



Bringing the pieces together

Be engaged.

Be a participant.

Be a part of the solution.

Developing a poverty reduction plan



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Message from the Premier

Self-sufficiency is about standing on our own two feet. Self-sufficiency means that through our individual skills and through hard work, each of us has the opportunity to create the kind of life we want, right here in New Brunswick. But to truly achieve this, we must overcome the challenges of poverty.

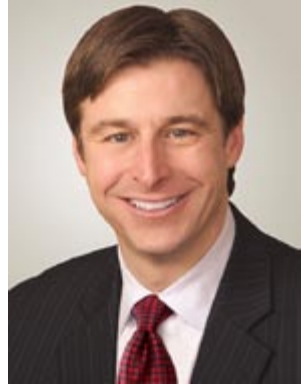
In order to turn our vision of a self-sufficient New Brunswick into reality, each New Brunswicker must have the opportunity to learn and obtain employment that reflects their true potential. Each New Brunswicker should be able to feel safe in his or her community and enjoy the respect of their friends and neighbours.

Poverty affects us all. When we, our neighbours, or our families don't have enough money for the very basics, like food, shelter and clothing, this affects us all. It affects our families, our communities and it affects our province. We know our province can be better.

That's why the provincial government is pleased to sponsor this new public engagement initiative to develop a poverty reduction plan for New Brunswick. Poverty affects all of us and overcoming it will take each of us.

The road to self-sufficiency is a journey we take together with benefits we will enjoy together. And together, we'll make sure no one is left behind.

Be engaged. Be a participant. Be a part of the solution.



Premier Shawn Graham



Message from the Social Development Minister

It is with enthusiasm that I took the challenge of leading the development of a strong poverty reduction plan for New Brunswick.

Developing a poverty reduction plan is a shared responsibility. That is why this important initiative will be led jointly by the community non-profit sector, the business community and the provincial government.

The success of this initiative requires partnerships among community non-profit organizations, businesses, universities, residents and governments.

Through this public engagement initiative, a plan to reduce poverty will be developed and all participants will have the opportunity to contribute.

This is a unique opportunity to rethink the social development policies of New Brunswick.

The process will take place throughout the province to give all of you the opportunity to get involved.

We hope to hear from you.

Mary Schryer





Why develop a Poverty Reduction Plan for New Brunswick?

Government's goal to achieve self-sufficiency by 2026 will require fundamental social and economic changes. While many programs and initiatives exist that provide assistance to people in need, the province requires a more comprehensive approach to social development.

Developing a poverty reduction plan should not be exclusively a government responsibility. It requires cross-sectoral partnerships among government, non-profit organizations and the business community. A poverty reduction plan should be a project that involves the entire society.



What is Public Engagement?

Public engagement is a way of bringing residents, community non-profit organizations, businesses, and government together to solve problems that affect people's lives.

It is a very inclusive, problem-solving approach to dealing with complex public problems. When everyone in a community is affected by a problem, it is everyone that should take part in finding solutions to that problem. In this way, a partnership is formed whereby people work together to achieve a common goal.

Through this public engagement initiative, participants will:

- share information and learn more about poverty in New Brunswick,
- get a better understanding of how poverty affects everyone,
- hear other people's ideas and views about poverty,
- decide what things can be done to reduce poverty,
- agree on priority actions to reduce poverty, and
- agree on who should undertake each action.



Public Consultation versus Public Engagement?

With **public consultation**, residents, organizations and the business community propose recommendations to government to help solve a problem. They do not participate in decision-making. Based on the input received, government develops the solution and takes appropriate action. Participants in the consultation process are not expected to act on any of the solutions suggested.

In a **public engagement process**, everyone comes together to talk about a problem, find solutions and take action. Residents, organizations, the business community and government take part in a real dialogue to express their ideas and opinions, listen to each other and decide together what needs to be done and who will do it. There is a higher level of dialogue, thought and learning as the partners develop the plan to address the problem. After this, everyone takes action.



What is Government's role?

The provincial government is initiating the process by bringing people together to find ways to reduce poverty in New Brunswick. Government is acting as the coordinator by providing logistics and resources to allow this dialogue to take place.

Government will also participate as an equal partner in the dialogue, the debate of issues and the identification of solutions. It will work on a consensus with the partners on appropriate actions to reduce poverty in New Brunswick. It will come prepared to commit to action, as will all other partners.



What is the role of citizens?

New Brunswick residents are invited to participate in the dialogue during the sessions or by sending ideas and suggestions by website, e-mail, fax, or regular mail. They will be invited to express their opinions, to listen to others and be open to new ideas. Their input will contribute to establishing a consensus on the priority actions to reduce poverty in New Brunswick.



What is the role of community non-profit organizations and the business sector?

Community non-profit organizations and the business sector are invited to participate in the dialogue sessions. They can also send ideas and suggestions by website, e-mail, fax, or regular mail. They are invited to share their own expertise and experience, listen to others with different life experiences and be open to new ideas. Their input will help establish a consensus on the priority actions needed to reduce poverty in New Brunswick. They will come to the table prepared to commit to action, with ideas on what they will do to reduce poverty in New Brunswick.



What will be the process?

Dialogue Sessions – Winter 2009

Several sessions involving participants made up of a cross-section of the population as well as any New Brunswicker who wishes to be a part of the engagement initiative. A first round will engage participants in a dialogue regarding poverty and how it can be reduced. A second round will allow participants to review a draft report and identify key priority actions.

These sessions will take place in the following regions: **Bathurst, Campbellton, Caraquet, Edmundston, Fredericton, Miramichi, Moncton and Saint John.** Dates and sites will be announced before the end of December 2008.

Round Table Sessions – Fall 2009

Participants will have expertise regarding the issue of poverty. They will include those who either currently live in poverty or have lived in poverty. During the sessions participants will be debating the actions proposed and will define priority actions, identify indicators of success, and outline costs for each action. This will result in a poverty reduction options document to be submitted at the final forum.

Final Forum – Fall 2009

The participants will be engaged in a one-and-a-half-day session to debate the poverty reduction options document, agree on which options should be undertaken to reduce poverty, determine how to implement the actions and decide how the plan will be monitored.

This three-step process will result in a Poverty Reduction Plan for New Brunswick.

For more information:

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