have a specific mandate for poverty reduction, municipalities are the closest level of government to the people and feel the impacts of poverty most directly. It is critical to work with senior levels of government to create supportive policy and funding mechanisms that enable programs and services as well as address general affordability at the local level.

SERVICE SECTOR

The local service sector relies on government funding, fundraising, and donations to deliver important community services. This sector is well-established on the North Shore with multiple organizations providing essential services related to housing, child care, food security, wellness, newcomer services, justice, safety, and other community programs. Funding parameters are typically set by government, but the implementation and provision of social services is frequently the responsibility of the local service sector. There are opportunities to build from the strong foundation on the North Shore and identify new opportunities and partnerships, as further outlined in the Strategy.



APPENDIX C

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

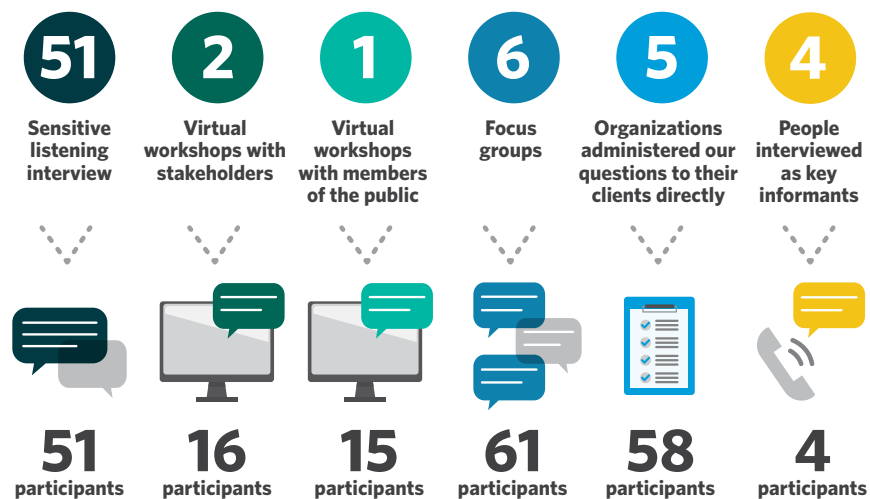


THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Statistics only tell part of the story. To learn more about how poverty affects people on the North Shore, a robust engagement plan was developed with input from the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force. The approach to engagement involved a mix of methods to hear from people experiencing poverty and service providers working closely with those experiencing poverty. During March and April 2022, the project team (the consultants and staff from the three municipalities and two Nations) convened multiple conversations across the North Shore, which included in-person events and virtual discussions. The engagement process is summarized below and Table 1 provides a detailed list of participants.

ENGAGEMENT AT-A-GLANCE

In total we engaged with 205 people



Engagement focused on connecting with people with lived experience of poverty. As people can experience setbacks and challenges that lead to poverty at many life stages in their lives, a diverse selection of North Shore residents was interviewed including people experiencing homelessness, single parents, newcomers, youth, Indigenous people, families, and seniors. Interviews were structured to foster trust and connection, including meeting people 'where they were at'³¹ to learn from their experiences.

As a first step, the Task Force identified organizations that work with people experiencing poverty. The project team then connected with many of these organizations to ask how they would like to be engaged and if their clients would also be interested in meeting with members of the project team.

³¹ The idea of meeting people where they are at considers present circumstances, past experiences, personality, and mental and physical health needs. This concept recognizes the unique challenges someone may experience and prioritizes building a connection and relationship that is effective for them.

Several different approaches to engagement were provided to participants based on these conversations:

SENSITIVE LISTENING INTERVIEWS (EMPATHETIC AND TRAUMA INFORMED LISTENING)

The project team connected with several different groups to organize interviews with their clients. These interviews took place in a variety of settings, as directed by the social service organizations interfacing with their clients on a regular basis. The project team interviewed people in-person at existing drop-in centres and programs, as well as in virtual settings where people were meeting online. Certain organizations felt it would be beneficial if their staff facilitated the interview, given the sensitive nature of the subject matter and their existing relationships and trust. Transcripts and notes from these interviews were then provided to the project team. In total, 51 people with lived experience of poverty were interviewed. Many participants had associated challenges including homelessness, housing precarity, mental health issues, food insecurity, discrimination, and stigma, as well as language barriers.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The project team convened two virtual workshops with service providers to delve into poverty in greater detail. A total of 16 participants attended these virtual sessions. Using a digital whiteboard, a lively discussion occurred between participants. The guiding principles from TogetherBC were used to structure the conversation, providing space for dialogue on opportunity, reconciliation, affordability, and social inclusion.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A virtual workshop with members of the public was also held to learn about and better understand their experiences on the North Shore. A total of 15 participants attended this session.

