**OMSSA’s Submission to the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario’s Discussion Paper, August 2011**

**Summarized by Oladayo Odutayo, McMaster University, for the McMaster Community Poverty Initiative**

Ontario Municipal Social Services Association is a group of organizations, primarily municipalities, whose purpose is to change the entire system believing it will be the only way to successfully reduce poverty. This document puts forward the belief that as long as a person is in poverty, they do not have an equal opportunity to live a fulfilling life due to the constant economic and physiological strains it puts on them.

* This is a group that prides itself on its principals and provisions to better people lives.
  + Believes in integration – *Bringing everyone to work together to help each other*
  + Very people centred approach
  + Focuses on poverty reduction and self- sufficiency
  + Social Inclusion – *social connection by giving individuals chances to contribute to society.*
  + Strive to provide income that people can live on
  + Encourages innovation
  + Pushes the local economy to look after one another

Due to the fact that the current system is based on a budget deficit model, it is monitored very closely with stern guidelines. They believe that it causes people who need help to be trapped in poverty.

*The OMSSA requests of the Social Assistance Review:*

**Job Development at the Micro and Macro levels**

* Getting government, the business core, education institutions, etc., to work together in order to develop jobs.

**Streams of Income Support**

* Short term assistance of skilled labours temporarily out of work
* Medium term assistance for people who are also looking for work but need greater assistance than the short term people.
* Long term assistance is a guaranteed annual income for people with disabilities or other or other rigid circumstances.