

The background of the cover is a solid purple color. It features a decorative border of white puzzle pieces that form a wavy, horizontal line across the top and bottom of the page. The puzzle pieces are arranged in a way that they appear to be floating or slightly offset from each other.

TogetherBC:

British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

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IMPORTANT NOTE:

In 2018 Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada began a comprehensive review of the Market Basket Measure (MBM) to update the base measure established in 2008-2010. This process resulted in changes to the MBM that better reflect current living expenses and consumption patterns. The data for the 2018-base MBM was released on September 8, 2020, just as this report was being finalized. Consequently, this report will still present the 2008-base MBM data that was used during the 2019 calendar year. The next report, to be released by October 2021 will use the 2018-base MBM. The Province looks forward to working with the federal government on improving the availability of population-based data, including measures for Indigenous people and people with disabilities, to further enhance the effectiveness of the MBM.

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the first annual report of TogetherBC, British Columbia's poverty reduction strategy.

The report is an important step in implementing TogetherBC. It provides critical accountability for our government's multi-ministry poverty reduction strategy, which is focused on removing barriers, creating opportunities and putting people first.

Poverty reduction was our first priority when I was appointed Minister in 2017.

At that time British Columbia was Canada's only province with no poverty reduction strategy. We also had some of the worst poverty rates in the nation with over a half million people living in poverty, including 99,000 children.

Our strategy committed in legislation to reduce overall poverty by 25 per cent and child poverty by 50 per cent within five years. The strategy, however, is much more than these numbers. TogetherBC is built on the understanding that reducing poverty means addressing the ways that people are held back from opportunities, excluded from their communities and squeezed by unaffordability. It means breaking the cycle of poverty, an extremely difficult challenge for those who are facing the struggle of poverty for themselves and their families.

Sadly, we know that poverty does not affect all people equally. Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, LBGTQ2S+ people and others who face discrimination and racism also face higher rates of poverty. If we truly want a more fair and inclusive society, reducing poverty needs to be a foundational aspect of that commitment.

I am proud of the progress we have made. The strategy builds on the principles of Affordability, Opportunity, Reconciliation and Social Inclusion. Our progress was made through significant investments in child care, housing, income assistance rates, minimum wage, and greater access to skills and employment training. We did an overhaul of many of the punitive regulations and legislative restrictions that hurt people and held them back unnecessarily. We helped 136,000 people including 42,000 children escape poverty by the end of 2018.

There is more work to do. This challenge has been compounded by COVID-19. We know the issues that often underly poverty have been magnified by the pandemic. From the outset of our work I have said one ministry or one government cannot defeat poverty on their own. It takes all levels of government, community, business and labour working together if we are to be successful. That will certainly be true if we are to overcome the negative impacts of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable citizens.

My thanks to all those who have committed to the progress of TogetherBC. Your efforts and belief in the importance of poverty reduction cannot be overestimated. I especially want to thank the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee chaired by Catherine Ludgate for their advice, hard work and unwavering dedication to reducing poverty in our society.

Together, we can create a province that has the well-being of everyone at its heart. TogetherBC is an integral step in that process.

Shane Simpson
Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction



Message from the Parliamentary Secretary

As the Parliamentary Secretary for Poverty Reduction, I have worked alongside the Minister, the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee and the many organizations and people working to reduce poverty in our province. In this report, the work that has already been done is reflected in programs and policies across government, as well as in the collaboration and teamwork of organizations, communities and individuals.

TogetherBC, B.C.'s first poverty reduction strategy, recognizes the power of collective action to make life better for people. It brings together solutions to address poverty from across all levels of government, community organizations, Indigenous leaders and communities, and importantly, from people who live in poverty.

The issues in poverty are intersectional, and the policies and programs that we develop must directly support the vulnerable population groups that are more likely to face barriers. Now more than ever, we need to focus on the complex and systemic issues in poverty, address inequities and continue to create programs that are welcoming, culturally safe and non-discriminatory.

This report gives us an opportunity to not only share the ways that we have worked to reduce poverty in 2019, but an opportunity to share some of the individual journeys of British Columbians – their struggles and their achievements, and how these program and policies were able to support them in a time of need.

It is important to note that this report outlines programs, policies and initiatives in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic affected families, businesses and communities in B.C., particularly already vulnerable populations. The road ahead is a challenging one, with thousands of British Columbians facing new challenges with the impacts of COVID-19. This work is now more important than ever.

TogetherBC, and the work we have already accomplished, is based on a vision that every British Columbian should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and feel included in a prosperous and healthy province. We will continue to put people first and build a brighter future to make life better for everyone.

Mable Elmore
Parliamentary Secretary for Poverty Reduction

Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Independent Commentary

The Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee was appointed by Minister Simpson in 2019. The independent committee advises the minister on matters related to poverty reduction and prevention. Membership includes British Columbians with a range of backgrounds including advocates, stakeholders and people with lived experience of poverty. One important role of the committee is to assess the progress of government actions taken to meet the targets and timelines set out in B.C.'s first *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act*.¹ The committee provided the following commentary for the 2019 annual report.

Actions Taken in 2019 to Reduce Poverty in B.C.

The actions taken to implement the legislated poverty reduction strategy are designed to reduce income poverty primarily via income support programs, and to improve well-being in five other priority areas: housing; families, children and youth; education; employment; and social supports. A broad range of programs are detailed in this report, with the specific numbers of people affected by those programs. Here, we highlight a few that stand out, paying specific attention to actions of relevance to Indigenous people and communities.

Housing:

Across B.C., the calls for safe and affordable housing are loud and clear. Support by governments at all levels has been insufficient over many decades, and only recently have provincial and municipal governments gone beyond lacklustre involvement in the provision of subsidized and low-rent housing. The Province made some progress this year, but more must be done, and we need the federal government to join B.C. in this work. Homelessness is a national problem, but B.C. bears the brunt of it because people are mobile within Canada and the weather is less dangerous, so there is strong justification for federal financing. We applaud advances made by the provincial Indigenous Housing Fund which provides housing both on- and off-reserve in First Nations communities and now has 1,165 units in progress. We also recognize the significant strides made by the Rapid Response to Homelessness Initiative which has completed 1,726 units of modular housing and has many more units in progress.

1. The Committee acknowledges the excellent support by staff of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. We are also grateful for the consistent participation of Minister Simpson and Parliamentary Secretary Elmore throughout our year of meetings and explorations. The co-operation of the provincial government in providing data and administrative support to our work has been essential and is appreciated.

Families, Children and Youth:

In 2019/20, the Province and the First Nations Health Authority allocated \$12.6 million for 29 new mental health and wellness initiatives that includes the participation of 120 First Nation communities across B.C. The Single Parent Employment Initiative (SPEI) helps eligible single parents receiving income and disability assistance secure employment and stabilize their families. Since inception in 2015, 2,153 parents have enrolled and 1,346 found employment. An evaluation of the duration and types of employment obtained over time is needed to see how many of these parents have secured jobs that provide stable and adequate income for raising a family.

Education:

In 2019, the Province invested \$318 million over four years to remove interest on the B.C. portion of all new and existing student loans, which means an average graduate in 2019 would save \$2,300 in interest over a 10-year repayment period. New programs to advance reconciliation were introduced, from the Framework for Enhanced Student Learning to Trauma-Informed Practice Training for school district staff, with the goal of improving the educational outcomes and completion rates for Indigenous youth.

Employment:

A key measure has been to increase the minimum wage in a stepwise fashion from \$12.65 per hour in 2018. The Province increased the minimum wage in June 2019 to \$13.85 per hour (and in June 2020 to \$14.60 per hour, to be followed in June 2021 to \$15.20 per hour). In all, this is a 20 per cent increase in hourly wages for minimum wage workers since 2018. Roughly seven per cent of paid employees in B.C. (excluding self-employed workers) are paid the minimum wage, and thus benefit from this increase, plus a similar fraction of workers paid near the minimum wage have also benefitted from wage increases.

A series of legislative changes introduced in 2019, after years of advocacy by B.C.'s labour movement and social justice community, will improve fairness and enhance the rights and well-being of workers. These include changes to the Labour Code that make it easier for workers to unionize, and changes to the Employment Standards Act to enhance protections for temporary foreign workers and provide protected leave for those caring for ill family members.

The Province also established a new unpaid job-protected domestic or sexual violence leave of up to 10 days, plus an additional period of up to 15 weeks if a worker, a worker's minor child, or a specified dependent adult is facing domestic or sexual violence. The Province should move to introduce a statutory right to paid sick leave for all workers, and more work needs to be done to address the precarity of work and improve the situation of working poor and under-employed British Columbians.

Income Supports:

On April 1, 2019 the Province increased income and disability assistance rates by \$50 per month for individuals and single parent families and \$100 per month for couples and two-parent families, benefitting approximately 200,000 clients. However, this small increase fell far short of what is needed to provide an adequate monthly income for people, and advocates continue to criticize the Province for failing to prioritize a significant increase in rates. We applaud the halving of MSP premiums in 2019 (with planned elimination of premiums in 2020).

Social Supports:

In November, the Province announced \$2 million in funding to open several new legal clinics around B.C., which will provide clients with free legal advice and services on a range of issues including poverty, housing, immigration and disability. Also, work began to develop three Indigenous Justice Centres in Prince George, Merritt and Prince Rupert, with a focus on criminal law and child welfare and will reflect the unique needs and approaches of Indigenous people in each region. Improved access to legal advice and services for lower income people can help reduce unfairness affecting their housing, income and other essential needs.

Progress towards Legislated Targets

Income poverty refers to the condition of a household having too little income to meet its basic needs. The poverty rate measures the fraction of people that live in such households, where the basic needs threshold is defined by the Market Basket Measure (MBM). And the MBM has proven inadequate at capturing the right range of indicators for Indigenous people and communities. The reduction of income poverty is not the sole objective of the Province in its poverty reduction strategy. Other aspects of well-being, such as housing sufficiency and food security, are very important. However, the Province has legislated goals for poverty rates in B.C. The legislated target for the five-year period beginning on January 1, 2019 is to reduce the poverty rate among all persons by 25 per cent from its 2016 level, and to reduce the poverty rate among persons under 18 years of age by 50 per cent from its 2016 level.

Substantial Progress has been Made

In B.C., the poverty rate (calculated by the MBM) among all persons in 2016 was 12 per cent. By 2018, that rate had dropped to 8.9 per cent, a proportionate reduction of 25.8 per cent. The child poverty rate, that of persons aged under 18, was 12 per cent in 2016. By 2018, that rate had dropped to 6.9 per cent, a proportionate reduction of 42.5 per cent. In terms of numbers of people, this was an overall reduction of 136,000 British Columbians living in poverty since 2016, including 42,000 children.

The Province has engaged in many activities, detailed in this report, to improve lives and reduce deprivation, including actions to reduce income poverty. Such actions include, for example, increasing welfare benefit levels. The major actor in reducing

income poverty over the period 2015 to 2019 was the federal government, through the implementation of the Canada Child Benefit in 2016 (which specifically targets child poverty) and increases to other income support programs. These increases were permanent, which gives the Province a good foundation upon which to act, for example, through increased income supports for households with children.

The legislated targets offer measurable benchmarks that can be used to assess progress. However, we believe that although attention to income poverty is a meritorious policy goal, it should not be held as a sole objective. For example, this Committee believes that the recent progress made in the area of public housing is very important in reducing material deprivation in large numbers of households. However, it is not reflected in income poverty measures at all.

While substantial progress on income poverty has been made, we note the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in the period immediately following this reporting period. As the federal and provincial responses to the pandemic have included massive temporary income support, and the pandemic has induced a massive decrease in both aggregate demand and supply, it is difficult to foresee how these will interact in terms of poverty rates for 2020 and 2021. Poverty rates can fluctuate from year to year with changes in the economy, employment rates, and the cost of living – and in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible that poverty rates will increase again over the next couple of years.

Commitment to Reconciliation

We believe the strategy reflects a commitment to

- reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples,
- the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and
- the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Province is to be commended for its own adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2019. Efforts to particularly focus on the disproportionate rate of poverty among Indigenous people is noted throughout the six areas above, but we also want to highlight three additional actions that reflect these commitments.

- We applaud the end of issuing “birth alerts,” a practice that allowed hospitals and child welfare agencies to flag mothers deemed to be high-risk without their knowledge: birth alerts disproportionately affected Indigenous women in B.C.
- Work by the Ministry of Children and Family Development to making changes to the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* and starting to shift jurisdiction over some child welfare matters to First Nations.
- We welcome the draft First Nations Justice Strategy and a similar work that was done with Métis Nation BC to develop a Métis Justice Strategy.

These actions signal important cultural shifts and progress on our reconciliation journey. We note the seismic shift in understanding of colonization and structural racism that began post-reporting period brought on by the Black Lives Matter movement and the murder of Chantel Moore, a young Indigenous woman, on a “wellness check” by police. Systemic racism can no longer be tolerated and ignored.

We are committed to bring changes and improvements in programs to address poverty going forward, as we understand poverty affects Indigenous people and racialized people both more broadly and more deeply. This requires systemic and foundational changes to begin to resolve. When the data from the 2021 census becomes available, it will be important to see how income poverty rates for Indigenous people (recognizing census data for this population is poor because participation is very low) and racialized people were affected during the early years of B.C.'s poverty reduction plan.

Respectfully submitted by the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee:

Catherine Ludgate (chair),

Sarah Brownlee,

Cheryl Casimer,

Zahra Esmail,

Murry Krause,

Rosanna McGregor,

Bradley (Brad) Mills,

Adrienne Montani,

Tabitha Naismith,

Krishna Pendakur,

Lissa Smith,

Stephanie Smith,

Caitlin Wright

Executive Summary

British Columbia's first ever poverty reduction strategy, TogetherBC, was released in March 2019, following the unanimous passing of the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* in November 2018. The Act requires an annual report on the previous calendar year that describes action to implement the poverty reduction strategy, the effects of the strategy on poverty reduction and progress made towards legislated targets to reduce B.C.'s poverty rates. Based on 2016 numbers, B.C.'s overall poverty rate is to be reduced by 25 per cent and B.C.'s child poverty rate is to be reduced by 50 per cent by 2024. The annual report is to be completed and publicly posted by October 1st each year. This is the first annual report on TogetherBC and it reports on actions taken from January 1 to December 31, 2019.

POVERTY REDUCTION TARGETS

In 2016, there were 557,000 people in B.C. living in poverty, 99,000 of them children. TogetherBC represents a starting point for delivering on the targets introduced in the Act. Market Basket Measure (MBM) numbers from 2018 show that progress has already been made. The overall poverty rate in B.C. decreased from 12 per cent to 8.9 per cent, a 25.8 per cent reduction. The child poverty rate decreased from 12 per cent to 6.9 per cent, a 42.5 per cent reduction. This is an overall reduction of 136,000 British Columbians living in poverty since 2016, including 42,000 children. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has had unprecedented social and economic impacts on British Columbians. The 2020 Annual Report will address the effects of this pandemic on people living in poverty and the actions taken in response.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

The MBM rates do not capture the full scope or complexity of poverty in B.C. This report describes several core indicators which look beyond income to consider how poverty is impacted by social, economic and environmental factors. Appendix B of this report provides figures related to government initiatives, graphs and more information about indicators and trends.

SIX PRIORITY ACTION AREAS

TogetherBC is built on the guiding principles of affordability, opportunity, social inclusion and reconciliation. The strategy brings together solutions to poverty from across government and across society.

This annual report describes actions taken throughout B.C. to advance progress in poverty reduction in six priority areas: housing; supports for families, children and youth; education; employment; income supports and social supports.

Housing – Government provided thousands of units of supportive housing, but the effect that this will have on homelessness rates is yet to be determined.

Families, Children and Youth – In 2019, more than 27,700 received child care for \$10 per day or less for at least one month. The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* was amended to enhance supports for youth at risk, and government released *A Pathway to Hope*, a 10-year vision for mental health and addictions care.

Education – In 2019, government invested \$318 million over four years to remove interest on the B.C. portion of all student loans, saving an average graduate in 2019 \$2,300 in interest over a 10-year repayment period.

Employment – On June 1, 2019, B.C.'s minimum wage was increased to \$13.85 per hour benefitting nearly seven per cent of paid employees. Changes to labour and employment laws provide unpaid leave to victims of domestic or sexual violence.

Income Supports – On April 1, 2019 income and disability assistance rates were increased by \$50 per month for individuals and single-parent families and \$100 per month for couples and two-parent families.

Social Supports – In 2019, government made policy changes to make it easier for people to access income assistance and launched a poverty reduction planning and action grant program for local governments. Investments were also made to improve access to legal services, arts programming and sports programming.

While progress was made in many areas, there is still more work that needs to be done. The Minister's Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee note this in their commentary.

CONCLUSION

Reducing poverty is a cross-government initiative. A detailed listing of programs that contribute to poverty reduction broken down by ministry and Crown agency is contained in Appendix C.

Progress made in many areas to reduce poverty has the potential to be undone by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This will be reflected in the 2020 annual report.

Introduction

In 2016, there were 557,000 people living below the poverty line in British Columbia - 99,000 of them children. At that time, B.C. was the only province without a poverty reduction strategy. While the province enjoyed a strong and thriving economy, it had one of the highest poverty rates in the country, with 12 per cent of the population living in poverty - many while working.

Poverty is a systemic and complex problem that won't be solved with simple and antiquated tropes like 'get a job'. With a minimum wage that had not kept up with rising costs, few opportunities for people to get ahead, and years of cuts to the programs and services people rely on, too many were left behind. Housing prices continued to skyrocket, and renters were often forced into short-term leases that landlords used as a loophole to allow for unlimited rent increases.

In summer 2017, the B.C. government took real action to reduce poverty in British Columbia and began work on developing the province's first poverty reduction strategy. Recognizing both the need to engage with those living in poverty about their priorities, and to give people immediate relief, government began with an immediate hike to both disability and income assistance rates, the first in ten years.

Other early actions that helped form the bedrock of the province's first poverty reduction strategy included protections from unfair rent increases, a fair path to a \$15 minimum wage and improved supports for those at high risk of poverty, such as former youth in care.

Living in poverty can mean experiencing food insecurity, homelessness, accumulating debt and facing stigma. Poverty is also linked to mental illness and substance use, which can exacerbate the circumstances of poverty or be worsened by living in poverty.

Tackling poverty isn't just about addressing income inequality – it is about building a fairer society. Poverty doesn't affect all people equally. People who are marginalized are much more likely to live in poverty – and for Indigenous people, poverty is a result of colonization and displacement, which continues today in the form of racism and discrimination.

Government passed the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* ("the Act") in November 2018, and in March 2019, the Province released TogetherBC – British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy, which seeks to reduce the overall poverty rate by 25 per cent and the child (under 18) poverty rate by 50 per cent by 2024, as legislated by the Act.

The Act requires that an annual report on the poverty reduction strategy be produced by October 1, of each year, beginning in 2020. This is the first annual report and it reports on the 2019 calendar year (January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019). The Act also requires the annual report to describe (a) the actions taken to implement the strategy; (b) the effects of the strategy on poverty reduction; and (c) progress made towards the targets.

This annual report shares information about the efforts taken and progress made toward reducing poverty in B.C. and making life better in six priority areas: housing; families, children and youth; education; employment; income supports and social supports.

The Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee, appointed by the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to provide advice on poverty reduction and prevention, has also provided independent commentary on the actions taken to reduce poverty over the 2019 calendar year. The committee's commentary is included at the beginning of this report.

Measuring Progress

Poverty Reduction Targets

The Act requires government to reduce the overall poverty rate in British Columbia by 25 per cent and the child (under 18) poverty rate by 50 per cent by 2024.

The Act and TogetherBC are based on the 2016 MBM numbers, Canada's Official Poverty Line.² The MBM reflects the cost of a 'basket' of goods and services representing a modest, basic standard of living in Canada. The measure includes five components: costs for food, clothing, transportation, shelter and other expenses.

In 2016, B.C. had an overall poverty rate of 12 per cent, which was the second highest overall rate in Canada (see Table 1). B.C.'s child poverty rate was 12 per cent, the fifth highest child poverty rate in Canada (see Table 2).

Since then, poverty rates in B.C. have gone down. Between 2016 and 2018 (the most recent data available), the overall poverty rate in British Columbia decreased from 12 per cent to 8.9 per cent, a 25.8 per cent reduction. The child poverty rate decreased from 12 per cent to 6.9 per cent, a 42.5 per cent reduction. This is an overall reduction of 136,000 British Columbians living in poverty since 2016, including 42,000 children.

It is important to note that the MBM does not reflect the circumstances of poverty for Indigenous communities. Government is committed to working with the First Nations Leadership Council, and Indigenous organizations, to develop meaningful measures for Indigenous communities over the next year.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In 2018 Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada began a comprehensive review to update the base measure established in 2008-2010. This process resulted in changes to the MBM that better reflect current living expenses and consumption patterns. The data for the 2018-base MBM was released on September 8, 2020. Consequently, this report will still present the 2008-base MBM data that was used during the 2019 calendar year. The next report, to be released by October 2021, will use the 2018-base MBM.

2 Data for the MBM is reported with a two-year lag. This means that data from 2016 was used as a baseline for progress when BC's Poverty Reduction Strategy Act was passed in 2018.

Table 1. Incidence of Low Income by Economic Family - MBM (2008 Base)³

All Persons	Incidence (%)				Ranking (Higher Number is Better)		
	2016	2017	2018	% Change 2016-2018	2016	2017	2018
Canada	10.6	9.5	8.7	-17.9%	..	..	..
BC	12.0	10.3	8.9	-25.8%	2	2	6
NL	10.8	9.7	9.7	-10.2%	6	5	2
PEI	11.3	10.1	9.1	-19.5%	5	4	5
NS	12.9	12.8	10.3	-20.2%	1	1	1
NB	11.8	9.7	7.9	-33.1%	3	5	8
QC	8.6	9.0	7.9	-8.1%	9	8	8
ON	11.8	10.2	9.5	-19.5%	3	3	3
MB	9.4	8.7	9.3	-1.1%	7	9	4
SK	9.2	9.5	8.8	-4.3%	8	7	7
AB	8.6	6.8	7.3	-15.1%	9	10	10

Table 2. Incidence of Low Income by Children Under 18 - MBM (2008 Base)

Children	Incidence (%)				Ranking (Higher Number is Better)		
	2016	2017	2018	% Change 2016-2018	2016	2017	2018
Canada	11.0	9.0	8.2	-25.5%	..	..	..
BC	12.0	9.8	6.9	-42.5%	5	5	7
NL	11.7	10.6	9.0	-23.1%	7	3	4
PEI	15.4	9.1	..	..	1	8	..
NS	14.0	17.1	12.1	-13.6%	3	1	1
NB	14.3	13.1	7.9	-44.8%	2	2	6
QC	8.2	8.4	5.7	-30.5%	9	9	9
ON	13.2	9.6	10.0	-24.2%	4	6	3
MB	11.9	9.5	11.3	-5.0%	6	7	2
SK	10.7	10.3	8.2	-23.4%	8	4	5
AB	7.3	5.0	6.4	-12.3%	10	10	8

³ Statistics Canada. Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type. 11-10-0135-01

Depth of Poverty

The depth of poverty measures the gap between the average income of a person living in poverty and the MBM threshold, to show how far they are below the poverty line. Deep poverty is defined as having income that is below 75 per cent of the poverty line.

In 2016, 6.7 per cent of British Columbians lived with income below 75 per cent of the MBM threshold, including 5.5 per cent of children. In 2018, deep poverty had decreased by nearly one-third to 4.6 per cent for all persons and by more than half to 2.2 per cent for children⁴.

In 2016, the average person living in poverty was only able to afford 60.5 per cent of the MBM of basic goods and services (39.5 per cent below the poverty line). In 2018, the average person living in poverty had an income that was 63.2 per cent of the MBM threshold (36.8 per cent below the MBM threshold), a slight improvement of 2.7 percentage points since 2016.

The depth of poverty for families with children improved significantly between 2016 and 2018, largely the result of the implementation of the Canada Child Benefit. In 2016, the average low-income family with children had incomes 66.6 per cent of the MBM threshold (33.4 per cent below), compared to 73.6 (26.4 per cent below) in 2018.

Core Progress Indicators

The scope and complexity of poverty is deeper than the story told by the MBM poverty rates. People's experience of poverty is influenced by a variety of social, economic and environmental factors. This report uses several core indicators which, when looked at together with the MBM rates, paint an overall picture of progress on poverty reduction efforts in B.C. Other data related to the effects of government action on reducing poverty are also included in Appendix B⁵ of this report.

