**A Report from the Standing Committee on Mission**

**Homelessness: A General Overview**

According to a 2015 report by Habitat the last global survey on the question of Homelessness was in 2005. In it, the United Nations estimated that 100 million people were homeless worldwide and further to that as many as 1.6 billion people lacked adequate housing.The trend has since grown such that it is now estimated that almost **2% of the global population**-or close to 150 million people are homeless. Covid-19 is only exasperating the situation.

**So, how is homelessness defined?** There are three general categories- all of which manifest in the Canadian context:

1. The Chronically Homeless are most frequently people who live on the periphery of society and who often suffer from mental illnesses and/or substance abuse.
2. The Cyclically Homeless are individuals who have lost their home as a result of some change in their situation, such as loss of a job, a move, a prison term or a hospital stay.
3. The Temporarily (short term) Homeless are individuals who become homeless following a disaster (fire, flood, war) or whose economic/personal situation is altered (e.g. a separation)

Historically understood to be an urban crisis, homelessness is also increasing in both suburban and rural communities. Victims include women fleeing violence, youth, veterans, new immigrants, people with disabilities, families with children, individual men and women, those suffering from mental illnesses and/or abuse problems as well as other disenfranchised individuals.

Canadian data suggests that over 300.000 Canadians (.8% of the overall population) experienced homelessness in 2018; with more than 35,000 Canadians homeless on any given night. As for the issue of “adequate housing” in Canada please check out:

<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/10/07/1925663/0/en/A-lack-of-affordable-housing-hurts-us-all.html>

A few facts-According to a study conducted by Homeless Hub in 2016\*

* 129,000 Canadians needed emergency shelter that year.
* The number of Seniors (65+) seeking support is increasing.
* The Canadian Indigenous population (4.3% of the general population),comprise 28-34% of the shelter population.
* 75% of homeless people in Canada struggle with mental illness.

<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/SOHC16_final_20Oct2016.pdf>


RESPONSE/ACTIONS:

**Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy**. The Government of Canada has committed $2.2 billion to tackle homelessness across the country. The goal is to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by fiscal year 2027 to 2028. To view the comprehensive report- please use the following link:

<https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/placetocallhome/pdfs/canada-national-housing-strategy.pdf>