

# THE PATH FORWARD – RECLAIMING POWER AND PLACE



## NATIONAL FAMILY AND SURVIVORS CIRCLE

*Nothing About Us, Without Us*

**National Family and Survivors Circle Contribution – 2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People**

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# THE NATIONAL FAMILY AND SURVIVORS CIRCLE LOGO



## NATIONAL FAMILY AND SURVIVORS CIRCLE

*Nothing About Us, Without Us*

Relationships matter. They are fundamental to Indigenous worldviews and to the work of developing and implementing the National Action Plan (“NAP”), where we are all part of the solution in creating pathways to a better and brighter future for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The National Family and Survivors Circle (“NFSC”) developed a logo as a visual guide and reminder of the importance of relationships to achieve the transformative change through decolonization we are seeking through the NAP process.

These relationships, values and teachings have anchored our efforts to take decolonizing approaches in our work as the NFSC. We hope this logo will help educate and provide hope.

**THE BLUE PATHWAY** represents water, which connects us, sustains us, and gives new life.

**THE GREEN PATHWAY** represents land, which grounds us in who we are and where we come from.

**THE PURPLE PATHWAY** represents dignity and healing.

**THE RED PATHWAY** represents the sacredness of the voices and truths of families and survivors.

**THE HEART** honours and commemorates the immeasurable value of our loved ones who are missing or have been murdered.

**THE FIRE** represents the bringing together of our home fires in the shared responsibility and accountability for ending all forms of gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

**THE SUNRISE** represents a new horizon, a new beginning for the reclaiming of Power and Place.

**THE WHITE LINES** represent ice, snow, and water in all its forms. These are dominant features of the landscape in the far north for many months out of the year. They also represent the delicate and interconnected relationship between humanity and climate change.

**THE 13 MOONS** represent the calendar cycle of opportunities for transformative change and reflection.

# NFSC VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is for all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people to live dignified lives, where we are free to fully assert and exercise our Indigenous Rights, including Inherent and Treaty, and our Human Rights, where we will continue to reclaim our Power and Place within our lands, territories, and within our Nations, Peoples, and communities, where we are valued and respected, and live with dignity and substantive equality in Canada.



# NFSC MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to continually advocate that all governments, agencies, and organizations, who have a responsibility in ending the genocide, centre families and survivors in their work. We are committed to working with governments, agencies, and organizations to assist in creating pathways for families and survivors to be engaged in this work through true partnerships that are decolonizing, respectful, equitable and rooted in cultural humility and dignified approaches.



# Dedication and Acknowledgements

The NFSC acknowledges loved ones who are missing and the spirits of those who have been murdered throughout the centuries. Tragically, we know that these losses continue today. Although we are not able to name all who are missing or who have been murdered, they are lovingly remembered. As survivors, we would like to acknowledge **Indigenous** women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who are targets of gender- and race-based violence. To all families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people: you are not alone, and this work is dedicated to you. We will rise together with dignity, self-determination, and power as Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Together our collective strength brought us to where we are today towards Reclaiming Power and Place, finding justice, and ending genocide in Canada.



We acknowledge and hold in our hearts the many children who have been left behind and devastated by this violence. You are valued, loved and are always in our hearts and minds. This work is also dedicated to you. We are filled with gratitude for the families and communities who continue to love, care, and support the children throughout their lives.

We acknowledge the families, survivors, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and **families of the heart** who came forward to the National Inquiry. It is because of your courage to stand in your truth and share your voices that Canada has arrived at this historical place in time: the time to end the genocide.

We recognize that some families of murdered and missing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and survivors did not share their voices and truths at the National Inquiry for various reasons. We know that some continue to be silenced. Your voices matter and we must continue to advocate for your inclusion in all processes.

We acknowledge long-time grassroots advocates, frontline workers, elders, brothers, knowledge keepers, leaders, national and international champions, and allies who join us in solidarity in our fight for justice.

