



For Immediate Release

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New Fact Sheets Show Growing Racial Disparities in Canada

Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change (COP-COC) is releasing today a new set of fact sheets showing racial disparities in education & learning, employment, food & water security, health & child welfare, housing & homelessness, income & social assistance, immigration & newcomer settlement, justice & policing, and poverty, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The set of ten fact sheets are based on the 2016 Census of Canada and other recent studies. The highlights of persistent disparities experienced by Indigenous communities and communities of colour include:

- The 2016 Census showed that 20.8% of peoples of colour in Canada are low-income compared to 12.2% of non-racialized people;
- Racialized women earned 58 cents, and racialized men earned 76 cents, for every dollar a white man earned in Ontario in 2015. The ‘colour-code’ persists for second generation workers of colour;
- The 2016 Census data shows a 45% income gap between Indigenous women and non-Indigenous men, while the average income gap between all Indigenous and non-Indigenous people were 33%;
- Black students were 12% of the Toronto District School Board student population but represented 48% of all expulsions; Indigenous students were 0.3% of the student population and 1% of all expulsions; Eastern, Mediterranean and Southwest Asian students were 4% of the population but 8% of all expulsions;
- In 2016, 40% of inmates in segregation at the Toronto South Detention Centre were Black, but they are only 7.5% of the Toronto population;
- Most recent immigrants were spending more than 50% of their income on housing; 15% spend 75% or more of their income on housing;
- A national study reported that individuals with an Indigenous identity were more than twice as likely (18%) to have experienced hidden homelessness as their non-Indigenous counterparts (8%);
- In 2011-2012, almost 11 million Canadian households experienced food insecurity; the percentage was higher among recent immigrants - 19.6%, versus 12.4% among Canadian born

“We hope the new fact sheets will serve as a wake-up call to political leaders at all levels of government on the urgent need to address systemic racism in our society. We call on them to work with communities of colour and Indigenous communities to find the appropriate solutions for these pressing issues,” said Debbie Douglas, Executive Director of OCASI – Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants and a steering committee member of COP-COC.

“These growing racial disparities are a concern for all Canadians, and we are encouraged by the interest shown by different sectors across Canada in our Fact Sheets. This new set is an excellent resource for groups to better understand racial disparities within their jurisdictions and learn how to effectively address them together with the affected communities” said Avvy Go, Clinic Director, Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, also a COP-COC Steering Committee member.

“With the recent announcement of funding for an Anti-Racism Strategy, Canada has recognized the disparities facing communities of colour and Indigenous communities due to systemic racism. Canada must take bold actions to tackle systemic racism, including strengthening employment equity so that communities of colour and Indigenous communities can close the income gap and have equitable access to decent jobs,” said Shalini Konanur, steering committee member of the COP-COC and Executive Director at the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario.

“The recent terror attack in Christchurch, New Zealand is a painful reminder that Islamophobia is real, and it requires all of our collective efforts to combat hate and racism of all forms,” said Mohamed Boudjenane, spokesperson of the Canadian Arab Federation.

The set of ten fact sheets can be downloaded from the COP-COC website:
<https://colourofpoverty.ca/fact-sheets/>

COP-COC is a campaign made up of individuals and organizations working to build community-based capacity to address the growing racialization of poverty and the resulting experience of increased levels of social exclusion and marginalization of racialized communities (First Peoples and peoples of colour) across Ontario. COP-COC works to build concrete strategies, develop tools, and build community-based capacity through which individuals, groups and organizations work together to address the growing structural ethno-racial inequalities across Canada.

COP-COC launched the first set of fact sheets on racial inequities in Ontario in 2007, with data drawn from the 2006 Census.

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