THE FACES OF INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS:

THE PERPETUAL INUIT HOUSING STRUGGLE

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ABSTRACT

With the evident rise of homelessness among the general population in Canada, studies have shown that the Indigenous communities are highly overrepresented among the homeless population; with the Indigenous population comprising 4.3% of the total population in Canada, they represent 10% of the homeless population. This trend worsened over time, compelling key actors on all levels to recognize the need for an Indigenous-specific homelessness and housing crisis policy. This study is centered in the urban context of Montreal, Quebec, where the Indigenous population rapidly urbanize and migrate into major city centres, and the intention is to generate a better understanding of the general urban Indigenous experiences, further identifying a subset of the Indigenous community, the Inuit, who are further disadvantaged in Montreal. This is done through a comprehensive examination of their history in the region, the policies that address the issues, the push and pull factors that influence their migration into city centres, as well as a rundown of organizations that address specific needs of members of the community.

Amidst the plethora of housing challenges that Indigenous people face between rural and urban settings, it became evident that their urban experience also consists of an experiential type of homelessness, further explored in this paper. As the Indigenous population are continuously marginalized in urban centres, a critical presence of Indigenous-specific organizations such as shelters, day centres and transitional housing provides a space for the members of the community, assisting them with varying levels of

aid, from education, training, and housing, further enabling them to slowly reintegrate into this new society. However, organizational outreach remains limited due to a lack of dialogue by major drivers of change, hindering their potential of assisting one of the most vulnerable communities in Montreal.

With the continuous migration happening within these communities due to several factors, it is essential to recognize this phenomenon to further mitigate the consequences they face as they arrive in urban centres. This paper asserts that the specific experience of homelessness by Indigenous populations in urban centres need to be addressed through proactive policies, as it exacerbates the lack of consensus and understanding of the main core of the issue, how it is being generated and what can be done to alleviate it. As Indigenous-specific organizations continue to exist in major city centres such as Montreal, it is highlighted that due to their nature of comprehending the unique experiences they face, their presence in the urban systems can aid Indigenous people in their transition into urban centres, reducing the risk of falling into the endless cycle of homelessness.

Keywords: Urban Indigenous, Temporary Shelters, Inuit, Indigenous Housing, Homeless, Urban Design, Montréal

RESUMÉ

Avec une hausse évidente de la population itinérante au Canada, les études ne cessent de prouver qu'une grande partie de celle-ci fait partie de communautés autochtones; représentant environ 4.3% de la population totale du Canada, celles-ci comprennent 10% de la population itinérante. Cette tendance n'a fait qu'empirer avec les années, obligeant les acteurs clés à tous les niveaux de reconnaître le besoin de mettre en place une politique qui lutte contre le sans-abrisme ainsi qu'à la crise du logement spécifique aux communautés autochtones. Cette étude est centrée sur le contexte urbain de Montréal, Québec, où l'on observe une forte migration de peuples indigènes vers les zones urbaines. L'intention de ce projet est de générer une meilleure compréhension de l'expérience urbaine du peuple autochtone, en identifiant un sous-groupe indigène qui est l'un des plus défavorisés à Montréal, les Inuits. Ceci est fait en effectuant une étude compréhensive de leur histoire dans la région de Montréal, les politiques qui adressent ces problèmes, les facteurs qui les encouragent ou non de migrer vers les centres-villes, ainsi qu'un aperçu des organismes ayant l'intention de répondre aux besoins spécifiques des membres de la communauté autochtone.

Parmi la pléthore de défis en matière de logement que les peuples autochtones font face entre les environnements urbain et rural, il est devenu évident que leur expérience urbaine consiste aussi d'un type expérientiel d'itinérance, davantage exploré dans le présent document. Comme la population indigène est continuellement marginalisée dans les centres urbains, une présence critique d'organismes spécifiques aux Autochtones comme

des centres d'hébergements, des centres de jour et des logements de transition, offrent un espace pour les membres de la communauté, les aidant sur plusieurs plans, allant de l'éducation, la formation, au logement; leur permettant davantage à s'intégrer dans cette nouvelle société. Cependant, la portée des organisations demeure limitée due au manque de dialogue des individus clés au changement, ce qui entrave l'assistance à l'une des communautés les plus vulnérables de Montréal.

Avec la migration continue parmi les communautés autochtones causée par plusieurs facteurs, il est essentiel de reconnaître ce phénomène pour ainsi atténuer les conséquences qu'elles subissent lorsqu'elles migrent vers les zones urbaines. Ce travail de recherche affirme que l'expérience itinérante spécifique aux Autochtones dans les centres urbains doit être adressée par l'entremise de politiques proactives, car elle exacerbe le manque de consensus et de compréhension du cœur du problème, la manière dont il est généré et qu'est-ce qui pourrait être fait pour le soulager. Comme il y a toujours des organisations spécifiques aux problèmes de l'itinérance des Autochtones dans la ville de Montréal, il est à noter qu'en raison de leur compréhension de ces expériences uniquement indigènes, la présence de ces organismes est cruciale à l'intégration de ces peuples dans les centres urbains, ainsi améliorant leurs chances de survivre le cycle continu de l'itinérance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AANDC	Department of Aboriginal Affairs of Northern Development Canada
CMA	Census Metropolitan Areas
CMHC	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
FNMHF	First Nations Market Housing Fund
FNQLHSSC	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission
HPS	Homeless Partnering Strategy
NAHA	National Aboriginal Housing Association
NAHO	National Aboriginal Health Organization
NFCM	Native Friendship Centre of Montreal
PAQ	Projets Autochtone du Québec
PiT	Point in Time Counts
UAPS	Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study

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Chapter I: Introduction of the Proposed Research Topic

1.1 Preface

A growing phenomenon with a fairly unexplored urban landscape among contemporary global issues is the state of homelessness. As populations are rapidly increasing and migrating into fast-paced urbanizing centres, people are having trouble finding an adequate living area. According to a study done by the United Nations in 2005, over 100 million people are homeless globally, with an estimated 1.5 billion people living without adequate housing.

Although Canada is a developed country, homelessness remains a rampant issue. According to a study done by the Homeless Hub, at least 235,000 Canadians are visibly homeless in a year. Furthermore, a considerable amount of "hidden homeless" may vary according to the sources, between 500,000 people and 900,000 people (Duchesne, 2015). An emerging pattern can be linked back to the 1980s, when the federal government shifted its priorities from social housing, social welfare programs and healthcare, that exacerbated the homelessness crisis (Hulchanski et al, 2009). "Homelessness" became a common term in developed countries around the mid-1980s (Hulchanski, 2009) due to the government shift, creating a country wide social problem that factions of people who once were housed become housed under different programs.

Presently, Canadians are still at risk of homelessness due to a synthesis of varying factors that include declining wages, reduced benefit levels, and a declining number of affordable and social housing. In the 1990s, homelessness exploded in the Canadian

context, with families and individuals still experiencing it until today (Gaetz et al, 2014). It expanded from a specific subset of society - many single men in the 1980s- and now it encompasses a more complex population as Canadian communities become more diverse (Gaetz et al, 2014), clearly emphasizing that homelessness does not discriminate based on age, gender, sexuality or race (Hulchanski et al. 2009).

Consequently, it is important to recognize that existing communities experiencing homelessness are frequently from racialized and newcomer communities. Discrimination, language barriers, trauma and colonization are common factors that occur with marginalized populations in Canada resulting in an overrepresentation of these populations, namely the Indigenous community, affecting them in both urban and rural settings. According to Christensen (2016), these grievances are direct symptoms of the perpetual consequences of colonialist society, and the negative implications it has on the Indigenous people socially, culturally, economically and physically, on their own traditional homelands. Therefore, this study intends to generate a better understanding of the homelessness perspective of the **Indigenous Communities, thoroughly examining the specific Indigenous experience**s. This research will investigate the broader scale of spatiality for the Indigenous community to further comprehend the motivations of migrating to urban centres, understand the current support infrastructures, their effects and impacts, as well as present a well-rounded approach to understanding and providing for their current housing needs in urban centres like Montréal.

1.2 The Research:

This study looks at the homeless Indigenous community in Montreal, as they comprise of 40% of the total homeless community in Montreal, while they are only 0.6% of Aboriginal People in the entire population of the city of Montreal (iCountMTL, 2018). It is significant to understand the contemporary crisis of homelessness, specifically for the Indigenous Community, as the urban Indigenous population is growing. They are overrepresented in the statistics and there is a need to comprehend why this has been a consistent occurrence over time. It is critical to understand the housing conditions of the Indigenous Communities in both rural and urban settings to grasp the reasons behind their migration to other areas. Site visits to organizations will be conducted to further understand the accessible services for the Aboriginal population in Montreal, in pursuit to understanding their specific needs and answering the following questions:

- What are the current housing conditions of the Indigenous Communities in both rural and urban settings in Quebec? What are their motivations to migrate to urban city centres?
- What homeless shelters typologies are available for the Indigenous Communities, specifically for the Inuit, that experience homelessness?
- How have these homeless shelters enhanced the user experience and enabled the users to successfully reintegrate back into society?

Despite the focus of this study being the homelessness perspective of the Indigenous Community; it will still review the broader Canadian context to understand the broader

issue of homelessness, housing inadequacy and poverty in Canada (Patrick, 2016). To further understand the phenomena of homelessness, it is important to present the contemporary causes, approaches and solutions that are part of a structural dialogue, and must be understood before discussing a specific subset of people and communities.

1.3 Intended Audience

Primarily, this research can contribute to a specialized subset of architects and interior designers to recognize the effects of space in terms of design on the indigenous experience, as well as to further enhance their current knowledge of homeless shelters and their programs. It aims to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of how architectural design intersects with the complex social situations, recognizing the effects of built environment on a vulnerable population. Key actors, such as Government Officials, Policy Makers and Planners can also find this study valuable to bolster their understanding of the importance of design to avoid worsening the current 'at risk' population. Additionally, it can promote dialogue within society as it attempts to bridge the gap between the users' reintegration into society and the community through design. Lastly, this study intends to create a well-rounded research and approach that understands the historical trauma and current effects of settler colonization that further displaced the Indigenous population from their homelands, and further marginalized them as a striking presence in the homeless population.

1.4 Methodology and Framework

The method of this study will be a synthesis of a literature review on homelessness in both the Canadian Context and specifically examining the Indigenous Community

perspective. A collection of data will also be done on understanding the current housing conditions and needs for the Indigenous Community in both rural and urban settings of Quebec. An exploratory survey of the different homeless shelters, types and typologies, that offers and provides services to the Indigenous Community in Montréal. Further into the exploratory survey of the homeless shelter typologies, a spatial matrix of the spaces of these typologies will be created to understand their impacts and effects on the residents.

In Chapter 2, it will present the Canadian experience of homelessness, the solutions created to alleviate the issue, and policies built in an attempt to mitigate its rapid increase in urban centres. Chapter 3 will touch on the varying housing typologies for the Aboriginal population across the rural and urban spaces such as on-reserve communities, northern communities and in urban centers. This chapter also examines the key actors and how they address the on-going challenges of housing in these areas such as overcrowding, inadequate housing, and growing hidden homelessness. In Chapter 4, an in-depth study will be done on the Indigenous housing challenges specifically in the province of Quebec and the city of Montréal to comprehend a more local context and their needs. Chapter 5 will further analyze the housing challenges for the Inuit communities, as they are the most overrepresented population of homeless in Montréal. By conducting an investigation on key organizations in Montréal using public information, several organizations were identified and showcased in Chapter 6.

The main books that discuss the history and trauma of the Indigenous Community will be read to provide a more comprehensive background and understanding of the marginalized

community. The works by Evelyn Peters and Julia Christensen, "Indigenous Homelessness: Perspectives of Canada, Australia, New Zealand", "No home in a homeland: Indigenous peoples and homeless in the Canadian North" respectively, and "Definition of Indigenous Homelessness" by Jesse Thistle are the main references for the research as these books presents a comprehensive perspective of the Indigenous Community's experience of the homelessness and struggles that they experienced in the Canadian North. According to the Aboriginal Homelessness Study by the Homeless Hub, it is critical to understand and comprehend the history and intergenerational trauma that the Indigenous Community has suffered through to grasp the contemporary crisis that the Indigenous Communities are facing, and to further comprehend their overrepresentation among the homeless population. A more in-depth study of the city of Montréal, the "Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study: Montréal Report" is used as another resource as it examines the current Indigenous population of Montréal.

Other resources utilized in this study are urban Aboriginal reports that enumerate the Indigenous homelessness in certain urban cities such as Winippeg, Prince Albert, Regina, Québec, Montréal and Toronto. They are necessary to understand the prevalent Indigenous homelessness across Canada, and further understanding how these cities have tackled these issues. The State of Homelessness (2013, 2014, and 2016) by Stephen Gaetz and colleagues also aided the research as it compiled several topics regarding homelessness within the Canadian context, as well as addressing the Indigenous homelessness experience.

The primary framework will hinge on a comprehensive literature examination to construct a rounded understanding of the Indigenous struggle, demonstrating a perpetually negative experience of the Inuit subset through the lens of urban design. This analytical lens will allow for an understanding of the specific urban conditions of dwelling, opportunity and systemic integration. This framework will then serve as an analytical basis for the latter part of the report, which will utilize the same lens used to examine the Indigenous homelessness situation to assess the existing solutions, analyzing the provided spaces to form an understanding of what is being done, the progress made and suggestions on how to proceed and which directions are worth taking for the purpose of mitigating the identified Inuit specific issues.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

This research focuses on the homeless Indigenous community, a specific subset of the homeless population, in the urban context of Montréal, Québec, with an in-depth investigation of their housing challenges in varying built environments. As Montréal is the focus of this report, the amount of institutes and homeless shelters that cater to the Indigenous community is limited, creating both empirical strengths and weaknesses.. However, it addresses a local need. This deepens the understanding of the national homeless crisis of the Indigenous People by focusing on one large subset of the population in Montréal and Québec context. There is also an apparent lack of material and resources that correlate elements of the built environment dimensions of the Indigenous experience, with concentrations mainly on social, health and political studies. There may also be hesitation within the members of the community and a response bias that may lead to misinformation.

1.6 Thesis Outline

The structure of this body of work will adhere to the following:

The first chapter serves as an introduction towards the proposed research topic. It discusses the importance of this study, the rationale and the objectives. It will also provide a review of the overall definition of homelessness in a global perspective, specifically in a Canadian context, focusing on the Indigenous community perspective. Alongside this, it will identify the research problem, scopes and limitations, the intended audience, methodology, framework and a description of the thesis outline.

The second chapter covers a comprehensive literature review on the issues of growing homelessness in the Canadian context, a discussion of existing policies and their development. Furthermore, the chapter will unpack the issue of homelessness in the Quebec context, with a thorough analysis of the specific populations and their specific needs within the urban environment.

The third chapter revolves around a thorough study of the background of Indigenous housing structures all over Canada including on-reserve communities, northern communities and their presence in urban centers as well as the specific challenges experienced within and through these structures and the influential actors involved in each one. This examination of Indigenous housing will lead into a discussion on the urban Aboriginal experience, highlighting the reality of these communities being incredibly over-represented in the homelessness statistics despite them being a numerical minority.

The fourth chapter expands into a description of the Indigenous housing challenges present in the province of Quebec, including migration into the province, the subject of availability of affordable housing and the challenges present therein (discrimination, poor integration into the urban system, etc.). A brief discussion of services, organizations and shelters will follow, as to highlight the experiences of the aboriginal populations and others in these assistance structures, with a thorough examination of the specific services and their effect to be tackled later in the sixth chapter.

The fifth chapter develops a micro-examination of the Inuit Homeless Experience, offering an exhaustive look into the history of the Inuit Community, their relationship to the Canadian Government and the province, the histories of their locality and what draws them to the urban landscape of Montréal. This is then followed up by a deeper look into the specific types of homelessness experienced by the Inuit Community, unique to the Inuit experience of the Montréal Urban Context. Finally, the section concludes with a review of policy action undertaken to tackle this issue and ones similar to it as well as a look into the available housing options available for the Inuit community within the urban environment and the challenges associated with each of them.

The sixth chapter investigates the various assistance structures available to the Aboriginal populations within the province of Quebec. These organizations have been categorized by their ability to either directly or indirectly impose certain solutions upon the problem of Aboriginal homelessness in general and Inuit homelessness more specifically, as well as specifically marginalized subgroups within these populations. Furthermore, an overall conclusion of the study is included in the chapter.

Chapter II: Literature Review on Canadian Homelessness

2.1 Definitions

As homelessness became a social issue in Canada during the 1980s, the definition of this term has expanded as awareness grew within a variety of academics and stakeholders, recognizing its complexities. Hence, it is important to understand and build a definition of homelessness as it can have 'profound consequences for policy, resource allocation, and parameters used to evaluate the successful homeless initiatives' (Frankish, Hwang, Quants, 2005, s24). Therefore, to formulate a better understanding of homelessness, a review of varying definitions is important.

Globally, there is no internationally agreed definition of homelessness. The United Nations recognizes that a multitude of definitions can exist across countries as homelessness is built on cultural bases that vary in convoluted concepts of adequate housing, housing standards and security of homes/tenure. The lack of unified definition of homelessness has proven to be challenging to fully grasp the idea through comparisons. In 2012, the Canadian Homelessness Research Network, known for their nationwide research on Homelessness, in collaboration with other groups, generated a national definition for Homelessness as:

The situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the

individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing (CHRN 2012:1).

Furthermore, the Canadian Homelessness Research network also presents diverse living circumstances that encompasses the phenomena of homelessness, classified according to their specific definitions:

1. **Unsheltered,** also considered to be 'absolute homeless', living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation.

2. **Emergency Sheltered,** including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence.

3. **Provisionally Accommodated,** referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure.

4. **At risk of Homelessness,** referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. An emphasis on homelessness as a fluid experience rather than a fixed state was promoted by the Canadian Homeless Research network as shelter conditions may dramatically alter over time.

