

OUTCOMES SUMMARY REPORT

# POVERTY ACTION PROJECT 2023

A UBCM funded project delivered through:

**The Sunshine Coast Regional District**  
**The Town of Gibsons**  
**The District of Sechelt**

With stewardship and project  
management provided by:



SUNSHINE COAST  
**Resource  
Centre**

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# ENDING POVERTY ON THE SUNSHINE COAST

The 2023 Poverty Action Project represents **phase two** of ongoing efforts to combat poverty on the Lower Sunshine Coast. It is a continuation following the completion of **phase one**, which involved extensive community consultations and led to the creation of a Strategic Framework for Action on Poverty in 2021. Building upon this foundation, the Sunshine Coast Resource Centre (SCRC) initiated the Poverty Action Project, with a focus on implementing the eight recommendations outlined in the 2021 strategy.

## WHAT IS POVERTY?

Poverty is the lack of resources, like money or support, the choices or the power necessary to obtain and maintain a basic living standard. People in poverty face challenges with food, housing, social security, and interaction, as well as limited opportunities for them to fully participate in community.

On the Sunshine Coast, 12.6% of our adult population lives in low income households. The rate for children (0-17) is 13.8%, representing over 620 children (0-17 years old) and the rate for seniors (65+) is 13.3% representing 1,375 seniors.

### YOU ARE CONSIDERED TO BE LIVING IN POVERTY IN BC IF YOU ARE:



**<\$2,100**  
Monthly

Single



**<\$3,333**  
Monthly

Family of four

In Canada, the poverty rate for single individuals was 21.9% in 2021, almost five times the rate for persons in families (4.4%). In 2021, 16.1% of persons living in single-parent families experienced poverty, and those in female single-parent families (17.2%) were more likely to experience poverty than those in male lone-parent families (11.6%). In 2019, 22.0% of persons living in lone-parent families were living under the poverty line.<sup>2</sup>

2. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/230502/dq230502a-eng.htm>

## THE REALITY IS, POVERTY IMPACTS SOME PEOPLE MORE THAN OTHERS.

For example if you have a disability or health issues, are a single parent, a senior on a fixed income, have experienced trauma, live with addiction, or live in a remote area with fewer opportunities, you are more likely to experience poverty. This disparity plays out across demographics and communities even within our small region.

In Canada, the Government uses a metric called “Low Income Measure After Tax” or LIM-AT to gauge low income. LIM-AT % indicates if a household's income is 50% lower than the average household income in BC, which was \$68,400 per year in 2021. The table below shows the percentage of our population living on a low income, or less than \$34,200 per year.

**TABLE #1: PREVALENCE OF THE LOW INCOME AFTER TAX (LIM-AT) ON THE SUNSHINE COAST (2021)**<sup>3</sup>

| AREA                               | LIM-AT % | CHILDREN (0-17) | SENIORS (65+) |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| Sunshine Coast<br>Regional average | 12.6%    | 13.8%           | 13.3%         |
| Pender Harbour                     | 14.7%    | 14%             | 16.4%         |
| Roberts Creek                      | 12.1%    | 10%             | 13.2%         |
| Town of Gibsons                    | 11.5 %   | 13.6%           | 13.9%         |
| District of Sechelt                | 12.6%    | 13.1%           | 13.5%         |
| shíshálh Nation                    | 20.8%    | 24%             | 24%           |

3. Statistics Canada Census Data combined, 2021

# POVERTY REDUCTION PROJECT SUMMARY

Our 2023 Sunshine Coast Poverty Action Project completed work in the following areas:

**01**

**FINANCIAL SUPPORTS AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES**

**02**

**DIGITAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION - "COMPUTER KINDNESS CORNER"**

**03**

**THE POVERTY AWARENESS "DO A KINDNESS" PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN**

**04**

**THE "DECISION MAKING THROUGH A POVERTY LENS" POLICY TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

**05**

**INFORMATION, SUPPORTS AND REFERRALS**





# SUNSHINE COAST POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY (2021)

The [2021 Strategic Framework for Action on Poverty Reduction](#), which was developed in consultation with the community and with service providers, had a total of eight recommendations. This table provides an overview of our community's responses to these recommendations over the course of the past two years.

