



# ANNUAL REPORT

**2022-2023**

# about

The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition consists of +80 organizations & community mobilizations that collectively advocate for public policy solutions to end poverty, homelessness & inequality in B.C.

We aim to **improve the health & well-being of all living in British Columbia**. The Coalition advocates for a targeted & comprehensive poverty reduction strategy that prioritizes equity-deserving groups & a whole government, cross-ministry approach to ending poverty. Our work is grounded in the foundation of universal human rights.

Basis of  
Unity.

Membership List

Blueprint  
for Justice

## land acknowledgement

The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition exists on traditional, ancestral & unceded x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>i'yəm (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), & səliwətaʔt̓ (Tsleil-Waututh) territories, home of the Hul'q'umí'num' speaking peoples. We acknowledge the historical & present-day practices of colonization & recognize that poverty is interwoven with colonization, oppression & genocide. We strive to stand in solidarity with Indigenous people & communities in asserting Indigenous peoples' rights, cultural practices, land defense & food harvesting.

# Message from the Provincial Director



**We established seven key policy points to reduce poverty in BC.**

## Growth, transformation, & rebuilding

This has been another year of major growth, transformation, & rebuilding for the BC PRC. We have been building up our capacity: this year **our staff team grew to 3.5 positions** thanks to generous funding from Vancity Credit Union, & we have a permanent office space at 312 Main. The coalition continues to gather regularly & gain momentum, & we've had time to build out some of our strategic & systemic priorities.

In addition to the internal building out of our systems, infrastructure, & governance pieces, we have also turned our attention outward towards advocacy, campaign, & policy work. Most significantly, the **Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy** underwent a formal review for the first time since it was established in 2018. We participated at every level of this process, from convening CAN members to give feedback informed by their lived expertise of the realities of poverty & its impacts & attending public town halls. Together with coalition members & policy experts, we also crafted a submission to the government of our **top seven recommendations** not just for poverty reduction, but poverty eradication in BC.

Going forward, these submission recommendations will form the backbone of our strategic advocacy goals. We aim to make these recommendations a reality, thus improving living conditions & realities for many individuals & families experiencing poverty.

This year saw wins, firsts, & the growth of partnerships at neighbourhood, municipal, & regional levels, including:

- a Black Leadership Program for folks of African descent with lived experiences of poverty and/or homelessness
- a CAN cohort in Kelowna
- a Housing Justice event in New Westminster
- new partnerships with housing researchers & advocates
- mobilizing residents of the Downtown Eastside to vote during the municipal elections
- anti-oppression workshops to strengthen the education & expertise of members
- 12 days of collaborative action to end immigration detention across Canada - wins in 8 out of 10 provinces

We are living through trying times - climate change & extreme weather, a toxic drugs crisis, extreme affordability challenges, catastrophic housing costs, the rise of white supremacy & right-wing nationalism, anti-2SLGBTQIA+ ideologies & legislations, alongside attacks on reproductive justice, rising precarious work, & the erosion of public systems in favour of privatization. It's a lot to contend with. **These intersectional social issues require systemic interventions.** We need to mobilize effective, strong, & sustainable social movements to build sound policies reflective of lived experience & expertise.

Clearly, there is deep, hard work to do. We are so grateful for the funders, partners, members, CAN leaders, volunteers, board members, & our incredible staff team for moving the coalition forward. Together we are setting up good internal foundations to take up these challenges together. It has been another extraordinary year for the BC PRC, & I look forward to the upcoming year & seeing what we can do with the momentum we are building to create a poverty-free BC together!

-Rowan Burdge  
*Provincial Director*

# The BC PRC's Activities

This summarizes the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition's (BC PRC) activities from June 29, 2022, to June 30th, 2023.

## PRC Poverty Reduction Coalitions Societies' Board of Directors 2022-23

Dan Huang-Taylor  
David Lee  
Halena Seiferling  
Meredith Klemmensmen  
Richard Han



Rysa Kronebusch  
Shannon Daub  
Stephen Elliot-Buckley

## BC Society Updates

The BC PRC registered as a society  
May 26, 2021

**Incorporation Number:** S0074949

**Business Number:** 79789 8905 BC0001

**Last AGM date:** June 29, 2022

**Next AGM:** July 4, 2023

\*Special Thanks to  
Cheyenne, a CAN member  
who has been sitting in on  
BC PRC board meetings  
to offer input!

