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CPRN is a national not-for-profit  
research institute whose mission is to  
create knowledge and lead public  
debate on social and economic  
issues important to the well-being of  
Canadians, in order to help build a  
more just, prosperous and caring  
society.

## Growing Number of Workers Low Paid, Without Rights and Benefits

Two million adult workers in Canada today (that's one in six workers) earn less than \$10 an hour. Barely enough to sustain an individual, let alone a family, or lift them out of poverty.

Many of these workers are not protected by employment standards legislation. Many are not eligible for benefits like



extended health care, dental care, sick leave, disability and life insurance and pension plans. Many fall through the cracks where public programs, like EI and public pensions, are concerned. Two-thirds of them are women.

“Labour market policies are failing the growing number of Canadians in non-standard jobs, and many others as well,” says Ron Saunders, Director of CPRN’s Work Network, and author of the first in a series of

papers on the predicament of Canada’s “vulnerable workers”.

In his paper, *Defining Vulnerability in the Labour Market*, Saunders describes

vulnerable workers as “those whose participation in the labour market leaves their well-being at risk, because they have difficulty accessing work that is decently paid and/or offers

conditions of work that meet basic social norms.”

Full-time, permanent, paid employees now represent only 63% of the total work force. The remaining 37% are either self-employed or work at part-time or temporary jobs.

“Policies designed in an era when it was assumed that every family would have a principal wage earner with a well-paid, full-time job, who

(Continued on page 2)



could access benefits and rights on behalf of the family,” says Saunders, “no longer meet the needs of a significant portion of the workforce.”

It is important to note that not all those with non-standard jobs are vulnerable workers, self-employed professionals, for example. At the same time, there are workers in traditional employment relationships who are vulnerable to low wages and standards and a lack of benefits.

Saunders points to the impact of globalized markets, technological change and demographic factors in exacerbating conditions facing vulnerable workers.

Mobile capital, mobile jobs, and demands for workplace flexibility in the face of increased foreign competition, have reduced workers’ leverage. They also produce greater income inequality between low and high skill workers in high-wage countries like Canada. Technological change demands higher skills and adaptability. Finally, demographic change places new demands on the family. Eighty per cent of women with school-aged children have jobs outside the home, while 14% of all families are headed by single parents, usually women. Support for family care-giving is inadequate.

The current paper defines some of the dimensions of vulnerability in the workforce, identifies a need for public policy responses and action by employers, and points to areas for further research.

Among the policy responses worthy of further investigation are:

- Extending the scope of coverage of statutory minimum standards to include more non-standard employment relationship.
- Improving compliance with existing employment standards, to protect workers unaware of their rights or fearful of making them an issue.
- Encouraging employers to offer decent pay and better access to non-statutory benefits. Evidence suggests this can be a win-win situation.
- Increasing the minimum wage.
- Providing better access to training for those in low-paid jobs.
- Tax relief for the working poor, effectively increasing the rewards of work, and
- Wage supplements to help move people from social assistance to work.

The reasons for improving the pay and working conditions of vulnerable workers go beyond a matter of fairness to the individuals involved.

“There is evidence that improving the quality of jobs boosts economic productivity (in both the firm and the economy), as well as social well-being,” says Saunders. “This is every bit as much an economic project as it is a strictly social one.”



## Children and Families at Risk – Who's Responsible?

We know the essentials for ensuring that children have the chance to develop into active and productive citizens. They are: adequate income, effective parenting and supportive communities (see Stroick and Jenson, *What Is the Best Policy Mix for Canada's Young Children? – CPRN*, 1999). We also know that failing to provide these essentials hurts the individuals and families involved and represents a tragic loss for society. It is puzzling, then, that it is still necessary to make the case for the appropriate social investment.

In a presentation she made to Ontario's Panel on the Role of Government early this summer, Jane Jenson, the Director of CPRN's Family Network and Canada Research Chair in Citizenship and Governance at the Université de Montréal, re-examines this issue.

In *Young Families, Social Risk and the Role of Government*, Jenson shows how families today face greater risks than ever before. The likelihood of both parents working outside the home, in many cases for wages that fail to raise a family above the poverty line, the lack of quality, affordable child care, the frequent presence of aging dependants, are part of the new reality. They greatly add to the challenge of parenting, to time stress and the tension between the demands of work and family.