**TABLE #2: EIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SC POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY**

| RECOMMENDATION   | RATIONALE   | RESPONSE  |
|--|---|---|
| Coordination of intentional Social Planning Council for poverty reduction      | Get service, business, faith and government officials, working separately, to work together towards common, shared goals.               | Thriving Communities Council, through the Sunshine Coast Resource Centre  |
| Establish a Regional Housing Table to address affordable housing supply issues | Sunshine Coast has reached sustained, crisis levels in terms of housing affordability and availability all along the housing continuum. | <a href="#">Cover the Coast Alliance for Affordable Housing</a> , Sunshine Coast Housing Action Table, and a Regional Housing Coordinator |
| Establish a Child Care Planning Table to create more child care opportunities  | Enhancing child care ensures opportunities for local workforce participation, for families to have more income opportunities.           | School District 46 Joint Child Care Council   |

| RECOMMENDATION   | RATIONALE   | RESPONSE  |
|--|---|---|
| Implement a long-term poverty awareness and anti-stigma public communications strategy | Poverty reduction starts with everyone acknowledging and recognizing the different ways that poverty shows up in the community and how we respond to it   | <a href="#">Do a Kindness</a> poverty awareness and community action campaign   |
| Promote and increase wages and income supports   | Understanding the Living Wage, which has gone up to \$24.30 per hour, is what communities can advocate for from employers and government. Knowing what income supports and subsidies are available also helps to manage the cost of living. | <a href="#">Updated living wage calculation</a> with Sunshine Coast Foundation  |
| Improve access to transportation to create more equity in the community                | Transportation impacts livability, vibrancy, sustainability, labor force participation and engagement in community  | SCRD Transportation Networking Meetings, Sunshine Coast Seniors Planning Table Transportation Working Group, Regional Accessibility Committee, <a href="#">TRaC</a>   |
| Develop policy and practices in the community using the <a href="#">Poverty Lens</a> . | Inclusivity, equity and justice require asking questions and being reflective when planning events or creating policies   | Anti-stigma, inclusion and poverty lens training and tools  |
| Improve access to a range of digital services and skills                               | Increasing access to digital services (internet, cell) and hardware (phones, computers) increases opportunities and enhances participation.   | <a href="#">Computer Kindness Corner</a> , SCRC <a href="#">Digital Equity Guide</a> , Sechelt and Gibsons Library technology services, Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre computers, ongoing digital literacy training workshops in community |

# FINANCIAL SUPPORTS AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COAST

To escape poverty, individuals need to increase earnings and/or reduce expenses. Given the escalating cost of living, boosting income is often the only option.

In the poverty action project, we focused on **four core aspects**: tax clinics, money management, updating the Living Wage, and navigation of income subsidies and supports. However, there are other options available, such as exploring job opportunities with WorkBC, situated on Cowrie St. in Sechelt.

## TAX CLINICS: THE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM (CVITP)

The goal of this project was to encourage people to do their taxes and increase awareness of the existing [CVITP program](#) in the community. CVITP is a group of dedicated volunteers on the Coast who offer free tax filing services for people with low incomes.

Many people are afraid to file taxes because they think they will owe money, but usually, they actually get money back - either through a tax rebate, or because it enables them to access other government subsidies.

By enhancing the marketing communications of the CVITP program through digital and print marketing, and through the hard work and dedication of volunteers, the program was able to file 1331 tax returns, a 25.7% increase from 2021.





**TABLE #3: CVITP YEARLY TOTALS 2014-2021**

| YEAR                 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| TOTALS TO SEPT. 30TH | 768  | 886  | 892  | 979  | 1175 | 1071 | 1035 | 1187 | 1331 |

## GET IN TOUCH

You can access the CVITP service through multiple locations along the Coast, including the Resource Centre in Sechelt. You can also get involved as a volunteer!

Email [help@resourcecentre.ca](mailto:help@resourcecentre.ca)

Visit [www.resourcecentre.ca](http://www.resourcecentre.ca)

# LEARN ABOUT BUDGETING AND MANAGING DEBT

This project was a partnership with the Sunshine Coast Credit Union to offer in-person finance workshops and coaching on budgets and debt through a program called, “Each One. Teach One” (EOTO). It is designed to deliver information and empower individuals to support money management and make the best financial decisions for themselves and their families.

Our workshops supported nine participants during the project, and we are looking forward to offering the coaching and workshops more often. Any organization on the Coast can request an EOTO workshop, just [contact them on their website](#) or contact the Sunshine Coast Credit Union!