# OPERATIONS

- Director and Officers Liability insurance renewed Jan 2023.
- Group Health Benefits Plan in place for staff team as of Feb 2023.
- Bookkeeper set up, payroll, financial controls set up.
- Quarterly Financials are reviewed and approved by the board of directors.
- The BC PRC is a registered lobbyist with the [BC Lobby Registry](#).
- Workers' Compensation coverage completed for 2023.
- 3-year BC PRC Projected Budget 2022-23 approved by board March 30th, 2022.  
We are currently in year 2 of this budget.
- The BC PRC moved into an office space at 312 Main, and the staff team is enjoying the collaborative coworking space.
- We also became a [proud living wage employer](#) this year!
- We had a successful membership campaign that welcomed 34 new/returning organizations to [the Coalition](#).

# FINANCIALS



## Summary of Revenue\*

Donations	\$6,300	2%
Grants	\$96,280	26%
Membership Fees	\$11,520	3%
Vancity Credit Union	\$250,000	69%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$364,100</b>	<b>100%</b>

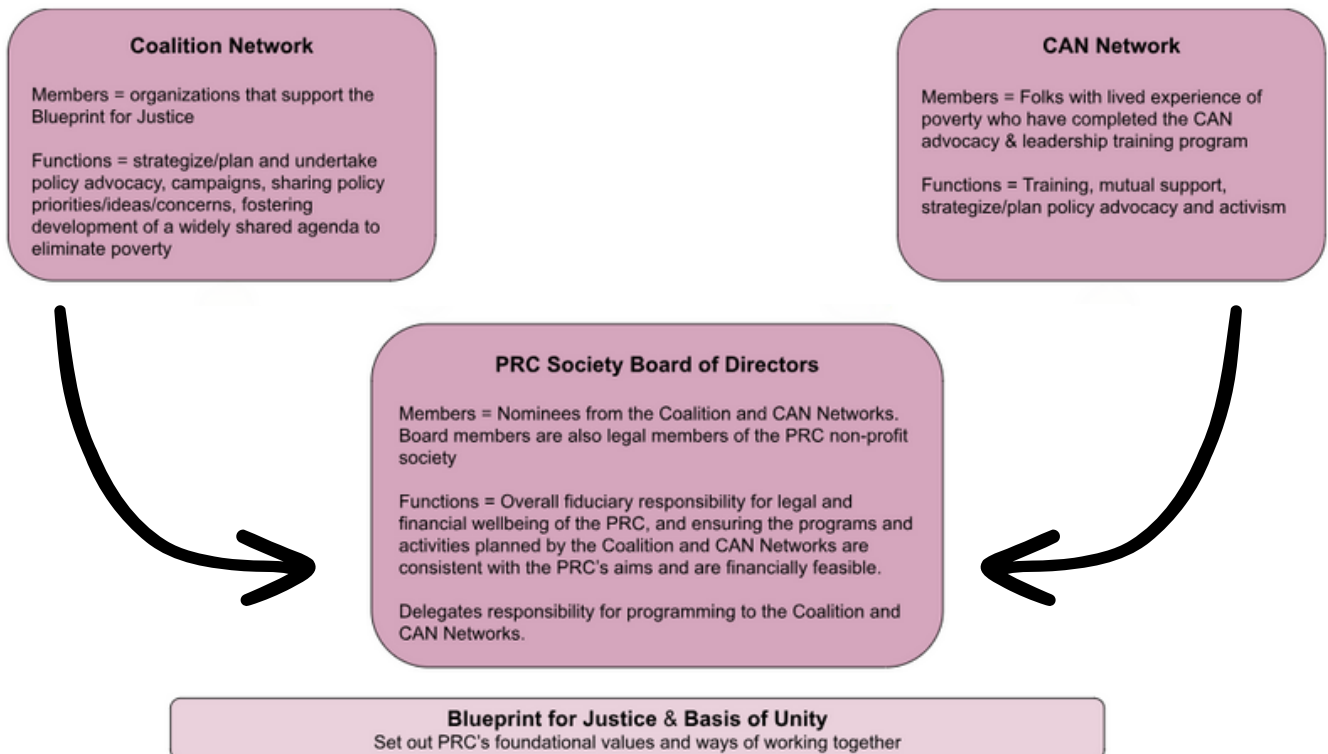


## Summary of Expenses\*

Programs and Services	\$64,098	23%
Facilities and Office Expenses	\$27,540	10%
Admin Fees and Payments	\$2,867	1%
Staffing	\$185,800	66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$280,305</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Based on The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition's board-approved financial statements for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2023

# GOVERNANCE



New Society Governance Policies Updates - completed

# PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

**CAN Kelowna:** The BC PRC Successfully Completed CAN Kelowna's Cohort - we were thrilled with the nine graduates who completed the program. Special thanks to our fantastic local guest speakers, our venue hosts at metro community, and the City of Kelowna staff who were able to support and join us! Our CAN graduates have also been participating in Housing Needs Assessment + Healthy Housing Strategy | Get Involved Kelowna. We look forward to see more great work from CAN Kelowna leaders!

**Anti-Oppressive Workshops with HSABC, round 3:** In 2023, the BC PRC, in partnership with the Homelessness Services Association of BC, launched a third round of our shared anti-oppressive virtual free workshop series to help empower members with knowledge, expertise, and tools in anti-oppressive theory and practice. Themes include areas like disability justice and crip kindness, Decolonization, Sex Work, and more. This iteration of the series is funded by the Health Science Association's Equality and Social Action Fund.

