



Our Vision is to build a community where everyone experiences a standard of living which is sufficient for their physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being without compromise of dignity and self-respect. We support a healthy and prosperous community for all.

People often think they have no role to play in poverty reduction. The truth is to reduce poverty we need our communities, everyone, present and involved. People who have and are experiencing poverty, business, neighborhood organizations, municipalities, community members are capable of a lot when they come together to work together.

Creating Community is a three-year project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation to change the way our communities think about and respond to poverty.

2016 IN REVIEW

Objective 1: To deepen understanding in our community of the complex nature and impact of poverty

People who know poverty from experience, as well as frontline workers met with the Poverty Roundtable HPE over the fall and winter months. Around 500 people participated in conversations on what poverty looks like – in Bancroft, in Quinte West, in Belleville, in Deseronto, in Picton, Coe Hill, Tweed and Maynooth gathering perspectives and experiences from youth, college students, seniors, individuals, people with disabilities, families and the precariously employed. Community profiles will be shared in the coming year to help us learn more about the experience of and impact of poverty on our communities and to identify actions our communities can take.

Objective 2: To engage people from a broad range of perspectives to plan and take action together on poverty reduction

With around 400 members currently, membership has broadened to include more people from various backgrounds and in different community roles: business, municipal, health, faith, social justice, social services and community members at large. Increasingly more members, who have or are currently experiencing poverty, are joining the roundtable as a platform for change work. Members are playing active roles in influencing the *Creating Community* project – moving our communities forward for poverty reduction.

Community Conversations informed the **2017 Federal Pre-Budget Submission from the Roundtable**. The federal budget 2017 reflects some of the changes we pushed for, e.g. funding for affordable housing and ending homelessness.

The Roundtable held two consultations on the **Federal National Poverty Reduction Strategy**. Highlights include defining poverty holistically rather than being only income based:

“People live in poverty when denied the income and resources that support individual choices regarding physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs and when these circumstances exclude them from fully participating in their communities.”

Increasing the voice of lived experience in informing the national strategy (*no decision about me made without me* guides this) and an absolute must to increase incomes as a base of the national strategy. The submission will be shared with the Poverty Roundtable HPE this Spring. Please continue to provide our community voice, through individual or agency submissions, to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy – visit <http://esdc-consultations.canada.ca/poverty-reduction-strategy>

Several roundtable members and community partners participated in planning to **broaden community engagement for poverty reduction**. Planning and engagement groups answered,

“Who isn’t here in our collective work that needs to be and how do we begin involving those not traditionally at our table?”

Community engagement groups met from across Hastings and Prince Edward in Quinte West, Picton, Belleville, Wollaston Township and through Quinte wide networks. Highlights include a focus on 1. shared prosperity as we build business engagements, 2. the potential of municipalities to lead, 3. claiming rights to reduce poverty and expanding platforms for people who have been or are in poverty to lead action, 4. expanding connections with the health sector– acknowledging that poverty is in fact a health crisis and 5. building solidarities across sectors and communities.

The Poverty Roundtable HPE has joined a number of regional anti-poverty networks. We are now members of **Vibrant Communities Canada – Cities Reducing Poverty**, joining roundtable initiatives across Canada and the U.S.

Objective 3: To change the way we think about and respond to poverty as a community

In November we hosted an **Education Forum - SHIFT** – a forum focused on shifting perspectives to learn from those who have been in poverty and who are at the frontlines in anti-poverty work in Ontario and in their communities. Experts came from Toronto, Guelph and Coe Hill. Pat Capponi, Tina Brophey, Barb McPhee and Lee Maidlow presented and led table discussions. The outcome of table discussions has been turned into a **community tool for change** – with an emphasis on how community, social and health based organizations can work more deeply with community for deeper change. Please visit

www.povertyroundtablehpe.ca to access the tool in the Resources section.

Forum participants spoke to the changes they made after attending the forum: A number of participants spoke to deeper anti-poverty commitments but also to changes in their work, citing changing training and orientation for new community workers, as well as expanding food and lunch programs, and coming out of silos in work, for example, connecting health to social services to improve overall health and well-being. Individuals involved in the forum, in community conversations and engagement planning have spoken to their increased community leadership role and determined focus in their communities, delving into research and expanding neighborhood community building activities.

This coming year, 2017, we will implement community engagement plans, host education forums, share community profiles and undertake community action planning. To get more information or to get involved contact Christine Durant, Director, or Tanya Dutton, Community Engagement Coordinator via email prt@povertyroundtablehpe.ca or call 613 779 7477, visit us in person at 65 Station Street, Belleville.

Special thanks and gratitude to our core funder and our core partner in the *Creating Community* project, Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Community Development Council of Quinte. Thanks to all Roundtable members, partners, businesses, municipalities, networks and newly involved groups and individuals participating in *Creating Community* for Poverty Reduction.



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