the Green Resilience Project

Conversations on climate change, income security and community resilience

Cover photo by David Dodge/Green Energy Futures. In 2017, Louis Bull Tribe and Iron & Earth partnered to deliver a five-day solar training program in which fossil fuel workers and Indigenous workers completed a hands-on solar installation at the Louis Bull Tribe's daycare centre. Marked with CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

The Green Resilience Project takes place across what is colonially known as Canada. We respect the sovereignty, laws, customs and values of the many Indigenous peoples and communities on whose land our work is carried out. The writing of this report took place on Treaty 1 and on the traditional land of the Anishnabeg, Mississauga, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa and Wendat nations.

We also acknowledge that the benefits many of us enjoy in our economy and society today have come from historical unpaid labour, forced servitude and slavery.

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1. Executive summary

Across Canada, communities are feeling the effects of climate change, rising income insecurity and their interconnected effect on community resilience. The Green Resilience Project was a series of conversations with 33 communities of varying size, geographic location and economic makeup to discuss the ways in which climate change and income insecurity affect their individual and collective wellbeing. Conversation participants talked about the challenges they face in their day-to-day lives and explored solutions that have the potential to build or strengthen community resilience, ensuring everyone has what they need to navigate a changing environment and economy as Canada moves toward net-zero emissions.

In each of these conversations we heard a wide range of viewpoints about the interactions between income security, climate change and community resilience. We encountered hope, fear, grief and a clear sense of urgency to implement transformative solutions that make life better for everyone. After reading and analysing summary reports from each community, the Green Resilience Project team identified four main conversation themes:

1 | People in Canada, especially those experiencing income insecurity or other forms of financial precarity, are increasingly exposed to climate impacts but are often unable to participate in proportionate climate solutions due to systemic barriers.

2 | People want their communities to be resilient in the face of climate change and income insecurity. They are interested in solutions that make tangible improvements to their lives, including accessible and affordable locally grown food, energy efficient housing and public transportation as well as strengthened local economies, services and infrastructure.

Over 500,000 people took part in the 2019 Montreal Climate March.
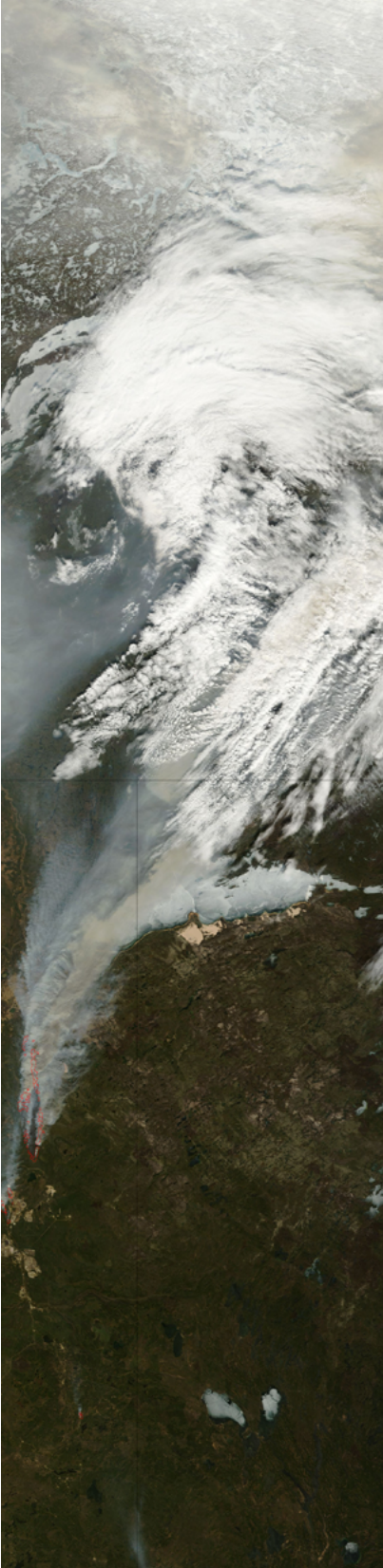
Aerial view of wildfires being extinguished in Alberta.

3 | People are sceptical of their ability to take meaningful action on climate change and income insecurity because of their limited influence on structural and systemic issues when compared to governments and corporations. Many feel that individual actions are limited in their effectiveness and that governments are not taking sufficient action to address these problems.

4 | Communities are ready to take action but lack political and economic agency to effect the scale of change that is needed. Governments must respond to this challenge with transformative policies that address the root causes of climate change and income insecurity while empowering communities to take self-directed action.

With these themes in mind, the Green Resilience Project team developed four recommendations for governments and policymakers that we consider to have the greatest, most immediate and lasting impact to empower positive transformations and strengthen resilience in communities across Canada:

1 | Incorporate basic income into Canada's plan for a just transition.

2 | Design income security and climate policy solutions to focus on improving individual and collective quality of life.

3 | Empower people and communities with the tools and resources they need to build or strengthen resilience

4 | Ensure that corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.

This report describes how we arrived at these findings. It includes a history of the Green Resilience Project, summary of the conversations that took place in each community and a reflection about what we learned in listening to them.

2. About the Green Resilience Project

The Green Resilience Project was a series of conversations on the connections between income insecurity, climate change, and community resilience in 33 communities across Canada.

The goals of the project were:

+ To explore and document the links between income security, climate change and community resilience through a series of 25 to 35 conversations facilitated by local community partners;

+ To get community perspectives on the ways in which income security can help build resilience and encourage local action on all the aspects of the climate crisis—from the response to local climate impacts to the transition out of fossil fuel employment;

+ To build conversation and understanding across the climate and income security communities, and with those who are often left out of policy discussions and decisions;

+ To serve as a starting point for local advocacy, collaboration and next steps.

We engaged local partners to organise and facilitate each of the community conversations (which we refer to in this report as community partners). We made this choice with the understanding that community partners would be better-positioned to tailor the conversation to their local contexts, more familiar to potential participants and able to draw on their networks to support their organising efforts.

We wanted the conversations to be community-focused and to bring together people with diverse knowledge, views and lived experiences. By engaging a wide range of community partners who could in turn engage a wide range of participants, we hoped to take this discussion beyond the bubbles of climate change and income security advocacy.

The conversations aimed to create opportunities to discuss possible solutions grounded in community-specific circumstances and attuned to peoples' need for adequate incomes, meaningful livelihoods and resilient communities in which everyone has what they need to prosper. We hoped participants would come away from these conversations with a vision of how climate and income security solutions can be connected and a sense of what they and their communities need in order to take action.

Students at George Webster School in Toronto learn about renewable energy by building model wind turbines.

It was also our hope that the relationships and ideas generated during the conversations would spark follow-up initiatives led by local partners or participants—creating opportunities for continued action in the wake of the project.

In order to gauge our effectiveness in achieving our goals, we identified four key conversation outcomes and asked our community partners to report on the extent to which their conversations facilitated them:

+ The conversation builds wider and deeper understanding of the links and synergies between community resilience, livelihoods, income security and the low-carbon transition;

+ Participants demonstrate increased awareness of climate change and their own capacity for climate action;

+ New relationships between community partners and conversation participants, and between communities and community partners across the country, are created and fostered;

+ Opportunities to foster ongoing discussions of solutions are identified.

In section three of this report, we discuss these outcomes and the perspectives our partners shared when asked to comment on them.

In every conversation, our community partners and participants shared an abundance of innovative and creative insight regarding how their communities could be stronger, fairer and more supportive of the individuals who comprise them. They spoke about powerful visions for a better future in which we are equipped with the tools and resources we need to ensure that no one is left behind in the transition to a lower-carbon economy. We are incredibly grateful for their contributions to this project.

3. Project design and implementation

Design and implementation of the Green Resilience Project took place between April 2021 and March 2022. A volunteer steering committee with expertise in advocacy related to climate change, income security and community resilience developed the project scope and focus.

Project staff recruited community partners with expertise or experience in climate change, income security or community resilience to facilitate local conversations and report back on what they heard. Our hope was that since their focus overlapped with that of the Green Resilience Project, their conversations could be useful for informing their ongoing work and inspiring next steps.

The Green Resilience Project was designed to be a listening exercise. Its purpose was to hear what participants had to say, identify key themes and patterns across conversations and make strategic recommendations reflective of the problems and solutions discussed.

The project structure placed community partners in leadership positions and encouraged them to tailor their conversations to best meet their communities' needs. We wanted partners to have a high degree of flexibility regarding how they framed the discussion in their communities. We provided some introductory educational resources on concepts like basic income and just transition that partners were welcome to share with their participants at their discretion. Several of our partners adjusted the language they used to talk about key conversation concepts, conversation structure and format and more.

Community partners were encouraged to include people who are not normally consulted on climate policy or income security policy. This took a different shape in each community.

Because the project was focused on hearing from a wide range of voices, we encouraged variation in how the conversations were conducted including the extent to which personal information was collected from participants. We provided partners with a tool to collect demographic information to aid in their own reporting process, but it was optional to use and as such any data we did collect is representative of only a sample of conversation participants.

A. About the project design

Community partners were given a set of four questions to ask during their conversations. They were encouraged to alter the questions to better fit their community context if needed. The questions provided were:

+ How are changes to our community's environment and economy affecting you, your family or the community as a whole?

+ How are these environmental and economic changes related to each other?

+ What are some possible solutions to the challenges we've discussed that will help the community respond to climate change and create income security for all community members?

+ How do you think these solutions can be achieved to build, maintain or strengthen community resilience? Who is responsible for these changes—individuals, community groups, governments or a mix?

In order to create consistency across conversations, allow community partners to take the lead on their conversation design and provide support where needed, the project team did the following:

+ Provided a conversation script template and facilitation resources. Partners were encouraged to choose whether or not to use the conversation script or any of the project resources based on their knowledge of their community;

+ Helped partners determine who should be invited to their conversation and how to collect demographic information or feedback from participants. Conversation formats were determined by the community partners with support from the project team. Formats varied

Toronto's St. James Town neighbourhood is one of the most culturally diverse urban pockets in the world. Its population density is more than 18 times that of the City of Toronto.

among partners and included virtual or in-person group events, one-on-one interviews and smaller group discussions. Community partners were encouraged to include (or re-move barriers to include) community members not normally consulted on these issues (including offering stipends to conversation participants as needed);

+ Provided facilitation training and communications or logistical support to community partners upon request;

+ Supported community partners in the completion of a Community Summary Report to share what they heard in their conversation;

+ Provided project funding to community partners to support conversation preparation, implementation and reporting.

In order to share project news and updates, amplify the work of our community partners and encourage networking between partners, the project team also created the following:

+ A website with relevant resources, updates and a blog featuring interviews with commu-nity partners

+ A social media presence and an e-newsletter

+ A wrap-up strategy and networking event for community partners

B. Did we meet our conversation outcomes?

We shared our four key conversation outcomes with our community partners and asked them to report on the extent to which their conversations facilitated them. This gave us a sense of how both partners and participants felt about the conversations' effectiveness and guided our process of data analysis and recommendation drafting.

The conversation builds wider and deeper understanding of the links and synergies between community resilience, livelihoods, income security and the low-carbon transition.

Partners felt that the opportunity to bring participants together to discuss these topics was valuable and supported heightened understanding of the links between climate change, in-come security and community resilience. Several partners commented that their participants benefited from the wide range of knowledge and experiences brought to the conversations. Our partner in Fredericton noted that "the wealth of experience in these breakout groups facilitated

a knowledge transfer to younger organisers and community members [...and] allowed community advocates in one area to learn where their work aligns with another."

Pre-existing knowledge related to climate change, income security or their connections varied. The majority of partners reported high levels of familiarity with the topics covered. Some of the conversations in Lockeport and Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation were conducted with elementary and high school students, so foundational knowledge was limited. However, both partners in these communities reported that they were impressed by students' ability to make connections between climate change and income security as the conversations progressed.

Our partner in Sault Ste. Marie reported that low-income community members were acutely aware that a single climate crisis (such as a flood) could leave them houseless or significantly impact their access to food and energy essentials.

Some partners who hosted conversations with Indigenous communities discussed the unique ways in which climate change and income insecurity affect Indigenous livelihoods. Our partners who hosted conversations with urban Indigenous communities in BC shared that:

> We have concluded that the reservation system, as well as the welfare system, is not serving our community. Indigenous people's livelihoods need to come from a just and honourable way of enhancing the use of the land so that the future generations' livelihood is guaranteed as well. A low-carbon transition is intertwined with Indigenous values and governance systems.

Other partners noted some obstacles to building these connections within the context of their conversations. Our partner in the West Kootenays, who conducted one-on-one conversations with low-income community members, reported that participants were more interested in learning about supports or programs available to help them deal with the challenges that climate change and income insecurity pose than investigating their root causes. A partner in Flin Flon (a town facing the impending closure of a mine that employs a significant portion of the population) reported that:

> The livelihoods and income security aspects did not figure very prominently in [participant] responses, [because compared to] the existential threat posed to Flin Flon by the impending mine closure, every other economic threat, even those relating to climate change, pales [in] significance.

Participants demonstrate increased awareness of climate change and their own capacity for climate action.

