

INCITE OPTIONS© POSITION STATEMENT

GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME IN CANADA

Convinced Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) is a necessary, transformative social policy to advance health equity and to stimulate a virtuous cycle of sustainable development in Canada...

- Past and emerging evidence – nationally and globally – shows that a relatively modest GLI can improve population health and in turn health system savings.
- GLI will affirm our collective capacity to fulfill UN Declaration responsibilities and remove unnecessary barriers to equity in Canada.
- GLI acknowledges the significance of social determinants of health on all Canadians.

Trusting the benefits transcend political boundaries to mobilize us across all sectors...

Incite Options© endorses GLI and urges the Federal Government:

- i. Fully embrace and acknowledge Guaranteed Livable Income as a human right.
- ii. Act now in a non-partisan way with diverse actors from public, private and plural sectors to formulate and implement Guaranteed Livable Income as one policy within a broad Social Protection Floor program that benefits all Canadians.

Furthermore Incite Options© recommends:

1. Collective and deliberative rethinking of society and conventional approaches to public policy to show we are a society that balances individual and collective needs and rights.
2. Change the language from that of poverty reduction to human rights in the form of equity and universal Social Protection Floors (that include GLI).
3. Public voice at the policy table. People and communities know what they want and they expect government policy to be inclusive, focused on solutions to societal challenges.
4. Aboriginal peoples are included in GLI policies to ensure cohesion in approach while safeguarding existing treaties, agreements, national reports and recommendations.
5. Government supports communication campaigns that inform Canadians of our collective, ongoing responsibilities in relation to the UN Declarations.
6. Federal/Provincial/Territorial and other policy-makers partner with Canada's public and community health professionals and associations to monitor impact of Healthy Public Policy on families and communities.

It's just the right thing to do and the right time to do it!

BACKGROUND: Guaranteed Livable Income Policy in Canada

While using GLI as vocabulary, Incite Options© acknowledges and embraces commonly used terms that align with GLI including Guaranteed Basic Income.

Inspired by the principles enshrined in internationally recognized agreements Canada has endorsed, including the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, the Millennium Declaration, International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the newly published UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015) amongst others...

Emphasizing these Declarations are an *ongoing* call for good governance and political action via healthy public policy to ensure all countries **progressively** realize all Human Rights...

Appreciating that on a global scale Canada remains one of the less unequal societies, we also note that income gaps are on the rise, as the richest Canadians increase their share of wealth...

Recognizing that income is a key factor that determines health, the conditions of daily living and a sense of social inclusion, belonging and fair opportunity for all Canadians...

- “The path to health is through income and social cohesion” (Wellesley Institute).

Acknowledging income inequities, thus also health inequities exist and persist in Canada...

- Inequality is a legacy of power, history, economy, and individual differences, amplified or diminished through the powers of the state...
- Therefore health inequities are not a problem just of the poor. It is our collective challenge and it is about public policies, political choices and our commitments to make positive change.
- Social and economic position in society is a result of a web of conditions influenced by governance and policy; not simply consequence of individual character or conduct.
- Therefore public policy must address root causes of inequity and social context – not symptoms – and ensure people are not blamed for the outcomes of their circumstances.

Concerned that some people are at greater risk of inequity, including women, children, Aboriginal peoples, newcomers, seniors, people living with disability, low-wage/precariously employed persons...

- Currently social policy may be less accessible for those people who would most benefit.
- Canada’s vast geography may contribute to inequities via an urban-rural divide...

Confirming, based on experience with people, families and communities existing in the gaps between policy and conditions of daily living – avoidable inequity exists in Canada...

PRINCIPLES, VALUES AND ASPIRATIONS

Believing Canadians value and want fair, *universal* access to opportunity and dignity for all Canadians; and that Canadians want to reconnect with the notion of a just society.

- Society must organize itself to protect the individual's ability to achieve basic Human Rights. Economic stability has long been related to democracy and political freedom.
- The Government and people of Canada have a collective responsibility to continue to advance UN Declarations including the recent Sustainable Development Goals 2015.
- Countries that are relatively equal in income distribution have higher social mobility.
- **Pragmatically**, the total cost of poverty has been attributed to be double or more the cost of lifting all Canadians out of poverty.

Affirming that Social Protection Floors (including GLI) that maintain human dignity and permit people to achieve healthy conditions of daily living should be considered *merit goods*...

- Economic growth is not the most important measure of our country's success; Canadians want action to improve quality of life beyond conventional focus on GDP.
- Traditional models of economic growth have not contributed to securing or enhancing the goals of inclusivity or social, ecological or economic sustainability.
- Social Protection Floors buffer people and nations during economic crisis and recovery.
- GLI helps break down discriminatory notions of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor.
- Supported by new technologies including biometric verifications, GLI cash transfers can be delivered with cost- efficiency and flexibility in partnership with private enterprise.

Motivated by results of effective Social Protection Floor programs evidenced in the 'Southern Revolution' where emerging countries pioneered new forms of universal cash transfers that averted the many risks of targeted programs; including error, stigma and disincentives to work...

Deeming: "A Guaranteed Livable Income" for Canada will be defined in wide consultation across political, public, private and plural sectors, *Incite Options*© endorses a model that: i) identifies GLI as a Human Right; ii) is Federally governed in reciprocal cooperation with Provinces and Territories; iii) assures unconditional and universal income granted to individuals to ensure each person has equitable opportunity for Health and Dignity regardless of circumstance.

***Incite Options*© asserts Guaranteed Livable Income will provide a valuable pathway towards economic and social inclusion in Canada.**

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Relevant Networks and Alliances*

Academics Stand Against Poverty: <http://academicsstand.org/>

BIEN: Basic Income Earth Network. <http://www.basicincome.org/bien/aboutbien.html#history>

The Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) was founded in 1986 as the Basic Income European Network. It expanded its scope from European to the Earth in 2004. It is an international network that serves as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income, and fosters informed discussion of the topic throughout the world.

Beyond 2015: <http://www.beyond2015.org/>

CANADA: Basic Income Canada Network / Réseau Canadien pour le revenu garanti.
<http://www.basicincomecanada.org/>

Institute of Health Equity. www.instituteofhealthequity.org

International Labor Organization. <http://www.ilo.org/secsoc/lang--en/index.htm>

Livable 4 All: <http://livableincome.org/>

Living Income: <http://livingincome.me/>

Unconditional Basic Income Europe: <http://basicincome-europe.org/ubie/>

UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on Post 2015 Development Agenda
<http://www.un.org/sg/management/hlppost2015.shtml>

UN Social Protection Floor Initiative. <http://www.socialprotectionfloor-gateway.org/>;
<http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowTheme.do?tid=1321>

UN Sustainable Development Goals: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/millennium-development-goals>

Wellesley Institute (advancing urban health). <http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com>

**Does not signify endorsement of this Position Statement*