Progress is also reflected qualitatively in the experiences of those impacted by the strategy – in the stories shared by communities, families and individuals living in poverty. Those voices have been emphasized to show how the actions taken to reduce poverty have made a difference in the lives of British Columbians.

Where possible, 2016 data has been compared to the most recent available data to support comparability in future annual reports. This aligns with the 2016 MBM baseline used to determine the legislated poverty rate targets. Due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, some data sets were unavailable at the time this report was produced. As a result, future annual reports may include additional or adjusted progress indicators.

4 Statistics Canada. 2020. Special tabulation, based on Canadian Income Survey, 2018

5 Indicators and program statistics include quantitative data from a variety of sources, such as Statistics Canada reports and provincial government programs (ministry and Crown agency reports). Numbers provided by provincial government programs are current, though frequently follow a fiscal rather than calendar year.

Most of the indicators outlined below are influenced by a variety of factors – such as the relationship between household food insecurity, income and food prices – that will not appear to be directly correlated to the MBM rates. Our overall poverty rates can decrease while other indicators show no change or even worsen. Some of the indicators will require several years of progress before showing improvements in their respective areas. For example, while obtaining employment will have an immediate effect on a person’s life, it takes many years of improved living circumstances to show progress in areas such as early childhood development and homelessness. Consequently, the full story of the 2019 actions described in this report will not be told until subsequent annual reports.

Progress Indicator Dashboard			
Indicator	Baseline	Most Recent Available Data (up to December 31, 2019)	Trends
<p>Households in Core Housing Need⁶</p> <p>Percentage of households (off-reserve) who have a core housing need.</p> <p>Determined by assessing whether a family or individual live in acceptable housing, and if household income is adequate to afford suitable housing in their community.</p>	14.9 per cent (2016)	14.9 per cent (2016)	n/a New data will be available after 2021.
<p>Homelessness Rates⁷</p> <p>The approximate number of British Columbians experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>This is based on point-in-time homelessness counts (PiT counts) and shelter data in communities across B.C. This broad approach provides coverage of more than 85 per cent of the province by population. PiT counts provide a snapshot of homelessness but are considered to underrepresent actual numbers.</p> <p>PiT counts are planned every two years.</p>	7,655 individuals identified as experiencing homelessness (2018)	7,655 individuals identified as experiencing homelessness (2018)	n/a <i>* In March 2020, PiT counts were completed in 13 communities across B.C., while the remaining 15 counts were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</i>

6 Core Housing Need, 2016 Census of Population, 2016001. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/chn-biml/index-eng.cfm>

7 The Homelessness Services Association of BC, Urban Matters, and BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2018). 2018 Report on Homeless Counts in B.C. Prepared for BC Housing. Burnaby, BC: Metro Vancouver.

Progress Indicator Dashboard			
Indicator	Baseline	Most Recent Available Data (up to December 31, 2019)	Trends
<p>Early Development Instrument (EDI)⁸</p> <p>Percentage of children in kindergarten considered vulnerable on one or more EDI scales.</p> <p>The EDI measures kindergarteners' ability to meet developmental expectations in five areas. Children considered vulnerable on the EDI are more likely to experience poverty as adults. Data is collected annually.</p>	32.2 per cent (2016)	33.4 per cent (2019)	<p>Area for Improvement</p> <p>The rate of children considered vulnerable increased by 3.7 per cent (1.2 percentage points).</p>
<p>Unemployment Rate⁹</p> <p>Percentage of people 15 years and older in the labour force (employed, unemployed but searching for work) who are unemployed.</p>	6.0 per cent ¹⁰ (2016)	4.7 per cent (2019)	<p>Progress</p> <p>The proportion of people who were unemployed decreased by 21.7 per cent (1.3 percentage points).</p>

8 Human Early Learning Partnership. EDI BC. Early Development Instrument British Columbia, 2016-2019 Wave 7 provincial report. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, Faculty of Medicine, School of Population and Public Health; 2019 Nov.

9 Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0287-01 Labour force characteristics, monthly, seasonally adjusted and trend-cycle, last 5 months

10 Issue 17-163: 2016 Census: Highlights from the Labour in Canada Release. Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/infoline/infoline-2017/17-163-2016-census-labour>

Progress Indicator Dashboard			
Indicator	Baseline	Most Recent Available Data (up to December 31, 2019)	Trends
<p>Household Food Insecurity¹¹ Percentage of food insecure households in B.C. Household food insecurity can be defined by the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints. It affects an individual's physical and mental health across the lifespan.¹²</p>	12.3 per cent (2015/16)	12.4 per cent (2017/18)	<p>No Significant Change The proportion of households experiencing food insecurity increased by 0.8 per cent (0.1 percentage points)</p>
<p>Sense of Belonging to Community¹³ Percentage of British Columbians 12 years of age and older who say they have a strong or very strong sense of belonging to their community.</p>	70.7 per cent (2015/16)	69.9 per cent (2017/18)	<p>No Significant Change The percentage of people who have a strong or very strong sense of community belonging decreased by 1 per cent (0.8 percentage points).</p>

11 Source: Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0385-01 Household food security by living arrangement. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310038501-eng>

12 PHSA (2016). Priority health equity indicators for British Columbia: Household food insecurity indicator report. Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/1186-PHS-Priority-health-equity-indicators-WEB.pdf>.

13 Statistics Canada Canadian Community Health Survey Public Use Master File, 2015-16, 2017-18.

B.C.'s Commitment to Reconciliation

Government is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to make real progress on reconciliation. Together, we made history in the fall of 2019 when we unanimously passed legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) – the first province or territory in Canada, and one of the first in the world, to do so. The B.C. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, developed in collaboration with the First Nations Leadership Council, provides a path forward on reconciliation – one that respects the human rights of Indigenous people and creates clarity and predictability for all people in British Columbia.

The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* requires that the strategy reflect a commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the UN Declaration.

Government policies that worked to eliminate Indigenous culture, language, economies and systems of governance have intergenerational effects on the health, well-being and wealth of Indigenous people in B.C. Despite these inequities, Indigenous communities remain strong and resilient. This means that for Indigenous communities, the scope of poverty reduction includes having the means to generate their own economy, considerations for self-determination, improved access to justice and culturally appropriate wellness supports. Addressing the ongoing effects of colonialism is fundamental to the poverty reduction strategy.

Amendments made to the *Gaming Control Act* in 2019 will provide B.C. First Nations with seven per cent of the BC Lottery Corporation's net income for 23 years to support self-government and self-determination, strong healthy communities and services that make life better for families. This translates to approximately \$100 million per year; the agreement is expected to result in approximately \$3 billion in revenues shared with First Nations by 2045.

Reconciliation is an ongoing process, and the Province remains committed to strengthening relationships with Indigenous governments, leaders, organizations and communities across British Columbia. The Province will continue to work in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples to expand opportunities for self-determination, to strengthen communities and implement the poverty reduction strategy.

Gender-Based Analysis Plus: Action on Equity

Poverty is related to the inequities experienced between different social, cultural and economic groups. These inequities impact people's lives in every way, particularly their physical, mental and social well-being. Addressing these complex, interrelated challenges requires a comprehensive and multi-layered approach.

Gender Based Analysis Plus, or GBA+, is an analytical tool that considers people's multiple intersecting identity factors, such as gender, race, age and socio-economic status. Policies, programs and legislation need to account for these differences and recognize that social issues, including poverty, are inherently intersectional. Using a GBA+ lens means considering how poverty is experienced differently by each of these groups.

For example, consideration should be made for how gender discrimination in the *Indian Act* disadvantages First Nations women. Until 1985, women with Indian status who married someone without status lost their status rights. Men, on the other hand, did not lose Indian status in the same way. This has greatly impacted gender roles for Indigenous communities and continues to affect generations of women.

As a result of using GBA+, the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* commits government to consider 13 different population groups when developing and updating the poverty reduction strategy. Many of these groups are more likely to live in poverty or be at risk of poverty because of the inequities they face. The population groups are:

- Children
- Youth
- Women and persons of all genders
- Indigenous Peoples
- Persons living with disabilities
- LGBTQ2S+ persons
- Seniors
- Persons living in rural and remote communities
- Immigrants and refugees
- Persons and families working and earning low incomes
- Persons living with or fleeing abuse
- Persons living with mental illness or addiction
- Persons of colour

In 2019, government made several investments intended to address inequities experienced by these key population groups, while recognizing that significant work needs to be done to ensure everyone feels included and safe within their communities.

Re-establishing the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

In May 2019, government appointed B.C.'s first independent human rights commissioner. The Office of the Human Rights Commissioner works to prevent discrimination and inequality by providing human rights education, research and guidance to all British Columbians on rights and responsibilities under the BC Human Rights Code.

Giving Voice to Indigenous Women

In 2018/19 and 2019/20, the Province provided \$546,000 to the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Women Giving Voice Initiative, funding a total of 54 projects. Giving Voice projects promote healing from gender-based violence by providing safe spaces for Indigenous women and girls to speak about issues of violence and create community-based solutions, both on- and off-reserve. Projects include traditional activities like knowledge workshops and healing circles, as well as community-focused projects, such as cultural retreats, land-based experiences such as food harvesting, and workshops on healthy relationships.

Community Highlight: *Giving Voice to Indigenous Women*

The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH), based in Victoria, has been helping Indigenous women who are homeless or at risk of being homeless to find housing with Indigenous cultural supports that promote healing and self-determination. Following the 2018 Point-in-Time homeless count, an emerging need was identified to *"conduct research on the real-life safety situations of the women who are in violent relationships exacerbated by addictions – how to improve engagement, support and safety."* Through a grant from Giving Voice, more than 30 women, including youth, young mothers, women at risk and women living in poverty, came together in a welcoming and culturally safe environment to participate in a focus group, cultural activities and a meal with the support of an elder and facilitator.

Juanita was struggling with her addictions and just coming out of a violent relationship when she participated in the Giving Voice Indigenous Women's Retreat *"Culture is Healing"* in June 2019. At the retreat, she found healing through both the land and the ACEH community. After the retreat, she became more involved in the ACEH community, and shared how her situation has changed

"I'm now housed and safer and I'm recovering well from heavy drug use and from my last very abusive relationship. I've got some new friends and connections since the past year."

-Juanita

Accessibility Legislation Consultations

Government is developing B.C.'s first accessibility and inclusion legislation, which will work to identify, remove and prevent barriers experienced by people with disabilities. A comprehensive province-wide public consultation was held in fall 2019 to engage with the disability community and ensure this process is in line with the principle of "nothing about us without us." Thousands of British Columbians shared their ideas, as well as personal stories of struggles and successes living with disabilities and navigating barriers to access and inclusion.

Resilience BC

Systemic racism can be a key contributor to poverty, impacting British Columbians with multiple intersecting identities of race, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity. In 2019, the Resilience BC anti-racism network was launched. Resilience BC offers a multi-faceted approach to improve community capacity to respond to hate activity and address systemic and institutionalized racism throughout the province. Through a central provincial hub, the program connects community organizations with information, supports and training to respond to and prevent future incidents of racism and hate. These community organizations lead anti-racism and anti-hate work locally to build awareness of what comprises racism and hate; mobilize their communities to respond to hate incidents in a supportive and collaborative way; and facilitate discussions and anti-racism education opportunities. The Province has invested \$540,000 annually in Resilience BC.

To inform the new program, government supported 21 community dialogues and small group consultations with more than 300 community leaders throughout the province in 2019 – including focused sessions for leaders who identified as Indigenous, Black, Chinese-Canadian, South Asian, Jewish, Muslim and LGBTQ2S+. Participants shared stories of how racism and hate have contributed to the social and economic marginalization of many community members and contributed ideas on ways this could change.

Trans+ Community Consultations

Following the province-wide engagement on poverty reduction, a separate consultation was conducted with the Trans+ community. Trans+ includes transgender, transsexual, nonbinary, genderqueer, Two-Spirit, agender and other gender identities. Consultations were held with Trans+ people in communities around B.C., including Prince George, Nelson, Victoria and Vancouver to learn more about their experiences of poverty. One session focused on Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) participants, who experience intersecting forms of discrimination. A total of 63 Trans+ people attended the consultations.

Participants provided insight on their experiences with employment, housing, medical services and mental health. They spoke about experiences of discrimination from employers and a lack of access to stable housing or to medical services. Due to negative experiences with the medical system, Trans+ people often do not seek out health care services, leading to worse health and deeper poverty. Furthermore, poverty and transphobia increase social isolation, which in turn aggravates mental health issues.

Participants provided a set of recommendations to reduce poverty among Trans+ people. The recommendations included: providing accessible, culturally safe medical and mental health care, and covering more medical supports for transitioning; providing more housing supports for Trans+ people, including emergency and transitional housing; creating more meaningful learning and employment; supporting diversity in the workplace; and developing greater intersectional training and education about Trans+ people for employers, educators, front-line service providers and the public. A copy of the consultation report is available online (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/poverty-reduction-strategy/2020-trans-plus-report.pdf>).

TogetherBC's Six Priority Action Areas

TogetherBC is built on a core of ambitious, transformational policies and programs that will have a substantive and lasting impact. These initiatives are framed around six priority action areas. The action areas were established based on what we heard throughout the public engagement as being the most critical areas of work to lift people out of poverty and improve lives. As required by the Act, the following topics must be considered when developing and updating the strategy: housing; families, children and youth; education; employment; income supports and social supports. The following sections highlight key initiatives across government and throughout communities that have made an impact on the lives of British Columbians.

Action on Housing

Housing was the main issue echoed throughout the province during the poverty reduction consultations. People shared that they were spending more and more of their income to put a roof over their heads. This pushed more people into poverty and left a growing number of people feeling vulnerable.

Homes for B.C.: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability, released in 2018, outlined first steps on the path to reaching our goal of a province where everyone has the secure, safe and affordable home they need. The Homes for B.C. plan was an important part of TogetherBC, acknowledging that affordable housing is an essential part of reducing poverty. In 2018, the Province invested \$550 million over 10 years through the Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund to support the building and operation of 1,750 new units of social housing for projects on- and off-reserve.

Government continued work in this priority area in 2019, investing in several important initiatives to increase housing affordability, provide support for renters and reduce homelessness.

Community Highlight: *Supportive Housing*

Supportive housing gives people some of what's missing because of homelessness: a sense of community, supportive services, meals and more. Richard, a supportive housing resident in Vancouver, said permanent housing *"freed me to grow as a person. I can look towards the future now."* He doesn't have to worry about staying warm and dry, and he has somewhere to put his stuff. There's finally time to think about other things. Like getting work, maybe going back to school. For Richard, getting away from a chaotic, mostly shelter-living existence to permanent supportive housing changed everything. *"I like it here. I want to stay. I am home now. All that other stuff is behind me."*

Increasing Supports for Renters

The 2018 Rental Housing Task Force made 23 recommendations to government on improving security and fairness for renters and rental housing providers. Government's action plan to implement the recommendations began by limiting annual rent increases to the rate of inflation; this cut rent increases by two per cent in early 2019. As a result of eliminating the additional two per cent increase, people living in a \$1,260 per month 1-bedroom apartment (the average rent in B.C. in 2019) saved up to \$288 in 2019.

Action on Homelessness

In 2019, government established the Office of Homelessness Coordination within the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to work across ministries, with other levels of government, and with community partners and stakeholders to serve the diverse population of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

To assist local and provincial organizations to explore ways of better responding to homelessness and foster collaboration, government provided \$6 million to the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) in 2019. As of December 31, 2019, grants were provided to 39 organizations, totalling \$1,162,000. Projects are helping to identify the diverse needs of the homeless population, develop strategies and actions to prevent homelessness and assist those experiencing homelessness or who are at risk.

Community Highlight: *City of Prince George Homeless Service Hubs*

In 2019, the City of Prince George helped launch two new pilot projects in the downtown area aimed at providing outreach, washroom, shower, laundry, daytime sleeping and storage access at two sites for vulnerable and homeless people.

Through community engagement sessions, the City identified that oftentimes homeless individuals experience barriers to service (i.e. food, employment, health and shelter services, etc.) because they have nowhere to store their belongings. Something as simple as access to storage can enable clients to attend job training programs (as more than a dozen clients have done since the hub project was started), as well as connect with outreach workers. The same outreach workers can also respond to businesses reporting difficult situations (often requiring skilled assessment, de-escalation and referral to appropriate mental health and health responders), and hear concerns about the health and well-being of individuals who may not have been seen for a period of time.

The City of Prince George is working with the operators of the two hub sites, as well as the non-profit operator of the Civic Plaza Public Washroom initiative, to enhance the process used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Through consistent and respectful data collection (collected in real time using GIS software), they're learning more about the composition of their community's homeless population, and how they are connected to service providers and what barriers to housing they experience.

The city continues to partner with BC Housing, the Prince George Native Friendship Centre and the Association Advocating for Women and the Community (AWAC) to provide these critical services to people in the community that need them.

"The service hubs are a component of a comprehensive approach to downtown cleanliness, safety and inclusion. By having two established homeless service sites, City bylaw staff, Paladin security staff and RCMP members can work in collaboration with outreach workers to ensure vulnerable individuals are appropriately connected to service providers. For vulnerable populations, the service hubs provide a welcoming and supportive environment in which to access a range of services and supports. For many individuals accessing the homeless service sites to utilize the washroom, or store their belongings, it is the first time they have been provided with the opportunity to learn about and be connected to essential services such as food, stable shelter, harm reduction resources, as well as laundry and shower facilities."

- Chris Bone, Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships,
City of Prince George)

Establishing a BC Rent Bank

In 2019, government invested \$10 million to establish the BC Rent Bank initiative in partnership with Vancity Community Foundation. Rent banks provide financial assistance in the form of repayable loans to households at risk of eviction for reasons such as non-payment of rent or utilities. Between June and November 2019, nine rent banks in B.C. made over 100 emergency loans, helping 250 people maintain their housing. Establishing a province-wide rent bank was a recommendation of the Rental Housing Task Force.

Community Highlight: *Richmond Rent Bank (Chimo Community Services)*

One of our applicants originally applied because he and his family were \$6,000 in rent debt, his wife got cancer and was unable to continue working due to her treatment. Although he kept working part-time it was not enough to sustain their situation and three children, and as a result they received an eviction notice for being late on their rent. At the time he was luckily connected to Jewish Family Services which got him on his way to finding solutions.

Upon reaching out to us we collaborated with his workers from Jewish Family Services, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and his landlord. We managed to get him on income assistance and advocated to the landlord not to evict them. We approved a loan for him and worked with his landlord to create a payment plan to pay his rent and what was already owed.

The applicant has now found a full-time job and was planning on coming off income assistance. He has made all his re-payments, is gaining independence and he is positive about the future. We hope to have such successful outcomes for all our applicants.

Action on Families, Children & Youth

Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to live in poverty as adults. Supporting families, children and youth is a critical part of lifting people up and breaking the cycle of poverty.

In 2019, government made major investments in child care and invested in supports for at-risk youth, like those in government care. Recognizing that social and economic inequities can lead to poorer health outcomes, government also took steps to improve accessibility and affordability of health and mental health supports for low-income and vulnerable people. Given that some programs were launched in 2019, the impact of these may not be felt until later years.

Investing in Child Care

In February 2018, the B.C. government announced a three-year, \$1 billion investment through the Childcare BC plan – the most significant child care investment in B.C.'s history. That investment continued through Budget 2019, with \$1.3 billion going toward the child care plan over three years.

In 2019, more than 27,700 children received child care for \$10 per day or less for at least one month through the Affordable Child Care Benefit, Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative and Prototypes Sites.

Funding for over 12,000 regulated child care spaces was also approved in 2019 (with 2,800 of those already in operation). These spaces are supported through a combination of the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund, Neighbourhood Learning Centres, and the Start-Up Grants program. Approximately 16,800 child care spaces have been funded since 2018.

Community Highlight:

Affordable Child Care at Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House

"In mid-2018, a family reached out informing us that their daughter's daycare was shutting down and they would need child care. At the time we didn't have any spots, but we learned that the child's siblings were attending our school age programs. Being an in-house priority family, we were able to enroll their daughter in our Satellite Daycare program as soon as a spot opened that fall. At the time Mom was on maternity leave with her twin boys."

"Later that year, Mom and Dad were so immensely relieved and beside themselves when the news broke that Satellite Daycare was now a universal \$10/day prototype site. This meant that Mom would be able to return to her job in September 2019 and have her three children under the age of four in daycare for \$600 per month. Being able to have child care at a prototype site has been a huge help financially for their family. It's allowed them to make the choice for Mom to return to work, something they could never imagine as a possibility if it wasn't for \$10/day child care. Her children continue to be a big part of our Satellite daycare family and we are so happy to have them with us."

- Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House

Community Highlight: *Affordable Child Care in Castlegar*

“As a mom, [\$10/day child care] gave me the freedom to reduce my working hours when I lost weekend child care without worrying about how we would pay our bills at the end of the month. In fact, because of the reduced daycare fees, we began doing full grocery trips and eating healthier meals. We stayed caught up on our bills and were able to sign our son up for multiple extra-curriculars that were out of our price point before the fee reduction. If I had reduced my hours at work without having a break on daycare fees, I would have needed to get a part-time evening job to maintain that lifestyle. Like many families, child care is a requirement in order to stay employed, and we shouldn’t be forced to choose daycare payments over extra-curricular activities, healthy meals, or keeping the lights on. \$10/day child care allows people to fully participate in the workforce and the economy while not having to sacrifice the most basic of needs.” – Christine Graham

“Before to \$10/day child care, I was weeks away from quitting my job because I couldn’t afford to work and have both my children in care. Within a year of \$10/day child care being in place, I’ve not only been able to keep my job, I also received multiple promotions and raises and was able to buy my first home. Because of affordable child care, I have a secure career, secure housing and secure care for my kids.” – Sarah Brownlee

“Affordable \$10/day child care impacted my family in immense ways, most notably during an unexpected transition in employment. Because of \$10/day child care, I was able to afford to keep my children in care at a time when I was unemployed and in search of a new position. The \$10/day child care plan allowed me to keep my child care spots so that I could immediately transition into working when I had a job offer. Without affordable child care, I would have had to give up my child care spots during my unemployed transition period, making it almost impossible to accept a new position due to the long child care wait lists. The cost savings also allowed our family to purchase a new-to-us vehicle after a car accident. The savings are so significant that we were also able to put our children in extra-curricular activities we would not have otherwise been able to afford. I really look forward to the possibility of the \$10/day affordable child care expanding.” – Jayme Jones

Changing Outcomes for Indigenous Children in Care

In June 2019, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* received royal assent. This federal legislation enables Indigenous groups and communities to transition toward exercising partial or full jurisdiction over child and family services with the goal of keeping Indigenous children and youth connected to their families, communities and culture.

The First Nations Leadership Council, the Province and the Government of Canada are working in a tripartite manner to implement changes in alignment with the Act. For example, The Province implemented amendments to the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* to honour Indigenous families' and communities' shared rights and responsibilities for their children and to enable better information sharing and improved collaboration with Indigenous communities.

Supporting Youth in Care

Government continued to improve programs for youth in care as well as former youth in care to succeed later in life. For example, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* was amended to enhance supports for youth at risk or involved in the justice system by providing earlier off-ramps and access to social services.

Prioritizing Mental Health

A Pathway to Hope is the government's roadmap for improving mental health and addictions care for all British Columbians. The 10-year vision puts an initial three-year priority on transforming mental health and substance use care for young people, supporting Indigenous-led solutions, providing better care and saving lives around substance use and improving access and quality of care. This plan sets a long-term direction and focuses on our most urgent priorities first to help people get the supports they need and deserve now and to reduce future demand on services.

In September 2019, the Province allocated \$3.5 million in grant funding to municipalities to address the overdose crisis through the Community Wellness and Harm Reduction Grant program. As part of the program, health authorities and community partners were encouraged to find local solutions to the overdose crisis aimed at saving lives and improving community wellness, such as needle distribution and recovery programs, as well as projects that reduce stigma and help connect people to health care services.

In addition, the Province provided \$10 million in funding to community organizations to expand access to affordable counselling services for marginalized people and those who have faced barriers accessing the supports they need. Twenty-nine community organizations received funding of up to \$120,000 per year for three years through the Community Counselling Grants program.

Investing in Indigenous Health Services

In 2018, the B.C. government, Government of Canada and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) each invested \$10 million to support First Nations in the design, planning and delivery of mental health and wellness services. This investment comes from the Memorandum of Understanding: Tripartite Partnership to Improve Mental Health and Wellness Services and Achieve Progress on the Social Determinants of Health and Wellness, for a total of \$30 million.

The Province and the FNHA have each committed \$20 million to support the remediation and replacement of six existing FNHA-funded treatment facilities and the construction of two new treatment facilities to link more people to treatment and recovery.

