



Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction

Nelson, BC
February 9, 2018

Introduction and Event Summary

On February 9, 2018, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Nelson, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together approximately 80 to 90 participants including people with lived experience of poverty; poverty reduction front line workers and advocates; people from the non-profit and business sectors; and other community members from all walks of life.

The event began with a welcome from Elder Donna Wright, followed by opening remarks from Mable Elmore (Parliamentary Secretary on Poverty Reduction).

Participants then engaged in round table discussions in groups of 8 to 10 people per table. Each table had a dedicated facilitator from a local community group or from SPARC BC who helped to guide the conversations. Each table also had a dedicated note taker who helped to record the discussion.

There were two rounds of discussion which focused on the following questions:

1. What are the issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?
2. What would address these issues and help you and others out of poverty?

Following the discussions, participants were invited to put a sticky dot beside the strategies or solutions that were most important to them. Each participant received four (4) sticky dots. Following the individual priority setting exercise, participants were asked to determine as a table the top three (3) priorities from the evening and to report these priorities back to the room.

Document Organization

This document contains the transcripts from the flip chart notes from those in attendance. The flip chart notes have been transcribed verbatim, correcting only for spelling and grammar as needed. The notes are organized according to the feedback received to the two questions beginning with:

1. What are the issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?
2. What would address these issues and help you and others out of poverty?

Question 1: What are the issues facing you and people in poverty right now?

- Effects of poverty
 - o Lack of money
 - o social isolation
 - o Poor health
- Capacity constraints
 - o Unable to pay living wage in the community
- Housing
 - o Lack of affordable housing
 - o People commute to community for work
- Income
 - o Like to see minimum wage higher
 - o Employees live in poverty
 - o There are many working poor
 - o When you have money you can access things easier than without
- Impact of Poverty
 - o People use creativity to leverage
 - o Loss of empowerment
 - o Long term costs
 - o Generational and systemic
 - o Debilitating
- Policy issues money not the answer
- People living in poverty
 - o Resilience
 - o Work hard but not able to pull off every year
 - o Innovative people
- Systemic issues
 - o Poverty is structural
 - o Not by accident
 - o The system is designed keep people in poverty
 - o All levels
 - o There is no commitment
 - o Need multilevel approach
 - o The sharing economy not sharing
 - o Uber – we have companies in the community who have been here over the long term – there should be a commitment to keep the community strong
- Food security
 - o Resources,
 - o Infrastructure
 - o Access more ready
 - o Loss of core funding limited what some can do -Now done on a wing and prayer

- All levels of government to provide funding
- Access to healthy food is the foundation for good health
- Food banks-there are no real regulations on the donations – quality of food
- Health Canada has guidelines around what is a healthy diet
- The food bank offers food but it is not always healthy food
- Make tax rebates available to people who donate healthy food
- Make food from scratch
- Create an organic garden to benefit all of society
- Basic health and medical care
 - People take what we get
 - Dental problems mean that now more is out of pocket
 - It is expensive to be poor
 - New car but with no maintenance
 - Attempt to be proactive on health but can't afford a gym pass
- Ministry office
 - Can be abusive to people
 - People are scared to speak up
 - Basic rights are worn down
 - People in poverty deserve if capable to be proactive
 - People need to be given the opportunity to “climb out of poverty”
- Single parent families
 - Child needs dental work but can't afford to pay
 - After food + rent there is nothing leftover
 - Money has its limits
 - Low income parents be try to be proactive about children's health
 - Not just about pharma-care
 - There is a hurdle from being on income assistance to employment
 - Hard step to leave income assistance for employment
 - Childcare is a challenge
- Food
 - People stand in line at the food bank
 - You go early to stand in line
 - It takes almost half a day so you cannot work on that day
 - There are resources available but it takes work to access them
 - Stores toss out food because of regulations
 - The type of food you eat impacts the health of your teeth
 - Oral health impacts overall health
- Mental health
 - Being poor is a full time job
 - It affects your mental health
 - You feel that the world is against you

- Knowing how to move to success can be hard especially when the issues are inter-generational and there is no mentor
- The efforts and challenges that you overcome are not always recognized
- Employment
 - Employers cannot find good staff
 - Also hard to find a good employer
 - Soft skills are lacking: things learned in a middle class home like how to speak to an employer
- Services and supports
 - There is always one barrier after another
 - Wrap around services do not exist
 - Cannot force people, need to be internally motivated
 - Need housing and education
 - Need to bring people up slowly and steadily
 - Reach out with client approval to other agencies
 - Cut the red tape
- Judgement and stigma
 - People feel that they are not trusted to use good judgement to be responsible
- Supports
 - Make sure that people have the wrap around services that they need
 - We have supports but there are many different silos
 - People need help to find out what is available – funding? Services?
 - People do not know where to go?
 - Income assistance clients no longer have a case worker –someone to help them to navigate the system
 - Provincial income assistance phone lines are a barrier
 - The funding model is creating funding in the wrong areas -it is so chopped up that it is not efficient
 - It take the Ministry three months to do something a volunteer could do in a day
 - There is a lot of red tape that gets in the way
 - Case workers are now stuck filling in forms
 - There is no one doing the “human piece”
 - Both are trying to do the right thing but the system is not working
- Medication supports
 - There is confusion between what is available federally versus provincially
 - There is a difference for pensioners versus PWD assistance
 - You find this out when you move from PWD to OAS/GIS
- Addictions support
 - There are challenges in getting income assistance after treatment
 - There are real barrier to finding housing and employment
 - There is real stigma and judgement of people struggling with substance use

- There should be more financial assistance/supports for those trying to make the transition into being clean and sober
- Individuals needing supports
 - People with substance use -income assistance and continuity of care
 - People leaving institutions - jail, treatment centres, hospital care
 - People transition from PWD to OAS/GIS
 - Veterans
 - Children in care
- Childcare/ parenting challenges
 - There is lack of support for women facing childcare/ parenting issues
 - Inequality for women
 - Wage disparity/ discrimination in the workplace
- Higher taxes to offer more supports/ services to individuals living in poverty
- Income
 - Need living wages that corresponds to cost of living for the community
 - Everyone equal/same treatment
 - Should not be an either or
 - Should be consistent standard of living for all persons
- User fees/extra costs
 - Get rid of extra costs for services
- Basic dental
 - Dental costs should be covered – a lot of people do not even have basic dental care
 - Poor teeth can affect your appearance and mean that people discriminate against you
 - Can't get employment because of your poor teeth
 - There is extra money to pay for more this
- Supports for people who do not qualify for income assistance
 - Lack of services/supports for people living in poverty who do not qualify for assistance
 - Some people are not eligible for basic income assistance or PWD
 - It is hard for these households –what do they do?
- Basic expenses
 - People living in poverty can't budget for extra or unexpected costs
 - It is hard to have savings
- Access to education
 - Student loans can be a problem
 - You need an education to make you employable but debt repayment keeps people living in poverty
 - Educational opportunities are becoming too far removed for too many because of high tuition costs
 - We need to provide training/ educational opportunities for youth to have ability to gain skills and become productive and employable
- Youth in care
 - –When youth age out of care they do not get the services/supports they need

