

About the Urban Poverty Project 2007

In 1996, the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) published a small study on poverty in Canadian metropolitan areas, entitled *A Statistical Profile of Urban Poverty*, using data from the 1991 Census. At that time, local level data on poverty were difficult to come by, and the study proved valuable to many people involved in poverty reduction initiatives across the country.

In the following years, the CCSD designed a more detailed follow-up study to utilize data from the 1996 Census. However, due to the substantial costs of acquiring the custom data from Statistics Canada, the CCSD sought partners to help support the initiative. By having partners who would use the data directly involved in the initiative, the hope was to help raise awareness of Canada's poverty problem and facilitate more research on these issues.

Thus, the Urban Poverty Project was developed to carry out two primary activities: to provide relevant local level poverty data of use to the project partners and to search for factors underlying differences in poverty among communities. Many regional and municipal governments, along with a wide range of community-based organizations participated in that first Urban Poverty Project initiative, together forming 19 consortia across Canada. Participants shared in the costs of obtaining important poverty data and helped fund the production of a report entitled *Urban Poverty in Canada: A Statistical Profile*, which was published in 2000.

The most recent cycle, the Urban Poverty Project 2007, draws on 2001 Census data. Again, community partners came together to form local consortia to purchase and analyze local level poverty data. In total, over 50 different regional and municipal authorities and local organizations – through 15 local consortia – acquired their own poverty databases containing detailed information about their particular communities, and they have produced a diverse array of materials in support of alleviating poverty.

Using these data, the CCSD redesigned the **Urban Poverty Project 2007** to encompass a series of analytical reports on a variety of dimensions of urban poverty in Canada. In addition, a series of on-line resources were developed, including fact sheets, poverty data tables and a summary document.

Reports and products developed under the Urban Poverty Project 2007 include:

- *Community Profiles: National Edition*
- *A Lost Decade*, an historical analysis of urban poverty from 1990 to 2000
- Detailed analyses of different dimensions of urban poverty in 2000, presented in the following reports:
 - *Poverty by Geography*
 - *Dimensions of Income Among Poor Households*
 - *Employment and Education*
 - *Populations Vulnerable to Poverty*
 - *Age, Gender and Family*
 - *Neighbourhood Poverty*

- An on-line database containing demographic profiles of 111 communities across Canada;
- Another database of over 100 poverty data tables, organized by levels of geography.
- *The Dynamics of Urban Poverty in the 1990s*, which summarizes the trends and patterns found.

All materials developed under the Urban Poverty Project 2007 are available at <http://www.ccsd.ca/pubs/2007/upp/>.

It is the CCSD's hope that these resources will continue to provide important references for further work on poverty in Canada. The CCSD is proud to be a part of this initiative, and we look forward to carrying on the tradition in the future using data from the 2006 Census as it becomes available.

Acknowledgements

As with most projects of this size and scope, the work was the result of many people's efforts.

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As well, a number of current and former CCSD staff also lent their considerable expertise to the project. Notable among them were Gail Fawcett and Katherine Scott who provided the data analyses, interpretation, and report writing for this series, and Angela Gibson-Kierstead who prepared the final data tables. Spyridoula Tsoukalas was the project lead of the Urban Poverty Project between 2003 to 2006. Spyridoula, Nathasha MacDonald and Coryse Ciceri prepared the initial analysis and draft of the UPP series. Additional support was provided by other CCSD staff, including Paul Roberts, Kate Rexe, and Sylvain Schetagne.

Gail Dugas and Nancy Perkins coordinated the production, distribution and communication activities related to the Project, while Susan Scruton was responsible for designing and building the project subsite.

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