The Province has also invested \$23.25 million in targeted federal funding over a three-year period to improve mental health and wellness services, with a specific focus on expanding land-based healing and culturally safe treatment approaches.

Community Highlight: *South Vancouver Neighbourhood House*

Neighbourhood Houses are community-based organizations that strengthen neighbourhoods by bringing diverse people together to create positive change. Centred around inclusion and social justice, neighbourhood houses build social connection by promoting local leadership and developing harmonious relationships among community groups of different cultural, economic, religious and social backgrounds. Programs and services are geared to the needs and interests of each community. South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, in partnership with almost 700 volunteers, supports around 5,600 people each year through programs and services such as Seniors' Wellness, Licensed Preschool and Out-of-School Care, Settlement Services for Newcomers, Literacy and more. Creating family programs in the largely racialized neighbourhoods of South Vancouver helps people access services and build connections, despite barriers related to poverty.

"Amena is a widow from Syria who came to Canada with her son. The Multicultural Women Peer Mentoring Group has been a great way for her to connect with other women to build mutual support, a sense of belonging and uncover hidden skills and strengths to cope with the challenges of being new to Canada. She is now finding work and feels able to support herself."

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House has been building community, fostering social inclusion and supporting low-income people since 1977.

Action on Education

Education plays a pivotal role in breaking the cycle of poverty. Inclusive and supportive K-12 programming ensures youth graduate from high school. Attending college, university or trades training can lead to better-paying jobs. Unfortunately, post-secondary education remains out of reach for many families and young people living in poverty. During the public consultations to develop the poverty reduction strategy, we heard that access and affordability were the biggest barriers for people looking to upgrade their skills. People emphasized that investments in education and training could help them find good, family-supporting jobs.

Making Post-Secondary Education More Affordable

In 2019, government invested \$318 million over four years to remove interest on the B.C. portion of all new and existing student loans. This means an average graduate in 2019 would save \$2,300 in interest over a 10-year repayment period. Borrowers collectively saved about \$22 million in interest payments in 2019-20.

In April 2019, government announced its single biggest investment in Open Education Resources and open textbooks by committing \$3 million for support services, online infrastructure and research.

Former youth in care also benefitted from expansions to the tuition waiver program. As of December 2019, 1,119 former youth in care had their post-secondary tuition and mandatory fees covered in comparison to 189 youth in 2016/17 – an increase of over 492 per cent.

Community Highlight: *Saving for Education in New Westminster*

In 2016, the City of New Westminster released a five-year Community Poverty Reduction Strategy. In 2019, as part of its action plan, New Westminster continued to build a strategy (which it started in 2017) for raising awareness about and enhancing access to the Canada Learning Bond (CLB) and the BC Training and Education Savings Grant (BCTESG). Through the CLB, the Government of Canada deposits up to \$2,000 into a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) to help low income families save for a child's education after high school. Similarly, the Province deposits up to \$1,200 into a RESP for eligible children for the BCTESG.

The City of New Westminster developed partnerships with SmartSaver, Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV), New West schools, United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. These partners promoted uptake of Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) in schools and in the community.

There was also recognition that many low-income families could not apply for RESPs because they hadn't completed their tax returns. In response, the City of New Westminster partnered with FSGV to host four tax filer clinics in 2018 and 2019 to help low-income households file taxes.

The result of the partnerships was impressive. In 2019, the City of New Westminster achieved an uptake of 56 per cent for the Canada Learning Bond, compared to the national average of 40 per cent. This means that more low-income families can save for their children's education and reach higher educational and career goals.

Skills Training for Employment

The Skills Training for Employment Program was established in 2019 to provide skills training and specialized employment supports for vulnerable and under-represented populations across B.C. Many British Columbians benefitted from government's \$28 million investment in the program, including former youth in care, survivors of violence, older workers and people with multiple barriers to employment. There were 99 contracts funded through the program that have supported approximately 4,422 British Columbians to get the skills and supports they need to obtain sustainable employment. Starting in 2019, the Province is providing \$15 million per year over the next two years to support skills training and employment programs for young adults. About 2,500 young adults annually are expected to access programs leading to jobs or further education.

Success Stories: *Adult Basic Education Program Highlights*

The Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English Learning Language (ELL) Programs are designed to improve learners' literacy, numeracy, language and academic skills in order to bridge into post-secondary education and/or find new or better employment. Participants are often living in poverty and need additional supports to prepare for higher education and good jobs. In 2018/19, more than 20,000 students benefitted from government's investment of \$18.5 million to support greater access to ABE and ELL programs. Budget 2019 included additional annual funding of \$5.5 million for a total of \$24 million a year.

Eric survived foster care, drug addiction and prison time to finally find success in Vancouver Island University's (VIU) ABE program. When he got out of prison Eric could not spell his own name. A few years later, during his time at a treatment centre, he was inspired to continue his learning journey. He enrolled in VIU's ABE program to complete his high-school diploma. *"Three years ago, he came to us at a basic literacy level and now he is graduating this year,"* says one of his ABE instructors. *"Eric is an inspiration to anyone who is thinking about coming back to school."* Eric received an award to continue his studies and will apply to the VIU Horticulture Technician program.

Reconciliation through Education

Ongoing systemic racism and the legacy of residential schools have resulted in additional barriers to education for many Indigenous people and communities. Reconciliation through education means acknowledging this legacy, removing the barriers and ensuring all Indigenous people have equitable access to educational opportunities.

In 2019, government piloted the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning in nine school districts. The Framework formalizes the planning and reporting expectations for school districts in order to enhance student learning and success. It reflects a public commitment by Indigenous people, Indigenous rightsholders, education partners and communities to work together to continuously improve student learning in relation to intellectual, human and social and career development. The Framework requires alignment of provincial K-12 accountability and evidence-informed practices that enhance student learning, inclusivity and equity of outcomes.

Investments were also made in other programs, such as the Indigenous-Focused Teacher Education Program and Trauma-Informed Practice Training resources to better prepare educators to meet the needs of Indigenous learners in K-12 and increase awareness of the impact of adverse childhood experiences on learning. The Compassionate Learning Framework included in these resources

identifies and acknowledges the ongoing impact of colonization and historical residential school trauma.

Post-secondary institutions are also implementing programs and services to enhance the educational outcomes and experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Action on Employment

Tackling barriers to employment is a key component of the poverty reduction strategy. When British Columbians have stable employment, with fair wages and good working conditions, families are lifted out of poverty.

Increasing the Minimum Wage

On June 1, 2019, the minimum wage in British Columbia was increased to \$13.85 per hour. Nearly seven per cent of paid employees in B.C. (excluding self-employed workers) have benefitted from the increase in the minimum wage. Almost 65 per cent of these employees identified as female and 53 per cent were youth aged 15-24 (based on 2018 statistics). By June 2021, B.C.'s general minimum wage will reach at least \$15.20 per hour.

Changes to Employment and Labour Laws

A series of changes to legislation in 2019 were designed to improve fairness and the overall well-being of workers in British Columbia. They include increased protections for temporary foreign workers and protected leave for those caring for ill family members. There were also changes that give eligible first responders experiencing mental health challenges, and participants in the Unpaid Work Program, streamlined access to critical workers' compensation benefits, keeping injured workers out of poverty.

The Province also established a new unpaid job-protected domestic or sexual violence leave of up to 10 days, plus an additional period of up to 15 weeks if a worker, a worker's minor child or a specified dependent adult in the worker's care is facing domestic or sexual violence. The leave is intended to allow workers – predominantly women – to take time away from work to deal with health, safety and legal issues without having to worry about unfair economic and financial implications, like losing their job.

Supporting Indigenous Economic Development

Government invested in several initiatives to support Indigenous economic development in 2019, including the Indigenous Business Loan program, Indigenous Business Advisory Centres and the BC Assembly of First Nations Economic Development Strategy. Additionally, provincewide engagement gathered input from more than 300 Indigenous partners and businesses to inform Indigenous Procurement as part of the BC Procurement Strategy Update 2020.

Success Story: *Career Paths*

In 2019, government invested more than \$11 million to expand settlement services for new British Columbians by 60 per cent. This includes language training, employment resources and guidance navigating the immigration process. The Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants program has helped 1,600 newcomers across the province upgrade their skills and obtain employment that matches their professional background.

When Herbert moved to Canada from the Philippines, he struggled with interviews and understanding the B.C. job market. In the Philippines, Herbert had worked as an Administrative Officer in government for over 14 years. After moving to Canada, he was working in the food service industry making \$11/hour. Herbert enrolled in the Career Paths program with a goal of pursuing his career in the administrative field.

Through one-on-one support and Career Paths workshops, Herbert found Temporary Aligned Employment (TAE) as a Client Service Agent with the provincial government. Herbert's commitment and eagerness to pursue his goals were noted by his supervisor and after a month in the position, the TAE turned into a permanent position, giving him further opportunities to pursue his career. This also meant Herbert was able to double his earnings and improve his standard of living.

"The in-person employment counselling meetings with my Employment Case Manager were important for me," Herbert said. "They gave me a lot of opportunities to learn. I am a newcomer; I know how it feels to be alone, but [the support I received from the case management sessions] gave me additional courage to pursue my career. As a newcomer, you don't have friends. You can't conquer the world on your own, and the program helped me to overcome my fears, worries, failures, frustrations."

WorkBC Employment Services

WorkBC offers employment services to people in B.C. in person at WorkBC centres throughout the province and online through WorkBC.ca. Staff specialize in helping people who face barriers to employment find their first job, or the next one. The services range from local and provincial job listings, to workshops and skills assessment, to targeted programs for those needing additional help, training, job placement support, work experience programs and wage subsidies.

More than \$287 million was invested through WorkBC programs in 2019/20. This encompasses WorkBC centres, assistive technology services, apprentice services and the Community and Employer Partnerships program. Funding is provided through the federal government's Labour Market Development Agreement, along with \$29 million from the Province.

In April 2019, WorkBC Employment Services introduced a range of streamlined, flexible and accessible services to help British Columbians get good, lasting jobs. The service

improvements included increasing the number of WorkBC centres, extending eligibility requirements and providing more direct supports like skills training and helping people access tools so they can pursue a career in the trades.

In 2019, WorkBC provided services to 73,540 people and supported 36,393 clients through their first year of employment. WorkBC Employment Services are available to all British Columbians needing help finding and keeping employment, including individuals who may need additional supports and services to overcome multiple barriers to employment.

Success Stories: *Charmaine's Story*

Charmaine was struggling to find work as a single parent with two young children and receiving income assistance. Finding affordable child care was a significant barrier to Charmaine finding employment.

Charmaine discovered WorkBC online and decided to visit her WorkBC Centre in Chilliwack. There, she accessed resumé writing workshops, job search assistance, career exploration and skills assessments. Charmaine also completed practice job interviews and researched the local labour market and education opportunities. WorkBC funding also helped Charmaine fulfil her child care needs. Charmaine was all set to apply for employment.

Charmaine applied for a position as an office manager and was the successful applicant. This is a sustainable employment opportunity, allowing her to support her children and leave income assistance. Charmaine continues to receive funding for her child care needs as WorkBC provided an additional year of child care funding to help her fully transition to her new job.

Janine's Story

After a successful career and a varied employment history, Janine was laid off when the store where she worked was closed. Unfortunately, around this time Janine's health took a turn for the worse and she struggled to find other employment.

A family member had heard about the great services that WorkBC offers people in similar situations and suggested Janine contact her local WorkBC Centre. There, Janine took part in many activities and assessments, which lead her to employment services that catered to her unique circumstances. In the end, Janine was employed in a part-time position that suits her physical abilities and now enjoys a sweet position in the candy department at a grocery store. *"I love the job! My manager and all the staff at the store are very supportive. I feel lucky,"* said Janine.

Success Story: *YWCA Changing Gears program*

WorkBC Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) is a collaborative and coordinated network of community organizations and employers who work together to strengthen the labour market in their communities. CEP's goal is to increase employment and work experience opportunities in communities across B.C., creating pathways to good-paying jobs that lift people up and help break the cycle of poverty. In 2019, government provided over \$18 million from CEP to support 81 projects to help strengthen labour market opportunities in communities, with a focus on reducing poverty.

Through \$764,800 in CEP funding, 18 women in the YWCA Changing Gears program, and 11 newcomers to Canada in the essential skills driver training at Douglas College, earned their Class 1 licence upon successful completion of the program requirements. Each participant also got work experience with local employers.

With a Class 1 licence, participants qualify for any position in the trucking industry, including long-haul driver or bus driver. More than 14,000 job openings for transport truck drivers are expected over the next 10 years. Another 4,000 transit operator positions are expected to become available over the same time frame.

Tamara, a YWCA Changing Gears program participant said, "To be given this opportunity is not something I have taken lightly. Doing this course has given me the chance to have a financially stable future, and to enjoy the career that I am immersed in. The education offered through this program has given me an edge. I will forever be thankful for this opportunity and think that it will change the lives of people around me."

Action on Income Supports

For people living in poverty, financial security starts with addressing affordability. As the cost of living continues to rise, government recognizes the importance of ensuring people can afford the goods and services they rely on for themselves and their families. In 2019, government acted to improve affordability and access to income, putting more money back into the pockets of British Columbians.

B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit

The B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit, announced in 2019, will come into effect on October 1, 2020. The benefit will provide a monthly tax-free payment to families and replace the existing B.C. Early Childhood Tax Benefit. The new program is expected to benefit 290,000 families with children under 18 years of age, providing close to \$380 million in benefits and reducing child poverty in B.C. by as much as 10 per cent.

Improving Affordability

Progress has been made to improve affordability for British Columbians by strengthening protections for those who use payday loans. Legislative amendments in 2019, coupled with previous investigation and enforcement of B.C.'s payday lending and insurance laws, resulted in a significant drop in insurance policies sold (from 26,592 in 2018 to 2,695 in 2019) and fees associated with those policies (a reduction of over \$636,000 in premiums earned by payday lenders). These changes build on protections introduced in 2018 limiting fees for cheque cashing and complement changes introduced in 2019 to regulate high-interest loans.

The BC Hydro Customer Crisis Fund provided 2,839 grants in 2019, totalling \$1.15 million, to customers experiencing temporary financial crisis. About 94 per cent of recipients indicated that they would have had to go without some necessities of living without support from the grant.

Additionally, Medical Service Plan (MSP) premiums were cut in half in January 2019, removing a monthly financial burden for people in low-paying jobs who were not supported by premium assistance. MSP premiums were fully eliminated on Jan. 1, 2020. Eliminating MSP premiums will save individuals up to \$900 a year and families as much as \$1,800 a year.

Increased Income Assistance and Disability Assistance Rates

On April 1, 2019, income and disability assistance rates were increased by \$50 per month for individuals and single parent families, and \$100 per month for couples and two-parent families. This \$92 million investment benefitted approximately 200,000 clients.

Improving Access to the B.C. Employment and Assistance Program

The B.C. Employment and Assistance Program (BCEA) provides income and disability assistance to over 200,000 people throughout B.C. To better support recipients of this assistance, a comprehensive initiative was undertaken in 2019 to eliminate policies that held people back. There were two rounds of policy changes, totaling over \$26 million in investments. The first round took effect in July 2019; the second required legislative amendments which were passed in November 2019 and came into force in January 2020. The changes are summarized online at <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020SDPR0002-000021>.

In addition to the BCEA policy changes, Community Integration Specialist (CIS) teams were created in 2019, helping connect B.C.'s most vulnerable citizens with financial assistance and community supports. CIS team members work collaboratively with community partners and agencies, meeting clients where they are. By fall 2019, 72 CIS staff were in place throughout the province. CIS staff provide support and services face-to-face and virtually, particularly in remote areas. Some of the services CIS staff provide include: expedited income and disability assistance intakes, making connections to shelter and health services, intensive case management, homeless outreach, responding to inquiries from community partners and coordinating services.

Success Story: *Community Integration Specialists*

In Prince George, a Community Integration Specialist sits at a local soup kitchen on Monday mornings with a sign saying, “Questions about Income Assistance or Persons with Disabilities Assistance?” One morning, she was approached by “John” asking about her sign. After she explained about assistance, she learned that he was homeless, had no income, and simply “got by”. The CIS worker was able to confirm that he had not had a steady income for almost 16 years, and the only money he earned was by selling leather and wood pieces he made. But even this was challenging while homeless because he had no place to store his tools, and nowhere to work. It had never occurred to him to apply for assistance. The CIS worker was able to support him in his application and refer him to WorkBC. He was very motivated, and the first thing he did when he received his first cheque was get a haircut.

Supporting Food Programs and Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Food insecurity occurs when people do not have reliable and regular access to quality, healthy, culturally appropriate, affordable food. It affects the health of approximately half a million people provincewide.

The Victoria Foundation received \$3 million in March 2019 from the Province for a Food Security Provincial Initiatives Fund. Of that, \$1.9 million went to the Mustard Seed Food Bank to support a food distribution centre for southern Vancouver Island. The remaining \$1.1 million was disbursed in grants that benefitted thousands of British Columbians across the province, including several grants to support food sovereignty in First Nations communities.

Community Gaming Grants also provided over \$1 million to food programs and food banks across the province, supporting their ability to develop increased capacity and to provide more meals, food hampers and food bursaries to people in need.

Community Highlight: *Food Rescue Project*

The Food Rescue Project operates in collaboration with more than 50 member organizations of the Food Share Network, an informal group of local non-profits, First Nations, school districts and organizations working toward a food-secure region. The Mustard Seed recovers about 1,815 kilograms (4,000 pounds) of fresh food daily from local grocery stores and redistributes it to network members, who in turn help feed 35,000 food insecure people in the capital region annually. The centre is the key piece in a food distribution network that decreases food insecurity and connects people with social service programs.

“The distribution centre will secure a permanent location for a food hub for the capital region,” said Derek Pace, executive director, Mustard Seed Street Church. *“Purchasing the building gives us the stability we need to continue growing the network of donors who provide food each week and to continue to support and participate in the Food Share Network made up of those groups who distribute food to people in their communities. In addition to helping ensure that the Food Rescue Project remains sustainable, the centre will enable the community’s larger vision for food security, growing programs in food literacy, employment, environmental sustainability and the local food systems.”*

Community Highlight: *Vancouver AIDS Society Grocery Program - Community Gaming Grant Funded \$100,000*

A 2013 study revealed that 72 per cent of people living with HIV are food insecure compared to seven per cent of the general population who are food insecure. While there are initiatives to reduce poverty in the general population, people living with HIV/AIDS need immediate intervention as their situation deteriorates rapidly if the right support is not provided. Food support has direct, positive impacts to the health system and the transmission of HIV. Food prices for protein and fresh produce are higher and often have a direct impact on affordability for people living with HIV, most of whom are in the low-income bracket or living in poverty.

The Grocery Program provides 1,200 individuals living with HIV and their families with supplemental groceries annually. Each week, food is provided to between 380-400 individuals and families (this includes 238 children). The program follows a “shopping basket” model, which is designed to empower individuals through the ability to choose from items offered, be greeted with dignity and respect and take an active role in developing their personal nutrition plan. The model also provides an environment intended to foster a sense of community among the participating clients.

Leveraging Federal Initiatives and Supports

Federal initiatives are an essential part of the strategy to meet our provincial targets. Several programs are critical to our path forward, including:

Canada Child Benefit

The federal Canada Child Benefit (CCB) is a tax-free monthly payment that provides for the basic needs of children under 18 based on a family's income. In July 2019, the maximum annual CCB payments increased to \$6,639 per child under age 6 and to \$5,602 per child aged 6 through 17. The CCB plays a key role in reducing child poverty, providing financial support to families in British Columbia and across the country.

Canada Pension Plan Enhancement

An enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) will improve the savings of Canadians during their working years. The initiative aimed to reduce the proportion of Canadians approaching retirement who may not be saving enough to replace at least 60 per cent of their pre-retirement earnings and changes were applied on January 1, 2019.

Canada Workers Benefit

Starting in 2019, the Government of Canada implemented the Canada Workers Benefit (CWB) to help low-income workers take home more money while they work and encourage more people to join and stay in the workforce. The benefit will help lift an additional 74,000 Canadians out of poverty. Individuals could receive more than \$1,300, while a single parent could receive more than \$2,300.

Supports for Seniors

In 2019, the Government of Canada increased the amount of earnings that a senior in receipt of the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) can make before it impacts their benefits to support working low-income seniors. The maximum Old Age Security (OAS) pension amount increased to \$607.46, and the maximum GIS amount increased to \$907.30 for single seniors and to \$546.17 for each member of a couple.

Action on Social Supports

British Columbians living in poverty often experience social isolation and a feeling of exclusion from their communities. Discrimination, stigmatization and social barriers can impact the ability to access housing, employment and other essential services. Social supports include a range of initiatives, programs and services that contribute to reducing poverty in communities and increasing a sense of community belonging.

UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program

In September 2019, the Province provided \$5 million to the Union of BC Municipalities for a Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Grant Program. The funds support local governments in designing poverty reduction plans and other initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. Eligible projects will address improvements to housing, community connectedness, food security and other key priorities. This approach recognizes the central role local governments play in developing local solutions to poverty. The first application intake closed February 29, 2020.

Community Resilience through Arts and Culture

In 2019, the Province provided \$735,000 to the Community Resilience Through Arts and Culture pilot program. This program helped support communities following the devastating 2017 wildfires. There were 83 grant recipients, including 56 Indigenous organizations undertaking cultural revitalization projects. Over 4,000 youth and nearly 3,000 Indigenous people were positively impacted by the diverse range of projects. Participants were predominantly Indigenous people, those living in rural and northern locations, youth, women, people with diverse abilities and those experiencing poverty and homelessness.

Success Story: *Community Resilience*

An Elder brought her three grandchildren and daughter to the moccasin making workshop. She stated, *"I haven't sewn moccasins in over 30 years. It's like riding a bike. Familiarizing myself with my culture again. I didn't realize what I knew would come back!"* Another Elder stated, *"This is the first time I was able to do workshops with real tanned moose hide. Usually it's the manufactured one. The authentic smoked moose hide smell is so awesome. It feels like home again."* A female participant, who is also a Sixties Scoop survivor commented, *"This is one of the first cultural things I've been involved in. I've been disconnected my whole life."* Young children were able to connect cultural knowledge and passing on of knowledge through sewing moccasins themselves. These impactful statements demonstrate the cultural and artistic significance that was experienced, through the provision of this grant. *"By learning how to sew moose hide crafts, younger people are regarding it as an opportunity, that by learning how to make traditional arts and crafts, they could create further income for themselves. Participants are always calling and asking if there are any more cultural opportunities such as moccasin making."*

- Dawn Agno, Indigenous Support Worker, Aboriginal Housing Society of Prince George

Access to Justice

There is a strong link between social exclusion, poverty and access to justice. Legal problems often stem from poverty, and by resolving these issues, people can get on a path out of poverty. Yet many people are unable to do so due to lack of resources, lack of knowledge of services or other barriers to access. Increasing access to justice and legal services is vital to reducing poverty and improving quality of life.

In November 2019, government announced \$2 million to open several new legal clinics around B.C. The free legal clinics will improve access to justice for the most vulnerable members of the communities they serve, providing clients with legal advice and services on a range of issues including poverty, housing, immigration and disability.

In October 2019, a draft First Nations Justice Strategy was presented to the Province, which initiated extensive consultation between the BC First Nations Justice Council and the Province. The Strategy sets a path to: reduce the number of First Nations people who become involved with the criminal justice system; improve the experience of those who do; increase the number of First Nations people working within the justice system; and support First Nations to restore their Indigenous justice systems and structures. A similar agreement was made with Métis Nation BC to develop a Métis Justice Strategy. Developing two strategies recognizes that First Nations and Métis people have different cultures, priorities and histories with the Province, and ensures distinct needs are met.

Work also began in 2019 to develop three Indigenous Justice Centres in Merritt, Prince George and Prince Rupert. The centres will provide important legal services for Indigenous people with a focus on criminal law and child welfare and will reflect the unique needs and approaches of Indigenous people in each region.

Path Forward: Indigenous Women & Girls Safety Community Sessions

Path Forward was an engagement initiative of community-based, Indigenous-led public sessions in partnership with the Province to develop a provincial response to the Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The engagement focused on the emotional, psychological and physical safety of Indigenous women and girls in B.C. and was completed in summer 2019. The final report includes tools and resources for community planning and capacity building to address issues around poverty, mental health and addictions, housing and health which continue to be significant systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Addressing Period Poverty

Period poverty is the widespread lack of access to menstrual products due to financial limitations. It affects girls, women, non-binary and transgender people across British Columbia who cannot afford menstrual products. Current research indicates that one in seven students has missed school due to their periods because they cannot afford products. Racialized populations, Indigenous people, transgender people and recent immigrants to Canada experience poverty at disproportionately high levels. As a result, they are likely affected by this issue more regularly and on a wider scale.

