

Accelerated efforts to eliminate poverty required for Canada to meet its human rights obligation to end poverty

For Immediate Release – *Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty* is calling on the federal government to accelerate efforts to eliminate poverty and fulfill its human rights obligations as rising costs of living affect communities from coast to coast to coast. The call comes as Canada and other UN member states convene in New York for the [2nd SDGs Summit and Action Weekend](#) to mark the halfway point to the deadline set for achieving Agenda 2030.

“Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is grounded in a human rights framework, requires urgency and political will from all levels of government,” said Leila Sarangi, National Director of Campaign 2000. “Poverty is a human rights violation that is disproportionately experienced by those facing systemic marginalization including Indigenous Peoples, racialized and immigrant communities, those with disabilities, lone mothers and youth in the child welfare system, among others. Canada is moving in the wrong direction; any progress we’ve had in the past is being undone. The SDG Summit is the right place for Canada to reflect on where it is falling behind and plan for new actions to end poverty once and for all. We are a wealthy nation, we have the means, we now need the political will.”

“Canada has made real progress in the last decade, especially when it comes to reducing child poverty.” said Terence Hamilton, Policy Specialist at UNICEF Canada. “But the UN Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved by 2030 by leaving some children behind. Every child has the right to be free from poverty.”

Campaign 2000, Citizens for Public Justice and Canada Without Poverty co-lead a national research project that engages communities experiencing poverty in policy development to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The project recently completed an eleven-month tour to host 17 conversations with 227 people affected by poverty and systemic marginalization in every province and territory. Participants across the country shared how low wages, precarious work and stagnant government assistance rates, which were dramatically insufficient prior to the pandemic, do not allow them to cover the costs of basic needs today, including food, rent, medications, energy and transportation, which in turn leads to worse health, education and social outcomes for these families.

“Governments must do more to accurately capture experiences of poverty in Canada,” says Natalie Appleyard, Socio-Economic Policy Analyst at Citizens for Public Justice and a co-lead of the project. “Collecting disaggregated data and firsthand accounts of unmet needs is necessary for developing policy solutions that are effective in addressing the structural causes of poverty.”

Canada’s latest [Voluntary National Review](#) for the SDGs reports gains in poverty reduction made in 2020 were so significant that poverty reduction targets were achieved a decade early. But the report also shows that progress was a result of temporary pandemic income transfers from the federal government to individuals and families.

“Those benefits are no longer available, and data is showing poverty rates climbing back up,” said Sarangi. “We need to fix the major holes in our income and social security systems. Our communities are in crisis. We are at the halfway mark for meeting our obligations under the SDGs but we do not know what the federal plan is as it relates to ending poverty.”

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Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, pan-Canadian network of 120 national, provincial and community partner organizations committed to working to end child and family poverty, hosted by Family Service Toronto. To learn more about Campaign 2000 and the Localizing Canada's Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goal's project, visit <https://sdg.campaign2000.ca>