

2015 GLOBAL CITIZEN AWARD WINNER



POVERTY COSTS is a collaborative campaign to raise awareness about the economic and social cost of poverty, and to mobilize Saskatchewan people in a call for a comprehensive poverty reduction plan. Throughout 2014, the campaign successfully kept poverty in the public conversation through strategic and innovative ways, by sharing personal stories, coordinating citizen action and engagement, effectively engaging the media, and educating the public and decision makers about the hard facts (the economic cost of poverty in Saskatchewan was calculated by the campaign at \$3.8 billion due to heightened service use and missed opportunities).

An essential tool in the success of the campaign was the leadership and expertise of people with a lived

experience of poverty. In addition, community engagement initiatives, provincial events, a wealth of support from Saskatchewan residents, and the hard work of dedicated core team members resulted in the announcement of a commitment to implementing a poverty reduction strategy in the Throne Speech on October 22nd, 2014.

The campaign is looking forward to working hard to ensure that a strategy that includes targets, timelines and accountability is developed to reduce poverty and improve the lives of many people in our province. While there is still a long way to go, the campaign is worthy of celebration for its major success in bringing together advocacy groups, citizens, and government in order to focus the public's attention on addressing the

root causes of poverty, such as affordable housing, education, health, and community support systems. In particular, the campaign was strengthened by the coordinated work of many partners in Saskatchewan all working to see real action on poverty, including the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition, Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership, Unite Digital Cooperative, and Upstream.

Guided by values of collaboration, transparency, non-partisanship, a belief in the power of community and in taking leadership from those with a lived experience of poverty, the campaign is a shining example of solidarity. Poverty Costs shows us that when we work together, a more just world is possible.