



GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Public health regional directors' brief

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October 26, 2023

Brief History

2002: Act to combat poverty and social exclusion

- National strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion
- Quebec funding for social initiatives (\$\$)

Interministerial action plans to combat poverty and social exclusion:

- **2004-2009:** 1st Government action plan (\$2.5 million)
- **2010-2015:** 2nd Government action plan (\$1.3 million)
- **2017-2023:** 3rd Government action plan (\$1,25 million)

2023: Public consultation for the 4th plan (2024-2029)

- **Submission of the brien (June 2023)**
- [Full version \(French\)](#)



Context and strategic orientations

Working context

- Very tight deadline: 1 month (mobilization and writing)
- Participatory exercise:
 - 9 regional public health departments involved in the drafting
 - 21 writers, 14 collaborators
 - 17 signatories (all)

Strategic objectives retained

- Communication exercise (concise and synthetic)
- "Mark the territory" (the struggle against poverty = Public Health issue)
- Cohesion and training project for our teams

Total of 41 recommendations

7 Priorities

**8 recommendations of interest
(Urban Health and provincial issues)**





INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT



Income and expenses

Recommendation 1

That the Government, particularly the *ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale* – MESS together with the *ministère des Finances*, carry out a **structured reflection on the possibility of introducing a basic income** which would allow an individual to emerge from poverty, and support research initiatives related to this measure.

Recommendation 2

That the Government, particularly the *ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale* - MESS together with the *ministère des Finances*, **improve the current basic income program for persons with severe constraints to employment** by annually adjusting the income available to a **viable income**

Recommendation 3

That the Government, in particular, the *ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale* - with the *ministère des Finances*, increase the basic social assistance allowance to at least reach the Market Basket Measure (MBM).

Employment and access to the labour market

Recommendation 4

That all Government measures acting on personal revenues be subject to a study of the possibility of adjusting revenues **according to the cost of living and the place of residence.**

Recommendation 5

That the Government, particularly the *Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale*, assign **priority to the development of quality employments in more disadvantaged environments and support training and qualification on the socio-economic level, by:**

- Promoting the MRCs which have a negative economic vitality index;
- Paying particular attention to the groups of workers most liable to be living in poverty according to territorial realities (e.g.: age groups most affected, immigration status, etc.).

Recommendation 6

That the Government, particularly the *ministère du Travail*, plan for an **annual adjustment of the minimum wage** so that a person who is working full time receives the equivalent of the viable income level.



EDUCATION, FAMILY AND SENIORS



Education and training

Recommendation 7

That, in order to ensure **greater equity in the educational success of youth**, the **Government conduct work on the impacts related to the discriminatory training path, particularly in regard to social health inequalities**, and identify possible meaningful solutions to minify them.

Recommendation 8

That the Government provide financial support for a **universal school food program**, conceived and introduced by all the players concerned, particularly those in the school, health and community environments for all the schools in Quebec.

Recommendation 9

That the **measures encouraging the creation of links between the school, families and community are maintained in a recurrent manner** in order to better meet the needs of disadvantaged students and their families, teachers and the community organizations which accompany them.

The Seniors

Recommendation 10

That the Government provide **long-term financing of actions in the immediate vicinity in order to halt isolation**, recognized as a risk factor including, among others, mistreatment, co-morbidity, loss of autonomy, falls and deconditioning among the elderly.

Recommendation 11

That **all the measures responding to essential needs** (income, housing, transport, information, nearby services) be **adapted and accessible to the reality of the vulnerable elderly**.



Access to educational childcare facilities

Recommendation 12

That the Government **develop new places in the *Centres de la petite enfance*, giving priority to the regions and neighborhoods which are most materially disadvantaged** and which show the highest proportions of vulnerable children in the *Enquête québécoise sur le développement des enfants à la maternelle - EQDEM*.

Recommendation 13

That the Government record the obligation **to receive socio-economically disadvantaged children in the selection process for educational childcare facilities** (related to the work underway on the access point for 0-5 year olds by the *ministère de la Famille*), and that it include all families living under the threshold of the low income measure (LIM).