From the point of view of an architect and urban-designer, the temporal nature of homelessness and the understanding of the wide range of living situations are helpful guidelines to homelessness, considering socio-economic marginalization and geographic mobility. However, it is essential to understand that homelessness is not homogenous (Gaetz et al, 2016), and thus we must acknowledge that varying causes and consequences

are experienced by a diverse population of the homeless across a large demographic, to be able to cater to and tailor strategic and design responses accordingly.

While a comprehensive definition of homelessness exists, the understanding of homelessness among the Indigenous Community has been deemed inadequate by its members as it doesn't completely integrate the historically constructed and ongoing settler colonization and racism that underscored the displacement and dispossession of the Indigenous communities of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples from their traditional governance systems and laws, territories, histories, worldviews, ancestors and stories (Patrick, 2016). The contemporary and prevalent understanding and definition of homelessness in the academic literature is informed by 'broadly white Western conceptions of home (that) privilege a physical structure or dwelling' (Mallet, 2006, pg.65), which disregards the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous Homelessness (Christensen, 2016). The method in which Indigenous 'homelessness' is defined is significant because it influences approaches and response strategies that are implemented by Indigenous organisations, and government and non-government agencies to further address this phenomenon (Memmott et al, 2002).

Despite a Canadian Definition of Homelessness of 2012, a brand-new definition was revealed in 2016 entitled "Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada" by Jesse Thistle in collaboration with Indigenous people and elders. The definition is as follows:

Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the

common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships (Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, 2012).

2.2 Growing Homelessness

The growing homeless population in Canada is becoming more evident throughout the years with a consistent growth of homeless rates from the 1960s due to the federal government terminating affordable housing programs. There is a need to understand the reasons behind the growing of varied groups of homeless, specifically in large, urban centres that continues to accumulate the highest number of homelessness across Canada. However, finding estimates of homeless individuals in Canada has been a difficult task due to minimal effort to enumerate homelessness, or a coordinated approach all throughout Canadian cities (Gaetz, et al, 2013). In the past, the statistics were heavily dependent on unreliable and incomplete data, further amplifying the inadequacy of this rising crisis (Gaetz, et al, 2013) and limiting the possibility of constructing policy that could address homelessness across all levels of key organizations and actors involved (Hechenberg and Jensen, 2008).

According to a recent study done by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2016) published the State of Homelessness 2016 outlining the progress of Canada's approach to homelessness; it unraveled the core issues of the beginning of homelessness to the current strategies used in different provinces of Canada, finding sustainable solutions to ending homelessness. The study states that on any given night, 35,000 Canadians are considered to be homeless, and at least 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness in a year (Gaetz, et al, 2013), with 13,000-33,000 experiencing chronically or episodically homelessness. Typically, the highest numbers of homeless individuals are older, single men, but studies have explained that it has become a more complex phenomenon. Single men between the ages of 25 and 55 still represent a significant number (47.5%), however, based on more recent reports, 27.3% of Women and 18.7% Youth are part of the growing number of homelessness (Gaetz, et al, 2016). Furthermore, a considerable amount of "hidden homeless" may vary according to the sources, between 500,000 people and 900,000 people yearly (Duchesne, 2015). Based on the segregated statistics, it is critical to comprehend the varying causes and consequences of homelessness across disparate demographics to enable policy making that is tailored and responsive to their specific needs (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2015).

As mentioned earlier, the Canadian Definition of Homelessness additionally defines and categorizes the varying types of homelessness from Unsheltered, Emergency Sheltered and Provisionally Accommodated. Individuals' experiences vary as some may be reluctant to utilize the shelters and some may prefer to utilize the available shelters within the city and not live on the streets. However, as heavily emphasized throughout literature, homelessness is multifaceted and is not homogenous. Some may find temporary housing

solutions if they are capable within a certain amount of time, while still using shelters or sleeping rough on other nights.

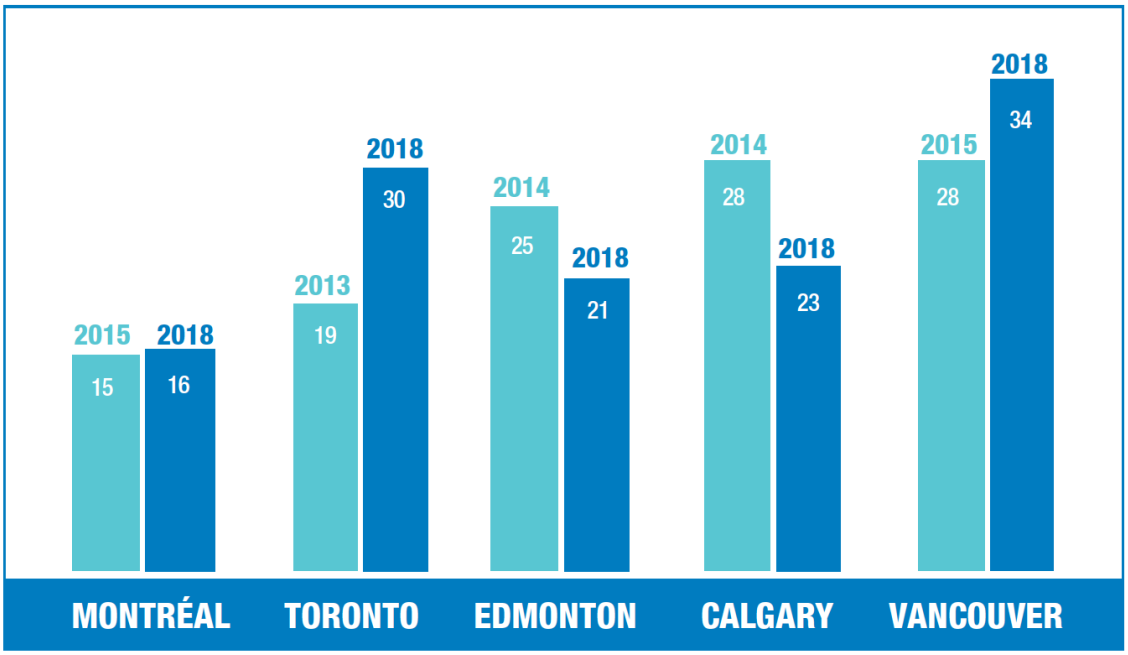

Figure 1.1: Number of Visible Homeless per 10,000 inhabitants in major cities of Canada. Source: The Results of I COUNT MTL 2018

This rampant issue of homelessness is growing, as numbers are amplified in large urban centers like Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Montréal. According to the most recent Dénombrement des personnes en situation d'itinérance sur l'île de Montréal le 24 avril 2018 (2019), urban centers present a growing number of homeless individuals, with Toronto and Vancouver showing the highest increase between 2013-2015 and their most recent homelessness study in 2018 (Latimer and Bordeleau, 2019). The increase of people experiencing homelessness in all three cities are in correlation with the trend of rapid increase of rent prices. However, Toronto's results are impacted due to a significant inflation of refugees and asylum seekers recently; with 3,876 people in shelters (non-

refugee/asylum claimants), 2,618 were refugee/asylum claimants, 497 in 24-hour emergency shelters and 118 people in 24-hour women drop ins, 1,028 in provincial institutions (Toronto Street Needs Assessment, 2018).

Despite most urban centres seeing an increase of homeless counts, cities like Edmonton and Calgary are experiencing a decline in comparison to their last Point in Time Count. The decline occurs in parallel with both urban settings addressing the issue with strong policies. Those include different programs such as the Homeward Trust in Edmonton, the Program to Assist the Homeless (PATH), and Alberta's Provincial Housing Strategy that aid people experiencing chronic homeless and help in finding and maintaining permanent housing (Latimer and Bordeleau, 2019). Furthermore, Alberta established an Interagency Council on Homelessness responsible for provincial planning, coordination and service integration by employing strategic community plans, investments in affordable housing and prioritizing the Housing First approach (Gaetz, et al, 2013).

2.3 Policies

The rapid increase crisis of mass homelessness in Canada can be seen as a direct result of the Federal Government's withdrawal of affordable housing investment and pan-Canadian cuts to welfare beginning in the early 1980s (Gaetz et al, 2013; Hulchanski, 2009). From the 1930s and further post World II, key actors from urban planners, social health workers, public health officials and other related professionals mainly focused on constructing better housing and neighborhoods. The rationale behind these decisions were the lack of newly built housing during the Depression and the Second World War, with the greater part of society inhabiting houses that were of poor conditions, varying from quality, aging and overcrowdedness. Soon after World War II, the revival of the

Canadian housing Market was in part due to the creation of a functioning mortgage system with government mortgage insurance, constructing social housing and further subsidizing private-sector rental housing (Hulchanski, 2009, pg.3). During 1982, an estimate of 20,000 social housing units were built annually, funded by all levels of government.

In 1984, the Federal Government started cutting back on social housing and related programs (Gaetz, et al, 2014; Hulchanski, 2009). During 1993, they discontinued the funding of new social housing. Furthermore, in 1996, the Federal Government extracted itself from any responsibility of low-income housing supply, reassigning this responsibility of federal social housing to provinces (Gaetz, et al, 2013). According to Hulchanski (2009), this shift of responsibilities exacerbated the dependence on the private market for housing provision, which put many individuals such as low income earners at risk, as well as those who endure discrimination due to different factors, from race, gender, family status, disability, immigration status, age, etc.

During 1995, the number of social housing units built yearly declined extensively to an equivalent of 1,000 units, but has been slightly improving as records show that in 2006, around 4,393 social housing units were being built. However, these numbers do not reflect the growing population of Canada, as in the past 25 years, Canada's population has increased 30% (Gaetz et al, 2013), but the annual national investment in housing decreased by 46%. Additionally, pointed out by Gaetz and his colleagues (2013), 100,000 housing units remained unbuilt in the past twenty years due to the termination of national funding programs for affordable and social housing.

With an evident increase of homelessness after the 1980s, Canada's first response concentrated on emergency services and supports (Gaetz et al, 2013). This crisis response of homelessness was the development of large infrastructures around emergency services such as shelters, day programs and drop ins (Gaetz, et al, 2016). However, these services are considered to be a "band-aid", on the surface reaction of the factors that encompass the overall comprehension of homelessness. According to Hulchanski (2009), the current resources and focus of these services supported people in their homelessness, asserting the urgency of shifting the focus on rehousing these people in need of adequate housing. Individuals who experience addictions and mental health problems can hardly benefit from short term support, necessitating a contribution to a long term approach towards stabilization. Although programs that support emergency services are recognized as good intentions and are part of the response to homelessness, they are not long-term solutions. In 2013 and 2014 reports on the State of Homelessness, Gaetz asserts the need to address the homelessness issue through a multi-faceted approach that incorporates both housing and support, and further investigation on preventative approaches. Over the past years, with this crisis becoming ever-present, the response has been devoted to addressing immediate needs of the people at risk, making inadequate progress in lessening the scope and scale of the issue at hand.

In the beginning of 2008, an alternative strategy to homelessness began to emerge, and is still continuing as of 2019. Beyond just providing emergency services for the homeless population, different provinces began proposing plans to end homelessness through prioritizing system integration, setting measurable targets towards the number of people

experiencing homelessness, and the adoption of Housing First as a significant intervention (Gaetz et al, 2016, pg.13).

Moreover, this significant shift in their approach was utilized even further in the renewal of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) by the Government of Canada in 2013 for five more years, ensuring the primary focus on chronic homelessness and the Housing First approach. The Homeless Partnering Strategy is a community-based program that intends to prevent and reduce homelessness by administering support and funding to 61 designated communities across Canada guaranteeing that the funding received from the HPS integrates Housing First Approach into the myriad of existing housing, homelessness and prevention services (Government of Canada, 2018). With the implementation of this strategy, it has the potential to aid the communities in all provinces and territories and different levels of government in their continuous effort to prevent and end homelessness in Canada.

2.3.1 Varying Policies across Canadian Provinces and Territories

The nature of this issue in its rampantness and severity has led to varying political stances across the different provinces and territories, each of which present an attempt to address the issue contextually in response to the specific political and social climate as well as their respective demographic. However, one of the biggest critiques of the Government of Canada is its absence of a national definition of homelessness, consequently hindering the development of effective approaches and solutions. In the first State of Homelessness (2013) report, Gaetz asserts that a common definition of homelessness can enable communities and all orders of government to adopt a universal understanding of the issue and create unified strategies and interventions. This would allow for measurable

outcomes and progress across all of the Canadian provinces and territories. With the existence of a nationally consistent understanding of homelessness, the federal government can promote strategies across all levels to address the growing epidemic, and engage in useful dialogue to find solutions.

The evident grayness led to the formation of the aforementioned Canadian Homeless Network Research national definition for Canada, including its four typologies and the myriad of housing and shelter categories. Through this, they were able to bolster a new perception of homelessness that is beyond just an 'individual' problem, but a synthesis of structural factors, systems failures, in addition to individual circumstances.

2.4 Homelessness Definition in Quebéc

The province of Quebec has also undertaken measures to prioritize and mitigate the growing issue of homelessness (Gaudreau, 2016). In 2008, several public hearings were being held to form a transparent discussion on the pressing issue. Over a hundred groups and citizens expressed concern over this issue throughout Quebec, and submission of proposals to end homelessness were accepted and analyzed (Government du Quebec, Politique nationale de lutte à l'itinérance, 2014). At the end of 2009, the Quebec Health and Social Services Commission on Homelessness conveyed thirty-three recommendations to tackle homelessness, with the fundamental basis of developing and adopting a policy to end and prevent further homelessness.

With that, The National Policy to Fight Homelessness in Québec, Politique nationale de lutte à l'itinérance – Ensemble pour éviter la rue et en sortir, defines the phenomenon of **homelessness** as:

[…] a process of social disaffiliation and a situation of social rupture evidenced by a person's difficulty in having a stable, safe, adequate and healthy home due to the low availability of housing or that person's inability to remain in one, and at the same time by the difficulty of maintaining functioning, stable and safe relationships in the community. Homelessness can be due to a combination of social and individual factors in the backgrounds of men and women.

Despite this definition intending to encompass the different experiences of homelessness, it does not aid in addressing the issue in an operational perspective. The Canadian Homelessness Research Network definition, found in the previous chapter, highlights how people are housed in a way that expresses itself in a more direct fashion, which is the main difference between the current national definition of homelessness in comparison to Quebec's definition of homelessness.

Moreover, the Quebec policy, similarly to other provinces and countries (Smith, 2015), recognizes three forms of homelessness: **situational**, **cyclical** and **chronic** (Gouvernement du Québec, National Policy to Fight Homelessness, 2014, p. 31). In comparison to the Canadian Homeless Research Network, these three categories do not address a significant subset of homelessness called the 'hidden homelessness', defined as "including people who are temporarily staying with friends, relatives or others because they have nowhere else to live and no immediate prospect of permanent housing" (Gaetz, et al, 2013). However, in the current homelessness enumerations in Quebec, the definition created by the Canadian Homelessness Research Network is utilized for their approach as it enables a national comparative study.

Along with enumeration, Quebec specifically forms a basic structure in an effort to combat homelessness as it is identified. It forms these support infrastructure through several organizations, established to cover a sizable spectrum of experiences along the issue of homelessness. Despite the scale of intervention being relatively minimal in the scope of the larger present problem, these organizations, which will be discussed in depth further on, are incredibly essential to the body of justice within the urban environment, and can very well be the only opportunity a marginalized population such as the Indigenous homeless community to break through homelessness and into a state of relative integration with the society that they have chosen to migrate to. Organizations offer an indirect assistance, meaning that they address specific consequences of homelessness and societal exclusion. On the other hand, other organizations deals directly with the issue of homelessness as it is presented, by offering a temporary housing solution as well as opening up doors that could eventually lead to a permanent home.

2.5 Enumeration of the Homeless

2.5.1 Point in Time Counts

As each province and territory across Canada define homelessness differently, it amplifies the absence of national strategies to further identify who are considered to be homeless. In addition, it is difficult to comprehend the breadth of the issue, especially on a national scale, because of the varying circumstances involved in coining a definition for homelessness. Although there are studies on available shelters of cities and the number of users, this is only a fraction of the situation, disregarding the unsheltered or provisionally accommodated. Until recently, there has never been a coordinated or consistent effort to enumerate homelessness in Canada (Gaetz, et al, 2013).

Nonetheless, Canadian municipalities are improving data gathering, implementing a method called "Point in Time" counts. This method is recognized around the world due to its ability to produce a detailed look at the number of homeless individuals on a given night, in addition to effective demographic information (Gaetz et al, 2014). This system works by enumerating sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons conducted throughout the day. It produces a measure of the extent of the problem at the community level, further identifying trends, needs and priorities (Gaetz et al, 2014). Previous studies using this method within Canadian communities were minimal, which meant that there was inadequate information on the extent of the homelessness problem in Canada. It has been brought to the attention of researchers and other key actors that several factors can affect the experience of homelessness, such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation and length of time that the individual is homeless. With local data collection improving as well as an agreed upon national estimation of homelessness, the responses can tailor to the needs accordingly, while ensuring measurable and comparable progress.

2.5.2 Enumeration of Homelessness in Québec and Montréal

In the province of Quebec, only three studies were done to enumerate the homeless population- a 1998 study by Louise Fournier, a recent Point in Time Count in 2015 and most recently in 2018. Although the study done by Fournier (1998) does not use the same strategy as the recent Point in Time Counts, it is still recommended to investigate any differences and similarities in the methodology and purpose to comprehend any changes between 1998 and most recent counts.

Louise Fournier published a portrait and enumeration of the homeless population in 1998. The purpose of this study was to determine the amount of people that are homeless in a year, in both Montréal and Québec city. Their strategy was to conduct interviews in the span of a year with the homeless service network, shelters, day centers and soup kitchens (Smith, 2015). This study, however, chose to omit the demographic of female domestic abuse victims, which can be cyclical and can possibly present a key demographic. As it stands, their findings presented that 28,214 individuals had used at least one of the services during the year that they studied (Smith, 2015). Although, they do acknowledge that every person who has used these facilities are not necessarily homeless, but they did find a total number of those who were homeless in the province to be 12,666 on a yearly basis.