We acknowledge the commitment of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Chief Commissioner Marion Buller, Commissioner Michèle Audette, Commissioner Brian Eyolfson, and Commissioner Qajaq Robinson, and Staff for their work and dedication. We recognize the Grandmothers for their sacred roles and guiding us through the process. We acknowledge the National Family Advisory Circle for their lived experience, expertise, and **agency** through their hard work and devotion throughout the National Inquiry process.

We acknowledge that the National Inquiry process was grounded by communities' prayers, ceremonies, sacred fires, sacred gifts, dancing, drumming, art, and poetry, and we recognize that this would not be possible without our ancestors and cultures.

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 What is the National Family and Survivors Circle



The establishment of NFSC was supported by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada as part of its response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry's (the "**National Inquiry**") Calls for Justice 1.1, which calls on **all governments** to develop and implement a NAP with Indigenous partners to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The NFSC is made up of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who are the family members of missing or murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and who are survivors of gender and raced based violence. We come from diverse Indigenous communities, backgrounds, strengths, and capabilities. As families and survivors, we agreed

to participate in this process with the assurance our lived experience, expertise, and agency would guide the identification of strength based best practices and actions to be included in the NAP. The NFSC participates in this work through advocating and providing guidance to the NAP development partners on how they can form **pathways** in their work for the full inclusion of families and survivors for transformative outcomes. The ultimate goal of our work is to advocate for accountability mechanisms through a decolonized approach to end the genocide and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. All governments and institutions must be held accountable and must act to repair the damage caused and provide long-term, sustainable, and fully resourced infrastructure and support to Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, survivors and our Nations and communities to recover from the violence and to provide for prevention, wellness, and nation building. Recognizing that families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people want and deserve action now and that all Calls for Justice are priorities, we focus on immediate actions for implementation in this document.

The establishment of the NFSC is historic. This level of integration of families and survivors into government and organizational co-development processes is a first. It must be precedent setting and define all paths forward. This one example of **decolonizing approaches** and inclusion of families and survivors called for in the Final Report and the Principles for Change.

## 1.2 Transformative Processes for Transformative Outcomes

“When we consider relationships as spaces of engagement, Ermine explains, we pay attention to the words, actions, and behaviours that exist on the surface. These words, actions, and behaviours, however, also tell us something about the attitudes, beliefs, and contexts that run below the surface and that function as a “deeper level force” in shaping the ways of knowing and being that may be present in relationships. To make lasting change to relationships so that they reflect a particular set of values – for instance, those that respect the rights of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people – requires doing the more difficult work of confronting and changing the “deeper level force” so that the underlying context also reflects these values.”<sup>1</sup>

How **transformative change**, and more specifically, how **decolonization** is accomplished, depends on transformative decolonizing approaches and processes. The National Inquiry Final Report into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls identified four pathways that continue to enforce the historic and contemporary manifestations of colonialism, and that continue the genocide. We understand these four pathways as being that “deeper level force” that is referred to in the quote provided above. Confronting and disrupting these four pathways of trauma, social and economic marginalisation, lack of will to change, and ignoring of the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and families and survivors, is crucial in creating transformative change through decolonization. The processes for doing so must follow the Principles for Change and the Four Pillars to guide the effective inclusion of families and survivors, and the centering of their experience, agency, and expertise. The need for transformative decolonizing processes has been highlighted for us through our experience in the NAP development process. Failing to embrace a new way of working that is rooted in the Principles for Change, including decolonizing approaches and the centering of families and survivors has resulted in missed opportunities and has further marginalized families and survivors.

Implementation of the NAP and the Calls for Justice requires the creation of new pathways within all governments, agencies, and organizations, for true partnership with families and survivors. These partnerships must be grounded in the Principles for Change and the Four Pillars of inclusion, accountability, interconnectedness, and impact, for transformative change to be accomplished.

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<sup>1</sup> National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). *Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls*, Volume 1a, at page 96, citing Ermine, “Ethical Space”, *Indigenous Law Journal*, Vol. 6, Issue 1/2007, at page 195. Available at: <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ilj/article/view/27669/20400>

We remind you of our vision, as this vision must guide us as we look at implementation and measuring success:



Our vision is for all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people to live dignified lives, where we are free to fully assert and exercise our Indigenous Rights, including Inherent and Treaty, and our Human Rights, where we will continue to reclaim our Power and Place within our lands, territories, and within our Nations, Peoples, and communities, where we are valued and respected, and live with dignity and substantive equality in Canada.

