TIME FOR ACTION

HUNGERCOUNTER 2005

CANADA’S ONLY ANNUAL SURVEY OF FOOD BANKS & EMERGENCY FOOD PROGRAMS
Every year, CAFB relies on hundreds of food bank staff and volunteers from across Canada to help put together this comprehensive project. We greatly appreciate the participation of everyone who contributes their energy year after year in our shared effort to bring an end to domestic hunger and food insecurity in Canada.

HungerCount 2005
Prepared by Chokey Tsering

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The Canadian Association of Food Banks: Who We Are and What We Do

Founded in 1985, the Canadian Association of Food Banks (CAFB) is a national umbrella organization representing voluntary food charities, including about 250 member food banks. CAFB is the voice of food banks in Canada. Members and their agencies serve approximately 90% of people who use emergency food programs nation-wide. CAFB operates the National Food Sharing System (NFSS), coordinating the shipment of food donations through voluntary transport to food banks across the country. CAFB also conducts research, engages in public education and advocates for public policy change to eliminate the causes of hunger, food insecurity and poverty in Canada. CAFB does not receive core funding from any level of government. While CAFB provides food daily for people in need, its ultimate goal is a hunger-free Canada.

HungerCount Background

Initiated in 1989, and conducted annually since 1997, HungerCount is the only national survey of emergency food programs in Canada. The survey reveals trends in food bank use, such as the number of emergency food recipients each year, their demographic profiles, the ways in which local food banks meet the demand, and the amount of staff and volunteer time needed to run the food banks. The information in this survey forms the basis for CAFB activities as described above. HungerCount findings are used throughout the year by those in community-based organizations, government, research, media and the corporate sector.

The number of people going hungry in Canada is even greater than the HungerCount survey demonstrates, as many people in need are unable to access a food bank. However, as it is the only annual, national survey that exists, CAFB will continue to conduct HungerCount to monitor and respond to the demands facing emergency food providers, as well as to measure the progress of our federal, provincial and municipal governments in acknowledging and addressing wide-spread hunger in Canada.
HUNGER FACTS 2005

MORE DEMAND NATIONALLY
Number of people using a food bank in one month of 2005: **823,856**
Total Combined Population of Newfoundland/Labrador, Prince Edward Island, the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut: **758,500**
Food Bank use since 2004: **-0.1%**, since 1997: **+24%**, since 1989: **+118%**
Number of food banks: **650 (631 in sample)**
Number of meal programs open in March 2005: **127 (114 providing statistics)**
Number of provinces & territories without a food bank: **0**
Years since Canada’s first food bank opened in Edmonton: **23**
Amount needed to bring all poor people in Canada up to the poverty line: **$18.6 billion (2001)**
Canada’s gross domestic product: **$1.1 trillion (2001)**

MORE DEMAND REGIONALLY
Highest provincial per capita food bank use: **Newfoundland and Labrador (5.5%)**
Province assisting largest share of food bank recipients: **Ontario (338,563)**

CHALLENGES MEETING DEMAND
Percentage of food banks with difficulty meeting demand: **38.8%**
Number of meals served in one month: **2.72 million**
Full-time equivalent jobs provided by volunteers in one month: **4,922**

INSUFFICIENT INCOME
Percentage of food bank clients whose primary source of income is from employment: **13.1%**
Percentage of food bank clients whose primary source of income is from social assistance: **51.6%**
Number of provinces/territories with minimum wage rates above the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO): **0**
Number of provinces/territories with welfare rates above the LICO: **0****

MORE HUNGRY CHILDREN
Percentage of food bank clients who are children: **40.7%**
Years since the federal government promised to eliminate child poverty: **16**
Change in the number of hungry children since then (1989): **+184,309**

Canadians who believe that hunger is a problem in Canada: **71%** (Totum Research Inc., 2004)
Number of “food bank” mentions in House of Commons from February/04 to June/05: **5*****
Percentage of donations to CAFB spent on charitable work: **+90**
Amount of government funding for CAFB core operations: **$0**

***Ibid., (2004)
*****Debates of the House of Commons Canada (Hansard)
Foreword

_HungerCount_ has been offering us a picture of the extent of food insecurity in Canada. Although figures only reflect the numbers of people who visit food banks during a one-month period every March, they nevertheless offer us insights into the extent of the hunger problem that continues to peril nearly 15 per cent of Canadians, as the recent Community Health Survey revealed. Optimists among us may rejoice that food bank use declined slightly between 2004 and 2005. Yet, we are still talking about more than 800,000 people reporting using food banks in a one month period in 2005. Worse, over 40 per cent are children. There is something terribly wrong with this picture.

One could dismiss these figures as self-serving if the _HungerCount_ reports were calling for more food banks. On the contrary, year after year, members of the Canadian Association of Food Banks state that what is needed is not more food or more food banks but effective public policies to end poverty. This report, once again, lists these public policy options and invites governments at all levels to take action.

The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit (WFS) Plan of Action in 1996 called for each nation to develop and implement a national plan of action to achieve food security domestically and internationally. Canada responded to this call with an Action Plan for Food Security. Unfortunately, there has been little progress in fulfilling Canada’s commitments to food security nationally or internationally. It is about time to re-examine the Action Plan for Food Security to define national objectives and priorities, to determine federal, provincial and local level responsibilities and to identify the role of civil society organizations, such as food banks and other community-based agencies, in ensuring food security for all.

International and national emergencies reveal how important public policy measures can be to both prevent disasters and help alleviate them once they have occurred. Such emergencies also require effective civil society-based emergency response systems. Our hope is that effective government action will reduce the number of people relying on food banks, while the CAFB’s network will continue to serve as the civilian emergency response team for national and international emergencies and to expand with broader community food security initiatives. The long term effects of chronic malnutrition and hunger demonstrate the need to identify food security and hunger as major public health and national security concerns. We hope to see the Public Health Agency of Canada and its provincial partners taking the lead on this issue.

Year after year, _HungerCount_ figures have been warning us of this public health crisis. It is time for action, now!

**MUSTAFA KOC**
_Professor at the Department of Sociology, Ryerson University_
&_Director of the Centre for Studies in Food Security_

Toronto, October, 2005
This year’s *HungerCount* findings reveal 823,856 people using a food bank in one month alone, 325,390 of whom are children. Food bank use remains at a record high, having dropped less than 1% from last year. Although the majority depends on government assistance, many clients are also employed.

In addition to providing up-to-date information on food bank trends in Canada, this report aims to demonstrate the causal, structural factors underlying hunger in the country. As the findings suggest, food bank clients face specific economic constraints that compel them to turn to emergency food assistance. This study will discuss various ways in which key government policies foster these economic constraints and, drawing from this discussion, it will offer some policy recommendations as measures to achieving effective and sustainable solutions.

Hunger is related to economic security. The steady erosion of income security benefits in Canada over the past ten years has been a significant factor in continued food insecurity in Canada, particularly among low-income households. A comprehensive set of policy measures – including living wages, adequate employment insurance and social assistance programs and more affordable housing and child care – along with concrete, measurable objectives, are essential to improving the income security of low-income Canadians and consequently, in helping to reduce the need for food banks.1

A cursory look at poverty in Canada reveals a dismal landscape. According to the most recent statistics on poverty rates in the country, hundreds of thousands of Canadians live on incomes of less than half the poverty line. Despite ten years of economic growth, the current poverty rate of 14.4 percent is still higher than in 1989, the year before the last recession more than a decade ago.2 The persistence of poverty is also of serious concern: nearly 1.4 million persons were poor every single year from 1996 through 2001.3 Statistics Canada’s recent Health Report (2005), found that almost 15% of Canadians, or an estimated 3.7 million people, were considered food insecure at some point during 2000/01.4 The report, based on data from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), also found that more than 40% of people in low- or lower-middle-income households reported some degree of food insecurity. Among the world’s richest nations, Canada has one of the worst rates of child poverty: almost 15 % of Canadian children live in relative poverty and child poverty rates in Canada have not improved in the last 15 years.5

Hunger must be examined against this backdrop. It is the only way that the problem can be perceived as a symptom of a more pervasive social malady. It is the only way to lift the curtain from a public consciousness – which has taken for granted the presence of the local food bank next door -long enough to ask ‘why?’
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... 1  
CAFB: Who We Are & What We Do .................................................................................. 2  
    HungerCount Background  
HungerCount Facts ........................................................................................................... 3  
Foreword ................................................................................................................................ 4  
Executive Summary ............................................................................................................. 5  
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 7  
Methodology ........................................................................................................................ 8  
HungerCount Results .......................................................................................................... 9  
    Food Bank Use  
    Food Bank Use by Province  
    Food Bank Users  
    Food Bank Operations  
    Impact of Food Bank Work on Workers and Volunteers  
    Meal Program Use  
State of Hunger in the Provinces and Northern Canada ...................................................... 15  
    British Columbia  
    Alberta  
    Saskatchewan  
    Manitoba  
    Ontario  
    Quebec  
    New Brunswick  
    Nova Scotia  
    Prince Edward Island  
    Newfoundland and Labrador  
    Northern Canada: The Territories  
Urban and Rural Perspectives ............................................................................................. 25  
CAFB Policy Priorities ........................................................................................................ 27  
    Policy Update  
Discussion .......................................................................................................................... 31  
    Government Priorities  
    Policy Update  
    Making Work ‘Work’  
    Taking Action on Family and Child Poverty: The Canada Child Tax Benefit  
    The Canada Social Transfer  
    More Food is not the Answer  
    Food Security: Where do Food Banks Fit In?  
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................... 36  
References ............................................................................................................................ 37  
Appendix I: Towards a Hunger-Free Canada ..................................................................... 40  
    Action Tools  
Appendix II: Glossary of HungerCount Terminology ....................................................... 42  
Appendix III: Table 3 Provincial Breakdown of Selected 2005 HungerCount Results .... 43  
Appendix IV: Notes ............................................................................................................. 44
“*We can’t depend on charity to do the work of inadequate social services.*”

*Loren Freid,* Executive Director, North York Harvest Food Bank, Ontario

Food banks in rural and urban areas, in every province and territory, provide data on the use of food banks and emergency food programs in their communities. They capture information about people who are visiting the 650 food banks and 2,864 affiliated agencies across the country to meet the most basic of needs. This vast and diverse network of non-governmental providers shares one common experience above all others: recipients depend on them because they do not have enough income to purchase the food they need for themselves and their families. At the same time, food banks are the first to acknowledge that they are not the appropriate vehicle for ensuring that Canadians have sufficient food for themselves and their families.