Period Promise

Through a \$95,000 B.C. government grant to the United Way of the Lower Mainland in June 2019, the “Period Promise” project is distributing menstrual products to 12 non-profit agencies that serve vulnerable populations throughout the province, who are making products accessible to their clients. The project is collecting quarterly data on the number of people served and products used, how the lack of access to menstrual products because of period poverty affects people’s lives and how addressing the issue can benefit communities. A final research report with the findings is expected in late 2020.

Provision of Menstrual Products in Schools

In April 2019, government announced that all B.C. public schools are now required to provide free menstrual products to all students in school washrooms. A \$300,000 grant was made available to school districts for start-up funding so that school districts could immediately provide students with equal and stigma-free access to free menstrual products in school washrooms. This new requirement ensures that students in low-income households do not need to fall behind in their education, extracurriculars or social participation.

Larissa is a young person who just aged out of care. Every month she struggles to afford basic things, like food, cleaning supplies and menstrual products. Of all of these, she buys her monthly stock of tampons last, and only when she can stretch her pennies to make it work. She often goes without tampons or pads for months on end, which means that she has missed school and work. She has lost jobs as a result. It has taken a toll on her mental health and makes her anxious to leave the house when she’s expecting her period to start. An aunt recently went through menopause and gifted all her spare period supplies. These lasted for several months, but Larissa used them sparingly – only when she was leaving the house – so that she could stretch their use for as long as possible. When she discovered that a community organization near her was giving out free menstrual products as part of Period Promise this year, it helped her feel more secure. Now, she’s able to work and attend school with more confidence.

- United Way of Lower Mainland

Increasing Community Belonging through Sport

The Province and Government of Canada partnered on the B.C. Sport Participation Program to provide a joint \$1.2 million to fund sport programming free or at a reduced cost for vulnerable and marginalized participants who are underrepresented in sport across B.C. New initiatives being funded include: Give it a Try programs for adults 55+; Empower YOUth mental health pilot program; and an after-school sport and arts pilot focused on vulnerable adolescent girls in high school.

KidSport BC provides sport and recreation opportunities for children in low-income families across B.C. In 2019, the Province provided one-time funding of \$2.5 million to Sport BC to expand KidSport BC programs to reach more kids from low income families. Now, over 7,300 children in the province are provided grants (average of \$250) for a season of sport.

Community Highlight: *After School Sport and Arts Initiative*

The After-School Sport and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) has provided \$2 million in annual funding to bring sport, physical activities and creative expression programming, free of charge to families. ASSAI focuses on children and youth (Grades K-8) who face barriers to sport or arts participation – such as financial, transportation, geographical, family circumstances, cultural, physical/cognitive disabilities, etc.

“We continue to be overwhelmed by the positive feedback from all those involved in ASSAI programming in School District No. 67. Our program leaders express gratitude for the opportunity. As we have a relatively small staff, we work hard to connect and support each other to learn and share. The principals in the program continue to amaze me with their passion and dedication to support this program. They work hard to connect with students and parents to select children for the program and set each student up for success. It has been a great way for principals to connect with families over a positive opportunity, especially from some of these vulnerable families that often have negative experiences. Most importantly our kids are shining through these programs. We see them engaged in positive supportive environments, forming relationships with caring adults - at THEIR school. We see them take risks and gain confidence as they try something new and then become GOOD at something new. We see them become more connected to their school and want to be part of their school community in a positive way.”

- ASSAI Leader, School District No. 67 Okanagan-Skaha

Supporting Inclusion for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Community Living BC (CLBC) provides services for adults with developmental disabilities. Many of the people served by CLBC experience multiple challenges associated with being low-income or living in poverty. They may face barriers to employment, need assistance with activities of daily living and often have limited access to adequate, affordable housing. In order to help CLBC clients navigate these challenges, CLBC started or made progress on many initiatives in 2019, including continued investment in an Inclusive Housing Initiative and supporting provincial leadership of people with developmental disabilities.

To increase access to opportunities, CLBC funds employment services and supports for inclusive post-secondary education. The Community Action Employment Plan has brought a wide range of partners together to advance employment. As of September 2019, more than 5,000 individuals were working, nearly 25 per cent of those under age 65 – close to 3,000 more than when the initiative launched in 2012/13. CLBC invested \$2.8 million in this initiative in 2019.

CLBC also made a \$1 million investment in a new employment service that has the additional goals of learning, inclusion and friendships. This L.I.F.E.-based service design began its pilot stage in 2019, with early positive outcomes reported.

As of 2019, the BC Inclusive Post-Secondary Education initiative supports 33 individuals with developmental disabilities to access post-secondary studies at seven campuses across B.C. These opportunities have benefitted students by becoming employed in careers alongside peers in sectors ranging from Forestry to Performing Arts to Business.

The Re-imagining Community Inclusion (RCI) initiative, launched in 2018, brought together adults with developmental disabilities, their families, service providers and advocates to create a 10-year vision for services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The partners at the RCI table continued their work throughout 2019, developing and implementing a pathway toward a more inclusive British Columbia.

Next Steps

TogetherBC represents the beginning of government's efforts to make meaningful progress toward reducing poverty in British Columbia. This first annual report reflects the work done in 2019 to fulfill that strategy: the actions taken to implement TogetherBC, the effects of these actions on poverty reduction, and the progress made toward achieving the legislated targets of a 25 per cent reduction in the overall poverty rate and a 50 per cent reduction in the child poverty rate by 2024.

Government has made significant strides toward reducing poverty since the work on developing the strategy began. The overall poverty rate for 2018 already shows a 25 per cent reduction from the 2016 baseline. The child poverty rate also declined – a 42.5 per cent decrease since 2016. Since 2016, 136,000 British Columbians have been lifted out of poverty, including 42,000 children.

Despite this important progress, the 2020 and 2021 annual reports will tell a very different story. COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on British Columbians. People experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness were faced with being unsheltered or in overcrowded conditions. Individuals who supplemented their income or disability assistance through casual or undocumented labour found that those sources of money were no longer available. Low-income working people were also significantly impacted by the pandemic. Many were already working precarious jobs with low wages and found themselves without work and relying on emergency government supports. Organizations offering free food or meal programs found the demand for their services increased dramatically, while their capacity to meet that demand was strained to the limit.

The extent of the impact remains to be seen, but the challenges and hardships experienced by people living in poverty were exacerbated by the pandemic. Whether it was food insecurity, income insecurity or housing insecurity, COVID-19 shone a bright light on the gaps in the social safety net that TogetherBC aims to address. Now more than ever, B.C. needs a strong poverty reduction strategy to strengthen social and economic security for our most vulnerable residents.

Governments at all levels, across jurisdictions, have stepped in with unprecedented emergency supports. Wage loss benefits, community supports, rental housing supplements and funding for food and meal programs have been implemented across Canada to help cover the gaps. The 2020 Annual Report on Poverty Reduction will speak more to the impact COVID-19 has had on people living in poverty as well as the actions taken in response.

Poverty reduction is about more than numbers. It's about people. TogetherBC brings together the collective wisdom of Indigenous Peoples, business and labour leaders, community advocates, representatives of all levels of government and most importantly, people with lived experience. These partnerships created the roadmap to reducing poverty in B.C. The Social Services Sector Roundtable, a formal engagement with the community social services sector; the Re-Imagining Community Inclusion initiative; the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee; and the UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program are just a few examples of the invaluable partnerships government has established.

When it comes to complex issues like poverty, no single sector can succeed alone. Our strong, multiple partnerships show how much we can achieve when we work together. While the targets and progress are expressed as statistics, the real success of TogetherBC is in the partnerships and the power of collective action.

TogetherBC is a roadmap toward lifting British Columbians out of poverty. In 2020, government will continue the efforts to improve affordability, create new opportunities, increase social inclusion and work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples toward meaningful reconciliation.

Appendix A

Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

About B.C.'s Poverty Reduction Strategy

Government is committed to a poverty reduction strategy, making life more affordable for all British Columbians, and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. In order to help understand and address the complex issues facing people in poverty, government:

- Conducted extensive consultations with British Columbians on their experiences with poverty and their ideas for poverty reduction; and
- Passed B.C.'s first *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* into law

About the ***Poverty Reduction Strategy Act***

The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* (the Act) was unanimously passed into law on November 8, 2018. The legislation includes targets and timelines to reduce the overall poverty rate in British Columbia by 25 per cent and the child poverty rate by 50 per cent by 2024.

As outlined in the Act, the Honourable Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, has a mandate to develop a poverty reduction strategy with legislated targets and timelines by March 31, 2019 and to update the strategy at least every five years.

About the Advisory Committee

The Act mandates the Minister to establish an advisory committee to advise the minister on matters relating to poverty reduction and prevention. The Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) will bring together a diverse group of individuals who will provide expertise and knowledge, and share ideas to support B.C.'s poverty reduction strategy.

Terms of Reference

Mandate

The role of the Advisory Committee is to advise the minister on matters relating to poverty reduction and prevention. This includes providing the minister with comments to be included in each annual report released by government on the actions taken to implement B.C.'s Poverty Reduction Strategy; the effects of the strategy on poverty reduction; and any progress made towards the targets.

The Advisory Committee must also advise the minister on future poverty reduction consultations, required by government each time the strategy is updated, as described in the Act. This ensures consultations are informed by the experiences of persons living in poverty, and upholds the commitment to Indigenous people.

Membership

Reducing poverty in B.C. will require partnerships and collaboration across sectors and groups and the composition of the Advisory Committee is designed to achieve this objective.

Membership will include people from a range of backgrounds and emphasize the experience of those living in poverty and key sectors that are critical to poverty reduction. At least half of the members must be women. Members are appointed by the minister through a Minister's Letter. The minister also appoints the chair.

The Advisory Committee will include a representative from at least each of the following groups:

- Organizations that advocate for people living in poverty;
- People currently living in poverty;
- People living with a disability;
- People living in rural and remote communities;
- Members of local governments;
- Businesses;
- Unions;
- Academia; and,
- First Nations and Indigenous people.

Reimbursement Details

Members of the Advisory Committee must be reimbursed for reasonable travel and out-of-pocket expenses necessarily incurred by them in discharging their duties under this Act. Members living in poverty (under the Market Basket Measure, Canada's Official Poverty Line) will be paid an honorarium of \$125 per meeting.

Duration

Members will be appointed for one, two, or three-year terms, with a possibility to extend terms to a maximum of six years. Members may attend Advisory Committee meetings either in person, by teleconference or by online videoconference.

Secretariat Support

Secretariat support will be provided by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and will include organizing meeting agendas and materials, providing travel reimbursement and honorarium payments, and other duties needed to support the work of the Advisory Committee.

Biographies of Members

Catherine Ludgate (chair) - Catherine is the senior manager of community investment for Vancity credit union. Catherine provides support to and participates in partnerships dedicated to social justice and financial inclusion such as microfinance and educational programs to ensure individuals have the knowledge, skills and confidence to make the right financial decisions for themselves. She serves on the City of Vancouver's Poverty Advisory Action Group, the Living Wage national community of practice, the Living Wage for Families Campaign and is a trustee of the BC Real Estate Council, the Credit Union Foundation of BC and the Co-operative Management Education Co-operative. She was previously involved with the federal Advisory Committee on Poverty Reduction and the BC Poverty Advisory Forum. Catherine holds a bachelor's degree from Simon Fraser University, a Diploma in Legal Studies from Capilano College, a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from Simon Fraser University, and a Master's Degree in Management of Co-ops and Credit Unions from St Mary's University.

Sarah Brownlee - Sarah is currently working in administration for a real estate company in the West Kootenays and for Castlegar United Church. Her previous experiences include managing a low-income housing complex and working in food security programs for vulnerable children. Modelling community engagement for her children, Sarah is an active volunteer: she is the main contact for Castlegar Pride (LGBTQ2S+), actively involved in reconciliation with the First Nation and LGBTQ2S+ communities, and serves as the secretary for the Castlegar and District Library Board. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Alberta College of Art and Design where she majored in Ceramics. She brings a wealth of first-hand knowledge and experience for low-income workers.

Cheryl Casimer - Cheryl is a citizen of the Ktunaxa Nation. She is a long-standing advocate for First Nations issues and perspectives and is committed to building better bridges of understanding between neighbouring cultures. She is a former chief and councillor of the ʔágam First Nation and was previously the director of treaty, lands and resources for the Ktunaxa Treaty Council. Cheryl is active in her community, serving on numerous boards including the First Nations Summit (co-chair), the BC Assembly of First Nations, and Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society. She is on the First Nations Summit Task Group, mandated to carry out specific tasks related to Aboriginal Title and Rights negotiations with B.C. and Canada. Cheryl also served on the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction.

Zahra Esmail - Zahra Esmail has been the Executive Director of the vibrant South Vancouver Neighbourhood House since 2016, and is the first Executive Director of the Marpole Neighbourhood House, which opened under her leadership in 2019. Zahra works with her diverse teams to build community connections and strengthen the neighbourhoods of Killarney, Victoria-Fraserview, Sunset and Marpole in Vancouver. With a background in community development, her current portfolio includes food security, settlement and integration services, licensed childcare, children and family development, youth leadership, seniors wellness, and Adult Day Programs. Prior to her current role, Zahra was the General Manager of Eva's Phoenix, a transitional shelter and training program in Toronto. She has also worked in international development with Street Kids International, Haven Haiti and BRAC with responsibility for programs in Haiti, India, the Philippines, Colombia, Sierra Leone, and Ethiopia. Zahra has a Master's in Globalization and International Development from the University of Ottawa, a Bachelor's in History from UBC, and an Associate Certificate in Fundraising Management from BCIT. She is a Board member of the Lookout Foundation. Zahra was recognized as one of Business in Vancouver's Forty Under 40 in 2019.

Murry Krause - Murry has been involved in various non-profit sector management positions focused on issues such as social justice, health care, poverty, homelessness, racism culture and heritage. Murry served as executive director with the Central Interior Native Health Society, an interdisciplinary primary health care clinic in downtown Prince George, before retiring after 22 years. He is currently a councillor with the City of Prince George, and he also sits as a director of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. Murry is past-president of the Union of BC Municipalities and chair of the Regional Hospital District Board. He also served on the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction.

Rosanna McGregor - Rosanna is the executive director for the Cariboo Friendship Society in Williams Lake. She has numerous years of experience with contract management and economic development through the programs run by the Friendship Centre. Rosanna participates on many community boards including the Social Planning Council of Williams Lake, Williams Lake Social Housing Society (chair), Aboriginal Housing Management Association (committee chair), and BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. Rosanna served on the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction and she is also involved in the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Advisory Committee as well as the Human Service Worker Advisory Council for Thompson Rivers University. She holds a Business Administration Diploma from the Fraser Valley College and a Micro Computer Accounting Certificate from Thompson Rivers University. Knuwente kuc es yegweyegt.s-kuc Help us be Strong.

Bradley (Brad) Mills - Brad is the former chief executive officer of Mills Printing and Stationery. He is actively involved in his community as chair of Basics Office Products and as chair for H.A.V.E. Café. H.A.V.E. is a social enterprise operating as a culinary training society and restaurant in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside that provides occupational and life skills training to residents of the community who are excluded from work due to poverty, homelessness, addiction or mental and physical disabilities. Brad was previously a board member for Dress for Success, an organization that supports women to make lasting change in their lives and the lives of their children.

Adrienne Montani - Adrienne is the provincial coordinator for First Call: BC Child & Youth Advocacy Coalition. She was the chairperson of the Vancouver School Board during her tenure as an elected school trustee. Adrienne has worked with many organizations on the issues of cross-cultural awareness and racism, women's rights and the impacts of social exclusion on the health and well-being of children and youth in low-income families. Adrienne is on the board of the Community Legal Assistance Society, the Institute for Public Education BC and is an honorary lifetime member of the Federation of Community Social Services of BC. She previously held positions as the executive director of the Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society and of the Big Sisters of BC, Lower Mainland division. Adrienne holds a Bachelor's Degree in Asian Studies (Honours) from York University and a Master's Degree in Adult Education from Simon Fraser University.

Tabitha Naismith - Tabitha is currently the Newton chair for BC ACORN as well as the secretary on the National Board for ACORN Canada. She has been involved in campaigns for ending the child support claw back for single parents on income assistance, raising the income and disability assistance rates, and was a vocal advocate to restore the bus pass for individuals on Persons with Disabilities assistance. Previously, Tabitha was a member of the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction.

Krishna Pendakur - Krishna is a Professor of Economics at Simon Fraser University. He studies statistical issues related to the measurement of economic discrimination, inequality and poverty, and has conducted important work on the economic barriers facing visible minorities and Indigenous peoples in Canada. Krishna holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of British Columbia, and a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley.

Lissa Smith - Lissa is the elected vice-president for the Métis Nation of BC where she is minister responsible for Métis rights, justice and Métis veterans. Her previous portfolios include child and families and health. She previously worked as a social worker for many First Nations and understands the complex socio-economic dynamics of intergenerational trauma that affect Aboriginal people today. Active in her community, Lissa is on the board of the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness. She holds a human service diploma from Vancouver Island University and a Bachelor's of Social Work from the University of Victoria. Lissa also served on the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction.

Stephanie Smith - As president of the BC Government and Service Employees' Union, Stephanie Smith represents more than 80,000 members who work in practically every community and economic sector in B.C. Stephanie was elected president of the BCGEU in 2014 and acclaimed to a second term in 2017. She is the first woman ever elected president of the BCGEU. An early childhood educator (ECE) by profession, Stephanie is also the first BCGEU president to come from outside direct government service. Stephanie's career as a union activist began as a new ECE in New Zealand and continued when she moved back to Canada in 1984. Stephanie is a lifelong feminist; a renowned advocate for workers' rights, public services, and unionization; and committed to promoting reconciliation, equity, and inclusion in everything she does. Stephanie holds an Early Childhood Education degree and she also served on the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction.

Caitlin Wright - Caitlin currently works at Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS) as office coordinator and a legal advocate. She was first drawn to working in the anti-poverty sector through her work as a volunteer disability advocate and at TAPS. Caitlin is honoured to bring both her lived and professional experiences to the volunteer work she undertakes including the important work of substantially reducing social and economic inequality and inequity in our province. Caitlin was born with a physical disability and uses a wheelchair for mobility; in addition, she has lived experiences with mental health disorders. Caitlin is pursuing a Bachelor of Social Work at the University of Victoria.

Appendix B

Indicator Trends

The indicators included in the table below are accompanied by explanatory notes in the pages following the table.

Legislated Indicator	Baseline Data	Most Recent Available Data (as of Dec 31, 2019)	Trend
<p>Overall Poverty Rate¹⁴</p> <p>The percentage of British Columbians living below the poverty line. Government has a legislated target to reduce overall poverty by 25 per cent by 2024.</p>	12.0 per cent overall poverty rate (2016)	8.9 per cent overall poverty rate (2018)	<p>Progress</p> <p>A 25.8 per cent reduction in the overall poverty rate (3.1 percentage points)</p>
<p>Child Poverty Rate¹⁵</p> <p>The percentage of children in B.C. (under 18) living below the poverty line. Government has a legislated target to reduce child poverty by 50 per cent by 2024.</p>	12.0 per cent child poverty rate (2016)	6.9 per cent child poverty rate (2018)	<p>Progress</p> <p>A 42.5 per cent reduction in the child poverty rate (5.1 percentage points)</p>
<p>Deep Poverty</p> <p>Percentage of persons living below 75 per cent of the MBM threshold for British Columbia.</p>	6.7 per cent for all persons (2016) 5.5 per cent for children (2016)	4.6 per cent for all persons (2018) 2.2 per cent for children (2018)	<p>Progress</p> <p>A 31.3 per cent reduction in the overall rate of deep poverty (2.1 percentage points) and a 60.0 per cent reduction in the child deep poverty rate (3.3 percentage points).</p>
<p>Average Poverty Depth¹⁶</p> <p>Average income for all persons living in low-income as a percentage of the MBM.</p>	60.5 per cent of the MBM threshold (2016)	63.2 per cent of the MBM threshold (2018)	<p>Progress</p> <p>A 6.8 per cent reduction in the depth of poverty (2.7 percentage points)</p>

14 Statistics Canada. Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type. 11-10-0135-01

15 Statistics Canada. Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type. 11-10-0135-01

16 Statistics Canada. Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type. 11-10-0135-01

Core Indicator	Baseline Data	Most Recent Available Data (as of Dec 31, 2019)	Trend
Households in Core Housing Need ¹⁷	14.9 per cent of households experience core housing need (2016)	Data is unavailable until 2021 Census.	No Reported Change
Homelessness Rate ¹⁸	7,655 individuals experienced homelessness (2018)	7,655 individuals experienced homelessness (2018)	No Reported Change
Early Development Instrument ¹⁹	The rate of EDI vulnerability on one or more scales in B.C. was 32.2 per cent (2016)	The rate of EDI vulnerability on one or more scales in B.C. was 33.4 per cent (2019)	Area for Improvement The rate of children considered vulnerable increased by 3.7 per cent (1.2 percentage points).
Unemployment Rate ²⁰	6.0 per cent unemployment rate (2016)	4.7 per cent unemployment rate (2019)	Progress The proportion of people who were unemployed decreased by 21.7 per cent (1.3 percentage points)
Household Food Insecurity ²¹	12.3 per cent of households were food insecure (2015/16)	12.4 per cent of households were food insecure (2017/18)	No Significant Change The proportion of households experiencing food insecurity increased by 0.8 per cent (0.1 percentage points)
Sense of Belonging to Community ²²	70.7 per cent report a strong or very strong sense of belonging to their local community (2015/16)	69.9 per cent report a strong or very strong sense of belonging to their local community (2017/18)	No Significant Change Per cent reduction in the rate of British Columbians feeling a strong sense of belonging (0.8 percentage points).

17 Source: Statistics Canada. Core Housing Need, 2016 Census of Population. 2016001

18 The Homelessness Services Association of BC, Urban Matters, and BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2018). 2018 Report on Homeless Counts in B.C. Prepared for BC Housing. Burnaby, BC: Metro Vancouver.

19 Human Early Learning Partnership. EDI BC. Early Development Instrument British Columbia, 2016-2019 Wave 7 provincial report. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, Faculty of Medicine, School of Population and Public Health; 2019 Nov.