- Youth need more services and supports as they approach adulthood
- Need to ensure youth have opportunities for training and education
- Provide youth training in fields that will provide employment that gives a good income
 - Move toward European paid education system
 - Need to start all over again and provide more
- Affordable housing
 - Home support for seniors
- Transportation
 - People need affordable & accessible transportation
 - Especially seniors who are living alone and in poverty
 - Many people have to live outside of the City to find housing they can afford
 - Need supports/ transportation/ medical care/ access to services
- Social isolation
 - Without access to transportation people can become socially isolated
 - Lose connection to family
 - Feel alone
 - Affects mental health – people are suffering
- Service delivery
 - Need better income assistance service model
- Homelessness is an issue
 - The absence of homes that people can afford
 - People living on streets, in fields nearby
 - Some people have no homes but they have friends or family to help (couch surfing)
 - Some of the housing is inadequate – poor repair
 - Rents are too high
 - As house prices have increased rents have increased
 - There is no rental housing available for people to rent
 - People in Nelson to Salmo, Trail can't afford to live here
 - Was in rent to own situation but it was unaffordable
- Definition of poverty- what is it?
 - In terms of policy, government programs
 - If you don't have a SIN # you can't access services
 - If you don't have an address then you also cannot access services – that's poverty
 - People can fall into poverty very fast
 - Governments number one job should be to protect people
 - Giving people services by putting people into boxes is making it harder for government to do a good job
 - Poverty should be seen as a continuum
 - Sometimes the types of choice people have on income assistance are not real choices
 - Education, affordability, accessibility = all of these things have costs
 - Opportunities are low for people living in poverty to go to post-secondary school

- Getting thru K-12 – there are lots of issues that affect a students’ ability to move forward for someone living in poverty they face –instability in their home environment, couch surfing, coming to school hungry
- Even if they are bright students without supports to thrive it might not be possible
- System has inefficiencies that can affect a students’ ability to learn
- Students with low education are often forced into difficult choices that affect their life chances – i.e. doing something illegal to survive
- Educating people well at a young age will have best outcome for each person and for society as a whole
- Poverty and the relationship to the social determinants of health
 - People living in poverty face ,many challenges
 - Economic factors, social factors, health
 - The factors are all inter-connected
- Hopelessness is a big issue:
 - Society is set up for people to lose hope
 - Gentrification
 - Society stratification
 - Inequality
 - All lead to an increased sense of disparity
- Hopelessness is a big issue:
 - Seniors not supported by adequate retirement plans
 - Retirement packages are reduced by company collapse
 - Raising minimum wage is not necessarily effective
 - Cost of living expenses often increase in response
- Education
 - Kids 0-5 have no power
 - Kids are at the discretion of parents’ choices or pressures
 - Matriarchal societies on reserve have different type of approach to parenting- In some ways this type of knowledge and learning should be shared
 - It that can be better than other places
 - Parents access to resources determine where kids are socially and intellectually
 - By the time kids get to kindergarten there’s already a big range of kids whose experiences will affect their future development
 - The core sense of a child’s security and self-esteem is affected by these factors – it is out of their control but can lead into poverty
 - The absence of a stable family can have a negative effect on kids
- Dental
 - Dental costs can be more expensive if you let it go
 - Need to deal with dental crisis
 - Need basic preventative dental care
 - Other countries –i.e. the UK and France have adopted this approach

- Transportation
 - o The bus schedules suck
- Food security
- Mental health
 - o Many mental health issues are caused or exacerbated by poverty
 - o Anxiety
 - o Access to services
 - o Access to recreation
 - o Domestic violence
 - o Addictions
- Intersecting issues
 - o Childcare costs
 - o Inflexible employment = affects childcare
 - o Judgement/ stigma = affects self esteem
 - o Loss of employment = loss of benefits
 - o Low income = barriers to getting loans/ financial assistance
 - o Family breakdown, domestic violence pushes many people into poverty
 - o Classism means that poverty is intergenerational=hard to break free
- Impact of the Residential School system
 - o There is an inter-generational impact on families
 - o Trauma and the challenges that come with trauma
- Recreational opportunities
 - o Unequal
 - o Sometimes issue of cost
 - o Transportation
- Community infrastructure
 - o Size of community can impact ability support people
 - o Smaller communities create opportunities to engage and connect with people
 - o Urban environments less welcoming
 - o Smaller communities may mean that it is easier for people to reach out and ask for help
 - o Poverty is more invisible in bigger communities
 - o People don't want to engage with people in poverty – walk past with blinders on
 - o In broader region around Nelson there are a wide range of vulnerabilities but we know where they are
 - o There are some similarities and differences in the way communities respond –i.e. Creson has a different culture than Nelson
 - o Some communities have lost population as industry left = this has resulted in increased poverty
 - o There were 75 kids at the school when growing up in Nelson- now there are only 8 kiids because the logging industry has left the community
 - o Wealthy people are ok but union jobs are gone
 - o Cost of living increasing, still expected to get a job but how?

- Ministry support
 - o Need to break silos
 - o Need to increase collaboration – share information
 - o Need to work on systemic enabling change at the Ministry level
- Mental Health issues
 - o Many homeless have mental health issues
 - o When you are homeless it is hard to access therapies
 - o Government doesn't pay for a therapists to see people on PWD
 - o Have to charge people privately
 - o if you don't have insurance to cover counseling then it is more difficult to get help
 - o Many therapist are stretched thin
- Institutionalization of poverty
 - o People used to be able to survive with community supports
 - o Many of the supports were cut
 - o Loss of core funding and cuts in funding means services in the community are competing for grants – competition for resources is entrenched
- Seniors
 - o Economic changes with retirement
 - o Loss of spouses has both financial and mental health impacts
 - o Low pensions – CPP only isn't enough
 - o There are many different health issues that come with aging
 - o Without family supports, people are very alone
 - o EU has adopted different approaches that look at how to support individuals through the whole life cycle- citizens of all ages
 - o Assisted living +institutional facilities available for only 1% to 2% of seniors population
 - o People not aging well at home – there is not enough support to age in place
- More affordable housing needed
 - o Housing is unstable
 - o Cannot plan for the future, the next month
 - o People need to ask where am I going to live next month – it can be exhausting
- Food insecurity
 - o Connected with lack of housing
 - o Can't grow your own food, quality of food
 - o Food security- hungry kids
- Affordable housing
 - o Can't find affordable housing
 - o \$375 is too low
 - o A bachelor unit of \$1,000 is too high
 - o A 1 bedroom rent is \$1,450
 - o There are psychologic & emotional impacts of unstable housing
 - o There are significant mental and physical impacts

