



FACING THE HOUSING CRISIS: EXPERIENCES FROM CANADA AND INDIA

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Housing is an issue of heightened and growing concern across the country. The burden of housing affordability is deep, affecting people across urban and rural communities and impacting multiple generations. Intersecting factors have contributed to this crisis, from high inflation to increasing rents, lack of cooperative housing, growing population and an income divide. This requires a wide range of efforts that, at their core, are centred on recognizing that housing is a human right, as well as policies and resources to ensure everyone can secure a place to live in dignity.

Seeking to be part of the solution, the Steelworkers Humanity Fund (SHF) has supported a range of initiatives here and abroad, including partnering with the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights (CCHR). This national organization has been expanding its work of building community capacity and education on the right to housing by working with renters and frontline housing workers in smaller cities and suburban communities. CCHR is tackling Canada's escalating housing crisis by conducting research, developing resources and delivering workshops

to advocate for housing rights, particularly among at-risk groups and regions most affected by housing insecurity. The work funded by SHF supports community housing strategies that successfully prevent evictions and replicate them in other parts of the country. CCHR is committed to contributing to the policy changes at various levels of government to achieve systemic changes and make the right to housing a human right for all.

Similar aspirations for housing justice are experienced by people in India who, although under very different living conditions, have proven the power of movement building when it comes to protecting housing rights in the face of corporations. This year, the SHF is working with ACORN International, a grassroots organization with a long history of fighting for the rights of working-class and low-income communities.

Home to nearly a million people in the heart of the megapolis of Mumbai, the residents of the Dharavi neighbourhood have been resisting a corporate takeover of their community by a powerful developer who wants to relocate



people and small businesses to make way for luxury apartments and upscale commercial spaces. Residents have been fighting for the right to stay in their homes, keep their businesses, and receive fair compensation if relocation is unavoidable. ACORN also supports residents in reaching out to potential allies and city officials in Mumbai, bringing together a larger coalition to challenge the existing redevelopment plans. While they face an uphill legal battle, a strong sense of community prevails in Dharavi. Residents often struggle day to day to make ends meet but are determined to demand fair treatment and housing rights when confronted by this “redevelopment” project.

Whether in Canada or India, organized collective actions and education efforts contribute to protecting our right to access and secure housing. A reversal of the housing crisis will not



be obtained overnight. Efforts are needed to implement equitable housing policies and shift conditions to ensure everyone has a safe and stable place to live and thrive.

To learn more about the
Steelworkers Humanity Fund

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