The most recent enumerating of homelessness was done by doing a Point in Time Count called the I Count MTL initiative, accomplished in Montréal during March 24, 2015 and April 24, 2018. In these studies, they set out to determine a count of homeless people during a chosen night of the year. This particular method is identical to the national methodology that was established by Dr. Stephen Gaetz and Dr. Alina Turner for it was recommended in the report on the State of Homelessness in 2013 and this method is used in several cities including Toronto and Vancouver, as well as in New York and Boston (Latimer et al, 2015). Therefore, these results can be comparable to other Canadian cities to further comprehend the severity of the issue and be able to tackle the problem at hand. At this stage, the program was funded by the City of Montréal, in partnership with the Douglas Hospital Research Centre.

During the 2015 I Count MTL study, it was counted to an estimate of 3,016 homeless individuals on the night of March 24, 2015. In this study, it did not include the hidden homeless such as individuals staying with friends, in hotels or motels, with no fixed address or in rooming houses. According to Latimer et al (2015), 429 spent the night outside, 1,066 were staying in a shelter, 1,041 were in transitional housing and 480 elsewhere (76 in hospitals, 51 in detention centers, 154 in Montreal therapy centres, 199 in therapy centres outside of Montreal). However, this study went into more depth as it included day centres and soup kitchens, ensuring to identify everyone who was homeless on the night of March 24. In comparison to other Canadian cities, Montréal had a rate of 15.4 out of 10,000 residents, proportionally lesser than Vancouver (28.1), Calgary (29.7), Edmonton (26.2) or Toronto (18.8), despite a more comprehensive and inclusive counting method done.

The most recent count has now been recognized as part of a federal government initiative, which coordinates a Canada-wide count program called Everyone Counts 2018, between March 1 and April 30, 2018 (Latimer and Bordeleau, 2019). Identical to the first count, it does not include the hidden homelessness as it states that it would need "other knowledge development initiatives to complete the portrait of homelessness and all the needs so that we know what services to provide" (I Count MTL 2018). However, it does take a step further in documenting the use of services by the homeless people and documenting their characteristics, past histories and the social and individual factors that led them to homelessness.

On the night of April 24, 2018, this study identified an estimate of 3,149 individuals who were considered to be visibly homeless. As reported in this study, 678 spent the night

outdoors, 785 were staying in emergency shelters, 1,051 were in transitional shelters, 168 were in a mix of emergency shelters and transitional housing, and 467 were using different services (123 in therapy centres, 172 in resources for women who experience abuse and violence, 142 in detention centres and 30 in hospitals).

The study in 2015 accounted for service centres for new immigrants, refugees or applicant status of refugees, and therapy centres and addiction rehabilitation centres outside of Montréal, deeming this to be the main difference between both studies as the 2018 study did not account for these groups. The 2018 methodology also made some adjustments to the study. That being said, with those adjustments taken into account, the estimated number of **individuals experiencing visible homelessness** increased from 8% (2015) to 12% (2018). However, it is also important to note that these were done in different dates of the year, possibly affecting the data gathered. Both of these studies also did not include the hidden homelessness due to limitations, but should also be accounted for as it has been identified to be an increasing issue in major cities.

By having a nationally recognized strategy to enumerate homelessness, it creates a basis for a comparative database that can be utilized to effectively analyze the issue at hand, as well as bring national attention of the rapidly increasing homeless. Although it only measures the visible homelessness, it is also important to acknowledge the need to quantify hidden homelessness to further understand the problem.

2.6 Faces of Homelessness in Montréal

In the I Count MTL 2015 report, it identified that 784 of the 3,016 individuals in the study had been experiencing chronic homelessness for 4 years or more, which is about a

quarter of the group, while men accounted for 76% of the homeless population. Furthermore, it was also recognized that 1,357 people were cyclically homeless, experiencing homelessness at least two times in the last three years. This study states that 24% of the people who experienced homelessness were women- with 54% using transitional housing services and 7% being unsheltered. Immigrants also represented 16% of the study, with 39% of this group comprising women. However, this study also highlighted that Aboriginal Peoples accounted for 10% of the study, despite only being 0.6% of the total population in Montréal. The Inuit population was the most overrepresented Aboriginal population of homelessness in Montréal, comprising 41% of this sample, although only being 10% of the total Aboriginal Montréal population.

However, in the most recent I Count MTL study in 2018, a similar percentage of women identified themselves as homeless, decreasing by 1%. By considering the arrivals of refugees into the city of Montréal, the sample of immigrant homelessness also increased, with the immigrant sample being 15% and the refugees being 4.2%, amounting to 19.2% in total. There were 16% of Aboriginal Peoples in this sample, with the Inuit being overrepresented again: 25% of Aboriginal People identified as Inuit, with only being 5% of the total Aboriginal Population in Montréal.

As stated by Gaetz et al (2016), the phenomenon of homelessness increased in both scope and complexity. In the early 1980s, the homeless population mainly comprised of middle aged and older men, but it has now been acknowledged as a diverse and non-homogenous population. However, to further curate policies in the future to tackle homelessness, it is critical to understand the fact that it has become extremely diverse. There are no one-size fits all solution for homelessness as different populations experience and encounter a

unique set of challenges. Therefore, it is important to understand their needs as a community to build recommendations and solutions that can create change.

In the presented data, homelessness has increased from 8% to 12%. In other words, 16 out of 10,000 people are homeless in Montréal, proportionally smaller in comparison to Toronto (30) and Vancouver (31). However, it is evident that the Aboriginal population is overrepresented in both studies, and increased in the most recent I COUNT MTL 2018 report. Similarly to studies done in Toronto and Vancouver, the Aboriginal population is also overrepresented. In the recent Street Needs Assessment done in Toronto (2018), 16% of the sample accounted for Aboriginal Population, despite only being 2.5% of the overall population of Toronto. The Vancouver Homelessness Count in 2018 also highlights a high percentage of Aboriginal homelessness, with their sample comprising of 40% of Aboriginal population. That said, this consistent pattern seen in major urban centres of overrepresentation of the Aboriginal population experiencing homelessness is too overwhelming to be of mere coincidence or a statistical oddity. Homelessness among the Indigenous population is extremely critical as it is a recurring phenomena, warranting further examination and investigation into the current issues on a national and provincial level.

Chapter III :Background on Indigenous Housing

In this study thus far, it has been identified that the Aboriginal People are the most overrepresented proportion of homeless people in Canada in its urban centers. According to recent studies, Aboriginal People make up 4.9% (Statistics Canada, 2016) of the Canadian population while forming a disproportionate percentage of the homeless population in cities across Canada. As presented by the State of Homelessness in Canada 2014, they represented 16% of the homeless population in Toronto, 30% in Ottawa, 46% in Saskatoon, over 60% in Winnipeg, and lastly, over 70% in Regina (Gaetz, et al, 2014). However, Aboriginal homelessness is not a singular and distinct phenomenon, as it is intricately linked within the broader context of on-going issues such as rising income inequality and declining availability of affordable housing across Canada (Gaetz, et al, 2014; Mikkonen and Raphael, 2010).

Aboriginal Peoples of Canada are the descendants of the nation's Indigenous groups who are the original inhabitants of North America (Caryl, 2014). They are classified into three major groups: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. Their culture and diversity varies throughout their practices, spiritual beliefs, languages and geography (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2013). *First Nations* identify themselves as such and may or may not have the status of "Indian" federally registered, according to the Indian Act, making them eligible for a range of benefits, rights, programs and services provided by the federal and provincial or territorial governments (Government of Canada, 2018). *Métis* people are considered to be the descendants of mixed Indigenous and European ancestry, having their own culture, language (Michif), and traditional homelands. The *Inuit* Population are descendants of the ancient Thule people, living in the northern lands

of Canada since time immemorial, thousands of years before there was any contact with the European settlers.

As emphasised in the study of Indigenous homelessness by Caryl (2014), Aboriginal people are considered to be the most materially, socially and spatially deprived ethno-cultural group in Canada. As a population, they are outrageously overrepresented in the homeless population and inadequately housed. This occurrence is worsening throughout the years, compelling key actors on all levels to recognize the need for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness and housing crisis policy. Such a prevailing situation originated out of several causes, especially with regard to historical dispossession of Aboriginal lands, colonial-and neo-colonial practices of cultural oppression, intergenerational trauma, systemic racism, governmental policies, the current economy and housing markets (Caryl, 2014).

The beginning of the systemic abuses endured by Indigenous people and children started when the federal government adopted a policy that forced Indigenous children to attend residential schools. Another policy period began when government child welfare agencies began to assimilate Aboriginal children, removing them from their homes and families, and being adopted/fostered by white families. This is most commonly known as the 'Sixties Scoop'. This 'pro-assimilatory approach' (Carlyle, 2014), also considered to be cultural genocide by many researchers and academics (Haskell and Randall 2009, Mitchell and Maracle 2005, Smith et al. 2005, Neu and Therrien 2003, Kendall 2001) incited harmful effects that has lead individuals, families and communities to experience

them until today, becoming profoundly traumatic to Aboriginal Peoples. These impositions were created to dominate Aboriginal People, wiping out their ethnicity and culture from their identity. In addition, the enforcement of these policies and the government's neglect on fulfilling treaty obligations to recognize the Aboriginal Peoples' rights to land and well-being caused overwhelming poverty, health problems and population decline for Canadian Aboriginal populations. Furthermore, the marginalization that Aboriginal peoples experience in modern-day are also a reflection of the contemporary political and social structures in Canada, in which Aboriginal people are continually experiencing and targets of systemic racism and neglect by governmental agencies within civil society, which adds on to their trauma.

All these factors have been linked to the reasons behind increasing homelessness rates within the Aboriginal people, as well as their low status in society. The multifaceted experience of discrimination and disadvantage of Aboriginal people is largely in connection with the destructive effects of colonization (Carlyle, 2014). The experience of homelessness and housing issues among the Aboriginal communities is evident throughout a society that displays systematic racial discrimination against people who identify as Indigenous.

Furthermore, this section will explore the overall experience of Aboriginal Peoples in housing, in varying geographic locations and contexts. It will also investigate policies constructed by different levels of government to produce an understanding of the incessant rise of Aboriginal homelessness in different contexts such as urban Aboriginal homelessness and reserve homelessness.

3.1 Existing Housing for Aboriginal Peoples

In general, Aboriginal communities live in worse housing conditions in comparison to non-Aboriginal populations. As stated by Statistics Canada (2016), of the 1,673, 785 people who identify with Aboriginal identify, 324,900 lived in a dwelling that needed major repairs. On top of that, half of on-reserve Indigenous households currently live in dwellings that are below housing standards (Government of Canada, 2016). Housing opportunities and challenges vary according to geographic location (norther, urban, rural and remote) and context, affecting housing situations and requirements, which can have a huge impact on several factors such as the cost of construction, renovation and operation. In addition, market values can also have an influence on the housing availability. With factors such as land tenure systems, agreements, legislative and regulatory frameworks adds to the complication to acknowledge emerging and existing Indigenous housing issues. For instance, the living conditions and context of Inuits are different from the First Nations communities, as Inuit have a land claim agreement in areas that comprise of Inuit Nunangat, including Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut and Inuvialuit. First Nations communities are "on-reserve" with a separate land tenure arrangement established by the Constitution Act (according to section 91). Métis also inhabit different land claim areas.

Since the 1970s, there were significant migration rates of Indigenous groups, moving from rural areas and reserves to urban centres (Stewart, 2018). An estimate of 600,000 (54%) of the total Indigenous population live in urban centres- and are rapidly growing (Statistics Canada, 2009) due to high birth and fertility rates and urban relocation between urban and rural communities. According to the Government of Canada (2016),

50% of First Nations live in urban areas off-reserve, and 70% of Métis, and 30% of Inuit live in urban areas. This imminent population growth within these major urban zones increase the chances of homelessness within the Aboriginal communities, intensifying what is considered to be a "national crisis" (Carlyle, 2014). In Canadian cities, the Aboriginal people suffer the most by the deficit of affordable housing (Walker, 2003). They face a myriad of housing barriers, originating from generations of colonization, limiting their access to housing and shelter. As emphasised by Monette et al (2009), "Aboriginal peoples, who share a common legacy of oppression and resilience, experience some of the worst housing conditions in Canada and have an exceedingly difficult time locating affordable housing" (p.42). These housing barriers in urban areas encompass poverty, lack of access to culturally appropriate social services and housing, literacy issues, discrimination, addiction, mental health problems, and intergenerational trauma resulting from experiences with residential schools and the child welfare system.

In contrast to non-Aboriginal Canadians, Aboriginal Peoples endure lower incomes, higher rates of unemployment and poverty, higher incidences of single parenthood and domestic violence (Belanger et al, 2012; Hanselmann 2001; Lezubski, Silver & Black 2000; Mendelson 2004). According to the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation, housing circumstances that can be categorized as adequate need to meet the following housing circumstances:

(1) *Adequate housing*: a dwelling must have full bathroom facilities and, according to its residents, require no major repairs;
(2) *Suitable housing*: a dwelling must have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the occupying household, as defined by the National Occupancy Standards;

(3) *Affordable housing*: total shelter and utility costs must consume less than 30% of household income (CMHC 1996b, 1).

Aboriginal Housing is complex as it encompasses a diverse population of Aboriginal people who experience a complicated nature of disadvantage. Due to the systemic racial discrimination against the Aboriginal Peoples (Caryl, 2014; Monette et al, 2009; Walker, 2008), their chances of improving their life are constrained. Furthermore, there is an importance of acknowledging these issues and addressing a multitude of approaches that engage the population.

3.2 On Reserve

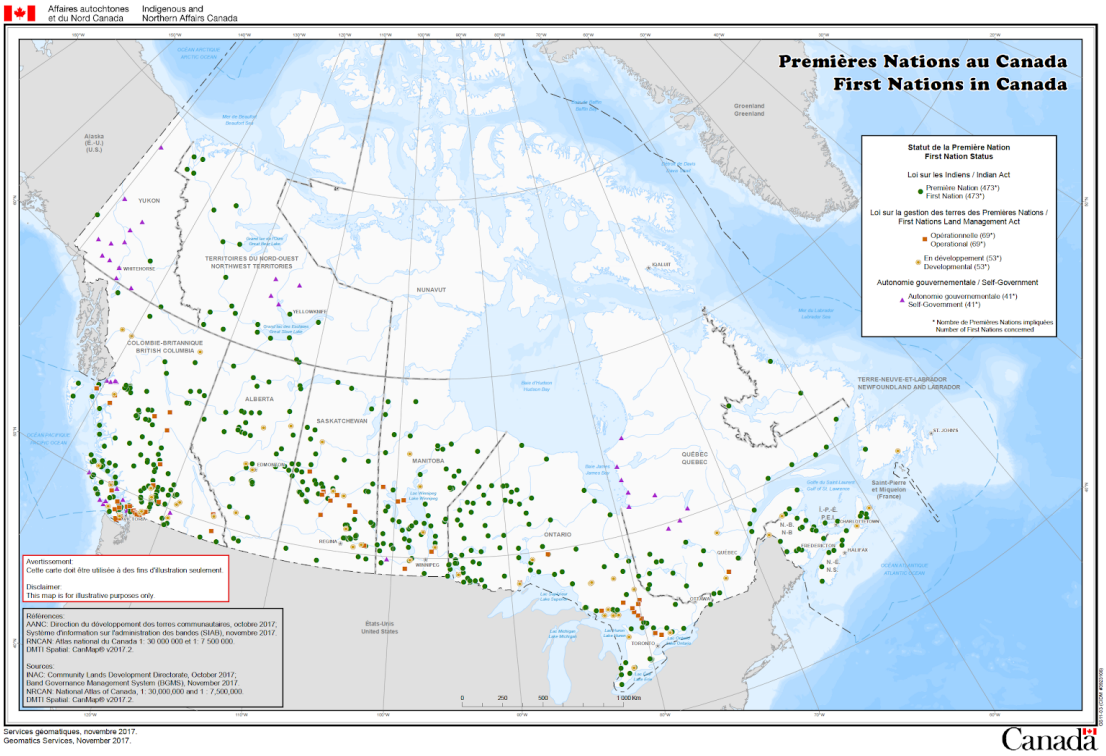

Figure 3.1: A map of all the First Nation Communities across Canada. Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Canada.

Although a greater portion of Aboriginal Peoples, 73.4% as of 2006, are living off-reserve, residing on-reserve still remains as a personal connection for Many Aboriginal

people. In a report by CMHC (2011), 82,400 Aboriginal households live on reserve. First Nations predominantly live on-reserve, unlike Metis and Inuit people who are governed by different rules. They typically migrate to urban centres due to a variety of reasons that will be discussed further into the chapter. It is also important to note that many of these communities reside on the edge of provincial and national borders, so their migration could at times be cross-border and not just within the province.

According to Anaya (2014), housing in First Nation communities "have reached a national crisis level." However, there are a variety of housing conditions and situations across the provinces, with some communities benefiting from living in good quality homes, but in other communities, there is an evident lack of adequate housing and shortage of homes that is worsening (Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, 2015). Most of the First Nations reserves exist in a state of tremendous deficiency with both housing and infrastructure (Carlyl, 2014; CMHC 2011, Durbin 2009, Monette et al. 2009, Statistics Canada 2008). With a shortage of plumbing and electricity, lack of major repairs and overcrowding, poor insulation, toxic mould and substandard construction remain to be on-going problems that a large majority of reserves suffer with, further affecting the quality of lives and livelihoods of the residents. Furthermore, 53% of on-reserve Aboriginal households were living in homes that did not meet standards of adequacy (according to the CMHC), implying that these households were either in need of major repairs, overcrowded, or both (Carlyle, 2014). Compared to off-reserve housing, 22% live in similar standards, and in all of Canadian households, 13% live in the same standards, showing a massive gap in housing provision and funding for Aboriginal

peoples (CMHC, 2011). 33% of Aboriginal households on reserve living in "unacceptable" housing, with regards to condition and size, did not have sufficient income to access acceptable housing (Carlyl, 2014). This is a growing reality for many Aboriginal people on-reserves who are suffering in these substandard housing due to low-income.

In a report done by the Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples (2015), a large majority of First Nation communities have a combination of band-owned homes, rental housing and privately owned homes. Additionally, it stated that during 2011, 59% of units on-reserve included band-owned housing, whilst 10% were rental housing and 31% were privately owned. By way of comparison, during that same year, 69% of non-Aboriginal Canadians were homeowners at that time. The lack of available housing on-reserves causes issues such as overcrowding, health and safety problems, and further expanded migration to urban areas.