- Emergency shelter hours
 - o Shelter hours
 - o People have to leave the shelter which means they have to wander the streets during the day – there is no place to eat and there is an implicit unwelcome feeling in any of the free spaces
- Income assistance
 - o Status, perceptions
 - o Can only have one crisis grant per month – maximum
 - o Have to be in imminent danger to get one
 - o Often can't get to the office during crisis
- Stigma
 - o Stigma in community – judged when you don't have housing and clothing
 - o \$80-\$120 out of cheque for storage costs – not considered rent to have dishes, jewelry displays, need to store because can't rebuy
 - o Judgement and stigma around poverty, labels & bad will on people who are less fortunate , hide poverty from kids/families “spend on booze and drugs”
 - o Stigma of “welfare bum”, question/ struggle with identity, other people determine your identity
 - o Blame people for poverty, their fault, hatred
 - o Stigma of being on income assistances” for the rest of your life (medi-tech system)
 - o Definition of family – two sisters aren't considered
 - o Barriers + discrimination to gaining employment (eg tattoo, piercing/ gender ID/ class/ sexual orientation/ race) cause poverty
 - o Rural people blamed for staying in their community ‘you chose to live there’
 - o Early childhood salary too low – cant get out of poverty
- Realities of poverty
 - o Youth hostel in Nelson, living there for 9 years – insecurity
 - o Lower middle income don't receive subsidies – working poor hostage to the system
 - o No emergency fund, no \$\$ left
 - o Early childhood supports, intergenerational poverty, never known anything else, hard to get out of mindset
 - o Poor kids have lower vocab, not prepared when school begins
 - o Not enough money for basic essentials
 - o Definition of poor - just because you don't have money doesn't mean you're poor
- Housing
 - o Substandard housing – moldy, health issues,
 - o Can't move due to lack of availability
 - o Stuck in precarious housing with terrible landlords
 - o Landlord issue in Nelson, don't upkeep housing, don't treat like a business, unlawful
 - o Taxes too high on housing in Nelson
 - o Waiting on BC Housing (Anderson list for +1 year)

- Nelson commons supposed to free up rentals, didn't make a positive difference
- Air B&B takes away units
- Housing (unaffordable, inadequate) unstable
- Some landlords illegally raising rent, disrespectful to tenants, recognize there are good landlords
- Not enough housing co-ops 2 bedroom 5 people Housing for single people vs family
- Childcare
 - Childcare costs – parents can't afford, can't work – cycle
 - Early childcare educators live in poverty
- Incomes
 - Wages aren't living wage
 - Low minimum wage (even \$15 too low for cost of living)
- Government Programs
 - People want to contribute, income assistance is last resort, then find out you can't access – devastating
 - Assistance rates too low
- Inequality
 - Disproportionate taxes on working poor/ low income
- Transportation
 - 15 hour week
 - Bus system unaffordable/ cost, schedule and frequency
- Social isolation
 - People stop inviting you to social gatherings
 - People not engaging with neighbours due to technology changes as Nelson expands
- Addictions
 - Nowhere to go to consume in Nelson
 - Back alleys/needles more often
 - Addictions due to lack of support from family community, peers
 - Lack of mental health supports, lack of sleep, anxiety worry about where you're going to sleep
- Employment
 - Sense of well-being tied to jobs, as jobs are lost due to tech changes; need to redefine what creates well-being
 - Lack of full time jobs- contract work, not quality, paid, meaningful work
- Homelessness
 - Hidden homelessness in Nelson – affects women disproportionately
- Health
 - General health – treatment at hospital and cost for dental and medical
 - Recovering from crisis takes longer when you are low income vulnerability increases
- Government programs
 - Local government taking up slack, province is sluffing responsibility”
 - Income assistance is too low

- Teacher perspective
 - o Chronic stress
 - o Kids worried about food, shelter missing out on sports, music other activities
 - o Kids with means getting opportunities than those without
 - o Teachers noticing increase in mental health issues (anxiety, depression, violence) from kids in poverty
 - o Dental
 - o Huge issue for families, even middle income because of costs
 - o Creates huge impact on health This is not recognized by health system Gigantic issue
- income assistance service delivery for welfare doesn't work for Slovan valley
 - o Long term case worker gone
 - o Poorer service delays
 - o Isolation
- Children feel the stress of poverty
- Mental health
 - o 2-3 year old kids getting mental health issues
- High stress, parents can't support
- Working poor
- Waiting lists for services
- Of 101, 25 kids need help and only 6 are receiving support
- Very few rentals mean people are stretching to own a house or couch surfing with kids
- Dental care for kids
 - o Access
 - o Transportation
 - o Funding
- Childcare
 - o Huge lack of high quality child care which would have large impact on outcomes for kids
 - o Space + quality child care + affordable
 - o Childcare erases your income
 - o This creates broad stress on parents, which leads to inability to work, substance use, poorer care for kids, depression, blame etc
- Government Programs
 - o Fear of income assistance workers
 - o Need more family support workers
 - o Lack of funding creates pressure on services
 - o "outcomes" funding model doesn't work
 - o Lack of support/ services for women to leave abusive relationships
 - o Lack of support to get people off assistance into workforce
- 'validation' models effect early years as well (support needs)
- Cannot be income assistance/labelled
- The issues are being created by the poor environment
- Even if you qualify 3 hours support for 7 hour day not enough

- Employment
 - o Labour laws favor employers, allowing them to only give part time hours
 - o People get 2 jobs, placing people between employers, leading to institutional poverty for the working poor, disproportionately impacting women
 - o Working has a huge negative impact on family life
 - o Service sector providers living in poverty to low wages, more pressure on women 'pink ghetto'
 - o Lots of entrepreneurs doing ok but not many labour jobs for people with different skills/lower education/other interests
 - o I can't teach at Selkirk College because I don't have a degree but I am an expert in my field
- Addictions
 - o Substance abuse really important issue
 - o Fentanyl impacting Nelson
 - o 3 ODs/ day at Nelson hospital
 - o Feel hopeless/trapped, 'blamed', 'choices', 'rural'- substance use only escape
 - o 90% of behavior problems at school isolated to mental health
- Families get 'stuck' in poverty (working poor) barely able to cover their needs, and no opportunity to get out or moving forward
- Rural places have higher needs and lower services
- Seniors
 - o Seniors living on \$1200/ month with high rents (\$1800)
 - o Growing seniors population
 - o Spouse separated after 70 years
 - o Making home support for hospital release crushed seniors
- Health care
 - o Better accessibility
 - o Senior broke a hip and couldn't afford a ride to hospital
 - o Cannot afford and afraid to ask
- Communication harder in rural areas (cell coverage) more power outages, including when care is needed
- People w/ roof over head + ability to contribute, have self-esteem – lots of people don't have that
- Lack of money
- Transportation
 - o Buses: some underserved areas
 - o Taxi unaffordable (know people who have to take taxi to work)
 - o Public transit need more frequent runs (in town can be 15 hour gaps between pick-ups)
 - o Really limited runs to nearby communities in Slocan Valley
 - o Eg no daily runs guaranteed throughout region
 - o Impacts employment options
 - o Schools that are isolated need transportation and access to services
 - o Less service to more affordable areas (fewer transport options = lower housing prices)