Many partners reported that participants already had a strong understanding of climate change and its impacts, either through lived experience, education or existing community initiatives. For instance, our partner in the Yukon reported that "because climate change is such a prevalent issue facing Yukon youth, it was the centre of much of our conversation. Participants demonstrated passion and knowledge around climate action, and shared their own experiences with solutions."

Our partner in the West Kootenays, who conducted their one-on-one conversations using a deep canvassing technique that allowed them to reach participants with a wide range of views about climate change and climate action, reported that discussing their West Kootenay 100% Renewable Energy Plan with their participants motivated them to learn more about climate change and how changes have been proposed in the region.

Our partners who hosted conversations with urban Indigenous communities in BC noted that climate action is inherently connected to Indigenous self-determination, reporting that participants discussed the connection between climate action and the inclusion of off-reserve Indigenous people impacted by the Indian Act in the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

One of the common threads our partners reported was participants' scepticism of their capacity to take significant or meaningful climate action because of their limited influence on the matter when compared to governments and corporations. Many partners highlighted a general consensus that governments are not doing enough to combat climate change and that individual actions (like recycling or growing local food) are limited in their effectiveness. Our partner in Churchill emphasised that community-led initiatives need financial support from government in order to have a significant and sustainable impact.

New relationships between community partners and conversation participants, and between communities and community partners across the country, are created and fostered.

Many partners reported that hosting these conversations allowed them to deepen their own relationships with community members and set the stage for future collaboration or conversation. Many partner organisations reported that participants learned more about the services or initiatives they offer in the community. Our partner in the Tantramar region shared that their conversation sparked the creation of a new initiative on food security and climate change in the community.

Mason Morley participates in the building of the Three Nations Energy solar electricity project. In 2020, three Indigenous Nations in northern Canada launched the community-owned project to decrease reliance on diesel-generated energy.

Other partners shared that the conversations allowed community members to form or deepen relationships with one another. One emphasised that the community needs financial resources in order for community leadership positions to continue to facilitate this relationship-building.

The Green Resilience Project team organised a wrap-up strategy session for partners to connect with each other and share insights about what they learned by organising their conversations, as well as to share how the conversation informed their ongoing work and identify possible avenues for collaboration. Some partners shared examples of advocacy and communications strategies that have helped them to bridge the gap between advocacy bubbles (eg. climate change, income security, racial justice, labour) and have the potential to be adopted in other partner communities. We circulated a contact form that allowed partners to connect with one another in the wake of the project to coordinate future collaborative initiatives.

Opportunities to foster ongoing discussions of solutions are identified.

The majority of our partners shared that community members expressed clear interest in continuing the conversation and brainstorming solutions to the issues the communities are facing. Our partner in Newfoundland shared that their conversation "seemed to ignite interest in people to create some local collective impact activity on the issue of basic income specifically," while our partner in Lockeport reported that "every conversation expressed interest in continuing the conversation on all the topics and concepts discussed."

Some partners expressed uncertainty about, or barriers to, whether the conversation created further opportunities for community members to explore solutions. Our partner in the Northwest Territories reported that "the conversation was designed as a one-time project/conversation, [leaving] little to no room for long-term action planning and implementation."

Partners identified few concrete plans for the continuation of solutions-planning. Some highlighted the need for additional funding or government support to facilitate this work. There is clear interest across communities, but without resources to move forward continuity is limited.

Local organisers host a Green New Deal townhall in Yellowknife in 2019 with support from 350.org. There is an urgent need for long-term solution planning as climate change and income insecurity threaten the livelihoods of communities across Canada.

4. About the community partners and conversation participants
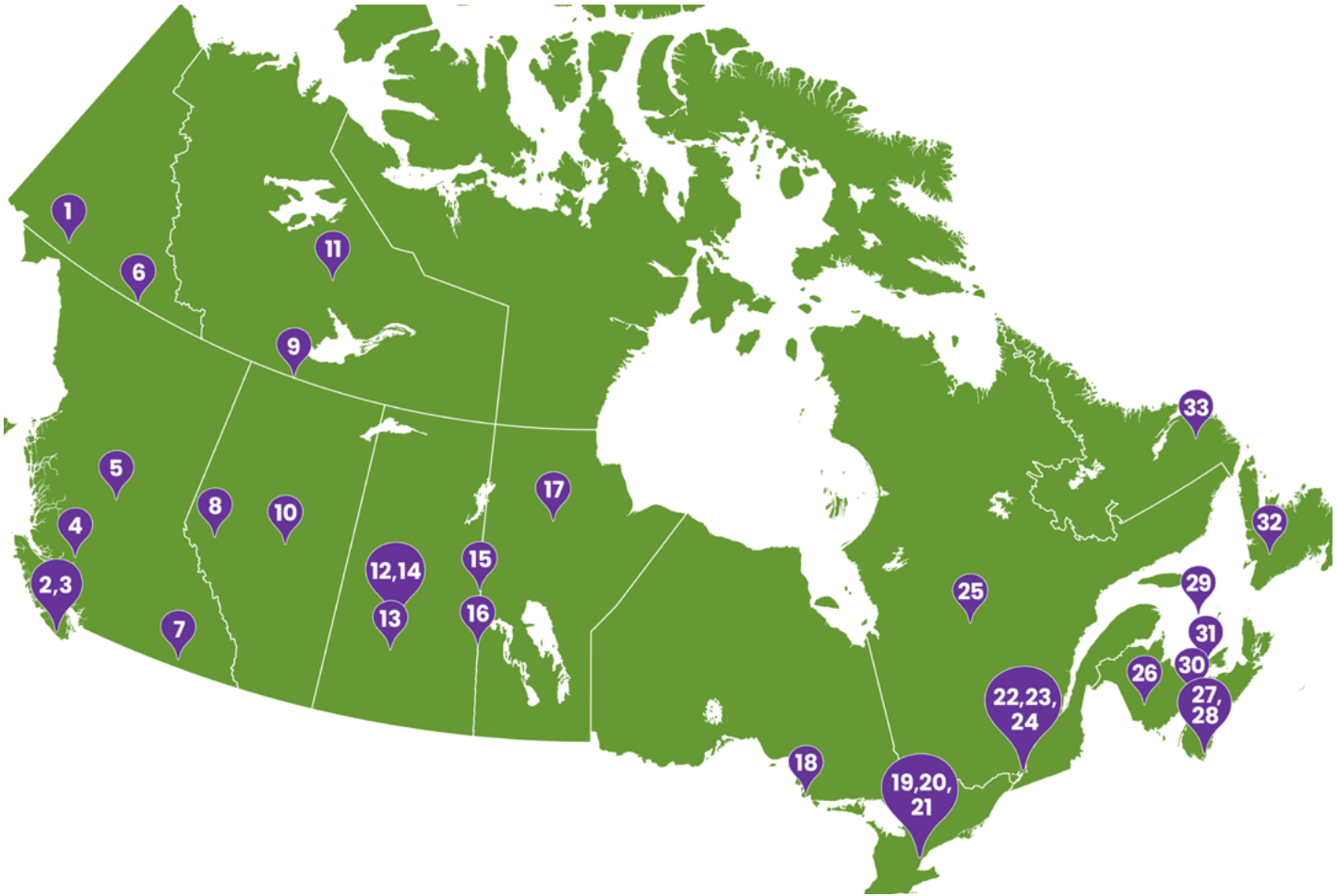
Twenty-eight community partners participated in the Green Resilience Project, holding 33 community conversations. Community partners reflected a range of interest areas: environmental organisations, anti-poverty organisations, a healthcare worker, a health policy researcher, Indigenous-led communities or organisations, basic income pilot sites, an arts and culture worker, three youth-focused organisations, a think tank, a community economic development organisation and a member-based farming organisation.

A range of urban, rural and remote communities participated, with representation in all provinces and territories with the exception of Nunavut. The rapid spread of COVID-19 made it unsafe for our designated partner in Nunavut to carry out an in-person conversation within the window of time available for this project.

Community partners were encouraged to invite participants from a wide range of backgrounds, with a focus on people impacted by climate change or other environmental issues, people living

on low incomes, people with lived experience of poverty or houselessness, Indigenous and racialised people, people with disabilities or health challenges, people working in climate or income security advocacy or people with livelihoods impacted by climate change or income insecurity. This was achieved with varying levels of success.

For partners who were successful in recruiting a diverse range of participants, that diversity looked quite different across communities. In some it meant a range of lived experiences and income levels but little cultural diversity. In others, the opposite was true. Some community partners focused on a particular commonality between participants such as livelihood (eg. farming, arts and culture), age or faith.

Below are 33 high-level snapshots describing the communities and community members who participated in Green Resilience Project conversations. We have included information provided by community partners that describes climate change and income security factors influencing the communities. We have also included general demographic information about the participants.

Additional details about each community conversation can be found in volume C of this report. **Full Community Summary Reports can be found in volume B**.

Community snapshots are listed by location, from west to east:

1

Location: Whitehorse, Yukon

Partner Name: BYTE - Empowering Youth Society

Participant Description: Youth (majority between 20 – 30, a few in their teens); Majority urban residents; Minority identified as Indigenous/BIPOC; Majority identified as middle income; Some union members; Participants represented a wide range of sectors in the workforce

Climate change/income security context: Northern location; Climate change impacts including rising average temperatures; Extreme weather events including floods; Permafrost thaw; Food scarcity; Housing shortages; Minimum wage is below living wage; Noted mental health impacts of climate change and substance use

Outreach Type: Social media; Posters

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

2

Location: Shirley, British Columbia

Partner Name: Alysha Jones (co-chair Intersectionality and Truth and Reconciliation Committee, Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment and member of the District of Sooke's Climate Action Committee)

Participant Description: Range of professions represented; Wide age range; Range of lived experiences; None identified as low income or BIPOC

Climate change/income security context: Rural location; Historical and current reliance on logging and silviculture; Has experienced extreme weather events; Social and ecological impact from industry; Noted water quality issues

Outreach Type: Email listserv; Social media; Direct invite

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

3

Location: Sooke, British Columbia

Partner Name: Alysha Jones (co-chair Intersectionality and Truth and Reconciliation Committee, Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment and member of the District of Sooke's Climate Action Committee)

Participant Description: Youth (ages 11 - 17); Seniors; Included small business owners; Included unemployed persons

Climate change/income security context: Rapidly changing community; Historically a forestry/fishing town; Has experienced a population increase; Vulnerable to climate impacts

Outreach Type: Direct invites; Email; Social media

Conversation Format: In-person group conversations; Virtual group conversations

4

Location: British Columbia, primarily Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island

Partner Name: The Columbia Institute

Participant Description: Locally elected officials: Mayors, regional directors, councillors, school trustees

Climate change/income security context: Included municipalities of various sizes; Across the Province, municipalities have experienced extreme weather events; Noted housing crisis and drug crisis across the region; Noted food security issues across the region

Outreach Type: Direct invites

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

5

Location: British Columbia, primarily urban areas

Partner Name: Aboriginal Life In Vancouver Enhancement Society (ALIVE) and North West Indigenous Council (NWIC)

Participant Description: Majority were urban Indigenous youth living off reserve; Included advocates/service providers; Missing perspectives: members of 2SLGBTQ+ community

Climate change/income security context: Inadequate social assistance programs; Severe conditions of being homeless; Intergenerational addictions; Lack of stable employment income; Discrimination based on low expectations; High costs of tuition; Distinctions-based approach funding on all levels of government; Barriers to accessing community centre resources

Outreach Type: Direct invites to network of individuals and organisations

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversations; In-person group conversations

6

Location: Yukon and Northern British Columbia

Partner Name: National Farmers Union

Participant Description: All farmers; Some also work in oil and gas sector; Majority middle income; All identified as white

Climate change/income security context: Rural locations; Conversation covers a large region; Northern; Extreme weather events including drought, floods; Lack of affordable housing; High cost of land; Incomes vulnerable to climate disaster

Outreach Type: Direct invites to membership and non-members; Social media

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

7

Location: West Kootenays, British Columbia

Partner Name: West Kootenay EcoSociety

Participant Description: Low income; Majority identified as white; Some identified as BIPOC; Some unhoused; Often excluded from climate action/ transition planning

Climate change/income security context: Mix of rural and urban locations; Noted increased cost of living; Climate change impacts including temperature changes, increased precipitation/snow; Extreme temperatures; Forest fires; Affected sector: Tourism

Outreach Type: Direct Invite; Institution (community organisations); Referral

Conversation Format: Phone; Email; In-person interviews

8

Location: Hinton, Alberta

Partner Name: Iron & Earth

Participant Description: Majority identified as middle income; Majority between ages 20 – 60; No one identified as 2SLGBTQ+; No one identified as racialised; 50% work in sectors affected by climate change/energy transition (agriculture, natural resources); 50% self-identified as men, 50% as women

Climate change/income security context: Rural location; Historical/current dependency on resource industries (oil and gas, timber, coal); Extreme weather changes including cold snaps, heat waves, drought, excess rain; Thermal coal phase-out; Directly impacted by energy transition

Outreach Type: Direct invites; Social media

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

9

Location: Northern Alberta and Northwest Territories

Partner Name: National Farmers Union

Participant Description: Farmers, small- and medium-sized farms; All identified as white; All identified as middle income

Climate change/income security context: Rural locations; Remote locations; Conversation covers a large region; Northern; "Forefront of climate change"; Short growing seasons; Extreme weather; Degradation of farmland; Food insecurity; Extractive industries; Forced removal of traditional foodways (hunting, fishing)

Outreach Type: Direct invites to membership and non-members; Social media

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

10

Location: Alberta (primarily Edmonton)

Partner Name: Citizens for Public Justice/Just Faith Alberta

Participant Description: Faith-based conversation: all identified as Christian; Primarily from Edmonton, one from Calgary, one from Fort McMurray, one from Olds. Primarily ages 40 – 60; Wide range of professions

Climate change/income security context: The oil and gas industry is a major employer in the area; companies contribute to a high standard of living. Taxes are low and the standard of recreational and municipal facilities are high. There is awareness of extreme weather events and changes such as air quality, but acknowledgment of climate change brings immediate concerns about jobs and livelihoods. Some perceived increased instability for workers in oil and gas industry; Rising cost of land

Outreach Type: Location-specific eblast outreach; Direct email; Telephone invitations

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

11

Location: Northwest Territories

Partner Name: Ecology North

Participant Description: Diverse range of participants from across the territories; Missing a strong presence from the Sahtu and Inuvik regions

Climate change/income security context: The sensitive, remote northern environment exacerbates and intensifies the wide range of impacts caused by environmental and climate change compared to other regions of Canada. Some of these interrelated issues are the heightened costs of food production and transportation, growing insecurities around the quality and accessibility of country foods, widespread housing issues/crises, and income stability.