Overcrowding and Shortage of Housing

There is an estimate of a 35,000 to 40,000 housing unit shortage, according to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs of Northern Development Canada (AANDC), and an even higher number, 85,000 housing units, as stated by the Assembly of First Nations. These housing shortages are intensified due to the rapidly increasing population growth among First Nations on-reserves , which leads to long waiting lists for housing in several communities, with residents living in overcrowded homes (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2015). Furthermore, in the last visit of the Senate Committee to on-reserve First Nation communities, a mutual agreement was made that the housing shortages and low-quality homes are in need of urgent attention. The issue of

overcrowding intensifies deterioration of buildings as a result of overuse and moisture build up.

Housing in-need of major repairs

With a deficit of housing availability on-reserve, there is also an equally worrying issue of poor housing conditions that exist in varying communities across Canada. As stated in the Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples (2015), there is a higher chance for housing on-reserves to be in a serious state of disrepair than in other communities. Issues persist, such as regular sewage troubles where water surfaces back up into toilets, bathtubs and sinks due to the lack of wastewater infrastructure. In addition, homes do not stay dry throughout the winter due to a lack of roof repairs.

Housing on-reserves also decline faster than housing off-reserve due to using poor quality building materials, inability among residents to continuously maintain housing, overcrowding and lack of funds to address these maintenance problems. Overcrowding is the primary reason for rapid deterioration of homes on-reserve. Additionally, this neglect of maintenance resulted in mould formations, a significant health issue amongst several communities. Once again, the residents acknowledge that this mould issue is heightened due to all of the issues mentioned. Apart from that, increased number of deaths due to house fires are also intensified by these housing conditions.

Housing Diversity On-Reserves

There is a need to highlight that housing supplies across these communities vary accordingly. Several communities may have new neighbourhoods and some may suffer through atrocious housing living conditions, residing in deteriorating buildings that are overcrowded and suffering the issues mentioned earlier. It is important to indicate that

among the diverse range of housing situations for First Nations on-reserve, it is not commendable to pursue them with a generic solution to context specific issues as each community encounters unique challenges and issues. To progress further, it is critical to understand the need for specifically tailored strategies and approaches, engaging with many sectors and levels of government, banks and funding resources.

The geographic diversity is evident, especially among northern, rural First Nation communities and those in the south. Accessibility to communities also vary by water, air or winter road, each enduring difficulties with regard to housing and infrastructure needs. Supplying and delivering construction materials can be time-consuming and costly, resulting in issues in building, maintaining and renovating housing. Other communities that are isolated lack access to alternate housing nearby, increasing housing shortages and overcrowding. The geographic context of these communities also has had a negative affect in further economic development within the First Nations on-reserves. According to community leaders, unemployment rates vary from a range of 4% to 85%, further affecting the capability of residents to pay for and have access to adequate housing. Furthermore, these communities have limited resources to request for professionals in the field, building inspectors and other individuals who are able to aid in construction and infrastructure building.

3.2.1 Housing Efforts and Funding On-Reserves

In addition, housing approaches vary significantly among First Nation communities. Other communities have a typical approach of private home ownership, while other communities do not. The communities who have higher rates of home ownership have

access to secure funding or loans funded by First Nations Market Housing Fund (FNMHF) as well as the Loan Program On-Reserve with Ministerial Loan Guarantee (Section 10) (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2015). In other communities where chances of buying or private home ownership are minimal, generally most of the housing is band-owned and constructed by funds provided by subsidies and programs available from the Department of aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), or the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). However, due to the Indian Act establishment, it makes it difficult for Aboriginal Peoples to obtain mortgages or build their own homes, influencing them to rent or lease units from band councils, resulting in the lack of investment in home ownership is prevalent throughout these communities. Due to these restrictive policies, Six Nations First Nations has used Certificates of Possession (CPs) to allow members of communities to possess land tracts on reserves. Other ways of funding are through loans under two housing programs established by the Six Nations called the Six Nations Revolving Loan Fund, the Bank of Montréal and Royal Bank On-Reserve Housing Loan Programs (Carlyl, 2014; Alcantara, 2005). These programs are perceived as a successful strategy to solving overcrowding issues and housing shortages on reserves.

Housing management also varies according to each community. Several communities are managed directly by the chief and council, while other communities developed politically independent housing authorities that are included within organizations with independent directors that report to chief and council. However, at the end, First Nations governments still have a responsibility for managing and maintaining housing and infrastructure, in most cases with limited funding, and minimal financial and human resources.

However, with the funding provided by CMHC and AANDC, there is still a lack of housing units and an increasing magnitude of inadequate housing which needs to be addressed (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2015). Although the CMHC's funding for on-reserve housing serves as an important source of support, it is unable to cater to the rapidly increasing need of housing units. In one program, only 546 units are promised, in the context of a housing unit shortage between 35,000 to 80,000, which implies that it simply cannot address the need of housing stock on-reserve. It is evident that there is a need to significantly increase the federal government funding to address these issues, or find alternative options to make any improvements on the matter at hand. According to Harold Calla, the Executive Chair of the First Nations Financial Management Board:

AANDC reports that Government of Canada funding and the First Nations' own funding investment result in, on average, construction of about 1,750 new units a year and the renovations are about 3,100 units a year. At this rate it will take 23 years to address the AANDC estimate of the current housing shortage and 49 years to address the AFN's estimate. In addition, it would take 25 years to renovate the units that currently need repair.

3.3 The North Situation

Due to a lack of housing units and an increasing amount of citizens living in inadequate housing, Aboriginal populations in the Arctic and Subarctic regions experience their own challenges of housing and homelessness. These communities in the northern regions comprise of Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Inuit Nunangat, including Nunavut, Nunavik,

Nunatsiavut and Inuvialuit. Suitable housing is diverse throughout the northern regions, with 90% in the Yukon, declining to 62% in Nunavut and 58% in Nunavik (NAEDB, 2016). A study done by Statistics Canada (2008) presented information that indicates that Inuit suffer overcrowding, housing shortages and housing inadequacies in their homeland, Inuit Nunangat. A large majority of the Inuit population (72.8%) live in Inuit Nunangat in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2016). The population of Inuit Nunangat had a higher chance of living in a dwelling that needed major repairs (with significant renovations on plumbing, electrical works and building material), than those who live in other regions (Statistics Canada, 2016). Among the territories within Inuit Nunangat, the percentage of people living in a dwelling in need of major repairs varied: Nunavut (34.3%), Nunatsiavut (32.6%), the Inuvialuit region (31.8%) and Nunavik (23.9%) (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Figure 3.2: A map of Northern Aboriginal Communities. Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Canada.

The Inuit Nunangat population experiences a unique set of challenges due to several factors such as: (1) the population being highly dependent on social housing due to low employment and low-income rates, propelling into overcrowding (CMHC, 2004); (2) high costs of transportation for construction materials, maintenance and operation costs, as well as getting professionals in the related fields, largely caused by geographic location in remote areas with extreme climates (CMHC, 2004); (3) low chances of employment opportunities and skill training and development due to the limited economic resources, diminishing any opportunity for progress for this Inuit population (CMHC, 2004); and (4) rapidly increasing population and lack of housing support, furthering the phenomenon of homelessness within these regions. The northern regions of Canada and the Aboriginal population who inhabit these areas are currently facing one of the biggest infrastructure and housing deficits, consequently constraining this population to improve any economic growth within the region (National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2014).

The shortage of adequate and affordable housing throughout the Inuit territories have serious public health consequences such as Tuberculosis, a rare disease in southern Canada, but a prevalent health issue among Inuit at a rate over 250 times more than non-Indigenous Canadians (Carlyl, 2014). Families within the Inuit community are also more likely to experience meanth health problems varying from stress and anxiety. The need for adequate housing is becoming critical for the young population (Statistics Canada, 2016), urging them to develop and identify context and culturally appropriate strategies for them to be able to participate fully in their lives. Since private home ownership is not

a financial reality for many Inuit communities, funding and ongoing financial support should be provided for social housing. A lack of federal support is one of the major reasons for the housing shortages, resulting in several consequences that Inuit populations face.

The ever-present shortage of housing and inadequate living conditions have reached a crisis level (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2017), with an increasing percentage of overcrowding and hidden homelessness. They are characterized to have low quality building materials, unable to tolerate harsh climates of the North. Although this shortage of adequate and suitable housing is prominent throughout the Northern regions, Nunavut and Nunavik particularly experience the highest rate housing shortages and inadequate housing.

Housing shortages across the northern regions

There is an evident housing crisis among the Inuit regions that has been an ongoing reality for many Inuit communities for decades. In the new housing report by the Senate Committee of Aboriginal People (2017), Nunavik alone are in need of 1,030 housing units to address the adequate housing deficit, and Nunavut would require 3,000 housing units to close the housing gap between Nunavut and other Canadian regions. The result of such a high rate of housing shortages and inadequate living situation in a region that mostly depends on social housing have coerced people to be part of long waiting lists for public housing units. An estimate of 3,700 people in the territory of Nunavut were on a public house waiting list in 2009-2010, while in Nunatsiavut in 2012, 196 families were in dire need of housing.

Furthermore, constructing and maintaining housing units in the north is a difficult task due to extreme climate conditions, expensive construction materials, limited construction season and limited local resources. According to NAEDB (2014), building costs are 150% higher in the North than the rest of Canada, and costs in more remote areas are higher.

Due to the housing situation, this places many Inuit communities and families at risk, with high percentages of Inuit on the edge of homelessness in the region of the most severe weather conditions. It is necessary for key actors to address these housing challenges to be able to provide a safe and successful future for Inuit generations to come.

Poor housing conditions

Poor quality of housing units is prevalent throughout the northern regions, particularly with materials, construction methods and design. The housing that exists today are housing stock that were constructed decades ago, in need of major repairs and are energy-inefficient. The use of materials that do not tolerate the weather conditions, as well as with less rigorous building standards magnify unsuitable housing conditions. Furthermore, the designs of houses lack any consideration that are essential elements for northern homes. Insulation issues in homes, unsafe housing designs and lack of quality in construction are some of the many problems within Inuit communities. Due to the pressure within the community to address the housing shortage, housing quality suffers and this results in substandard housing conditions.

Overcrowding

A significant issue throughout the northern regions is the growing problem of overcrowding in households, which is associated by several health problems comprising of respiratory infections and mental health issues due to severe stress and anxiety (Dayle, 2016). In addition, lack of privacy and high stress levels can intensify violence within families. According to Statistics Canada (2016), 40.6% of the Inuit population inhabited overcrowded housing, with the population in Inuit Nunangat experiencing the worst proportion of overcrowding (51.7%). Inuit living outside of Inuit Nunangat are 10.9%. The population of Inuit living in Nunatsiavut living in crowded housing is 20.6%, and 28.6% in the Inuvialuit region. The Inuit living in Nunavik and Nunavut experienced the highest levels of overcrowding, 52.0% and 56.4% respectively (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Hidden Homelessness

Due to the long waitlists and limited housing availability, individuals and families are compelled to move in with friends and relatives, heightening the overcrowding issue within these communities. The lack of housing forces people to move around, "couch surfing" from home to home, leading to the growing population of hidden homeless in these regions.

Furthermore, this is becoming a growing concern for the Aboriginal population as most of the visible homeless in Northwest Territories are of Aboriginal descent (Dene, Inuit or Métis) (Carlyle, 2014), resulting in this being an Aboriginal specific crisis. No attention is being made for this growing population of homelessness in the north, with still high rates of housing inadequacy and stocks failing to meet demands, pushing these marginalized individuals to become homeless.

3.3.1 Housing Efforts and Funding On Inuit Territories

Government bodies

Among the four regions in the north, governance varies according to the signed comprehensive land claim agreements. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed in 1993, which supplies lands, compensation, and hunting and fishing entitlement to Inuit beneficiaries. The Nunavut territory was established in 1999, wherein the Government of Nunavut was recognized as the public government of the territory. The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) was developed in 1975, particularly including provisions concerned with housing. The JBNQA also delegated some of the responsibilities of education and healthcare to the Inuit of Nunavik to develop institutions such as the Kativik School Board and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (Senate Committee of Aboriginal People, 2016).

The Government of Nunatsiavut was established in 2005 and was considered to be an Inuit regional government following the provisions of Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, by overlooking matters of health, education and housing. The federal government provides funding to the Government of Nunatsiavut for provision of different programs and services within the territories. The Inuvialuit Settlement Region was created in Inuvialuit Final Agreement, which was signed in 1984. There are no self-government provisions that have been negotiated thus far within this territory, giving the responsibility of social procedures and services to the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Provision and funding for Northern Regions

Since the 1950s, the federal government has been a significant actor in housing for Inuits. It offered social welfare programs such as healthcare, education and housing in Inuit communities. However, by benefiting from these programs, the federal government advised the Inuit to settle more permanently in sedentary communities by offering housing (Senate Committee of Aboriginal People, 2017; Bonesteel, 2006). With several programs established the federal government in 1959, they began to construct and provide housing units in northern communities, enforcing a sedentary lifestyle to the Inuit population. In the beginning of 1970s, the federal government delegated its responsibilities to other provinces and territories, and became less involved in the housing of Inuit. Following the shift of duties to Northwestern Territories to manage the public housing program in the territory of Indian and Northern Affairs, the federal government reassigned the ownership and management of all social housing in Nunavik to the Quebec provincial government (Société d'habitation du Québec, 2001), and within a few months, completely cutting off housing funding for Inuit to zero. In comparison to on-reserve housing programs, they were maintained and even improved, with over $3.8 billion invested in housing for First Nations, excluding the Inuit (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2004).

Currently, the federal government supports funding for housing units in Inuit Nunangat to provincial and territorial governments primarily through two programs administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC): the Social Housing Agreements and Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) initiative (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2017). The IAH initiative administers funding for several

endeavors such as new construction, renovation, homeownership assistance, rent supplements, shelter allowances, accessibility modifications and shelters for victims of family violence (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2017).

Furthermore, each province and territory are meant to match federal investments, due to the agreement with CMHC. Each province and territory should be responsible for design, delivery and provision for affordable housing programs to cater to the needs of specific regions (CMHC, n.d.). Although the amount of funding is not mentioned by provinces and territories across Inuit Nunangat, the recent IAH federal budget announced $177 million over two years, particularly in support for housing in the north and Inuit housing, comprising of $8 million to Yukon, $12 million to Northwest Territories, $76.7 million to Nunavut, $50 million to Nunavik, $15 million to Nunatsiavut and $15 million to the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Senate Committee of Aboriginal Peoples, 2017; Government of Canada, 2016).

As mentioned, the provincial and territorial housing agencies are responsible in the provision of housing programs across Inuit Nunangat. In Nunavut, the Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) supplies and delivers social housing and aids in homeownership assistance schemes. The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation provides some programs such as social housing and support living in Nunatsiavut, while at the community level, local housing organizations are also involved in the provision of housing.

In regions such as Nunavik and Nunatsiavut, local housing organizations are completely separated from the provincial government, such as the Kativik Municipal Housing

Bureau, providing social housing and other housing programs to the communities. The Torngat Regional Housing in Nunatsiavut gives housing support and social housing within its programs. Other communities have both local housing organizations and provincial housing authorities operate concurrently, both having separate policies to provide housing.

3.4 Urban Centres

In the past few decades, Canadian cities have seen a rising population of Aboriginal Peoples, specifically in urban centres. A large majority of the Aboriginal Population live off-reserve (54%), and they reside in urban areas (Statistics Canada, 2008), being one of the rapidly growing communities within the Aboriginal population (Carlyle, 2014; Walker, 2003). The motivations to migrate out of reserves vary among the Aboriginal communities, from employment opportunities, access to better education and healthcare. However, a study by the NAHO done in 2006 present that there is an estimate of one-third of the Aboriginal Population in Canada who live in inadequate, unsuitable and unaffordable, unlike an 18% estimate of the non-Aboriginal population. Despite their efforts to migrate to the city to access benefits, the Aboriginal population is still not on the same level in terms of socio-economic status and well-being along with the rest of the urban population (Carlyle, 2014).

A significant phenomenon that occurs within major urban centres is the overrepresentation of Aboriginal homelessness, resulting in academics, activists and other community organizations to shed light on the Aboriginal Homelessness Crisis (Carlyle, 2014; Belanger et al, 2013; Peters 2012, DeVerteuil and Wilson 2010, Leach

2010, Distasio et al. 2005, Walker 2005). The experience of Aboriginal Peoples in large urban areas are starkly different compared to mainstream Canadians as they suffer lower incomes, higher rates of unemployment and poverty, and higher occurrences of single parenthood and domestic violence (Carlyle, 2014; Mendelson 2004; Lezubski, Silver & Black 2000; Hanselmann 2001). To further understand the Aboriginal experience in urban centres, it is imperative to examine and comprehend the reasons behind migration, social and economic circumstances and policies that have affected them.

3.4.1 Causes of Migration

A large majority of Aboriginal Peoples migrate between their home communities and urban centres. Living on-reserve or in their home communities has been a terrible experience for most of Aboriginal Peoples due to lack of adequate housing, overcrowding, minimal opportunities for employment, lack of access to quality education, and poorly funded services such as healthcare (Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Homeless Count, 2018). Regardless of the Federal Government's legal responsibility on-reserve, it does not provide the same quality of services on communities who live on-reserve in comparison to non-Aboriginal Canadians who have access to better healthcare, services and primary education (AFN, 2005). With a large Aboriginal population moving into urban centres, it has been identified that they are concentrated mostly in Census Metropolitan Areas, primarily Western Canada in cities such as Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Saskatoon, Ottawa-Gatineau, Montréal, Regina, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Hamilton (Brandon and Peters, 2014).

However, it is important to recognize that there are a myriad of reasons for migrating into the city, depending on age, gender and context. According to several authors, the primary reason for Aboriginal women to migrate into urban centres and leave their home communities is due to domestic violence (Belanger et al, 2012; Beavies et al., 1997). Housing availability tailored for the needs of this vulnerable population are deemed to be culturally insensitive and discriminatory, underlining the need for additional programs that acknowledge the experience of Aboriginal women, further addressing their needs to promote independence and providing them with safe refuge from violence (Native Women's Association of Canada, 2004).