Hunger is a consequence of poverty. Solutions, therefore, lie in policies that ensure sufficient income security and an adequate standard of living. The economic recessions in the 1980s and 1990s, followed by cuts to social spending by both the federal and provincial/territorial governments, have increased the responsibility for the hunger problem on charitable organizations, such as food banks; consequently, food banks have become a seemingly permanent fixture in Canadian society. Today, this service is threatened by the strain of continued demands for food each year and the mounting challenges food banks are facing to meet this need. Food banks are not a viable policy alternative. Effective, long-term solutions lie in the hands of government.
Methodology

In February 2005, CAFB staff and coordinators sent the 21-item HungerCount survey to 650 food banks and affiliated agencies. A team of coordinators from every province and territory collected surveys and verified information. They then forwarded the completed surveys to the CAFB for data entry and analysis. Most coordinators are CAFB Board members with years of experience and are employed by large food banks or food bank networks. Along with the surveys, the coordinators submitted reports on general food bank trends in their respective provinces.

By comparing survey results to data collected at the same time every year since 1997, HungerCount shows patterns of food bank use over time. Food bank use is measured by counting the total number of individuals who received groceries from food banks and affiliated agencies during the month of March. March is the study period because it is considered to be an unexceptional month without predictable high or low use patterns. Each person is counted only once regardless of the number of times that they received food bank assistance during the study period.

Although HungerCount measures the total number of prepared meals served during the study period, the HungerCount survey is not a census of all meal programs in Canada and therefore greatly underestimates national meal program activities.
FOOD BANK USE

In Canada today, an estimated 650 food banks6 as well as 2,864 affiliated agencies7 are in operation (Table 1). In 2005, 631 food banks took part in the *HungerCount* survey, resulting in a national participation rate of 97.1%.

Table 1: Food Banks in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province/Territory</th>
<th>Total # of Food Banks (excluding agencies)</th>
<th>Total # of Food Banks Participating</th>
<th>% of Food Banks Participating</th>
<th># of Agencies of Participating Food Banks (included in survey)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ontario</em></td>
<td>288</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Total</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>2864</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Where no information was available for Ontario food banks, provincial food bank use statistics were gathered from newspaper and other print sources. As well, conservative estimates were included for areas in the remote North.*

Figure 1 illustrates the progressive increase in food bank use over time. In 2005, 823,856 people used a food bank in a typical month, a drop of less than 1%, compared to last year’s record 824,612*.
**FOOD BANK USE BY PROVINCE**

The overall decline in food bank use revealed in Figure 1 is in part explained by the drops in use in some provinces as shown in Figure 2, which illustrates the total number of people using food banks by province. In March 2005, food bank use dropped most significantly in British Columbia and Alberta by 10.5% and 16.6%, respectively, over the previous year. Although the overall number of food bank visits in these two provinces were lower, as many as 45% of BC food banks and 40% of Alberta food banks reported an increase in the number of clients. Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick and Quebec reported small declines; however, a significant percentage of individual food banks in New Brunswick (50%) and Quebec (47.1%) reported an increase in the number of clients. Ontario and Quebec continue to serve the largest number of people. Increases in food bank visits, although slight, were reported by Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Ontario.

* Due to reporting errors by two Quebec food banks in their grocery program totals in 2004, the 2004 national figure for total number assisted has been adjusted to 824,612. The findings in this report are compared to the adjusted 2004 totals.

** For details on provincial numbers, please see ‘State of Hunger in the Provinces and Territories’ & ‘Appendix III: Table 3: Provincial Breakdown of Selected 2005 HungerCount Results’ in the report.
Table 2 provides the total number of people assisted by food banks by province or territory, including data on households and individuals. Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, the most populous provinces in the country, continue to assist the greatest share of recipients.

Table 2: Total Number of People Assisted by Food Banks in March 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ALL FOOD BANKS</th>
<th>FOOD BANKS REPORTING BY AGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Share (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>75,413</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>45,481</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>24,600</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>46,161</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>338,563</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>215,256</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>19,441</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>25,453</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>3,208</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</td>
<td>28,384</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>&lt;.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>&lt;.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>&lt;.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>823,856</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Not all respondents were able to provide household statistics.  
2 Nova Scotia’s adult and children figures are based on 82 agencies.  
3 This figure underestimates the actual number of children assisted by food banks as not all food banks were able to provide a breakdown of adults and children.

Food Bank Users: Individuals, Families and Source of Income

Who is using food banks? According to a breakdown by age of food bank recipients, of the 800,196 people who received emergency groceries from a food bank in March 2005, 325,390 (40.7%) were children under 18 years of age (Table 2). Among the provinces, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had the highest percentage of child food bank clients at 46.4% and 46.3% respectively. Ontario reported the highest increase in child recipients (11.7%) from last year, followed by Manitoba (8.0%).

HungerCount also examines family composition: singles, couples without children, sole-parent families and two-parent families (Figure 4). Based on a weighted estimate provided with information from 499 surveys, more than half of all households visiting a food bank are families with children, as much as a third of them being sole-parent families. Single people make up more than a third of households being assisted.

Figure 4: Family Composition of Food Recipients
Figure 5 shows the sources of income of food bank clients using estimates provided by 415 food banks, weighted by total number of people receiving groceries. Similar to findings from previous years, the majority of food bank clients receive social assistance as their primary source of income. However, employed people continue to constitute the second majority of food bank clients. More clients on disability are also visiting a food bank, 12.6% compared to 7.6% last year.

**Figure 5: Primary Income Source of Food Recipients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Income</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Assistance</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Loan</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Income</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Food Bank Operations**

Food banks are increasingly challenged to keep up with the demand for food. As Figure 6 shows, many or most can only provide a few days worth of food a month. Based on findings from 557 food banks, the average (median) food bank provides 5.0 days worth of food in their food hampers.

**Figure 6: Days Worth of Food in Hamper**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days Worth</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Days</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Days</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Days</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The frequency of visits by clients also varies by food banks (Figure 7). Based on 560 surveys, 59.5% of food banks limit recipients to one visit a month, although many respondents indicated that in emergency situations food banks permit more visits. When supplies run low, most food banks avoid turning people away and instead take other measures.

Figure 8 shows the various ways in which food banks have responded to food shortages. Based on 635 surveys, 38.8% of food banks had to take additional measures this year. Most of the food banks, 31.3%, bought more food than they normally would; however, this practice can only last as long as financial resources permit. The ‘other measures’ indicated in Figure 8 consisted of increased efforts to raise food and funds, which is difficult for these under-resourced, volunteer-reliant organizations. Very few food banks turned people away (3.4%) or closed early/did not open their doors that day (1.1%).

Volunteers are an important resource for food banks. Almost half (44.8%) of food banks have no paid staff, relying on the work of volunteers to ensure that those in need receive food. In March 2005, among the food banks able to supply information about volunteer and staff hours, volunteers contributed 738,278 hours of service, the equivalent of about 4,900 full-time jobs per month, to 502 food banks. Paid staff provided another 272,808 hours in 580 food banks. Volunteer work contributed about 465,000 more hours than those provided by paid staff in March this year.
Impact of Food Bank Work on Workers & Volunteers

The increase in volunteer hours exemplifies in part one of the outcomes of the mounting strain on food banks to meet the continued food demand in light of whittling resources. Every provincial HungerCount report states increasing difficulties in generating enough donations and funds to assist clients and to stay open. Many respondents reported that while their job was meaningful to them, they felt over-worked, under-resourced and stressed by an inability to meet the true needs in the community. Some even expressed feelings of anger, frustration and concern related to lack of government action to alleviate poverty and hunger, leaving food banks to address crises. The following are their words:

“I feel angry and frustrated with the growing need as governments increasingly abandon more people and rely on the community to step in.”

“It is becoming more a job than an occasional volunteering.”

“Too few staff stretching too little food and money for too many people.”

“I feel powerless, I wish I could help more people.”

Meal Program Use

Many food banks administer meal programs in addition to managing emergency grocery distribution. HungerCount provides an indication of the depth of food insecurity in Canada by asking food banks to report whether they or their agencies provide this additional service. It is, however, beyond the scope of HungerCount to capture the many meal program providers operating independently of food banks. In March 2005, among the 127 food banks with meal programs, 114 provided 2.72 million prepared meals, the same amount as in 2004.
“…it was never our intent to be here as a permanent fixture….The growing demand for our services due to societal needs not being met elsewhere has forced us to continually improve and broaden the scope of our operations and fundraising capabilities. We are subject to “demand-side” economics, not “supply-side.” Business is, unfortunately, booming.”

Morley Katz, Chair, Board of Directors, North York Harvest Food Bank

Progress in federal policies related to hunger and poverty have, for the most part, been minimal; however, some headway is presently being made in various provinces with respect to affordable child care and housing, as well as minimum wages. Following the federal government’s 2005 February budget announcement of $5 billion over three years into a national child care system, bilateral Agreements in Principle on Early Learning and Child Care are being signed between the federal government and individual provinces.11, 12 Living wage campaigns sprouting throughout the regions have helped to bring about gradual hikes in minimum wages in certain provinces. And, a series of affordable housing initiatives have been taking place throughout municipalities as part of a renewed federal presence in this area.13

BRITISH COLUMBIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British Columbia by the Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Bank Use: 75, 413 (-10.5%)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 24, 216 (-9.08%)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Common Family Type: single people (40.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Recipients with Jobs: 11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Source of Income: social assistance 52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Ranking**: 3rd in Canada (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare Income(s) as % of Poverty Line***: lowest for 2-parent families with 2 Children (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage****: $8/hour (as of September 1, 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Compared to 2004 totals. Total food bank use in March 2005 was down (-10.5%) from March last year. Total child food bank recipients was also down by 9.08%.


About 8,000 fewer people in the province visited a food bank in March this year than in the previous year. This drop may in part be the result of the recent high economic growth in the province. In 2004, British Columbia led the country with an economic growth rate of 3.9% and the Ministry of Finance forecasts a continued high rate of 3.4% for 2006.14 Additionally, the relatively low level of unemployment may also have been a factor in the decrease in food bank use. In August of this year, B.C. had the third lowest unemployment rate in Canada at 5.8%.15

Despite the overall decline in the number of food bank clients over last year, 44.9% of BC food banks reported increases in food bank use. The Community Nutritionists Council of BC and the Dietitians of Canada in BC estimate that the monthly cost to feed a family of two parents with two children in 2004 was $632.16 A couple with two children on social assistance receives a monthly income of approximately $1,500.17 Considering only the cost of shelter and food, this household would have almost no money at the month’s end to purchase other necessities such as clothing, transportation, telephone, personal hygiene items etc. Four per cent of BC’s population is living on income assistance and this group is three times more likely to report food insecurity.18
Moreover, the province continues to claw back the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) from families with children on welfare in spite of a growing number of provinces who have ended or limited the deductions. Families with children on welfare fare poorly compared to other household types in the province: not only were two-parent families with children in BC the poorest in the country last year, but poor families in the province have the second highest poverty rate at 13.1%.19

These illustrate the enduring consequences of British Columbia’s notorious welfare cuts in 2001. The changes, which the National Council on Welfare purports “sets a dangerous precedent,” included additional tightening of eligibility and an unprecedented new two-year limit rule in any five-year period.20 Robin Campbell, Executive Director of Surrey Food Bank and BC HungerCount coordinator, notes that the welfare restrictions have entailed prolonged waiting periods for benefits.