Outreach Type: Open invitations to 33 communities

Conversation Format: Virtual (and phone) group event

12

Location: Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, Saskatchewan

Partner Name: Ahtahkakoop Health Centre

Participant Description: Indigenous-led; Youth; Elders

Climate change/income security context: Remote location; Extreme weather changes and events; Food insecurity impacted by energy transition

Outreach Type: In-person group conversation

Conversation Format: Media; Direct invite; Social media; Posters

13

Location: Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Partner Name: Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership

Participant Description: Majority identified as middle income; Minority have lived experience of poverty; Minority identified as Indigenous

Climate change/income security context: Urban location; Food insecurity; Lack of affordable housing; Extreme weather events including heat and excessive rain/snow; Changes in wind speed

Outreach Type: Social media; Direct invite: Institution (community organisations) and existing network

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

14

Location: Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation, Saskatchewan

Partner Name: Willow Creek Health Centre

Participant Description: Indigenous-led; Youth (grade 4); Elders

Climate change/income security context: Remote location; 40% of members rely on income assistance; Extreme weather changes including temperature changes, lack of precipitation, negative impacts on wildlife populations; Poor growing conditions for food; Housing shortage; Strong cultural identity

Outreach Type: Direct invites to Elder group; Direct invite to institution (school)

Conversation Format: Two in-person group conversations: one with Elders, one with youth

15

Location: Flin Flon, Manitoba
Partner Name: Flin Flon Neighbourhood Revitalization Corporation
Participant Description: Residents of Flin Flon; Identified as middle income; Some identified as BIPOC; Some unknown
Climate change/income security context: Rural location; Northern location; Extreme weather events; Imminent mine closure; Population decline; Income insecurity
Outreach Type: Media; Direct Invites; Social Media
Conversation Format: Hybrid event with in-person group and virtual attendees

16

Location: Saskatchewan and Manitoba
Partner Name: One House Many Nations (OHMN)
Participant Description: Members of One House Many Nations network; Most identified as Indigenous
Climate change/income security context: Increased resource extraction in the area; Increased infrastructure work impacting the local environment (community not consulted); Extreme weather fluctuations impacting access to materials, ceremonies, cultural events, work; Drought; Increased presence of wood ticks; Noted homelessness due to climate impacts such as fires, flooding; Concern re: ice road conditions and accessibility; Noted housing shortage; Many impacts of colonialism; High levels of unemployment among youth
Outreach Type: Direct invite to OHMN network
Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

17

Location: Churchill/Wabowden/Thompson, Manitoba
Partner Name: Community Futures North Central Development
Participant Description: Residents of Churchill, Wabowden, and Thompson, MB
Climate change/income security context: Northern location; Rural locations; Sectors affected by climate change/energy transition: Ecotourism, agriculture; Climate change impacts including extreme heat, growing season changes, wildlife habitat impacts
Outreach Type: Media; Direct invites; Social media
Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

18

Location: Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
Partner Name: Crane Institute for Sustainability
Participant Description: Majority of attendees identified as middle income; Some have lived experience of poverty; Majority did not identify as POC; Range of job sectors represented; Key Informant Interviews (KII) participants reflected a cross-section of academic and government stakeholders
Climate change/income security context: Northern location; Urban location; Food security; Affordable housing; Infrastructure; (Lack of) economic diversity dominated by industry and retail; Education, health and income community challenges
Outreach Type: Direct invites; Media; Social media
Conversation Format: Virtual community conversation; Key Informant Interviews (KII)

19

Location: Hamilton, Ontario

Partner Name: Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Participant Description: Basic income pilot participants; Some participants have lived experience of poverty; Community activists and organisers with basic income and/or climate justice expertise

Climate change/income security context: Basic Income pilot site (2017 - 2019); Noted rising cost of living; Food insecurity; Homelessness; Has experienced extreme temperatures

Outreach Type: Direct invites to a network of organisations

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

20

Location: St. James Town in Toronto, Ontario

Partner Name: St. James Town Community Co-op

Participant Description: Predominantly identified as POC; Majority identified as immigrants; Wide age range; Majority low income, some middle income; Minority identified as disabled; Some have lived experience of poverty; Missing perspectives: members of 2SLGBTQ+ community;

Climate change/income security context: Extremely culturally diverse neighbourhood; Population density 18 times that of the City of Toronto; Home to majority newcomers, many highly skilled/educated (49% of residents have a degree in higher education); Higher-than-average percentage of low-income households despite higher-than-average rate of employment; Food insecurity; Vulnerability to climate change impacts such as extreme weather

Outreach Type: Direct invites; Social media; Email

Conversation Format: Two virtual group conversations

21

Location: Haliburton/City of Kawartha Lakes/Brock, Ontario

Partner Name: Joli Scheidler, BA, BEd, MA, PhD Candidate, York University – Health Policy & Equity

Participant Description: Mix of low, middle and high income; Some have lived experience of poverty; Range of job sectors represented; Wide age range

Climate change/income security context: Mixed remote/rural; Includes basic income pilot site (Lindsay, 2017 - 2019); Has experienced extreme heat and intense storms; Tourism and agriculture sectors affected by climate changes; Income insecurity includes low wages, seasonal jobs, contract jobs

Outreach Type: Direct Invites to contacts through email; Media; Social media; Phone calls

Conversation Format: 1:1 interviews; Virtual meetings; Group meetings and email responses

22

Location: Montreal, Quebec

Partner Name: Y4Y Québec

Participant Description: Majority youth; All identified as Filipino; Most identified as middle income or not yet working age; All members of a faith group

Climate change/income security context: Urban location; City has experienced extreme weather events; Noted rising cost of living

Outreach Type: Direct invite: community faith group

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

23

Location: Montreal, Quebec

Partner Name: Y4Y Québec

Participant Description: Majority professional/middle income; Students; Youth; Some identified as white; Some identified as BIPOC

Climate change/income security context: Urban location; City has experienced extreme weather events; Noted rising cost of living

Outreach Type: Direct invites to network; Social media

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

24

Location: Montréal, Quebec

Partner Name: Coalition Climat Montréal

Participant Description: Just over one third of participants under 20 years old with the rest ages 20 – 60+; Minority identified as POC; Majority low to middle income; Some high income; Small minority with lived experience of homelessness or poverty

Climate change/income security context: Urban location; The city has experienced climate impacts including heat waves and smog; Food insecurity; Increases in rental property prices; Wide income disparities; Some solutions underway such as urban agriculture, food aid, pooling of goods and services

Outreach Type: Invites sent to a network of 34 organisations

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

25

Location: Across Canada (primarily Quebec)

Partner Name: cultural organiser Amanda Vincelli

Participant Description: All identified as artists and cultural workers; Wide range of roles within cultural sector; Ages 20–60; Majority identified as middle to low income; 35% have lived experience of poverty; 42% said their livelihood was seriously impacted by the pandemic; 10 of 31 identified as POC; Indigenous perspective underrepresented.

Climate change/income security context: General awareness of climate impacts; Income precarity within the sector

Outreach Type: Direct invites; Promotion via community organisations (over 50), networks and cultural leaders, with a focus on Indigenous, Black and other POC art workers and community organisers; Social media; Media; Newsletters.

Conversation Format: Two virtual group events: one in English, one in French

26

Location: Fredericton, New Brunswick

Partner Name: Conservation Council of New Brunswick

Participant Description: Majority identified as middle income; Some have lived experience with income insecurity; Noted absence of BIPOC; Included residents, community organisers and activists

Climate change/income security context: Urban location; Has experienced extreme weather events – most notably flooding, affordable housing shortage; High energy demand due to electric heat; Presence of income inequality

Outreach Type: Social media; Direct invite: Community organisation networks

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

27

Location: Lockeport, Nova Scotia

Partner Name: Centre for Local Prosperity

Participant Description: Wide age range (10 - 100); Demographics representative of the community

Climate change/income security context: Significant climate change impacts including rising sea level and rising water temperature; Rural location; Heavy economic dependence on a natural resource (fishing); Infrastructure vulnerability

Outreach Type: Direct invite; Social media

Conversation Format: In-person interviews; Virtual interviews

28

Location: Lockeport, Nova Scotia

Partner Name: Centre for Local Prosperity

Participant Description: Youth (grades 10 - 12)

Climate change/income security context: Significant climate change impacts including rising sea level and rising water temperature; Rural location; Heavy economic dependence on a natural resource (fishing); Infrastructure vulnerability

Outreach Type: Direct invite: Institution (school)

Conversation Format: In-person group conversation

29

Location: Atlantic Canada

Partner Name: National Farmers Union

Participant Description: Participants from across the region; Farmers, primarily small-scale diversified farms; Identified as low or middle income; Some have lived experience of poverty, homelessness; None identified as BIPOC

Climate change/income security context: Sector affected by climate change/energy transition (agriculture); Rural locations; Conversation covers a large region; Extreme weather events and changes including temperature fluctuations; Depopulation of rural areas

Outreach Type: Direct invites to membership; Social media

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

30

Location: The Tantramar Region, New Brunswick

Partner Name: Aster Group/Margaret Tusz-King

Participant Description: Range of professions and lived experiences; Participants from across the region; Identified as low or middle income; 30% have lived experience of poverty; 21% identified as disabled

Climate change/income security context: Significant climate change impacts including rising sea levels; Extreme weather events; Infrastructure vulnerability; Mixed rural/urban locations; Lower median income and associated health impacts are present

Outreach Type: Direct Invites; Social Media; Invites via a community organisation

Conversation Format: In-person event; Virtual event

31

Location: Prince Edward Island

Partner Name: PEI Working Group for Livable Income/ Cooper Institute

Participant Description: Range of professions and lived experiences represented; Participants from across the region; Identified as low or middle income; Some people identified as BIPOC

Climate change/income security context: Mixed remote/rural/urban locations; Lower than the national average incomes across the Province; Presence of sectors affected by climate change (fishing, agriculture, tourism); Extreme weather events; Presence of strong corporate influence within the Province

Outreach Type: Direct invites

Conversation Format: Virtual group conversation

32

Location: Newfoundland

Partner Name: Dan Meades (Provincial Coordinator, Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador)

Participant Description: From across the Province; Range of lived experiences; Range of professions

Climate change/income security context: Has experienced extreme weather events; Presence of an influential oil industry; Higher than national average poverty rates; Geographically/politically isolated

Outreach Type: Direct invites

Conversation Format: Virtual group event; One-on-one interviews

33

Location: Labrador

Partner Name: Dan Meades (Provincial Coordinator, Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador)

Participant Description: From across the Province; Range of lived experiences; Prominent representation from the private sector

Climate change/income security context: Has experienced extreme weather events; Presence of influential mining industry; Much higher than national average poverty rates; Geographically/politically isolated

Outreach Type: Direct invites

Conversation Format: Virtual group event; One-on-one interviews

An ice road across the Mackenzie River at Tsiigehtchic, NWT. Climate change threatens the livelihoods of many northern communities that rely on ice roads for transportation and access.

5. What we heard: What did participants talk about at their community conversations?

Green Resilience Project community conversations brought together a wide range of experiences, stories, ideas and insights. Some of these were specific to regions, community sizes, ages or other demographics, while others resonated across a range of participants and communities. What follows is a summary of the key themes that arose across conversations, as identified by the project team. Our partners talked about a wide variety of interactions between climate change and income security, and what follows is certainly not an exhaustive list.

Participants spoke about the financial challenges and climate impacts they are experiencing and how these intersect with each other. They described solutions that could decrease greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to climate impacts while also providing prosperity, stability and improved quality of life for everyone in their communities. They also spoke about the supports and processes their communities would need in order to realise them.