- Alternative to bus
- Accessing government services
 - Medical services centralized so access for outlying areas limited
 - New Denver and Kaslo reduced services from 24/7 to approx 9-5)
 - Some medical services in Kelowna but expensive to return home + no help to do so
 - Phone and online services are difficult to access
 - Long waitlists
 - Too many hoops
 - Administrative functions are wasting resources
 - People have trouble w/ online forms
 - Libraries + librarians becoming defacto disability service center
 - People go there to use computers and ask for help with forms
 - Lack of personal service
- Medical and health care
 - Lack of \$ for medication support post treatment or illness
- Social isolation
 - Lack of social connections
 - Unable to go for coffee
 - No free activities
 - When you're poor you don't feel represented
- Stigma
 - System acts like you are trying to get something (scam the system)
 - Stigma; parents worried of MCFD involvement if ask for help
 - People who live in hotels can't get reference because the hotel owner won't say you live there
 - The broader public doesn't get it
- Access to education
 - Post-secondary for those in poverty
 - Universally accessible
 - Hunger, parents working away, transport= issues preventing kids from getting to school every day
 - Access to funding for trades
- Housing
 - Quality of appliances + access to affordable + timely repairs
 - Lack of housing (social, affordable)
 - Broken promises
 - Housing rent has to be aligned with assistance – should be same amount
- Childcare
 - Not affordable if you make less than \$20/hour + if you make that much you need to work a lot more
- Realities of poverty
 - Rules around income assistance makes it impossible to get out of poverty

- Stuck in cycle
- Hidden poverty/ working poor
- No encouragement to get out
- Poverty is expensive- can't purchase in bulk, expensive to buy necessities
- Slower enrolment puts people into further debt poverty
- Poverty is expensive
- Can't buy good quality lasting clothing – have to buy cheap stuff that wears out quickly
- Can't buy healthy food which compounds the problem
- Poverty tires people out
- Can't take care of self
- Food security
 - Hunger
 - Kids coming to school hungry (need more funding)
 - Adequate nutrition
 - Too much dependency on food bank (government is relying on charity; this should be last resort)
- Accessing government services
 - Systems in place are difficult to navigate + not adequately designed
 - Hard to find info online, in print
- Some places knock \$5 off for low income – does nothing?
 - Something that costs \$5 for a low income person might as well cost \$100
- Affordable housing is not really affordable
 - 500,000 instead of 1 million is considered affordable
 - Affordable is a range for people
 - Less cost doesn't equal affordable
- Mental health
 - Better access + more expansive mental health services
 - Currently only provided a limited amount of services before they are done with you
 - Mental health support Pharmaceutical drugs are expensive
 - Mental health issues are a barrier for people accessing supports and services
 - Mental health system is a barrier for people who need mental health services
- Childcare access/ funding
 - Families can't access childcare
 - It's the second highest cost to a family
 - Lack of properly trained childcare support services in Nelson
 - Childcare workers are poorly paid
 - "If my wife and I both went to work to cover the cost of child care we wouldn't start making money until 11 am on Thursday"
 - Childcare is a huge issue for single and double income families
 - Costs \$1200-1600 a month in childcare
 - Income threshold for childcare subsidy is not high enough
 - More affordable to stay at home than work

- Government services
 - o The ministry office treats people like cattle
 - o People are just a #
 - o No help with forms
- Realities of poverty
 - o School costs put people into poverty
 - o People say budget better
 - o Not enough money to budget with
 - o There is no end to costs rising
 - o Poverty prevents people from being able to take chances to get ahead
- Food security
 - o Became a vegan because the cost of meat/dairy too high
 - o Would only eat one meal a day
 - o Food costs surged in the last few years
 - o To afford healthy food you have to go to stores that pay their workers poorly (Walmart)
 - o Foodbanks are not the solution
 - o They help but not resolve
 - o Foodbank on campus can't keep stocks
 - o They help but do not resolve the issue
 - o Middle class families starting to use food banks more and more
- Education
 - o Tuition cost increasing every year
 - o Students don't have a chance to get ahead
 - o "Need to work 22 years saving all your money, no extra spending in order to afford an education"
 - o I had kids in order to push back when I need to pay student loans
 - o "In England when I was a child University was free but there was no expectation to go"
 - o You have to go to University to be competitive
 - o Expect you people to go into tens-of-thousands of dollars in debt to get an education
- Health care
 - o MSP are a bigger driver of cost increases
 - o MSP – I thought our medical was supposed to be free
- Stigma
 - o Prices at Walmart are more affordable but people who don't support Walmart shame those in poverty for shopping choices
 - o Role of privilege in how rentals are acquired
 - o Street people are visible – landlords know who they are
 - o Landlords references are asking if person has mental health/addiction issues = discrimination
- Can't afford to stimulate local economy because local shop prices are out of reach of people in poverty

- Transportation
 - o Greyhound threatening to pull out of intercommunity regional bus routes
 - o Lack of transportation adds to feelings of isolation
 - o Limited bus service reduces ability to participate in programs etc
 - o Housing price pushed families out further afield – no transportation to get back in
 - o Students hitchhiking to get to class--Some have been sexually assaulted
- Lack of community
 - o How do we build neighbourly connections?
 - o Lack of community connections; people used to have neighbor connections; ask for a ride to town
 - o Parents no longer pulling on those connections – severed
 - o Dissolution of neighborliness
 - o Family dynamics - loss of support system, family members providing childcare
- Separated families – split incomes
- Housing
 - o Short term rentals (Air B&B) take away housing
 - o Housing shortage
 - o Housing is not affordable
 - o Air B&B accelerates housing shortage
 - o Supports need to be in place for people with complex needs when housing is set up
 - o Not just setting up housing, MAINTAIN housing and teach people how to be renters
- Tourism destination – Attracting wealthy people, with second homes
- People need to be able to get ID if they lose their ID, Don't know SIN #, denied access; (Homeless, lost/stolen ID) so hard to get help ; this is a common problem; you have to have ID to get ID
- Very hard to get ID, need to pay for it
 - o Requires detailed information = people don't know it; Government needs to find a way for people who live in poverty to get their identity back; This takes up too much time; People can't even get started because they can't prove who they are; slip further into poverty
- Childcare
 - o Cost of childcare
 - o Subsidy (income) threshold in/out not middle ground
 - o Access to space
- Mental health
 - o No 'After Hours' Services at Mental Health
 - o Crises happen outside 9am-5pm
 - o Mental Health access is poor
 - o Workers have caseloads, unable to see clients frequently enough
 - o Always stressed
 - o Oftentimes workers change so often, clients are not told, and have difficulty connecting
 - o Programs before being able to connect with a case manager, even if addiction is not their main concern