Recommendation 14

That the **CPE are made accessible to children requesting asylum and those in a precarious position.**

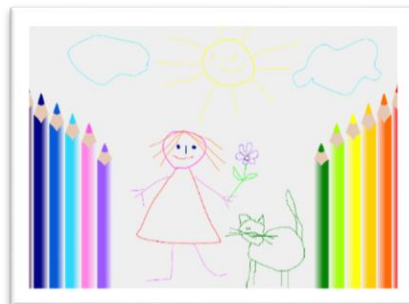
Access to educational childcare facilities

Recommendation 15

That the reserved placement offer in day-care centres (protocol positions) be improved, particularly by implementing a **national file** together with the *ministère de la Famille* - MSSS of supervision data in order to **continually follow the actualization of these positions** (related to the work underway on the framework agreement between the *ministère la la Famille* and the MSSS).

Recommendation 16

That the program *Interventions éducatives précoces* (early educational interventions) or a program with a similar structure, be **deployed in all regions of Quebec** and adapted to the realities and needs of each region.





BASIC NEEDS



Food security

Recommendation 17

That the Government, particularly the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* - MSSS, together with the *ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale* - MESS and the *ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie* - MEIE, **reinforce action on intermediate and structural determinants of food insecurity** by:

1. Improving and ensuring the **recurrence of measure 13.1** of the Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation;
2. As a priority, **orienting the Plan to support social economic initiatives designed to make healthy food affordable** for persons whose economic situation is precarious;
3. Adjusting this measure so that funding methods adapted to emergency stages (financing by project) and operations (multi-annual agreements) are combined.

Recommendation 18

If results are conclusive, that a **direct economic support measure for the purchase of healthy foods** be evaluated and generalized

Transportation

Recommendation 19

That the Government **increase financing for public and alternative transport** (carpooling, car-sharing, self-service bicycles, etc.) including semi-urban and rural regions, in order to enable individuals without a car to reach the indispensable locations and services to meet their needs.

Recommendation 20

That the Government increase subsidies for the existing public transport service offer in order to **provide service circuits outside rush hours**, favouring fair access to resources and services to the entire population.

Recommendation 21

That the Government create a **social pricing program** dedicated to implementing social pricing measures based on revenue for public transport.

Housing

Recommendation 22

That the Government, in particular the *Société d'habitation du Québec* - SHQ and the *Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* - MSSS, ensure that **social and community housing is subject to a substantial annual reinvestment until a proportion of 20% of the rental housing inventory is attained.**

Recommendation 23

That the Government, particularly the *Société d'habitation du Québec* - SHQ, deploy a **cornerstone assistance program specifically dedicated to the development of new social and community housing, considering a diversity of needs in terms of vulnerability**, both economic and social, automatically aligned with aids to individuals and better adapted to the context of development of the promoters of social housing.