Four broad themes emerged:

1 | People in Canada, especially those experiencing income insecurity or other forms of financial precarity, are increasingly exposed to climate impacts but are often unable to participate in proportionate climate solutions due to systemic barriers.

2 | People want their communities to be resilient in the face of climate change and income insecurity. They are interested in solutions that make tangible improvements to their lives, including accessible and affordable locally grown food, energy efficient housing and public transportation as well as strengthened local economies, services and infrastructure.

3 | People are sceptical of their ability to take meaningful action on climate change and income insecurity because of their limited influence on structural and systemic issues when compared to governments and corporations. Many feel that individual actions are limited in their effectiveness and that governments are not taking sufficient action to address these problems.

4 | Communities are ready to take action but lack political and economic agency to effect the scale of change that is needed. Governments must respond to this challenge with transformative policies that address the root causes of climate change and income insecurity while empowering communities to take self-directed action.

A. Identifying challenges: Climate impacts and risks in the natural environment

Participants across the country described changes to their natural environments caused by climate change that impact their finances, health, safety and wellbeing.

In some conversations there was discussion of increased flooding (both inland and coastal) and fears of further sea level rise. Participants expressed concern over how flooding could disrupt supply chains, prevent travel and damage homes and communities. For the Lockeport community, sea-level rise is an existential concern as the town is connected to mainland Nova Scotia only by a causeway. As one conversation participant put it, "if that's gone, Lockeport is gone." A participant from a conversation on Prince Edward Island shared that "you can see the erosion on an annual basis—we are losing metres of land."

Drought was also a concern in many communities. In Lockeport and Sooke many community members rely on wells for their water, but wells are going dry as groundwater levels drop. In the Tantramar region, drought was connected to increasing food insecurity and health risks from extreme heat. In Churchill, participants worried about how drought might increase the community's exposure to wildfires.

Several communities mentioned an increase in wildfires and wildfire smoke. In Flin Flon, this was the largest concern related to climate change. One participant shared

that during the past summer their spouse had kept an emergency bag packed in case they had to evacuate at short notice. It was pointed out that in some First Nations, any houses lost to wildfires would exacerbate already-overcrowded housing conditions.

"You can see the erosion on an annual basis—we are losing metres of land."

Many participants have observed an increase in storms and severe weather. This damages property and disrupts their daily lives, creating dangerous driving and walking conditions, forcing school closures, causing power outages and impacting livelihoods, particularly in the agricultural sector.

Seasonal change was another commonly discussed theme, including extreme heat during the summer combined with milder winters, but also periods of extreme cold. Participants noted that this type of weather disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in their communities, such as the houseless and seniors. Participants in BC discussed the heat dome this past summer that caused 600 deaths, describing it as a "huge wake-up call." A participant from Sooke described how their family had been forced to get a hotel room for a few days because they did not have air conditioning at home. In northern and remote communities, participants described how milder winters create unpredictable conditions for winter roads, interfering with recreation, transportation and the import of critical goods such as heating fuel.

In 2021, unprecedented flooding in southwestern BC forced over 15,000 people to flee their homes.

Some communities, especially rural and remote ones, have seen changes to animal populations and increases in pests. Several northern communities said they have started seeing ticks, even though, as one participant from a Saskatchewan First Nation pointed out, "in nehiyaw collective memory, no wood ticks ever lived on Treaty 6." Another participant from the same conversation described how beetles have been decimating surrounding forests, decreasing the local supply of lumber and firewood.

B. Identifying challenges: Experiences of income insecurity

Many groups discussed the economic challenges they and those around them face. They noted that income insecurity is not equally distributed—rural communities, women, people with disabilities, newcomers, 2SLGBTQ+ and BIPOC people are disproportionately affected. Participants from St.

James Town described having to juggle three or four jobs just to survive. Participants from the arts and culture sector said that shrinking funding and increased competition has heightened economic precarity in their sector, exacerbated by a general disappearance of permanent jobs. Participants in the Edmonton area pointed out that this increasing economic precarity includes the oil and gas sector, where jobs are being cut due to automation, many positions are contract-based and there has been an increase in the hiring of migrant workers.

Inflation and increased costs of living have created additional economic challenges. Participants across conversations pointed out that neither wages nor income assistance levels have kept up with inflation. The rising cost of gas and lack of robust public transportation systems make transportation more difficult and more expensive, especially for people facing income insecurity.

The high cost of tuition was also mentioned by several youth participating in the conversation as a contributor to income insecurity.

Participants also discussed the lack of affordable housing in their communities, including increases in rent and housing prices, rising evictions and in some Indigenous communities, a lack of adequate housing to begin with. Some participants in Vancouver emphasised the unsafe living conditions in Single Room Occupancy units and other low-income housing options. Another participant in BC described how "there used to be a part of [Vancouver] Island that was affordable, but in recent years, housing prices have skyrocketed." In Labrador, participants said that there is a "chronic homelessness" problem and that the shelter system is "maxed out"—concerns that were echoed across many conversations.

The pandemic and associated job loss have exacerbated financial insecurity and increased economic inequality. As PEI conversation participants observed, "Since COVID-19, the gap between the rich and poor on PEI has widened." COVID-19 has exacerbated a level of precarity that participants believe will only increase as the climate crisis worsens.

C. Identifying challenges: Connections between climate impacts and income insecurity

Having spoken about some of the environmental and economic challenges they are facing, participants then described the many ways in which these challenges are connected. Participants outlined some of the costs of protecting oneself from the direct and indirect climate impacts, such as being able to install and pay for air conditioning or cover extra heating costs. A St. James Town participant said that

When it's winter, your heat bill increases. And when it's summer, because of the humidity, your air conditioning bill increases, if you do have air conditioning. So it does affect us economically, in terms of how we have to decide what to do with our money…do we choose to pay the bill? Or do we go hungry?

Other climate change-related costs include paying for home or equipment repairs caused by extreme weather, covering rising insurance rates or even being able to move to a safer place in response to, or in anticipation of, a natural disaster. One participant from Opaskwayak Cree Nation (who participated in the conversation led by One House Many Nations) said they are already seeing increased houselessness in the Pas due to displacement from flooding and forest fires. Lower-income housing and neighbourhoods may be more exposed to floods and fires—for example, in the Tantramar region the most affordable housing is located on a floodplain. A participant in Hamilton pointed out that the city tends to neglect maintaining infrastructure in lower-income areas. In Churchill, higher water table levels have been causing basement flooding and not everyone can afford to pay for the repair costs. Participants in Saskatoon concluded that "only the most affluent citizens in Saskatoon can realistically afford to try to avoid the consequences of climate change." A Tantramar region participant

summarised that "everything is harder when you are poor."

Food and agriculture

Climate impacts and income insecurity interact in many ways, with food and agriculture impacts being one of the most frequently discussed. Many participants described the challenges they and other community members face accessing affordable and healthy food, especially with recent increases in food prices. A participant in Saskatoon who works at a non-profit described challenges with the at-cost grocery store they operate, including their struggle to ensure products remain affordable to customers on a fixed income. A participant in Newfoundland pointed out that those facing food insecurity may not be able to stock up on groceries ahead of an extreme weather event.

Many participants were concerned that under the globalised food system, climate impacts on harvests and supply chains will lead to continued rising food costs. "Climate effects in one area of the world can raise the price of food in Fredericton," one participant acknowledged, while participants in an agricultural-sector conversation led by the National Farmers Union (NFU) concluded that "eaters are realising that we cannot take stocked grocery store shelves for granted." Participants in the NFU-led conversation in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories noted that while their region has plenty of farmland, most of it is used to grow commodity crops for export rather than food for local communities. In both Sooke and Hamilton, participants expressed frustration that the agricultural land surrounding their respective communities is being converted into housing developments. On a smaller scale, members of Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation said they are already seeing decreased yields from their gardens: "There's no water, so our potatoes are small and don't go as far, so we have to buy potatoes but their prices have gone up too."

"Only the most affluent citizens in Saskatoon can realistically afford to try to avoid the consequences of climate change."

Farmers who participated in conversations across northern Alberta, the Northwest Territories and the Atlantic provinces described the strains that climate change is already placing on their livelihoods. One of these is increased input costs, such as the need to purchase greater amounts of insect netting as pest populations rise and infrastructure that can withstand more intense weather. The timing of the growing season is becoming less and less predictable, and unusual weather patterns force farmers to try to prepare for drought and flooding at the same time. For livestock farmers, their animals suffer during hotter, drier summers. General uncertainty creates a huge problem for farmers trying to maintain a sustainable business model. On top of climate impacts, the reliance on fossil fuels that many farmers experience disproportionately exposes them to the rising cost of fuel.

While consumers worry about climate impacts on food availability, disruptions to harvests or supply chains also represent lost profits for farmers. Even for farmers involved in direct marketing methods like farmers markets, increased input costs mean "farmers are caught in a difficult position of trying to offer affordable food to their community while not undercutting their neighbours, and of course paying their own bills."

Participants across several conversations also noted that the agricultural sector includes many migrant workers, whose livelihoods are even more precarious in the face of climate impacts.

Fisheries and tourism

Fisheries and tourism were two other sectors identified as being vulnerable to climate impacts, resulting in economic consequences for workers and communities. Fisheries are affected by ocean warming and rising sea levels. A PEI participant said that "the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the health of which is essential to our fisheries, is warming at an alarming rate." In Lockeport, climate change has had a short-term benefit to the fishery as warming waters have pushed lobsters northward. There was concern that this has led to unsustainable practices and that the lobster will soon be fished out.

Churchill's ecotourism sector depends on the presence of polar bears, which in turn depends on the freezing of Hudson Bay. Nearby, Flin Flon is facing the closure of its mine—and while there was talk among participants about whether the community could diversify into tourism, they also worried this might only expose their economy to greater

A farm in Stewiacke, NS. Food security was one of the most commonly discussed issues associated with climate change and income insecurity across community conversations.

climate impacts. Participants in Churchill also expected that the tourism sector will be broadly affected as seasons and weather events become more unpredictable.

Participants acknowledged that climate impacts to a central industry can affect an entire community, as other local businesses as well as the local government rely on the revenue it generates—this was especially prevalent in Hinton, Churchill, Lockeport and the Edmonton area. In the Edmonton area conversation, participants acknowledged how revenue from the oil and gas sector has created an affordable yet high standard of living.

Mental health

Participants also spoke about the toll that income insecurity, economic precarity and the climate crisis are taking on their mental health and wellbeing. Conversation participants in both Montreal and Hamilton pointed to how economic precarity negatively impacts mental health and family relationships. A participant from Vancouver said, "I don't have the opportunity to make a livelihood for myself, or my family. With the competitiveness of surviving, I just want to escape reality." A Hamilton participant who works at a community counselling agency said that they have seen an increase in "despair and hopelessness," due to economic changes and the deterioration of social assistance programs combined with "eco-trauma."

Participants described a feeling of hopelessness and helplessness around climate change, knowing that "the situation is only

going to worsen," as a participant from the NFU-led conversation in the Northwest Territories and northern Alberta said. Youth in particular have significant anxiety about their future—one participant in the Yukon called what they and other youth are experiencing a "collective mental health crisis." Youth in Montreal described how anxiety is rooted not only in the climate crisis itself, but also the financial precarity and sense of an unpredictable future that accompany it. Participants in Fredericton who were parents or guardians said they are very worried about their children's' future in terms of both worsening climate impacts and rising economic inequality, while participants in Newfoundland said they struggle to talk with their children about climate change without overwhelming them. Some people expressed hesitation about having children at all.

"It's felt internally when the land changes."

Participants, particularly in rural and remote communities, described how their mental and spiritual health is negatively affected when they see the land changing. In the Tantramar region, the increase in intense and potentially dangerous weather events causes fear and anxiety. A participant from Churchill said, "it affects mental health: connection to land changes…people can't do the things they usually do. Add that to a higher unemployment rate. It's felt internally when the land changes." Yukon youth described climate change as disrupting their relationship to land and animals. It also disrupts recreational activities that are important for

wellbeing—a participant in Hinton expressed despair at the loss of last summer's fishing season. Churchill participants also noted that getting out on the land can be expensive due to high fuel prices among other costs, preventing those who are experiencing financial precarity from experiencing the positive mental health effects of being on the land.

Affordability of environmental choices

In addition to increasing exposure to climate impacts, income insecurity can prevent people from participating in climate solutions. People facing income insecurity often do not have the time or energy to participate in climate solutions. "If I'm hungry, I don't care about the environment. Simple as that," said a St. James Town participant, while a Sooke participant pointed out that "the more we work, the less time we have to learn to grow food."

Many climate solutions require disposable income. As a PEI participant put it, "people who are financially secure have more freedom to invest in programs and goods which help to reduce their carbon footprint. People with fewer resources, less income, are not as free to engage in activities or programs that mitigate the impacts of the climate crisis." A participant from the arts and culture sector conversation said that

Le discours vert est un peu classiste et il est difficile de partager ce sujet avec des personnes ayant une précarité de logement et de revenu / The green discourse is a bit classist. It is complex to address sustainability issues with people who are dealing with income and housing insecurity.