- Food security
 - o For families, people with kids
 - o Being on a fixed income – to get by, you need to depend on foodbanks
 - o Scrambling, working hard to meet ongoing need
 - o Food is a human right
 - o Healthy food is a human right- health, longevity, child health
 - o Feeding 2-3 children is where food bank falls short
 - o Need skills to prepare food
 - o Question on quality of food – long term health care costs to this
 - o Working poor – food gets lost, quality of food
 - o Totality of peoples responsibility, folks finding it hard to feed themselves (rent clothing, heat etc) inadequate income- fill up on a “filler food (pasta etc to fill up) not nutritional
 - o People in poverty get expired food – have to eat it anyway
 - o Increase the quality of food we offer – dignity issue, makes people feel not valued
 - o Question RE: Why are grocery stores allowed to throw out food?
 - o Food recovery as a government policy
 - o Need food programs at schools
- Transportation
 - o To access food banks cupboards
 - o From rural areas to town
 - o Access to medical service, food, employment
 - o Bus services are getting cut
 - o Connection to community, to friends, to social opportunities
 - o No bus after 6 or 7 pm
 - o No match between when things happen & bus
 - o Social Isolation is result of poor transit
 - o People don't qualify for subsidized bus services are getting cut
 - o Cost of bus pass prohibitive
 - o Can't afford cabs if you miss the bus, hitchhiking puts people at risk
 - o Safety issue when transportation is limited
 - o Barrier to bringing in medical staff (ex- difficult to get into/ out of New Denver, created barrier to attracting staff)
- Accessing government services
 - o People need support to communicate with INCOME ASSISTANCE (Physically going to appointment)
 - o How are these people trained to communicate with clients?
 - o How are people behind the desk working/trained?
 - o Accessing income assistance itself is a challenge – all online, phone takes forever – 100 questions just to start
 - o Requires internet access (ie – meadow creek) , then you have to get to internet service/computer
 - o Fragmented services, not being in the “right” program can limit access to others

- Accessing services, if you are not on income assistance you can't access pharma-care etc
- Need BC electronic ID, email, my service account to even access the application
- Frontline workers are working with tough issues all the time and difficult
- Someone in pain, actively using, lost job, in hospital- this is a huge process
- Then you still don't get a yes/ no
- Cycle of poverty
 - Loss of employment
 - Break up of family
 - Low income
 - Homeless
 - Stigmatization and other and marginalization
- Stigma
 - Understanding what poverty is and who it could affect
 - Criminalization of poor
 - Privacy is paramount
 - Trade social intimacy for privacy
- Downloading
 - Relying on donation/charity- responsibility being offloaded onto community organizations, structural change is needed
- Housing
 - Rent/ buying price is high
 - Even with a decent wage you won't buy a house
- Food security
 - Cost of food way more expensive here
- Employment
 - Lack of employment (eg school and health)
 - Lots of jobs working to make ends meet
- Programs and supports
 - Support for outreach to understand w emotional support you have a better understanding
 - Lack of single parent supports
- Inequality
 - Wealthy place where the rich get richer and poor get poorer (disparity)
 - Unions have less power than they used to
 - Real estate speculation
 - Well-off have tax loop holes
 - Community has resources
- Homelessness
 - Lack of ability to camp in tents
 - Police moving people on but people don't have anywhere else to live
- Income
 - Wages – on fixed income
 - Impossible to pay all bills and costs

- Disenfranchisement of poor/passing people on
- Education
 - o Poor access to education (people graduating with \$80,000 in debt)
 - o Government putting less \$ into education
 - o Even less investment in public schools
 - o Generation of people only had option to go back to school
- Invest in communities
 - o Education to reinvest in community
 - o People earn less in local jobs so move away
 - o Give people a grant to stay for rural
- Access to information
 - o Barriers to a list of housing that's affordable
 - o \$700/m for rent but without running water
- Mental health and addictions
 - o Poor access to basic needs or health services
 - o Barriers to MH and addictions supports
 - o Drug users (what do we do for them?)
- Supports and non-profits
 - o Support workers are burnt out
 - o People and service organizations are not resourced
 - o Burn out lack of resources for workers
 - o Compassion fatigue
 - o Ministry and other front line workers
 - o Connectivity of organizations (salvation army and street workers)
- Reality of poverty
 - o What to do about it—perhaps ship people in from Vancouver
 - o People have lost their voice(disempowerment)
 - o You must actively raise money for important things
 - o People compromise to make tough choice
 - o Single parent with 3 kids will likely become homeless
- Whose job is it to find their power?
- Food security
 - o Food bank doesn't provide for dietary restrictions
 - o Poor food quality
 - o Are they getting enough to eat?
 - o Bring back government funded hot lunch in schools
 - o Do not privatize this
- Parents give kids to foster care will get more money for kids
 - o Give people more \$ before kids are taken away (preventative)
- Believe that parents know what to do
 - o People in poverty maybe if they were resourced they would have more success

- Child care
 - o Lack of childcare
 - o Especially stressful for single parents
- Isolation
 - o Symptom of isolation is poverty
 - o Sets you back from social engagement
 - o Social connection is key
- Give \$ to support these parents
- Transportation
 - o Lack of Bus service on Sundays
 - o People come in to rural for services
 - o Hitchhikers (in snow in winter)
- Mental health
 - o Access to mental health services is conditional
 - o If you pay = easy/ no money = wait list
 - o Can't get individual/ but group
 - o Get to critical stage
 - o Preventative mental health services
- Income
 - o Max salary and min salary
 - o Less salary/ makes it less cohesive
 - o What is the guaranteed lowest income amount?
 - o Due to taxes your net income is low
- Employment
 - o People don't have the hours for employment
 - o Not full time hours
 - o You need benefits
 - o Also option to only have part time if you have kids
 - o Jobs that make \$ can work less hours when kids are sick
- Gender issues
 - o Family responsibility on females
- Housing
 - o In Scotland's council housing, they have 30 days to find you housing if not you'll be put into a hotel
 - o Issue of absentee home owners
- Health
 - o Community raised \$ to buy a CT scan
 - o What could that money have done for poverty?
 - o Misalignment of values
 - o Risk of health due to poor food at food banks
- Supports
 - o Need to have volunteers or spiritual leaders

- People not used to stand up for themselves
- Need union/advocate/ people to help
- Laundry service at hospital is underfunded

Question 2: What would address these issues and help you and people out of poverty?

- Need political will to shift myth about poverty, destigmatize (1 vote)
- Not to pursue wealth, honored + celebrated build community (1 vote)
- Economy
 - Amazon pays low taxes and cuts of bricks and mortar community
 - Invest in a built community
- Celebrate education – build on things we have that are strong (2 votes)
- Access to Government Services
 - No access, hoops too big
 - Must go to one person to ask for help; too many systems;
 - Need support from cradle to retirement – do not need assessments, do not need things I cannot handle (1 vote)
 - Need one place to go to access services, get different supports in one place
 - Accessing resources--make more people eligible for everything – employment supports, health and social services which are linked
 - Consider one welfare system (like Australia) – format leave, income assistance, disability, pull money into one system
 - connect what we do to health, doctors, physio, advocacy, social work, triage (5 votes)
 - “A government office” with one stream of input, now in the system, rather than ground level workers navigating
- Allow families to be part of the solution
- Housing
 - BC Housing subsidized housing (3 votes)
- Government Programs
 - Increase Income Assistance rates
- Community supports
 - Every citizen has a Nelson citizen card, free pool pass, transit etc – you look like everyone
 - Services are centralized in Vancouver and larger centres, – there is a cost to not have these services available locally
 - Get to know your neighbours – everyone can make a difference
 - Community inclusion, start small with rides for neighbours
 - offer free access to gyms, theatre
- Transportation
 - Make transportation in rural areas more available
 - To health services, cancer treatment, seniors, young children