20 Statistics Canada. Labour force characteristics, monthly, seasonally adjusted and trend-cycle, last 5 months. 14-10-0287-01

21 Statistics Canada. Household food security by living arrangement. 13-10-0385-01

22 Statistics Canada Canadian Community Health Survey Public Use Master File, 2015-16, 2017-18

Additional Indicator	Baseline Data	Most Recent Available Data (as of Dec 31, 2019)	Trend
Number of households that benefit from provincial housing programs for affordable and supportive housing ²³	105,140 (2016/17)	110,464 (2018/19)	Progress The number of households increased by 5,324 (5.1 per cent)
Number of supportive housing units created ²⁴	963 (2016/17)	2,669 (2018/19)	Progress The number of supportive housing units increased by 1,706 (177.2 per cent)
Number of households receiving rental assistance in the private market ²⁵ This measure includes two programs: Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) and Rental Assistance Program (RAP).	31,329 (2016/17)	33,494 (2018/19)	Progress The number of households increased by 2,165 (6.9 per cent)
Number of children served by Childcare BC	Initiative started in 2019	More than 27,700 children received child care for \$10 per day or less for at least one month (2019)	No Reported Change
Average monthly number of funded licensed child care spaces ²⁶	108,110 (2016/17)	114,672 (2018/19)	Progress The number of funded spaces increased by 6,562 (6.1 per cent)

23 Source: BC Housing Annual Service Plan Report 2018-2019
<https://www.bchousing.org/about/corporate-reports-plans>

24 Source: BC Housing Annual Service Plan Report 2018-2019
<https://www.bchousing.org/about/corporate-reports-plans>

25 Source: BC Housing Annual Service Plan Report 2018-2019
<https://www.bchousing.org/about/corporate-reports-plans>

26 MCFD 2018/19 Annual Service Plan Report
https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/Annual_Reports/2018_2019/pdf/ministry/cfd.pdf

Additional Indicator	Baseline Data	Most Recent Available Data (as of Dec 31, 2019)	Trend
High School Six-Year Completion Rate ²⁷	The high school six-year completion rate was 87.3 per cent in 2016/17	The high school six-year completion rate was 88.8 percent in 2018/19	Progress The proportion of students completing high school within six years of enrolling in grade 8 increased by 1.7 per cent (1.5 percentage points)
Post-Secondary Participation Rate ²⁸	12 per cent of young people aged 18-24 attended college and 29 per cent attended university (2016/17)	13 per cent of young people aged 18-24 attended college and 30 per cent attended university (2018/19)	Progress Improvements in both the rate of people attending college and the rate of people attending university
Number of people who have participated in the Single Parent Employment Initiative This measure is cumulative, beginning in September 2015. Data was not reported on using this method until 2018.	2,024 participants (December 2018) 1,085 participants found employment (December 2018)	2,153 participants (December 2019) 1,346 participants found employment (December 2019)	Progress 129 more parents have participated in the program over the past year, and 261 more participants found employment
Number of Former Youth in Care Accessing Tuition Waiver ²⁹	189 tuition waivers were issued (2016/17)	1,119 tuition waivers were issued (2019)	Progress 930 more tuition waivers were issued in 2019 (492 per cent increase)

27 Data BC Six-Year Completion rates.

Available at: <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/bc-schools-six-year-completion-rate>

28 Statistics Canada. Table 37-10-0103-01 Participation rate in education, population aged 18 to 34, by age group and type of institution attended. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3710010301>

29 Ministry of Children and Family Development Submission to the Poverty Reduction Annual Report, May 2020.

Additional Indicator	Baseline Data	Most Recent Available Data (as of Dec 31, 2019)	Trend
Median After-Tax Family Income ³⁰	\$59,000 median after-tax family income (2016, in 2018 dollars)	\$62,000 median after-tax family income (2018)	Progress An increase of \$3,000 (in 2018 dollars), or 5.1 per cent, in median after-tax family income
Average Hourly Wage ³¹	\$27.11 average hourly wage – \$29.06 for full-time, \$19.46 for part-time (2016, in 2019 dollars)	\$27.64 average hourly wage – \$29.34 for full-time, \$20.79 for part-time (2019)	Progress A 1.9 per cent increase in real average wages – 0.9 per cent increase for full-time workers and 6.9 per cent increase for part-time workers
Number of People Served by WorkBC ³²	No Data Available – this program was launched in 2019.	WorkBC provided services to 73,540 people and supported 36,393 clients through their first year of employment (2019)	No Reported Change
Percentage of Population on Income or Disability Assistance ³³	3.9 per cent of British Columbians received income or disability assistance on average each month (2016)	4.1 per cent of British Columbians received income or disability assistance on average each month. (2019)	No Significant Change An increase of 5.1 per cent in the proportion of British Columbians receiving income or disability assistance (0.2 percentage points)
Number of Families Served by the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) ³⁴	441,300 families in B.C. received the CCB in 2016/17.	440,570 families in B.C. received the CCB in 2018/19.	No Significant Change A slight decrease of 730 families receiving the CCB.

30 Source: Statistics Canada. Market income, government transfers, total income, income tax and after-tax income by economic family type, annual. 11-10-0190-01.

31 Statistics Canada. Employee wages by industry, annual, unadjusted for seasonality. 14-10-0064-01.

32 WorkBC Submission to the Poverty Reduction Annual Report, May 2020.

33 Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. BC Employment and Assistance Summary Report. April 2020.

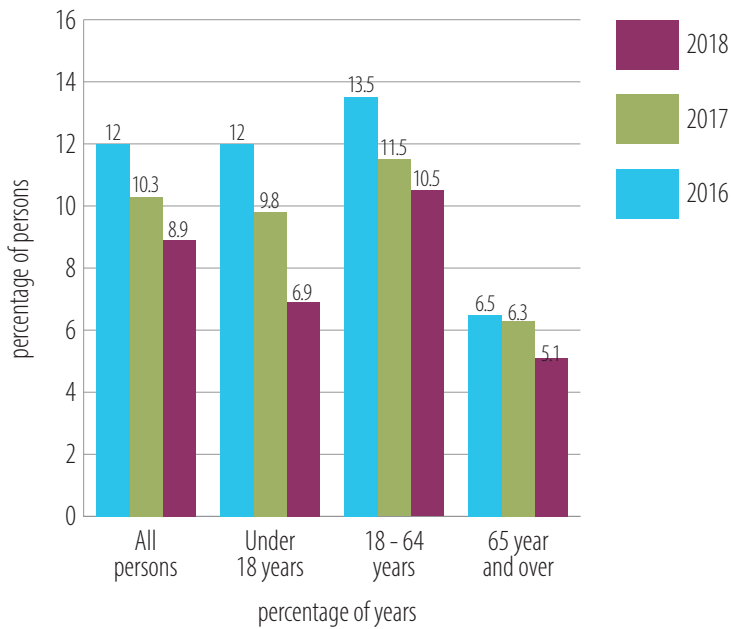
34 Canada Revenue Agency, 2019. Canada Child Benefit Statistics - 2018-2019 Benefit Year. <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/programs/about-canada-revenue-agency-cra/income-statistics-gst-hst-statistics/canada-child-benefit-statistics/canada-child-benefit-statistics-2017-tax-year.html#child>

Explanatory Notes on Indicators

Legislated Indicators

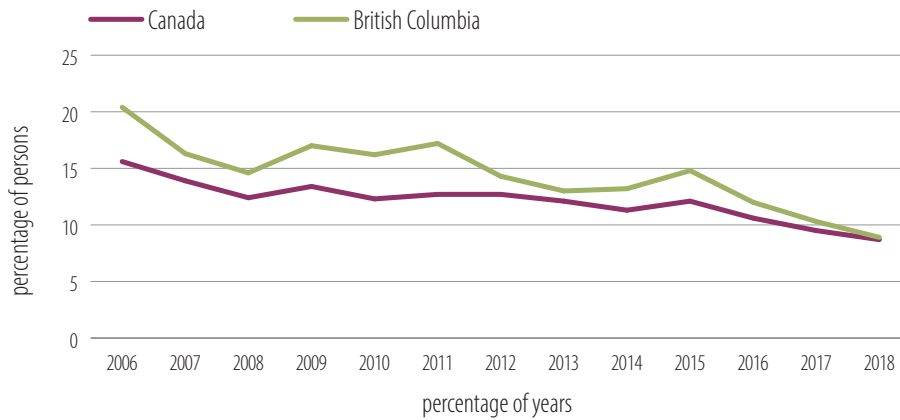
Overall Poverty Rate by Age Group

The percentage of British Columbians living below the poverty line, based on the MBM.



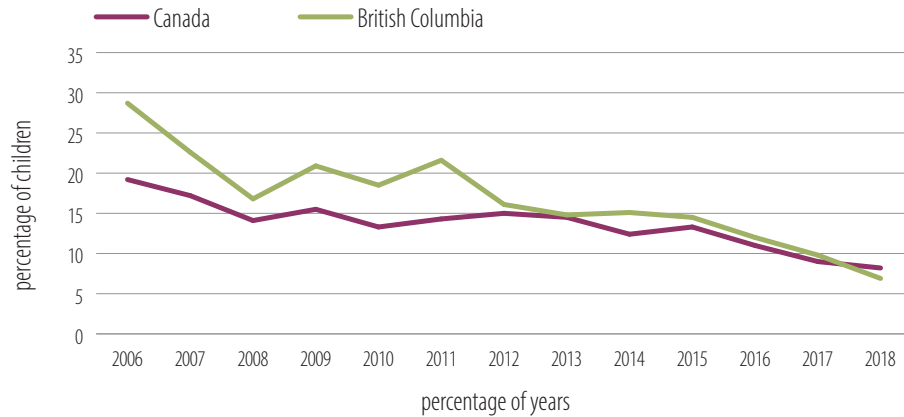
Overall Poverty Rate Trends

The percentage of British Columbians living below the poverty line, based on the MBM.



Child Poverty Rate Trends

The percentage of children in B.C. under 18 years of age living below the poverty line.



Deep Poverty

Deep poverty measures the percentage of persons with income below 75 per cent of the MBM threshold for British Columbia.

Average Poverty Depth

The depth of poverty is an indicator of how much income the average family living in poverty requires to get to the MBM threshold (poverty line). It is expressed as a family unit's total income as a percentage of the MBM threshold for that family size. It is averaged across all family units that have incomes below the MBM threshold (living in poverty). Higher values mean that the average person living in poverty is closer to escaping from poverty.

Core Indicators

Households in Core Housing Need

Statistics Canada produced the core housing need indicator in collaboration with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It focuses on vulnerable populations and involves two stages. First, it looks at whether a household is living in unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable housing. Next, income levels are assessed to identify if households could be expected to have affordable access to suitable and adequate alternative housing in their community. This indicator is an important poverty measure, because it not only looks at a resident's current situation but also evaluates their potential to improve their situation. It reflects the extent of housing insecurity experienced by vulnerable populations and their potential to solve their situation on their own. The core housing need is reported every five years in the national census.

Homelessness Rate

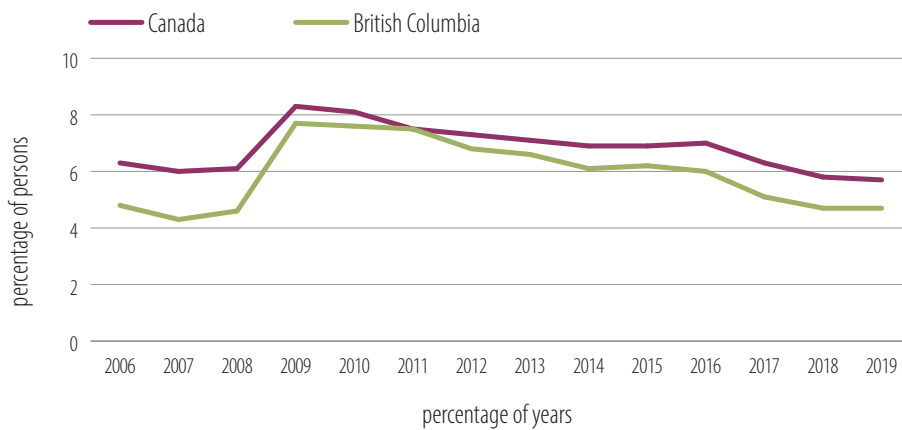
There is a clear link between poverty and homelessness. People experiencing homelessness struggle to afford basic needs such as clothing and food, experience negative impacts to their mental and physical health, and are not able to secure or maintain employment without having these basic needs met. Tracking homelessness rates helps to inform government programs that support vulnerable populations. The homelessness rate in B.C. is determined using point-in-time homelessness counts (PiT counts) and shelter data. PiT counts provide a snapshot of homelessness but are widely considered to be an undercount of actual rates. This broad approach used to measure homelessness covers more than 85 per cent of B.C. by population.

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

This indicator reports on the percentage of children in kindergarten considered vulnerable on one or more EDI scales. The EDI is a well-established tool that measures a child’s ability to meet developmental expectations in five areas: physical health and well-being; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development, and; communication skills and general knowledge. These areas are known to be good predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes, and children considered vulnerable on the EDI are more likely to experience poverty as adults.

Unemployment Rate

Increasing opportunities for stable employment is essential to reducing poverty. The unemployment rate for B.C. is reported by Statistics Canada. It shows the percentage of people 15 years and older in the labour force who are unemployed, expressed as a percentage of the labour force.



Household Food Insecurity

Poverty is one of the key contributing factors to food insecurity and reducing poverty can help increase access to safe and nutritious food³⁵. This indicator is reported by Statistics Canada and includes households experiencing marginal, moderate and severe food insecurity. It is based on a set of questions that indicate whether households both with and without children were able to afford the food they needed in the previous 12 months. Food security exists when households have access to affordable, culturally appropriate food. This is often characterized by the availability, accessibility, affordability, adequacy and appropriateness of food choices.

Sense of Community Belonging

British Columbians living in poverty often experience social isolation and a feeling of exclusion from their communities. Stigmatization and social barriers can impact an individual's ability to access housing, employment and other essential services. Research also shows that social isolation can be detrimental to health, while social engagement is associated with positive health outcomes. According to Statistics Canada, a sense of community belonging reflects social engagement and participation within communities. This indicator is used to measure social attachment to the community.

Additional Indicators

Number of Households that Benefit from Provincial Housing Programs for Affordable and Supportive Housing

This indicator reflects the number of individuals and families benefiting from BC Housing's programming. It demonstrates government's commitment to improve the housing situation for low-income British Columbians. Assistance ranges from emergency shelter and homeless outreach, transition houses, safe homes and second stage housing, independent and supportive social housing, rent assistance in the private market, home adaptations for seniors and persons with disabilities, as well as help for first-time homeowners. BC Housing works in partnership with the non-profit, co-op and Indigenous housing sectors to deliver most of these programs.

Number of Supportive Housing Units Created

Supportive housing is subsidized housing with on-site supports. Increases to supportive housing mean more British Columbians can access the supports they need to find and maintain housing stability. This indicator is reported by BC Housing and represents the total number of supportive housing units created in B.C. The creation of supportive housing is funded through multiple initiatives including, but not limited to, the Supportive Housing Fund and the Rapid Response to Homelessness initiative.

35 Ministry of Health Model Core Program Paper: Food Security <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/public-health/healthy-living-and-healthy-communities/food-security-model-core-program-paper-2014.pdf>

Number of Households Receiving Rental Assistance in the Private Market

This measure includes two programs: Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) and Rental Assistance Program (RAP). SAFER provides rent supplements to eligible low-income seniors, while RAP provides low-income working families with cash assistance to help with monthly rent payments. These supports are critical to keeping seniors and families housed and prevents British Columbians from falling deeper into poverty.

Number of Children Served by Childcare BC

This indicator includes the approximate number of children receiving child care for \$10 a day or less for at least one month in a calendar year. Support is provided through multiple programs including the Affordable Child Care Benefit, Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative and Universal Child Care Prototypes Sites. Affordable child care allows parents to work or pursue education and training opportunities to better support their families.

Average Monthly Number of Funded Licensed Child Care Spaces

This measure speaks to the average monthly number of licensed spaces with service providers who receive funding through the Child Care Operating Funding Program. It shows how increasing the number of child care spaces contributes to a system of accessible, affordable and quality child care for families, which can lead to better outcomes for children.

Note: There is a time lag between when new spaces receive funds to build or renovate and when they become operational. This time lag could be due to permitting, construction or licensing requirements. Additionally, the measure includes funded licensed child care spaces that are created as a result of other growth in the sector.

High School Six-Year Completion Rate

Young people from low-income families are more likely to leave school because of factors connected to poverty. This includes experiencing food insecurity and the inability to afford school supplies and extracurricular activities that promote success. In addition to the rate being affected by childhood poverty, high school completion is a strong predictor of an individual's income and employment status later in life. People who graduate high school are more likely to be employed full-time and live above the poverty line as adults. The six-year completion rate indicator is based on the proportion of students who graduate from public school in B.C. within six years from the first time they enroll in grade 8, adjusted for migration in and out of the province.

Post-Secondary Participation Rate

With changing labour markets, more jobs are requiring higher levels of training. Vulnerable youth—including Indigenous youth, youth from low-income households, and youth living in rural or remote communities—often have lower post-secondary participation rates. Increasing post-secondary participation can help improve job opportunities and break the cycle of poverty for young people. The post-secondary participation rate is published by Statistics Canada and reflects the total enrolment in a college or university as a percentage of the total population for each age group; the 18-24 age group is used in this report. The rate includes full- and part-time students who were taking a “credit course” that could be counted towards a degree, certificate or diploma. The number of students is based on a monthly average from September to April.

Number of People who have Participated in the Single Parent Employment Initiative

The Single Parent Employment Initiative (SPEI) helps eligible single parents receiving income and disability assistance secure employment. Eligible single parents can access a range of employment services and supports provided through 102 WorkBC Centres across the province. Participants may be eligible for: up to 12 months of funded training for in-demand jobs or a paid work experience placement; child-care costs covered while participating in the program and throughout the first year of employment, and; transit costs to and from school. These supports help single parents to overcome barriers to employment and build better futures for their families.

Number of Former Youth in Care Accessing Tuition Waiver

Many youth in care face adversity and additional barriers to accessing post-secondary education and greater job opportunities. The Tuition Waiver Program waives tuition fees for B.C. students who are former youth in care attending a B.C. public post-secondary institution. This includes Native Education College and eligible union trades training centres. The program was expanded in 2017 and is open to eligible students 19 years of age up to their 27th birthday.

Median After-Tax Family Income

Family income is a measure of the combined incomes of all people sharing a household or place of residence. It includes various forms of income, such as salaries and wages, retirement income and government transfers. Average household income can be used as an indicator for the monetary well-being of a province’s citizens. Mean or median net household income, after taxes and mandatory contributions, are taken as indicators of standard of living, because they include only disposable income and acknowledge people sharing accommodation benefit from pooling at least some of their living costs.

Average Hourly Wage

The average hourly wage is reported by Statistics Canada and represents the average hourly wage for full- and part-time employees over the age of 15 in British Columbia. Changes to the average hourly wage, after controlling for inflation, indicate whether working British Columbians are earning more in comparison to previous years. Full-time and part-time average wages are also presented to control for changes in the mix of employment.

Number of People Served by WorkBC

WorkBC Employment Services help British Columbians find and keep employment, including individuals who face multiple barriers to employment. Services are available to all unemployed or precariously employed B.C. citizens legally eligible to work in B.C. The table below includes total clients served by inclusion group in 2019 (not mutually exclusive).³⁶

Inclusion Group	Total clients served
Youth ³⁷	21,561
Immigrants	15,475
Persons with Disabilities ³⁸	14,455
Indigenous Peoples	8,162
Survivors of Violence and/or Abuse	7,627
Multi-Barriered	5,672
Francophones	1,230
All Inclusion Clients	49,598
All WorkBC Clients	73,540

Percentage of Population on Income or Disability Assistance

The BC Employment and Assistance Program provides financial support to British Columbians in need, including persons with disabilities, lone parent families with young children and persons with significant barriers to employment. In combination with a low unemployment rate, a low rate of dependence on income or disability assistance indicates that even British Columbians with barriers can participate in and benefit from a strong economy.

Number of Families Served by the Canada Child Benefit

The Canada Child Benefit (CCB) is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help with the cost of raising children under 18 years of age. The program provides important financial supports for families and impacts rates of child poverty.

36 WorkBC Submission to the Poverty Reduction Annual Report, May 2020.

37 WorkBC defines youth as aged 16-30

38 WorkBC defines Persons with Disabilities (PWD) as clients with a PWD designation through BC Employment and Assistance Program or with a confirmed employment-related disability.

Appendix C

Inventory of Government Initiatives that Reduce Poverty

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training		
The B.C. Employer Training Grant	Helps British Columbians access skills training while encouraging employer involvement in training their employees. In 2018/19, the B.C. Employer Training Grant provided funding to over 1,200 employers to support skills training for over 9,500 people. Government invested \$8 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing
The Community Workforce Response Grant program	Provides flexible and timely responses to emerging and urgent labour and skills needs in communities throughout the province. In 2019/20, 68 Community Workforce Response Grant program projects were approved to provide skills training and employment supports to over 1,000 people. Government invested \$10 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing
Sector Labour Market Partnerships (SLMP) program & Early Childhood Educators	The SLMP program funds projects that address sector and regional labour market issues. SLMP has partnered with the Early Childhood Educators of BC to evaluate the Province's Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy. Government made a 4-year (2018-2022) investment of \$1.8 million.	Ongoing
SLMP Program & Skills Ready	The SLMP program partnered with the Construction Foundation of British Columbia to deliver Skills Ready, which supports youth employment by teaching practical workplace skills employers want in new hires. Since 2018, Skills Ready has successfully engaged more than 4,000 youth, 400 educators, and 300 construction, manufacturing, automotive, marine, forestry and oil and gas employers. Government invested \$2.5 million from 2018-2020.	Ongoing
SLMP Program & Federation of Community Social Services BC	SLMP has partnered with the Federation of Community Social Services BC to collect detailed labour market information on service providers providing essential supports to vulnerable populations in BC, including social housing, counselling, substance abuse, and child protection. Government invested \$250,000 over two years from 2018 to 2020.	Ongoing
SLMP Program & First Nations Technology Council	This SLMP project is led by the First Nations Technology Council to conduct labour market research on Indigenous participation in the digital economy. Government invested \$339,316 in 2019/20.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (TWP)	This program waives tuition fees for B.C. students who are former youth in care between 19 and up to their 27th birthday who are attending a B.C. public post-secondary institution. The program was expanded significantly in 2017, and since the expansion 1,272 former youth in care students have been supported on TWP, resulting in 3,316 tuition waivers issued.	Ongoing
SLMP Program & Indigenous Tourism BC	This SLMP project is led by Indigenous Tourism BC to conduct labour market research and develop a workforce development strategy specific to the unique needs and challenges of the Indigenous tourism sector. Government invested \$122,050 in 2019/20.	Started in 2019
Adult Upgrading Grant (AUG)	The AUG supports eligible low-income students in adult upgrading programs to complete or upgrade their education by paying the cost of books, transportation, mandatory fees and unsubsidized child care. In 2018/19, the AUG provided financial support to 4,746 students to access upgrading programs. Government invested \$7.6 million in 2019.	Ongoing
Community Adult Literacy Program	The CALP is a community-based literacy initiative to promote and deliver adult, family and Aboriginal literacy programs through one-to-one and small group classes across the province. In 2019/20, CALP supported 94 community literacy programs in over 80 communities. Government invested \$2.4 million in 2019.	Ongoing
Proposed Tripartite Indigenous Skills Training and Employment Committee	In 2019 there were exploratory discussions on the creation of a tripartite Indigenous skills training and employment committee with the Province, First Nations Leadership Council and the federal government to better coordinate programming and funding, support Indigenous capacity and self-government, and address the needs of Indigenous people related to skills training and employment.	Started in 2019
Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships (ABCTP) Program	ACBTP provides funding for post-secondary education and training for Indigenous participants in community and creates a pathway for participants to ladder into further post-secondary education or skills training and employment. In 2019/20, there were 34 ACBTP projects serving 341 Indigenous people and 81 First Nations communities. Government invested \$2 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing
Indigenous Skills Training Development Fund (ISTDF)	ISTDF provides funding to Indigenous communities to increase access to skills training and education for Indigenous learners in community, and acquire the skills needed to respond to emerging labour market opportunities. In 2019/20, the ISTDF supported more than 63 Indigenous communities through 32 agreements. Government invested \$10 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

University of Victoria Indigenous Law Program	Government provided funding to the University of Victoria to support the first four-year, dual degree program in Canadian Common Law and Indigenous Legal Orders. Each year 25 students will be enrolled. Government invested \$900,000 in 2019, with continual funding of \$1.8 million starting in 2021/22.	Ongoing
Indigenous-Focused Teacher Education	Government is supporting Indigenous-focused teacher education to better prepare students to meet the needs of Indigenous learners in K-12, and to help non-Indigenous learners in K-12 have a better understanding of Indigenous Peoples and the impacts of colonial histories. Government invested \$2.7 million in 2019.	Ongoing
Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund	Government provides Emergency Assistance Funding to more than 3,700 Indigenous students annually to assist with unforeseen financial needs, such as medical expenses or family emergencies that require travel home. Government invested \$604,900 in 2019.	Ongoing
Aboriginal Service Plans	Government provides funding to support Aboriginal Service Plans at public post-secondary institutions which foster partnerships between institutions and local Indigenous communities. Government invested \$4.4 million in 2019.	Ongoing
Supports to Institutions without Aboriginal Service Plans	Government supported 14 post-secondary institutions to implement new programs, activities and services for Indigenous learners. Government invested \$1.75 million in 2019.	Started in 2019
Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English Learning Language (ELL) Programs	These programs are designed to improve learners' skills in order to bridge into post-secondary education and/or find new or better employment. In 2018/19, as many as 20,000 students benefitted from the Government's investment to support greater access to ABE and ELL. Government invested \$18.5 million in 2018/19 and \$24 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing
BladeRunners Program	Targets at-risk youth aged 15-30 and provides life-skills and job readiness training, job placement, and monitoring to help at-risk youth obtain and sustain full-time employment in a range of industries. In 2019/20, the BladeRunners program will serve approximately 1,018 participants in all B.C. regions. Government invested \$4.3 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Removing Interest on Student Loans	<p>In 2019, government invested \$318 million over four years to remove interest on the B.C. portion of all new and existing student loans. This means an average graduate in 2019 would save \$2,300 in interest over a 10-year repayment period. In 2019 there were approximately 200,000 B.C. student loans outstanding. Borrowers collectively saved about \$22 million in interest payments on these loans in 2019-20.</p> <p>In 2018-19, B.C. students accessed approximately \$734 million in federal and provincial funding. This includes more than \$196 million in provincial loans and \$54 million in non-repayable grants.</p>	Completed in 2019
Industry Training Authority (ITA)	In 2019, government funded over 27,000 apprenticeship and foundation training seats at public and private institutions through the Industry Training Authority. Budget 2019 included an increase of \$3.5 million over three years for the ITA to support trades training.	Ongoing
Co-op and work-integrated learning programs	In June 2019, the province invested \$9 million to expand and support co-op and work-integrated learning programs at post-secondary institutions throughout B.C.	Ongoing
Training for women and other under-represented groups	In 2019, government announced \$12.4 million to support seven new programs to help 2,036 women and other under-represented groups access opportunities for pre-apprenticeship training, apprenticeship services and employment.	Ongoing
Skills training for survivors of violence and abuse	Government announced new funding to expand programming for survivors of violence and abuse. Programs will include skills training, counselling and other supports to help participants break the cycle of abuse and overcome obstacles to employment. Programs and supports will include individual and group counselling and coaching, child care, and developing short-term and long-term goals for personal and economic success.	Ongoing
Older Workers 55+ program	Older workers can face barriers to employment, including a lack of technical skills and training opportunities, and an unfamiliarity with current hiring practices. In 2019, government provided new funding to support British Columbians who need support to build a new skill set to re-enter the workforce or transition careers.	Ongoing
Open Education Resources (OER)	In April 2019, government announced its single biggest investment ever in open education resources committing \$3 million to develop OER and OER-related support services, online infrastructure, and research that impact a broad range of educational programs. Approximately 130,000 students in B.C. have saved over \$13 million since the open textbook project was launched in 2012.	Ongoing