“As a result, people are left with few or no resources and support when they are in most need. Many turn to food banks during such times.”

The provincial government forecasts a record surplus of 1.5 billion in the February 2005/06 provincial budget21 and 1.3 billion in a September Budget Update.22 In the February budget, the province touts the largest annual debt reduction in BC history of 1.7 billion from the previous year.23 Some measures to assist low-income British Columbians were announced, including income tax reductions and premium changes to the Medical Services Plan and increased income assistance for persons with disabilities – the first significant increase in more than 10 years. Furthermore, in the updated budget, the province announced additional funding for seniors, including the renewal of the Seniors’ Supplement for low-income seniors.

Campbell believes that the investments stipulated in the budget do not adequately address issues of poverty and hunger in the province. She observes that despite a booming economy and plenty of jobs in the province, most of the jobs are part-time or full-time at minimum wage.

“The economy has not improved for low-income families in B.C. The 2005 budget benefits upper middle-income households but the poor remain poor.”

In spite of a high wait list for social housing in BC of about 10,000 applicants, federal funds of $89 million for the construction of new social housing in the province between 2002 to 2007 is being re-directed into the health care system.24 According to the Dietitians of Canada in B.C. (2004), up to 2,500 new affordable family housing units could have been built with these funds.

ALBERTA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alberta by the Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Bank Use: 45,481 (-16.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 18,610 (-15.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Common Family Type: sole-parent (31.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Recipients with Jobs: 22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Source of Income: social assistance (29.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Ranking (2001): 7th (13.2%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welfare Income(s) as % of poverty line (2004):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lowest for sole-parent families (48%); 2nd lowest for single adults (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage: $7/hour</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total food bank use, including the number of child food bank clients in the province, is down. The recent economic boom in the province may have helped to drive down food bank use. With a $50 billion dollar economy, Alberta has the country’s fastest growing economy having grown by 3.7% in 2004.25 Furthermore, unemployment rates in the province are considerably lower than in other provinces – in 2004, Alberta had the lowest average unemployment rate in the country at 4.6% and, in August of this year, unemployment rates in the province remain the lowest at 3.9%.26

However, employment alone has not been sufficient to protect individuals against the need for food bank assistance. The growth in the number of ‘working poor’ continues as
22% of the province’s food bank clients are employed – the highest percentage of employed food bank clients in the country. Moreover, in spite of the overall decrease, 40.3% of Alberta food banks reported increases in food bank use. Marjorie Benicz, Executive Director of the Edmonton Gleaners’ Association Food Bank and Alberta HungerCount coordinator, points out that the strength of Alberta’s economy belies the quality of employment available in the province:

“Even with as strong an economy as Alberta maintains, there still is a significant number of people working for minimum wage that need the food bank to make ends meet from month to month. Alberta food banks continue to see the struggle of the working poor. Equally upsetting has been the number of children under 18 needing food bank services.”

As a result of unforeseen soaring energy prices, the province faces a 2005 surplus of as high as $8.8 billion – $6 billion more than what the province had budgeted for. In spite of this huge surplus, Alberta plans to increase spending on social services by only 8.3%. Bencz also points out that welfare rates have not been increased since 1993. Furthermore, although Alberta has stopped reducing basic social assistance by the full amount of the National Child Benefit supplement, Alberta families receiving the NCBS have their benefits adjusted according to the age of the child; as a result, the single parent with one child received $2,811 in 2004 compared to $2,911 for the rest of the provinces. Fifty-seven per cent of the province’s food bank clients are families with children and although the number of child food bank recipients is down, this group still comprises a disturbingly disproportionate number of children: children and youth represent about 25% of the general population while among food bank clients in the province, they constitute 43.1%.

Bencz points out that the aftershocks of the BSE crisis, which continue to reverberate throughout the province’s beef industry and rural economy, have also had an impact on the continued high use of some food banks in the province. In response to the intensifying problems contributing to hunger in Alberta, Bencz states that food banks are working towards advocating for the necessary policy solutions but they cannot do it alone.

“What is needed is a better understanding by government officials regarding the real needs of low-income people.”

SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan by the Numbers

Food Bank Use: 24,600 (+6.5%)
Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 11,411 (+3.7%)
Most Common Family Type: single people (40.2%)
Percentage of Recipients with Jobs: 7.9%
Principal Source of Income: social assistance 76.9%
Poverty Ranking: 5th (14.7%)
Minimum Wage: $7.05/hour

In spite of enhanced social program spending in the 2005 provincial budget announced early in the year, food bank use in Saskatchewan is up from last year as is the number of child food bank visits. The boost in government spending includes social assistance increases, and initiatives in immigration, affordable housing and child care. Although this is encouraging, comments Wayne Hellquist, Saskatchewan HungerCount coordinator and C.E.O. of the Regina and District Food Bank, it is not enough:

“(The) $10 per month increase in the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan’s adult basic allowance… was a positive step forward but fell far short of what was anticipated and is needed. The food banks in Saskatchewan will continue to advocate for an increase in this basic allowance to ensure that individuals and families can move towards greater independence.”

In February of this year, Community Resources and Employment Minister, Joanne Crofford, proudly announced that social assistance caseloads had reached their lowest levels in 14 years and credited the “Building Independence” program for the turnaround. The number of families and individuals on welfare in January 2005 was 27,669, the
lowest for that month since 1991 and down from the all-time high of 41,000 in 1994.31

Critics, however, are less enthused, warning that programs such as this encourage a low-income labour force, essentially transferring people from the welfare poor to working poor. Furthermore, a reduction in social assistance caseloads is not necessarily indicative of a decrease in the depth of poverty; not only is food bank use in the province on the rise but the province has one of the second highest number of food bank clients receiving social assistance. Saskatchewan is also one of the few provinces who continue to deduct the NCBS from families on welfare. Sole-parent families are the second largest group of food bank clients in the province at 28.1%.

Although the increased demand for emergency food assistance is especially pronounced in major urban centres, Hellquist notes that “shifting economic crises have also led to greater need from the rural communities throughout the province.” He adds that food banks are forced to continually improve and broaden the scope of their operations and their ability to generate enough resources to sustain those operations. In light of the continued hunger problem, Hellquist argues that food banks’ work must go beyond providing food:

“We need to continue to work with all levels of government to develop long term solutions to hunger and poverty while recognizing that food banks can play an essential role in ensuring greater food security for those who struggle to put nutritious, quality food on their tables each and every day. Food banks have come to recognize that they must provide individuals and families with enhanced support systems and the capacity to gain greater independence, self-esteem and the skills necessary to provide for themselves over time.”

MANITOBA

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Manitoba by the Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Bank Use: 46,161 (+8.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 21,245 (+8.0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most Common Family Type: single people (31.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of Recipients with Jobs: 14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Source of Income: social assistance (45.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Ranking: 2nd highest (17.2%); 3rd highest for all poor families (12.8%); highest for sole-parent mothers (54.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage: $7.25/hour</td>
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In 2000, Gary Doer’s NDP government ended the clawback of the National Child Benefit Supplement from the welfare checks of social assistance recipients and benefits to families were gradually restored over a three-year period. Nonetheless, poverty in Manitoba to a great extent afflicts children and single women, who generally head single-parent family households. Food bank use among children is up by 8% from last year; some children in the province are more at risk based on gender, race, ethnicity and culture: nearly half of off-reserve Aboriginal children (49.7%) are living in poverty and more than half (51.2%) of children who recently immigrated to the province live in poverty.32

To compound the problem, the affordable housing deficit remains a salient issue for many poor families in the province. In its 2005 budget, Manitoba promises to invest in new programs to support parents and integrated shelter benefits to help make housing more affordable for poor Manitobans.33 Presently, up to 2,500 affordable housing units are to be built by 2007, yet this meets only a fraction of the need, particularly for poor families in the province. According to a report by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (2004), among low-income families with children, nearly half (48.3%) are in unaffordable housing.34 The report also reveals that 10.6% of all households pay more than 30% of their gross income for ‘poor housing’ – housing in need of major repairs. Of those households, 25.4% of them contain families with children.

Manitoba’s minimum wage, although it has been increasing steadily, has not kept pace with inflation: between 1976 and 2002 minimum wage earners saw their real wages decline...
by more than 20%. The income of a lone mother with 2 children working 40 hours a week at the current minimum wage is less than 50% of Statistics Canada’s Low Income Cut-Off (LICO). In real dollars, she earns just $15,000 a year but requires $31,000 to meet basic family needs and to remain above the poverty line.

As a percentage of the total population, Manitoba has the second highest percentage of food bank users in the country at 3.94%. Furthermore, the province shows the highest increase in total food bank use among the provinces from last year. In her report on food bank use in Manitoba, HungerCount coordinator, Heidi Magnuson-Ford, Agency Relations Coordinator of Winnipeg Harvest food bank, lists the major factors contributing to the rise in food bank use in the province:

“Food bank coordinators cite the same reasons for the steady increase in clients over and over again. Minimum wage including the recent .25 increase does not cover living expenses, and coupled with part-time employment, poverty only deepens. Housing and transportation costs are more than what low-incomes can support.”

ONTARIO

Ontario by the Numbers

Food Bank Use: 338,563 Highest number of clients in the country (+4.8%)
Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 144,234 (+11.7%)
Most Common Family Type: single people (34.3%)
Percentage of Recipients with Jobs: 14.5%
Principal Source of Income: social assistance (50.2%)
Poverty Ranking: 9th (11.7%)
Welfare Income(s) as % of Poverty Line: 3rd lowest for 2-parent families with 2 children (50%)
Minimum Wage: $7.45/hour

Ontario serves the largest number of food bank clients in the country and food bank use in the province is also up over last year: in 2005, about 15,000 more individuals and approximately 15,000 more children visited a food bank per month compared to 2004. The province also has one of the highest percentages of child food bank clients at almost 43%. More than 100,000 families on social assistance in Ontario were eligible for the National Child Benefit in March 2004; all of these Ontario families had that benefit clawed back. Today more than one third, or 35%, of Canadian children in poverty reside in Ontario.