Kishigami (2014) interviewed several men and women in Montreal to understand their living conditions. In this report, he identifies that men and women have diverse reasons for moving to Montreal such as social issues, forced relocation to a correctional facility, personal problems, family and friends living in Montreal (at the time), accompanying family or partner, and escape from physical abuse and housing shortages. The major reasons for men was due to social issues (4) and forced relocation to a correctional facility (3), personal problems (3), family or friends living in Montréal (3), and accompanying family or partner (3). For women, their major reasons for migrating was to escape physical abuse (11), accompany a family member or partner (8), escape sexual abuse (3), seek medical attention (3) and educational opportunities (3).

Many Aboriginal Youth also migrate to urban centres to access more opportunities for education, healthcare and employment. However, they are also an overrepresented population in Canadian homelessness, being acknowledged as a crisis by several sources such as agencies of the Government of Canada (Carlyl, 2014; CMHC, 2001). In a study

by CMHC (2001), Aboriginal youth were 20% of the street youth population in Ottawa, despite them being only 1.5% of the population. According to Stewart (2018), the Aboriginal Youth who move are unable to access these services within their reach, and are more likely to entangled in street lifestyle. Numerous Aboriginal Youth suffer homelessness, and get involved with substance abuse, creating a cycle that is difficult to end.

3.4.2 Urban Aboriginal Experience

The urban Aboriginal Population experience unique social and economic challenges (Carlyle, 2014; Walker 2005, Hanselmann 2001). This population is deprived of quality education and training, higher unemployment rate and has a lower income status than those of non-Aboriginal population (Peters 2012). In these major urban cities, Aboriginal Peoples endure multiple barriers while attempting to restart their lives in a new place. Barriers such as discrimination and oppression that have been going on for generations have caused severe physical and mental health problems, exacerbating the growing dependency of substance abuse, domestic violence and racism (Carlyle, 2014). These barriers, amalgamated with loss of social support, puts this particular population in a significant disadvantage in both the employment and housing markets, resulting in a higher chance of experiencing homelessness. However, these challenges are similar what other immigrant populations endure, the main difference is that the Aboriginal Peoples are under the responsibility of the federal government, both on and off reserve, but is lacking in action (Carli, 2013). Clearly, this evident issue should be addressed as it stems from historical processes, structural causes, political decisions, and inevitably, neglect for this population (Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Homelessness Count, 2018).

The discrimination and racism is rooted in colonial times, leaving an impact on how Aboriginal peoples are perceived and handled, further hindering opportunities in their lives to progress (Carlyle, 2014). Discrimination of Aboriginal Peoples enhances their inability to gain access and secure affordable adequate housing in cities. Recent studies done by Belanger et al. (2012) highlight that "at a national level, urban Aboriginal homeownership and rental rates are lower than those of mainstream Canada, and Aboriginal Peoples tend to present higher core housing needs and lower income levels". This means that this population faces housing discrimination, defined by Cohen and Corrado (2004) as "occurring when a person is denied equal access to housing, or full enjoyment of housing, for reasons that are not related to one's merit as a tenant or homeowner." According to several studies done, "Aboriginal Peoples experience housing market discrimination as renters as owners, and as prospective renters or owners" (Carlyle, 2014; Belanger et al. 2012 a, Belanger 2012 b, Brown et al. 2008, Walker 2008, Belanger 2007, Webster 2007, Peters 2006, CMHC 2005, Cohen and Corrado 2004, Walker 2003, Barsh 1997).

Due to high costs of rent in major cities, this adds to the systemic economic disadvantage that Aboriginal Peoples endure. In cities like Vancouver, where it is ranked to have one of the worst housing affordability in Canada, it is considered to be severely unaffordable for urban individuals (Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Homeless Count, 2018). With that being said, if non-Aboriginal urban populations have difficulty in accessing adequate and affordable housing in major cities, then the urban Aboriginal People experience an increased risk of inability to access housing further worsened by economic and housing discrimination.

Actors that are considered to be the mediator to access adequate and affordable housing are highly likely to discriminate against Aboriginal Peoples. These actors comprise of landlords, property managers, real estate agents, community housing agency personnel, government agency personnel and mortgaging agency personnel (Carlyle, 2014). This can lead to a variety of consequences such as higher cost of rent, forced to live with others (possibly overcrowding), higher frequency of moving houses, and negative effects on health, education and employment (Cohen and Corrado 2004).

Studies present that racism and discrimination go far beyond housing markets and is even embedded through service provisions. Due to heavy segregation and marginalization, Aboriginal peoples are more likely to experience difficulty in accessing local available services. These discriminatory institutional practices exist across health, educational, and legal and criminal justice systems stem from colonial settler societies like Canada, who operate to further isolate Indigenous groups, evident in policies that govern these populations (DeVerteuil and Wilson, 2010:499). Kishigami (2014) asserts that a large proportion of homeless Inuit in Montréal tend to avoid numerous shelters due to enduring a form of discrimination from non-Inuit workers and other individuals experiencing homelessness. Aboriginal women in British Columbia are also hindered in accessing health care due to discrimination from health care workers (Kurtz et al.,2008).

Figure 3.3: Statistics of Urban Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada. Source: Belanger, Y. et al. (2013). Homelessness, Urban Aboriginal People, and the Need for a National Enumeration. Aboriginal Policy Studies, 2(2), 4-33.

Furthermore, the Aboriginal Peoples are overrepresented in the homeless population across cities in Canada, evidently becoming a crisis that needs dire attention. According to a study done by Belanger et al (2012), at any given night, 6.97% of urban Aboriginal People are deemed homeless, while non-Aboriginal people were only 0.78%. Furthermore, more than one in 15 urban Aboriginal people are considered homeless in comparison to one out of 128 non-Aboriginal Canadians, putting Aboriginal people eight times more likely to become homeless compared to non-Aboriginal urban individuals

(Belanger et al, 2012). Their lack of adequate housing, healthcare and education on-reserve are drivers for Aboriginal people to migrate into urban centres. Some individuals and families may opt to temporarily stay with friends, relatives or others temporarily until they are able to find permanent housing, bolstering a phenomenon called Hidden Homelessness. Although there is a lack of data on the severity of this issue, researchers are now making an effort to understand the effect of this in the Aboriginal population.

However, with these unique barriers that they face in their journey to accessing housing and services in urban centres,their likelihood of homelessness across Canada increases. Until this obvious cycle of neglect, racism and discrimination is heavily acknowledged and reflected into policies that can aid in influencing the treatment of urban Aboriginal Peoples, it will remain an endless snowballing effect that further perpetuates rapidly increasing levels of Aboriginal Homelessness in urban centres and on-reserves.

Chapter IV: Indigenous Challenges in Quebec

Urban centres have witnessed a pattern of consistent increase of Indigenous Populations over the years, with 54% of this population living in major urban cities (Statistics Canada, 2008). It has been stated that off-reserve Aboriginal communities are one of the fastest and largest growing communities in Canada (Patrick, 2014; Walker, 2003). With this growing population coming into large urban cities, there is a need to pay special attention on understanding the urban Aboriginal experience, directed towards providing them the necessary services and provisions that can improve their livelihood. Therefore, obtaining data for this prevalent phenomena in Canadian urban centres is critical to gathering useful information to curate specific policies and approaches for their overall experience, in addition to bringing more awareness to this subject as they migrate and integrate themselves into a unique, challenging environment.

Furthermore, with a high population of Aboriginal populations in urban centres, there is also evidence that people in the community also experience or are at a higher risk of experiencing homelessness, in comparison to non-Aboriginal people. According to a study done by Belanger et al. (2013), at any given night, 6.97% of the urban Aboriginal population in Canada is homeless, in contrast to the national average of 0.78%. In other words, 1 out of 15 Aboriginal people in cities encounter homelessness, a stark contrast with 1 out of 128 of the general population (Belanger, et al, 2013). Evidently, the Aboriginal population is the most overrepresented population in homelessness statistics, in urban areas and within their communities. Although it is important to understand the overall population that experiences homelessness, the urban Aboriginal population is a

young population that is rapidly growing in major city centres, accentuating the crucial need to comprehend the reasons behind their overrepresentation in homeless statistics.

Patrick (2014) states that a significant proportion of urban housing that are accessible to the urban Aboriginal population are inadequate and unaffordable, causing another link to the disproportionate range of homelessness in major cities. The housing crises that Aboriginal people experience are closely related to homelessness. With the previous chapter highlighting the various challenges that is urban Aboriginal population experiences, touching on housing discrimination, services and healthcare, this chapter's main focus is to investigate the specific housing challenges that the urban Aboriginal population experience in Montréal, Québec. It is critical to understand the intentions and influential factors that push the Aboriginal population to migrate to urban city centres, which can vary from community and city. Therefore, it is important to understand the context to further address and acknowledge the on-going issues in existing communities.

4. 1 Migration to Québec

4.1.1 Short history of Québec

From time immemorial, Indigenous populations have resided in Québec, continuing their long history in this city. Historically, they used to occupy key locations in present day Montréal, similarly across all urban centres in Canada, a European settlement. Québec has been home to over ten Indigenous tribes over time. he presence of Indigenous populations in major cities dates back to the 1950s in western Canada, and began to escalate further during the early 1980s in Montreal and other cities in the Province of Québec (Lévesque 2003). Despite their ever-present existence in Quebec, and other urban centres in Canada, the Indigenous population continues to be one of the poorest and most

vulnerable segments of society (World Bank, 2001) as they endure a unique set of challenges in social and economic situations (Patrick, 2014).

Figure 4.1: A map of all the existing Aboriginal communities in Quebec. Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Canada.

Although there is a lack of data on rural to urban migration for Aboriginal Populations, there was a census analysis done in 1986 to investigate Aboriginal migration. In this study, it highlighted that status Indians who have resided off-reserve were more likely to change communities than those who live on-reserve. Among these groups, First Nations and Métis had a higher possibility of off-reserve migration. However, in a survey done in 1991 by the Aboriginal Peoples' Survey, 61% of Aboriginal People who currently live on or off-reserve moved in their lifetime (but not in the past 12 months), while this was 69% for the Métis. For those who have reported moving, 41% of Aboriginal people and 48% of Métis stated that they migrated to their current residence from a different place in the same community, while 27% of Aboriginal People and 26% of Métis moved to their current place of residence from a different community in Canada. Within this survey, 40,300 Status-Indians and 14,590 Métis were reportedly migrated within the last 12 months.

Inuit population are less likely to migrate to other communities as their location is more isolated from urban centres. Furthermore, as they adhere to a more traditional way of life, they are not easily drawn to cities. According to the same survey (Aboriginal People's Survey), only 3445 adult Inuit moved within the twelve months of the survey; 29% moved to a different neighborhood within the same community, whilst 11% relocated to another community within Canada.

In Quebec, there is a high migration rate of Aboriginal Populations, in which between 2001-2006, Quebec had the highest population growth of the Aboriginal Population, increasing by 62% (Puskas et al, 2016). In 2011, 10% of the entire Aboriginal Population of Canada resided in Quebec (Statistics Canada, 2016), totalling 2% of the province's

population. A Statistics Canada survey in 2011 recorded that Quebec was home to 82,425 First Nations people, 40,955 Métis, 12,570 Inuit, with others identifying as other Aboriginal identities (4,415) or more than one Aboriginal identity (1,550). Over the period of 2006-2011, the Métis population saw the greatest increase (47%), following the First Nations (26%) and the Inuit population (15%).

Furthermore, Quebec coexists with 11 Aboriginal nations: the Waban-Aki (Abenaki), Mamiwinnik (Algonquin), Atikamekw, Nituuhuuiyiyuuch (Cree), Huron-Wendat, Innu, Inuit, Wulust'agooga'wiks (Maliseet), Mi'gmaq (Micmac), Kanien'kehakas (Mohawk), and Naskapi. These nations reside in 14 Inuit villages and 41 Aboriginal communities all over Quebec, with an increasing population of Aboriginal people living in major cities like Gatineau, La Tuque, Montréal, Sept-Îles, and Val-d'Or. Quebec recognizes that Aboriginal nations are significant stakeholders in their history, culture and identity, as they formed and aided the province, from the beginning of encountering the first European settlers, until currently, constituting an important part of the urban landscape of Quebec.

4.1.2 Reasons behind their migration

Statistics Canada (2016) reports that Quebec is one of the seven Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) that have seen the Aboriginal population double from 2006-2016. Major cities in Quebec have varying concentrations of the Aboriginal population. Among all of them in Quebec, Montréal has the highest number of the Aboriginal population (34,745), accounting for 0.9% of the entire population (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Indigenous people tend to migrate to other communities and urban centres due to reasons such as housing shortages in their current community, overcrowding and the lack of employment opportunities (Canadian Encyclopedia). These migration patterns for the Indigenous population are rapidly increasing in cities like Montréal. However, it is important to highlight that these migration patterns are not isolated to one instance and is not a one-directional process (Brandon and Peters, 2016). The people who migrate to urban centres remain close to their culture and family connections within their home communities, involving visiting and or moving back and forth within their communities and urban centres.

In a study done by the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study for the city of Montréal, the determining reasons to migrate were due to a desire for educational opportunities (41%), employment opportunities (31%), family (29%) and city life (22%). Other reasons such as being in close proximity with friends (8%), career advancement (7%), fleeing a terrible family situation (7%), and to meet new people outside of their communities (6%). In conclusion of the study, the Indigenous population in Montréal have similar determinants to migration as other first generation Aboriginal residents of other urban centres in Canada. However, the participants of the study in Montréal have the highest percentage of expressing to move to meet new people among other studies done in Canada.

This migratory pattern for the Aboriginal population occur in various levels: within cities or between cities and rural regions. As stated earlier in the paper, understanding the geographic context and life in the communities leads to an evident correlation of the on-going migration due to poverty, social exclusion, dropping out of school and familial problems. Therefore, the occurrence of migration is a symptom of the difficult life

conditions in these communities. According to the RCAAQ (2008), a majority of Aboriginal people have been leaving their communities in the hope of improving their lives. Some individuals may be considered 'misfits' of the community, having an existing friction within the community itself, forcing these people to leave or escape their homelands.

However, they seem to be stuck in a never-ending cycle of difficulty in all aspects such as economic and social situations, as well as housing in these urban centres. Their relocation to cities occur to better their life and leave a terrible living environment, only to be met with a unique set of experiences that lead them to similar problems but in a different place. Their goal to reestablish a better life in the city is hindered due to economic and social marginalization that they endure. These obstacles that the urban Aboriginal have to experience when they move increases their risk of experiencing a period of homelessness at some point.

4.2 Housing Availability

The urban Aboriginal challenge to finding housing in Montréal is similar to the struggles of Montrealers as they look for suitable, adequate and affordable housing. Comparable with other major cities, the supply of rental housing is insufficient, particularly in the affordable sector of the housing market. Social housing waitlists are extensive and can take a long time, and finding private housing that can meet the needs for low-income families are a rare case. Several studies have underscored the significant challenges that Aboriginal people face in their path to finding housing in urban centres (Brandon and Peters, 2016). Aside from these housing challenges, they also suffer social and economic discrimination, exacerbating their high rates of unemployment and poverty.

Consequently, Aboriginal people are overrepresented in the homeless population in Montréal, and many more "hidden homeless" of those who live in crowded and insecure housing in cities.

Due to the increasing costs of market housing in major cities and a limited number of subsidized housing, many Aboriginal individuals take refuge and live with friends or family members. According to Distasio and his colleagues (2004), they determined that 70% of Aboriginal people stated that their first priority upon arrival in the city is to find housing, in comparison to 20% of participants who declared that finding employment is their main focus. Humphreys (2006) and Distasio et al (2004) have evaluated that only half the people who migrate to urban centres can have access to housing.

In the study done by Distasio et al (2004) for the First Nations communities in Winnipeg, research shows that "the transition from reserves to cities is often accompanied by living with friends and family for periods of time in order to cope with housing costs". This phenomena of "hidden homelessness" surfaces further issues in social and health impacts. As some family members of First Nations visit for a limited time, the hosts need to account for the needs of the visiting family.

A survey done in 2000 among 472 homeless First Nations people who were currently living in Prince Albert and Regina in Saskatchewan discovered that 5% of them were homeless or used shelter services, and the others resided with friends or family (SIIT 2000). Although this approach can aid in the transitory process of their relocation, it also adds a burden to their hosts' budgets and privacy. This was stressful on the migrants as they consistently had to watch their hosts' mood and attempt to lessen their presence in

the homes, further impacting their activities such as finding housing, employment or education and training.

In the study titled “Portrait of Homelessness for First Nations Communities in Montréal”, they also highlight “hidden homelessness” to further understand the structure of this phenomena that is considered to be another consequence of the housing crisis. Although taking refuge in temporary shelters within their social network is an approach to avoid living on the streets, it is significant to understand this situation as part of a larger cycle, and not as a static situation (FNQLHSSC, 2016). Additionally, Distasio et al (2004) also reports that the aid provided by extended family and social networks is an essential part of their values and their support for their fellow community members. The experience of living with friends and family seems to be a universal circumstance among the Aboriginal people, as they are four times as likely to live in a crowded dwelling in comparison to non-Aboriginal people (Statistics Canada, 2006). Although this may alleviate the possibility of homelessness, it adds a level of dependency on the other person. The strategy of living with friends and family are able to assist with new migrants of the city, but it does cause a burden on the host’s budgets and privacy.

The urban Aboriginal peoples’ pursuit to finding housing is further prevented by their high unemployment rates, aggravating their economic hardships. Poverty is an encompassing experience throughout the urban Aboriginal population as they face an unemployment rate double that of the non-Aboriginal population in most Canadian cities (National Household Survey, 2011). Furthermore, Aboriginal people are inadequately presented in managerial, supervisory and professional occupations. It has also been reported that more than twice as many Aboriginal as non-Aboriginal

individuals have incomes below the poverty line (Brandon and Peters, 2016). In the 2011 National Housing Survey, Aboriginal people's incomes in the year 2010 came to an average of $20,701 in comparison to $30,955 for non-Aboriginal respondents.

