

The logo for BC PRC is a blue circle containing the text "BC" stacked above "PRC" in white, bold, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a white, hand-drawn scribble of overlapping lines.

BC  
PRC

# Annual Report

July 2021 - July 2022

# BC Poverty Reduction Coalition Annual Report

## About the PRC

The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition consists of over 100 organizations and community mobilizations that come together to advocate for public policy solutions to end poverty, homelessness and inequality in B.C. We aim to improve the health and well-being of all living in British Columbia. The Coalition advocates for a targeted and comprehensive poverty reduction strategy that prioritizes equity-seeking groups, and a whole government, cross-ministry approach to ending poverty. Our work is grounded in the foundation of universal human rights.

[Click for our Basis of Unity — BC Poverty Reduction Coalition](#)  
[Click for our Blueprint for Justice — BC Poverty Reduction Coalition](#)  
[Click for our Membership List as of 2022.](#)



The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition office is on traditional, ancestral and unceded xʷməθkʷiyəm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔł (Tsleil-Waututh) territories home of the Hul’q’umi’num’, SENĆOŦEN and Sḵwxwú7mesh Sníchim speaking peoples. We acknowledge the historical and present day practices of colonization and recognize that poverty is interwoven with colonization, oppression and genocide. We strive to be in solidarity with Indigenous people and communities in the assertion of Indigenous peoples’ rights, cultural practices, land defence and food harvesting.

# Message from the Provincial Director



This has been an incredible whirlwind of a year for the PRC. From transitioning from being hosted by the Vancity Community Foundation to the Homelessness Services Association of BC, orienting as a new staff member, hosting a CAN Leadership Training program in New Westminster, to getting Coalition members together for important discussions on priorities and campaigns, it has been a year of transformation, change, and growth for the PRC.

As we launch into a new era as an organization, we have so many foundational, integral folks, members, organizations, and funders to thank and appreciate; without the support of our fearless and tireless steering committee, society director's, our amazing funders, the Coalition Membership, and the generous committed care of Stephen D'Souza, the Homelessness Services Association of BC, and the phenomenal ongoing support from Vancity Community Foundation, we would not be in the place we are today, coming at poverty issues in BC from a position of strength, integrity, and power.

As we are sorting out our internal systems, we are also facing the impacts of the catastrophic pandemic, unprecedented climate changes, the toxic drug poisoning crisis, extreme heat and weather events, an ever increasing wealth gap and housing crisis, and the continued prevalence of poverty across our province that has reached calamity levels, and the erosion of our public systems. We continue to commit to approaching this urgent work with our values at the heart of everything we do.

Thank you to our membership base, whose leadership and continued care help guide us forward in these challenging times, and our CAN Leadership Network, whose lived experience, expertise, advocacy and hope are at our core, and offer us so much heart.

It's been a humbling, wisening, and thrilling experience to move alongside all of you in this work. I look forward to celebrating our successes while continuing to move the PRC along into our next year of transition, transformation, advocacy, and action.

Rowan Burdge



Provincial Director

Society Directors 2021-22

Rita Koutsodimos  
Halena Seiferling  
Stephen Elliot-Buckley  
Shannon Daub

Steering Committee Members 2021-22

Stephen D'Souza  
Rysa Kronebusch  
Meredith Klemmensmen  
John Millar  
Richard Han

*A huge thank you to Kendra Milne, Doug Tuck, Meenakshi Mannoe, and Nina Taghaddosi who have stepped down from the Steering Committee, but who have offered the PRC great wisdom, expertise, support, and care.*

We also want to expressly thank David Lee, Emma Rae Lierley, and Rowan Shafer for their volunteer contributions to the PRC!