Jenson questions the appropriateness, in this context, of an older policy paradigm that attributes responsibility for child outcomes primarily to families. She argues, instead, for a notion of shared responsibility and for the importance of investing in children. This demands accessible, affordable, quality child care, provision for parental leaves and other supports to families, like adequate housing and community services.

# Unique Quebec Family Policy at Stake

Quebec provides North America's only example of an integrated approach to family policy. It stands as proof that there is room in market-oriented countries for progressive public policies designed specifically for families.

A new study from CPRN's Family Network places Quebec's achievements in a comparative light and draws lessons applicable elsewhere in Canada and abroad. In *Articulation travail-famille : Le contre-exemple des pays dits « libéraux » ?*, authors Caroline Beauvais and Pascale Dufour compare approaches to balancing the demands of work and family in the United Kingdom, Canada and Quebec.

Beauvais and Dufour find Canada's federal government and that of the U.K. both exhibit a "hierarchy of help" when it comes to families. The first level of response is left to the labour market, the next to the family itself. Only when these two fail to meet the needs of families will the state step in, and then only in a limited and targeted way. Family policy, in this context, amounts to residual programs for the poor and marginalized.

Balancing work and family demands in the market-oriented discourse is seen more often in personal, rather than family, terms.

"The result is that the costs of an unbalanced relationship between work and family are seen in terms of their effect on children, employers, or society as a whole, but not in terms of families," says Dufour. "Responses are then haphazard, akin to social measures that affect families only incidentally."

Beauvais and Dufour use the example of child care to demonstrate the fundamental difference in the approach of Quebec compared to the rest of the country.

Outside Quebec, only 12 percent of children under 12 years of age had a day care space in 2001. Federal talk of a national child care program has foundered on intergovernmental discord and deficit fighting. Canada's support to families has been delivered through the tax system, with the exception of maternity and parental leave (provided through Employment Insurance (EI)). Yet, contradictory policies tighten up EI and reduce access to parental leaves.

"The current child care situation in Canada is at the very least paradoxical," says Jane Jenson, Director of the Family Network, "especially in a country that sees participation in the labour market as the solution to the needs of parents."

Quebec presents a very different model, the authors argue, one that starts from the needs of the family.

From the 1980s on, while the federal government and the other provinces adopted policies targeting low-income families, Quebec made a comprehensive family policy its explicit objective. This is in no small measure a result of the active role of the province's family and feminist movements.

By the time a new government took office this year, Quebec's policy was characterized by:

- A network of child care and after-school care centres accessible to all children for \$5 per day, regardless of parental income.
- A new family allowance adjusted to family situation (single or two-parent), family income and number of children. Initially universal, it is now targeted.
- A parental insurance program, covering maternity and paternal leave more generously than federal provisions.
- A ministry devoted to Family and Childhood that recognizes the pre-eminent role of parents in child development and also the state's role in support of families.
- Family-oriented policies in the public sector that make the state a model employer.
- Doubling the days employees may be absent for family reasons, from 5 to 10 per year.

The Parti Québécois government's promises to expand these provisions by adding a reduced work week and parental leave for the self-employed have been set aside by the new Liberal government. The new government, while promising to increase the number of day care spaces, has also ended universality in the day care program, introducing differential payments and a larger role for private delivery.

"It remains to be seen whether the unique Quebec model can survive the change in government," says Dufour. "But one thing is clear, the Quebec model has demonstrated the viability of a more comprehensive approach to family policy than that in evidence elsewhere in the country today."



# Fresh Ideas Campaign

## CPRN Grows in Alberta

*Julian Nowicki, Deputy Minister of the Executive Council for the Alberta Government, hosted a lunch for 26 deputy and associate deputy ministers. (Left to right) Jim Dinning, CPRN's Alberta-based board member, Judith Maxwell, Julian Nowicki and Jay Ramotar, Deputy Minister of Transportation.*



'Friend-raising' is the best way to describe our visit to Alberta in November. With the help of several collaborators in Edmonton and Calgary, Judith Maxwell had a chance to discuss emerging public policy issues facing Canada with key corporate, community and government leaders.