The continued hikes in minimum wage rates in the province, planned to reach $8 an hour by 2007, signals some hope for low-wage workers in the province. Nonetheless, Adam Spence, Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OAFB), points out the inadequacy of these wage hikes as minimum wage earners in the province are living below the poverty line, particularly in larger urban centres.

“Even at the new rate, a single person working 35 hours a week would only make $13,559 a year, which is well below the poverty line in small communities like Cochrane ($15,928) or large centers, like Ottawa ($20,337).”

Food banks in Ontario support the urgent need for higher minimum wages since the rising cost of living in the province make it increasingly difficult for low-income individuals to meet basic needs. Statistics Canada reports that the average cost for food and shelter in the province has increased by roughly twice the average rate of inflation between this year and last.

The overall need for food banks in the province is rising, as food banks this year are witnessing unusually high numbers of visitors. In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) the number of food bank clients has reached record levels at 175,000 users. The number of clients visiting the Ottawa food bank has hit an all-time high: at least 7,000 more people visited the food bank in February over the same month last year.

The erosion of income security benefits for working age adults continues to be a factor linked to the rise in food bank use in the province. Social assistance has declined in value by over 35% in the past decade. Only 5% of all income security spending in Ontario is spent on welfare, also known in the province as Ontario Works (OW), yet it is the key source of income for many food bank clients.
On May 17, 2005, Premier Dalton McGuinty’s Liberal government announced its first increase in welfare rates since its drastic cuts of 21.6% in 1995, planned to take effect August 1, 2005. The province has also taken some steps in acknowledging the affordable housing shortage. In April 2005, the province signed a new Affordable Housing Agreement with the federal government as part of its comprehensive affordable housing strategy. The agreement brings the total amount invested in affordable housing in Ontario by the federal, provincial and municipal governments to $734 million over the life of the program. This is expected to create more than 15,000 units of affordable housing and provide housing allowances and rent supplements for about 5,000 low-income families in Ontario.44

However, more than 150,000 households remain on Ontario’s social housing waiting lists. Since the introduction of the Tenant Protection Act in 1998, which significantly slackened rent controls, the cost of accommodation has jumped across the province. In Toronto, in the last five years of reported data, the cost of rent has increased at a rate 28% greater than inflation, according to Statistics Canada data (2005).45 In the GTA, food bank clients spend an estimated 75% of their income on rent.46,47 People receiving social assistance spend most of their money on housing but the shelter allowance portions of OW barely cover the cost of shelter, leaving little after-rent income for food and other items. Ontario Works is a little more than $500 for a single person but the average rent for a bachelor apartment in Toronto is about $700. In the province, a single-parent family with two children receives about $550 in a shelter allowance and approximately $530 in a basic needs allowance. While low-income families generally rent at the lower end of the scale, the average rent in Toronto for a two-bedroom apartment is approximately $1,000, leaving less than $100 for food, clothing and other expenses.48

QUEBEC

**Quebec by the Numbers**

Food Bank Use: 215, 256 2nd highest number of clients in the country *(−2.0%)*
Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 78,180 *(−2.53%)*
Most Common Family Type: single people *(40.6%)*
Percentage of Recipients with Jobs: 12.1%
Principal Source of Income: social assistance *(51%)*
Poverty Ranking: 2nd *(17.2%); 2nd highest for 2-parent families *(11.0%)*
Welfare Income(s) as % of Poverty Line: 2nd lowest for couples with 2 children *(49%)*
Minimum Wage: $7.60/hour

*Due to reporting errors by two Quebec food banks in their grocery program totals in 2004, the 2004 HungerCount total for number of people assisted in the province has been adjusted to 219,689 from 236,717.*

Food bank use in Quebec has dropped by 2% from last year. Nonetheless, in some areas the situation is not improving as 47% of food banks in the province this year reported an increase in the number of clients. To date, Quebec is the only province in Canada that has in place a specific and comprehensive anti-poverty law – Bill 112. In 2004, the province announced the Government Action Plan to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion – a report that offers a comprehensive list of goals towards ending poverty and social exclusion in Canada. Quebec plans to provide $2.5 billion over the next five years for various initiatives including raising the minimum wage (which was increased from $7.45 to $7.60 in May of 2005), constructing additional housing, providing supplementary social and child assistance and implementing participation and work premiums.49

Several measures to assist those living in poverty have already been implemented such as a new work premium for all low-income households as well as a universal Child Assistance measure; the latter gives low-income parents increased support per child: $2,000 for one child, $3,000 for two children, $4,000 for three children and $5,000 for four children.50,51 Furthermore, the 2005 provincial budget plans to invest $145 million towards 2,600 new housing units, for a total of 18,600 new units, as well as $15 million to renovate existing social housing. This is in addition to the $2.5 billion under the plan to combat poverty.52

Quebec activists acknowledge that the Action Plan and the recent provincial budget represent the beginnings of some progress on poverty reduction in the province; but they also warn that the current agreements of the Plan could
potentially hurt the “poorest of the poor”: unemployed childless welfare recipients. These individuals could see their income deteriorate further because of the decision, deliberately taken as a work incentive, to only index their already inadequately low benefits by half of the rate selected for other households. Critics also point to the lack of specific targets in the plan for covering basic needs and for escaping poverty, the insufficient protection of welfare benefits, the vagueness of several of the announced measures, and the failure to implement the monitoring mechanisms stipulated in the Act.53

Nonetheless, Clément Bergeron, Executive Director of Association québécoise des banques alimentaires et des Moissons (AQBAM) believes that Bill 112 holds the potential to help reduce poverty in the province and that its implementation should not be delayed any further.

“Poverty in the province is increasingly affecting people working at minimum wages and who now turn to food banks to make ends meet. Collective wealth is increasing but social measures to share this wealth are slow in coming.”

NEW BRUNSWICK

Food bank use in New Brunswick is down slightly; however, 50% of food banks in the province reported an increase in the number of visits over last year. According to anecdotal evidence by food banks in the province, the general decline in major industries such as farming and fishing has contributed to food bank use in the province. Unemployment in New Brunswick, at a rate of 9.8% in 2004, was higher than the national average of 7.2%.54

Affordable shelter is another key issue for many of New Brunswick’s poor: welfare recipients who receive $264, or even $485 a month, for long term disability, cannot find adequate housing and are constantly on the verge of homelessness. Some positive developments addressing this problem include the relaxation of a controversial policy that discouraged people on welfare from living together to share expenses. The change will allow two single parents to live under the same roof, without having their benefits reduced.55

New Brunswick’s 2005-2006 budget earlier this year highlights boosted investments towards families and seniors and social assistance rates will increase by 6% over the next three years. Last December, the government introduced legislation to amend the Assessment Act to provide a provincial property tax exemption for non-profit low-income residential rental accommodation. Minimum wage increases will also be implemented, rising to $6.50 in January 2006 up to $7 by January, 2007. “But this is not enough,” argues Valerie Carmichael, President of the New Brunswick Association of Food Banks and Director of the Woodstock Food Bank, who, in her provincial report, notes that “income assistance rates have not kept up with the rising costs of living, in particular, rent and utilities.” Many food bank clients, Carmichael adds, are in seasonal or part-time jobs that are low-paying and do not offer health coverage. Carmichael also explains that families visiting the food banks suffer as a direct result of the cutbacks on the school system; for example, since schools have fewer resources at their disposal, they are scaling back on expenses by asking parents to cover costs of items related to graduation and field trips.

New Brunswick food banks, like their counterparts in the rest of provinces, are feeling the effects of these trends, largely due to limited resources that stymie their ability to accommodate the continued demand. Carmichael adds that with government cutbacks in social spending, food banks find themselves competing for donated dollars.
NOVA SCOTIA

Nova Scotia by the Numbers
Food Bank Use: 25,453 (+7.6%)
Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 8,361 (-2.0%)
Most Common Family Type: sole-parent (34.1%)
Percentage of Users with Jobs: 7.5%
Principal Source of Income: social assistance 62.5%
Poverty Ranking: 4th (15.8%)
Welfare Income as % of population: 4th lowest for single employable person (30%)
Minimum Wage: $6.80/hour

One of the focal points of the Nova Scotia 2005 budget is more support for Nova Scotians in need. Well over $40 million will be spent to support the needs of seniors, Nova Scotians with disabilities, and lower-income families. New dollars will be targeted towards low-income housing units, subsidized daycare spaces, shelter allowance for single income assistance recipients and personal allowance for all social assistance recipients.

Minimum wage rates in Nova Scotia are one of the lowest in the country, but will rise to $7.15 in April next year. Nonetheless, at the current rate, someone who works eight hours a day, five days a week will only earn a little more than $1000 a month. That same person pays an average of $751/month for a two-bedroom apartment in Halifax – 55% of their monthly before-tax income. (Source: CMHC data)

Currently, about 21,900 people in the province hold a minimum wage job. Dianne Swinemar, Executive Director of FEED NOVA SCOTIA and HungerCount coordinator for the province comments:

"Even with the increases in minimum wage occurring in Nova Scotia next spring, people will still have trouble earning enough income. Instead of providing opportunity and support, inadequate social assistance benefits and the growth in the low wage economy are actually contributing to the need for food banks in the province."

The current affordable housing agreement between Nova Scotia and Canada, signed in 2002, commits $18.63 million in funding to create or renovate 850 to 1,500 housing units over five years. The combined funding of $37.26 million was to be spread across four program areas: New Rental Housing Initiative, Rental Housing Preservation Program, New Home Purchase Program and Home Ownership Preservation Program. However, concerns about affordable housing continue to grow. Metro Halifax alone faces a housing shortage for at least 1,000 people and more are occurring throughout the rest of the province.

“We must impress upon our elected officials the need to address poverty holistically. A holistic approach would concentrate on improving income, health, housing and education under one strategy.”

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Prince Edward Island by the Numbers
Food Bank Use: 3,208 (+1.8%)
Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 1,138 (-5.9%)
Most Common Family Type: sole-parent (31.2%)
Percentage of Users with Jobs: 14.7%
Principal Source of Income: social assistance (35.4%)
Poverty Ranking: 8th (12.8%)
Minimum Wage: $6.80/hour
Tourism is an important employment generator in PEI and makes a significant contribution to the province's economy. An estimated 12,000 - 13,000 jobs at the peak of the summer season are directly related to spending by tourists. Essentially one third of jobs in the province are in the major tourism-related sector.61 The industry, however, has been in a slump the past few years. In response, the 2005 provincial budget earmarks $1 million for tourism marketing and it is hoped that the province's economy will slowly begin to rebound from the bleak performance of recent years.62

In spite of the high dependency on this sector, it offers precarious and low-paying employment. Most of those jobs last four months on a full time basis.63 The lack of employment security and benefits in this sector makes workers particularly vulnerable to food insecurity. PEI has the second highest percentage of employed individuals visiting a food bank in the country at 14.7%.