**City of Vancouver Elections Project:** We worked with the City of Vancouver, Exchange Inner City and other partners to employ CAN members and folks with living experiences of poverty to support equity-deserving people in navigating barriers to voting in the Vancouver election. This led to Lorna, a CAN leader, speaking on a panel webinar on Getting Equity on the Political Agenda: Strategies at the Local Level, hosted by the Tamarack Institute.

**Community consultant in an inquiry into hate during the pandemic:** We participated as a community stakeholder in the BC Human Rights Commissioner's Rise of Hate during the Pandemic Inquiry. Rowan attended the in-person report launch and was in the report projects' video calling for social condition to be added as a protected grounds to the Human Rights Code.



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: BLACK LEADERSHIP LAB

We held our first-ever Black CAN Leadership Program in February and March 2023. With this program, we aim to **support the development of Black leadership** in the progressive advocacy sector. This series was for folks of African descent with lived & living experiences of poverty.

We are grateful to Chanelle Tye for co-facilitating with Lama Mugabo, our CAN Program Manager. Thanks to 312 Main for hosting the program space and the funders who made this program possible for the first time. Finally, thank you so much to the wonderful guest speakers who contributed so much with their expertise: Cicely Blaine, founder of Bakau Consulting; Djaka Blais, ED of the Hogan's Alley Society; Dee Abdirahman of the Liberation Collective; and one of our CAN Graduates, Margret Wanyoike.

The program launched during Black History Month and capped with a Hogan's Alley Walking Tour.

**Congratulations to the program graduates!**  
See what they had to say about being part of the Leadership Lab:



I very much enjoyed every day of this session. You have brought **excitement, humour & a sense of community** belonging.

This leadership lab has been helpful to me. It was one of the **most meaningful** trainings I have had since I came to Canada 2 years ago.

**“I’m ready to lead. Let’s show the world what we can do!”**

Leadership is about love, selflessness, humility, equality, & empathy. To serve the community effectively, we must include all these attributes. We should **never give up** the struggle to build a better community.