Julian Nowicki, Deputy Minister of the Executive Council for the Alberta Government, hosted a lunch with 26 deputy and associate deputy ministers. Participants discussed the findings of CPRN's report *Citizens' Dialogue on Canada's Future: A 21st Century Social Contract* (April 2003), and the implications for Alberta as new players at the First Ministers' Table and new leadership on the 'Hill' in Ottawa.

A highlight of the trip was the 'dinner and dialogue' for 60 leading Edmontonians at the Royal Glenora Club, co-hosted by John and Maggie Mitchell and Jim Dinning. Drawing on the Citizens' Dialogue report, the guests were given the challenging task of discussing and then reporting back to the larger group how they might implement



*Several guests stayed on to chat after the dinner in Edmonton: (left to right) Maggie Mitchell, Judith Maxwell, Lynn Odynski, Heather Watt, Kathy Grieve and Dr. Jean Agrios.*

some of the ideas the citizens envisioned for the future of Canada. As several guests remarked, coming to an agreement is not easy when many of these issues, such as creating a working society with a living wage or reducing the democratic deficit, are not cut and dried.



What Judith calls "The Great Social Transformation" was the topic for discussion at a lunch hosted by Ann McCaig for a small group of influential Calgarians. Guests wrestled with the repercussions of the tremendous changes in the shape of our families, our work habits, our community life and in the role of markets and government since the post-war era. Many emphasized the

*The discussion at the lunch hosted by Ann McCaig for a small group of influential Calgarians will help Judith Maxwell provide direction for CPRN's research agenda. Pat (left) and Sherrold (right) Moore, two of the guests, with Judith Maxwell (centre).*



# Fresh Ideas Campaign

importance of education and ensuring that children have the best start in life. As Judith remarked, “reciprocity between young and older generations is fundamental to the well-being of citizens in the coming decades.”

A big “thank you” to Jim Dinning, our Alberta-based board member, who helped to orchestrate the trip. As a former Alberta minister and deputy minister, and now an executive vice president with TransAlta, he is a superb ambassador for CPRN. As Jim puts it “we need CPRN to be an active ‘provocateur’ in today’s public debates because they offer up ideas that can actually be implemented.”

Alberta has been a key part of CPRN’s research agenda over the years. We are thrilled to see our network continue to grow with the help of so many new friends. We look forward to achieving great things together in the years to come.

– Pamela Miles, Vice-President, Development, CPRN



*Sixty leading Edmontonians attended the dinner hosted by John and Maggie Mitchell and Jim Dinning in November: (left to right) Jim Dinning, Maggie Mitchell, Judith Maxwell, John Mitchell, Lynn and Ron Odynski.*

## Fresh Ideas Campaign Update

The *Fresh Ideas Campaign*, launched in June 2002, recently passed the million dollar milestone, with \$1.09 million raised to date. Our many corporate and community friends are helping guarantee that CPRN will continue to respond to emerging public policy issues facing Canada.

Our Campaign leadership, with **Courtney Pratt, President and CEO, Stelco Inc.** as Chair and **Purdy Crawford** as Honourary Chair, is superb. The Campaign committee includes **Jalynn Bennett, Jim Dinning, Arthur Kroeger, Hon. Margaret N. McCain, Mary Mogford** and **Michèle Thibodeau-DeGuire**.

Several of our most recent contributors, **Power Corporation of Canada, Home Depot Canada, Scotiabank** and **SNC-Lavalin**, have made multi-year commitments to the *President’s Innovation Fund*. The more than \$675,000 contributed to this fund will enable CPRN to move ahead on several innovative projects.

The **R. Howard Webster Foundation** recently announced an \$80,000 grant for the Work Network’s *Vulnerable Workers* series. The first paper in this series, *Defining Vulnerability in the Labour Market*, released in November 2003, received much fanfare in the media across Canada. Other funders for this series include **The Law Commission of Canada** and **The Atkinson Charitable Foundation**.

