



Engage!

It's healthier to live in the city!

The Heart and Stroke Foundation made this surprising observation in the Foundation's [Annual Report Card on Canadian's Health](#).

According to the Foundation, "80% of Canadians believe city living and its high pressure, fast-paced lifestyle is detrimental to your health." But the reverse is actually true.

We all spend too much time in our cars, but urban dwellers are much more likely to live in an area that is convenient to walk or bike in (87% versus 60%) and will walk or bike to do daily chores (77% versus 60%).

As a result, individuals in moderate-to-high density neighbourhoods that have community and commercial services within walking distance of where they live are 2.4 times more likely to meet the Foundation's recommendation that we have at least 30 minutes of active physical activity each day.

"Our car-dependent habits are killing us. We have to start focusing on healthy lifestyle habits to replace our drive-through mentality," says Dr. Anthony Graham, the Foundation's spokesperson. Each hour spent in a car increases the chance of becoming obese by 6%.

Canadian citizens and their governments have to become more active if these serious health issues are to be reversed.

Governments can increase investments in public transportation, walking and biking trails and modify urban design to encourage a more physically active life style.

Individuals, in the meantime, should spend less time in front of the computer and sitting in cars. Lace up those shoes and get active!

[!\[\]\(529949c2c3dadbaa4e538e8c643454bc_img.jpg\) Annual Report Card on Canadian's Health](#)

Related Links:

- [Is your community "activity friendly?"](#)
- [Smart Growth Network](#)

By: David Pell

UN on Trial



Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, 1997-2006

“Eradicating poverty is an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind.” - UN General Assembly, 1996

The United Nations accepted a target to reduce global poverty by 50% by the year 2015 as part of its Millennium Development Goals and designated 1997-2006 as the Decade for the Eradication of Poverty.

As the Decade comes to an end, governments and international associations will be assessing the progress made on eliminating poverty around the world.

According to such diverse sources as Bono of U2 fame and the London-based Economist magazine, the nations of the world have the financial resources

required to eradicate poverty. What is not known is the extent of the global community's "will" to resolve this urgent problem.

A staggering number of people continue to live in poverty worldwide. Even the members of the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), the world's wealthiest nations have an estimated 15% of their population living in poverty.

The UN General Assembly will meet in September 2005 to review the progress that has been made and to determine the way forward. Canada's position and contribution to this upcoming discussion is not clear.

Prime Minister Paul Martin is concerned about the situation in Africa and may support measures to assist African countries with debt relief and the expansion of trade. Also, since 2005 is the International Year of Microcredit, the Microcredit Summit's Campaign to help 100 million of the world's poorest citizen's may also receive increased Canadian support.

 [Decade for the Eradication of Poverty](#)

Related Links:

- [Microcredit Summit Campaign](#)
- [UN Millenium Campaign - Voices Against Poverty](#)

By: David Pell

Trois-Rivières Rebuilds

ÉCOF (Corporation de Développement Economique Communautaire de Trois-Rivières) has been working hard over the past year to re-build after a devastating fire destroyed their office building.

While it has been a long and challenging road to get started again, they have successfully relocated to a new building and have been actively working on a number of community projects.



They are currently running an employment centre for low income residents who do not have a diploma, specialized training, etc. ÉCOF is also developing local social economy enterprises to provide employment in low income neighbourhoods, and they've been actively mapping the levels of poverty and literacy rates within local neighbourhoods.

In addition, they are working on a strategic plan with community members and partners from local neighbourhood initiatives to prioritize their activities for the next five years.

Trois-Rivières has also been actively participating in the tele-learning events in the Pan Canadian Learning Community (PCLC), including the [Funders Network](#) and the [Sustainable Incomes](#) and [Living Wage](#) Learning Initiatives.

Their participation is, in part, facilitated by a new translation service that Tamarack has been testing.

Francophone communities listen as an interpreter translates, in real time, during a tele-learning call. This has enabled both the communities of Trois-Rivières and St. Michel to more actively participate in learning opportunities through the PCLC, allowing for an enriched and vibrant learning experience for all!

[Trois-Rivières in Vibrant Communities](#)

Related Links:

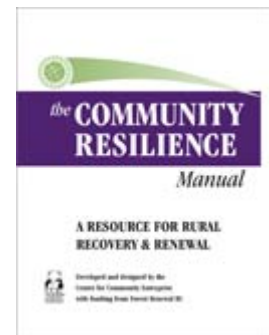
- [ÉCOF \(Corporation de Développement Economique Communautaire de Trois-Rivières\)](#)
- [Trois-Rivières Gender and Poverty Report \[en français\]](#)

By: Kerrie Skillen

How resilient is your community?

Most people involved in community building work have heard about community capacity building, but what about building community resilience?

The Resiliency Manual is a tool created by the Centre of Community Enterprise (CCE) that small communities can use to assess their own resilience against 23 proven characteristics of resiliency, ranging from leadership in the community to economic diversification.



Using a simple four step process outlined in the guide, communities can develop a Portrait of Community Resilience and set priorities for action.

Getting a handle on priorities is only part of the package. The Centre has also developed Tools & Techniques for Community Recovery & Renewal – a tool kit (some call it an encyclopedia) of best practices of over sixty community building methods developed on the ground over the last thirty years.

In the tradition of “building together”, the Resiliency Manual and Tools & Techniques resources are works-in-progress and the Centre adapts them as people report back how they have been used in their communities.

Perhaps your community might be one of them?

 [on resiliency from CCE](#)

By: Mark Cabaj

Creating a permanent underclass

"What we risk in the next recession is creating a permanent underclass," warns David Pecaut, co-chair of a new task force in Toronto focused on income security.

More than 50 prominent economists, academics, business people and civic leaders make up the Task Force on Modernizing Income Security for Working Age Adults. They will produce a report in June to encourage the federal and provincial governments to reform income security policies, including:

- Creating a system that rewards people who move from welfare to work.
- Ensuring that those who work full time receive adequate pay.
- Guaranteeing employed workers receive skills training so they are not vulnerable to economic change.
- Ensuring a proper standard of living for the those who are disabled or unable to work.

The task force worries about the vulnerability of those who access social services and programs should a recession hit. Sweeping changes to welfare rules since the 1992 recession means that programs that paid out billions of dollars then would not be so generous now.

In 1998 for instance, more than 80% of unemployed citizens received employment insurance benefits. Now, only 38% are eligible.

"We have a flawed system here and it needs to be fixed," says Pecaut.

 [on the task force](#)

Related Links:

- [City aid crisis looms - Toronto Star, Feb. 18, 2005](#)
- [New task force aims to bolster income security - Globe and Mail, Feb. 18, 2005](#)
- [Toronto City Summit Alliance](#)

By: Louise Kearney