Ministry of Agriculture		
B.C. Land Matching Program (BCLMP)	BCLMP provides land matching and business support services for new and established farmers. Since the pilot launch in 2016, the B.C. Land Matching Program has helped 47 farmers for a total of 55 matches. Government invested \$370,000 in 2019.	Ongoing
B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program	Agri-Business Planning provides specialized business planning services for food producers and processors. Since 2018, the B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program has supported 93 B.C. food producers and processors receive business planning services. Government invested \$255,000 (from AGRI) in 2019.	Ongoing
B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program (IADP)	Provides agriculture opportunities assessments and specialized financial and business planning services for the food and agriculture industry. Government invested \$94,763 (from AGRI) in 2019.	Ongoing
Community Greenhouse Toolkit	Government developed a toolkit consisting of a checklist and a one-to two-day workshop to support Indigenous communities make informed decisions about community greenhouse investments.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Attorney General		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
BC Family Maintenance Agency (BCFMA)	In November 2019, the BCFMA, a new crown corporation, successfully took over operations of the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP). The FMEP program enables over \$200 million in collection and disbursement to about 37,000 families on an annual basis, with more than 53,000 children entitled to child support through the program.	Completed in 2019
Justice Access Centres (JACs)	JACs help people find early and affordable solutions by providing self-help and information services; dispute resolution and mediation options; limited legal advice; access to community resources and agencies; and courses, presentations and publications. In 2018/19, JAC Self-Help Resource Rooms provided over 10,000 services. JAC clients were assisted with nearly 2,200 civil issues.	Ongoing
ICBC's Rate Affordability Action Plan	ICBC's Rate Affordability Action Plan (RAAP) is focused on providing fair, affordable rates for British Columbians. In April 2019, major improvements in accident benefits increased the care available for anyone injured in a crash. Without RAAP, one-time vehicle insurance rate increases of up to 40% would have been required.	Completed in 2019
Indigenous Communities Driver Training	ICBC was approached by the Haisla Nation to help facilitate Haisla community members obtain their driver's licences. ICBC worked with All Nations Driving School and the Haisla Nation to remove key barriers for driving students in remote communities. Since 2018, the joint ICBC/Haisla Nation driver training initiative has enabled 203 Indigenous individuals from remote communities to secure driver's licences or has put them in the process of doing so.	Ongoing
New Funding for Legal Clinics	In November 2019, the Province announced new funding to hire lawyers and legal assistants at several newly established legal clinics around BC that will be able to offer no cost legal advice on issues including poverty, housing, immigration and disability and secure counsel in certain related legal proceedings they may be involved in.	Announced in 2019
Parents Legal Centres (PLCs)	PLCs provide early and collaborative services to parents when a child is at risk of removal or has already been removed. The PLC model, piloted in Vancouver in 2015, has expanded to 10 locations. The pilot site has had success in assisting families with child protections issues, with almost half of the families assisted being Indigenous.	Ongoing

Ministry of Attorney General		
Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT)	The Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) is an administrative tribunal and is part of the public justice system. There is a fee waiver application available for the dispute resolution process for those who cannot afford the nominal filing fee.	Ongoing
Re-establishing the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (OHRC)	The first independent Human Rights Commissioner was unanimously appointed by a special committee of the legislative assembly for a five-year term starting September 3, 2019, and the OHRC became operational.	Completed in 2019
Responsible and Problem Gambling Program – Narrative Approaches Training Initiative (RPGP)	In the 2019/20 fiscal year, the RPGP delivered 14 specialized narrative training sessions to 202 helping professionals in both urban and rural communities. The Narrative Approaches Initiative is a community-based “train the trainer” program specifically designed for Indigenous communities and service providers working in those communities. It is intended to enhance the existing skills and knowledge of Indigenous participants in the helping field.	Ongoing
Amendments to the Gaming Control Act	On October 31, 2019 amendments to the Gaming Control Act came into effect to ensure 7% of the BC Lottery Corporation’s net income is shared with First Nations in BC for 25 years.	Completed in 2019
Development of a First Nations Justice Strategy and a Métis Justice Strategy for British Columbia	In 2017, government and the BC Aboriginal Justice Council (now the BC First Nations Justice Council – BCFNJC) signed an agreement to jointly develop a provincial Indigenous Justice Strategy. The First Nations Justice Strategy outlines how to improve the experience of First Nations people involved in the criminal justice system, reduce incarceration rates, and rebuild traditional First Nations justice system and institutions. The draft Justice Strategy was presented to the province on October 29, 2019, which initiated extensive consultation between the BCFNJC and the province. The Province made a similar commitment to work in partnership with the Métis Nation BC to develop a Métis Justice Strategy, recognizing that First Nations and Métis people have different cultures, priorities and histories with the Province.	Ongoing
Indigenous Justice Centres (IJC)	The BC First Nations Justice Council has identified an urgent need to develop Indigenous Justice Centres across BC as a key part of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy. The IJCs will provide important legal services for all Indigenous people. Three communities have been selected for the first IJCs to be implemented, and work began in 2019 to get all three centres operational by Spring 2020.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Children and Family Development		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Safe & Affordable Child Care through Childcare BC	In February 2019, the BC Government expanded its three-year investment through the Childcare BC plan to \$1.3 billion as part of the most significant child care investment in B.C. history.	Ongoing
Federal-Provincial Early Learning and Child Care Agreement	Starting in 2017/18, the three-year \$153 million Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement provided an enhancement of \$10 million annually for three years to Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs. An average of 366 more children are being served each month, enabling access to inclusive child care.	Ongoing
Affordable Child Care Benefit (Childcare BC Initiative)	This initiative supports families and works in tandem with the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative to reduce the costs for licensed child care. In 2019, between the Affordable Child Care Benefit, Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative, and Prototypes Sites, more than 27,700 children received child care for \$10/day or less for at least one month of 2019.	Ongoing
New Spaces Fund and the Start-up Grant program (Childcare BC Initiative)	This initiative supports the development of licensed child care spaces. Since 2018, the combination of Childcare BC New Spaces Fund, Neighbourhood Learning Centres, and the Start-Up Grants program funded the creation of over 16,800 spaces with over 12,000 of those approved in fiscal 2019/20 (approximately 2,800 were already in operation). In 2019, the maximum funding amount available to non-profit and public sector organizations through the program increased from \$1.5 million to \$3 million, resulting in a marked increase in the volume of applicants.	Ongoing
Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (Childcare BC Initiative)	The Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Wage Enhancement provides supports to early care and learning professionals. In 2019 more than 4,400 bursaries were awarded to students beginning or upgrading their post-secondary education to become an ECE and a \$1 per hour wage enhancement was introduced for eligible Early Childhood Educators in April 2019.	Ongoing

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (Childcare BC Initiative)	These programs offer a range of consulting and support services to children, families and child care centres. In 2018, \$30 million was invested over three years to expand Aboriginal Head Start programs. Through this investment, an additional 643 Aboriginal Head Start spaces were created, with 181 operational by March 31, 2019.	Ongoing
Increased monthly maintenance rates for caregivers	In 2019, for the first time in a decade, the monthly maintenance rates for all caregivers was increased. Budget 2019 included \$20.9 million in new funding to increase caregiver rates and harmonize the rates for foster and extended family care. The Province also flowed a federal government increase of 2.2% to the Child Canada Benefit to caregivers on July 1, 2019 by increasing the maintenance rate.	Started in 2019
Anxiety Program for Children	In partnership with Anxiety Canada, the ministry developed the Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) program for grades K-7.	Started in 2019
Respite funding for children/youth with special needs	In 2019, children and youth with special needs respite funding was increased by \$6.3 million – \$5 million for families on the waitlist, and \$1.3 million to increase the base annual funding amount. This was the first increase in base respite funding since 1989.	Ongoing
Youth Mental Health	To support children and youth mental health, the MCFD Child and Youth Mental Health program continues to provide screening, assessment and treatment for children 19 and under, including specialized services for trauma, acute psychiatric diagnosis and youth who need intensive residential treatment.	Ongoing
Meeting Digital Needs of Former Youth in Care	Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) help youth transitioning out of government care to cover the cost of basic needs like housing, child care, tuition and health care while they go back to school, or attend a rehabilitation, vocational or approved life skills program. In 2019, government collaborated with TELUS and the Children's Aid Foundation to re-launch the Mobility for Good Program, giving more young adults from care access to cell phones and low-cost or free phone plans to stay connected with their communities and support networks.	Ongoing

Ministry of Children and Family Development		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
WorkBC	In 2019, the Ministry of Children and Family Development collaborated with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to promote the newly expanded WorkBC program that provides youth in and from care, between the ages 16 to 30, support to overcome barriers to employment and acquire the skills they need to succeed.	Started in 2019
Youth Criminal Justice Act	In 2019, the Youth Criminal Justice Act was amended to enhance supports for youth at risk or involved in the justice system within the community by providing earlier off ramps and access to social services. Staff received relevant training to support the amendments.	Completed in 2019
Transition from Care to Adulthood	In 2019, pilot projects in partnership with IBM Canada, ICBC and the Federation of BC Youth in Care Network provided young adults free laptops and driver training to support their transition from care to adulthood. The 2018/19 re-launch of the Take the Wheel program provided 88 bursaries to young people in every region of the province. Laptops for Learning provided a total of 369 laptops to young adults transitioning to adulthood, 182 of which were distributed through Delegated Aboriginal Agencies.	Ongoing
Reconciliation	The ministry continues to work together with communities, nations and organizations to further their shared interest in assuming increased levels of authority and jurisdiction over child and family services, including the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Secwepemc Nation, Cowichan Tribes, Lake Babine Nation, NStQ, Huu-ay-aht First Nations, and the Métis.	Ongoing
An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families	In 2019, MCFD began to implement An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families – federal legislation that affirms Indigenous Peoples' inherent right to jurisdiction in relation to child and family services and establishes a process for them to exercise their legislative authority.	Started in 2019
Birth Alerts	In 2019, MCFD ended the practice of issuing birth alerts, shifting to focus more on supporting high-risk expectant parents while keeping newborns safe, and families together, through a collaborative, rather than involuntary, model.	Completed in 2019

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Amendments to the Child, Family and Community Service Act	Amendments to the Child, Family and Community Service Act came into force on April 1, 2019 to honour Indigenous families' and communities' shared rights and responsibilities for their children and to enable better information sharing and improved collaboration with Indigenous communities.	Completed in 2019
Services for Indigenous Communities	In 2019, for the second year in a row, MCFD offered \$30,000 to each of the 202 First Nations and seven Métis organizations in B.C. for the delivery of community-based, family support and prevention services in community.	Ongoing

Ministry of Citizens' Services		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
BC Procurement Strategy and the Indigenous Procurement Initiative	In 2018, government launched the BC Procurement Strategy which modernized government procurement. Government is also leading the Indigenous Procurement Initiative. In 2019 government conducted extensive internal and external engagement, including meeting with more than 300 Indigenous partners and business owners across the province.	Ongoing
Child and Youth Mental Health Project	The Child and Youth Mental Health Project integrates data from multiple ministries to better understand how children and youth access mental-health services, and how those services impact them into adulthood.	Ongoing
Connecting British Columbia Program	The program, funded by the Province and administered by the Northern Development Initiative Trust, expands access to high-speed internet in rural communities. Since July 2017, 479 communities – including 83 Indigenous communities – are benefitting from the program. Government invested \$50 million in 2019.	Ongoing
Customer Service in Many Languages	A toll-free multilingual phone service through Service BC is improving accessibility for citizens. For speakers of Hausa, Cebuano or one of 140 other languages, real-time access to information in their mother tongue is now just a phone call away.	Ongoing
Service BC Channel Expansion	In January 2018, Service BC began to modernize its Provincial Contact Centre, which now allows citizens to communicate through their channel of choice.	Ongoing
Service BC Centres	Over the past five years, Service BC and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction have implemented an integrated service model in 45 different communities around the province, helping to break down the welfare stigma and provide a best-in-class customer service experience to vulnerable citizens.	Ongoing

Ministry of Education		
Framework for Enhanced Student Learning	During the 2019/20 school year, government piloted the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) in nine school districts. FESL provides a set of guiding principles for a system-wide commitment to improve student success and equity of outcomes for Indigenous students, children and youth in-care, and students with disabilities and diverse abilities.	Started in 2019
The BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)	Promotes systemic shifts and collective efforts that will support improved educational outcomes of all First Nation students in BC, regardless of where they live or are enrolled in school. In 2019/20, 6,796 Indigenous learners living on-Nation were supported by \$5.2 million in transportation funding through BCTEA to access BC public schools. Government invested \$100 million over 5 years (2018 – 2023).	Ongoing
Equity in Action Project	Provides equitable opportunities for Indigenous students to attend safe learning environments free from discrimination and racism. Ten school districts joined the project in 2019 for a total of 31 school districts in total participating, representing 67 per cent of the Indigenous students in the province.	Ongoing
Improving Educational Outcomes for Children and Youth in Care	In 2019, government released its first annual report on education outcomes of children and youth in care. Ministries signed a Partnership Agreement that outlines how they will work together to support children and youth in care, with a focus on improving educational outcomes.	Completed in 2019
CommunityLINK	Provides funding to school districts for programs and services focused on vulnerable students. Annually, about 25 per cent of CommunityLINK funding is spent on food programs. The total number of students receiving CommunityLINK supports in the 2018/19 school year was 86,916 students. Government invested \$52.8 million in the 2018/19 school year.	Ongoing
Ready, Set, Learn	Ready, Set, Learn (RSL) supports free school-orientation events hosted at schools or in local communities for families and their 3-5-year-old children. In the 2018/19 school year, about 1,160 schools participated in RSL by providing approximately 24,000 parents/caregivers and 26,000 children with school and/or community-based supports each year.	Ongoing

Ministry of Education		
StrongStart BC	StrongStart BC (SSBC) centres and outreach programs reduce young children's vulnerability and increase success in school throughout the early years as well as later in life. In 2019, there were a total of 330 SSBC programs, serving approximately 33,500 children in all 60 school districts. Government invested over \$10 million in 2019.	Ongoing
Trauma-Informed Practice Training Resources (Compassionate Learning Framework)	In 2019, online training resources were developed for school district staff to increase awareness of the impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma on learning. The Compassionate Learning framework included in these resources identifies and acknowledges the ongoing impact of colonization and historical residential school trauma.	Completed in 2019
Provision of Menstrual Products in Schools	On April 3, 2019, government issued an order that all B.C. public schools are required to provide free menstrual products to all students in school washrooms. This order normalizes and equalizes access to menstrual products in schools.	Completed in 2019

Emergency Management British Columbia		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status
Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF)	Persons living in poverty are often more vulnerable and susceptible to the negative consequences of emergency events. First Nations communities are particularly exposed to the impacts of natural disasters in many parts of our province. CEPF funded 182 projects in 2019, with an investment of \$69.5 million over four years.	Ongoing
Supporting Vulnerable Populations Displaced by Disasters	In 2019/20, government provided supports to vulnerable populations as a result of being displaced by large apartment fires well beyond the normal 72 hours of Emergency Support Services. Government continues to support populations displaced by disasters.	Ongoing
Household Emergency Assistance Program	In 2019, government piloted the Household Emergency Assistance Program to provide support to residents impacted by the spring flooding in Grand Forks and within the Kootenay Boundary Regional District.	Completed in 2019
Modernizing B.C.'s Emergency Management Legislation	In 2019, government engaged with stakeholders to help modernize B.C.'s emergency management legislation. The new legislation will reflect the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, a United Nations initiative that pays special attention to factors such as inequality and poverty.	Ongoing

Emergency Management British Columbia		
Online Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability Assessment	In Fall 2019, government released an online Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability Assessment tool that helps local authority and First Nation communities identify hazards or sources of harm, the community's resilience to those hazards, and what the consequences could be to community health, property, environment, and other values.	Completed in 2019
Provincial Disaster Recovery Framework	In Spring 2019, EMBC released the Provincial Disaster Recovery Framework as the central coordination, accountability, and oversight mechanism for integrated disaster recovery and coordinating platforms that align key roles and responsibilities.	Completed in 2019
Central Coast Regional Emergency Management Partnership	The Central Coast Regional District, Nuxalk Nation and the Province signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in December 2018 to strengthen coordination efforts in all phases of emergency management for emergencies in the Bella Coola Valley. Each partner is providing \$99,000 annually for three years. This Partnership is the new model for government to further establish future regional emergency management partnerships.	Ongoing
Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding with First Nations Leadership Council	In 2019, the Province and the federal government entered a Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the First Nations Leadership Council. The MOU commits all parties to develop a formal relationship to foster dialogue on emergency management issues.	Completed in 2019
A Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility in Emergency Management Services for First Nations People	In 2019, government and the First Nations Health Authority signed A Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility in Emergency Management Services for First Nations People. The Declaration outlines a plan to embed cultural safety and humility in the policies and practices of Emergency Management BC.	Completed in 2019
Bilateral Agreement between Indigenous Services Canada and Emergency Management BC	In 2017, the Province and federal government signed a bi-lateral service agreement that ensures all First Nations on-reserve in B.C. receive emergency management services and supports comparable to those accessed by local authorities. In 2019, the Province continued to support Partnership Tables, the delivery of First Nations emergency management training and education tools, and response and recovery initiatives at the community level.	Ongoing

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Action Plan to increase female recruitment and retention in the mining sector	There was a Mining Jobs Task Force (MJTF) Recommendation to develop an Action Plan to increase female recruitment and retention in the mining sector. A report was initiated in 2019 and completed in March 2020 with recommendations that will inform an Action Plan and will likely inform future training initiatives.	Started in 2019
BC Mining Innovation Roadmap	There was a Mining Jobs Task Force Recommendation to develop a BC Mining Innovation Roadmap. A report was initiated in 2019. Anticipated recommendations include avenues for increasing local hiring in rural and remote towns with mining operations and ways to further work cooperatively with both industry and Indigenous communities.	Started in 2019
Studying past and present Indigenous Mine Training Programs	There was a Mining Jobs Task Force Recommendation to introduce an Integrated Indigenous Mine Training Program. A report was initiated in 2019 and completed in February 2020. The recommendations from the report outlined a framework on how to develop a flexible service delivery model in the area of Indigenous mine training.	Started in 2019
Economic and Community Development Agreements	Government engaged with First Nations throughout B.C. on agreements in the sharing of direct mineral tax revenues on new mines and major mine expansions. These agreements are known as Economic and Community Development Agreements (ECDAs). There are 48 signed ECDAs with 48 First Nations for 24 mines.	Ongoing
CleanBC Better Homes program	Offers rebates for high-efficiency natural gas furnaces and water heaters for low-income families. Up to 1,660 households will receive incentives for using high-efficiency heating equipment through 2020. Government invested \$1.3 million from 2019 to 2020.	Started in 2019
CleanBC Social Housing Incentives Program	Offers energy study funding, project implementation support, and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction incentives. Up to 11 housing providers will receive incentive support for high-efficiency heating equipment through 2020, which will reduce energy costs for tenants. Government invested \$1.8 million from 2018 to 2020.	Ongoing
Comprehensive Review of BC Hydro	Government is conducting a comprehensive review of BC Hydro. Phase 1, completed in February 2019, resulted in a forecast of cumulative rate increases that is approximately 55 per cent lower than the cumulative increase under the previous government. Phase 2 is examining new partnerships and economic development opportunities for Indigenous Peoples in the energy sector.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

Public Housing	Government is working to improve the comfort and efficiency of public housing through energy efficient retrofits. \$400 million of the 10-year Capital Renewal Fund, which supports the improvement and preservation of public housing stock in B.C., is targeted to energy performance improvements. This will help reduce energy costs and offer increased health benefits to those living in public housing.	Ongoing
Public Transit	In partnership with the federal government, the Province is working to expand and improve public transit in B.C. In the next 10 years, B.C., the federal government and local governments will invest in the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund and the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program to expand and improve public transit in B.C. with new rapid transit lines, new SkyTrain cars in Metro Vancouver, and new buses across the rest of the province.	Ongoing
Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy	CleanBC, government's climate plan, is working to address the impact climate change has on poverty through the development of the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy. The development of this strategy will include a poverty reduction lens as well as GBA+ analysis.	Ongoing
Affordable Student Housing	As one of the winners of the Province's CleanBC Net-Zero Energy-Ready Challenge, University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus is using passive house concepts to build 220 units of affordable student housing. Government invested \$18.7 million in 2019.	Completed in 2019
Deposit/Refund Program	Government's deposit/refund system for beverage containers has been supporting low income and vulnerable populations for many years. These populations often gain a significant source of income from the collection and return of beverage containers to depots or retailers.	Ongoing
Affordable and Accessible Park User Fees	BC Parks offers a variety of reduced park user fees and opportunities for low-income earners and persons with disabilities.	Ongoing

Ministry of Finance		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Climate Action Tax Credit Enhancement	This tax credit was enhanced on July 1, 2019 to help offset the impact of carbon taxes paid by low- and moderate-income individuals or families. The enhancement provided an increase of up to \$19.50 per year for an adult and \$5.50 per year for a child. Approximately 1.3 million individuals or households receive the benefit. The total estimated investment in 2019/20 is \$255 million.	Ongoing
B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit	The B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit was announced and enacted in Budget 2019. The program will launch in October 2020 and is expected to support 290,000 families with children under the age of 19. The total estimated investment is \$380 million once the benefit is fully implemented.	Announced in 2019
Fully eliminated Medical Services Plan (MSP) premiums	MSP premiums were cut in half in January 2019, removing a monthly financial burden for people in low-paying jobs who were not supported by premium assistance. MSP premiums were fully eliminated on Jan. 1, 2020. Eliminating MSP premiums will save individuals up to \$900 a year and families as much as \$1,800 a year.	Started in 2019
Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Enhancement	A phased-in enhancement of the CPP will improve the savings of Canadians during their working years. The policy initiative aimed to reduce the proportion of Canadians approaching retirement who may not be saving enough to replace at least 60 per cent of their pre-retirement earnings. The changes were applied on January 1, 2019.	Started in 2019
Canada Workers Benefit (CWB)	Starting in 2019, the Government of Canada implemented the CWB, to help low-income workers take home more money while they work and encourage more people to join and stay in the workforce. The CWB replaces the old WITB system and will help lift an additional 74,000 Canadians out of poverty.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Community Support Grant (CSG)	This program is part of Government's three-year Forest Worker Supports Programs (FWSP). It provides short-term funding to support Interior B.C. communities that have been impacted by closures and curtailments in the forest sector. In 2019, seven communities were funded through the CSG program supporting approximately 1,405 workers and totaling \$600,000. Each impacted community received between \$75,000 and \$100,000.	Started in 2019
The Forest Employment Program (FEP)	This program is another component of the FWSP. It aims to create short-term employment opportunities for contractors and workers in the Interior that have been affected by indefinite and permanent mill closures in the forest sector. In 2019, 25 projects were supported through the program totalling \$3 million.	Started in 2019
Community Transition Teams	These cross-government teams are formed to assist rural communities and workers undergoing significant economic dislocation, such as the loss of a major employer. In 2019, eight Community Transition Teams were established.	Ongoing
The Indigenous Forestry Training Program (IFTP)	The program provides funding for Indigenous students to complete an accredited forestry technician or degree program, as well as mentorship and work experience during the summer months. Funding increased from \$125,000 to \$375,000 in the 2019/20, and 22 Indigenous youth participated in 2019.	Ongoing