Each One. Teach One.

# UNDERSTANDING THE LIVING WAGE ON THE SUNSHINE COAST



A “Living Wage” is how much it costs, on average, for a family of four to afford the cost of living. In 2021, the Sunshine Coast Foundation published a [Living Wage Report](#) showing that the wage should be \$19.79 per hour.

We embarked in collaboration with the Sunshine Coast Foundation to find out if the Living Wage on the Sunshine Coast of BC had stayed the same. In fact, it has not. It's gone up to \$24.30 an hour on the Sunshine Coast, a 22.8% increase.

[Living Wage for Families BC](#) states that the Sunshine Coast has the third highest living wage in all of BC, just behind Golden and Haida Gwaii.

**TABLE #4: LIVING WAGE & MINIMUM WAGE ON THE SUNSHINE COAST**

Despite the fact that the minimum wage has been steadily rising over the last 12 years, there remains a significant gap between what is considered a living wage and minimum wage



Roksy and Mike, innovative employers at the restaurant *Run with Soup* in Sechelt, provide free lunch for those in need, and offer an employment food-exchange program.

# DIGITAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

In our community, access and use of internet and technology is not equal for everyone. The digital equity project wanted to address this and joined forces with the [Sunshine Coast Computer Kindness Program](#), based in Roberts Creek. The goal was to collect and distribute refurbished technology in downtown Sechelt through the creation and promotion of a [Computer Kindness Corner](#). This partnership was focused on sending fewer devices to the landfill, while developing relationships with organizations interested in promoting access to technology.

**TABLE #5: NUMBER OF CKC DEVICES REQUESTED, DONATED AND DISTRIBUTED FROM MAY 5 - JULY 21, 2023**

|        | REQUESTED | DONATED | DISTRIBUTED |
|--------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| PHONE  | 16        | 18      | 16          |
| LAPTOP | 15        | 13      | 9           |
| TABLET | 2         | 8       | 2           |
| TOTAL  | 33        | 39*     | 27          |

\*Does not include 3 devices donated that were not suitable for reuse.

\*\*Does not include desktops donated to the SC Computer Kindness Program



In addition, we connected with 20 individuals experiencing various forms of digital exclusion and connected with six different local organizations and initiatives working in this space. The learnings from our community of peers and organizations were timely and valuable and helped us understand the changing nature of digital exclusion and highlight some of the gaps that remain, most of which is digital literacy training.

Finally, we built a [Technology Resource Guide](#) where you can find all nonprofit technology resources and services on the Sunshine Coast. Whether it is classes, tech support, free Wi-Fi spots or computer repair services, we've got it listed.





# COMBATING STIGMA THROUGH THE “DO A KINDNESS” CAMPAIGN

We strongly believe that addressing poverty starts by building a community of people supporting and looking after one another. In response to recommendations made by the Poverty Reduction Strategy, we set out to create a campaign that would bring more visibility to poverty on the Lower Sunshine Coast by taking a solutions-oriented approach. By choosing to amplify community action (kindness) and the realities of poverty, the result, “Do a Kindness”, helped us move closer to our goals.

## OUR KEY GOALS WERE TO:

**01**

**RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT POVERTY**

**02**

**HELP DEFINE POVERTY AND ITS EFFECTS ON MULTIPLE POPULATIONS AND COMMUNITIES**

**03**

**REDUCE SHAME AND STIGMA**

**04**

**INSPIRE FOLKS TO GET INVOLVED**

**05**

**MAKE STATISTICS ACCESSIBLE**

**06**

**CREATE A CAMPAIGN THAT CAN BE LONG-LASTING**

**THIS INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED ON JUNE 12TH, 2023 AND RAN FOR SIX WEEKS FEATURING:**

- Launch of [www.doakindness.ca](http://www.doakindness.ca), a dynamic and engaging digital landing page featuring stories, information about poverty on the Coast and community resources
- **21 large vinyl posters** of stories prominently displayed in high traffic locations across the region
- **385 posters** distributed throughout the community featuring stories and poverty statistics
- **3 stories featured** on BC Transit buses and **4 strategic ads** in the Coast Reporter
- Social media posts and community engagement through **Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube**
- Strategic partnership with CoastFM for months-long interview series featuring **6 stories on Facebook and YouTube**