Mike MacDonald, provincial coordinator for HungerCount in PEI and Manager of Upper Room Hospitality Ministry, fears that the recent cuts in civil servants jobs, many of which are being made in Health and Social Services, will have a major impact on the island's economy.

"Not all of these [500] cuts have been implemented; it has been a long process and is leading to a lot of uncertainty."

As a result of federal changes to the employment insurance (EI) program, begun in the 1990s, a growing number of individuals who make a living in temporary, seasonal employment, such as the tourism industry are turning to EI only to find little or no support. The percentage of unemployed receiving employment insurance in PEI decreased significantly between 1989 and 2001.64 Not only are EI benefits more difficult to access but for those who do receive them, coverage is inadequate as 27.7% of PEI food bank clients receive EI – the highest percentage in the country for the fifth consecutive year.

Lastly, the National Council of Welfare (2005) reports that the rising cost of living combined with the provincial government’s continued clawback of the National Child Benefit Supplement were insufficiently offset by the province's increases to provincial social assistance in 2003 and 2004. The report also reveals that the value of welfare for a couple with two children in 2004 had decreased by 1.4% from the previous year.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newfoundland and Labrador by the Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Bank Use: 28,384 (-3.6%) Highest per capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Child Food Bank Recipients: 10,598 (-12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Common Family Type: sole parent (39.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Users with Jobs: 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Source of Income: social assistance (80.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Ranking: Highest in the country (17.6%); highest for unattached individuals (53.1%); highest for poor families (14.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage: $6.25/hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate: Highest in the country (14.4% - 2005)</td>
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In the 2005 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador committed to a poverty reduction strategy which would build on a number of initiatives announced in the 2005 provincial budget. These include a $1.8 million increase in income support rates for couples and single clients without children, funding to increase the 1st child benefit of the Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit and $350,000 for an improved earning exemption for working income support clients. In the area of health care, there is $1.6 million this year along with a total of $16.8 million of federal funding over five years to increase the number of low-income families accessing the Child Care Services Subsidy program.

It was also announced that the minimum wage would be raised in phased increases to $7 per hour by January 2007.65
Eg Walters, Newfoundland and Labrador HungerCount coordinator and Executive Director of the Community Food Sharing Association in St. John’s, is encouraged by the recent signing of the Atlantic Accord, believing that it will “provide much-needed funding for social and other government programs.” Nonetheless, Walters is sceptical that this will have an immediate impact on hunger in the province, as the province continues to have the highest per capita food bank use in the country.

The population of Newfoundland and Labrador is heavily dependent on financial assistance from the federal government. The province continues to have the highest percentage of food bank clients on social assistance as well as the highest food bank use as a percentage of the population. Furthermore, according to latest available data, the province ranks at the bottom in terms of both urban and rural per capita incomes. Rural areas in Newfoundland and Labrador have the highest percent of individuals falling below LICO of all provinces.

Fishing, pulp and paper manufacturing, and iron ore mining are the major economic activities but they generally do not provide sufficient jobs or income to alleviate the widespread poverty and the high rates of unemployment, even during periods of economic expansion. The gloomy employment prospects in the province are driving out employable individuals as evidenced by the loss of 21% of its population in the past decade to out-migration.

Newfoundland and Labrador also have the highest rate of minimum wage workers, with approximately 8.5 percent of all employed persons (16,000 individuals) earning the minimum wage. The majority of minimum wage earners are women and part-time workers. In 2003, even a single minimum wage earner working full-time fell below LICO. In the same year, families supported by a minimum wage earner also experienced a large gap from LICO.

Remote communities in northern Canada face unique challenges in the context of poverty and hunger: residents live in greater geographical isolation and experience more severe degrees of food insecurity as food is expensive and often of poor quality with little nutritional value.

In fact, according to one study, over half of the population of Nunavut has experienced food insecurity in 2000/01: in remote northern communities in the region, a community-based study found that between 83% and 92% of all households had experienced food insecurity and that 44% did not eat for an entire day in three or more months as they were not able to afford food. At times, even the children went hungry in 51% of the households. In the Northwest Territories, 28% of the population experienced food insecurity in the same period.

To address this problem, First Ministers met in September 2004 to discuss increased funding for health care, which for the three territories resulted in a $150 million Health Access Fund. This fund is in addition to the $60 million the territories received under the Canada Health and Social Transfer from the 2003 First Ministers Accord. The $150 million fund is to be spread over three years to help the territories offset medical transportation costs and to fund long-term health initiatives. The terms and conditions for the Health Access Fund, however, are still not finalized.

In a subsequent meeting in October, 2004, the First Ministers discussed Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing as a follow-up to their September 13 – 15 meeting on health care. An expert panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing will be established to provide recommendations on the allocation of the fixed amounts. It is scheduled to release its recommendations in late 2005.

### NORTHERN CANADA: YUKON, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES & NUNAVUT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Territories by the Numbers</th>
<th>Number of Child Food Bank Recipients:</th>
<th>Minimum Wage:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Bank Use:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yukon (YK): 739 (+10.6%)</td>
<td>• YK: 242 (+13.6%)</td>
<td>• YK $7.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Northwest Territories (NT): 663 (-18.9%)</td>
<td>• NT: 137 (-19%)</td>
<td>• NT $8.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nunavut (NU): 494 (+76.4%)</td>
<td>• NU: 167 (+44%)</td>
<td>• NU $8.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Provinces have largely responded to the fiscal squeeze in federal transfers and the offloading of responsibilities by downsizing their own transfers and passing on more responsibilities to local governments and, indirectly, onto the shoulders of the voluntary sector.

In the past decade, Canada’s municipalities have been experiencing ‘chronic under-funding’, having seen a 37% decline in federal and provincial transfers and now receiving only eight cents out of every tax dollar collected. Local governments play an integral role in the delivery of day-to-day services, which are essential to quality of life. Federal government policies related to municipalities, albeit diffused, include services for new immigrants, housing programs, community development initiatives and urban Aboriginal policy. These services are directly linked to food bank use in local communities since many food banks provide information to clients about other social service agencies or groups such as low-cost housing, immigrant services and welfare benefits. Some operate full-fledged Learning and Resource Centers and, sometimes in collaboration with other community partners, offer a variety of services such as educational upgrading, job search skills training, and on-site day care.

Urban Challenges

More responsibilities and fewer federal/provincial resources have contributed to increased homelessness and a deteriorating infrastructure, particularly among large urban centers. The New Deal – a collaborative agreement among federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments and other stakeholders - aims to develop long-term strategies for improving the conditions of municipalities.

Urban poverty targets specific groups of people more than others: almost half of Canada’s Aboriginal people live in urban areas, namely Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina; nearly three quarters of all new immigrants settle in the large urban centers of Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal. In the Greater Toronto Area, newcomers to Canada continue to make up about half of the food bank population. Economic marginalization is particularly significant for these groups who face substantial differences in unemployment rates, income levels, levels of poverty, and shelter cost burden compared to the general population. Increasing income disparities, according to a report by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2004), also compound the housing affordability issues that many in these groups struggle with.

Federal and provincial policies and programs need to better reflect and respond to the social changes sweeping across Canadian municipalities generally and in large cities in particular. The high poverty rates among newly arrived immigrants in cities, for example, demonstrate Canada’s failure in helping immigrants settle in the country and point to the need for Canada to provide more adequate funding of settlement programs. Additionally, all levels of government need to address the issue of skilled immigrants not working in their fields which contributes to food bank use in Canada’s larger urban centres. In the Greater Toronto Area, for example, newcomers to Canada make up half of the 175,000 people visiting a food bank; 60% have university-level degree but only 9% are actually employed in their field of study. The findings in this report reveal that among food banks located in communities of 500,000 or more, 60% of food bank workers identify settlement services for newcomers as a policy priority.

Since government policies and programs will necessarily vary according to the local situations, municipalities must be actively involved in establishing the problems and in finding the solutions. The tripartite development agreements in Vancouver and Winnipeg are examples of the type of cooperative partnership among the federal, provincial and municipal governments needed to appropriately respond to these growing local challenges.
Rural Challenges

About 30% of Canada’s population live in rural and remote areas of the country. In 2001, each Atlantic province, Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories had more than half of their population living in predominantly rural regions. Poverty and hunger are not merely urban issues. The socio-economic vulnerability of residents of smaller or rural communities is reflected in the rise in food bank reliance in those regions. Since 2000, 51 rural food banks have opened. This year, HungerCount found 317 food banks in communities of less than 10,000, more than 45% of all food banks.

Compared to their urban counterparts, people in smaller communities face specific challenges such as lower average family incomes, higher old-age and child dependency ratios, a relatively smaller population of people of working age (20-50 years old) and limited access to social supports. An aging population and a smaller pool of working-age individuals are largely the result of the migration of rural youth to urban centres, prompted by the lack of employment opportunities. Though youth migration is not a phenomenon unique to rural communities, these communities do experience much lower rates of return migration than do urban centers. According to Statistics Canada research findings on rural youth migration, only 1 in 4 rural youth who leave their community will return to the same community within 10 years.

The economic constraints faced by rural residents in particular make them more susceptible to food insecurity. Heidi Magnuson-Ford of Winnipeg Harvest Food Bank in Manitoba - which reports that 20 new food banks in rural Manitoba have opened since 2000 - illustrates the situation in rural Manitoba:

“Manitobans are in the midst of the second summer with extremely poor growing conditions. Crops and gardens are severely compromised or non-existent because of too much rain and flooding. Farm and construction workers are affected and showing up at food bank doors. Food banks are also suffering because garden produce is simply not available for community members to donate. The BSE crisis continues to have an impact that is driving farm families to food banks. This is a very dark side to Canada’s thriving economy.”
Food bank workers specifically point to needed changes in policies related to income and income security, such as social assistance and the minimum wage, as necessary measures to combat hunger and poverty. Figure 9 highlights these priorities.

**Figure 9: Policy Priorities of Canadian Food Banks**

The majority of the 502 food banks and agencies, 78.5%, believe that an increase in social assistance benefits to allow people an adequate standard of living would have the greatest impact on hunger and poverty in Canada. Raising the minimum wage is a close second at 74.7%, followed by the need to create affordable housing at 73.1%.

While the priorities listed above were most often mentioned by emergency food program operators, other policy initiatives cited were improving rates and access to employment insurance (57.6%), increasing income disability supports (56.6%) and income supports for seniors (54.4%) and improving job training opportunities (52%).