- Education
 - o need to fund education to keep up with the world
- Health
 - o Health cost in 10 years will use entire provincial budget
 - o Social services become part of health system with measured long term outcomes
 - o Create one stop community health care centres with Doctors, naturopaths, nutritionist, diet, income assistance, physio, pre-natal, etc (9 votes)
- Food security
 - o Increase in food banks –need budget for a car (1 vote)
 - o Hot meal program in schools with great food, like in Italy and France; real food
 - o Pricing caps on food prices, especially healthy food
 - o Increase the availability of good food, should be cheaper than processed foods
- Do work to find commonalities to make us less individualistic and make rolling out broad changes easier
- Income
 - o Minimum wage increase (1 vote)
 - o Increase assistance rate (2 votes)
 - o Pay peoples a living wage (\$20/hour), guaranteed income (1 vote)
 - o Pilot projects for Basic Income/Guaranteed Annual Income – allows risk, can save money (2 votes)
- Provincial support for local governments to protect and create more public realm and commons and free public programming (5 votes)
- Child care
 - o Child care – subsidized public regulated child care for all families with a standardized curriculum (1 vote)
- Government support
 - o Require all ministries and departments to look through poverty reduction lens (like Newfoundland) (2 votes)
 - o Province funded free public programming, hard to have a budget in small communities (3 votes)
 - o Increased support for public domain, eg, teachers, public arts, recreation, children’s play spaces, gardens, co-ops (3 votes)
 - o Definition of family changes for unique housing/family, 2 sisters should be able to live together as a family
- Inequality
 - o Reduce taxes for middle and low income
- Employment
 - o More training subsidies, increased access when not on EI
 - o Do not tie all training tied to EI, also for the underemployed
 - o Recognize the changing nature of work
 - o Apprenticeships and job shadowing for not just youth; available through your career, recertification

- Incentives as opposed to punishment
- Transportation
 - Better access to transportation and events – consider free/discount access card
 - need transportation to access services (1 vote)
 - Extend bus service – holiday service
 - Car-share in Nelson, local ride-share
 - Good transportation (3 votes)
 - Extend bus service hours (no bus on Sundays)
- Housing
 - Need a strong rental ombudsman, we used to have one
 - Stable housing, low cost housing, in community centre (1 vote)
 - Housing co-ops – build more in Nelson, can pay off whole building, haven't been built for decades (3 votes)
 - Increase rental caps for landlords so increases make a difference
 - Look at taxes on rental properties – lower so renters don't pay the increases
 - Make different types of housing available across spectrum (1 vote)
 - A BC Housing subsidy that provides people with support without dictating the type of housing people living in poverty should have to live in (1 vote)
 - Get rid of slumlords
 - Affordable housing – more diversity in providers so that people are not discriminated against (3 votes)
 - Improve affordable housing as well as supports & services for persons living in substandard housing or home in need of repairs including seniors who age in their existing homes but can't afford to maintain and repair – need supports and services as can't afford home due to living in poverty (2 votes)
 - Have standards for housing and provide options to families that will work for everyone (ie not everyone want to live in subsidized housing – would like subsidy & choice as to where they live(1 vote)
- Food security
 - More access to community / personal gardens to allow you to grow food – improves mental health
 - Plant fruit trees, harvest for people that need it, fruit farming
 - Food bank access, recognizing ultimate goal is they “go out of business”
 - Community kitchen – access to local food, how to cook it, canning workshops, mini food cupboards
 - Grocery store donations, rather than food waste, good and edible food- food rescue
- Access of government services
 - Need a local office – more compassion in the office with staff (1 vote)
 - Have a staffed Financial aid office (1 vote)
 - Have Financial aid officers – try to apply for assistance
 - More workers, less caseloads In office, reduce over work in local office
 - Reduce wait time for mental health services, EI all services (1 vote)

- Have a community service hubs (2 votes)
- Look at successful models in other places, do research + improve the patch work of current services
- Government role
 - Invest in infrastructure, more expensive the longer you wait
 - Make children a priority – early education, housing, food everything will follow + fair pay for educators (3 votes)
 - Use market basket level rather than LICO
 - Adopt a Swedish model – universal social services & educational supports (3 votes)
- Inequality
 - Need to associate living in poverty with the charter of rights and freedoms
 - People have human rights that are being violated as a result of living in poverty (6 votes)
 - – lack of opportunity for children due to living in poverty (1 vote)
- Education
 - Due to lack of ability to support children due to lack of funds to pay for additional educational costs parents living in poverty are unable to provide opportunities and support for their children (5 votes)
 - Lack of education – barriers to ability to learn
 - Have improved curriculum – accommodate different learners & learning difficulties so that all children succeed
- Seniors
 - Seniors that need help should receive help
 - Support for elders is lacking
- Health care
 - Universal Health care including teeth + eyes + medication (3 votes)
 - Federal programs that provide universal support and services (2 votes)
 - Continuity of care needs to be established and put into practice
 - Implement no cost MSP immediately
 - Administrative costs of MSP are equal to \$ money coming in
- Income
 - Living wage – regardless of reasons against
 - Living wage – lobby government changes to regulations and policy
 - Trickle up approach of guaranteed basic income
 - Trickle down doesn't work
 - More money in hands of community members who can stimulate economy (3 votes)
 - Why do we have minimum wage not maximum wage
 - Unions need to support people who need lifts in wages – minimum wage jobs
 - BCGEU represents low income jobs but not driving up those wages
 - Other unions focused on driving up already high paying positions i.e. teachers, firefighters
- Housing
 - Service providers who operate affordable housing options can act as monopolies & only provide service to some rather than all (1 vote)

- Social responsibility should be as important as fiscal responsibility (4 votes)
- Government role
 - o Establish core funding (1 vote)
 - o More transparency & cooperation/ collaboration w ministry & community Service providers with hope of developing understanding & trust (1 vote)
 - o Transition support timelines (2 votes)
 - o More income to those in poverty
 - o Reduce costs of what is needed
 - o Follow a dual approach
 - o Reduction of red tape
 - o Increase Access to services
 - o Increase Access to social workers
 - o Can't easily transfer over to case workers
 - o Don't make people tell their stories over
 - o Need a comprehensive approach
- Childcare
 - o More access to affordable childcare (2 votes)
 - o Look at where to get the budgeting to support childcare workers (1 vote)
- Equality
 - o Tax reform to fund programs that support those who need it (people in poverty)
 - o Look out for people who have been paying into private retirement funds and lose it when business shuts down (eg. Sears employees)
 - o People earning 100s of millions not giving back to society
- Universal childcare (2 votes)
- Mental health
 - o Accessibility to mental health supports
 - o Make these supports easier for people who need it (2 votes)
 - o Better/ quicker supports
 - o Five week waitlist for counselor in Nelson
 - o \$80-\$140 for a private counselor
 - o Women's Centre offers supports but need to fit in their parameters to access services
 - o Mostly volunteers
 - o Need to distinguish between addiction vs mental health support
 - o Need to go to "Pavilion" in trail Access to supports
 - o Know someone who was suicidal, had to figure out transportation to and from facility, figure out how to pay rent that she missed in treatment
 - o So many additional unsupported obstacles
- Transportation
 - o Dad needs to take a bus to Trail three times a week for dialysis
- Access to government services
 - o More staff/ workers paired up with people in need (5 votes)
 - o Need advocates/ supports to help navigate system