**TD Bank Financial Group** has designated their Campaign contribution to our new Cities and Communities Research Program. See our *Sponsor’s Corner* on page 11 for more details.

CPRN is most grateful for the support we are receiving through the *Fresh Ideas Campaign*. These contributions enrich the competition of ideas here in Canada – a hallmark of a healthy democracy.

*For more information about the Campaign, please contact Pamela Miles, Vice-President, Development at (613) 567-7472 or [pmiles@cprn.org](mailto:pmiles@cprn.org)*



# PM Paul Martin and the Legacy of Paul Martin, Finance Minister

“What kind of social policy can we expect of Paul Martin?” the pundits ask, as if it were a bit of a riddle.

Some reply that the answer lies in his record as Finance Minister throughout much of the nineties. They expect fiscal conservatism to rule his policy choices. But, as Jane Jenson points out in a recent presentation to a Carleton University School of Public Administration conference, Martin is also the author of the Chrétien era’s main social policy reforms.

Martin’s 1995 budget completely redesigned the financing and delivery of social programs. His subsequent budgets reinforced those new principles. So, there is plenty on the record to demonstrate his past social policy choices.

But Martin made much of his intention to bring about change in his acceptance speech at the Liberal leadership convention in Toronto. Taking him at his word, Jenson argues that his biggest social policy challenge, then, is confronting the effects of his own post-1995 legacy as Finance Minister.

In *New Prime Minister.....New Era: Policies and Priorities for Canada*, Jenson reviews Finance Minister Paul Martin’s social policy legacy and suggests directions a new and innovative Prime Minister might take to undo some of the damage and to advance policy in three key areas; governance, access to work, and ensuring equity.

## *Urban Nexus:* Great Free Resource on Cities and Communities

*Urban Nexus* is CPRN’s Family Network monthly e-bulletin of policy research, news and events on cities and communities. It starts from the premise that place matters.

*Urban Nexus* is for policy makers, researchers and interested members of the public seeking up-to-date information about new research on cities from Canadian and non-Canadian sources. It covers a range of policy perspectives and features literature in French as well as in English.

*Urban Nexus* is edited by CPRN research associate, Neil Bradford. Bradford uses an urban lens to present traditional policy fields in a new light, and to highlight emerging issues for cities and communities.

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# Low Voter Turnouts: An Alternate Explanation

The trend to lower voter turnouts in many recent elections in Canada is often seen as a sign of apathy or cynicism on the part of citizens. A new publication from CPRN points to a different interpretation.

**Citizens' Dialogue Experience: Follow-up Survey Results** by CPRN Researcher, Nandini Saxena, provides insight into the factors that determine the level of citizen engagement in the political process. The paper assesses the impact of an intensive engagement experience on participants' subsequent political activity.

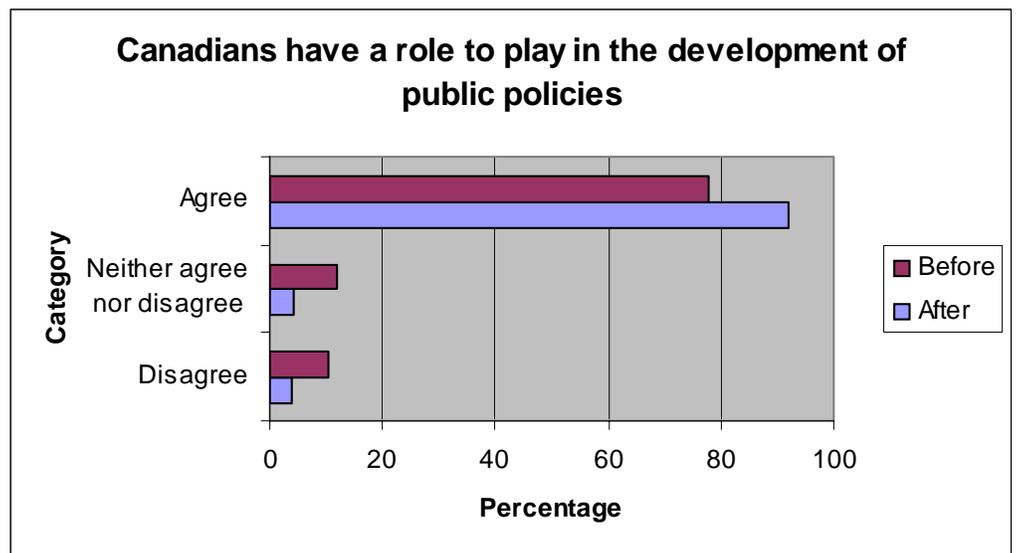
“There is a world of difference between today's apparent disaffection with traditional political processes and the tremendous enthusiasm we see when citizens have an opportunity to participate in intensive dialogue on important policy issues,” says Mary Pat MacKinnon, Director of CPRN's Public Involvement Network.