Statistics Canada (2006) stated that the employment rate of Aboriginal people in Quebec was 51.3%, in comparison to 60.5% for non-Aboriginal people (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2013). However, in 2018, the employment rate of Aboriginal population in Quebec raised to 55.7%, while the non-Indigenous population settled at 61.6% (Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey, 2018). In the second quarter of 2018, the unemployment rate for the Indigenous population decreased by 1.1%, making it 9.6%, in comparison to the non-Indigenous population with an unemployment rate of 5.3%. These numbers show that although the Indigenous population still has a lower employment rate and higher unemployment rate than non-Indigenous population, there is an evident improvement and gradual increase of employment opportunities in Quebec for the Indigenous population.

The growth of opportunities is combined with their ability to access education, as it is also more likely for an Aboriginal individual to be employed if they have a bachelor degree. As stated in Statistics Canada (2011), the employment rates were higher for those Aboriginal people who had postsecondary credentials; First Nations people and Métis was 74.3% and Inuit was 76.0%. In contrast to those First Nations people, Métis and Inuit who did not have a certificate, diploma or degree, had employment rates of 43.1%, 43.9%

4.2.1 Housing Options

The state of urban Indigenous housing in Canada has been explored in the academic discourse to further understand the cyclical processes that constrict the advancement of

Indigenous people within homeownership and home rental sectors. In addition, an exploration of past and current housing programs and policies are discussed, maintaining a stance that they are inadequate in addressing the housing and homelessness issues, specifically for the Indigenous population.

	2001	2006	% Change 2001–2006
Canada (all)	11,562,975	12,437,500	9.3
Aboriginal (off-reserve)	398,400	506,235	7.9

Table 4.1: Number of Households. Source: Statistics Canada (2009), 2006 Census: Family Portrait: Continuity and Change in Canadian Families and Households in 2006: Highlights; and Statistics Canada (2007), Aboriginal Population Profile. and Belanger, Yale D., Weasel Head, G., Awosoga, O. (2012). Housing and Aboriginal People in Urban Centres

Belanger and Awosoga (2012) expressed a need to comprehend the inequalities between Indigenous housing and non-Indigenous housing in the Canadian housing market, which reveals that out of the national number of households, 12.4 million households, only 506, 235 (n=4.07%) belonged to Aboriginal households found in Table 4.1.

The CMHC defines an Aboriginal household as one of the following:

- *a non-family household in which at least 50 percent of household members self-identified as Aboriginal; or,*
- *a family household that meets at least one of two criteria: at least one spouse, common-law partner, or lone parent self-identified as an Aboriginal; or,*
- *at least 50 percent of household members self-identified as Aboriginal (CMHC 2012).*

This growth correlates with the Aboriginal population rising from 1996 to 2006, with an increase of 45%. In addition, it is also influenced by a rise of people identifying themselves of Aboriginal identity.

	2006	2016
Canada (all)	12,437, 500	34,460,060
Aboriginal (off-reserve)	506, 235	1,673,785

Table 4.2, Total Households of Canada of 2006 and 2016. Source: Aboriginal Population Profile, Statistics Canada (2016)

Total Aboriginal Households	First Nations	Metis	Inuit
1,673,785	642,845	583,780	64,825

Table 4.3, Total Aboriginal Households of the Aboriginal Population in 2016. Source: Aboriginal Population Profile, Statistics Canada (2016)

However, in a more recent account of this information, Table 4.3 shows the total number of households of Canada in 2016, 34,460,060 households, while only 1,637,785 (n=4.8%) belong to Aboriginal households (Statistics Canada, 2016). This shows that despite the rise of Aboriginal households between 2006-2016, there is still a massive gap between Aboriginal households vs. non-Aboriginal households. Among all three Aboriginal identities, First Nations are the more likely to become a homeowner than the other Aboriginal groups, showing that the Inuit population has the least number of households owned, as shown in Table 4.4.

Region	Status Indian	Non-Status Indian	Métis	Inuit
Canada	38.9%	48.2%	54.3%	38.9%
NL	67.3%	65.1%	69.4%	55.0%
PEI	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nova Scotia	53.1%	52.0%	51.2%	30%
New Brunswick	54.8%	52.1%	45.9%	n/a
Quebec	51.7%	52.4%	50.8%	38.5%
Ontario	47.5%	50.4%	58.3%	31.9%
Manitoba	27.3%	42.4%	55.6%	35.3%
Saskatchewan	24.5%	39.6%	53.8%	n/a
Alberta	35.6%	48.3%	53.2%	42.6%
BC	35.1%	42.2%	50.5%	35.4
Yukon	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
NWT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nunavut	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 4.4: Aboriginal Homeownership in Canada according to identity. Source: CMHC (2009a), Aboriginal Identity, Location and Tenure, Canada, Provinces and Territories (2006). and Belanger, Yale D., Weasel Head, G., Awosoga, O. (2012). Housing and Aboriginal People in Urban Centres

Additionally, similar inequalities are evident in homeownership rates within the provinces of Canada (Belanger and Awosoga, 2012). Non-Status Indians and Metis seem to have the highest rates of homeownership among those living in CMAs. The Inuit population also has lower rates of homeownership in most of these CMAS, showing their disparity between the rest of the Aboriginal groups. When studying the rates of Aboriginal home ownership in urban centres, it is significant to look into the living standards of these houses. A study done by Peters (2012) states that a significant proportion of housing occupied by Aboriginal Peoples in urban areas are inadequate and not affordable.

	All Households		Renters		Owners	
	# Households in Core Housing Need	Incidence of Core Housing Need	# Households in Core Housing Need	Incidence of Core Housing Need	# Households in Core Housing Need	Incidence of Core Housing Need
Aboriginal Status (2006)						
Non-Aboriginal Household	1,412,580	12.4	918,690	26.8	493,890	6.2
Aboriginal Household	81,810	20.4	63,065	34.9	18,750	8.5
Status Indian	38,740	24.8	31,440	37.9	7,305	10.0
Non-Status Indian	15,860	20.3	12,440	35.1	3,415	8.0
Métis	33,145	16.2	23,260	30.1	9,880	7.7
Inuit	5,705	35.8	4,835	46.4	865	15.6
Aboriginal Status (2001)						
Non-Aboriginal Household	1,414,075	13.5	955,315	27.9	458,760	6.5
Aboriginal Household	71,265	24.0	56,170	37.7	15,090	10.2
Status Indian	35,745	28.0	29,625	40.8	6,125	11.1
Non-Status Indian	13,590	23.7	10,530	36.7	3,055	10.7
Métis	24,665	19.2	18,055	33.3	6,615	8.9
Inuit	4,680	35.8	3,805	43.3	870	20.3

Table 4.5: Characteristics of Households in core-housing need in Canada, 2001 and 2006. Source: NAHA (2009) and Belanger, Yale D., Weasel Head, G., Awosoga, O. (2012). Housing and Aboriginal People in Urban Centres

Furthermore, research shows that nationally, the urban Aboriginal homeownership and rental rates are lower in comparison to the rest of Canada, with Aboriginal households revealing higher core housing needs (Belanger, et al, 2012). In Table 4.5, Inuit experiences a higher percentage of core housing need in both conditions of renters and owners. The poor quality of housing conditions are experienced by the Inuit population in Inuit Nunangat and urban centres, both studies overlooked by the academic discourse.

According to the NHA (2011), Montréal has 15,825 Aboriginal households, with 14.5% of them living in core housing needs, in comparison to the 8% of non-Aboriginal households (Statistics Canada, 2001). This entails that their housing was inadequate and unaffordable- defined as costing 30% of household income or more. Aboriginal households in Canadian cities also face severe rent burden, as they are more likely to §§spend 50% or more of their income on rent. There are no specific numbers by Aboriginal identity available for Montréal, showing the sheer neglect of the Inuit experience and housing conditions in urban centres.

4.3 Services, Organizations and Shelters

4.3.1 Services and Organizations

The experience of the urban Aboriginal population stretches beyond housing markets, as it also exists in practices across health, education and legal and criminal justice systems (DeVerteuil and Wilson, 2010). This encompassing experience is pervasive throughout the Aboriginal population in all Canadian Cities (UAPS, 2011). In their study, participants were questioned if they have used non-Aboriginal services and organizations, how they felt and what the nature of their experience was like. Among these services, a majority of the participants used banks or credit unions (83%) and health care system (67%). They were least likely to report using employment and training services (14%), social housing programs (11%) and child welfare system (10%). The survey also states that Aboriginal people in the city of Montréal are the least likely to have recent contact with non-Aboriginal employment and training programs (UAPS, 2011).

Their experiences of using these services were generally more positive, outweighing the negative ones. According to UAPS (2011), they experienced the highest positive

experiences in bank or credit unions (91%), employee and training services (85%), the health care system (81%) and social housing programs (78%). The service that elicits the highest negative reviews (36%) were using child welfare systems, but still having a dominant positive review (51%), an opposite pattern to western cities and Toronto.

Those who faced negative experiences stated that they were primarily concerned with the process of obtaining these services and their treatment towards them. The study states that four out of ten report that they dealt with a negative experience due to racism or discrimination; being unfairly treated or disrespected; dealing with judgmental, mean or rude staff; or did not understand the needs of their specific culture (UAPS, 2011). Furthermore, three out of ten people mentioned that there were issues with long waiting lists, complicated paperwork and expensive fees, which is an overall problem of the process of these services. Two out of ten were questioning the effectiveness of the service, as they felt like it was not supportive enough, as well as seeming like there was a lack of resources consequently providing them with poor service. Other negative experiences that were stated were due to an application getting rejected, being misinformed or misdiagnosed, being abused as a child by authority figures, or having a child removed from their home (UAPS, 2011).

A study was also done by the UAPS (2011) in understanding the participants' perceptions of and interactions with Aboriginal services and organizations in Montréal. These organizations and services provide a cultural connection and identity for the urban Aboriginal population through the services they offer, the events they curate for the communities and act as a presence for the Aboriginal people. According to their study, 50% of the participants have often (21%) or occasionally (29%) use or rely on Montréal's

Aboriginal services or organizations, while the other 50% state that they rarely (21%) or never (29%) use them (UAPS, 2011). Typically, those who are regular users are Aboriginal individuals who are 45 years and older and low-income earners. Aboriginal people use these services due to the positive environment they encounter and the services they provide. The users of these services are more likely to utilize the friendship centres (56%). Others use employment centres (20%), health centres (16%) and housing services (6%). In this study, there is an evident minimal use of these services and organizations for social housing programs and services in both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal groups.

4.3.2 Shelters and Transitional Housing

Similar to other Canadian cities, the Aboriginal population is overrepresented in the homelessness studies that have been done in Montréal continuously in 2016 and 2018 (iCountMTL, 2016 and 2018). Although they only account for 0.6% of the entire population of the city of Montréal, they represent 10% of the entire homeless population. In the iCount MTL study done in 2016, 70% of their participants who identified as Aboriginal have used shelters and transitional housing, in comparison to 72% of non-Aboriginal participants.

		Non-Aboriginals	Aboriginals
	n=	839	89
Unsheltered	141	87%	13%
Emergency Shelters	472	89%	11%
Transitional Housing	257	95%	5%
Other places	58	91%	9%
Total	***928***	***90%***	***10%***

Table 4.6: Percentage of Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal homeless. Source: I Count MTL 2015 (2015).

		Status First Nations	Non-status First Nations	Métis	Inuit
	n=	22	10	12	30
Unsheltered		27%	7%	13%	53%
Emergency Shelters		36%	11%	15%	38%
Transitional Housing		0%	30%	30%	40%
Other places		50%	50%	0%	0%
Total		***30%***	***13%***	***16%***	***41%***

Table 4.7: Breakdown of Aboriginals by Identity. Source: I Count MTL 2015 (2015).

This table categorizes the Aboriginal participants' usage of shelter in the study. According to Table 4.7, most Aboriginal participants were unsheltered (13%) the night they took their survey. Following that, they are also most likely to use an emergency

shelter (11%) and transitional housing (5%). Among all the groups, the Inuit shows a higher value in all the categories. Although this study may be inadequate due to the low value of Aboriginal people who participated, it is still important to understand where they are most likely located as a homeless individual. The breakdown of the Aboriginal participants by group is also significant to further comprehend the reasons behind their circumstances.

Québec

	General		Men's		Women's		Youth		Family		Total	
	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds
Alma	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Drummondville	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	18	0	0	2	18
Fermont	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
Gatineau	1	55	0	0	0	0	2	16	0	0	3	71
Joliette	1	6	0	0	0	0	2	21	0	0	3	27
La Pocatière	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	0	0	1	9
Mont-Laurier	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9
Montreal	7	132	4	811	9	185	9	125	1	13	30	1,266
Quebec City	2	52	1	39	3	35	4	37	0	0	10	163
Rimouski	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	0	0	1	10
Rouyn-Noranda	1	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	15
Saguenay	0	0	1	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	29
Saint-Georges	1	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	23
Saint-Hyacinthe	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	0	0	1	9
Salaberry-de-Valleyfield	1	20	0	0	0	0	1	9	0	0	2	29
Sherbrooke	1	18	1	8	0	0	1	9	0	0	3	35
Trois-Rivières	2	26	0	0	0	0	1	11	0	0	3	37
TOTAL	**20**	**363**	**7**	**722**	**12**	**220**	**25**	**274**	**1**	**13**	**65**	**1,757**

Table 4.8: Provincial Summary of Emergency Shelters in Quebec. Source: Shelter Capacity Report (2018).

Appendix A: Transitional Housing by Clientele Served (2018)

Province/ Territory	General		Men's		Women's		Youth		Family		Total	
	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds
Newfoundland and Labrador	1	74	0	0	1	3	2	25	0	0	4	102
Nova Scotia	0	0	1	19	4	55	3	45	0	0	8	119
New Brunswick	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	10	0	0	2	14
Prince Edward Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Québec	26	447	14	668	26	745	42	566	6	96	114	2,522
Ontario	23	519	18	646	24	398	34	442	5	183	104	2,188
Manitoba	6	144	2	58	0	0	2	27	0	0	10	229
Saskatchewan	5	106	5	88	5	65	6	62	1	7	22	328
Alberta	10	296	7	575	6	151	13	152	1	3	37	1,177
British Columbia	20	667	4	109	4	57	5	68	0	0	33	901
Yukon	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Northwest Territories	0	0	1	32	1	18	1	13	0	0	3	63
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CANADA	**92**	**2,257**	**53**	**2,197**	**71**	**1,492**	**109**	**1,410**	**13**	**289**	**338**	**7,645**

Table 4.9: Clientele of Transitional Housing according to Province/Territory. Source: Shelter Capacity Report (2018).

National Summary: Emergency Shelters (2018)*

Province/Territory	2018		2017		2016	
	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds	Shelters	Beds
Newfoundland and Labrador	7	67	6	61	5	53
Nova Scotia	9	220	9	217	8	208
New Brunswick	9	157	9	148	9	150
Prince Edward Island	1	7	1	7	1	7
Québec	65	1,757	75	1,934	74	1,948
Ontario	149	6,898	149	6,764	147	6,622
Manitoba	13	650	15	661	15	661
Saskatchewan	18	476	21	443	21	439
Alberta	35	3,304	36	3,182	36	3,182
British Columbia	78	2,170	77	2,069	76	2,019
Yukon	3	27	3	27	3	27
Northwest Territories	3	82	3	76	4	100
Nunavut	2	44	2	34	2	34
CANADA	**392**	**15,859**	**407**	**15,623**	**401**	**15,450**

Table 4.10: Summary of Emergency Shelters across all of Canada. Source: Shelter Capacity Report (2018).

Furthermore, In the Shelter Capacity Report (2018), among the cities of Quebec, Montréal has the highest number of shelters (132) as shown in Table 4.8. Transitional Housing is also prevalent in Quebec, as it has one of the second highest numbers of this infrastructure. However, there seems to be a 9% decrease of emergency shelters in the province of Quebec from 2016 to 2018.

There is an important presence for these shelters and transitional housing due to the heavy dependency of the homeless Aboriginal population for these infrastructures, as shown in the iCountMTL report. Although these infrastructures were presented as quick band-aid solutions to the emerging homelessness problem in its earlier stages, they should not be abolished. They are an important first line of defense to address the challenge of homelessness for all. These infrastructures, along with more long-term strategies to address this issue, should be maintained and provided as they can further aid in mitigating homelessness for this specific population. The value of their presence and the demand for access by the Aboriginal population should be telling of their need to be provided with these infrastructures. Furthermore, the presence of these existing support structures (shelters, transitional housing and social housing) are critical to be considered as a housing option for the Indigenous population.

Chapter V: Inuit Housing Challenges

Across Canada, several studies have been conducted to focus on urban Indigenous issues, specifically focusing on the experience in western provinces and cities that contain large populations of Indigenous people such as Vancouver and Winnipeg. As compared to these cities, research done in provinces such as Quebec are insufficient, with less studies done in Montréal (Montréal Urban Needs Assessment, 2014). Similarly to other cities, Montréal experiences a pattern of overrepresentation of the Indigenous population in the homeless community. As mentioned earlier in this report, with the recent approach of using Point-in-Time Counts nationally to improve their understanding of the homeless population, Montréal's study showed that the homeless population portrays a disproportionate number of Indigenous people in both surveys done in 2015 and 2018, with the recent study portraying the Indigenous population being 0.6% of the entire city, 10% of them are homeless (Latimer et al, 2015).

In Montréal, the Indigenous population consists of three main single Aboriginal identities such as First Nations, Metis or Inuk (Inuit), with the First Nations presenting a larger population (16,130), then Métis (15,455) and Inuit (975) (Statistics Canada, 2016). According to UAPS (2012), the Inuit population is the least likely to be urbanized, with less than 30% living in urban centres. However, in the 2015 and 2018 I Count MTL reports, the native population that are most likely to be experiencing homelessness is the Inuit, representing 40% of the homeless population within the 0.9% Indigenous population in Montréal. Studies have extensively covered the homeless phenomenon experienced by Indigenous subgroups, mainly focusing on First Nations and Metis. However, as the Inuit increasingly urbanized, they are most likely to experience

homelessness. This rising issue demands to be addressed through further understanding of the specific Inuit experience.