Ministry of Health		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program	This is a healthy eating initiative that supports farmers' markets and strengthens food security across British Columbia. Program participants receive coupons to use at local farmers' markets in the summer months. In 2019 there were 5,404 households registered representing 15,862 individuals. Since the program launched in 2012, the Province has invested \$8.5 million. In 2019/20, annual funding was increased by \$121,000 to increase the number of households participating by 250.	Ongoing
Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Partners Council (ISPARC)	ISPARC develops sustainable programs that use sport and recreation to help build healthy, active, vibrant communities. The Ministry of Health partnered with this organization on a cost-share agreement that provides \$820,000 in annual funding between August 1, 2018 and July 31, 2020 for healthy living activities. Between August 1, 2018, to July 31, 2019, approximately 9,000 Indigenous community members participated in free programs, 351 Indigenous leaders were trained, 255 separate healthy living programs were delivered, and 115 communities were reached across the province.	Ongoing
All Youth Matter	The initiative offers training to physical activity and sport leaders on how to foster inclusive environments for youth from underserved or marginalized populations. Funding was provided between October 2016 and July 2020 totaling \$325,000. Approximately 40 learning facilitators and 1,000 leaders trained across the province.	Ongoing
Active Aging BC Initiatives	This initiative includes the Choose to Move and Active Aging Grants programs, which seek to increase opportunities for older adults to move more and to create lasting social connections. Choose to Move reached 2413 older adults from January – December 2019. Active Aging Grants supported 5900 older adults from January – December 2019.	Ongoing
Doulas for Aboriginal Families Grant Program (DAFGP)	In 2019/20 the Ministry of Health provided \$264,000 to expand the program. DAFGP provides financial support for Indigenous women and families in B.C. to access services and support from practising doulas during pregnancy, labour, and after birth. Between April 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, 224 DAFGP grants were approved. The program has 181 doulas registered, with 26 self-identifying as Indigenous.	Ongoing

Ministry of Health		
Provincial Perinatal Substance Use Project (PPSUP)	<p>The program advances provincial capacity and services to improve health outcomes for pregnant and early parenting women who use substances and their infants. It aims to initiate and expand evidence-informed services in community and acute care across B.C. Between April 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, the project served an additional 384 mother-baby pairs throughout the province, exceeding its annual target of 222.</p> <p>The PPSUP is a three-year project (2019-2021) federally funded through the Canada-British Columbia Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addictions Services Funding Agreement, and provincially administered through BC Women's Hospital and the Provincial Health Services Authority. In fiscal year 2019/20, \$4.8 million was allocated to the program.</p>	Started in 2019
Foundry	<p>Foundry centres bring existing core health and social services together in a single location where young people ages 12 to 24 can access the care they need, both in the community and online. Supports at each centre include: primary health care, mental health and substance use services, social services (e.g. employment, educational, financial services) and youth and family peer supports. From January 2, 2019, to December 31, 2019 there were 35,651 recorded visits to Foundry by 9,770 unique youth. Budget 2019 provided \$74 million over three years (2019/20 to 2021/22).</p>	Ongoing
Peers / People with Lived and Living Experience of Substance Use	<p>The Ministry of Health is supporting the development of a provincial peer training curriculum for people with lived and living experience with substance use. The ministry has also supported the uptake and implementation of the BCCDC developed Peer Payment Standards for Short Term Engagement.</p>	Ongoing
Standard development for supportive recovery homes	<p>The ministry is developing standards that will provide improved care and service linkages to thousands of British Columbians each year as they access supportive recovery services.</p>	Started in 2019
Increasing rates for residential mental health and substance use facilities	<p>Worked with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) to increase per diem rates for residential mental health and substance use facilities to improve services for low income people. Increased rates will facilitate the provision of improved care for all clients eligible for SDPR benefits in a qualifying facility.</p>	Completed in 2019
Increasing access to pharmaceutical alternatives	<p>Pharmaceutical alternatives such as injectable agonist treatment (iOAT) and other alternative dispensing models help connect clients with social support services. Access to safer opioid supply enables improvements in other social and structural factors such as accessing housing, saving money, and affording food.</p>	Ongoing

Ministry of Health		
Waiving ambulance fees	Ground transport by BC Emergency Health Services charges a fee of \$80. Individuals who qualify for MSP Supplementary Benefits based on adjusted net income of less than \$45,000 per year, as well as residency requirements, have their ambulance fees waived.	Ongoing
Covering the cost of hair removal for lower gender affirming surgery	Hair removal is a prerequisite for lower gender affirming surgery in B.C. This was previously a potential barrier to surgery for those who cannot afford the out-of-pocket expense. The Province is supporting these costs. Trans Care BC estimates surgical prerequisite hair removal demand at 112 cases annually by 2022/23 at cost of approximately \$430,000.	Started in 2019
Fair PharmaCare	Changes made to Fair PharmaCare mean that households earning up to \$30,000 in net income annually no longer pay deductibles, and the provincial government pays 70 per cent of their eligible prescription drug costs right away. This improves access to prescription medication for approximately 240,000 lower income families. In Budget 2019, \$105 million was allocated to the initiative over three years.	Started in 2019
Secondary ID Attestation	Enhancements to the Secondary ID Attestation process were introduced to improve access to photo identification in collaboration with the Ministries of Attorney General (ICBC), Citizens' Services, and Social Development and Poverty Reduction.	Completed in 2019
Partnership with First Nations Health Authority	The Joint Project Board (JPB) is a partnership between the First Nations Health Authority and the Ministry of Health. Through this partnership, annual funding of up to \$15.33 million supported 27 primary care projects in First Nations across the province. This investment enhanced service delivery and access to mental health and substance use supports, primary care, maternal and child health and oral health.	Ongoing
Partnership with Métis Nation BC	Since 2016/17, the Ministry of Health has provided \$200,000 in annual funding to Métis Nation BC to support the improved health and wellness of all Métis people in B.C.	Ongoing
Partnership with BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres	Since 2016/17, the Ministry of Health has provided the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres \$200,000 in annual funding to support Indigenous people living in urban settings	Ongoing

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation		
Imagination Library	The program supports literacy and education in remote and rural Indigenous communities where there are no libraries or book stores. Approximately 4,429 books were sent to participating children in 2019. The total cost of the program in calendar year 2019 was \$17,995.08 which was cost-shared between MIRR and the Ministry of Education. Funding is renewed on a yearly basis.	Ongoing
First Peoples' Cultural Council	The First Peoples' Cultural Council is a crown agency with the mandate to revitalize Indigenous languages, cultures, heritage and arts. Funding and training from FPCC's programs and grants provide employment and economic opportunity for people in Indigenous communities. Approximately \$1.051 million is provided in annual funding.	Ongoing
Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Women (MACIW)	MACIW's mission is to improve the quality of life for Indigenous women including addressing approaches to advance poverty reduction. MACIW is comprised of up to 10 members and provides advice to government on how to improve the quality of life for Indigenous women.	Ongoing
MACIW Giving Voice Program	MACIW administers the Giving Voice program which funds community-led projects that provide space for Indigenous women, men, youth and Elders to give voice to issues of violence within their lives, families and communities. The annual budget for MACIW's Giving Voice program is \$200,000. Additional funding for MACIW's Giving Voice program was provided by MIRR, PSSG and FLNRO in 2018/19 and 2019/20 for a total of 54 projects worth \$546,000.	Ongoing
Tsimshian Unified Employment, Training and Education Plan (ETE Plan)	The ETE Plan provides increased community-led and community-driven opportunities for training, work experience, apprenticeships and education to Tsimshian community members. Approximately \$9 million was provided to support the ETE Plan between 2016/17 – 2018/19.	Completed in 2019
Indigenous Business Loan Program	In 2019, the Province provided approximately \$952,000 to support the Indigenous Business Loan Program administered through the All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO). The program supports Indigenous economic development in British Columbia, and over 75 loan applications were received from Indigenous owned businesses in 2019.	Ongoing

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Indigenous Business Advisory Centres	\$252,000 (\$84,000 per centre) was provided to three Indigenous Business Advisory Centres in Fort St. John, Prince George and Cranbrook. This program provides business development services to Indigenous entrepreneurs and small business owners, supporting business expansion and job creation.	Ongoing
BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) Economic Development Strategy	The province provided \$2.5 million over three years (2016/17 – 2018/19) to support this initiative, and in 2019 an additional \$2.24 million over two years (2019/20-2020/21) was provided. Moving forward, the initiative will include economic reconciliation and governance efforts that will support economic development among First Nations.	Ongoing
Investing in BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC)	In 2019, government provided \$2.15 million to the BCAAFC to ensure reliable funding to B.C.'s Friendship Centres. This was the second year of a \$6.45 million three-year commitment and was the first time that government dedicated reliable funding to Friendship Centres in B.C. history.	Ongoing

Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness		
BC Settlement and Integration Services	The BC Settlement and Integration Services Program assists vulnerable foreign workers by providing information on workplace rights and offering supports in the event of workplace safety/ employment standards violations. Over 16,000 clients are served per year and \$5.7 million is provided annually.	Ongoing
Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants	The Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants aims to help newcomers obtain employment in their field. The program has served over 3,700 clients since inception. To date, 72 per cent of clients have obtained employment in their field upon program completion. Approximately \$5.8 million in provincial funding is provided annually, supplemented by \$2 million from the federal government.	Ongoing
Modernization Regulations	A selection of regulations under the Employment and Assistance Act, Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act, Metal Dealers and Recyclers Act, Offence Act, and the Police Act were amended to modernize non-inclusive gendered language, supporting the Province's commitment to gender equity and inclusion.	Completed in 2019
Small Business BC (SBBC)	In 2019, SBBC partnered with the Presidents Group and the Neil Squire Society to help businesses hire people with disabilities and become more accommodating in their workplaces. Helping small businesses target employment opportunities to unemployed and underemployed people helps people with disabilities get jobs and work experience.	Ongoing

Ministry of Labour		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Minimum Wage Increase	<p>On June 1, 2019, minimum wage was increased to \$13.85 per hour. A total of 6.8 per cent of (138,600 out of a total of 2,046,500) paid employees (i.e., excluding the self-employed) have benefitted from the increase in the minimum wage.</p> <p>The ministry has also directed the Fair Wages Commission to work with economists, workers, the technology sector, small businesses, youth and others from all regions to make recommendations to address the discrepancy between the minimum wage and living wages in B.C.</p>	Ongoing
Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave	Established a new unpaid job-protected domestic or sexual violence leave of up to 10 days, plus an additional period of up to 15 weeks if a worker, a worker's minor child, or a specified dependent adult in the worker's care is facing domestic or sexual violence.	Completed in 2019
Temporary Foreign Worker Protection Act (TFWPA)	Brought into force the provisions for the TFWPA established in 2018. The legislation contains compliance and enforcement provisions, which will help protect vulnerable temporary foreign workers from exploitation and abuse. The Act creates two new registries, one for foreign worker recruiters and one for employers wishing to recruit foreign nationals.	Completed in 2019
Critical Illness or Injury Leave	Established job protected critical care leave for workers who need to care for a critically ill family member. The leave allows workers to access (i) up to 36 weeks for a family member under 19 years old, and (ii) up to 16 weeks for a family member who is 19 years old or above. This leave aligns with the federal government Employment Insurance (EI) benefits related to critical illness. The leave reduces significant burdens for caring for family members under often very difficult circumstances and ensures that workers in B.C. can take full advantage of federal EI benefits without the risk of job loss.	Completed in 2019
Established a new Family Member Regulation	Expanded the definition of family member to include a broader array of family-type relationships. This recognizes the importance of relationships in the LGBTQ2S community, Indigenous communities, and the strong mutual support networks that develop amongst migrant workers separated from their families.	Completed in 2019

Ministry of Labour		
Improving Access to Employment Standards Branch Services	The Employment Standards Branch in the Ministry of Labour is involved with managing complaints and issues brought forward by workers. A new \$14 million investment over three years will modernize services. Improvements include removing barriers for workers to access their statutory entitlements; streamlining the complaint process; undertaking proactive enforcement activities; improved data collection; and, protecting vulnerable temporary foreign workers working in B.C.	Started in 2019
Job Placement Coordination Offices	Offices were established in five interior communities hardest hit by mill closures: 100 Mile House; Fort St. James; Fort St. John; Mackenzie; and Clearwater. The offices offer individualized assistance to affected workers in accessing government services and programs and to match job opportunities with displaced forestry workers. As of December 31, 2019, the job placement offices received a total of 70 job match applications.	Ongoing
Established a Bridging to Retirement Program	The program offers up to \$75,000 to Interior mill workers facing layoff or significant shift curtailment or older workers not laid-off but voluntarily wishing to retire to make room for younger workers who would otherwise be laid-off. As of December 31, 2019, the program received a total of 635 applications. 12 of the applications were resolved with a total commitment and payout of up to \$611,541.04.	Ongoing
Mental Disorder Presumption Regulation	Expanded the 2018 mental disorder presumption for paramedics, police, fire fighters, sheriffs and correctional officers to include nurses, emergency dispatchers and publicly funded health-care assistants. The presumption gives eligible workers easier access to workers' compensation benefits by presuming that PTSD and other mental disorders are due to traumatic events experienced in their work.	Completed in 2019
WorkSafeBC Coverage	Extended WorkSafeBC coverage under the Workers Compensation Act to individuals participating in the Unpaid Work Experience Program. This means participants in this program are deemed to be workers of the Crown and are eligible for workers' compensation benefits if they are injured over the course of their participation in the program.	Completed in 2019

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Alcohol Guidelines	In partnership with the BC Centre on Substance Use, the ministry released new guidelines that include 13 evidence-based recommendations to health care providers on how to best support people who are experiencing high-risk drinking and Alcohol Use Disorder.	Completed in 2019
Community Harm Reduction	In September 2019, \$945,000 in grant funding was provided to local municipalities to address the overdose crisis. Proposed projects will involve regional health authorities and community partners, improving services and employment opportunities for British Columbians with lived experience of substance use and homelessness. This funding was provided through the Overdose Emergency Response Centre and Community Action Initiative.	Ongoing
Community Counselling Grants	In fall 2019, the Province provided \$10 million over three years to expand access to affordable community counselling through grants to community organizations across the province. Twenty-nine community organizations received funding up to \$120,000 per year, for three years.	Started in 2019
Mental Health and Substance Use Workforce Cross-Sector Analysis	The ministry is developing a workforce analysis to better understand the challenges and opportunities across the Mental Health and Substance Use sector. The investment in 2019 was \$25,000.	Started in 2019
Overdose Emergency Research Agenda	Began consultation to create a mental health and substance use research agenda for B.C. This would include the priority research themes to support evidence-based system improvements for mental health and substance use, particularly for those vulnerable to the social and structural determinants of health such as poverty.	Started in 2019
Peer Support: Provincial Curriculum and Practice Standards	MMHA, BC Campus, and other partners are developing a provincial peer training curriculum as well as standards of practice, educational resources and evaluation tools. Peer support initiatives complement traditional clinical mental health and addictions services. In 2019, \$1 million was provided over three years to support the initiative and BC Campus employed 267 Peer Support Workers.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

Prescriber Enhancements	In 2019, over \$5 million was invested to increase rapid access to addictions medicine by expanding the ability of physicians and nurse practitioners to prescribe medication-assisted treatments. Improving access to medication-assisted treatments will help people stabilize and provide opportunities to access ongoing treatment and recovery support.	Started in 2019
Supportive Recovery Regulation	On December 1, 2019, changes to the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, Assisted Living Regulation came into force. To ensure operators meet the new regulatory requirements, the Province has partnered with the Community Action Initiative to provide one-time training grant funding. Registered supportive recovery operators can apply for funding up to \$8,000 per residence to assist to hold at least 20 hours of training in specific areas. Applications for the grants became available in the Fall of 2019.	Started in 2019
The Tripartite Partnership to Improve Mental Health and Wellness Services and Achieve Progress on the Social Determinants of Health and Wellness	The Tripartite Partnership committed the Province of B.C., Government of Canada, and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) to each invest \$10 million over two years (2018/19 and 2019/20) to support First Nations in the design, planning and delivery of mental health and wellness services. In 2019/20, the Province and the FNHA allocated \$12.6 million in 2019/20 for 29 new mental health and wellness initiatives that includes the participation of 120 First Nation communities across	Ongoing
First Nation Health Authority (FNHA) Treatment Centres	Provided \$20 million to support the FNHA with the renovation, replacement and construction of First Nation-run treatment facilities across B.C.	Completed in 2019
FNHA land-based healing services	Provided \$23.275 million over three years (2019/20 – 2021/22) to FNHA to support First Nations-led land-based healing services.	Started in 2019
Métis-led mental health and wellness planning	Provided Métis Nation BC with \$375,000 for Métis-led mental health and wellness planning, including the development of a cultural safety and wellness curriculum, harm reduction and anti-stigma campaign, mental health promotion materials and capacity building.	Completed in 2019

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Engagement with urban Indigenous people	Provided the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres with \$375,000 for capacity building and to conduct engagement sessions at BC Friendship Centres. These engagement sessions will help inform MMHA of ways to coordinate service delivery for urban Indigenous people in B.C.	Completed in 2019
Establishing Integrated Child and Youth Teams	A focus of investment from Budget 2019 is modelling a new system of integrated care in five of B.C.'s 60 school districts. These Integrated Child and Youth Teams will provide young people and their families with wraparound care that is coordinated across ministry and community service streams and settings and ensures youth are met with the right intensity of services when they need them and in their own community. In 2019, government announced the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows and Comox Valley school districts will be the first to receive the Integrated Child and Youth teams.	Ongoing

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Community Gaming Grants	Community Gaming Grants provide \$140 million in annual funding to not-for-profit organizations throughout B.C. The grants support ongoing program and service delivery that meet the needs of, or provide a direct benefit, to their communities. The Human and Social Services sector of the program provides funding to community organizations to establish and support poverty reduction initiatives that improve community life. In 2019, eligible applicant organizations within the Human and Social Services sector received over \$15 million.	Ongoing
Housing Needs Reports - Requirements and Supports for Local Governments	Legislative requirements took effect requiring local governments to collect data, analyze trends and present reports that describe current and anticipated housing needs in B.C. communities. The housing needs reports are a way for communities to better understand their current and future housing needs and to identify existing and projected gaps. \$5 million will be provided over three years to administer the program through the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM).	Started in 2019

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Restricting Rent Increases	In January 2019, government limited the maximum allowable rent increase to the rate of inflation, which cut rent increases by 2% in 2019. Government's new approach strikes a balance between giving relief to renters while encouraging people to maintain their rental properties. As a result, people living in a \$1,260 per month 1-bedroom apartment (the average rent in B.C. in 2019) saved up to \$288 in 2019.	Started in 2019
Security and Pet Deposits	In response to recommendation 18 of the Rental Housing Task Force report, the Residential Tenancy Branch introduced an expedited process that allows renters to make a direct request to return their pet/security deposits.	Started in 2019
Increased Public Education for Landlords and Tenants	The ministry provided funding to the Tenant Resource Advisory Centre (TRAC) and LandlordBC to offer education workshops on renters' rights. TRAC conducted 15 tenant education workshops in communities across B.C., improved their website features, and partnered with the Justice Education Society to offer free video-based online courses for tenants. LandlordBC has offered an introductory course to educate landlords on their rights and responsibilities. Increased education and outreach allow landlords and tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities, prevents misunderstanding/disputes from arising and facilitates a positive relationship that ensures a more secure rental housing environment.	Started in 2019
Continued work to implement the Rental Housing Task Force recommendations	Government is moving forward with Phase 2 of the action plan to improve security and fairness for renters and rental housing providers. Many of the recommendations are completed or well underway.	Ongoing
Strengthening Enforcement	The ministry continues to strengthen its enforcement role to proactively address issues of potential contraventions of the Residential Tenancy Act.	Ongoing

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Path Forward: Indigenous Women & Girls Safety Community Sessions	In Summer 2019, community-based, Indigenous-led engagement sessions were held across the province to inform provincial priorities in responding to the Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.	Completed in 2019
Greater Protections for Payday Loans and Other High-Cost Credit Products	In Spring 2019, legislative changes were passed to strengthen protections for those who use payday loans, including a prohibition on the sale of insurance on these products. This resulted in a significant drop in insurance policies sold (from 26,592 in 2018 to 2,695 in 2019) and fees associated with those policies (a reduction of over \$636,000 in premiums earned by payday lenders).	Completed in 2019
Limiting Cheque Cashing Fees	As of September 15, 2019, the fee cap for cheque cashing services was extended to include on-demand or “imprest” cheques issued by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The most that can be charged to cash an imprest cheque is either \$2.00 plus 1% of the face value of the cheque, or \$10 – whichever is less.	Completed in 2019
Victim Service and Violence Against Women Programs	Government provided \$5 million in each of 2018/19 and 2019/20 to better meet the ongoing demand for programs and services such as counselling, court support programs, outreach and crisis support for women and children who experience domestic violence, sexual assault and other crimes. In 2019, 48,720 new clients were supported/served by one of the ministry’s police-based or community-based victim services.	Ongoing
Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Remediation Grants	The Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Remediation Grant Program provides one-time grants to organizations in B.C. to prevent and reduce crime. The grants fund programs and projects in the areas of gender-based violence, violence against children and youth, Indigenous healing and rebuilding, and human trafficking, sexual exploitation and vulnerable women in the sex trade.	Ongoing

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach – Situation Tables	The Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach is leading the implementation of Situation Tables across B.C. The Situation Table model brings organizations and agencies together to deliver interventions to acutely elevated risk clients (AER). AER means that clients have multiple risk factors that span the mandates of more than two agencies; that the likelihood of a crisis in their lives is imminent; and that the crisis will be severe. Approximately \$1.2 million will be provided over three years (2017/18 through 2019/20) to support the program.	Ongoing
ShiftBC	ShiftBC is a risk-reduction and individual resiliency program specifically focused on providing support to individuals that are vulnerable to the process of radicalization to violence. \$2 million in federally fenced funding will be provided over 5 years to support the program.	Ongoing
Transitioning Clients from Custody to Community	The Integrated Transitional and Release Planning (ITRP) teams operate out of seven of 10 correctional centres. These teams consist of a probation officer and a correctional supervisor and they provide case management and release planning support to eligible clients. Individuals who participate tend to struggle with homelessness, mental health and or addictions.	Ongoing
Supporting Inmates with Tax Filing	Volunteers participating in the federal Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) have been approved to support inmates in completing their taxes while they are serving their sentence in custody.	Ongoing
Cellphone Billing Transparency and Affordability	In Spring 2019, a public online survey was conducted on cellphone services and related consumer issues, with over 15,000 respondents. The results of the survey were shared with the CRTC in its current review of Canada’s wireless services.	Completed in 2019
Pill Press	The Pill Press and Related Equipment Control Act and associated regulations came into force on January 15, 2019. The Act addresses the public health crisis associated with the high rate of illicit drug (opioid) toxicity deaths in B.C. Establishment of the Pill Press Registry has led to more frequent and valuable contact between PSSG, Canada Border Services Agency, Health Canada, and law enforcement. The furtherance of these relationships is leading to greater knowledge/ expertise with respect to pill presses which, in turn, contributes to addressing the opioid crisis.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
WorkBC Employment Services	WorkBC Employment Services are available to unemployed or precariously employed B.C. residents. In April 2019, the program introduced a range of new streamlined, flexible, and accessible services to help British Columbians get good, lasting jobs. This program supports key priorities of the poverty reduction strategy by helping to break the cycle of poverty. In 2019, services were provided to 74,000 people and 34,000 clients were supported through their first year of employment.	Ongoing
WorkBC Disability Supports	Since April 2019, WorkBC has served 14,455 people with disabilities. 730 clients received assistive technology supports at work through WorkBC Assistive Technology Services contracts in 2019.	Ongoing
WorkBC Services for Indigenous People	The ministry is working with provincial colleagues, the federal government, and Indigenous governments as well as service providers, including WorkBC Centres, to build relationships and enhance services to Indigenous people.	Ongoing
WorkBC Community and Employer Partnerships	Over \$18 million was provided through Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) to support 81 projects to help strengthen labour market opportunities, skills training and job creation in communities, with a focus on reducing poverty.	Ongoing
Community Integration Specialists (CIS)	In 2019, government established CIS teams whose role is to connect B.C.'s most vulnerable citizens with financial assistance and community supports. CIS team members work collaboratively with community partners and agencies, meeting clients "where they are at." By the fall of 2019, 72 CIS staff were up and running, throughout the province. CIS staff provide support and services face to face, working throughout the community and in partner agency locations, as well as providing support and services virtually, particularly in more remote areas. Some of the services CIS staff provide include: expedited income and disability assistance intakes, making connections to shelter and health services, intensive case management, homeless outreach, responding to inquiries from community partners, and the coordination of services.	Started in 2019
Office of Homelessness Coordination	The Office was established in 2019 to move towards a more coordinated, effective approach to addressing homelessness, working across government and with external partners and stakeholders.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