Respondents to the current survey all took part in one of 10 day-long deliberative dialogues CPRN conducted across the country in the Fall of 2002. The dialogues sought to define a citizens' vision for Canada ten years from now, the steps needed to achieve that vision, and the role citizens, their communities, markets and governments should play. *Citizens' Dialogue on Canada's Future: A 21st Century Social Contract*, published in April 2003, presented the key findings and policy implications of the dialogue.

Participants in that dialogue made it clear that they want to assume a more active role in public policy. They called for the creation of a clearly defined space to allow them to participate in major decisions between elections.

“Today's post-dialogue survey backs up those results,” says MacKinnon. “It suggests that it is not apathy, but a lack of opportunity to connect with government that lies behind low levels of engagement in the traditional political process.”

The survey results make it clear that the value of public dialogues goes beyond their potential contribution to public policy. Participation in dialogues increases citizens' confidence in their ability to contribute to policy discussions. It also convinces them of the value of engaging with their peers and with decision makers in the development of public policy.



Some of the survey's principal findings:

- 45% of respondents increased their participation in public affairs following the dialogue experience.
- large majority of respondents – 69% – took additional steps to inform themselves on public affairs following the dialogue. 61% of these also increased their level of activity in public affairs.
- 91% of respondents see dialogues as a useful way of improving the quality of communication among Canadians and between citizens and decision makers. 77% would participate in another dialogue if invited.

“These findings suggest that future political reforms should include a commitment to making citizen engagement an integral part of the ongoing political process in this country,” MacKinnon says. “Public policy will benefit and a measure of faith in the political system will be restored.”



# Coping with Change: HR in the Non-profit Sector

Canada's non-profit sector is responding to a turbulent environment with positive human resource strategies that rival or surpass the effectiveness of those in the for-profit and public sectors.

The fourth study in a pioneering series on the non-profit sector from CPRN's Work Network finds the sector under stress, but highly innovative in its responses. ***Coping with Change: Human Resource Management in Canada's Non-profit Sector***, by Kathryn McMullen and Richard Brisbois, examines the impact of changes in the external environment on both organization and human resources policies of non-profits.

"The non-profit sector is a critical part of the delivery system Canadians rely on for their quality of life," says Ron Saunders, Director of the Work Network. "That's why the sector's ability to adapt and survive is of vital public interest."

Canadians turn increasingly to non-profit organizations for a host of essential goods and services, especially in the wake of cuts in the public sector. Some 60,000 non-profits (excluding religious organizations and quasi-governmental organizations like hospitals and schools) provide almost 900,000 paid jobs. That's equal to the total combined employment of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, or to the total number of jobs in the construction, mining and oil and gas industries nationally.

"Like other sectors, the non-profit sector has experienced intense pressures for change

over the past decade," says Kathryn McMullen.

The sector has seen its responsibilities grow in tandem with public sector cutbacks. What's more, its funding has become more tenuous – shifting from

*"The non-profit sector is a critical part of the delivery system Canadians rely on for their quality of life," says Ron Saunders, Director of the Work Network.*

on-going, core commitments to short-term, targeted funding.

"These changes place enormous demands on non-profit organizations," says McMullen, "demands that require unusual innovation and adaptability from both managers and workers."

The authors document a dynamic sector that has been as active as other sectors in raising employee skill levels, improving product and service quality,

*"What sets the non-profit sector apart, however," says McMullen, "is the central role its people play."*

and increasing employee participation in decision-making. Motivation for these changes is not dissimilar to that of other sectors.

