

The relationship between poverty and income

Poverty is **NOT just an income issue**

BUT creating public policy that maximizes access to income and the economy is a critical component to eliminating poverty

Over time, we have seen serious disconnect at the heart of our consumer-culture-driven economy: **people are constantly told they should aspire to endless material consumption, but are actively denied the means of doing so.**

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The partisan rhetoric regarding where income comes from, who is or isn't deserving, what supports should or shouldn't be, and how they are accessed have deep roots in our colonial, patriarchal, neoliberal and capitalist foundations.

With all that said, regardless of which side of the political continuum your ideology falls on....

Creating public policy and practical processes that support all citizens to actively engage in a thriving family, community life actually **increases wealth for all, increases health and well-being, and drives the economy in a positive way.**

Values based, charitable models of helping

Public Policy is often developed by people who have **NO LIVED EXPERIENCE** of the circumstances the policy is designed to address

Across sectors, we will hear about times where there is a divide – **folks that are “deserving of supports” and folks “who should make better decisions”**

Charitable response is rooted in making us feel better about helping people but doesn't address the root issues

There is a fundamental difference between **CHOICE and OPTIONS**

- This changes with privilege and affluence, stability, and other demographics, and social determinants of health
- There are life circumstances that impact the interconnectedness of choice and option

The same policy makers without lived experience of the circumstances are designing things based on the choices they are privy to – which are not the same as the folks who are impacted by the policy.

Let's talk about CHOICE

You are invited to THE BEST EVER PIZZA PARTY

It's my promise to you that you won't be disappointed and that you will have your favourite pizza at the party.

QUESTION 1: ARE YOU GOING?
If you are please stand up



BEST PIZZA EVER

WHEN YOU ARRIVE
this is the only pizza at the party

ARE YOU LEAVING?
ARE YOU EATING?
ARE YOU HAPPY?

What are all the different
choices and options that play
out in this scenario

SIT DOWN WHEN YOUR
SITUATION IS EXPOSED



The Response(s)

- Vantage points
- Reactive vs proactive
- Points of conflict
- The magic bullet syndrome





We have a legacy of Economic Exclusion

- **Colonization and the public policies that created the legacies for Indigenous people** play/played a critical role in purposefully excluding them from participation in the economy.
- The building of **assets and the intergenerational wealth transfer** that comes from asset building has been absent for generations of Indigenous families.
- **Purposeful exclusion** from education pathways, employment pathways and generations of trauma have a direct impact on the **disproportionate numbers of Indigenous people living in poverty**.
- Policy makers, community advocates, likely all of us, are **quick to share the data about over-representation** of Indigenous folks (in poverty, in justice, in poor health outcomes) but we lack the capacity (or willingness) to **flip the conversation to the under-representation of the same folks in education outcomes, high paying employment options, positions of power or policy making**.



We have an obligation to commit to **Economic Reconciliation**

- **Disrupting belief systems** that perpetuate the idea that some people (particularly Indigenous folks, but also other equity seeking demographics) are not deserving of supports

- **Advocating and demanding Equity based distribution of wealth** – at the very least through a **livable minimum wages** in Saskatchewan

- Advocating for **Equity based frameworks** to distribute the change in wealth

- Building in **race-based data collection** to openly and transparently identify gaps and celebrations.

- A national, interjurisdictional, approach to a **Canadian Basic Income Guarantee**.

We can continuously try to create programs to eliminate poverty – but without systemic policy changes we will be in a perpetual cycle of responding.



To connect with the
Saskatoon Poverty Reduction
Partnership and get involved
the 12 Bold Ideas to Eliminate
Poverty please email Colleen
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Saskatoon Poverty
Reduction Partnership