# Advocacy

- **Attended** the BC Budget 2023 Lockup and provided analysis of the BC Budget on CBC.
- **Presented** at the 2024 BC Budget consultations.
- **Met** with Ministry staff regarding EI clawback and disability and shared letter explaining why EI Benefits Should Be Exempted from PWD Income.
- **Signed** the letter to stop fees in Universal Healthcare.
- **Presented** on panel: Transforming Systems for Continued Poverty Reduction Success that responded to the 2022 Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty.
- **Participated** in the Home Energy Justice Forum both as a panellist and speaker (Provincial Director) and as attendees (CAN members, staff).
- **Acted** as a Community Reviewer for West Coast Leaf's Gender Equity Report Card.
- **Signed** on to demand BC enact pay equity legislation.
- **Supported** Health Justice's Guiding Principles for a more just mental health act.
- **Signed** two open letters in response to displacement of unhoused neighbours and their belongings in the DTES, and the service disruption that ensued during displacement.
- **Contributed** as a member of the Just Transition Working Group, which created this policy brief on the importance of Social Justice in Just Transition and co-wrote a Tyee op-ed as an accessible add-on to the brief.
- **Supported** Council of Canadian's Pharmacare Campaign and spoke on a panel with Avi Lewis on the importance of public, fair pharmacare access.
- **Supported** the Migrant Rights Network on #StatusForAll migrants.
- **Signed** the Chew On This Campaign letter to address food insecurity in Canada.
- **Advocated** for a universal school food program across BC.
- **Supported** this Challenge of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's culture of risk and surveillance letter and campaign.
- **Endorsed** a Winter Housing Plan for People Who Shelter in Public Spaces.
- **Supported** a Worker Solidarity Network petition calling for increased funding to the Employment Standards Branch (ESB).
- **Signed** on to Women Transforming Cities' letter to Vancouver City Council asking them to Reinvest in Equity.
- **Endorsed** a paper by Pivot Legal Society against Involuntary Treatment: Criminalization by another name.
- **Endorsed** the campaign for Pay Equity Legislation in BC.
- **Endorsed** a Policy Brief on improving income assistance in BC.
- **Signed** onto the paper: No, Longer Prison Sentences Do not Reduce Crime.
- **Supported** (and offering continuing support to) adding social condition to the Human Rights Code.
- **Signed** the open letter calling for stronger protections for gig workers in BC.



# RESEARCH



Organizational partner on study: 2SLGBTQ+ Poverty in Canada.

The BC PRC was on the steering committee for the Lived Experience Community 2030 | Canada Without Poverty project and the report entitled "Redefining the Consultation Process; Recommendations for Community Co-Design Policymaking".

The BC PRC contributed to this Churchill Fellow Scholar's report: To empower people facing poverty through social and housing status rights-based models - Churchill Fellows Association of the ACT by Farzana Choudhury.

CAN members are collaborating with UBC researchers on the issue of extreme weather impacts on renters and folks who are precariously housed.

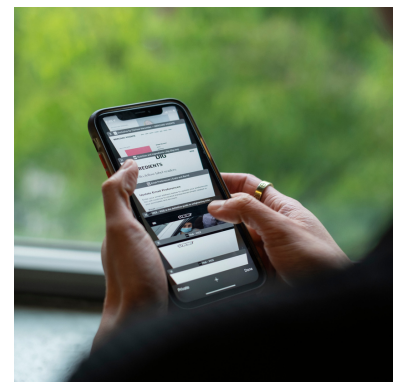


The BC PRC and CAN Network participated in the "Ethics of Engagement Project" led by the City of New Westminster.

Following our work on Public Transit and Equity-Deserving Groups: Understanding Lived Experiences, the BC PRC also sat on the Community and Equity Advisory Table (CEAT), with Mobilizing Justice as a member.

With homelessness in Metro Vancouver at an all-time high, The BC PRC and CAN network have partnered with Douglas College on the Changing the Conversation Project on Housing Insecurity. The aim is to build a greater sense of solidarity among people who experience housing insecurity.

The BC PRC is a community group with the Understanding Precarity in BC, hosted by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.





The year marked significant growth of our CAN network. We have switched our governance model to reflect the importance of lived expertise in our work and to ensure a fair wage for CAN Leaders to support their participation.