Many federal and provincial climate incentive programs focus on home retrofitting and electric vehicles, and some participants felt this overlooks those who cannot afford to own a home or a car. To participate in a rebate program one must usually be able to afford an upfront investment, which is unrealistic for many. For people who rent, the decision to retrofit is not in their hands—even while some struggle to afford the high heating bills caused by energy inefficient housing.

"In the urban centres, they say get an electric car. Well, in Labrador, what? An electric snowmobile, or an electric outboard motor? We can't."

Electric vehicles were also seen as impractical in rural and remote communities. A Lockeport participant pointed out even if they were affordable, their community lacks any charging stations. A Labrador participant agreed with that, saying "in the urban centres, they say get an electric car. Well, in Labrador, what? An electric snowmobile, or an electric outboard motor? We can't."

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside has a strong sense of community resilience and history of social justice advocacy. Residents of the neighbourhood face disproportionately high levels of housing insecurity.

"It's horrible to be stuck supporting unhealthy, unsustainable products or activities because of poverty."

Participants expressed a desire to support local and environmentally responsible products and companies, especially when it comes to purchasing local and organic food, but these options are less affordable. Some participants also expressed disappointment over how cheaper products are often also more disposable or break more easily, creating more waste. A St. James Town participant said, "it's horrible to be stuck supporting unhealthy, unsustainable products or activities because of poverty."

These barriers are frustrating for those who feel a sense of responsibility to do their part in the fight against climate change, but are limited by their circumstances.

D. Identifying challenges: Wider social, economic and political connections

Many participants described the systemic historical and structural ways in which climate change and income insecurity are connected. Some participants saw both as rooted in the capitalist-colonial system and its current neoliberal iteration. A participant from the conversation organised by One House Many Nations pointed out that Canada itself, "including the current economic system," was founded on white supremacy and land theft. Under capitalism, said a youth

participant in Yukon, "profit, rather than sustainability or resilience, is the ultimate measure of success," and basic necessities such as housing, food and clean water are commodified. Capitalism also drives climate change by promoting wasteful, unnecessary mass consumption to continue to grow the economy. Environmental effects are not accounted for in this system. Participants in the Saskatoon conversation discussed how many environmentally harmful decisions might not be feasible if we received an "invoice from Mother Earth."

"We are observing a neoliberal response from governments and corporations: crises are more frequent and the responsibility is put on individuals, pointing fingers at marginalised people and other parts of the world."

Some participants in the Edmonton area conversation saw their Christian faith as providing an alternative worldview and set of values to materialism. One participant said, "I think the churches could do a lot to say that there are other ways of being fulfilled, quality of life, being with people, relationships, reciprocity. These are all things that we need to relearn." Participants in Hinton spoke in terms of a "balancing act" between the environment and economy,

while acknowledging that an "environment versus economy" narrative was not completely accurate since the two are deeply entwined. In Lockeport, participants thought the economy must operate within "planetary limits," and that it is possible to meet everyone's needs without continual economic growth. In Churchill, participants suggested that a stable economy, and everything families and communities need to thrive, "comes from the land up."

It was also pointed out that the rich create the vast majority of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. "Because of the ways in which the elite control all of the resources on the earth, that is why we have climate change," said a St. James Town participant. A participant from the arts and culture sector conversation said that "we are observing a neoliberal response from governments and corporations: crises are more frequent and the responsibility is put on individuals, pointing fingers at marginalised people and other parts of the world."

The current economic system was seen as driving not only climate change, but also widespread disempowerment. One participant on PEI suggested that income inequality should not be discussed without also discussing inequity and political and economic disempowerment resulting from classism, racism, gender discrimination and other forms of systemic oppression. Some PEI participants described power as concentrated in the hands of institutions, the wealthy and businesses, with poverty and disempowerment not an accident but an outcome of a system that makes it easy for some people

A polar bear awaits the annual ice freeze near Churchill, MB. Churchill's ecotourism sector depends on the presence of polar bears, but changes to the freezing of Hudson Bay threaten its sustainability.

to accumulate wealth at the expense of the vast majority. "We need to remember that inequality has to do with those who have everything as much as it has to do with those who have little," said a PEI participant.

E. Implementing solutions: Government support and political will

Conversation participants were also asked to identify solutions to the challenges they discussed and discuss who is responsible for their implementation. Participants expressed that everyone is responsible for combatting the climate crisis and every individual should "do their part" by making small changes in their daily lives. However, most participants also emphasised that the majority of solutions cannot be left to individuals. Many argued that businesses and corporations must take responsibility for reducing emissions within their industries, and that these efforts have the potential to make a much greater difference in meeting emissions targets than individual actions. Most

of all, participants attributed responsibility to the government and its power to enable and compel emissions reductions across all sectors of society. They emphasised that governments have the power to allocate resources, to tax and fund, and to act at scale. Many participants expressed frustration that they did not see governments stepping up in the way they should. Our community partners in Labrador wrote that "communities in Labrador think of themselves as being resilient, but they do not think that they are supported by their elected officials."

Funding

There was widespread agreement across conversations that governments at all levels, but especially the federal government, must increase funding for the energy transition and for communities. Many were frustrated that badly needed actions related to climate change and income insecurity are framed as too expensive—some pointed out how the rollout of the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and the purchase

of the Trans Mountain pipeline prove that the government can afford to spend on major activities if it chooses to. A participant from Churchill said that "the science is there but we are missing the political will to shift the system. Money needs to go into communities. The middle class and the poor know how to do a lot with a little."

Many participants also discussed how more funding should flow to non-profits, which play a critical role by providing frontline support to people during climate-related emergencies, among other important services. Some suggested the government could raise public funds through more progressive taxation, increasing tax rates for the wealthy and corporations to promote "redistribution of wealth" and fund public programs and services.

Bureaucracy

While there was enthusiasm for government leadership in the areas of policy and funding, conversation participants also pointed out that there must be a reduction in bureaucratic barriers if these processes are to work at the speed and transformative level dictated by the scope of the crises. In Hinton, participants agreed that while there was a need for government involvement, it can also create "anxiety, uncertainty and bureaucracy." A participant in Yukon said, "one thing that's unfortunate that we're seeing is a lot of the funding we're getting [for climate solutions] has strings attached and is not accessible, and there [are] a lot of huge burdens, especially for Yukon First Nations."

Many participants suggested that there needs to be a complete change within the culture of government to include those with fresh perspectives and practices—including by electing more women and BIPOC leaders. Participants also thought governments need to shift toward long-term thinking rather than "band-aids," and toward being pro-active rather than reactive. There is a need for a more intersectional, systems-based approach on the part of governments—instead of working in silos, they should focus on forging more connections between government departments, as well as between government and non-government organisations. A Fredericton participant suggested that community groups, business and government need to talk to each other more, and make sure practices and guidelines are aligned.

Public engagement

Many participants spoke about how governments can better engage with communities and citizens—so that while governments are providing comprehensive, high-level leadership and resources, communities and citizens have meaningful oversight and leadership to ensure that initiatives fit their needs.

Participants in Sault Ste. Marie observed that there is a high degree of apathy in their community, a result of being disempowered and disenfranchised. Some participants in Labrador thought that "government was a thing that happened to them, not for them." Some participants saw governments as more concerned about the priorities of the

corporate and private sectors, the wealthy and the global economy than communities and ordinary people. "Oil and gas prices determine what happens in the province," observed one participant from the NFU-led conversation in the Atlantic region. Some complained that governments permit large-scale and extractive projects that neglect the needs of citizens, especially those who are lower-income. Participants in the One House Many Nations conversation discussed disillusionment with the duty to consult process—one participant said, "we put time into duty to consults…they don't follow their own consultation policy framework."

Participants across several conversations agreed that more meaningful consultation and engagement processes need to be developed. "If you authentically engage the community and empower [community members], there's so much they can do," said a participant from Fredericton. Consultation processes are often experienced as paternalistic, and fail to adequately listen to and address citizens' concerns and priorities. A participant on PEI pointed out that consultations on the transition off of fossil fuels should be widespread and inclusive: "Government is supporting community organisations, like anti-racism organisations, but I'm not sure they're involved in the decision-making process in terms of climate crisis work." Better, wider, and more meaningful engagement processes could help ensure climate solutions adequately address the challenges low-income people and communities may face.

"We put time into duty to consults…they don't follow their own consultation policy framework."

A Sault Ste. Marie participant shared that it comes down to "having enough decision-makers at levels of government [who] are…willing to confront corporations and not to be bought out." Some participants who had been involved in advocacy and other community-based work spoke about how success was often linked to having an ally in government. In the PEI conversation the provincial government was viewed as an asset, perhaps due to the number of "close personal connections possible in a small jurisdiction between the people and political leaders… people feel that knowing their politicians, they have access to political power." Some conversations pointed to how implementing a proportional representation voting system could ensure those in government actually reflect voters' choices.

F. Implementing solutions: Broad policy measures

Just transition

Some participants saw governments playing a unique and important role in leading a just transition out of the fossil fuel economy.

Some, including those in Hinton, Newfoundland and the Edmonton area, discussed a just transition in terms of supporting workers in the fossil fuel sector,

including income support, retraining and bridge programs and early retirement support. Participants in the Edmonton conversation discussed the anxiety oil and gas workers face, including fears they may be too old for retraining, or not able to make the same amount of income in a different industry. A just transition was also framed as a way of protecting entire communities whose economies may rely on the fossil fuel sector: "Transition must not destroy communities," said a participant in BC.

Other conversations focused on how a just transition should strive to ensure that everyone has access to affordable new forms of energy and that "no one is left behind." For participants in the Yukon, this meant making sure new technologies and sources of energy are designed for a remote northern context. A Yukon youth participant said that governments have the responsibility to make sure everyone can participate in climate solutions: "to make the changes that need to happen at the rate that they need to happen, there [are] a lot of economic supports that are required." This sentiment was echoed in the West Kootenays conversations. One suggestion from the Yukon conversation to address the problem with rebate-based incentive programs was to offer grants instead for retrofits or electric vehicles.

Participants also discussed the need for a just transition that includes supports for specific sectors, such as agriculture. Farmers need access to capital funds to electrify their operations and reduce emissions. The NFU-led conversations highlighted that farmers cannot afford the costs associated with

Fishing boats in Lockeport, NS. The community's economy is highly reliant on the lobster fishery.

the lower-carbon transition on their own given how tight margins are to begin with. There was a desire to see the government help make farming a "desirable alternative" to the extractive sector in more communities, including compensating farmers using agroecology practices that sequester carbon and provide other ecological services.

A few conversations pointed to the broad need for job creation and access to training or retraining. Participants in St. James Town thought the just transition could provide retraining opportunities for immigrants and newcomers, and also called for better recognition of immigrants' existing skills. Some participants shared experiences facing discrimination during job searches due to being a person of colour or Indigenous—one person said they find it hard to support calls for "green job creation" when they do not believe they will have access to those jobs.

Two groups discussed the need for positions – either within government or funded by government – to coordinate transition efforts. Participants in the Hamilton conversation discussed how a just transition would require coordination between government, industry, research institutions and other sectors of society.

Basic income

Many groups discussed basic income as a government-led measure that could play an extremely positive role in addressing inequality and income insecurity as well as the
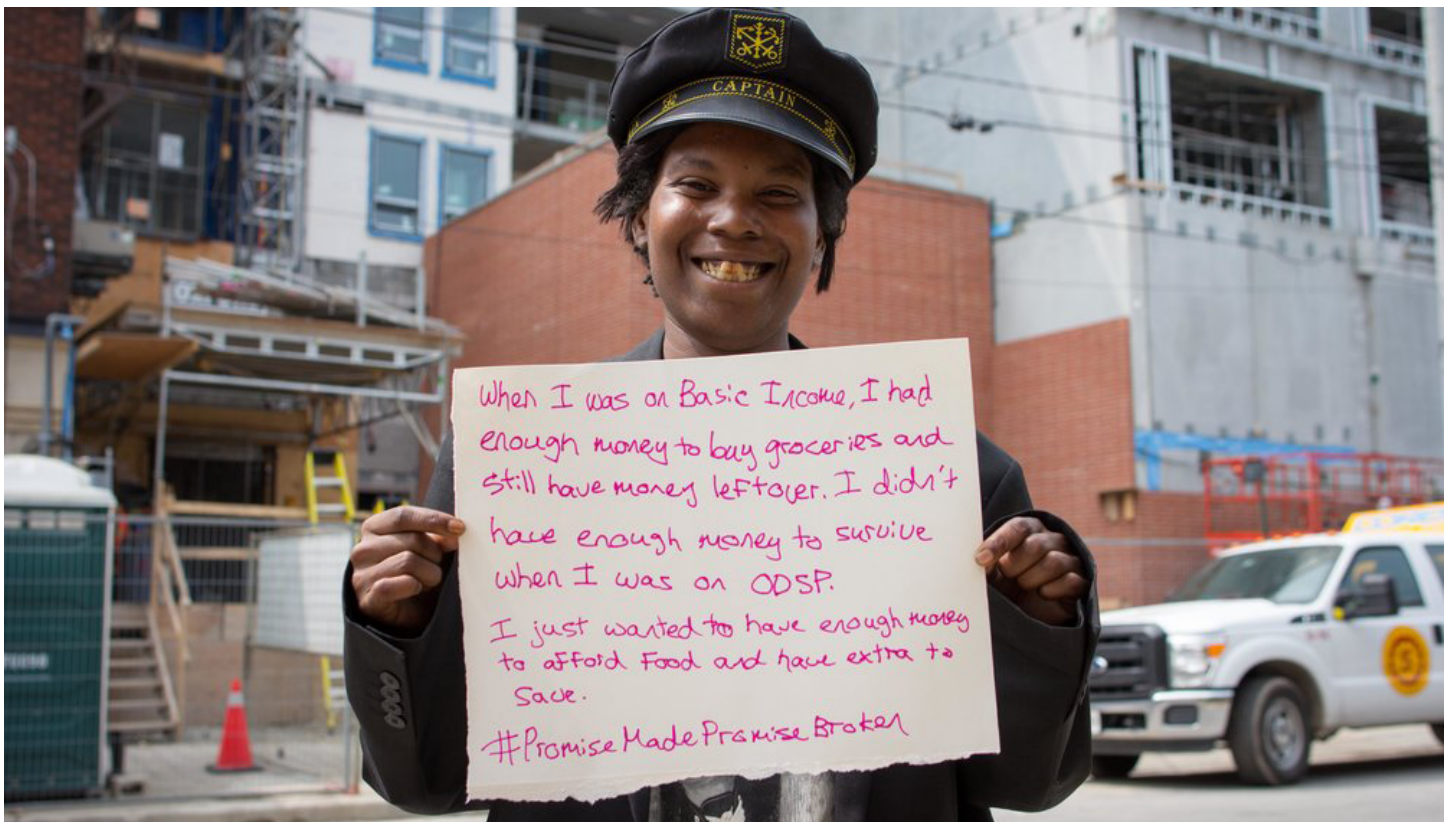
Photographer Jessie Golem's Humans of Basic Income photo series amplifies the stories of participants in the Ontario Basic Income Pilot program, which ran from 2017 until it was prematurely cancelled in 2019.

