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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner asks community and rights-related organizations to continue to share their priorities

Vancouver B.C. – Early responses to a survey from B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner indicate poverty and housing are top concerns for service and rights-related organizations in the province. Of the over 400 organizations that have so far responded to the Commissioner's "Baseline" survey, over a fifth cited either housing and shelter (12%) or adequate income and poverty (8%) as one of their top three human rights concerns.

"We have already received hundreds of responses, but we are missing critical voices from Thompson-Okanagan, Cariboo, Kootenays, North Coast, Northeast and Nechako," said Commissioner Govender. "We welcome responses from anywhere in B.C. but are especially asking organizations in these regions to take the survey to ensure your voices are represented."

"It is critical we hear from organizations in all regions of the province. Hearing from a wide range of organizations across B.C. will better allow us to understand human rights issues and evaluate progress. It will help direct our efforts to influence policy and raise public awareness, and help us to deepen relationships across B.C. to enhance capacity and build strength."

BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) launched the Baseline survey on May 4, 2023; it will remain open until June 9, 2023. Responses will inform BCOHRC's multi-year effort to establish a baseline from which changes in the state of human rights in B.C. can be measured, to identify priorities and to advance solutions.

The survey is open to the leadership, staff, board members and volunteers of community organizations, member-based organizations and public sector institutions working in community service and human rights-related fields in British Columbia. It is available online at:

<https://bit.ly/baseline-survey-public>

Those with accessibility or financial barriers to completing the survey are encouraged to contact us at research@bchumanrights.ca or 1-844-922-6472 (toll free) for assistance.

Other preliminary survey highlights

- Early respondents reported that the most successful ways of advancing human rights include: raising awareness and education across the community (25%), community organizing and coalition (18%) and advocating for policy or legislative change (18%).
- Respondents to-date are from organizations that serve or represent a wide variety of populations, including Indigenous Peoples (5%), people who are low-income or living in poverty (5%), racialized people (5%) and people with physical disabilities or chronic illness (5%).

- Those who have responded so far include frontline workers (36%), non-frontline workers (15%), management (19%), executive leadership (14%) and volunteers (9%).

Resources

- The Baseline survey is available online at: <https://bit.ly/baseline-survey-public>
- Baseline Project website: <https://baseline.bchumanrights.ca/>
- Publication (BCOHRC; May 2020): [Adding “social condition” as a protected ground to B.C.’s Human Rights Code](#)
- Publication (BCOHRC; February 2020): [Report to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)

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Media contact

For more information about the new Baseline Project survey, please contact Lindsey Bertrand, Senior Communications Advisor, at media@bchumanrights.ca or 1-604-306-7369.

Media kit

[Download](#) our media kit for images of Commissioner Kasari Govender.

About BCOHRC

BC’s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner exists to address the root causes of inequality, discrimination and injustice in B.C. by shifting laws, policies, practices and cultures. We do this work through education, research, advocacy, inquiry and monitoring. Learn more at: bchumanrights.ca

About the Commissioner

B.C.’s Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender, started her five-year term on Sept. 3, 2019. Since then, our Office has been working swiftly to build a strong team, to listen deeply to the concerns of British Columbians, to deliver education materials on our rights and responsibilities, to issue policy guidance to protect marginalized communities and to lay a human rights-based foundation for our work. As an independent officer of the Legislature, the Commissioner is uniquely positioned to ensure human rights in B.C. are protected, respected and advanced on a systemic level throughout our society.

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