This chapter aims to cover the foundational research to form a well-rounded understanding of the specific Inuit housing experience particularly in the province of Quebec, as well as in the city of Montréal. The migration patterns between the North and Montréal will be examined to understand the pull and push factors to urban centres. The specific phenomenon of homelessness among the Inuit population will also be examined to address specific solutions. Furthermore, this chapter will build an understanding on how Inuit specific organizations can alleviate the perpetual struggles of the Inuit population that is evident here in Montréal. It will also explore the housing options and policies and the Indigenous population, specifically the Inuit.

5.1 Urban Inuit in Montréal

5.1.1 Urban Inuit Experience

Figure 5.1: Map of the 52 communities across the Inuit regions. Source: Indigenous Affairs and Northern Canada. https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/Map/irs/mp/index-en.html

The urbanization of the Indigenous groups began with First Nations and Metis People migrating to major city centres in the 1960s, followed by an increase of Inuit population migrating to these areas during the 1980s (Kishigami, 2014). In the report by the National Household survey (2011), a high percentage (73.1%) of Inuit in Canada lived in Inuit Nunangat, comprising of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik and Labrador Region (Nunatsiavut). Across these Inuit regions, there are 52 communities that are recognized as Inuit. Statistics Canada (2012) states that one out of four Inuit live in major

urban centres. The Inuit population is experiencing an increasing population situated in large southern urban centres such as Montréal (1,535), Edmonton (1,480), Ottawa (1,450), Toronto (1,385), Yellowknife (735), St. John's (680) and Winnipeg (420) (Statistics Canada, 2013). An emergence of this trend is evident in 1996, only 17% of Inuit resided outside of Inuit Nunangat; during 2001, it grew to 18.7%; in 2006, it grew further to 21.8% and in 2011, it became 27.9%.

The research conducted on the urban experience for the urban Aboriginal population recognizes that this specific group faces unique social and economic challenges (Peters, 2014; Walker 2005; Hanselmann 2001) in Montréal, as well as other regions in Canada (Beavis et al. 1997). Due to their low levels of education and training, they also experience higher unemployment and lower income rates. Furthermore, the barriers they experience are exacerbated due to their likelihood of experiencing personal disabilities, varying from physical and mental health, as well as substance abuse. These factors put them at a significant disadvantage in terms of employment opportunities and housing markets. With a lack or a weak support network in these urban centres, it increases their risk of homelessness.

In recent years, Montréal's urban landscape has started to include Indigenous specific organizations such as Projet Autochtones du Quebec, Chez Doris, Native Friendship Centre and the Native Women's shelter. Organizations like these can aid and alleviate the challenges that urban Aboriginal experience. Several studies indicate that these organizations are a critical part of the urban Indigenous life as they receive and have easier access to further support them in varying degrees from access to food, healthcare, cultural activities, clothing **(indirect assistance**) and temporary housing **(direct**

assistance). Many Indigenous people, including Inuit, are unaware of the services provided by these organizations due to a lack of knowledge about them. However, the Inuit are still most likely to use these facilities, according to a study done by Kishigami (2012).

Although this report specifically focuses on the vulnerable percentage of Inuit men and women, there is still a portion of this population that has ascended the barrier of these challenges and successfully integrated within the urban systems.

5.2 Causes of Migration to Montréal

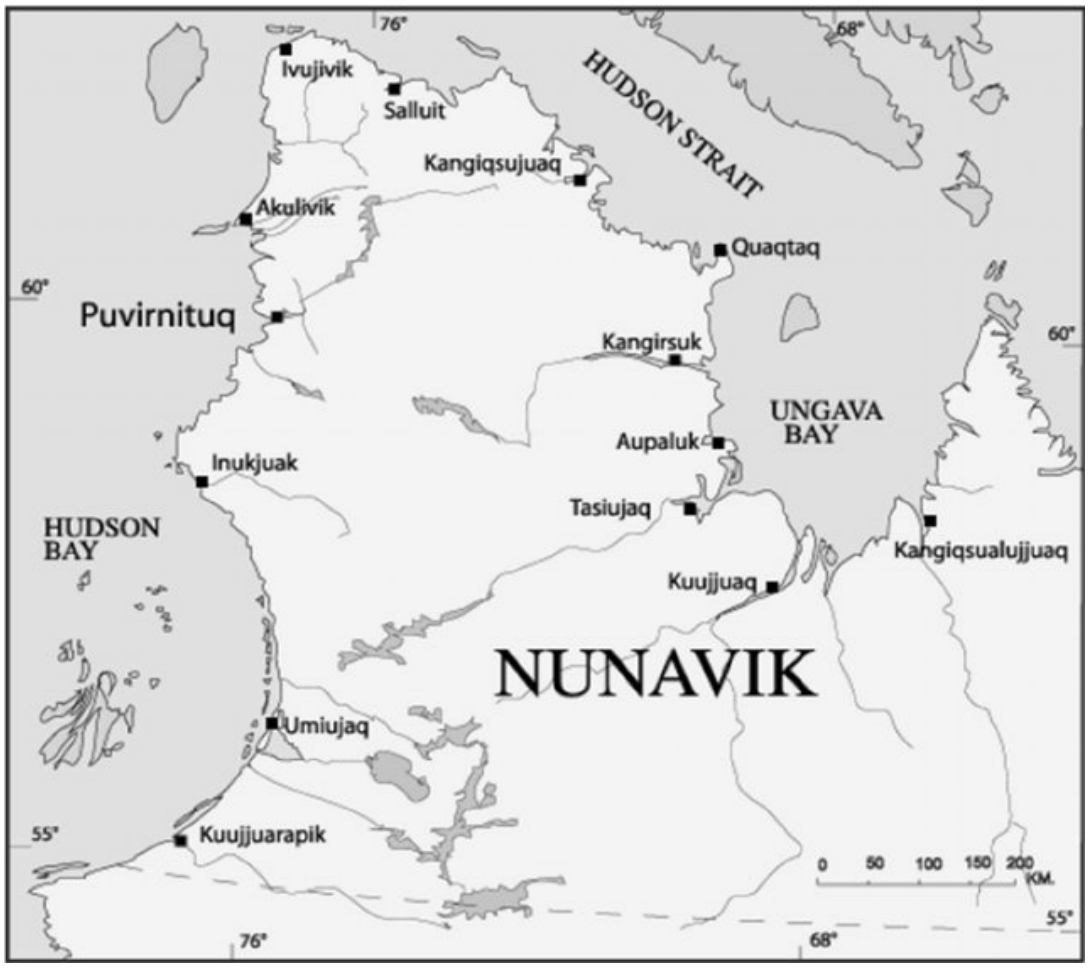

Figure 5.2: Locations of the 14 Inuit communities in Nunavik (Northern Quebec, Canada). Nunavik Tourism Association 2010. en/media-centre/nunavik-maps media-centre/nunavik-maps

Research regarding the urban experiences and migratory patterns mainly focus on First Nations and Metis, while the state of the Inuit population has barely received much scholarly attention. The research concerning the Inuit generally documents their living conditions in their homelands. Although that is a critical perspective within the understanding of their experiences in the North, it overlooks their growing population in urban spaces. The urban dimension of the Inuit population experience continues to be understudied and poorly understood (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2017), further neglecting their specific needs within these spaces.

Push and Pull Factors

The migration patterns of the Inuit population between rural to urban centres are highly influenced by several push and pull factors. Although the urban Indigenous have similar underlying factors behind their rural-urban mobility and experience challenges in both spaces, the studies regarding the Inuit and their history, geography, culture and identity in creating an awareness on both individual and collective experiences is critical. In a rather uncommon occurrence, a specifically targeted study of the Inuit population in Montréal was conducted by Nobuhiro Kishigami in 2014, which was a study that comprised of 75 participants that represented the conditions and characteristics of current Montréal Inuit who are socially and economically vulnerable.

According to Kishigami (2014), the primary pull factors consist of accompanying a family member, partner, sick person or a friend into major city centres to access medical services, potential employment and educational opportunities. These factors appear as one of the major pull factors of their mobility between both men and women. However,

according to the survey, these pull factors apply to a majority of women in comparison to men. Studies show that Indigenous women are more likely to move to urban centres in hopes of finding opportunities in spaces that enable them, their children and their families to have easy access to higher quality services (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2017; Norris, et al, 2004).

In contrast, the push factors that influence Inuit migration generally tend to be negative such as: physical abuse, social issues, forced relocation to prisons, lack of employment opportunities, lack of services, overcrowding, increase of homelessness, and high cost of housing in the North (Kishigami, 2014). However, men and women experience varying levels of these factors. For instance, in this study, women are more likely to relocate to urban centres due to physical and sexual abuse. This is heavily supported by the current research on Indigenous women in general, as they tend to experience domestic violence and social ostracization within their own community (Janovicek, 2009; Cooke and Belanger, 2006). Other pull factors that a majority of Inuit women experience are lack of housing and employment (Kishigami, 2014).

This study also reveals that men are more likely to relocate due to social issues and forced relocation to detention centers or prisons. Due to this, individuals who are recently released from correctional facilities are more vulnerable, increasing their likelihood of falling into homelessness (Peters, 2014). The study further states that they are also more likely to migrate due to personal issues, lack of housing, and for easy access to alcohol and cigarettes.

The pull and push factors stated can further shape the migration experience for the growing population of Inuit, but it needs to look deeper into other factors that may be involved during the process. Patrick and colleagues (Patrick et al. 2011: 73) state that:

> Inuit who move to Ottawa for jobs or higher education navigate the city differently from those who have been marginalized in the North, fled from abusive homes, or spent time in Ottawa for medical reasons. Social stratification and different reasons for migrating determine the positionalities of individuals and families in the urban context, which translates into a myriad of experiences, perceptions, and ways of dealing with the realities of urban life.

5.3 Different Types of Homelessness in the Inuit Experience

In creating a national definition of homelessness in Canada, The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness defines this phenomenon as "a range of housing and shelter circumstances with people being without any shelter at one end, and being insecurely housed at the other." (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012). In addition, they identified four typologies of this homelessness: Unsheltered, Emergency Sheltered, Provisionally Accommodated, and At risk of Homelessness. However, in this approach of understanding homelessness, it enhances the importance of the spatial qualities of home. Other literature has showcased the use of terminology such as "roofless" and "houseless". asserting concern of the phenomenon of "hidden homelessness".

Although the definition and terminology used in dissecting homelessness seems adequate enough in the general context, a report done by Thistle (2012) reveals that these preconceived notions that classify homelessness are rooted in western ideology of

homelessness, which disregards the reality of the Indigenous experience. While the general consensus seems to describe a rigid definition of homelessness within the spatial dimension, it is important to understand that the Aboriginal experience encompasses an additional element of homelessness, which can be identified as relating to an experiential process. As this multidimensional understanding of homelessness relates to the Aboriginal experience, it is accentuated further within the Inuit experience.

Aboriginal experiences are unique in a way that it diverges into two separate avenues that influence and feed off each other. Furthermore, while the Aboriginal experience can be encompassing of the experience that the Inuit community faces, it does not necessarily mean that the Inuit experience can be translated into the overall Aboriginal experience. The challenges that the Inuit population experiences may be similar with other Indigenous communities, but they endure a further degree of disadvantage. For instance, although one of the primary reasons of migration for the Indigenous population involves seeking adequate healthcare in urban centres, the Inuit community relocating from the North experiences a longer travel distance, arriving at a higher disadvantage due to a high possibility of a lack of support in the urban centre from their distant communities. This further marginalizes the members of the Inuit community, making it more difficult to integrate within their new environment.

5.3.1 Spatial Homelessness

Visible Homelessness

To reiterate the statistics by iCountMTL 2015 and 2018, the homeless count revealed that although there are only 0.6% of the Indigenous population in Montréal, 10% of them are

experiencing homelessness. However, to specify, 41% of the sub group that identify as Inuit are the dominant population. It is evident that there is a rampant issue of homelessness within the Inuit community in Montréal.

		Status First Nations	Non-status First Nations	Métis	Inuit
	n=	22	10	12	30
Unsheltered		27%	7%	13%	53%
Emergency Shelters		36%	11%	15%	38%
Transitional Housing		0%	30%	30%	40%
Other places		50%	50%	0%	0%
Total		***30%***	***13%***	***16%***	***41%***

Table 5.1:Breakdown of Aboriginals by Identity. Source: I Count MTL 2015 (2015).

Visible Homelessness can be defined as people who live in public or semi public spaces, and places not meant for human habitation (Gaetz, et al. 2012) ; this is a similar definition to the category of "Unsheltered" by the COH (2012). As seen in Table 5.1, in the category of Unsheltered, among the Aboriginal groups in this study, 53% of Inuit individuals were experiencing this typology of homelessness.

Visible homelessness is perpetuated by several factors such as lack of or losing employment opportunities, substance abuse, mental and physical disabilities, and lack of network and community support within the urban centres that can further accentuate the likeliness of Inuit to become or remain unsheltered. However, this relationship is also

interchangeable, being that it could imply that a more disconnected member of the population becomes susceptible to these factors, while the factors can also be primary drivers resulting in isolation, discrimination and segregation.

Hidden Homelessness

According to Gaetz et al (2014), he defines the phenomenon of hidden homelessness as "people who stay temporarily with acquaintances, friends or family, with no immediate prospect of getting their own place, knowing they might get kicked out at any point". It has been fairly discussed by several authors, limiting or adding to the understanding of it; some authors restrict it to people living with friends, family or acquaintances temporarily; others include inadequate housing or overcrowding as a form of hidden homelessness. These situations are accurate portrayals of the challenges that the Inuit population face, especially as they arrive into the urban centre.

In the study done by Kishigami (2014), a section discusses the 75 individuals' social relationships upon arrival to Montréal. It showcased that 25% (19 out of 75) Inuit had no family or relatives in Montréal, while 75% (56 out of 75) did. Within these 75 individuals, 40 of them considered themselves homeless. In this category, 35% (14 out of 40) had no family, while the 65% (26 out of 40) did. In comparison to the average number of Montréal Inuit (25%), there is a larger majority (35%) of homeless Inuit with no family or relationship within the city.

The potential of hidden homelessness within the Inuit community seems likely due to a high degree of the population having access to immediate family and relatives as they experience a typology of hidden homelessness that includes temporary living with

no security of tenure (Peters, 2012). However, Kishigami (2014) also states that Inuit individuals would rather operate independently or access community structures through the local Indigenous specific organizations. This enhances the likelihood of Inuit homeless to experience a different typology of homeless within the hidden homelessness category such as unfit or inadequate housing or overcrowding with strangers. Furthermore, it is also more likely for them to end up experiencing visible homelessness as they may face other obstacles such as lack of income, discrimination within the housing market, racism and other challenges.

5.3.2 Experiential Homelessness

As mentioned earlier, when discussing the phenomenon of homelessness, the general approach to it is understanding its spatial qualities and adequacy. However, this seems to overlook the importance of the experience that individuals face that can influence the spatial properties of the overall phenomenon. Thistle (2012) pursued the notion that the Canadian definition of homelessness disregarded the qualitative experience of the Indigenous peoples, rooting this from the broader legacy of marginalization and displacement created by settler colonialism, further excluding the Indigenous peoples' rights in their own land. This report showcases the "12 dimensions of Indigenous Homelessness"; (1) Historic Displacement Homelessness, (2) Contemporary Geographic Separation Homelessness, (3) Spiritual Disconnection Homelessness, (4) Mental Disruptions and Imbalance Homelessness, (5) Cultural Disintegration and Loss Homelessness, (6) Overcrowding Homelessness, (7) Relocation and Mobility Homelessness, (8) Going Home Homelessness, (9) Nowhere to Go Homelessness, (10)

Escaping or Evading Harm Homelessness, (11) Emergency Crisis Homelessness, (12) Climactic Refugee Homelessness (Thistle, 2012).

In the UAPS report, it was stated that over half (50%) of the participants in this survey use Aboriginal specific organizations as it provides them with a range of services that understand their experiences and can tend to their specific needs. The provision of services involving Indigenous people are critical for the urban Indigenous people who access them. Their scope of understanding for delivering Indigenous specific programs that incorporate their principles, beliefs and traditions can create a community and educational structure for them, resulting in significant economic benefits for Indigenous communities. These infrastructures are also capable of providing employment opportunities and train them to enhance their strengths. According to Thurston (2011), the organizations that offer services and programs should prioritize the cultural safety as a foundation for providing these to the Indigenous people. Aboriginal governance and cultural reconnection are also two factors mentioned that are necessary to address when handling the Indigenous homeless.

This large reliability of Aboriginal services in Montréal showcases the importance of these kinds of infrastructures in the urban landscape for this specifically disadvantaged population. Apart from providing assistance in terms of housing, they also provide an array of services such as education, training, employment, economic development, child care, health care, cultural support and corrections (UAPS, 2011). Nearly half (48%) of the users of these organizations state that they are drawn to positive environment, whether that be because of a certain degree of comfort or a connection to their Aboriginal culture. Furthermore, the use of these Aboriginal specific services are similar in number

between individuals who are new to the city (arriving in the city within the last two years) and long-time residents (those who arrived in the city for more than 20 years ago).

According to the same study, the Inuit population in Montréal is the most likely population to access these organizations for their services (UAPS, 2011). In this sample of 63 Inuit who are living in Montréal, 90% of them have migrated from other communities, and 10% of them have lived in this city all their lives. That being said, a majority (58%) of those born outside of Montréal recognize this city to be their home, while 26% of them consider home to be their homelands, and 12% say it is another community (UAPS 2011). This study also reveals that although 87% of them are proud of their identity, 51% of them agree that they are concerned about losing their identity and culture while living in the city, further elaborating that the Inuit population is not only a minority group in Montréal, but also within the pan-Aboriginal community (UAPS, 2011). Close to half (48%) state that there are community activities that relate to Aboriginal culture, and that these activities are more likely to be related to First Nations culture than specific Inuit culture.