transition off fossil fuels. Some participants were already engaged in advocacy around basic income or were aware of initiatives in their region. While some participants expressed hesitation, many saw a basic income as desirable.

"I like the idea of having more money to spend as a safety net, but I do not like the idea of having to depend on the government."

Participants described the ways in which a basic income could help communities adapt to climate change and the transition off fossil fuels. Conversation participants in Lockeport highlighted how a basic income could support those with land-based livelihoods that are vulnerable to climate impacts, such as fishing. A basic income could help alleviate risks in the agricultural sector as it adapts to climate impacts and tests new approaches to farming without fossil fuels. A participant in St. James Town said that a basic income "allows you to retrain yourself" in order to access better-paying or more climate-friendly employment. Participants also thought a basic income could help people prepare for climate-related disasters, help them afford environmentally friendly activities such as purchasing local food, and give them time to get involved in environmental and social justice issues in their communities.

Other positive outcomes included helping people to meet their basic needs around food, housing and transportation.

Participants discussed how a basic income could create more dignity, improve mental and physical health and create more time for leisure, volunteering and spending time with friends and family. Younger participants said it could help them with schooling, finding meaningful work and renting or purchasing their own homes.

More broadly, participants thought a basic income could boost local economies and create savings within the healthcare and justice systems. In St. James Town, basic income was described as a possible alternative to the demands and limitations of grant-based funding for non-profits and other initiatives.

Some participants also expressed doubt and caution around basic income. Participants in Labrador wondered whether a basic income would be enough to cover the high cost of living in northern communities. Participants in the Yukon, as well as those in the arts and culture sector, cautioned that a basic income should not be used to justify austerity policies and defunding or eliminating other social welfare measures. One participant in the conversations with urban Indigenous communities in BC said, "I like the idea of having more money to spend as a safety net, but I do not like the idea of having to depend on the government."

A few groups also named other ways that governments could counter income insecurity, including addressing unemployment caused by the pandemic and legislating a higher minimum wage.

G. Implementing solutions: Strengthening communities

Specific solutions for addressing climate action and income security were overwhelmingly focused on strengthening local economies as well as community-based programs and services, initiatives and networks.

Community-based economies

Some participants described the need to shift to a "circular economy" model that would move away from a system of "take-make-waste" (in the words of Yukon participants) toward one designed to minimise waste and maximise efficient use of resources. Participants in Sault Ste. Marie and the Tantramar region spoke about "caring, sharing and gift economies," which would create ways for valuing and exchanging goods and services without using money.

Participants wanted to see more local businesses and industries supported by fair-paying jobs. They expressed support for cooperatively structured businesses and Indigenous-owned businesses. Participants imagined local industries based on the sustainable harvest of resources, such as forests or fisheries, under local ownership and management. Local economic development could also focus on value-added industries, suggested participants in Sooke.

Some participants, particularly in the Churchill and One House Many Nations conversations, discussed the importance of youth being able to stay in their communities

for education and employment. A participant in the One House Many Nations conversation said that Indigenous youth need better opportunities for on-reserve education, training and jobs. They suggested that training and education programs should include stipends or funding for students in order to allow them to cover basic needs for themselves (and their families) while studying. "First Nation-led community colleges that are ready to work on community issues – housing and food and other needs – with funding for projects and student training allowances would provide the resilience these communities need," they said.

Several conversations touched on the need for economic diversification, particularly Hinton, Lockeport and Flin Flon. A participant in Hinton discussed how former coal and oil and gas workers could be moved into the alternative energy sector or other emerging industries in Hinton that "[utilise] the talents that we already have." The "capacity to shift" was seen as key to resilience in Hinton. Participants in Lockeport noted how the entire community is economically dependent on the fishery, especially as a small town with a small tax base. One participant said that "we need to be thinking incredibly hard about how to not depend on the lobster. We need to do more preemptive work."

While not explicitly focused on economic diversification, participants in the Yukon and Churchill conversations discussed how limited choices for good employment sometimes force people into extractive work: "People here want to care about the environment, but are forced into an extractive approach

to earning a living," said one participant in Churchill. One challenge with climate-focused economic development, said a BC conversation participant, is that it can prioritise the development of highly skilled sectors like green tech rather than more accessible or traditional sectors. In Shirley, community resilience was connected to a diverse local economy—one participant shared that "if we are trying to be local and sustainable, we need all of us, the nurse, the architect, the carpenter, everybody."

"People here want to care about the environment, but are forced into an extractive approach to earning a living."

Participants in the Churchill conversation suggested that well-paid jobs in community-oriented sectors and businesses could give people the freedom to choose that kind of work over "big business," while participants in Montreal thought that building local economies could help increase community resilience and self-sufficiency within a global economy that is controlled by "huge multinationals." Participants in the Shirley conversation discussed how government assistance would be required to subsidise local businesses and industries and aid in job creation. The traditional economy that supports many Yellowknife participants already relies on subsidies from the territorial and federal governments, and there was concern that as "governments transition and priorities alter," those livelihoods would be left behind.

Other suggestions for strengthening communities beyond the local economies included more local medical services for smaller communities, more community green spaces, more public spaces for recreation and gatherings and the removal of barriers to participation in community services and programs. There was also much discussion across conversations of the need for individuals to get involved in their community, and the role that organisations and local institutions play in supporting climate and income security initiatives. Many conversations pointed to positive examples that already exist in their community, suggesting that existing strengths should be built upon.

PEI participants saw the Island's strong informal networks as one such asset. Some called for more initiative on the part of institutions such as universities, schools and faith groups. Collaboration to "build new alliances and share resources" between community organisations with different groups of diverse ethnic and cultural identities was identified as important by participants in the Tantramar region. Churchill participants discussed how a few extremely active "community champions" can carry a substantial amount of community responsibility, and that more people need to be brought into community work to avoid burnout.

Food security solutions

The local food system is an important component of the community-based economy. Strengthening local food systems could help make food more accessible and affordable

PEI's Next Generation Farmers and Fishers photography category winner by Krista Shaw. To build a sustainable agricultural sector, support and opportunities for young farmers is essential.

for everyone while decreasing agricultural emissions and the exposure to climate impacts and delivery disruptions inherent in global supply chains. Farmers pointed out that this would have to start with increasing access to land for new farmers, including through models like commons and land trusts.

Strengthening the local food economy could include more use of direct distribution measures like community-supported agriculture programs and farm-to-community programs, as well as collective marketing structures like local food processors, cooperative stores selling local foods and regional branding. This would require familiarising consumers with the idea of eating more locally and seasonally—perhaps through public education and awareness campaigns about the advantages of local food. Participants thought that strengthening local food economies would help make healthy, local food more accessible, shorten supply chains and

decrease the risk of climate disruption. Participants talked about existing local food initiatives in their communities, including a community hub in Sault Ste. Marie that teaches people to grow, preserve and cook their own food, a Yellowknife initiative called Harvester's Table that allows home gardeners to sell extra produce at their local farmers' market, and the St. James Town Community Co-op's OASIS Food Hub, a multifaceted initiative for urban food production that currently includes a community garden, a food-buying club and more.

Participants also discussed the initiatives they would like to see in their communities. A Tantramar region participant suggested exploring "hydroponics, all-season greenhouses, community gardens, food forests [and] microfarms." Encouragement and education around backyard gardening was also discussed. One Fredericton participant said that "[community gardens] can help some people get a sense of control in the

face of climate change impacts and income insecurity." This can support not only a sense of individual resilience and empowerment, but community-level resilience through support and connection. Participants in the St. James Town conversation also discussed how much of the land that could be used for community gardens is owned by large real estate corporations and developers with other priorities.

Participants in the West Kootenays conversations discussed community kitchens, while in Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation there was interest in the community raising cows, chickens, ducks, buffalo and beehives. Support for hunting and snaring was also important. Beardy's and Okemasis participants suggested that the community health clinic could grow essentials (such as potatoes and onions) to give away, and imagined a program connecting Elders and students in order to share gardening space and knowledge.

Housing solutions

Many participants discussed the importance of addressing challenges around housing. This includes addressing existing issues around the right to good-quality and affordable housing as well as transitioning homes off of fossil fuels and protecting them from climate impacts.

Many participants agreed that housing needs to be available and affordable for all. Suggestions for achieving this included expanding the public affordable housing supply, changing the definition of "affordable" housing to be more inclusive of those in the bottom percentiles of earners and implementing stricter rent control.

Participants on PEI and in Saskatoon thought that housing – perhaps even environmentally friendly housing – should be understood as a right. Participants in the One House Many Nations conversation said that while Indigenous communities need new homes urgently, it is also imperative that any new housing has proper heating, cooling and filtration systems to ensure it is comfortable to live in as climate impacts intensify. Fredericton participants suggested the application process for energy retrofit programs needs to be simplified to be more accessible. Others thought that there should be standards and enforcement to ensure rental housing is not only sufficiently heated, but also sufficiently cooled in summer, as well as standards for energy efficiency. Fredericton participants noted that improved energy efficiency would help reduce energy costs for renters and homeowners alike.

Renewable energy solutions

Communities were interested in transitioning to renewable energy, especially through "community-based energy systems." Lockeport participants discussed how community or publicly owned renewable power could help ensure electricity becomes affordable and accessible for everyone.
The most desirable form of renewable energy is dependent on the geography of the community—some coastal communities discussed tidal power or wind turbines, while Hinton participants were interested in

geothermal and biomass and Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation discussed wind and solar power. Lockeport participants discussed hydropower, but didn't want it to harm local ecosystems. In Labrador, many participants were concerned over the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project and methylmercury contamination of local fish populations.

Participants in Lockeport also noted that despite some provinces' existing incentive programs, solar panels still need to be made more affordable. They also discussed renewable energy infrastructure installation and maintenance as a source of local employment, expressing interest in solar panel manufacturing as a new industry for their community. Flin Flon participants discussed the possibility of a local hydrogen industry.

Transportation solutions

Participants agreed that their community transportation systems could be redesigned to be more affordable and accessible and produce fewer emissions.

The Wind Energy Institute of Canada on the northwest tip of PEI has been conducting wind energy research since 1981.

As previously discussed, electric vehicle rebates do not benefit lower-income households. There was widespread agreement that additional focus should be placed on public and active transit. Participants on PEI said that increased public subsidies could help make public transit affordable, and that the public sector could lead in the electrification of transportation by purchasing electric buses for school and public transportation. Participants in BC discussed the success of the free-fare transit for youth program, adding that there is demand for free-fare transit for low-income residents as well.

Participants in the West Kootenays thought that ride-sharing, especially for low-income and seniors, is another option worth exploring in rural areas. Some rural communities suggested affordable publicly funded shuttle buses or other approaches to improving intercommunity public transit networks.

H. Implementing solutions: Processes and principles

In order to move toward transformative community-based solutions, participants pointed out certain processes and principles would be necessary.

Education and awareness

Participants emphasised the importance of building awareness and knowledge around the facts of climate change and income insecurity in order to create solidarity within communities as well as political will. A Hinton participant explained that

[People want] to be familiarised with these topics [and understand] that they're not as polarising and toxic as they're portrayed in [the] media or in certain groups. We're all part of the Hinton community, and we would like to see [its] betterment and a stronger community.