FOCUS GROUPS

Certain organizations indicated a preference for shared discussion, particularly where established support groups already met on a regular basis. These sessions allowed for in-depth dialogue and discussion among participants, in addition to direct facilitation from members of the project team. In total, six focus groups were held with a total of 61 participants.

ORGANIZATIONS ADMINISTERED OUR QUESTIONS TO THEIR CLIENTS DIRECTLY

Several organizations indicated their preferred method of interaction with their clients to be through a questionnaire. Certain organizations frequently use questionnaires and, given the sensitivity of the subject matter, were preferred over in-person conversations. Questionnaires also provided an opportunity for translation into different languages (i.e. Farsi, Chinese, Korean). Impact North Shore helped to facilitate this translation process. In total, five organizations administered a questionnaire to their clients and 58 participants completed questionnaires.

“I want to learn more about reconciliation. When we talk about reconciliation in school it feels forced sometimes and like it only matters when Indigenous stuff is in the news. It should be something we are always learning about - not just something that we talk about once or twice a year.

There should be opportunities to come together and learn...maybe even intergenerational learning. We should ask Indigenous groups what they want. I think we will learn more when we have that personal connection and we can meet people who have that experience.

We went out on a canoe with people from Tsleil-Waututh Nation and learned some of their language and it was the coolest thing we've done in school. I learned so much that day. Maybe we could have more days like that.”

Quote from person with lived experience

PEOPLE INTERVIEWED AS KEY INFORMANTS

For many service providers, it can be challenging to find time to engage in in-depth discussions, given the complexity and demands of their work. For organizations unable to participate in longer workshops, the project team connected virtually for structured discussions to gain their perspective. This avenue was effective in meeting people 'where they are at', as many organizations referenced capacity limitations as a barrier to their participation in longer discussions. In total, four people were interviewed as key informants.

KEY THEMES

Through these conversations, key themes began to emerge. Engagement highlighted the passion that people have about their community – people want to stay on the North Shore but feel increasingly challenged to do so because of the cost of living. The existing social service programs are incredibly impactful – many people highlighted the sense of community and connection they experience visiting the libraries or local not-for-profits.

There was a feeling that more could be done to support the social service sector to provide additional programs to more residents as the need is exceeding the sector's capacity to respond. Participants highlighted the importance of working closely with local Nations to provide culturally-safe services, which starts with relationship building.

Feedback also focused on inclusivity, as poverty is about more than not having enough money to pay for food and shelter. People experiencing poverty felt like they did not belong on the North Shore and that other residents did not know they exist. More needs to be done to highlight these realities. These themes are explored in more detail below.

GROWING CONCERNS ON COST OF LIVING

- Rising price of food and gas is a source of stress
- Housing expenses are not manageable
- Trade-offs are happening as people cannot afford rent (e.g. food)
- People feel as though they will not be able to stay on the North Shore
- Disconnect between cost of living and income, including people working and experiencing poverty

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ARE NOT AFFORDABLE

- Limited low-cost mental health services
- Prescription medication is very costly
- Dental care is not available to people with low incomes
- Recreation programs are not accessible for people with low incomes

INSUFFICIENT INCOME AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

- Hard to break the cycle of poverty, especially when earning more income means not qualifying for certain subsidies
- Child care costs are significant, and for some people it is cheaper to stay home than return to work

HOUSING IS NOT AFFORDABLE AND THERE IS LIMITED AVAILABILITY

- Housing costs are a source of stress among all engaged
- Frustration with high cost of rent
- Lack of subsidized rental housing
- Gap between subsidized rental and market units is extreme, as people ineligible for subsidized units cannot afford market rates
- Desire for housing that meets need (e.g. intergenerational, higher-barrier shelters, livable units)
- Rate of change is perceived as significant, with feelings that there is 'more growth than we can handle', and concerns related to foreign investment