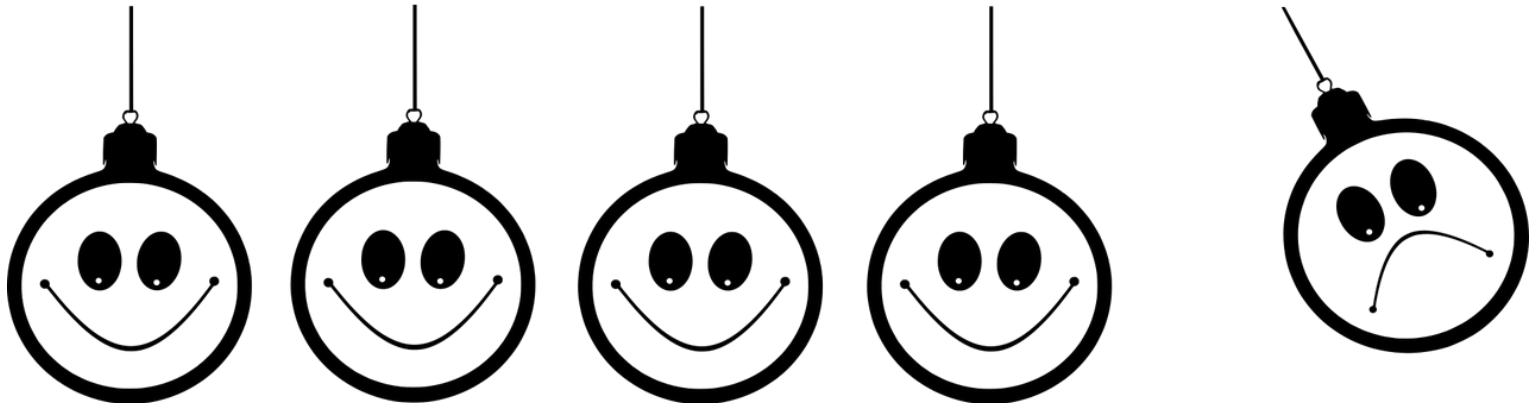
Recommendation 24

That the Government, particularly the *Société d'habitation du Québec-SHQ* and the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux - MSSS*, ensure that the *Cadre de référence sur le soutien communautaire au logement social et communautaire* (reference framework in support of social and community housing) is accompanied by a substantial re-investment in response to current needs and that **all social and community housing projects are accompanied by a perennial financing measure and adapted according to the needs of the clientele targeted by this housing.**

Access to health and social services

Recommendation 25

That the Government mandate a public organization **to analyse the impact of the reform announced by the health and social services network** from a perspective of equity of access and reduction of social health inequalities.



Access to health and social services

Recommendation 26

That the Government allow **individuals not covered by the *Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec* who reside in Quebec be eligible to the first-line access point**, established by the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* in order to benefit from first line social and health services (including prevention, promotion and protection services) in the Quebec public network.

Recommendation 27

That the Government introduce **the measures and conditions necessary so that all health professionals** exercising in Quebec offer health care to all persons requesting asylum covered by this program as set out in the framework of the federal interim health program,.





SOCIAL EXCLUSION, CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY ACTION



Social exclusion, prejudice, stigmatization and discrimination

Recommendation 28

That a **society-based campaign** be carried out in order to counter prejudice and stigmatization of persons experiencing poverty, in addition to ensuring recognition and valorization of their involvement in society.

Recommendation 29

That, with the participation of persons experiencing poverty, various **measures and training be introduced to transform** perceptions, visions, values, practices, behaviours and modes of operation of the **institutions and players who offer public services, with the aim of eliminating prejudices, stigmatization and discrimination** toward persons experiencing poverty.



Citizen engagement and Community action

Recommendation 30

That the public and parapublic networks be encouraged to take more recourse to encouraging the **participation of persons experiencing poverty and social exclusion in decisional locations and procedures** during the introduction of modifications or new legislative or regulatory measures concerning programs, policies or activities liable to affect them, by implementing adapted mechanisms (diversity of procedures and locations).

Recommendation 31

That, in a perspective of inter-regional equity, the **funding of the overall mission of the organizations** supported by the *Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome* and by the other Quebec departments be increased and that the **funding of social initiatives** to reinforce their ability to act in their own mission of assistance, accompaniment, defense of rights and citizen participation be increased so that they can meet the needs identified and considered priorities.

Citizen engagement and Community action

Recommendation 32

That the Government assign **each region flexibility in adapting measures and interventions** to take into account the socio-economic realities of each region.

Recommendation 33

That the Government ensure that the **financing assigned to each region** in the next plan to combat poverty is based on validated indicators to **ensure equitable distribution of financing** taking into account the variables which have an impact on social health inequalities due to health and poverty.



Territorial approach

Recommendation 34

That the Government ensure that the *Alliances pour la solidarité* become a **recurring and regionalized measure** which provides:

1. **Recurring indexed financing**, adequate to maintain the collaboration related to the deployment of regional alliances;
2. Maintenance of **regionalized project selection mechanisms**;
3. Indexed annual renewal of the total envelope for the solidarity alliances.