**CAFB Policy Update**

CAFB recommends that specific, concrete and measurable objectives with timelines be developed to monitor national progress on eliminating hunger, food insecurity and poverty. The following tables show CAFB’s positions, as articulated in the Position Statement on the Rome Declaration on World Food Security & Canada’s Progress on Its Domestic Commitment to Improve Access to Food (June 2002) and the responses of government to date.
I. THE CANADA SOCIAL TRANSFER (CST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAFB Position</th>
<th>2005 Update</th>
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</table>
| • Ensure accountability and transparency on the CST by:
  (a) splitting the CST into a separate Social Transfer - on
  social assistance and social services – and a Post-
  Secondary Transfer
  (b) ensuring that each area within the
  Social Transfer has a clearly outlined funding mechanism
• Establish a social development index to measure
  progress.*
• Restore funding to the 1995-1996 pre-CHST levels.
• Increase funding to the CST. With more federal dollars
  flowing to the provinces through the CST envelope,
  along with the appropriate conditions and standards
  attached, the federal government can encourage
  provinces to take measures geared towards improving the
  incomes and income security of Canadians in need, such
  as increasing minimum wages, ending the NCBS claw-
  back, establishing work-income supplements and offering
  benefits for non-standard types of employment. |
| • Presently, the CST consists of a block transfer to
  provinces of about $15 billion designated towards post-
  secondary education, social assistance and social services,
  such as early childhood development and early learning
  and child care. |
| • Total federal dollars for the CST remain well-below the
  pre-1995-1998 levels while funding for the Canada
  Health Transfer (CHT) have increased as a result of
  enhanced health funding in October 2004. |

* This concept is emergent in the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW). Five years in the making, the CIW is being designed by a Canadian think-tank of economists, statisticians, public health analysts and the like; it will measure progress in social development, looking at areas such as employment rates, housing costs, income and the gap between the rich and poor. The CIW will be launched this fall.

II. LIVING WAGE JOBS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAFB Position</th>
<th>2005 Update</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| • The ‘casualization of work’ - the increase in casual, part-
  time, contract and temporary jobs - has led to more
  “working poor.”
• Government must help create and support living wage* jobs by: i) implementing a work income supplement for
  low-wage earners ii) and establishing a policy to ensure
  that government contracts be awarded to companies that
  provide living wage jobs. |
| • Minimum wage hikes have been insufficient; provincial
  minimum wage rates remain well below the poverty level,
  whether using the Market Basket Measure, the Low
  Income Measure or Low-Income Cut-Off. |
| • Federal government must raise the federal minimum
  wage to at least $10 per hour (the estimated amount
  needed to enable an adequate standard of living for mini-
  mum wage earners working full-time). To make the fed-
  eral minimum wage a national minimum wage, the new
  standard should be applied to all federal contractors, and
  provinces should be encouraged to match the federal
  minimum wage. |
| • Canada is a low-wage country. One in six Canadians
  working full-time is earning low pay.** |
| • Despite strong economic growth and burgeoning corpo-
  rate profits over the last decade the proportion of jobs
  paying less than $10 an hour has not decreased since
  1981.** |

* Wages that support an adequate standard of living including food, housing, health care, transportation and other needs, without reliance on public and private subsidies.
** Canadian Policy and Research Networks, “Lifting the Boats: Policies to Make Work Pay.” June 2005 (please see References)
III. EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REFORM (EI)

**CAFB Position**

- The EI program needs substantial reform to ensure that workers who pay into the program are able to access their own benefits in the event of job loss.
- An equitable program, outlined by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), would: “protect workers in all forms of employment; ensure unemployment, pregnancy and parental leave, temporary sickness and income support while training; end EI discrimination against women, youth, older workers and workers in seasonal industries; protect at least 70% of the unemployed; remove features that blame the unemployed for their layoff; simplify the program, and ensure a benefit structure and financing of EI that reflects regional unemployment differences.”

**2005 Update**

- There were no improvements to EI benefits in the 2005 federal budget. All of the announced EI measures indicate that there will be no benefits improvements in the next five years.
- The reduction of 1.95% in EI premiums for 2005 is barely enough to cover this year’s benefits.
- Government has decided to cut one-third of the administration budget over 5 years.
- Some of the conditions for equity outlined by the CLC were included in a list of 28 measures submitted by the Human Resources and Skills Development Committee but they have not been implemented.
- The government still has $45 billion in EI surplus.

IV. THE NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT SUPPLEMENT (NCBS)

**CAFB Position**

- Consolidate the NCBS with the Canada child Tax Benefit, thereby i) precluding the former from being deducted at the provincial and territories levels and ii) creating a comprehensive child benefit system for Canada.
- Increase the supplement to a maximum of $4,900 by 2007/08.
- Enact legislation that also protects those families who are not in receipt of social assistance but who are low-income.*
- Enact legislation that protects those programs that the clawback currently helps fund, such as the expansion of medical benefits to the working poor and, in some cases, provincial child benefits, since an end to the clawbacks could mean an end to these programs.** The provincial governments of Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and all three territories provide benefits for children in addition to those provided by the federal government.

**2005 Update**

- Manitoba and New Brunswick do not claw back in any way; Quebec, Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador limit the clawback in various ways.***
- The government promises to increase the Canada Child Tax benefit to a maximum of only $3,243 by 2007/08.

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Also, please see Appendix II: Glossary.

** Ibid.

*** Provinces have adopted varying ways of ending/limiting the clawback. Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador have ended the clawback in a way similar to the Transition Model.
### V. NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAFB Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Implement a national housing strategy that meets the needs of Canadians and ensures the right to housing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Adopt more flexibility in how provinces and territories can spend the funds allocated for affordable housing. Federal and provincial governments must break the housing logjam.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2005 Update</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The 2005 federal budget promises to continue existing programs, which include a 2004 commitment to invest $1.5 billion in affordable housing over five years; it also includes an additional $1.6 billion as part of the NDP/Liberal 2005 Budget agreement. The new federal dollars will not require matching funds from other levels of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Millions of federal dollars remain unspent because of intergovernmental wrangling. Approximately $800 million is left untouched in the Affordable Housing Initiative.</td>
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### VI. ECONOMIC ACCESS to REGULATED CHILD CARE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAFB Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Ensure access to regulated childcare by (a) giving provincial governments adequate, stable &amp; long-term funding (b) introducing mandatory national standards to ensure quality of service delivery &amp; (c) establishing a mechanism for ensuring provincial compliance with national standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Secure commitments to expand only in the non-profit sector from those provinces who have signed the bi-lateral agreements on Early Learning and Child Care with the federal government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include support for children aged 6-12 in the bilateral agreements, as the current agreements only focus on children 0-6 years of age.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2005 Update</th>
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<tr>
<td>• The 2004 federal commitment of $5 billion over the next 5 years to regulated early learning and child care programs still stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The 2005 federal budget announced plans to invest $5 billion dollars over the next 3 years in a national childcare program. So far, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Alberta and Nova Scotia have signed on to a bi-lateral Agreement in Principle with the federal government to secure high quality early learning and child care. This agreement brings a national system one step closer.</td>
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### VII. ENSHRINING the RIGHT to FOOD in DOMESTIC LAW

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CAFB Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>• The federal government must enshrine the right to food in domestic law, consistent with its international commitments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The right to food cannot and should not be realized through charitable or food relief programs, such as food banks or food stamps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The right to food cannot be attained without realizing the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to housing.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>2005 Update</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The right to food, housing and an adequate standard of living remains unrecognized in domestic law.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Discussion

Hunger, as a symptom of the structural problem of poverty, has various systemic and individual manifestations. Any legislative measure to eliminate this multifaceted issue would therefore require a combined set of policies. *HungerCount* findings consistently show that the least financially secure groups in the country are experiencing the highest incidences of food insecurity. Since hunger is essentially an income problem, any policy measure to reduce hunger must be geared towards improving the income security of those less well-off. Canada’s eroding social safety net is the legacy of drastic spending cuts on federal programs, set off by the economic recessions of more than a decade ago. Elevating income and income security must start with rebuilding the social safety net.

**Government Priorities**

Debt/deficit reduction has been the overarching tenet of the past federal budgets. It has also justified the drastic spending cuts on programs and services that have hurt the most vulnerable – low-income people. But the rationale for balancing the books has become tenuous since Canada has paid down more than $60 billion of the federal debt and has experienced more than ten years of strong economic growth. The 2004/05 fiscal year marks the eighth consecutive year of a federal budget surplus. When compared to its fellow G-8 countries, Canada has the lowest net financial liabilities.84

In the midst of this fiscal vigour, people continue to visit food banks. Since the first food bank opened in 1981, food banks have proliferated throughout the country. In the last five years an estimated 35 food banks have opened – equivalent to a growth rate of about seven food banks each year. At the same time, the federal government has been reporting consecutive larger-than-expected budget surpluses.

Some inroads into reducing hunger have begun to emerge recently, as demonstrated in the 2005 federal budget. Canada is finally moving forward on some key policy areas that could entail concrete improvements in the lives of low-income Canadians. Some of the chief components are:

- $5 billion over the next 3 years for a national child care program.
- $585 million for the Child Disability Benefit to help families with children with disabilities.
- A $1.5 billion increase for much-needed affordable housing.

Furthermore, the NDP/Liberal budget agreement, Bill C-48, ensures an additional $4.6 billion in long promised investments, including $1.6 billion for affordable housing and $1.5 billion for post secondary education.

The increased federal dollars to be invested into child care and affordable housing are positive first steps towards easing the financial burdens faced by low-income Canadians. More affordable child care will remove one significant barrier to employment for parents struggling to raise children on meagre social assistance benefits. More affordable housing will contribute to lowering the barriers confronted by low-income individuals, and families with children in particular, to educational and employment opportunities as well as to reducing the demands on health and income-support services.85 Improvements in these vital areas may even reduce the incidences of food insecurity experienced by families with children who are, as *HungerCount* findings have been showing, the fastest growing group of food bank clients.

Could this enhanced federal program spending be the sign of new times or simply the strategic political manoeuvrings of a minority government vying to regain its majority status in the next election? And just how much of an impact will these new developments have on hunger and poverty in the country? Since these enhanced investments will flow through to the provinces, the provincial impact is another matter of concern. The litmus test will be how quickly the money rolls out to the targeted groups, how accessible these programs will be to them and ultimately, whether or not food bank use in the country declines.

**Policy Update**

While this report articulates the need for a comprehensive approach to policy that would address the multiple aspects of income security needed to reduce food bank need, it also highlights some key policy areas that play a pivotal role in alleviating hunger and poverty. The following is a discussion of three trends that have shown to be
Discussion

persistently linked to food bank use: labour market changes, eroding income security and, as a related issue, continued child and family poverty.