Hinton participants said that it is important for people to understand how climate measures (especially potentially divisive ones like carbon pricing) actually work, and that building greater understanding might help people find common ground. Participants in Saskatoon said education is also needed around government decision-making to enable people to engage in effective advocacy.

Participants saw schools as one avenue for education. They discussed the possibility of incorporating teachings on climate change and environmental practices as well as values around community and collectivity over individualism, Indigenous history and worldviews, and politics and advocacy into curriculums. Participants in the PEI conversation thought this would help these practices and values become "normalised" throughout society. Youth participants in Montreal also pointed out that "adults, industries and companies" are the ones in power right now, so education and awareness-building must also focus there.

Farmers in multiple NFU-led conversations pointed out that people of all ages must be more educated about where their food comes from and the importance of local and sustainable food systems. This could also encourage more young people to become

farmers. A farmer from the Atlantic region said,

There really is a disconnect, I think, between food and farming and what a lot of young folks are learning in schools. I think we need more opportunities to reconnect all of us, but especially young people, with the natural world and with growing food and eating food that they've grown and building that into the education system, and then creating more opportunities for intergenerational talking and mentorship.

Cooperation

Cooperation at all scales was identified as another important principle—the sharing of more practices and knowledge, and building of partnerships between communities, between regions, even across the country and internationally. "Coastal issues are shared all over the world," pointed out a participant in Lockeport.

On a more regional scale, a possible outcome of the Churchill conversation was the creation of a "directory" capturing current climate and income initiatives in northern Manitoba communities to increase learning, replication and opportunities for collaboration. No one community has all the knowledge or solutions.

Participants in the One House Many Nations conversation discussed their group's structure as a good example of diverse, grassroots-led collaboration that allows for creative problem-solving:

A cool thing about One House Many Nations is that we're a very diverse team, so we're thinking about these problems…in three-dimensional ways….We continually build to find root causes, identify the existing problems, and try to bypass them to create something. For me, it is centring our grassroots people who have the autonomy to move forward and solve these problems together in the way they, the community, see fit. We do not prescribe solutions; we work to help facilitate the solutions.

Building broader understanding around issues like colonialism and systemic racism was seen as crucial for enabling cooperation on both an individual and institutional level. "How does this group, who already supports these issues, speak to and engage with folks who may not be familiar [with], care [about], prioritise or value these things?" asked one participant in BC.

BC participants also talked about cooperation in terms of finding common ground: "How can we find common ground and get more people onside, even if they don't necessarily agree on every single one of these issues? [We need to] focus on what unifies us, like housing for all."

Activism

Some groups discussed the importance of engaging in activism and advocacy on many of these issues, and many agreed this is an important role people can play in creating change beyond individual lifestyle-based choices. A St. James Town participant said that "as a community, we need to build capacity about how to put pressure on the political class." Other ideas related to activism included learning about "levers for change," learning from past social movements that have occurred locally, nationally or internationally and participating in social movements like the climate strike (which was cited as a huge cause for hope by youth participants in Montreal). Montreal participants discussed many examples of activism in their city, including how these activities "promote the emergence of networks of communities while fostering individual involvement and hope." Participants in the One House Many Nations and BC urban Indigenous communities conversations highlighted that Indigenous resistance to fossil fuel extractive projects has been critical in keeping fossil fuels in the ground.

Participants also recognized that it is important to avoid burnout when trying to engage in activism on top of all the requirements of daily life. A PEI participant pointed out that as with other environmental solutions, "when people are struggling to meet their basic needs, they don't usually have the time or energy – the freedom – to engage in campaigns or activities aimed at influencing public policy."

"How can we find common ground and get more people onside, even if they don't necessarily agree on every single one of these issues? [We need to] focus on what unifies us."

Intersectionality

Intersectionality, and prioritising leadership from a wide range of voices, was identified as another important principle in any climate change and income insecurity work.

Participants discussed how those who hold systemically marginalised identities may be more exposed to income insecurity and climate impacts. Solutions have to be aimed at addressing both inequality and climate change together, and people facing economic barriers and/or who hold these identities must be centred in the design and implementation of solutions.

"Indigenous youth are the youngest and fastest-growing population in Canada and Canada needs to listen to what we have to say."

Many participants also spoke about the importance of having youth participation and leadership in climate and poverty work. "Indigenous youth are the youngest and fastest growing population in Canada and Canada needs to listen to what we have to say," said a participant from the conversations with urban Indigenous communities in BC.

This diversification of engagement and leadership must happen at institutional levels, but also within community work and social movements. Participants in the PEI

Hundreds gather at an anti-racism rally at Vancouver's Canada Place in June 2020.

conversation said that aligning on different issues (basic income, food security, affordable housing, migrant workers' rights, ability rights, racial justice and more) and around common values and goals can strengthen grassroots work.

Decolonisation and Indigenous self-determination are extremely important parts of this work. Specific measures suggested by Indigenous participants included implementing UNDRIP, improving processes of free, prior and informed consent over any development in traditional territory, addressing hunting restrictions and ensuring Indigenous representatives are at the table during planning and decision-making processes broadly.

In Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation and Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, participants spoke about the huge importance of passing on

traditional knowledge and ways of life to young people within their communities. Other majority settler conversations spoke about the importance of Indigenous leadership and recognising that Indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems have much to offer when it comes to living within the boundaries of planet earth.

I. Conclusion

While the conversations generated a wide-ranging set of ideas, some patterns stood out and appeared in many community contexts. It was clear that financial precarity exposes people to more intense impacts from climate change while at the same time decreasing their ability to participate in solutions. For that reason, participants wanted to see climate solutions that were grounded in community-based economies and low-carbon food and transportation systems and energy-efficient affordable housing. Much more leadership and support is needed from governments of all levels to enact policies that can provide the basis for transformative change. Outside government, there is a need for activism that places pressure on governments and corporations to act as well as greater education and awareness-raising. In all of these endeavours, leadership from marginalised voices is critically important.
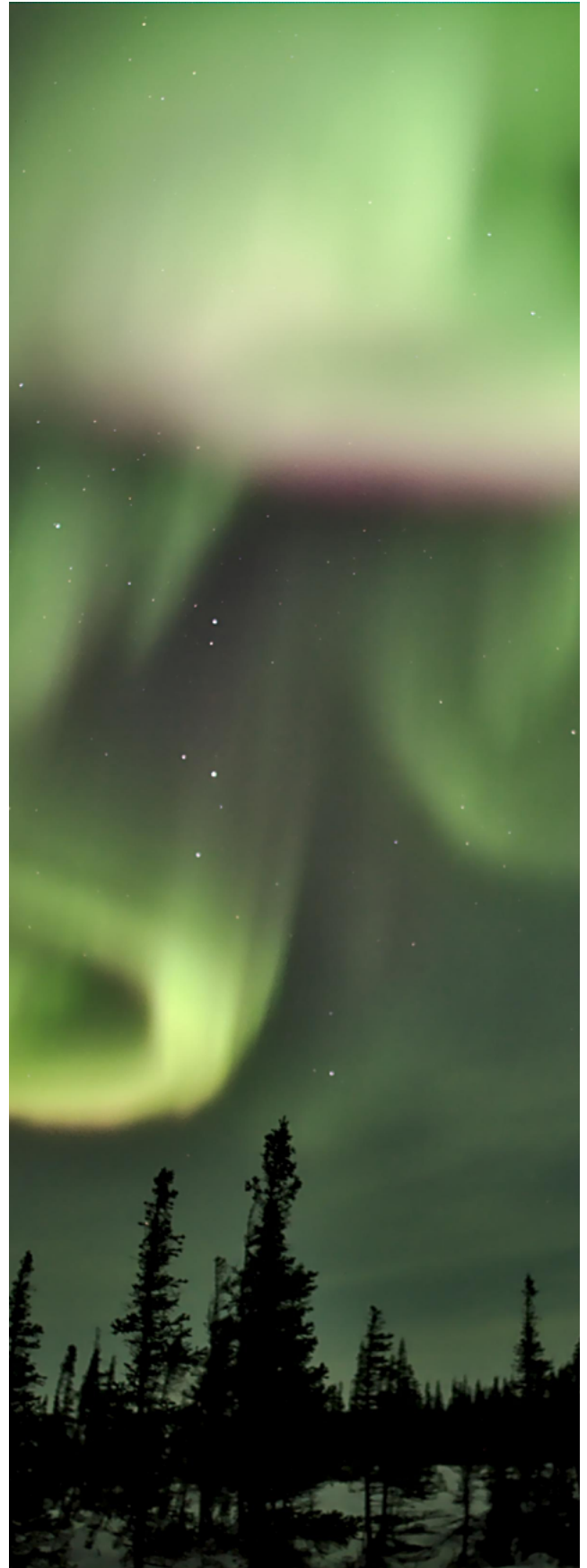
Northern lights over Churchill, MB.

6. What we heard: What do community partners think needs to happen next?

This section focuses on opinions and ideas shared by community partners rather than conversation participants. Our partners identified a wide range of potential actions that could be taken in their communities to address the problems and solutions identified by conversation participants, which can be loosely grouped into the following categories.

Continue the conversation by conducting similar discussions with larger and broader groups of people, including with local officials.

Form strategic partnerships with surrounding regions or municipalities, other grassroots groups, across social movements, across sectors and with community groups who are experienced in engaging with vulnerable individuals and communities.

Create educational opportunities for community members, including by way of public education curriculum to strengthen understandings of climate change, income insecurity and their links.

Form community groups focused on the intersections of climate change and income insecurity or poverty.

Conduct community engagement campaigns in order to share knowledge of existing opportunities or initiatives related to climate change and income insecurity, as well as to form mutual aid networks.

Create hired or volunteer positions related to building resilience around climate change and income insecurity.

Secure financial supports aimed at meeting community members' basic needs so that they have increased capacity to take action on climate change. These include a living wage; affordable food, housing and transit; deeper investments in energy conservation efforts and more.

Conduct community-led activities aimed at building local resilience, including establishing community gardens, creating regional climate response plans and building public cooling/warming/evacuation centres. Our partner from Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation highlighted the importance of promoting activities such as companion planting and creating opportunities for band members to work with their hands and practice reciprocity with the land.

Conduct research regarding current climate initiatives in the community and their effectiveness, renewable energy, risk maps, and more. Establish community-university-systems research hubs where possible.

Advocate for community needs by engaging in conversations and processes that direct policy, pressuring elected officials and taking part in grassroots activism.

Implement Indigenous-led solutions by centring Indigenous leadership and worldviews, especially in the North. Several partners emphasised that solutions to climate change and income insecurity must be accompanied by acknowledgment of their deep-rooted connections to colonialism and violence against Indigenous peoples and action on reconciliation and decolonisation. Our partner from Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation highlighted the importance of reconnecting to the land and returning to traditional livelihoods disrupted by Western colonial education.

Dismantle oppressive systems so that the people most impacted by climate change and income insecurity have a seat at the decision-making table. Our partner who organised conversations with urban Indigenous communities in BC noted that Indigenous people are disproportionately affected by climate change and income insecurity impacts such as housing insecurity, intergenerational addiction issues and dependency on government supports. They emphasised the importance of systemic changes that create the conditions for Indigenous self-governance and reconnection to traditional ways. For instance, they reported that the "misuse of the Distinctions Based Approach to exclude the non-status distinction in Treaty Rights result[s] in higher rates of death, overdose, disease and child apprehension."

An Every Child Matters Rally held at the Art Gallery of Vancouver in July 2021. Rallies were organised across Canada to honour the children, families, communities and Nations harmed by Canada's residential school system.

7. What we learned: How did what we heard guide our conclusions and recommendations?

We asked our partners to share in their Community Summary Reports some of their thoughts on the effects of the conversations and what they learned from speaking with community members. Their responses informed our four main themes:

1 | People in Canada, especially those experiencing income insecurity or other forms of financial precarity, are increasingly exposed to climate impacts but are often unable to participate in proportionate climate solutions due to systemic barriers.

Many of our partners shared that while participants showed interest in taking action on climate change, income security and community resilience, their actual capacity to do so is limited by time, funding, resources, personnel capacity and more—as described extensively in section five of this report. The National Farmers' Union reported that "farmers don't have the time or money to incorporate the positive agroecological and regenerative approaches they'd like to." Other partners shared evidence of mental and emotional exhaustion among their participants, hindering the formation of new initiatives.

Our partner who led conversations with arts and culture workers across Canada noted that

What was surprising is the level of awareness and knowledge that a majority [of participants] demonstrated versus their limited ability to engage tangibly and sustainably with these issues in their lives and practices. This undoubtedly remains one of the biggest challenges we face in terms of tackling the climate emergency.

This echoes similar statements made by many community partners. The majority of participants across conversations were intimately familiar with the effects that climate change and income insecurity have on their own lives as well as the resilience of their communities at large, but felt that without funding, support or leadership from government the power they had to implement positive change was limited.

2 | People want their communities to be resilient in the face of climate change and income insecurity. They are interested in solutions that make tangible improvements to their lives, including accessible and affordable locally grown food, energy efficient housing and public transportation as well as strengthened local economies, services and infrastructure.