# PRC's Activities

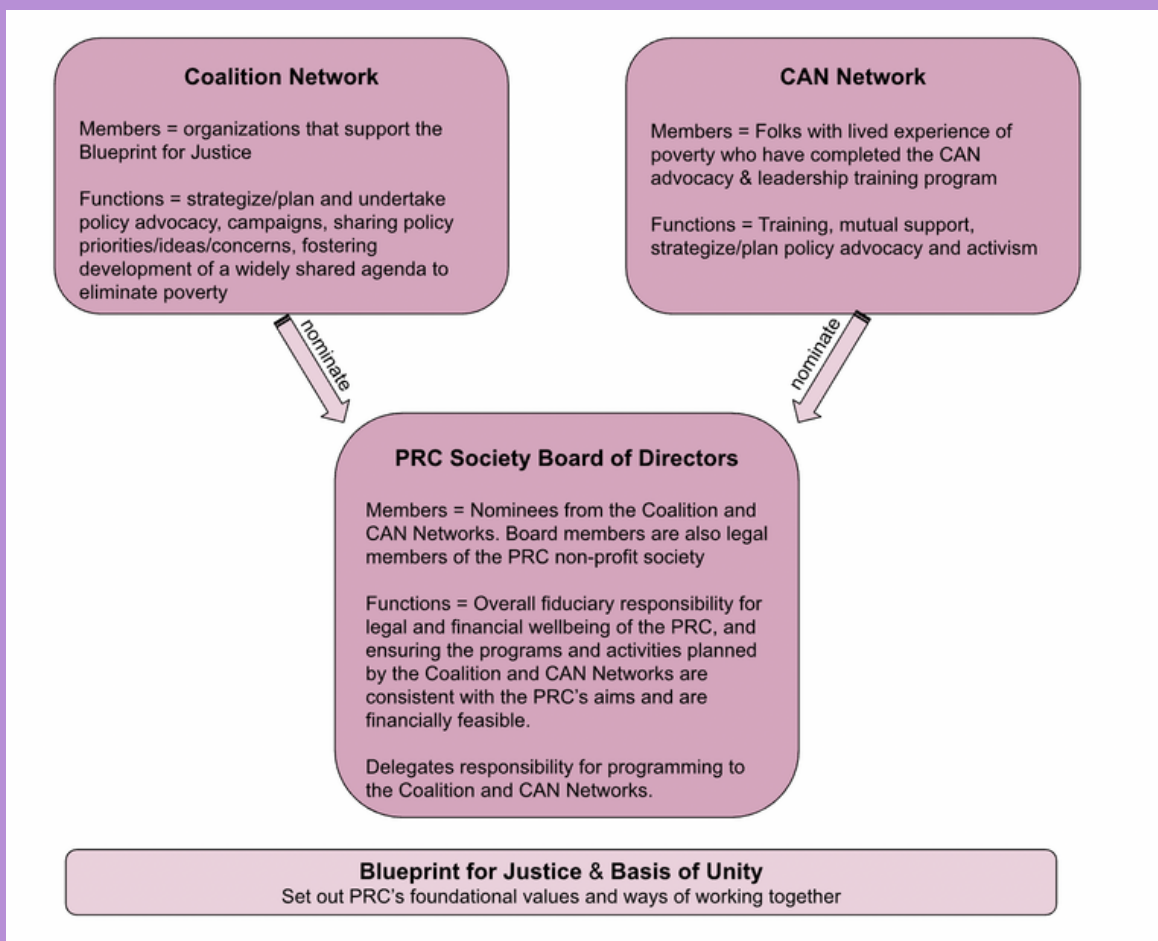
This is a brief summary of the activities by the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition (BCPRC) for the period between July 26, 2021 to June 29, 2022.

## 1. Society Transition Updates & Financials

- a. **PRC registered as a society registered May 26, 2021.**
  - i. Incorporation Number: S0074949
  - i. Business Number: 79789 8905 BC0001
- b. **Full transition from HSABC to independent non profit status as of May 1, 2022, agreement in place with Vancity Community Foundation.**
- c. First AGM: June 29, 2022, with a special meeting to elect a new BOD set for fall 2022.

The PRC total annual expenses : \$99,036.86, net income: \$69,936.75 as of March 2022.