Making Work ‘Work’

Labour indicators today paint a sunny picture: Canada is experiencing the lowest rates of unemployment since 2000 largely as a result of increased access to jobs. However, neither greater prosperity nor income security has followed this boost in job creation, indicating an ‘imbalanced job market’

The percentage of adult workers who work either part-time, in temporary jobs, and in non-incorporated self-employment situations has risen from 24.4% from the past year to 27%. Although in the first months of 2005, Canadians 25 years and over experienced the lowest unemployment rate since 2000, 18% of Canadians state that their incomes are insufficient to meet basic needs and 14% of these Canadians are in full-time jobs. Furthermore, about 30% of Canadians anticipate losing their jobs in the next couple of years – the highest reading since 2000.

Vulnerability to low-wage employment is much greater than average among young workers and adult women than among adult men. According to the Labour Force Survey for 2003, 57% of young people earned less than $10 per hour, while 16.2% of women aged 25 to 54 and 11.2% of men aged 25 to 54 earned less than $10 per hour. The incidence of low wages is also much higher among recent immigrants and workers of colour.

In their most recent report card on the Canadian labour force (2005), the Canadian Labour Congress concludes that there has been little or no improvement in the quality of jobs of the majority of Canadian workers for the past twenty-five years. The majority of workers are not sharing in overall economic growth. Moreover, there is evidence that the chances of low-wage workers climbing job ladders over time have been falling, such that more workers are trapped in insecure jobs for much longer periods of time than used to be the case. The present labour market and minimum working wages in particular, fail to safeguard low-wage earners from poverty and to enable welfare recipients to successfully enter the work force.


The expansion of the low-wage economy has led to more people in need of employment insurance benefits (EI), the first line of defence in the likelihood of unemployment. But the precarious nature of low-wage employment has made it more difficult for workers to qualify for EI benefits. Having been cut so severely over the past decade, in spite of running huge surpluses each year, EI does very little to protect the majority of low-wage workers. More than $45 billion of the EI surplus has been used to pay off the deficit, pay for tax cuts and pay down the government debt.

While the labour market has moved toward greater casualization, the federal government is moving further away from supporting unemployed workers, particularly those caught in low-wage, part-time, contract and seasonal work. Relatively few food bank recipients and other unemployed people have access to EI because many have too few work hours to qualify. The percentage of food bank clients receiving employment insurance has dropped from 5.5% last year to 4.5% this year. In 1989, approximately 85-90% of unemployed Canadian workers had access to EI and today, only 37% of the total unemployed collected EI benefits.
Government response has been tepid. There were no EI benefit improvements in the 2005 federal budget and key items included in the 28 measures to improve the program, submitted by the Human Resources and Skills Development Committee, were not implemented. Instead, the government intends to run three EI pilot programs starting in 2006 but 95% of Canada's three million unemployed will not be touched by them. Making employment insurance more accessible would help to better cushion workers in precarious employment from poverty and ultimately contribute to lower rates of social assistance. But the predominance of a low-wage economy that generates and sustains insecure jobs gives individuals few options but to accept inadequate employment. Furthermore, labour market realities, such as low wages and an inadequate EI program, provide little incentive for social assistance recipients to enter the workforce.

“When the reality for someone on welfare is a bad job that pays only $15,000 a year, and has no [extra] medical coverage for their children, many are, understandably, too afraid to make that jump.”

Sue Cox, Executive Director, Daily Bread Food Bank, Toronto, June 28, 2005

As the program of last resort, social assistance, or welfare, also offers poor refuge. As figure 5 shows, 51.6% of food bank users rely on social assistance as their primary source of income. This suggests that current levels of social assistance do not do enough to ensure an adequate standard of living. According to the National Council of Welfare’s latest report on welfare incomes in each province (2005), the value of welfare for the most part continues to decline “adding further to the misery of the 1.7 million or so children, women and men who were forced to rely on welfare.” The report also found that total welfare incomes everywhere in Canada were well below the poverty lines and the average incomes in all ten provinces in 2004.

**Taking Action on Family and Child Poverty: the Canada Child Tax Benefit**

A disturbing pattern in the HungerCount findings is the persistently high number of food bank clients who are children. This year again, children constitute a large proportion of users at 40.7%. Since the first HungerCount in 1989, children have comprised roughly 40% of all food banks users in the study yet they represent only 25% of the nation's population. The clawbacks of the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) are part of the problem. As a component of the Canada Child Tax Benefit to families with children, the NCBS is still being deducted from welfare families by some provinces. Although federal transfers to child benefits have increased since 1998, these increases have been virtually cancelled out by freezes and cuts in provincial and territorial benefits, including the NCBS clawback. Furthermore, despite current data showing that the NCBS has had measurable success in reducing poverty, Canada’s child poverty rate is still too high for a nation whose GDP per capita is in the top ten in the world. In deducting money from benefits, vulnerable families – single-parent families in particular – are being penalized. This year’s HungerCount findings show that 53% of food bank clients are families with children, almost 30% of whom are lead by sole-parents.

Ending the clawback will help to improve the income of needy families and hence to reduce food bank use among this demographic. A study by the Daily Bread Food Bank in Toronto, Ontario (2004) concludes that 13,500 children in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) would no longer need to use a food bank if the NCBS were restored to families on social assistance. Research from Atlantic Canada shows that New Brunswick’s decision to end the NCBS clawback has reduced hunger among mothers and children.

Despite all the glowing rhetoric about the National Child Benefit and a very real increase in federal funding, the fact remains that many families on welfare were worse off in 2004 than they were five years earlier [the first full year of the National Child Benefit]. This is a big step backwards in the fight against child poverty.


But simply ending the clawback, as Manitoba and New Brunswick have done, may not be enough. It does little to assist low-income families with children who are not in receipt of social assistance. Yet this type of family also turns to a food bank for help in feeding their children. The “Transition Model” approach, proposed by the Daily Bread Food Bank Toronto, in a 2005 report on the clawback offers a more exhaustive and detailed alternative. Whereas the first approach primarily benefits families with children on social assistance, the Transition Model is designed in a way that also helps the working poor and, in particular, families who are not receiving social assistance but who are still at
the lower end of the income spectrum. This approach to ending the clawback also better protects those programs, such as provincial child benefits, which are funded by the savings to provinces generated by the NCBS clawback.

**The Canada Social Transfer (CST)**

Hungry children are a poignant facet of hunger and poverty. It is a compelling illustration that these societal afflictions touch upon diverse population groups, failing to spare even the most vulnerable members. Solutions can be sought through a number of policy areas, as discussed above, since each can have a significant impact on reducing food insecurity and food bank need. This report goes further to highlight the Canada Social Transfer as a strategic starting point.

The Canada Social Transfer (CST) is a federal block transfer to provinces and territories in support of post-secondary education, social assistance and social services. The CST can be a “driver of policy and funding mechanisms to promote social inclusion in Canada” since it touches upon a host of programs and services that are linked to poverty and hunger, such as welfare, family tax benefits, child care and affordable housing. The CST is a key means through which the federal government can exert influence over the impact of these services provincially. For example, as of 2004-05, funding for early childhood development and early learning and childcare is transferred to provinces and territories through the CST. Yet the CST continues to be under-funded, even after the deficit was eliminated in 1997: there has been a decline of more than $5 billion in cash transfers since 1992-93 and by 2007/08 the cash portion of the CST is slated to rise by only 2% per year, which is below even the rate of inflation.

Instead, health has been an explicit federal priority as demonstrated in the funding incongruity between the CST and Canada Health Transfer (CHT). The major increases to health funding in October 2004 further widened the funding disparity between the two transfers. In the long run, this continued funding imbalance will likely entail additional strain on the health care system since sustainable reform in this sector requires preventative health measures – specifically, measures that focus on the *social determinants* of health.

Since it has been well-documented that socio-economic status is the single most important determinant of health, the CST has an integral role in ensuring the overall well-being and health of the nation. The recent boost in funding to child care through the CST to the provinces is one example of how federal dollars can help lower some of the barriers confronting low-income Canadian families.

In addition to insufficient funding, the CST is also structurally flawed. As a block fund, the CST does not come with any conditions and national standards. The establishment of clearly identified standards will better ensure that sufficient money is in fact being spent on social programs, thereby enhancing the CST’s potential to achieve real social inclusion.

> "While health care as a social policy has been a defining feature of what it means to be Canadian, the CST – its purposes, its standards, and the amount of resources dedicated to it – provides a crucial opportunity for us to further build the kind of nation we desire."
> Honourable Roy J. Romanow, P.C. 2004

**More Food is not the Answer**

> “Food banks need to reconsider their original premise that they are temporary structures. A person who thinks that he/she has six months to live acts differently than a person who believes he/she has 60 years to live.”
> Mustafa Koc, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Director of Center for Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University, Toronto, 2005

Food banks are facing a crisis in terms of generating sufficient resources to meet this demand. As the findings in this report show, the number of volunteer hours over hours contributed by paid staff has increased from last year and almost 40% of food banks had to resort to other measures to assist their clients due to food shortages. There is no question that Canada’s eroding social safety net has had a part to play in this, signalling for many of those in food banking today the urgency for taking additional measures beyond providing emergency food assistance to deal with the problem.

Drawing from their arsenal of frontline experience in fighting hunger in local communities, today’s food banks
are ‘powerful proponents’ for long-term, system-based solutions to poverty and hunger. Many can be found actively engaged within anti-hunger and anti-poverty networks that address structural causes of hunger and poverty.

**Food Security: Where do Food Banks Fit In?**

The food security movement – the confluence of diverse groups from within the broad spectrum of food security work – while having its roots in earlier efforts in the 1970s, has been rejuvenated in recent years and is now gaining momentum. The 2001 Canadian Food Security conference and the subsequent food security assembly in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 2004, drew together a medley of organizations, including those in food banking; in spite of differing ideological and practical approaches to food security, all shared the desire to encourage the Canadian government to honour pledges made to abolish hunger and poverty, both internationally and domestically.

Food banks are not new to food security work. At times partnering with other local community groups, a number of food banks today are running comprehensive and integrated programs, such as community food security initiatives that offer nutrition education and cooking and sewing programs. However, there has been little research into the way food banks operate and how they provide client service beyond collecting and distributing food.