- More frontlines workers to provide services and not act as gatekeepers
- Government Supports
 - Help people bridge off social assistance by providing medical and 1 months wages, exempting income (1 vote)
 - These bridges are the key to success with a supporting vs penalizing approach
 - Adequately fund the services that exist (1 vote)
 - More protection for workers so that employees can't reduce hours and benefits
 - Offer a bursary for clothes
 - Give \$1000 for back to work bursary for clothes, gas, childcare
- Housing
 - Need more affordable housing for families (1 vote)
 - 1 bedrooms are great but need more multi-person homes
 - Build more subsidized housing
 - Pressure province and feds to build supportive housing (2 votes)
 - Last subsidized housing project in Nelson was built 20 years ago --it's falling apart
 - Need money beyond capital funding
 - Pay for upkeep etc.
 - The coop in Nelson is falling apart too
 - Build more student residences to reduce pressure on rental units
- Transportation
 - Convenient functional transportation
 - Communities around Nelson have affordable rent but no transit to get to and from
 - City should look at lots that are available and partner with nonprofits to develop affordable housing (1 vote)
- Education
 - Have accessible post-secondary (1 vote)
 - Increase funding for public education (2 votes)
 - Give extra money to 'inner city' schools
 - These schools would get support workers and \$ for school lunch
 - Schools need counsellors, psychologists, assessments, food, food programs, child and youth workers or social workers in each school (or high needs schools)
 - Education is the way out
- No silver bullet, very complete structural issues, human issues
- Housing (3 votes)
 - Rental subsidies
 - Building housing (funded by fed/prov)
 - Subsidized housing
 - Quality housing, safe + healthy (mold)
 - Landlord certification
 - Identify absentee home owners and get money from them (not community members)
- Early childhood
 - HELP (UBC) EDI assessments can point out issues where the needs are

- Recognize and act on the relationships of poverty and child development
 - Early intervention
- Select standing committee 2016 hubs for services ‘family courts’ expanded to support families
- Dental care (1 vote)
 - dental care
- Guaranteed minimum income
 - Let people grow from there
- Start with adequate money/resources (1 vote)
- Child care
 - Quality child care at young age (4 votes)
 - Child care spaces in schools
 - \$10/day childcare for families under \$40k income
 - Create the best we can
- Remove barriers for people in poverty
 - MSP fees (stop hassling people) (1 vote)
 - Lack of dental care
 - Everything is online, a whole generation doesn’t have computer literacy
 - Let people do things face to face
- Income
 - Increase minimum wage more quickly
 - Make a living wage (1 vote)
 - Living wage for rural areas
 - Living wage for childcare workers
 - Raise minimum wage to encourage people to work and pair this with guaranteed annual income (not one or other)
- Transportation
 - Higher vehicle costs, better bus service
 - Better school bus service
 - 6 year olds can’t walk 1 km to catch the bus--unsafe
- Look at social service funding and give people access to social workers, credit counselling, debt relief, address debt levels (1 vote)
- Addictions
 - Support people with addictions (outreach teams ‘car 87’)
 - itinerant nurses to support detox
 - Support for people at all stages of life
- Guaranteed annual/basic income (6 votes)
 - Ensure income can match meeting basic needs of life
 - Universal income
 - Guaranteed annual income/wages
 - GAI + supplements for all types of caregivers
- Health care
 - Dental care –free coverage for all

- Accessible health services that include vision + dental + MH counselling, physio – health service coverage expansion (3 votes)
- Aboriginal
 - Truth + reconciliation commission calls to action implemented especially as related to UNDRIP
 - Programs in schools that deal with racism
- Access to government services
 - One stop shop to have questions answered instead of siloes at ministries and waitlists for calls and services (2 votes)
 - One contact person/ case worker to support client thru process navigating system
 - Nelson has a few outreach people working with people on street – but we need this type of support for all segments of people facing poverty including seniors who need different approach than homeless
 - Better mechanisms to find out about services from a human, not just web based
 - Systems approach to reduce working in silos (2 votes)
- Economy
 - Attract industry to Nelson area that fits demographics here – creative artistic intelligent, motivated people who need jobs that align with that (1 vote)
 - In next ten year automation with increase – need to plan for that with economic stimulation and decisions
 - Tax automation
 - If we are going to be a tourism economy we need to deal with planes not landing at “Cancelgar”
- Government supports
 - Support in home for people living under poverty line
 - Support for stay at home parents/seniors caregivers (1 vote)
 - Better supports for people w/ postpartum depression
 - Look to people experiencing specific issues
 - Raise benefits for all
 - Don’t reinvent the wheel – look at what precedents work in other countries (eg., Finland, Germany, etc.)
- Gender
 - Remove gender imbalance of poverty
 - Women more vulnerable than men to be in poverty
 - Gender approach to all government policy
- Education
 - Access to secondary education
 - Support for post-secondary (2 votes)
 - Loans do not equal work
 - Full funding for PSE (1 vote) – invest in our youth + people going back to school
 - Need full support income assistance grants

- Inequality
 - o Plug tax loopholes
 - o Increase taxes for higher earners
 - o Policies and benefits must benefit all British Columbians
 - o Revision of tax system for more equal wealth
 - o At policy level: see issue as systemic not just helping this specific group of people; it touches every area and ministry
 - o Inclusive hiring and housing standards (can't discriminate) needs enforcement
 - o Accessibility to human rights tribunal/advocacy
 - o Rethink taxes Increase, taxes should provide similar social nets for all
 - o Tax reform --redistribution of taxes for greater equality
- Government supports
 - o Social safety net approach that ensures people can meet basic living needs
 - o Not placing a \$ amount to it but need to look at what works and what is needed
 - o Look at poverty reduction precedents in NFLD
 - o Poverty reduction implies any level of poverty is Ok – need to take poverty elimination approach
 - o 0% poverty is what we should be going for here, the perspective that should underpin any action moving forward
- Health care
 - o Put healthcare focus on prevention and supporting health prevention instead of dealing with health crises and fund this approach appropriately (3 votes)
 - o Health is now a money making industry
- Housing
 - o Safe and affordable housing's (1 vote)
 - o (there's housing out there that's affordable but its unsafe – not good enough)
- Indigenous
 - o As immigrants come into country and communities we must integrate newcomers without putting people into poverty – serve migrants as well as people already here
- Recreation
 - o Free/affordable access to rec opportunities
- Stigma
 - o Need to overcome stigma associated with poverty
 - o Perception is that if you don't have money. you're failing
 - o Educate our whole society about poverty
 - o Support people experiencing poverty to reach out for assistance without experiencing shame
 - o Some families can't afford hot lunch programs for kids but don't admit it so kids go hungry because they don't want to 'out' their kids as poor
 - o Change social perspective on poverty (1 vote)
- Community supports
 - o Free subsidized access to community services