Across communities, there is a clear appetite for governments to implement comprehensive solutions in areas like food security, affordable housing, basic income, energy efficiency upgrades and more, informed by

meaningful consultation with (and involvement from) community members.

When partners shared some of the solutions identified by community members, they were often things that would improve life for individuals, families and communities as a whole. Localising food production not only decreases the climate impact of the agricultural sector, but it also increases the affordability of food, decreases reliance on imports and external forces and allows community members to experience the mental and physical health benefits of growing food. Equitable access to affordable public transportation gives people agency, decreases fuel and vehicle costs and allows them to choose a climate-friendlier solution. These changes are not sacrifices, but rather opportunities.

Our partner in Yellowknife highlighted the importance of traditional knowledge as central to creating change in the North, reporting:

Through this conversation, our understanding of the role and importance of traditional knowledge, wisdoms, and approaches has been further solidified. Specifically, relying on traditional approaches can help us re-imagine the social, cultural, political, and economic structures that currently dominate the NWT. This would entail a transition from social, cultural, political, and cultural unjust ways of operating while working to ensure an economy and climate that works for all in the NWT [...] Specifically, participants shared the importance of locally created solutions voiced by local actors to address the relations between climate change and economic insecurities in their home communities.

3 | People are sceptical of their ability to take meaningful action on climate change and income insecurity because of their limited influence on structural and systemic issues when compared to governments and corporations. Many feel that individual actions are limited in their effectiveness and that governments are not taking sufficient action to address these problems.

Many of our partners reported a sense of scepticism about individuals' or communities' ability to implement change on their own. Participants across communities expressed desire for heightened government action and accountability (at all levels) and a deprioritisation of corporate interests in status-quo economic and environmental conditions.

"It's not like we're lacking in the people wanting to make these changes, we just aren't the people who have the power to do it."

Several partners mentioned a sense of hopelessness, apathy or lack of trust in institutional structures. Our Labrador partner shared that "there is a sense of hopelessness, as though nothing the participants could do would make a meaningful difference and they did not have faith in governments to make decisions that would positively impact their communities."

As our Sault Ste. Marie partner put it, "it's not like we're lacking in the people wanting to make these changes, we just aren't the people who have the power to do it."

Communities across Canada are eager to take action on climate change and income insecurity, but need sufficient funding, resources and supports in order to do so.

4 | Communities are ready to take action but lack political and economic agency to effect the scale of change that is needed. Governments must respond to this challenge with transformative policies that address the root causes of climate change and income insecurity while empowering communities to take self-directed action.

Several partners expressed that they require funding or other forms of institutional support in order to be able to take action in their communities. They reported that while participants demonstrated knowledge of what needs to be done and clear appetites for change, there was a general consensus that governments need to provide sufficient resources and funding in order for transformative change to take place. Below is a sample of excerpts from select Community Summary Reports that support this idea:

Atlantic region (NFU-led): Farmers are resilient and tend to adapt quickly to environmental challenges, though they are personally absorbing the added costs. There is a need for financial support.

Churchill: There is a unified and significant appetite for some form of leadership within the communities to work towards solutions, and this takes funding as community members are already at capacity.

Shirley: Participants were passionate and optimistic about the capacity of the Shirley community to work together to address these concerns but also acknowledged the need for government support to create local jobs.

British Columbia (Columbia Institute): It's clear local elected officials are aware of what is needed in their communities to address these issues, but they lack resources and strong leadership.

Across these communities, and no doubt in many others throughout the country, people want to be resilient, to care for each other, to build their communities, to transition to healthier, happier, more secure and sustainable ways of living together. But the stories we've heard show that there is a struggle between needs and resources, ambition and capacity, despair and hope, and a search for government leadership that listens and acts quickly in an urgent race against the clock.

8. Recommendations

This set of recommendations – created by the Green Resilience Project team based on what we heard from community partners and participants – are the ones we consider to have the greatest, most immediate and lasting impact to empower positive transformations and strengthen resilience in communities across Canada. They enable many other recommendations on specific issues raised by participants across conversations to be more effective. Most importantly, they create the conditions for hope, care and collective prosperity.

1 | **Incorporate basic income into Canada's plan for a just transition.** Canada's just transition needs to support and strengthen all people and communities. Rather than a siloed approach that treats specific sectors or climate disasters as discrete entities, we need proactive policies that enable everyone to thrive in and contribute to an equitable low-carbon future. In addition to important, oft-discussed aspects of a just transition like upskilling and retraining for workers in sectors whose jobs are impacted by climate change, a comprehensive just transition plan must also include a basic income guarantee.

Basic income creates the financial security people need to support themselves and their families. It gives them the time and energy to retrain, reskill or transition to new jobs, to engage in care work, to pursue innovative solutions to the challenges they're facing and to meaningfully contribute to their communities. Findings across community conversations demonstrate that people want to support each other in taking action on the urgent economic and environmental challenges they face, but lack both the personal and structural capacity to do so. Basic income strengthens community resilience by framing wellbeing as a collective responsibility rather than an individual one. It gives people the capacity to help each other and to take action on the issues they care about. It can play a crucial role in ensuring that no one is left behind in the course of a rapid environmental and economic transition.

2 | **Design income security and climate policy solutions to focus on improving individual and collective quality of life.** Across communities, we heard that people want to be part of transformative environmental and economic change but are limited by time, money and other structural barriers. People who are already struggling to support themselves and their families cannot be expected to reduce home energy consumption, retrofit their housing, purchase an electric vehicle or take other actions that require spending or sacrifice. All policy solutions that aim to address climate change or income insecurity must be framed in terms of opportunity and gain, not loss and pain.

3 **Empower people and communities with the tools and resources they need to build or strengthen resilience.** Communities are experts on their own experiences of climate change and income insecurity. They already know which actions would improve individual and collective wellbeing in a period of significant environmental and economic change. As such, community-level transformative acts must be led by communities themselves, moving beyond models of cursory engagement or consultation. This includes ensuring communities have meaningful control over development that takes place on their land. Community agency must be facilitated through appropriate and accessible policy, funding and other forms of government support.

A consistent message from our conversations was that communities are not benefiting from status-quo economic, social and political conditions. It is imperative that government leaders at all levels recognize that with sufficient resources, communities can create conditions for effective, transformative action on climate change and income insecurity. Given Canada's history of colonialism and cultural genocide against Indigenous peoples, working toward decolonisation and reconciliation for the harms inflicted by multiple institutional and individual actors is central to this work. Implementing the Calls to Justice identified by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, including the full adoption and implementation of UNDRIP, is an essential step for the federal government.

Several partners who hosted conversations with Indigenous people and communities emphasised the importance of self-determination and governance in all matters relating to or affecting Indigenous people. This includes free, prior and informed consent on all activities affecting Indigenous people's rights and land, ending the criminalisation of Indigenous land defenders and centring traditional values into multilateral decision making. A participant in one of these conversations shared that any possible future that provides balance for Indigenous communities must be rooted in Indigenous worldviews, priorities, resources and economies. Ongoing, self-reflexive work in these areas is central to empowering communities to take action on climate change, income insecurity and much more.

4 **Ensure that corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.** Our recommendations are urgent and doable—but only if we are prepared to invest in them. If we are to address long-standing systemic crises like climate change, income insecurity, racial and gender inequality and other forms of systemic oppression, we must undertake major federal tax reform. We cannot justify the continued existence of tax loopholes, offshore tax havens and shrinking corporate tax rates—every person and every corporation must pay their fair share. The responsibility to pay for the changes we need should not rest on the shoulders of those who can least afford it.

9. Conclusions

Where do we go from here?

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that we must take a holistic approach to resolving large-scale issues and injustices—that we cannot meaningfully confront climate change, income insecurity or systemic marginalisation without confronting all of them together.

Our conversations demonstrated that communities want to build resilience, but lack the capacity and the political power to implement solutions on par with the scale of the challenges they face. Those who participated in our conversations are interested in solutions that improve their quality of life and strengthen their communities—things like access to affordable, locally grown food, energy-efficient affordable housing, robust public transit systems and stronger localised economies, services and infrastructure.

Governments must address this problem by enacting transformative policies that address the root causes of climate change and income insecurity. As the ideas shared by our conversation participants demonstrate, it is impossible to separate the causes and effects of both issues. As such, solutions must be focused on increasing quality of life by easing economic precarity and creating conditions for localised climate action that benefits communities. It is essential that this process shifts political and economic agency to the communities that are affected by these issues through ongoing engagement and creation of leadership opportunities.

The future of the Green Resilience Project

This report will be shared with our community partners and made publicly available on our website.

Going forward, members of the Green Resilience Project steering committee will incorporate this report into ongoing research and advocacy on the importance of connecting climate and income insecurity solutions. This will include presentations on report findings within education settings and to government.

Finally, we hope that these conversations can continue across Canada. To help facilitate this, we've made a copy of our conversation materials publicly available under a Creative Commons licence. Anyone is welcome to use these materials to organise a community conversation in their own region. For more information, see Appendix C.

Acknowledgments

We are incredibly grateful to all of our community partners and conversation participants who shared their thoughts and expertise with us. This report is the reflection of the hard work and participation of hundreds of people across the country.

In 2017, Iron & Earth partnered with Louis Bull Tribe to deliver a five-day solar training program in which fossil fuel workers and Indigenous workers completed a hands-on solar installation at the Louis Bull Tribe's daycare centre. Iron & Earth organises short-term upskilling and retaining programs to help workers prepare for careers in solar and wind energy. Photo by David Dodge, GreenEnergyFutures.ca

10. Appendices

A. Project contributors

Steering Committee:

Mitchell Beer, Energy Mix Productions - Project Lead
Sheila Regehr, Basic Income Canada Network - Project Lead

Susan Abells, Coalition Canada Basic Income - Revenu de base
Dr. Robert Case, Social Development Studies - Renison University College, affiliated with the University of Waterloo
Kendal David, Basic Income Canada Youth Network, student - School of Social Work, Carleton University
Kendra Downe, Basic Income Canada Youth Network, student - Human Environment Program, Concordia University
Dr. James Mulvale, Faculty of Social Work - University of Manitoba
Pierre Stevens, Basic Income Canada Network, Basic Income Nova Scotia, Department of Mathematics and Statistics - Dalhousie University (retired)
Nolan Wilson, Basic Income Canada Youth Network, lawyer

Staff:

Jessie Golem, Outreach Coordinator
Hannah Muhajarine, Project Assistant
Janet Patterfung, Project Manager
Blandine Sebileau-Meyniel, Outreach Coordinator, Quebec
Cecilia Stuart, Communications Manager

B. Project logic model

Goal: Identify, report, and share understandings of links and synergies between livelihoods, community resilience, income security, and the low-carbon transition.

The Green Resilience Project

Assumptions	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Community partners facilitate the implementation of local dialogues	Funding (from Environment and Climate Change Canada)	25-35 community-based dialogues	25 - 35 communities and partners	Community partners have the capacity, tools, resources and training to create a "brave space" to foster community dialogue	The project builds wider and deeper understanding of the links and synergies between community resilience, livelihoods, income security, and the low-carbon transition
Community partners can be organizations or individuals	Volunteer steering committee with expertise, and access to the knowledge base of their own organizations, to guide the project	Ongoing communication with community partners	1,175 - 1,625 participants	The project fosters understanding among participants of key concepts as well as the links and synergies between livelihoods, income security, community resilience, and the low-carbon transition	New relationships between community partners and dialogue participants are created and fostered.
Dialogue participants will include populations often left out of discussions	Experienced staff with project management, communications, coordination and technical skills to implement the project	Promotion of the project and community dialogues	Representation from all provinces	Opportunities to foster ongoing discussions of solutions are identified	Findings from the final report inform government climate and economy policy and support future projects from community organizers
The project team provides a standardized discussion guide, with supporting resources to ensure common understanding of key concepts and to support the provision of "brave spaces" for community dialogues.	Agreements with community partners	Before/after surveys of dialogue participants	Evaluation of supporting resources	Findings are effectively communicated to the Federal Government	Momentum is built to design and implement community-based solutions to achieve 2050 goals for a low-carbon transition
Resources are designed to support and inform, and not to lead discussions to prescribed solutions	Project funding is provided to community partners to support local implementation	Identifying next steps to continue local dialogues	Communications metrics	Expectations described in the project agreement are met	Momentum is built to design and implement a basic income policy for all Canadians
Dialogue formats are determined by the community partner with support, advice from the project team, and may vary	Tools, resources and training for community partners, including a concept paper; discussion guide; communications assets; and training for facilitation and recording of dialogues	A website to connect & promote the project and community partners	Evaluation of dialogues		
		Mid-project progress report	Financial accountability (project financial statements)		
		Final report	Key findings from the community dialogues that identify links and synergies between livelihoods, community resilience, income security, and the low-carbon transition		
		Wrap-up with community partners			
		Final report is shared and publicized			

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C. Open-access conversation materials

One of the goals of the Green Resilience Project is to foster conversation and understanding about the links between climate change, income security and community resilience. To that end, we have made our conversation planning and facilitation materials available for anyone who is interested in hosting a conversation in their community. Please visit our website to access them.

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