Climate change

Recommendation 35

That the **needs of vulnerable populations be considered in preparing public projects or policies**, while taking into account the assessments of la *Vulnérabilité régionale aux changements climatiques* - VRAC (regions most vulnerable to climate change) and the *Plans d'adaptation régionaux au climat de santé publique* - PARC (regional public health climate adaptation plans)



Recommendation 36

That the **State invest in strategies which favour community resilience and social cohesion in order to reinforce the social network, protection factors and the capacity to deal with climate change.**



FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT



First Nations and Inuit

Recommendation 37

That the Government, together with and in support of indigenous partners and in a **perspective of self-determination, develop measures** - whether or not included in the future Plan to combat poverty and social exclusion - **which take into account the specific needs, priorities and best means** of the indigenous populations in communities and the urban environment, as well as the **financial needs** associated with these measures (particularly through specific sustainable financing integrated with the intentions of the indigenous organizations).



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN



Implementation of the Government action plan

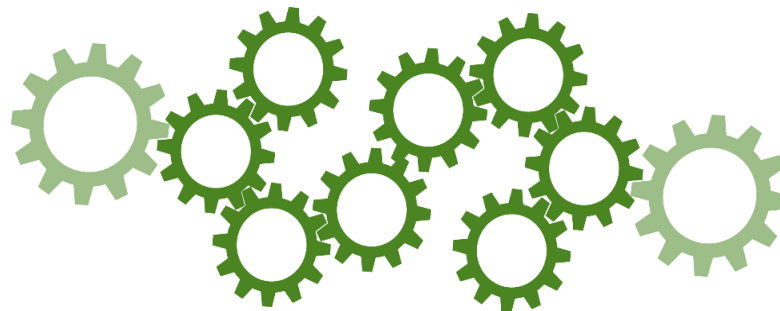
Recommendation 38

That **the continuity of the plans of action is assured by avoiding a latent period between the plans** to combat poverty and social exclusion by scheduling, no later than 12 months preceding the end of the 4th plan and its measures, the obligation to:

1. Initiate the assessment process for the 4th plan of action;
2. Establish the authorities and bodies and start up consultation and inter-departmental initiatives with a view to the 5th plan of action.

Recommendation 39

That **an independent mechanism be introduced to follow-up the impact** clause contained in section 20 of the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*.



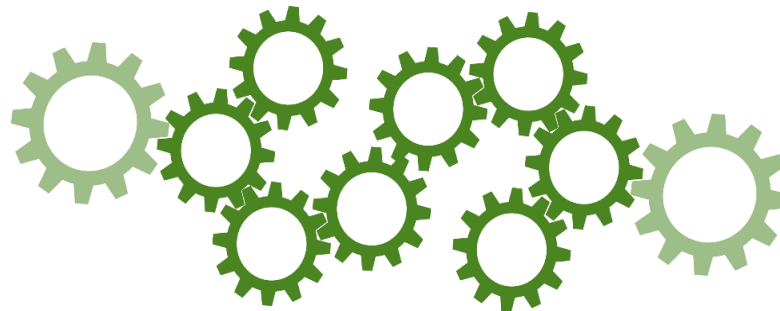
Implementation of the Government action plan

Recommendation 40

That mechanisms are provided to identify measures in the 4th plan which are recurring and which, notwithstanding the end of the 4th plan, will be maintained or prolonged until the entry into force of the next plan.

Recommendation 41

That financing be facilitated by more than one measure within the scope of the Government plan of action to combat poverty and social exclusion by assigning flexibility to the integration of administrative tools in order to ensure the accountability of projects in the regionalized measures (e.g.: measure 11 and 13.1 of the PLP3).



Conclusion

The cost of poverty

- No time to cost all the recommendations listed in the brief but...
- We know poverty has a cost :
 - Ontario: 2005-2010: health care costs were **76% higher** in severely food-insecure households compared to food-secured ones (1)
 - 2009: Increasing the incomes of the poorest would have reduced Quebec's healthcare spending by **1.7 billion annually** (2)



- 1) Tarasuk, V., Cheng, J., de Oliveira, C., Dachner, N., Gundersen, C. et Kurdyak, P. (2015, Oct 6). Association between household food insecurity and annual health care costs. CMAJ, 187(14), E429-E436. <https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.150234>
- 2) Barayandema, A. et Fréchet, G. (2011). Les coûts de la pauvreté au Québec selon le modèle de Nathan Laurie. Québec: Centre d'étude sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion, Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/emploi-solidaritesociale/cepe/publications/RA_cout_pauvrete_quebec_cepe.pdf

Thank you