- Free bus pass (happens in Cranbrook)
- Community Centre in Nelson has great programs but can cost \$100 for 12 classes – families in poverty cannot access these
- Remove barriers to ask for it, access, engage
- Support social engagement for people in poverty
- Transportation
 - Get people out of cars, in public transit – give students free bus passes, encourage use, culture change towards public transportation (1 vote)
 - Transit helps the environment and encourages social change
 - All active modes of transportation
 - Official Community Plans should support active transportation
- Mental health
 - Support people with mental health to come to same level of wellbeing too
- Ensure all people have needs met w/ dignity +equity
- Community supports
 - Housing, food, acceptance
 - Provide places for people to be
 - Safe homes
 - Safe places to spend time
 - Passes to leisure/activity programs that lead to healthy life
- Food security
 - People (young people) who want to farm not able to afford land
 - Make land cost less/rent
 - Food security solution
 - Robust food programs (best if not necessary)
- Criminal justice
 - Take restorative justice approach to law enforcement
 - Liaison person to deal with “crime” or criminalizing mental health and homelessness –help stop jail as only solution
- Democracy
 - Proportional representation electoral system
 - Prevent ministry interests taking over political system decisions (1 vote)
 - Through investigation into reports of misconduct
- Education
 - Maintain and improve public education system (3 votes)
 - Make education accessible to all
 - Better funded
 - Improve quality of teaching, rigorous evaluation
 - Adequate support for kids with disabilities in schools (1 vote)
 - Universal post- secondary education + trades training (3 votes)
- Income
 - Universal basic income (3 votes)

- Not just for survival actually quality of life
- Specific and appropriate to where you live
- Increased disability assistance, income
- Stigma
 - Recognize that poverty is an issue for all of us and reduce stigma (a culture shift)
- Transport: increase bus access to outlying areas
 - Bus pass program
 - Bike sharing (electric! We have hills)
- Housing (3 votes)
 - Building more low cost housing
 - More + better subsidies or put rental caps
 - Government sponsored housing (private is often very poor quality)
 - Housing that is private
 - Restrict “investment” housing that keeps people out of getting into market (aka speculation/ sometimes outside community buyers)
- Childcare
 - Affordable day care + more availability (3 votes)
 - Pay workers a living wage
 - It’s an industry that is in crisis
 - Early years support for child + parents
 - \$10 a day plan (4 votes)
- Income
 - Minimum wage – earning exemptions, be permitted to supplement income, let people get some money in the bank
 - Implement Living Wage, not minimum wage and have government mandates this
 - Both minimum wage & welfare rates need to increase
- Government supports
 - Long term Income Assistance leads to depression, low self-esteem
 - Welfare rates need to go up
 - Look at what Scandinavian Countries do – look at success and model what works
- Food security
 - Food security is entirely linked to income
- Access to government services
 - ID No fee to start everything up
 - Give people the opportunity to better themselves – How can you get a job with no SIN?
 - Temporary SIN to allow you to work until you can afford to get the rest of your ID in order
- Rural Communities
 - need to be looked at with the same importance as big cities
 - Funding should not be tied to population
 - Rural areas have the same problems as cities (ie mental health, winter emergency bed, addiction etc)
 - These problems exist in smaller areas and are getting worse

- Transit
 - o Use smaller buses (1 vote)
 - o Use maintenance costs, less gas, cheaper to buy
 - o Use money to extend transit services
 - o Don't need large buses in small centres
 - o Coordination between when programs are offered and when buses run Program planning around buses
 - o Programs provide transportation subsidy- Provide bus tickets, gas cards Create , build government investment in Co-op housing
- Realities of poverty
 - o How to get a job without a house? How to get a house without a job?
- Housing
 - o Nelson has empty lots (eg. Loss of the Kerr), beside Safeway
 - o Do infill options to build affordable housing
 - o Province increase investment in affordable housing (6 votes)
 - o Province to mandate that cities allocate a certain amount of affordable housing
 - o Redefine "Affordable" ie 30% of income)
 - o Provide housing subsidy – maintain and increase it , to consider rising costs (Another way other than building more)
 - o Increase density: New buildings in downtown core should include affordable housing with more supports
 - o Stop speculation (foreign investment to housing and airbnb)
 - o Need more housing advocates, supports help people maintain their homes
 - o Example of success: Anderson Garden, Nelson (Healthy, dignified housing)
 - o Adequate housing – without plumbing, basements w/ no windows, garages, people trying to get clean, having to live with users
 - o Guaranteed affordable housing (5 votes)
- Income
 - o Guaranteed Annual Income It is working (9 votes)
- Government supports
 - o How government treats people who have been on Income assistance for a long time is not productive
 - o Restricting current funding values to realize values (people priority instead of just economy (1 vote)
 - o Create supportive networks for children
 - o Start funding solution at pregnant women and kids
 - o Help men learn how to get emotional support from other men (not just women)
 - o Stop abuse
 - o Lots of informed men's groups
 - o Supporting women and children will lessen their vulnerability
- Childcare
 - o \$10 a day childcare

- Inequality
 - o Stop privatization (1 vote)
 - o Structural change
- Proportional representation (1 vote)
 - o Reestablish socialization
 - o Restructure tax system (1 vote)
- Food security
 - o Design a community around food security
 - o Something nutritious within a 5 minute walk
 - o Community garden (alternative food support)
 - o Recognize who uses instead of quick fixes that don't help Hot lunch and nutrition in schools
- Health care
 - o Nurses in schools (or nurse practitioner + on the street)
- Education
 - o Put courses (e.g. civics) in schools to educate children about value to social issue/situation & each person's role in that (2 votes)
 - o Make people know they can do something to fix the problem
- Income
 - o Guaranteed minimum income (2 votes)
 - o Fair income for people
- Social inclusion
 - o Opportunity for people to engage meaningfully
 - o E.g., employment or social inclusion)
 - o Strengthen the informal support network for people
 - o Stop policy of individualism (create community)
 - o Need to start thinking like children and how they view taking care of someone eg community
 - o fight stigma, and isolation
- Community role
 - o Recognizing, celebrating and funding support networks and good relationships
 - o Do community engagement and make it accessible and equal (to make community well)
 - o Design community around housing and childcare Instead of car
 - o Enhance community/urban planning (no cars/front door services)
- Employment
 - o More employment opportunities--support job creation
 - o Temporary employment opportunities when have mental health and addiction
 - o Unionize support workers (all)
 - o Bring back unemployment works
 - o More hours for employment
- Early childhood supports
 - o Support for parents
 - o 2 year maternity leave

- Supports
 - o Same funding for keeping kids in home to match child foster care
 - o Bring laundry back to hospital
- Mental health
 - o Increase evening and weekend hours for mental health and addiction workers
 - o Zero homelessness
 - o Mental health substance use – adequate funding, supports, integration (3 votes)