Indigenous Poverty

Why is the indigenous community still living in poverty?

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What challenge does your project address?
It addresses the challenges the Indigenous people face when trying to make money to survive. Some create objects and crafts to sell, they hunt and sell animal parts, all to try to make money for themselves and family. Everything is much more expensive as well up North with much fewer jobs.

Why did your team select this topic or challenge?
Our team selected this challenge because during truth and reconciliation day, we learned quite a bit about the first nations peoples history, and with some researching, we found out that more than 50% of the first nation people live in poverty, which is unacceptable.

How is it a real world problem or concern?
Poverty is a problem that affects all people worldwide, it is one of the biggest problems in the world. It drives people out of homes and makes very hard for them to get by.
In class, we learnt about Photoshop, and at the same time, made a graphic to help our projects.
Our Investigation began with 3 guiding questions:

Where do first nation people get their income from?  
We answered this question with research.

Does the government help?  
We also answered this question with research.

What local supports do first nation people have?  
We hosted an interview to answer this question.
Where do First Nation People get Their Income From?

Indigenous people are much less likely to get employed than a non indigenous person. The jobs indigenous people receive can be very varied, but they get employed most by health care and social assistance, trade and retail, along with public administration and contraction. However, they get paid much less than an average non-indigenous person, and their employment rates aren't much better. Indigenous people on reserve are less likely to land jobs than people off reserve and indigenous women in particular are much less likely to get employed.

To add onto it, indigenous people are also much less likely to be in a position of management. The yearly income for an average indigenous person is around $30,000 a year in Ontario with an age range from 25 - 64 years old with the average salary of a person in Ontario being around $33,900 a year.
Does the government help?

The main way the government funds first nation people is through “contribution agreements”. A contribution agreement is a form of government loan/grant. Aside from monetary supports, the government has a whole list of services that apply to indigenous people, the full list is here: https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada.html

The government provided 600 million dollars towards First Nation Housing in 2017-18, and 416 million in 2016.

More than half of all indigenous people live in urban areas, the government provides funding to the UIP Program (Urban Programming for Indigenous People), The government has been providing 52 million dollars per year since 2017-2018, and they will continue funding it until 2022-23.
An Interview with Kyl Morrison

For one of our leading questions, we conducted an interview with an Indigenous Support named Kyl Morrison. This interview really opened our eyes into what we should focus on. He talked about indigenous perspectives and told us to research how they got into poverty in the first place. He recommended different documentaries that really show how much the media changes our views on traditions that the indigenous people have been doing for centuries.
Act Phase:
Overview of our Project

This shows our group being interviewed by Ms. Alexander. It showed what we're doing, where we are, and how much we still have to do.
Who and How are we Helping?

An indigenous student from Gloucester High School named Brooke makes indigenous jewelry to sell. We’ve decided to help them with selling their products by making packaging with custom logos. We’re doing this because she seems to be selling her jewelry for much less than it should be worth. With these custom boxes and packaging, we hope we can up the value of these items.
What are we Making?

We've decided to create 2 packaging items for the earrings and rings they make. The first is a backsheet for the earrings to hang and display from. This sheet will be made from cardstock that we'll laser cut to get perfect holes through. The second is a wooden box that we will laser cut into a ring box layout which we will add foam batting to so that the ring doesn't move or break in the box. Of course, both will have a custom engraved logo for their products.
What are we Making? (2)

We are also making 2 websites for this project. 1 of them will talk about the life on reserves and the struggles the indigenous people face when trying to make money. The second will be for Brooke as a place to have an artist bio and tell her audience what she does.

Main Website:  
https://sites.google.com/ocdsb.ca/cien-a-indigenous-poverty/home

Brooke’s Bio:  
https://sites.google.com/ocdsb.ca/brookesjewelry/home
How will this help?

As stated before, we will make custom packaging for the rings and earrings with custom logos in hopes of upping the value of the jewelry Brooke makes. In addition however, we will create a small awareness piece in the form of a website in the hopes to spread awareness of this problem in our community.
Challenges we’ve faced during this project

We’ve faced many challenges during our time on this project, many of which were at the beginning. We were lost on what to do, and we didn’t have a clear idea on what we should do. With some help from Mr. Smith, we were able to get past the problem of “What is our challenge”. Other challenges arose when we were trying figure out how we were going to help. Eventually we decided to help the indigenous girl mentioned previously. After this, almost everything started falling into place. Though this project was from easy, we managed to figure out what to do and how to do it in time. Although we had our ideas in place the equipment we planned to use was far from ready. A blackout occurred a couple days before we planned to use the equipment (i.e. the laser cutter) made it so that it didn’t function properly. To add further to our troubles, after the holidays, we went back into online classes, which made working on the project more difficult.
Conclusion

In the end this is a pretty big problem in our community that hundreds of indigenous people struggle with. Our method is far from a solution, but we think it’s a way to support an indigenous creator and spread awareness of this issue. We can go a long way working with the people around us.