BC Rent Bank	In 2019, government invested \$10 million to establish Rent Bank BC in partnership with Vancity Community Foundation. Rent banks are a homelessness prevention tool that focus on providing housing stability for low- to moderate-income renters. Rent banks provide financial assistance in the form of repayable loans, to households at risk of eviction for reasons such as non-payment of rent or utilities. Between June and November 2019, rent banks in B.C. made over 100 emergency loans, helping 250 people maintain their housing.	Started in 2019
Homelessness Community Action Grants	Over three years, \$6 million will be provided through the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) to assist both locally- and provincially-focused organizations explore ways of better responding to homelessness and fostering more awareness and collaboration. \$2 million was allocated in 2019.	Started in 2019
BC Homelessness Count	Through BC Housing and the Homelessness Services Association of BC, the provincial government is providing \$900,000 to fund homeless counts in 16 communities and the compilation of all local homeless counts into a provincial summary. Data from the counts is used to quantify the extent of homelessness and guide responses from all levels of government. Planning took place in 2019. Completion originally planned in 2020; probable extension to 2021 due to COVID-19 crisis.	Ongoing
Preventing and Reducing Homelessness Integrated Data Project	This project involves integrating key datasets across multiple ministries to better understand, analyze and predict demand on services in order to improve homelessness policy and program decisions.	Started in 2019
Accessibility Legislation Consultations	Government is developing B.C.'s first accessibility and inclusion legislation, which will work to identify, remove and prevent barriers experienced by people with disabilities. Engagement with the disability community and other groups is critical to informing this process and is in line with the principle of "nothing about us without us." A comprehensive province-wide public consultation was held between September and November 2019. It included regional community meetings, online questionnaires, virtual town halls, emails, phone calls, and independent community conversations. Thousands of British Columbians shared their ideas, as well as personal stories of struggles and successes living with disabilities and navigating barriers to access and inclusion.	Completed in 2019

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Increased Assistance Rates	On April 1, 2019, income and disability assistance rates were increased by \$50 per month for individuals and single parent families and \$100 per month for couples and two-parent families. This \$92 million investment benefitted approximately 200,000 clients.	Completed in 2019
B.C. Employment and Assistance Program	The program provides income and disability assistance to over 200,000 people throughout B.C. There were two rounds of policy changes in 2019, totaling over \$26 million in investments. The first round took effect in July 2019; the second round took effect in January 2020.	Completed in 2019
Partnership with Indigenous Services Canada	The ministry works with Indigenous Services Canada to ensure that Indigenous people in British Columbia who live on reserve lands have access to similar poverty reduction benefits. Information sharing prevents inequities based on geographic location (on or off reserve lands) and supports the Poverty Reduction Strategy Act's commitment to Indigenous Peoples.	Ongoing

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture		
KidSport BC	KidSport BC is a non-profit organization that provides grants to lower income families to help cover the costs of a season of sport. To expand the reach of the program, the Province provided a one-time investment of \$2.5 million in 2019. More than 7,300 children are supported through the grants.	Completed in 2019
B.C. Sport Participation Program (BCSPP)	In 2019, the Province continued its partnership with the federal government on the BCSPP to provide a joint \$1.2 million to fund sports and physical activity opportunities for under-represented populations (e.g. low income, Indigenous, new Canadians, females, people with disabilities and older adult populations).	Ongoing
After-School Sport and Arts Initiative (ASSAI)	The Province also supports ASSAI through \$2 million in annual funding. The initiative brings free sport, physical activity and creative expression programming to selected schools across the province with a focus on children and youth (Grades K-8) who typically face barriers to sport or arts participation. More than 12,000 vulnerable British Columbia youth who face barriers to sport participation are served by this program.	Ongoing
Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Council's (I-SPARC)	Provided funding for I-SPARC's Strategy in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action related to sport (#87-91). \$1.4 million is provided annually and a one-time \$1.46 million payment was provided in 2019 to support Team BC's participation at the 2020 North American Indigenous Games (now delayed to summer 2021). More than 25,000 Indigenous people are reached each year through this funding.	Ongoing
Annual Report on Multiculturalism	In 2019, the Multiculturalism Branch significantly revised the annual Report on Multiculturalism, which details actions provincial government ministries and Crowns are taking to ensure programs, policies and initiatives are responsive to B.C.'s diverse population, particularly racialized and under-represented groups. The new format includes a more detailed analysis section highlighting key themes, best practices and comparative data. Many racialized and under-represented groups are more likely to be impacted by poverty and the report supports the sharing of promising practices on ways government is transforming service delivery approaches and building partnerships to reduce access barriers and ensure responsiveness.	Completed in 2019
Multiculturalism Grants	Through this grant program, \$300,000 was invested in 2018/19 to support 75 community projects that promoted intercultural connections and reduced systemic barriers for racialized and marginalized groups across the province.	Ongoing

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Organizing Against Racism and Hate program	Through the Organizing Against Racism and Hate program, the province invested \$268,000 in 2018/19 in 36 communities to support local responses to incidents of racism and hate, and to address systemic racism, a key contributor to poverty.	Ongoing
Resilience B.C.	Following province-wide consultations on racism and hate, the ministry launched Resilience B.C., a new anti-racism network. The new program will further enhance community efforts to address racist and hate incidents while also tackling issues of systemic racism.	Started in 2019
Knowledge Network	The Knowledge Network is a free and commercial-free public service with television, web and mobile programs. They offer quality children's programs that support literacy and ensuring that seniors have access to programs that connect them to the world. The program also invests in independent productions that leverage federal government funding for B.C. filmmakers.	Ongoing
Community Resilience through Arts and Culture	In 2019, \$735,000 was provided to the Community Resilience through Arts and Culture program. In its second intake, 83 grants were awarded, including 56 Indigenous organizations undertaking cultural revitalization projects.	Ongoing
Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO)	In recognition of the VSO's 100th anniversary, in 2019 the B.C. government provided a \$1-million grant to VSO's "Tomorrow Starts Today" fund. \$450,000 was provided for the Day of Music program and \$550,000 to support the Making Music Accessible and Affordable initiative. This funding aimed to help an estimated 50,000 people enjoy VSO's free concerts in 2019. The VSO's goal is to double the number of people able to attend free concerts over the next five years.	Completed in 2019
BC Arts Council (BCAC) Funding: Individual Arts Awards	BCAC directly supports creation of new work and subsistence for artists through the provision of Individual Arts Awards in media arts, visual arts, and creative writing. A typical visual artist in Canada has an income of \$20,000, less than one-half that of all workers. In 2019, the program increased the amounts of grants to writers from \$6,000 to \$12,000 and to visual artists from \$7,500 to \$15,000, a 25% increase to respond to rising costs of living. In 2019/20 over 60 creative writers and over 40 visual artists benefitted from increased grant amounts.	Ongoing

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture

BCAC Funding: Community Arts	In 2019/20 BCAC increased operating assistance support to Community Arts Organizations to \$1.45 million. This enabled organizations to provide accessible, often free or low-cost programming, for all ages within their communities. Community Arts Projects (festivals excluded) were also supported with \$80,000, increasing opportunities for British Columbians and their families to experience arts and cultural expression first hand. \$500,000 was spent on long-term, developmental arts practices within communities.	Ongoing
BCAC Funding: First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) Indigenous Arts Scholarship	BCAC worked with FPCC in the development of their inaugural \$200,000 scholarship fund for Indigenous students to pursue traditional mentorships and post-secondary education. The first intake will be in 2020.	Announced in 2019
BCAC Funding: First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) Indigenous Arts Program	<p>In 2019, BCAC provided \$1.5 million to FPCC to support its Indigenous Arts Program, a continuation of a 25-year partnership to directly support Indigenous artists, communities and cultural practices. Indigenous Arts and Culture is a priority of the BCAC strategic plan. In addition, FPCC raised its maximum awards for individual artists from \$5,000 to \$10,000, towards parity with the greater sector.</p> <p>In 2019/20 FPCC, in partnership with the BCAC, supported 137 individual artists.</p>	Ongoing
BCAC Equity Framework	Equity, Diversity and Access is a priority of the BCAC Strategic Plan (2018-2022). In 2019, work started on the development of an Equity Policy Framework for the BCAC, taking an intersectional look at equity and access to support current and future program, policy and process development.	Started in 2019
Strategic Framework for Tourism in B.C. 2019-2021	The framework sets out a clear vision for a prosperous and sustainable tourism sector that distributes social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits to people throughout the province.	Started in 2019
Regional Destination Marketing	Provided \$1 million to Regional Destination Marketing Organizations to support destination development implementation and help communities impacted by mill closures explore new tourism opportunities.	Completed in 2019

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Indigenous Tourism Accord	Signed the Indigenous Tourism Accord with Indigenous Tourism B.C. to support Indigenous tourism development, with an emphasis on cultural tourism.	Completed in 2019
Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI)	Increased annual funding to the RMI in 14 communities. Funding was increased to \$13 million in 2019-20 from a previous average of \$10.5 million. RMI recipient communities are encouraged to incorporate accessible tourism experiences and support local Indigenous tourism development. Thirty-seven accessible projects were completed.	Ongoing
Tourism Accessibility and Inclusion Plan	Launched a tourism accessibility and inclusion plan to promote B.C. as an inclusive and welcoming destination for everyone. This included adding more than 400 businesses with accessibility features to the HelloBC website; helping travellers with accessibility concerns obtain the information they need prior to travel; publishing six accessible travel itineraries on the HelloBC website; developing an Accessible Tourism Business awards program; and, expanding the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) to include eligibility for affordable housing initiatives to support tourism workforce.	Started in 2019

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Active Transportation Grant Programs	Provincial grant programs provide cost-shared funding to Indigenous and local governments to build active transportation networks, with an emphasis on projects in Indigenous communities and smaller centres. Through the Active Transportation Network Planning Grant, the province cost-shares to a maximum of 50%, or \$50,000. Up to \$500,000 is available through the Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant. Projects funded through this initiative provide safe, accessible transportation options which benefit low-income British Columbians without access to a vehicle.	Ongoing
Everyone Rides Grade 4+5	This initiative trains students in Grades 4-5 to use active transportation safely. To support participation of students of all income levels, the program provides bikes (including adaptive bikes) and helmets for children for use during participation in the program. A pilot project was launched in 2019 with \$200,000.	Started in 2019

BC Housing		
Community Housing Fund	This program will provide close to \$1.9 billion over 10 years to build and operate 14,350 affordable new rental homes for seniors, families, low-income and middle-income earners. As of December 31, 2019, 5,218 units are in progress. Of these, 52 units are completed, and the remainder are underway.	Ongoing
Women's Transition Housing Fund	This program will provide \$734 million over 10 years to build 1,500 new supportive homes for women and children fleeing violence, including transition houses, safe homes, second-stage and long-term housing. As of December 31, 2019, 679 units are in progress. Of these, 80 units are completed, and the remainder are underway.	Ongoing
Supportive Housing Fund	This program will provide \$1.2 billion over 10 years to build and operate 2,500 units of supportive housing for those who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. As of December 31, 2019, 850 units are in progress. Of these, 358 units are completed, and the remainder are underway.	Ongoing
Indigenous Housing Fund	This program will provide \$550 million over 10 years to build and operate 1,750 units of social housing for projects, both on and off Nation, in First Nations communities. As of December 31, 2019, 1,165 units are in progress. Of these, 314 units are under construction, and the remainder are underway.	Ongoing
Rapid Response to Homelessness Initiative	As part of the Budget 2017 Update, the provincial government announced an investment of \$291 million to build 2,000 modular housing units for those who are experiencing homelessness. In addition, \$170 million will be invested over three years to operate the housing and provide support services. As of December 31, 2019, there are 2,012 units in progress. Of these, 1,726 units are completed, and the remainder are underway.	Ongoing
Emergency Shelter Program	Emergency shelters are temporary but immediate places to stay for anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. As of December 31, 2019, the program funded approximately 2,189 permanent, year-round emergency beds in approximately 32 communities across the province.	Ongoing

BC Housing		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Homeless Outreach Program and Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program	BC Housing partners with community-based agencies serving more than 70 communities throughout the province. The Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program provides support to 18 of these communities. Outreach workers undertake a wide range of support activities to address immediate physical and safety needs including connecting people with housing and income supports, providing links to other support services and acting as a landlord liaison.	Ongoing
Homeless Prevention Program	This program assists at-risk groups facing homelessness by providing rent supplements and support services to help them access rental housing in the private market. BC Housing provides funding for the program which is administered by community-based agencies and homeless outreach providers. As of December 31, 2019, 1,716 HPP portable monthly rent supplements were allocated to service providers in 38 communities throughout the province.	Ongoing
Rental Assistance Program	The Rental Assistance Program is aimed at helping working families earning less than \$40,000 a year with cash assistance to help with their monthly rent payments in the private market. As of December 31, 2019, there were 9,307 households receiving RAP with an average monthly subsidy of \$424.	Ongoing
Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)	The SAFER program provides rent supplements in the private market to low-income seniors (aged 60+) including singles, couples and individuals sharing accommodation. As of December 31, 2019, there were 24,851 households receiving SAFER with an average monthly subsidy of \$209.	Ongoing
Women's Transition Housing and Supports Program	The program supports women and children who have experienced violence or are at risk of experiencing violence by providing temporary shelter, or housing and supports.	Ongoing
Home Adaptations for Independence	The program provides financial assistance to help low-income seniors and people with disabilities or loss of ability to fund adaptations to their home.	Ongoing

BC Hydro		
BC Hydro Customer Crisis Fund	Offers support for residential customers facing disconnection of electricity. During the 2019 calendar year, 2,995 grants totalling were distributed to eligible customers experiencing temporary financial crisis. About 94 per cent of recipients indicated that they would have had to go without some basic necessities of living without support from the grant. Government invested \$1.15 million in 2019.	Completed in 2019
BC Hydro Flexible Payment Plans	Offers flexible payment plan options, such smoothing out seasonally high bills by signing up for equal payment plan.	Ongoing
Low Income Advisory Council	BC Hydro continues to work with its Low Income Advisory Council, which includes representatives from various low income advocacy groups and stakeholders, to refine and improve processes, practices and customer service.	Ongoing
BC Hydro's Indigenous Scholarships and Bursary program	Through the Indigenous scholarships and bursaries program in 2019, BC Hydro awarded 15 scholarships valued at \$5,000; 10 bursaries valued at \$2,000; and one scholarship valued at \$8,000. The program supports students to attend post-secondary education programs.	Ongoing
Contracts and Procurement	Through its Indigenous Contract and Procurement Policy, BC Hydro works with Indigenous-designated businesses to offer procurement opportunities. In 2019, BC Hydro reported \$222.7 million in contracts with Indigenous businesses.	Ongoing
Low-Income Conservation Programs	BC Hydro, in partnership with FortisBC, has two offers for eligible low-income households – the Energy Conservation Assistance Program (ECAP) and Energy Saving Kits. In 2019/20, over 2,000 households went through the Energy Conservation Assistance Program (ECAP) and over 15,000 households received an energy saving kit. Government invested \$3.6 million in 2019/20.	Ongoing

BC Oil & Gas Commission		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Indigenous Education Program	The Commission's Indigenous Education Program (IEP) is a partnership with several post-secondary institutions across the province to provide scholarships/awards/bursaries and training programs for Indigenous people. The Commission has invested \$204,500 since 2017.	Ongoing

BC Pavilion Corporation (PavCo)		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Vancouver Convention Centre	<p>The Vancouver Convention Centre continues to receive recognition for its commitment to community initiatives. In 2019, the Convention Centre was recognized as a Social Procurement Champion by Exchange Inner City and Buy Social Canada for demonstrating excellence in social procurement.</p> <p>The Convention Centre supports local social enterprises and charities that offer employment training and work experience for individuals living in the Downtown Eastside and other Vancouver neighbourhoods. Event materials are regularly donated to community groups.</p>	Ongoing
BC Place	BC Place has activated a diverse range of opportunities and initiatives designed to create a positive impact in communities across the province. An example of this work is the Good Food Recovery Program, an innovative partnership that ensures surplus food is distributed safely to people in need. As of December 2019, more than 7,100 meals have been distributed to people in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighbourhood through the Good Food Recovery Program with Centerplate at BC Place. The Community Ticket Donation Program through BC Place also supports hundreds of local organizations and not-for-profit societies by donating tickets to upcoming events at the stadium. Under a new program initiated in 2019, BC Place now accepts requests for ticket donations which are used to support fundraising efforts benefiting community groups, charitable organizations and not-for-profit initiatives across British Columbia.	Ongoing

Columbia Basin Trust		
Training Fee Support Program	<p>Provides funding towards short-term training or certification to increase the chances of securing gainful employment.</p> <p>575 unemployed or underemployed people received grants in 2019 to complete short-term training or certification to increase their chances of securing jobs. 70 per cent of those that receive training are gainfully employed within 12 months. Investment in 2019 was \$240,000.</p>	Ongoing
Food Recovery Projects	<p>Helping make nutritious food more affordable and accessible throughout the Basin with an investment of \$440,000 towards 10 projects that are reducing waste and helping families meet their basic needs.</p>	Started in 2019
Basin Farmers' Market Co-operative Nutrition Coupon Program	<p>In partnership with the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, the Trust has committed \$520,000 over four years (2018-2022) towards the program, which enables lower-income families, seniors and pregnant women to buy fresh, locally grown food from Basin farmers.</p>	Ongoing
Child Care Support Program	<p>The Child Care Support Program has supported the child care sector with \$3.4 million since 2017 to help maintain and create new child care spaces in the Basin, train more Early Childhood Educators, and provide advisory services to strengthen the capacity of child care providers.</p>	Ongoing
Affordable Housing program	<p>The Trust's Affordable Housing program supports the development of housing that is affordable and meets the specific needs of Basin communities. The Trust has invested \$26.9 million in affordable housing since 2016.</p> <p>In 2019, the Trust supported the creation of 264 new units and the improvement of 110 existing units with a \$3.9 million investment.</p>	Ongoing
First Nations Housing Sustainability Initiative	<p>The Trust's First Nations Housing Sustainability Initiative supports First Nations communities in the Basin to enhance and increase their local affordable housing. Since 2017, the Initiative has invested \$3.75 million to support local First Nations' housing needs.</p> <p>With funding committed in 2019, the Trust is helping create 12 new units and improve 110 existing units.</p>	Ongoing

Columbia Basin Trust		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Poverty Reduction Projects	The Trust is supporting four poverty reduction projects that are taking actions toward improving the lives of low-income people in the Basin with a total investment of more than \$400,000.	Ongoing
Social Grants	The Social Grants program supports the well-being of Basin residents living in poverty and facing significant barriers. Since 2012, Social Grants have provided over \$8 million towards projects that support people experiencing vulnerabilities. 28 projects were supported in 2019.	Ongoing
Early Years Enhancement Program	The Early Years Enhancement Program invested nearly \$350,000 since 2017 towards the planning, coordination and implementation of community based early years projects that support the healthy growth and development of children.	Completed in 2019
Social Connections Grants	Social Connections Grants supported six projects that are reducing social isolation for Basin residents experiencing poverty through an investment of \$203,040.	Started in 2019
Student Wage Subsidy	Student Wage Subsidy Programs are focused on addressing the needs of small businesses, building a stronger local economy, and creating a skilled workforce. Since 2010, \$10.8 million has helped employers hire full-time students on a part-time basis throughout the school year and hire full-time students over the summer.	Ongoing

Community Living British Columbia

<p>Inclusive Housing Initiative</p>	<p>This initiative launched in 2016 to develop strategic partnerships and actions around inclusive housing. In 2019, with Inclusion BC and other sector partners, the program focused on research to quantify the demand for inclusive housing among CLBC eligible individuals, development of tools to assist in community engagement to promote inclusive housing and development of tools to assist families in planning for housing. CLBC sponsored Inclusive Housing sessions at the Housing Central Conference to raise awareness for the need for inclusive housing outside of the community living sector. Approximately \$75,000 was invested in the initiative in 2019.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Community Action Employment Plan</p>	<p>Actions in 2019 focused on making employment support services available for all interested people who are eligible for CLBC, streamlining access to employment services in partnership with WorkBC, and supporting increased capacity amongst agencies delivering employment services.</p> <p>The Community Action Employment Plan launched in 2012/13. As of September 2019, more than 5,000 individuals were working, nearly 25% of working aged individuals accessing CLBC services. The investment in 2019 was \$2.8 million.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>New Employment-plus Service Design</p>	<p>In 2016/17 CLBC began the design of a new employment service that added goals for learning, inclusion and friendship. The resulting L.I.F.E.-based service design began its first pilot stage in 2019, which reported positive outcomes for participants, such as improved learning, inclusion and friendships. Approximately \$1 million was invested in 2019.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Supporting Provincial Leadership of People with Developmental Disabilities</p>	<p>Through this initiative, CLBC is increasing the number of individuals with developmental disabilities in leadership roles. This ensures that people with lived experience are involved in decision making processes that affect them. Examples of this work in 2019 include: creating and expanding Strategic Initiative Advisor roles, developing a Welcome Workshop Presenter role, leadership training through the People Planning Together program, and continued partnership with BC People First – a non-profit organization led by individuals with developmental disabilities.</p> <p>Approximately \$25,000 was invested in this initiative in 2019.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Community Living British Columbia		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Expansion of STEPS Forward	STEPS Forward's BC Initiative for Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (BC-IPSE) provides inclusion support for students with developmental disabilities to access post-secondary education. CLBC has supported this initiative since 2014/15. In 2019, \$635,000 was provided and supports are available to individuals at seven campus' in all five CLBC regions across BC.	Ongoing

Destination BC		
Name of Program/ Initiative	Description	Status in 2019
Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2019-2022	Implemented in 2019, this initiative focuses on building capacity within the tourism industry to support more inclusive and accessible tourism products, services, experiences, as well as meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.	Started in 2019
Hiring persons with disabilities	Destination BC will continue to promote hiring of persons with disabilities within the tourism industry and share information about the work of the Presidents Group for accessible employment, as well as accessible and inclusive employment best practices on its corporate social platforms and in its corporate monthly newsletter, and in the Learning Centre.	Ongoing
Online Learning Resources	Destination BC's Learning Centre, located on the corporate website www.DestinationBC.ca , provides businesses and entrepreneurs across B.C. with tools and resources to enhance their marketing efforts, visitor experience offering, and strengthen their business. As a component of the accessibility initiative, an Accessible Tourism section was added to the Learning Centre in December 2019. This section currently features 11 resources, including three that highlight inclusive employment.	Ongoing
Indigenous Tourism British Columbia	Destination BC supports Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC) with \$1.0 million dollars in funding per year. Part of the funding is used to support regional Indigenous specialists, which among other responsibilities, assist in economic development opportunities throughout the province within Indigenous communities.	Ongoing

Royal BC Museum		
Digitizing Indigenous materials	Prioritized the digitization of Indigenous materials, with a focus on digitizing linguistic tapes in order to support language revitalization programs within Indigenous communities. This included the repatriation of digitized files (sound recordings, photographs, etc.) to Indigenous communities in B.C.	Ongoing
History of Residential Schools	Identified and shared information about residential schools from collections to educators and learners.	Ongoing
School Programs Focused on Indigenous Peoples	Offered a wide variety of school programs aimed at increasing awareness of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and histories.	Ongoing
Accessible Admission	Offered free admission to the Royal BC Museum to self-identified Indigenous people.	Ongoing
Indigenous Consultation	Consulted with Indigenous communities across B.C. about the Museum's plans for modernization.	Completed in 2019
Indigenous Summer Arts Studio program	Designed and hosted the on-site Indigenous Summer Arts Studio program. The program originated from Indigenous artists and community members advocating for a space to learn from one another and share their teachings with the public.	Completed in 2019
Increasing access for low-income British Columbians	Offering access to low-income British Columbians through events and programs like Community Days, Family Day, and the Greater Victoria Public Library pass program, in which library patrons can check out a Royal BC Museum family pass.	Ongoing
Improving Online Content	Continued to add new content to Royal BC Museum online assets, accessible for free to anyone, anywhere in the province, with an internet connection.	Ongoing