## 2. Governance Structure

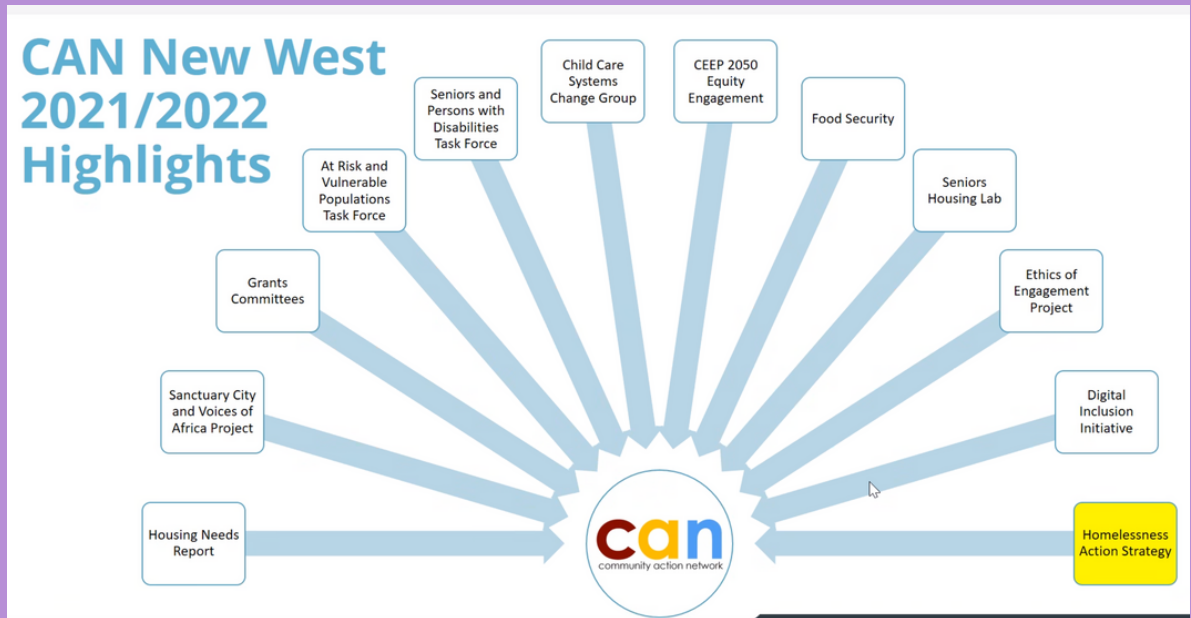


### 3. THE CAN NETWORK

In Spring 2022, we ran a 7-week CAN Leadership program in New Westminster in partnership with the City of New Westminster. **Eight graduates successfully completed the program!**

- Guest speakers included Council Nadine Nakagawa, Shane Simpson, Viveca Ellis, Betina Wheeler, Pivot Legal with VANDU, and 5 former CAN graduates.
- Followup engagements and events, and connecting with the New Westminster public library about hosting a clubhouse/resource space for New Westminster graduates, at their request have continued for summer 2022, with plans to expand these supports ongoingly.
- Funding in place to run a CAN program in Kelowna, slated for Fall, 2022.





Quote from John Stark regarding the New Westminster Homelessness action strategy:

*"CAN Leaders have played a pivotal role in regards to strategy development. They sat on the working group, they informed the engagement process, they conducted engagement activities, and they reviewed proposed actions. They will also be involved in strategy implementation."*

[Click to See one of our amazing CAN advocates in action addressing the City Council of New Westminster re: national housing strategy.](#)

## 4. PRC Projects



### City of Vancouver, Getting Around to Feed Ourselves Well project

We wrapped up this project this year! You can check out some of the findings in [our summary page here](#), and see Dr. Soma's webinar [on the project here](#).

Survey says:

- 66.4% of households on assistance are food insecure vs less than 10% of all households
- over 41% of respondents found it difficult or very difficult to access non profit food hubs during the pandemic

👉 SA & PWD must be raised above the poverty line 👈



An image of produce in a cloth bag, with text that says "Getting Around to Feed Ourselves Well: Tammara Soma, PhD, Daniel Rajasooriar. SFU.



## City of Vancouver Capacity Building

The PRC Presented a five-part Anti-Oppression themed virtual Workshop Series in partnership with HSABC. These workshops included Disability Justice (Nov 2, 2021), Curriculum For Change (Nov 16), Decolonial and Anti-Oppressive Practice (Nov 23), Anti-Oppression 101 (Nov 30) and Queer Competency Training (Dec 7).