We've reduced barriers to civic engagement for CAN members by providing our leaders with media training and upcoming anti-racism and anti-oppression training to keep building skills. We also offer **hot meals, bus tickets, and childcare costs, and pay CAN Leaders a living wage** for their time in their advocacy for these kinds of engagements. We are so grateful to our funders and our leaders and partners who do this work.

This past year, PRC hosted two cohorts of the CAN training program, first in **Kelowna**. With the support of the Central Okanagan Foundation, we ran the Kelowna Cohort in the **fall of 2022**. In March 2023, CAN worked closely with the City of Kelowna and City Spaces, a consulting company that was hired to conduct a Housing Needs Assessment. We connected City Spaces with our CAN leaders, and they were able to conduct a thorough focus group with folks who are experiencing severe housing precarity.

In **February and March 2023**, with the support of the Reaching Home Foundation, the Langley Social Justice Committee, and 312 Main, we were also able to host our **FIRST-ever Black leadership program in Vancouver!**

This program included a field trip to our Housing Justice event, and a cohort Hogan's Alley Walking Tour and lunch. We appreciate Lama Mugabo's tireless work and advocacy in getting this program to launch during Black History/Futures Month and his commitment to organizing for racial and housing justice.

Over the course of the year, we were invited to participate in numerous **public engagements & events**, including:

- Home Energy Justice Forum
- The UGM Summer Connect
- The Heat Dome Action BC
- The National Right to Housing Network's Strategic Advocacy Summit
- Tamarack Institute's Communities Ending Poverty Virtual National Gathering
- an engagement with Vancouver Coastal Health on heat impacts



# CAN wins gold!

Our contribution to community building was recognized by the Planning Institute of BC (PIBC) with the highest award in urban planning: the **Gold Award for Excellence in City and Urban Planning**! The award was given to the City of New Westminster and PRC for the work CAN is doing in New Westminster.

CAN Leaders were invited to showcase their community and policy work at the HSABC annual conference on September 23-24, 2022! Their multimedia project explores a variety of policies that CAN Leaders have informed.

This year, PRC welcomed a CAN member on the BC Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee and many others on city advisory groups to impact local decision-makers with their lived expertise. CAN work was featured in Tamarack Case Study: Transforming Systems Through Lived Experience.

**Our CAN Leaders do so many incredible things:** from coordinating heat dome mutual aid response, running a peer navigator program at the New West public library to supporting the Homelessness Action Strategy and good city policy wherever they are.

## Did you know?



In addition to CAN training, we hold **monthly virtual meetings** of our CAN leadership network to facilitate community engagement activities, as well as **appreciation dinners and picnics** for CAN leaders to connect with one another.

photo, left: CAN Leader Margaret in a video on Building a Childcare System that Works for Immigrant and Refugee Women Series

photo, previous page: Richard Schabler, CAN Leader, & John Stark, Senior Manager, Supervisor of Community Planning at City of New Westminster received the PIBC award in June 2023 in Sun Peaks, BC.

# IN THE NEWS

Impact

snapshot

14 Different media outlets featured BCPRC quotes

2 Co-authored op-eds with coalition members

6 Articles & comments on tenant rights to cooling/heat preparedness

5 Live radio and/or TV interviews

Independent journalism that swims against the current. **THE TYEE**

NEWS ANALYSIS CULTURE SOLUTIONS MORE SUPPORT US SEARCH Q

OPINION | Municipal Elections 2022 | Rights + Justice | Municipal Politics

## In Vancouver, Prioritize Human Rights This Election

Municipalities have power. Citizens have power through our municipal leaders to either move towards equity or away from it.

Rowan Burdige and Nina Tajhaddosi / 29 Sep 2022 / TheTyee.ca

Rowan Burdige is the provincial director of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition. Nina Tajhaddosi is the anti-stigma campaigner at Pivot Legal Society.

