

The Climate and Equity Lab, a collaboration between Gore Mutual Foundation, Social Innovation Canada (SI Canada), and York University's Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, aims to understand the impacts of climate change on Canadians in urban areas in core housing need and identify viable solutions to address the issue.

Background

In Canada, climate change is imposing an increasingly disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups, and factors such as poverty have a significant negative impact on the likelihood of recovering from extreme weather events.

As part of its 25th-anniversary celebration, Gore Mutual Foundation introduced the Equity Acceleration Fund, a \$1 million initiative dedicated to supporting charitable organizations in addressing the intersection of poverty, equity, and climate change. Recognizing the lack of investment in understanding the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups, The Climate and Equity Lab was born.

Current Focus: Discovery Phase

The Lab is currently in the Discovery Phase and focused on identifying gaps in existing research, exploring how climate change intensifies inequalities faced by disadvantaged populations. We are focused on understanding how **climate perils** such as wildfires, flooding, hail, and wind impact Canadians in **core housing need**¹, starting with Vancouver, Toronto, and Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge.

The current phase involves seeking input from stakeholders through workshops to help understand the problem and its various complexities. With insights from stakeholders, we will also identify areas where solutions are most likely to emerge.

Phase 2, Experimental Phase, will identify potential solution areas / promising ideas to prototype that address the impact of climate change perils for individuals in core housing needs, and conduct prototype testing to assess their feasibility and effectiveness.

¹ "Core housing need" is a term defined by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The definition is used to determine if a household can afford suitable and adequate housing in their community. Core housing need is a 2-stage indicator. It helps to identify households living in dwellings considered unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable. It also considers if income levels are such that they could not afford alternative suitable and adequate housing in their community.

Who do these issues matter to?

- Canadians at risk of major perils of climate change at the intersection of housing
- Mutual and Insurance Companies and other financial institutions
- Municipal Governments (Provincial & Federal secondary focus)
- Industry (Construction and Building Industry Partners, Forest Practices, Climate Technology Solutions. etc.)

Partners:

Gore Mutual Foundation acts as the lead sponsor of The Climate and Equity Lab, while Social Innovation Canada (SI Canada) acts as the Project lead, responsible for the management of the project's deliverables and leading the facilitation of the stakeholder gatherings.

As the academic partner, York University's Faculty of Environment and Urban Change provided a postdoctoral researcher who is identifying gaps through existing research and assisting in developing new research to explore how the effects of climate change may exacerbate existing gaps and inequalities faced by Canada's most disadvantaged populations.

