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Fact Sheet

For Indigenous By Indigenous

The National Indigenous Collaborative Housing Inc. (NICHI) exists to uphold and advance housing as a human right for all Indigenous Peoples living in urban, rural and northern communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast. NICHI is built on a principle of cooperation and coordination of expertise amongst members, partners, and stakeholders committed to ensuring that no Indigenous person gets left behind because of where they live. NICHI will roll out a National Urban, Rural, Northern (URN) Indigenous Housing Strategy, convene Indigenous-led housing providers, and fill a gap in federal policy as a national coordinating mechanism. NICHI will harness extensive Indigenous housing expertise to co-design and co-deliver a national strategy, distribute resources to Indigenous housing projects and support wrap around services. Its governance, management and operational structures utilize the strengths that Indigenous service organizations bring to the collaboration.

In order to realize the promises of reconciliation, and to advance the rights that Indigenous Peoples have, it's important that all levels of government prioritize culturally relevant and Indigenous-led supportive housing initiatives in alignment with the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) report, which mentions the need for safe and secure housing over 200 times.

NICHI recognizes that culturally appropriate wrap around services are essential elements of successful housing outcomes and will remain open to Indigenous organizations who share the same vision to join the coalition to work together towards For Indigenous, By Indigenous (FIBI) solutions.

Articles 21 and 23 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

States: Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, Indigenous Peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

Adequate housing is a human right, it's essential in order to thrive.

A right to culture. A right to health. A right to security. A right to justice. Barriers to education, employment, health care and cultural livelihood are rooted in, housing insecurity created by colonial land dispossession. With support services, Indigenous People are breaking cycles of poverty.

Home—a place of safety, love, health, security, and belonging.

Disproportionately high numbers of Indigenous Peoples in urban,* rural and northern centers experience housing insecurity that can include being homeless, precariously housed, accessing shelters and supports, and being at risk of violent situations. Causes can be lack of affordable, safe and appropriate housing, but also being forced to live in unsuitable dwellings that have infestations, poor water and/or air quality, and are in unsafe neighbourhoods. Unstable housing can lead to frequent moves, inaccessibility for family members with disabilities, and barriers to those fleeing violence.

Urgent need

Currently, Canada's federal government has only allocated $300 million to address Indigenous housing and homelessness programs in urban* rural and northern areas. This is for the 80+ per cent of Canada's Indigenous population living away from Indigenous-governed territories (including Status or non-Status First Nations, Métis, and Inuit). The Government's National Housing Council recommends the need is over $6 billion per year.

80%

The percentage of the Indigenous population in Canada living away from Indigenous-governed territories represent a wide range of backgrounds: First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Non-Status, Status unknown, Self-identified.

801,045

Indigenous people living in large urban centers.

3 to 1

Indigenous Peoples likely to live in a dwelling in need of major repairs.

2.5x

Likelihood Indigenous women will be victims of violence than non-Indigenous women.

17.1 vs 9.4%

Indigenous people living in overcrowded housing compared to non-Indigenous population.

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1,000s

Indigenous youth disconnected from their communities on a yearly basis with no access to existing funding.

24%

Percentage of Indigenous Peoples living in a low-income household in an urban area.

$300m vs $6b

The amount of money allocated vs. the assessed need.
*Based on 2021 census data

Critical areas of urgent and un-met housing needs.

At this moment at least 100 Indigenous-led service providers across the country are ready to deliver housing for those who are most vulnerable. However, these projects are struggling to complete their work successfully due to lack of appropriate investment and rising housing costs. If these projects fail because they don't have enough resources for completion, the significant unmet need will only grow.

NICHI will focus on:
1. Ensuring equitable distribution of funds to Indigenous households in core housing need.
2. Ensuring sustainability of existing units operated and maintained Indigenous housing providers and service agencies.
3. Building subsidized Indigenous-owned and operated housing units over the next 10 years.
4. Creating supportive housing units for individuals as well as families with intensive support needs.
5. Providing rent/affordability assistance to Indigenous households who have access to good market housing but cannot afford their rent or ownership housing costs.
6. Establishing a support plan that creates pathways providing Indigenous people with different options on the housing continuum, including access to affordable homeownership.
7. Providing funding to embed culturally appropriate wraparound services and enable cultural recognition within housing to support the success of individuals and families.

Vulnerable Groups:

- Pregnant youth and youth single parents
- Youth exiting care
- Those fleeing domestic violence
- Homeless/unsheltered
- Families with children transitioning back to living with their families
- Intensive support/complex care housing for adults who have experienced homelessness
- Transitional and supportive housing for youth

• Second-stage housing for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people who are fleeing violence or have been subjected to sexualized violence and exploitation
• People experiencing mental health and substance use challenges requiring long-term housing with supports
• People transitioning from incarceration/rehabilitation
• Adults with mobility disabilities in need of personal care
• Adults with intellectual disabilities in need of supportive housing
• Elders needing personal care

FAQs

What are culturally appropriate wrap around services?
Wrap around services exists to improve the lives of individuals, children and families, seniors and youth by responding to complex needs created through a legacy of trauma and experiences resulting from colonialism. For examples of some of these experiences, see Risk Factors below.

How likely are Indigenous households to be in housing need than the rest of the population?
Statistics vary from province to province. The difference is the greatest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba where Indigenous households are respectively 1.8 and 1.7 times more likely to be in housing need than the rest of the residents in those provinces**
**2021-02-11 PBO URN Report

How will the coalitions solve the problems?
NICHI does not build houses or offer services directly in communities, rather it provides Indigenous housing providers with capital, planning and organizational support so they can address the communities' unique needs.

Why support the coalition?
The coalition includes Indigenous housing and service providers who have more experience than anyone in Canada in this field. Some have been supporting Indigenous-led organizations for over four decades to provide shelter and services, making real impacts to improve lives. The coalition welcomes all Indigenous-led organizations and agencies to join.

Who does the coalition serve?
There are 29 Indigenous coalition members and 22 sectoral supporters and the numbers are growing. But membership in the coalition isn't necessary. It advances housing as a human right for all Indigenous Peoples living in urban, rural and northern communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast away from their home communities or reserve lands.

How to support the coalition?
As a housing provider, learn more or join the coalition.
Support FIBI ask your MP to recognize the role of Indigenous-led solutions.

Risk Factors, Systemic Barriers and Pathways to Homelessness of Indigenous Peoples in Canada (order does not denote priority)
Decades of Lack of Investment in Affordable Housing Supply
Unequitable Access to Health and Social Services
Government Policies, Legislation, and Discourse
Imposed Patriarchy and the Reserve System
Intergenerational Abuse Trauma Transfer
Cultural and Social Disconnection
Judicial System and Incarceration
Addictions and Substance Abuse
Lower Education Levels
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Institutional Releases
Child Welfare System
Economic Disparities
Residential Schools
Domestic Violence
Human Trafficking
Loss of Language
Mental Wellness
Unemployment
Discrimination
Lower Wages
Sixties Scoop
Colonialism
Assimilation
Oppression
Genocide
Poverty
Racism
Abuse