"What sets the non-profit sector apart, however," says McMullen, "is the central role its people play. Often unable to compete with other sectors on salaries, it has to focus more on the working environment, on job quality factors."

Indeed, the study finds that many non-profit organizations have a comparative advantage over other sectors in areas such as individual control over work, shared decision-making, and mutual respect and trust in the employment relationship.

"These are advantages the sector would be wise to build upon," says McMullen, "since the current funding environment prevents many organizations from offering high salaries or long-term permanent jobs."

The authors make a number of recommendations for further research aimed specifically at uncovering the human resource realities in the sector and improving its sustainability.

More research is needed, they suggest, to identify what role organizational size plays in the non-profit sector. They also call for research on strategies particularly suited to the needs of non-profit organizations – like diversifying funding sources, adopting formal approaches to fundraising, and collective approaches to such things as providing employees with benefits and training.

"Lessons learned from this research are likely to apply beyond the non-profit sector," says Ron Saunders. "Strategies that make the non-profit workplace desirable to skilled and committed workers, make good business sense in any workplace."



# On the Net and In the Media

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The number of annual discrete visitors to [www.cprn.org](http://www.cprn.org) reached more than 541,000 in November, up 40% over a year ago. Downloads of CPRN publications remain strong, with more than 613,000 in the past twelve months, 33% higher than the year before. We now have 45 publications recording more than 5,000 downloads apiece, led by Linda Duxbury and Chris Higgins' paper (Work Network), ***Work-Life Balance in the New Millennium: Where Are We? Where Do We Need to Go?*** with almost 34,000 downloads. Other rising stars include Joseph Michalski (Public Involvement Network) ***Quality of Life in Canada: A Citizens' Report Card – Background Report*** (15,502), Neil Bradford (Family Network) ***Why Cities Matter: Policy Research Perspectives for Canada*** (12,437), Cathy Fooks et al. (Health Network) ***Health Human Resource***

***Planning in Canada*** (12,626), and our ***Annual Report 2001-2002*** (26,167).

Our special Web site on workplace indicators, **[www.jobquality.ca](http://www.jobquality.ca)** is setting new records with almost 100,000 annual visits – double those of a year ago.

The past three months have seen CPRN in the news frequently in all media – print, electronic and on the Web – with more than 60 mentions. Of particular interest was a report from the Public Involvement Network taking a look at how participation in our **dialogues on Canada's unwritten social contract** influenced citizens' subsequent activities, a report from the Work Network on **vulnerable workers**, and Judith Maxwell's views on the **federal Liberal leadership transition**. There has also been a steady growth in the dispersion of CPRN's publications on list serves of related organizations on the Web.

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# People

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## Montreal Matters



*From left to right: Judith Maxwell talks with Henri-Paul Rousseau, Chair and CEO, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, and John Rae, Executive Vice-president of Power Corporation of Canada, at the breakfast-conference.*

Judith Maxwell attended a breakfast-conference in October 2003 organized by the Foundation of Greater Montreal for *Montreal Matters*, a CBC initiative to enhance debate and discussion around issues of importance to Montrealers.

Four distinguished speakers zeroed in on poverty in Montreal – its effect on the home, parental skills, child development; and as a major indicator for behavioural problems in youth – and effective community interventions. The invited guests were members of the business and professional community, including Réal Raymond, President and CEO of the National Bank of Canada, who co-hosted the event at the National Bank head office with Kathleen Weil, President and CEO of the Foundation of Greater Montreal.

## Judith Maxwell Wins Award

The Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation has chosen CPRN's President, Judith Maxwell, to be a Trudeau Mentor.

The Trudeau Foundation's "intellectual network" of Fellows, Scholars and Mentors, is dedicated to "finding innovative policy solutions to important issues facing Canada and the world". Areas of study and research include Human Rights and Social Justice, Responsible Citizenship, Canada and the World, and Humans and their Natural Environment.

The Trudeau Mentors are selected from nominations solicited "from leaders in many walks of life, from business and government, to the academic community and the arts". Mentors agree to work with one or more of twelve Trudeau Scholars for the next year.