Given the success of the workshop series, we followed up with an additional five workshops in Jan–March 2022:



*"The facilitator/instructor was so wonderful... gentle, informative, funny, organized, clear, she explained things in such a wonderful way that made it easy to digest, and also made me feel really open to examining how I (or my organization) may be perpetuating systems of oppression."*

*"I was so impressed with the intentionality that the facilitator used in ensuring that intersections of violence was addressed from race, gender, and Disability status. I felt they were well trained and responsible in facilitating this workshop, and was very impressed".*

-anonymous feedback from survey

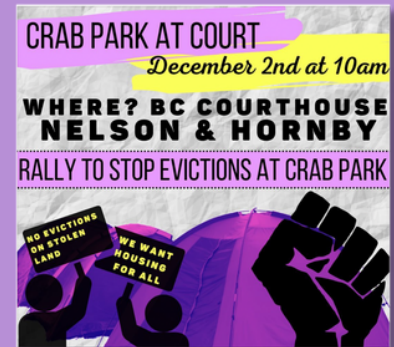
## 5. PRC Core work

### a. Coalition Building

- i. Re-started monthly newsletters, social media channels, coalition meetings
- ii. Surveyed coalition re: desired workshop subjects, BC Budget Consultations
- iii. Meeting with 25+ members to (re)build relationships and get updates on campaigns.
- iv. Membership Drive 2022, renewed 38 members, and received \$20,000~ in membership fees and donations

### b. Events attended

- i. Crab Park Rally
- ii. 2SMMIGW Annual memorial march.
- iii. WISH and Association of BC Students AGMs.
- iv. BCTF social justice conference.
- v. CCPA-BC's 25 Anniversary Dinner



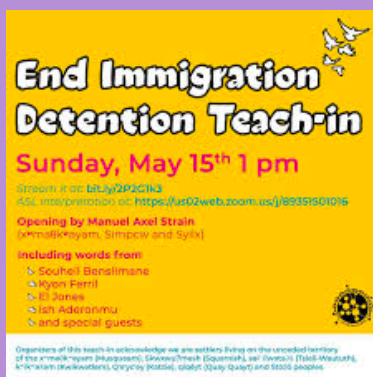
### c. Campaigns Supported, endorsed and/or Led

- i. Ending Immigration Detention in BC: 14 Days of Action
- ii. #AllOnBoard Success: Transit free in BC for children 12 and under | BC Gov News, History, Progress and Wins: #AllOnBoard to End Mobility Poverty Campaign
- iii. Free Contraceptives: AccessBC!
- iv. A Living Wage for Families - First Call
- v. Canada Disability Benefit: Disability Without Poverty, #EndDisabilityPoverty
- iv. #EndtheWait with Sanctuary Health: New research calls for urgent policy reform to ensure health access & human rights for immigrants
- vii. Unite 40: Unequal Women's Campaign
- viii. BC Health Coalition: Seniors' Care Accountability Campaign
- ix. Pivot's #Stop the Sweeps
- x. 10 Paid Sick days : BC Federation of Labor Open Letter
- xi. \$10aDay Child Care
- xii. Ending the Spousal Caps for Disability Assistance
- xiii. Full & Permanent Immigration Status for All!