Food banks are seen as symbolizing a society in which almsgiving has become a normalized cultural feature; they are hence perceived by some as ‘de-politicizing’ the issue of hunger. Yet food banks are the first to proclaim that they are not the solution. They recognize the urgent need to forge collaborative networks and partnerships towards structural solutions to hunger and food insecurity. Greater exploration into these activities will not only widen the lens through which to examine the continued problem of hunger and poverty through emergency food assistance services, but it will also help to consolidate food banks’ efforts in the larger food security field.
Policy initiatives conceived at the federal level influence the nature, extent and depth of problems, such as hunger, that manifest locally. The cuts to federal program spending in the 1980s were followed by the growing income gaps between the rich and poor. From 1989 and 2001, the incomes of the top 20% of the wealthiest Canadians grew by over 16% while the incomes of the bottom 40% shrank by about 5%. Locally, this has been accompanied by more than 600 food banks cropping up in neighbourhoods across the country that are assisting an increasing diversity of groups.

It is urgent that what is happening in local communities across Canada resound more forcefully at the lofty level of our decision-makers in order to transcend the current disconnect. While food banks and other emergency food agencies have become entrenched features of our local, social landscape, the word ‘food bank’ has been uttered a mere five times by our elected federal representatives in roughly an entire year of parliamentary deliberations. Moreover, federal budgets, in the apportioning of the nation’s wealth, are a profound statement of a nation’s values and priorities. Given that the last federal budgets have shown little indication of a solid commitment towards enhanced social investments, government’s priorities do not reflect the values of many Canadians who believe that hunger is a problem in Canada and that government has a significant role in finding solutions. The continued presence of the food bank next door is thus an affront to these sensibilities. With the economic turnaround that Canada has made since the recession, it is now time that government make social inclusion rather than ‘debt reduction at all costs’, the new credo.

Federal legislation geared towards improving incomes will no doubt help to reduce poverty, and consequently hunger, in Canada. As this year’s HungerCount findings once again demonstrate, food bank clients, albeit of differing ages and backgrounds, are invariably linked by a fundamental experience: income insecurity. Ottawa plays the critical role of setting necessary benchmarks attached to enhanced federal dollars flowing to the provinces. The CST, as discussed in this report, is a key conduit for federal funding of social programs. It is therefore an important feature of the social policy landscape as it holds enormous potential for producing more inclusive systems of welfare and social services.

Far from being partisan issues, hunger and poverty affect everyone: unchecked, they can take an enormous toll on Canada’s venerated health care system, its national economy as well as its overall quality of life. Locally, greater social inclusion means shorter lines at the neighbourhood food bank, fewer food drives in the local malls, churches and schools, healthier children and ultimately, more empowered communities.
References


Ibid., Family, Seniors and Status of Women: Family and Child Care Services. Available at: www.mfasst.gouv.qc.ca/thematiques/famille/aide-financiere/index_en.asp#4


References
References


Appendix I: Towards A Hunger Free Canada

HungerCount goes beyond simply presenting the most current data. It also highlights public policy solutions to hunger and poverty. CAFB’s Plan of Action includes a strong commitment to increasing awareness and working for change. CAFB will continue to:

- Conduct, maintain and promote the use of the HungerCount survey
- Meet with politicians and staff at all levels of government to discuss public policy solutions
- Encourage our members and the public to take action
- Develop media relations and public education tools to keep public policy issues related to hunger “top of mind”
- Work together for systemic change with coalition partnerships

ACTION TOOLS: STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP ELIMINATE HUNGER AND POVERTY

Canadians are clearly concerned about hunger in their communities, as evidenced by the enormous generosity shown in donation “drop-offs” at local food banks and community food drives throughout the year. Furthermore, a recent independent research poll commissioned by CAFB found that 70% of Canadians recognize hunger as a problem and 90% believe that solutions lie with government. We urge you to act on this concern and contact your elected representative without delay.

1. Contact Your Local Candidate

Take HungerCount to your local representative and ask them to state their position on eliminating hunger and poverty in Canada. Let them know that your vote depends on their answers!

To help you find and contact your local MP:
Parliament of Canada postal code or name search of MP’s: www.parl.gc.ca

You can also contact the political parties directly:
Liberal Party of Canada: www.liberal.ca
New Democratic Party of Canada: www.ndp.ca
The Conservative Party of Canada: www.conservative.ca
Bloc Québécois: www.blocquebecois.org

For a complete directory of Canadian political parties visit: http://home.ican.net/~alexng/can.html

You can also visit the CAFB website at www.cafb-acba.ca, under Education and Research, to download a copy of our Online Advocacy Kit, which includes a detailed guide to visiting your local member of parliament.

2. Volunteer Your Talents!

CAFB and its members are always looking for volunteers. Visit www.cafb-acba.ca and get our membership directory.
3. For additional ways to get involved or for more information on issues related to hunger and poverty, visit the following links:

**Hunger and Food Insecurity (Canada):**
- Caledon Institute for Social Policy: www.caledoninst.ca
- Campaign 2000: www.campaign2000.ca
- Campaign Against Child Poverty: www.childpoverty.com
- Canadian Council on Social Development: www.ccsd.ca
- Canadian Federation of Students: www.cfs-fcee.ca
- Canadian Food Security Network: www.ryerson.ca/~foodsec/fd.htm
- Canadian Labour Congress: www.clc-ctc.ca
- Canadian Policy Research Networks: www.cprr.ca
- Canadian Social Research Links: www.canadiansocialresearch.net
- Citizens for Public Justice: www.cpj.ca
- Council of Canadians: www.canadians.org
- Daily Bread Food Bank: www.dailybread.ca
- Food Security Assembly: www.foodsecurityassembly.ca
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities: www.fcm.ca
- Make Poverty History: www.makepovertyhistory.ca
- Mazon Canada: www.mazoncanada.ca
- Meal Exchange: www.mealexchange.com
- National Anti-Poverty Organization: www.napo-onap.ca
- National Children's Alliance: www.nationalchildrensalliance.com
- National Council of Welfare: www.ncwcbnes.net
- PovertyNet: www.povnet.org
- Statistics Canada Community Profiles: www.statcan.ca/start.html
- Tristat Resources: www.shillington.ca

**Hunger and Food Insecurity (International):**
- America's Second Harvest: www.secondharvest.org
- Bread for the World: www.bread.org
- Canadian Food Grains Bank: www.foodgrainsbank.ca
- Centre on Hunger and Poverty: www.centreonhunger.org
- Community Tool Box: http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu
- FIAN: www.fian.org
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: www.fao.org
- Food First: www.foodfirst.org
- Food Research and Action Center: www.frac.org
- Hunger Free America: www.hungerfreeamerica.com
- International Alliance Against Hunger: www.iaahp.net
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization: www.fao.org
Appendix II: Glossary of HungerCount Terminology

Food Bank: A central warehouse or clearing house, registered as a non-profit organization for the purpose of collecting, storing and distributing food, free of charge, directly or through front line agencies which may also provide meals to the hungry. Food banks may also coordinate advocacy, public education and employment programs, as part of the effort to eliminate hunger.

Affiliated Agency: An organization that regularly receives a supply of groceries from a central food bank for direct distribution to the public.

Grocery Program: The distribution of groceries from food banks to the public. Food “hampers” or bags of groceries are provided with enough food for several days (at most).

Meal Program: The distribution of prepared meals to the public; may be operated by a food bank, or another agency, such as a soup kitchen, hostel or shelter.

(Prepared) Meal: Includes breakfast, lunch and snacks.

Full-Time Job*: 1,950 hours of paid employment.

Food Security: Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Income Security**: Sufficient and adequate income support in the form of social insurance (disabilities, employment insurance, etc.), social assistance, and income supplementation that can be unconditional or based on an income or needs test.

Adequate Standard of Living: The ability to afford basic needs including food, adequate housing, health care and transportation.

Transition Model*** (of ending the claw back of National Child Benefit Supplement): “The Transition Model proposes paying social assistance benefits to adults only. Families with children are provided for through a combination of the National Child Benefit Supplement (which would no longer be clawed back) and a new [provincial] benefit modelled after the NCBS. It also calls for a new Working Income Supplement for all working families. The benefits of this model is that it presents a way of restructuring welfare benefits that would allow children’s benefits to be paid outside the current welfare system.”

*As defined by Immigration Canada. Available at: www.immigration-canada.org/English/index.html

** Available at: www.socialpolicy.ca/i.htm

### Appendix III: Table 3: Provincial Breakdown of Selected 2005 HungerCount Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2005 Item</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NF</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Volunteer Hours</td>
<td>738,278</td>
<td>53,086</td>
<td>29,873</td>
<td>8,789</td>
<td>231,472</td>
<td>79,618</td>
<td>298,287</td>
<td>17,295</td>
<td>14,943</td>
<td>1,396</td>
<td>3,332</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Staff Hours</td>
<td>272,808</td>
<td>13,839</td>
<td>14,347</td>
<td>3,062</td>
<td>4,011</td>
<td>24,122</td>
<td>201,905</td>
<td>8,071</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>1,236</td>
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#### Family & Household Composition - Estimated Percentages (weighted by total number of people assisted in grocery programs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Type</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NF</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sole-Parent</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single People</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples No Children</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Parent</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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#### Income Sources - Estimated Percentages (weighted by total number of people assisted in grocery programs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Source</th>
<th>Canada</th>
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<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Assistance</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Insurance</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Support</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension Income</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Loans</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Income</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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</table>

#### Amount of Food in a Hamper - Percentage of Food Banks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NF</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Days</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5-5 Days</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Days</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Frequency of Food Bank Use Permitted - Percentage of Food Banks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least once a week</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every 10 days - 3 weeks</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every 5 - 14 weeks</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3 per year</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Measures Taken due to Lack of Food - Percentage of Food Banks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures Taken</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1+ measures taken</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close early/do not open</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn people away</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy food</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give less food</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
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<td>17.6</td>
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<td>10.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>26.1</td>
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Appendix IV: Notes

1 For a definition of ‘food security’ and ‘income security’ please see Appendix II: Glossary


3 Ibid., 2004.


6 For a definition of ‘food bank’ please see Appendix II: Glossary

7 Ibid., ‘affiliated agency’

8 For a definition of ‘full-time job’ please see Appendix II: Glossary

9 Ibid., ‘meal’


12 See ‘CAFB POLICY UPDATES: IV: National Child Benefit Supplement’ for a list of provinces who have signed the Agreement in Principle.


20 Ibid., 2003.


31 Ibid., 2005.


36 Ibid., 2004.


Appendix IV: Notes


52 Ibid., (2005).


63 Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2004). *Quality of Life in Canadian Communities; Incomes, shelter and necessities. Theme Report #1*. Available at: www.fcm.ca/housing/community_security/qol_2004_theme_1_en.asp


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75 Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (2004). *Quality of Life in Canadian Communities; Incomes, shelter and necessities. Theme Report #1*. Available at: www.fcm.ca/housing/community_security/qol_2004_theme_1_en.asp

Appendix IV: Notes

85 Ibid., (2005)
87 Ibid., (2005).
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