**"I JUST HAD THE PLEASURE OF READING THROUGH ALL OF THE "DO A KINDNESS" MATERIAL ON THE WEBSITE. WOW! YOU AND YOUR TEAM HAVE PUT TOGETHER A BRILLIANT THOUGHT-PROVOKING CAMPAIGN. IT HAS A CLEAR INSPIRING MESSAGE, COMBINED WITH BEAUTIFUL LAYERS OF DEPTH THAT REALLY TELL THE STORY."**

Kelly Foley, Sunshine Coast Housing Coordinator

**"I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH AN EXPANSIVE CAMPAIGN ON THE COAST BEFORE AND IN PARTICULAR, NOTICED THE BUS ADS AND LARGE POSTERS UP AROUND TOWN. I THOUGHT THAT IT WAS INCREDIBLE EXPOSURE -- A VERY PROFESSIONAL, CREATIVE, AND WIDELY DISTRIBUTED CAMPAIGN."**

Sunshine Coast Resident

**"I THINK THESE POSTERS ARE REALLY EFFECTIVE. THEY REMIND US THAT OUR COMMUNITY THRIVES BECAUSE OF THE GENEROSITY OF ORDINARY FOLKS. YOUR CAMPAIGN IS A REMINDER THAT WHAT REALLY CREATES A VITAL COMMUNITY IS THE EVERYDAY GENEROSITY, THE KINDNESS WE CAN OFFER TO ONE ANOTHER."**

Denis Fafard, Sunshine Coast Resident

# COMMUNITY INFORMATION HUB

There are so many resources in the community available, but sometimes people just don't know about them! The SCRC maintains an online directory and monthly newsletter, a bi-weekly Ask Angie Coast Reporter informational column, and an office in Sechelt with staff and volunteers, where people can go to access resources and get one-to-one support in navigating the options available to improve your circumstances and quality of life.

## GET IN TOUCH

Call 604-885-4088

Email [help@resourcecentre.ca](mailto:help@resourcecentre.ca)

Visit [www.resourcecentre.ca](http://www.resourcecentre.ca)

Drop-in Monday-Thursday 10 am to 2 pm at  
107A - 5710 Teredo St, next to Scotiabank.

In addition to the in-person hub and services available, the Poverty Reduction Project developed a series of easy to use guides on particular topics relevant to supports and poverty reduction. We began with three guides, with three more planned to follow in 2023-2024.

**01**

**FOOD ACCESS RESOURCES**

**02**

**DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

**03**

**INCOME SUPPORTS**



These guides will be distributed from various locations throughout our region by official and unofficial navigators and service providers. Throughout the project, a navigation network has been compiled of people who work on the frontlines with people often experiencing poverty. The goal is to build upon these templates and create resource guides in other topics that would benefit the community.





# EQUITY, INCLUSION AND POVERTY LENS

When we get wrapped up in project or policy development, it can be hard to see things from different angles because of:

**PRIVILEGE**

**INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES**

**OUR OWN LIVED EXPERIENCES**

**OUR EXISTING FRAMES OF REFERENCE**

Even the most well-meaning person can say the wrong thing, have inaccurate assumptions, and believe things that cause others to be stigmatized. It is imperative that we make the effort to consider inclusivity, anti-stigma and perspectives of poverty when developing plans, policies and events.

We've created a short report to serve as a [toolkit, checklist and ongoing resource](#) for **how to incorporate different 'lenses' into daily work– as well as into all planning, engagement and research.** Ensuring that we are asking questions to promote anti-stigma, equity, inclusion and anti-poverty in our work is crucial to building communities of care and creating opportunities for true engagement and empowerment.

# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The 2023 Poverty Action Project has made important strides in addressing poverty and promoting equity, inclusion and social change. Through collaboration with local governments, organizations, volunteers and community members, we are working together to bring awareness to, and reduce poverty so that we can improve the well-being of our community.

This project as well as other community, provincial and federal responses in recent years have achieved significant progress in ending poverty, but it is an ongoing process. Building a thriving and equitable community remains the shared responsibility of all residents, governments and organizations. By acknowledging and addressing historical inequities, embracing diverse perspectives, and continuing to implement evidence-based approaches, we can sustain the momentum towards a poverty-free Sunshine Coast.

To get involved in poverty reduction efforts on the Coast, reach out to a non-profit organization in your community or contact [povertyreduction@resourcecentre.ca](mailto:povertyreduction@resourcecentre.ca).



# COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The poverty action project (2023) would not have been possible without the expertise, support and encouragement of the following individuals.

## **POVERTY ACTION PROJECT LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Katie Clogg, Executive Director, Sunshine Coast Resource Centre  
Chris Hergesheimer, Project Manager  
Sarah Tesla, Communications Specialist  
Vicky Duffield, Digital Equity Coordinator

## **COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Sarah Tesla, Sunshine Coast Resource Centre  
Katie Clogg, Sunshine Coast Resource Centre  
Kelly Foley, Cover the Coast  
Keith VanBrabant, Coast 91.7 FM  
Sean Travis Ramsay, Community Action Team  
Cayce Laviolette, Vancouver Coastal Health  
Brenda Rowe, District of Sechelt

## **DIGITAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION PROJECT**

Vicky Duffield  
Saumya Bhasin  
Keanna McLeod  
Cara Legault  
Ian Hunt  
Clint Budd  
Danielle Walters  
Katherine Parsonage

## **PROJECT CONSULTANTS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE**

John Kerpan  
Sarah  
Keith

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORTS**

Community Volunteer Income Tax  
Program Volunteers

Carol Shaley  
Charlene Orr  
Diane Moniz  
Greg Thompson  
Gwen Wilcox  
Harry Drost  
Jerry Coulson  
Jim Westell  
Louis Legal  
Terri Fjaagesund

Sunshine Coast Credit Union  
Miranda Beall, EOTO Certified Trainer

## **BRAND AND DESIGN**

Wiseblood Consulting  
Aina Kawamoto  
Ynah Pantig  
Katelyn Bishop

## **THRIVING COMMUNITIES COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

Sunshine Coast Foundation  
St. Hilda's Anglican Church  
Sunshine Coast Community Action Team  
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society  
Partners in Change Society  
District of Sechelt  
Sunshine Coast Regional District  
Vancouver Coastal Health  
Cover the Coast Alliance for Affordable Housing  
Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development  
Association  
Sechelt Downtown Business Association  
Sechelt Community Safety Task Force  
Town of Gibsons  
Sunshine Coast Association for Community Living  
SCRD Planning Department  
Sunshine Coast Affordable Housing Society  
Sunshine Coast Resource Centre  
Betty Baxter, Co-Consultant, 2021 Strategic  
Framework for Poverty Reduction  
School District 46



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the traditional and unceded territory of the shíshálh and Skwxwú7mesh Nations, and recognize the deep connection with their ancestral land.

It is incumbent on us to recognize the profound historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, which have resulted in the displacement and marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

The repercussions of colonization have left lasting socioeconomic disparities, intricately linked to heightened rates of poverty. For instance, among shíshálh Nation members, **the average rate of poverty stands at 20.8%, which is 7% higher than the rest of the peninsula.**<sup>1</sup>

The intergenerational effects of colonization, including trauma, loss of cultural identity, and restricted land and resource rights, have further compounded the challenges faced by Indigenous peoples, perpetuating cycles of poverty that continue to be felt today.

We recognize the intricate link between poverty reduction and reconciliation. As our community continues on this journey of reconciliation and decolonization, we acknowledge that each of us shares the responsibility to actively promote justice, inclusivity, and equity of the Nation, while honouring their rights, culture and self-determination.

1. 2021 Statistics Canada Census Data, UJM-AT Tax Graphs



# MEDIA LINKS

## 2021-2022

[Poverty reduction strategy lays out 8 recommendations - Coast Reporter](#)

[Forums share findings about poverty on Sunshine Coast - Coast Reporter](#)

## 2023: NEWSPAPERS

[Opinion: Let's talk about poverty on the Sunshine Coast - Coast Reporter](#)

[Opinion: Let's talk about poverty – how filing your taxes can lead to income - Coast Reporter](#)

[Just ask Angie: Digital accessibility pilot under way - Coast Reporter](#)

[This Coast organization is using acts of kindness to find cracks in the system](#)

[Just ask Angie: What to know about the Resource Centre's "Do a Kindness" Campaign](#)

## 2023: SOCIAL MEDIA

<https://www.youtube.com/@doakindness>

<https://www.instagram.com/doakindness/>

<https://www.facebook.com/SunshineCoastResourceCentre>

<https://www.facebook.com/917Coastfm>