In addition, Kishigami (2002) did a study on the Inuit identity and how difficult it is to maintain whilst living in urban centres due to the lack of opportunities to engage in these culture cultivating activities. Furthermore, he argues that due to living in a multi-ethnic environment, they continue to miss out on experiencing social conditions such as maintaining the Inuit culture and language, due to the Inuit engaging within urban institutions. An example Kishigami showcases in this study is how Montréal Inuit lack the opportunity to continue partaking in traditional pursuits such as hunting and fishing, while looking for other means of economic gain within the city. This study also reveals

that Inuit women in Montréal tend to live with or marry non-Inuit partners, consequently having their children not speaking Inuktitut or sustain an Inuit identity.

This demonstrates an imperative need to create community services that are specific for the Inuit population to enhance their urban experience in major cities like Montréal. As they migrate into the city, not only do they struggle with homelessness within a spatial aspect, but also with experiential homelessness. These Indigenous specific organizations have been critical in aiding this population in not only providing temporary shelters, but in offering community services, hosting cultural cultivating events whilst creating networks with people within the community. Furthermore, they can support and ease new Inuit migrants into their transition into Montréal by giving them access to temporary housing, day to day services, training and education.

Chapter VI: Research on Shelters and Indigenous Specific Organizations

As mentioned throughout this study, Indigenous-specific support structures can aid the vulnerable homeless community of the Indigenous, enhancing the importance of their existence in the urban systems. Through word of mouth and information available online, contact was established with members of these organizations, informing them about the nature of the research, along with a formal request for a tour of the facility and an in-person meeting. Among the six organizations that were contacted, only two organizations (Chez Doris and Native Friendship Center of Montreal) were able to accommodate the site visits within their schedules. However, the detailed discussions of the other organizations (Projets d'Autochtone du Quebec and Native Women's Shelter of Montreal) were solely based on online research.

6.1.The Assistance available to the Inuit:

Within the urban landscape of Montréal, a statistical examination reveals the inherent disadvantage that the Indigenous community experiences as a whole, as well as the accentuated and specific Inuit struggle that is present in the Indigenous subgroup. Within the urban landscape, specific organizations have been established to counter the effects of indigenous homelessness that a high percentage of the Indigenous community faces. In the general context of Montreal, there exist two types of organizations that work on alleviating various challenges that lead to the homelessness problem, in hopes of aiding in the eventual mending of the issue of homelessness at large.

Some organizations attempt a direct approach to housing, which happens initially through the offer of and maintenance of temporary housing arrangements in Montréal. However, these assistance structures offer a more general hand at the alleviation of the issue and don't specifically target the severely disadvantaged subgroups within the homeless populations. A limited number of these structures exist to aid the Indigenous community in Montréal, and upon research, only two of these organizations, Projets d'Autochtone du Quebec and the Native Women's Shelter of Montréal, offer a housing program known as Transitional Housing.

On the other hand, other organizations attempt to offer targeted assistance that is specifically tailored to the nuanced issues of certain subgroups within the homeless population, such as the grossly overrepresented Indigenous populations. Existing organizations such as Chez Doris and the Friendship Centre of Montréal offer more indirect assistance structures that do not tackle the homelessness issue head-on, but rather offer remedies to issues that are either direct consequences of perpetual homelessness or eventually lead to homelessness.

These two categories of services are available to the Inuit population within the Montréal context and as the Inuit increasingly urbanized, their statistical disadvantage of being unanticipated, disconnected and discriminated against will only continue to deepen further.

6.2 Indirect Assistance:

After conducting general research into the issue of Indigenous homelessness in Montréal, it is revealed that a driver of Inuit homelessness arises from their poor integration into the existing urban systems**.** Assistance offered by specialized organizations intends to bridge the gap of societal integration, directly or otherwise. Those service structures include, but are not exclusive to: Social services that offer community engagement within the unfamiliar environment. Personal support structures from victims of domestic violence as well as the dispensing of seasonal support mediums directly to the affected populations as well as other services that center around immediate safety and hygiene.

These band-aid solutions offer quick and immediate fixes to obvious problems within the overarching narrative of Indigenous homelessness. This is also a relatively nuanced assistance that attempts to tackle dimensions of the homelessness issue from within, such as the opportunity to integrate urbanizing individuals into the established urban systems more seamlessly, offering the potential to break the cycle of perpetual Indigenous homelessness.

6.2.1:Friendship Center (NFCM):

This service caters more specifically to the urban aboriginal populations as well as remaining focused on the general homeless population. It exists as one of the primary providers of legal, social, educational and medical service providers in the Greater Montréal Area. This Urban Aboriginal Center is aimed specifically at the improvement of the quality of life of the urbanizing Indigenous populations as migration incentives continue to pull an increasing number of individuals annually, as mentioned previously.

While the NFCM does not provide any direct means of alleviating homelessness (i.e. Transitional Housing, Permanent Housing or Beds) it offers a myriad of services that specialize in indirect assistance and the improvement of quality of life of at-risk youth and adults as well as homeless youth and adults.

In addition, the center aims to promote personal culture and community among the aboriginal youth specifically as well as providing opportunities for relationship building, peer counseling and developing a positive spirit of initiative and self-help through educational and social facilities in a safe and healthy environment. Along with the community development services, meals, they provide transportation to centers and clean needle exchange and other services centered on general safety and harm reduction.

The NFCM were approachable, however, due to their extremely busy schedule, visitation to their facility and conversation with the employees needed to be kept brief and to the point. During the site-visit, a conversation with a resident intern provided a complete run-down of their facilities and services.

This indirect assistance structure, while it doesn't tackle homelessness directly, is a crucial presence in the urban landscape. The potential for a slightly improved quality of life, counseling, community and the presence of a basic safety net could make all the difference between smooth societal integration and suffering through perpetual homelessness that is virtually inescapable due to it being a self-feeding cycle.

6.2.2: Chez Doris

As a charity organization formed in 1977, Chez Doris was established with the goal of offering day-time shelter and assistance for all women in an environment of confidentiality and understanding. Furthermore, this organization has been providing indirect assistance to the Indigenous women who are currently living on the streets of Montréal. The Chez Doris day shelter offers a variety of services that intend to cover a broad range of issues encountered by the women in society in general as they experience severe circumstantial shifts and sudden life-style changes, as well as mitigate and support women through experiences of domestic abuse and other hostile environments.

The established 'Walk-in' dynamic was designed to create a sense of community and belonging in a safe, home-like environment, where interaction is encouraged with social professionals and other users of the space to provide a well-rounded sense of societal integration for women who are currently experiencing difficulties due to being marginalized, abused or generally unsupported. Provisions of meals, clothing and hygiene services during the day-time operation are direct attempts to quickly alleviate immediate issues caused by either homelessness or an absent supporting structure. As mentioned earlier, Chez Doris directly offers financial administration, legal and medical services, as well as specific housing assistance structures aimed at Inuit women specifically in order to help them find permanent housing solutions along with residence establishment through furnishings. It also aims at enhancing their general economic and employment status by allowing them to receive mail, financial aid and ability to access community services.

A visit of the Chez Doris premises is an essential part to the understanding of the influence and presence of these organizations within the societal context. Upon scheduling an appointment, the organization was extremely accommodating and welcoming to the idea of my visit. The visit occurred in the early afternoon, around 13:00, which is considered to be prime business hours as during this time, they serve lunch in their gathering room/cafeteria. I was met with a resident caseworker who was able to take a moment during the busy hours, and proceeded to give a run down of the services they offer, the facilities within Chez Doris and showed me their day to day operations.

As I was toured around the facilities, the spaces were certainly limited, but were robust in nature as they could be used in different ways. As mentioned earlier, their "hang out" area, on the ground floor, is also where they serve daily lunch meals, and could also be used as a gathering space during special events. This space is what is considered to be the heart of Chez Doris due to it being the most used and busiest space daily, as mentioned by the resident caseworker. The ground floor also consisted of the offices for the caseworkers and reception, as well as the bathrooms and showers for easy access by the women.

In the basement, there was a kitchen that was used daily to serve the women of the organization, but also, this is where within three times a week, cooking workshops occurred to teach women how to cook and enhance their knowledge about nutritional information, with a specific day (Fridays) for Inuit women to cook their traditional food. Other facilities included storage for personal hygiene for women and a room for women to access donations of clothing and household appliances. The first floor consisted of a

recreational room that is also used as an art room that is available daily, a room for women to sleep with six beds, and an administrative room that serves as an office for the accountants that aid women in financial services and psychosocial support.

After a site-visit and an examination of their annual report, it was revealed that in the year of 2018-2019, 16.94% of the users of Chez Doris identified as Inuit. This is a steady increase from the previous year of 15.6%. Despite this being a daycare center with fairly limited “bed access”, the beds within this space have been used 3,195 times, 3.67% increase from the previous year of 3,082. Generally speaking, as visitation numbers continue to hike-up in their projected increase and Chez Doris continues to meet their goals, they will increasingly become an essential part of the alleviation infrastructure, directly and indirectly, meaning that they will continue to experience high demand and will require attention and funding.

6.3 Direct Assistance

The organizations that provide direct assistance offer a more focused approach to the present issue of homelessness. This is done by providing temporary shelters and assistance in accessing more permanent housing solutions within the present urban systems. While these organizations provide a visible fix of the issue within the urban landscape, it cannot be the only structural system working on the issue, due to its limitations in mitigating the issues that cause homelessness in the first place. Providing temporary shelter exclusively, while incredibly important, provides no reliable exit strategy from the unrelenting grip of indigenous homelessness.

6.3.1 Projets Autochtones du Québec (PAQ)

The PAQ service structure involves the provision of stable housing structures (short and long-term) to the afflicted members of the indigenous population in Quebec. It also accentuates its goal of "Social Re-insertion" of homeless, at risk populations or ones experiencing any degree of difficulty. Along with the pre-existence of many of the aforementioned social services to some extent as well as the development of intercultural dialogue, Transit Rooms is a specific service structure offered by PAQ. This service is offered at availability and is only offered for a very brief period of time. It is intended to help the users of these facilities to examine, improve eligibility and preparations for long-term/permanent housing options.

PAQ also provides permanent housing programs, which explicitly work on housing homeless Indigenous populations as well as developing their character and skills, allowing them a better chance at societal integration and the potential infiltration of the existing urban hierarchies that have become increasingly exclusive and discriminatory against the indigenous homeless population. PAQ also shows initiative in tailoring programs more exclusively to specific subgroups of the afflicted population as the need arises, going as far as assisting with cover letters, resumes and the monitoring of physical and psychological help of their clients.

6.3.2 Native Women's Shelter Of Montréal (NWSM)

This organization is incredibly similar to PAQ, being that it provides specific means of personal improvement along with providing shelter within a nurturing environment that is focused around cultural integration/interaction and personal safety, and promoting

independence and autonomy for the population of Indigenous women that experience a deeper level of disadvantage societally and within their own communities. They provide women and children with in-house programs and services, as well as outreach services that can aid those who are struggling to re-establish their life in urban centres.

They primarily extend their help outwards through the running of frequent workshops that highlight therapeutic aspects of certain activities as well as providing superior traditional awareness within a created safe environment that is available for aboriginal women and their children. Other services such as accessing financial and aid and low-cost housing, advocacy series, counseling, and healing circles are available for the women and children to gain a level of independence.

Among many of their programs, a significant one that stands out is the "Welcoming Fire Program" in which outreach workers continually assist past users of the organization and other referred clients. It offers culturally sensitive tools that can be utilized by the client to be able to understand the root of their problems and methods on how to gain healthy and emotional stability in their lives and in their families.

While this organization provides a very powerful counter to the issue at hand, its confidential location (for the safety of the users) and difficulty in establishing contact has made attempts to analyze, understand and develop future suggestions/lessons incredibly difficult for they do not offer statistical analysis of their goals or facilities to the general public.

6.4 The Influence of Spatial and Experiential Assistance Structures

In the urban Landscape of Montréal, the identified organizations serve a crucial role in alleviating the larger issue of Indigenous homelessness. A complete understanding of the nuanced and interlocking structures of Spatial and Experiential homelessness is essential to moving forward, and to the provision of successful protocols for assistance that work towards solving the problem.

The interlocking nature of these two types of homelessness dictates that for an individual to exit the established cycle of homelessness, they would require emotional, social, financial and even legal support (Experiential Assistance). This enables access to several societal hierarchies and spatial assistance systems including facilities that directly influence their housing status (i.e shelters) or opportunities that generally offer a way out of the perpetuity of homelessness. Access to a community space and other experiential supports enables the individual to integrate better with their present society which enables them to access spatial support. However, access to a focused spatial system can enable the user to experientially associate with their environment and community resulting in successful societal integration and another way out of homelessness.

6.5 Final Thoughts

The phenomenon of homelessness is prevalent across all of Canada. Those who experience homelessness are frequently from racialized and newcomer communities, with factors such as discrimination, language barriers, trauma and colonization further increasing their chances of marginalization. However, a prevailing situation among the provinces of Canada is the disproportionate representation of the Indigenous population

within Canada's homeless. This overrepresentation in statistics across Canada should be grounds to comprehend this consistent occurrence in recent decades. A vast amount of literature, including this report, has acknowledged this on-going and evident cycle of homelessness experienced by the Indigenous community, calling for the lack of concern, urgency, and understanding by policy makers that can further mitigate this issue.

We must recognize that the experience of homelessness by the Indigenous population is beyond the established definition of 'homelessness', rooting from a western perspective. To define homelessness in such a critical moment can further categorize homelessness and shapes the approach of research, the type of services made available and creation of policy intervention. Academics and researchers alike have argued that the definition of homelessness can be a major shift that can encompass the multi-dimensionality of Indigenous homeless experience; that they're homelessness exceeds spatiality and a lack of 'shelter', which is discussed and categorised as 'spatial homelessness' and 'experiential homelessness' in this study. Furthermore, this definition should include the role of colonialism, intergenerational trauma, and the socio-cultural and material conditions of "being displaced from critical community social structures and lack of stable housing" (Peters and Christensen, 2016; Menzies, 2008). The effects of these factors are still experienced by Indigenous homeless until today. In contextualizing these factors that have been indelibly linked to the Indigenous experiences of homelessness, it can aid in creating an expansive definition for this disadvantaged community.

Although the main focus of this paper is the homelessness experience of urban Indigenous populations, it was necessary to examine the prevailing homelessness in the North and on-reserves that is currently at an all time high. Certain circumstances such as a shortage of adequate housing, long waiting lists for affordable housing, minimal employment opportunities, lack of access to quality education, poorly funded healthcare services and high rates of domestic violence forces or motivates Indigenous individuals to leave their homelands and migrate to urban centres for 'a better life'.

This increase of the rural-urban mobility of Indigenous people puts them at a higher risk of homelessness in urban centres as they are often met with high levels of discrimination in urban settings, further marginalizing a population that is already at the edge of society. The urban Indigenous faces a unique set of challenges such as finding affordable and adequate housing, discrimination in employment markets and service provisions such as healthcare, as well as a deterioration in their mental health leading to substance abuse and domestic violence. Furthermore, there is an insufficient amount of literature discussing the urban Indigenous, reducing the possibility of dialogue to understand this phenomenon,

The challenges of urban Indigenous communities are similar throughout Canada. However, a specific subset of the community, the Inuit, has been identified to have a large overrepresentation in the homeless streets of Montreal. To reiterate the findings of the study, the homeless statistics of Montréal emphasizes that the Indigenous represent 10% of the homeless community, despite only being 0.4% of the entire population of

Montréal. Within the Indigenous homeless population, the Inuit represents 40% of that population. Limited action has been done by different levels of key actors despite their distinct majority in the statistics, placing them at a further disadvantage among the Indigenous population here in Montréal, leading to make this a focus of this study. In addition, the investigation of the urban Inuit experiences through academic research is rare, which highlights the lack of action towards this growing issue.

It has been evident through research that the issue stems from policies made in the past that allocated specific land for the Indigenous population like reserves or The North. These spatial impositions acted as a way to dominate the Indigenous Peoples. The systemic dispossession from their lands as they were relocated to assigned spaces consequently limited their mobility and participation. Hence, it exists within societal nature to exclude and restrict their presence from the urban environment because we further marginalize them to the edge of society. Despite the efforts of Indigenous population to migrate to urban centres and become part of the urban landscape, society creates barriers such as harsher rental housing markets and land ownership, discrimination in employment and service provisions, and etc., further maintaining this duality of ‘our world’(the urban city) and ‘their world’(the North, reserves). The urban centre comes with a specific set of rules that when users try to immigrate between those contexts, they are unfamiliar with the rules or not aided in understanding them, that it becomes destiny for them to fail. These barriers make it difficult for this population to penetrate into our world, and any attempt to do so, eventually leads to their perpetual struggle of integration, leading into homelessness.

The structure of the world that the Indigenous people are migrating to lies in the perpetual cycle of homelessness, defined by three elements: A majority of the Inuit migrate to Montréal from a far distance, typically from a village in the North, due to factors such as accompanying a family member to the city to access healthcare services, employment opportunities, and access to education. Once they are done with the reason of their migration, they begin to cycle between temporary housing and other social structures such as shelters, friendship centres and community centres, but are never accepted within the urban system. With these obstacles set in place, the migrants who fail to integrate into the urban system transition into varying categories of homelessness. Primary actors only acknowledge these specific communities when they have already become a victim of the vicious cycle, seemingly achieving a level of unsettling negligence to the issues of the Inuit migrants.

There is an opportunity to aid and cater to the urban Indigenous through the existence of Indigenous specific organizations in Montréal such as Chez Doris, Projets d'Autochtone du Quebec, The Native Friendship Centre and The Native Women's Shelter. These organizations, although accessible by all who are currently in a vulnerable state, they specialize and cater towards Indigenous people through community events and programs that ease their transition into the urban systems. The presence of these support structures play an important role in the urban system as it provides a spatial setting for the urban Indigenous population to maintain a strong identity within their culture and be a part of a positive community. However, the role that they play is not fully recognized by major

key actors, limiting their potential to further aid the Indigenous community. Although they are considered as band-aid solutions to 'fix' the problem of homelessness among the Indigenous population, these organizations could have the opportunity to act as a mitigator to avoid becoming a victim to the cycle of homelessness- to address the urban Indigenous issues as migrants, as soon as they attempt to enter the urban landscape, not only when they have become victim to the cycle of homelessness.

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