2 Comments

PRINCE GEORGE POST

News / Local News

## Two years after deadly heat dome, B.C. still has no program to provide air conditioners to those in need

The province was supposed to complete a review last year, but it is already 5½ months overdue

Gordon Hoekstra

Published May 16, 2023 • Last updated May 17, 2023 • 4 minute read

Join the conversation

A woman talks on her phone while taking in the sun on Heatley Ave. in Vancouver on May 16, 2023. PHOTO BY JASON PAYNE /PNG

straight

ARTS FILM & TV FOOD & DRINK MUSIC NEWS GOLDEN PLATES BEST OF VAN LIVING

## Vancouver's rents remain highest in Canada, says new report

We're number one! We're number one!

by V. S. Wells on January 27th, 2023 at 11:07 AM

LOOK at all these beautiful apartments you can't afford to live in.

SAN BRECKHOLOST

## On The Coast with Gloria Macarenko

Poverty experts have a list of wants from provincial budget

Play Segment 5:49 Share Segment

Liz Barnett and Rowan Burdige speak with Kathryn Marlow about the needs for those in need this year.

Aired: Feb. 27, 2023

CANADA'S NATIONAL OBSERVER

OPINION ANALYSIS CLIMATE SOLUTIONS SPECIAL REPORTS PODCASTS NEWSLETTERS CONVERSATIONS NEWS TEAM ABOUT

## Big Pharma lobbying soared after Liberals and NDP promised progress on pharmacare

By Natasha Bulowski | News, Politics, Ottawa Insider | February 15th 2023

# Campaigns

Collaborative campaign work is at the heart of our mission. We strive to elevate and escalate coalition members' campaign work as often as we can!

## success

Following 14 Days of Action in 2022, which we undertook with a host of community partners, Vancouver City Council historically called on the province of British Columbia to **end immigration detention**. On July 21, 2022, the BC Government committed to ending their contract with the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA).

**Eight out of ten provinces have now ended their contracts with CBSA** as a result of this campaign. This is an incredible win for human rights in Canada! We will continue to hold the federal government to account to ensure this practice ends fully.

## success

We are delighted to have backed AccessBC's campaign for free contraception in BC. The campaign celebrated a major win this year, with Budget 2023 announcing **Free Contraception in BC as of April 2023**. Congratulations, AccessBC, for your work in making this happen!

## in progress

We have proudly endorsed the **Coalition for Healthy School Food** program's campaign for universal free school food in BC.

We support the **Better Care for Seniors Campaign** by BC Health Coalition.

We are a proud endorser of the **Transit for Teens** campaign, which is advocating for the expansion of the Get on Board! - Kids 12 and Under Ride for Free program to include young people up to age 18 to have fare-free transit!

# EVENTS

Whether it's at a march, conference, walking tour, or breakfast meeting, we love connecting to our coalition & community members in person!

## highlights

- DTES Annual Women's memorial march.
- Learn + Connect Series on Systems Change
- BC Federation of Labour Convention
- Labour Day event in Surrey.
- Move Up's Job Steward Seminar
- Feminist Deliver Collective Reimaginings: From Family Policing to Family Wellbeing Symposium
- Westcoast Leaf Annual Breakfast
- BCTF AGM & BCTF Social Justice dinner
- Seeding Change Conference by PHABC
- Hogan's Alley Walking Tours

## EVENING OF STORYTELLING

**FROM DISPLACEMENT TO HOUSING JUSTICE:**  
A CONVERSATION ON BLACK HOUSING PRECARIETY IN METRO VANCOUVER



February 15  
6:30 - 8 pm

Douglas College, New Westminster  
Room N2201 @ 700 Royal Ave

join for a panel discussion & short film screening  
catered event: food served starting at 6 pm

with support from:  Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada / Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada Canada 



# STAFF

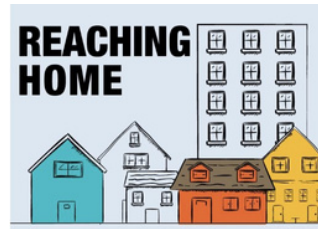
Thanks to Vancity Credit Union, the BC PRC has grown to a team of 3.5 positions! Please welcome Sacia, Victoria, and Lama as permanent staff members to the BC PRC team. The new team is increasing the BC PRC's capacity to take on our own campaigns in 2023!

# THANK YOU!

Our work is made possible thanks to our funders & supporters



NEW WESTMINSTER



Special thanks to our labour supporters

