



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

A CALL TO ACTION



Make Poverty History

The First Nations Plan for Creating Opportunity

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) launched a national campaign in the fall of 2006 to create awareness of First Nations issues and call for action against poverty.

The Make Poverty History for First Nations campaign highlights the struggles facing First Nations people and communities. First Nations and Canadians in general must take action together and demand that Canada's political leaders honour their commitments to end poverty.

The AFN campaign is linked to Make Poverty History, a worldwide effort to eliminate poverty that began in 2005 and involves over 80 countries.

"Poverty among First Nations can be eliminated. Eliminating it requires respect, dignity and the willingness to empower of First Nations people. I believe that together we can achieve this goal. And when we do eliminate First Nations poverty in Canada, Canada as a whole will benefit as much as First Nation peoples and communities."

— AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine

What does Poverty really mean?

Too many First Nations children, elders, families and communities are living in conditions that should not be accepted by anyone in Canada.

- 1 in 4 First Nations children live in poverty.
- First Nations youth commit suicide at 5 to 8 times the Canadian rate as a result of poverty and despair.
- High school graduation rates for First Nations youth are half the Canadian rate.
- About 1 in 4 First Nations homes with children are overcrowded.
- Close to 100 First Nations communities are under boil drinking water advisories.
- Mould contaminates almost half of all First Nations homes.
- More than half of First Nations people are not employed.
- Diabetes among First Nations people is at least three times the national average. (Source: www.rhs-ers.ca)
- First Nations suffer from Third World diseases such as tuberculosis at 8 to 10 times the rate of Canadians in general.

It is time to speak up against these unacceptable conditions and demand change... **CHANGE TODAY FOR TOMORROW!**

Make Poverty History

Creating Opportunities

More than half of First Nations people are under 23 years old. If poverty isn't addressed today, it will continue to linger among First Nations families and communities in the next generations.

How do we break this cycle? We need strong, stable, self-sufficient governments. We need economic development opportunities – our fair share of Canada's resources coming from our traditional and current lands. We need good health care, safe housing, and access to educational opportunities close to home.

"I believe that First Nations youth should look to the future with hope and big dreams. The world is full of opportunities and nothing should hold them back. It's time for all First Nations people – including our youth – to take a stand against poverty so we can help make their dreams come true. Let's work together to Make Poverty History for First Nations."

—Adam Beach, Actor

This isn't the case today. First Nations peoples receive half the amount of funding per person as other Canadians. Our funding for health and other essential services like education are capped every year at a level below what is needed to meet our needs.

What we know is that it will cost Canada more to do nothing.

Money is necessary, but it isn't enough. We need to create a solid and stable foundation for First Nations to make the decisions that affect our lives and plan for our own future.

The First Nations Plan is reasonable, achievable and necessary for a productive and competitive Canada.



GET INVOLVED

Please join us in a united effort to Make Poverty History for First Nations. We need your help to tell the government that First Nations will not be ignored and that First Nations' rights must be fully recognized and respected.

Here are a few ways that you can support this national campaign:

- Sign the online petition at www.afn.ca.
- Write to your Member of Parliament.
- Distribute campaign materials to people in your community and encourage them to become involved.
- Participate in the **National Day of Action on June 29, 2007.**

The National Day of Action is an opportunity for all Canadians to stand together in support of a better life for First Nations. **The Assembly of First Nations is promoting education, awareness and action through peaceful rallies in Ottawa and across the country, giving a unique voice to our children, youth and elders.** Improving the lives of First Nations will make Canada a stronger, healthier and better nation for all Canadians.

"Poverty breeds helplessness and hopelessness and our people deserve a better future. We need immediate action from the government and we need to work together to break the cycle of poverty for First Nations."

— Ted Nolan, NHL Coach

**N.D.A.
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For more information on the campaign, please visit www.afn.ca

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Make Poverty History
for First Nations
www.afn.ca

Take Action. Make Your Voice Count. Strengthen Our Message.