The other Mentors for this year are Justice Louise Arbour, Allan E. Blakeney, Elizabeth Dowdeswell, L. Yves Fortier, Michael Harcourt and Ken Wiwa.



# Sponsor Corner



## Bank Financial Group

TD Bank Financial Group is an active contributor to policy debates in Canada and CPRN is delighted to have this major Canadian financial institution as a partner. TD sponsored the TD Forum on Canada's Standard of Living in 2002 which generated an excellent debate on Canada's economic future. Through the Forum, TD sponsored dozens of papers including Judith Maxwell's paper *Smart Social Policy – "Making Work Pay."*

As a major author of comprehensive research reports designed to promote discussion and awareness of urban policy, TD's *Fresh Ideas Campaign* contribution is designated to CPRN's new Cities and Communities research program. This five year research program was developed by Neil Bradford, Associate Professor of Political Science at Huron University College at the University of Western Ontario. He is the author of two of CPRN's highly acclaimed papers: *Why Cities Matter: Policy Research Perspectives for Canada* (2002) and *Cities and Communities that Work: Innovative Practices, Enabling Policies* (2003).

*"We believe that as a good corporate citizen, we must take leadership by collaborating with civic leaders and community groups to address economic development issues ... by lending our voice to public discussion on the crucial challenges facing our country ... and by sharing with others the knowledge and ideas that we have fostered within our own organization".* 2002 Accountability Report, TD Bank Financial Group

In Canada and around the world, TD Bank Financial Group serves more than 13 million customers in three key businesses: personal and commercial banking including TD Canada Trust; wealth management including the global operations of TD Waterhouse; and Wholesale Banking, including TD Securities, operating in a number of locations in key financial centres around the globe. TD Bank Financial Group also ranks among the world's leading on-line financial services firms, with more than 4.5 million on-line customers. TD Bank Financial Group had CDN\$302 billion in assets, as of July 31, 2003.

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## Fresh Ideas for Canada's Future

Brace yourselves for a time of policy ferment as new political leaders take charge in several provinces and the federal government. All of them have promised “Change.” All of them are short of money. All must set priorities – not just for 2004, but for a four-year mandate. It is a seminal time in our history.

What fresh ideas will CPRN have to offer in coming months?

Jane Jenson is leading a small band of smart people from Canada and abroad to create a new mental map to guide social policy in Canada. They are updating the principles and assumptions to reflect the needs and possibilities of a new economy and a new society. You will recall that we have written a lot about the great transformations of the past decade or more.

Ron Saunders will produce a challenging new portrait of the non-profit sector, based on our own path-breaking work over the past year and several excellent studies by other think tanks. Ron is also directing a new body of research on Canada's vulnerable workers – that significant portion of the labour force that finds it difficult to access work that provides a decent income and working conditions that meet societal norms.

Mary Pat MacKinnon and her team in the Public Involvement Network will be giving ordinary Canadians a voice on several troublesome policy issues, including setting budget priorities in a time of restraint and how we should manage our used nuclear fuel. They are also advising a number of public institutions on ways and means to use deliberative techniques to build consensus in a world where every issue becomes a contest.



Cathy Fooks is our pioneer navigator, drawing the accountability map showing the current chaotic accountabilities in Canadian health care systems. She and her team will then assess the strengths and weaknesses of the techniques we use to hold health providers to account, including report cards, patient charters and other possibilities.

Leslie Pal of Carleton University and I have teamed up to rethink the meaning of “the public interest” in the 21st century. We will be suggesting a Public Interest Accountability Framework to be used as the cornerstone for regulatory reform efforts by provinces and the federal government.

A theme that will link much of our work in the next few years will be the way that governments think about place. For decades, we have thought about regions and provinces. Nowadays, we need to think in terms of cities, communities and even neighbourhoods. We need ideas for realigning policy processes so that governments do business seamlessly with these local places. They have to learn how to deliver health, education, justice, social services, social transfers and economic development as part of a holistic response to local needs.

All in all, it should be quite a year ahead. We hope you will join us for the voyage.

From all of us here at CPRN, every good wish for the holidays and the New Year to come.

– Judith

*Judith Maxwell*  
President