DISCRIMINATION IS A BARRIER TO ACCESSING HOUSING AND STABLE EMPLOYMENT

- Challenging for single parents to find family-friendly housing
- New immigrants in precarious employment positions
- Credential recognition is a major barrier to accessing good paying jobs
- Concern that jobs are not going to those living in the North Shore

ACCESS TO GOOD JOBS IS A CRITICAL PATH OUT OF POVERTY

- Positive impact of hiring people with lived experience
- Employment training programs are highly beneficial
- People need stable and secure housing before they can apply for work
- Language programs are essential for newcomers looking to learn English (often a work requirement)

IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC TRANSIT NEEDED

- Desire for dedicated rapid transit from Downtown Vancouver to the North Shore – the lack of this service is a source of stress and anxiety for single parents
- Challenging to access services and programs without a car
- Congestion is becoming a major issue
- Additional transit to outdoor recreation opportunities would be beneficial



GREATER AWARENESS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS IS NEEDED

- Opportunity for organizations to collaborate to ensure appropriate referrals are provided and/or explore centralized service provision
- Interest in embedding a human-centred approach to service provision
- People experiencing poverty are not always aware of which programs are available
- Organizations have capacity limitations and cannot always advertise their services

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS ARE PART OF POVERTY REDUCTION

- Desire for communication campaigns to decrease stigma around homelessness, poverty, mental health, and substance use
- Need for recognition that there is not one face of poverty
- Prevailing attitude that poverty does not exist on the North Shore

PRIORITIZE RECONCILIATION

- Build capacity of Indigenous communities
- Invest in relationship building with Indigenous communities as trust needs to be built
- Create opportunities for cultural exchange
- Provide training opportunities for non-Indigenous staff
- Implement the Calls to Action
- Explore changes to the education curriculum for students to learn from Indigenous people on the land

POVERTY CAN BE AN ISOLATING EXPERIENCE

- Sentiments that people experiencing poverty are a 'forgotten segment of society'
- More support is needed for people experiencing poverty with distinct needs (e.g. parents of children with disabilities)
- Interest in events/activities that bring people together
- Desire for intergenerational exchange and learning
- Stigma and shame can keep people from accessing services

STRONG SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

- Recognition of the many important organizations in the North Shore
- People feel a sense of community when visiting different organizations
- Connection to community is strong – people do not want to leave the North Shore
- Opportunity for a more centralized approach to service provision



Table 1: Engagement Participation at-a-Glance

Participant	Sensitive Listening Interviews	Service Provider Administered Questionnaire	Focus Groups	Key Informant Interviews	Virtual Workshops	Task Force	Steering Committee
North Shore Homelessness Taskforce				✓			
North Shore Neighbourhood House					✓	✓	
North Shore Restorative Justice Society						✓	
North Shore Table Matters					✓		
North Shore Women’s Centre	✓		✓				
North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce						✓	
North Shore City Library	✓					✓	
North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission					✓		
North Vancouver School District		✓				✓	
Parkgate Community Services Society					✓		
Quest Food Exchange				✓			
RCMP				✓			
Silver Harbour Centre	✓					✓	
Spectrum Mothers Support Society			✓				
Vancouver Coastal Health						✓	
West Vancouver Child and Family Hub			✓				
West Vancouver Memorial Library					✓		
West Vancouver Police						✓	
West Vancouver Schools						✓	
West Vancouver United Church					✓		

Participant	Sensitive Listening Interviews	Service Provider Administered Questionnaire	Focus Groups	Key Informant Interviews	Virtual Workshops	Task Force	Steering Committee
City of North Vancouver - Planning						✓	✓
District of North Vancouver - Community Planning					✓	✓	✓
District of West Vancouver - Access Services						✓	
District of West Vancouver - Community Services	✓				✓	✓	
District of West Vancouver - Youth Hub					✓	✓	✓
District of West Vancouver - Youth Outreach			✓				
Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)						✓	
səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)	✓					✓	✓
Avalon Women's Centre	✓				✓	✓	✓
Canadian Mental Health Association North and West Vancouver		✓			✓		
Community Living BC				✓			
Family Services of the North Shore					✓		
Harvest Project		✓					
Hollyburn Community Services Society					✓		
Impact North Shore						✓	
Lookout Housing and Health Society		✓				✓	
North Shore Alliance Church	✓				✓	✓	
North Shore Community Resources					✓		
North Shore Crisis Services Society					✓		
North Shore Disability Resource Centre	✓					✓	