d. **Advocacy**

- i. BC Budget consultations presentation and written submission Budget 2022 and 2023
- ii. Letters re: vacancy control, 10-day sick leave Open letter, Proof of Vaccination order response, Transport 2050 submission.
- iii. Met with City of Vancouver Councillors Christine Boyle and Jean Swanson.
- iv. Met with the Office of Human Rights Commissioner
- v. Canada Without Poverty Advisory Group member for Lived Experience Community 2030 Consultation Recommendation Report and Community Audit Toolkit
- vi. Contributed to The future of work: From precarity to security / L'avenir du travail: de précarité à sécurité consultation, and National Advisory Council on Poverty on The future of health and poverty: Building resiliency, equity and justice.
- vii. Towards Climate Equity in BC consultation: Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy
- viii. Addressing Climate Equity in B.C.'s Extreme Heat Response Framework: participant
- ix. Energy Affordability Working Group Stakeholder Engagement Session on April 13, 2022, and submitted to the THE ENERGY AFFORDABILITY WORKING GROUP ON HOUSEHOLD ENERGY AFFORDABILITY
- x. BC Coroners Service Heat Related Death Review Panelist: April 20, 2022. Final Report June 7, 2022.
- xi. Advocating with Disability Alliance of BC and others for EI Benefits Should Be Exempted from PWD Income | DABC: letter in progress
- xii. B.C. Carbon Pricing Equity Consultation: Organizations Serving Low income communities participants.
- xiii. Met with Vancouver Coastal Health's Heat Team re: low income experiences of heat and climate change impacts to make recommendations for their upcoming resources and community-based heat mitigation tools.
- xiv. Food Banks Canada Roundtable Session on Poverty Reduction.
- xv. Fair Wages Commission: Living Wage Consultation.
- xvi. Ending Working Poverty Open Networking Session, Hosted by: Communities Ending Poverty (Tamarack)
- xvii. City of Vancouver Transport Pricing study - consulted.
- xviii. Submission to Ministry of Public Safety re Immigration Detention in BC Jails
- xix. End the Wait: Health Access for Newcomers to BC
- xx. Submission for Just Transition Act



f. **Lobbying**

- i. Met with Leah Squance, Executive Director of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. (March 2, 2022)
- ii. Adam Walker, Parliamentary Secretary for the New Economy - meeting with the precarious working group. (Feb 4, 2022)
- iii. Met with Vancouver City Councilors for ending immigration detention campaign.
- iv. Met with Zahra Esmail, new Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee chair for BC.

g. **Research**

- i. 2SLGBTQ+ Poverty in Canada: organizational partner on study. *In progress*
- ii. Understanding Precarity in BC | Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Project: joined the UP-BC Work-based Precarity Working Group in progress
- iii. Public Transit and Equity-Deserving Groups: Understanding Lived Experiences
- iv. Hate During the Pandemic Survey: Inquiry - Community Liaison Organization



h. **In the Media**

- i. Jas Johal Show - Global, August 30, 2021
- ii. Global News, August 31, 2021
- iii. Vancouver Sun, September 7, 2021
- iv. Toronto.com, September 12, 2021
- v. The Canadian, September 12, 2021
- vi. Guelph Mercury Tribune, September 12, 2021
- vii. Toronto Star, September 12, 2021
- viii. CBC, September 12, 2021
- ix. Waterloo Regional Record, September 13, 2021
- x. Radio Canada, September 13, 2021
- xi. Vancouver is Awesome, September 13, 2021
- xii. B.C. groups concerned over lack of compromise in COVID-19 vaccine card plan, September 13, 2021
- xiii. What If Riding the Bus Were Free?, November 29, 2021
- xiv. Inflation Hits Those on Disability Assistance Hard: 'Mostly, It's Heartbreaking', December 1, 2021
- xv. BC weather: Coroner's review of heat dome deaths | CTV News
- xvi. 'People didn't die because their phones didn't work, they died from heat,' say experts calling for further prevention



## 6. CAN Leadership Network:

# can

community action network

In addition to our CAN New Westminster Leadership Training this spring, which led to our 5th cohort of CAN leadership graduates, we have held monthly virtual meetings of our CAN leadership network. These are all amazing advocates with lived and living experiences of poverty and/or homelessness, many of whom have been integral to our campaign work, and project, such as with the #AllOnBoard campaign, and work around #BCLobbyDays, Raising the Rates, and more! This group also had two in-person gatherings to get to know the new provincial director, reconnect after a hiatus, and do some brainstorming around priorities for the upcoming year. The CAN has identified the following three priorities to shape their upcoming work:

1. Raising the Rates and removing barriers for disability and social assistance.
2. Food Justice and Security efforts.
3. Mitigating and preventing the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events on low income and marginalized communities.

**We look forward to working alongside this powerful network of leaders and powerhouse advocates!**



# Thank you SO much to our funders and supporters:

Vancity Community Foundation  
HSABC  
Vancity Credit Union  
City of Vancouver  
BCGEU  
City of New Westminster  
Central Okanagan Foundation  
Move UP!  
BCGEU  
BCTF  
CUPE BC  
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, BC  
Public Health Association of BC