Successful implementation of the NAP and the Calls for Justice will be a lived reality. Success will not be measured through a “checking of the box” approach where governments measure their actions against the Calls for Justice. Success will be measured by looking at how the lived experiences of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors, are directly transformed and the impact is felt on the ground. It is about measuring a dignified life and measuring the lived experience of justice.



This graphic is one representation of the transformative growth the NFSC is hopeful will occur through the National Action Plan process. The seed represents the 231 and 21 Calls for Justice outlined in the National Inquiry Final Report and the Kepek-Quebec Supplementary Report, respectively. The growth of the roots represents the development of the NAP and the trunk its implementation. From this we expect will grow concrete outcomes that will be seen and felt in the lives of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The red dress has become a universal symbol of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The NFSC acknowledges the 2SLGBTQQIA+ Sub Working Group for its idea to include a rainbow ribbon shirt to honour missing and murdered Indigenous 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.



## 2.0 National Family and Survivors Circle Approach and Contribution to the National Action Plan

The National Inquiry's 231 Calls for Justice includes calls directed at all governments, institutions, and all Canadians, and includes distinct Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Calls for Justice. The Supplementary Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Kepek-Quebec further includes 21 Calls for Justice. The Final Report provided seven Principles for Change to guide implementation of the Calls for Justice.<sup>2</sup> Key amongst these are the principles of a Decolonizing Approach and Inclusion of Families and Survivors. These are at the foundation of our approach. We also provide our understanding of these principles in keeping with centering lived experience. Based on our experience with the NAP process so far, we have developed Four Pillars which provide guidance on how to work ethically with families and survivors and how to respect their expertise, lived experience and agency. Lastly, we describe key terms which can be found in [Appendix A](#).

"The Path Forward - Reclaiming Power and Place" is the NFSC contribution to the NAP and is independent from the Core Working Group and the Sub-working Groups. In our contribution, we provide the position, perspectives, and priorities of the NFSC members with respect to the Calls for Justice and the NAP. We outline best practices on how to include families and survivors. We advocate for the recognition of the agency and the leadership of families and survivors in their Nations and communities. Further, we outline our expectations of all those with obligations and responsibility to take action to end the genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

### 2.1 Understanding Violence

Violence, broadly defined, is the most urgent problem of our times, the source of immense suffering and public health crises, a constant challenge to public institutions, and the single greatest threat to our children and youth. Violence is inherent to the colonial state, past and present. Failure to address colonial violence, including genocide, enables all forms of violence and oppression. In Canada and abroad, violence is committed disproportionately against Indigenous girls, women, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people all the time and this must end now.

In the colonial context, language is widely used to (a) conceal violence, (b) obscure offender responsibility, (c) conceal victim responses and resistance, and (d) blame and pathologize victims. Misrepresentation is part and parcel of colonial and gender-based violence. Justice demands that institutional actors tell the truth by using accurate language based on careful analysis of violence and resistance and by including the voices of those who have been directly harmed.

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<sup>2</sup> *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Volume 1b, at page 169. Available at: [https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final\\_Report\\_Vol\\_1b.pdf](https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1b.pdf)*

## 2.2 Inclusion of Families and Survivors as a Decolonizing Approach

The NFSC leads through a decolonized approach focused on inclusion of families and survivors based on lived experience, expertise, and agency. We believe it is the expertise and leadership of families and survivors that is needed for the meaningful and effective implementation of the Calls for Justice through transformative processes for transformative outcomes. The fulfillment of the 231 Calls for Justice and the 21 Calls for Justice outlined in the Supplementary Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Kepek-Quebec requires a *Decolonizing Approach*. This approach is:

“ A way of doing things differently; it challenges the colonial influence under which we live by making space for Indigenous perspectives that are often cast aside. It involves recognizing inherent rights through the principle that Indigenous Peoples have the right to govern themselves in relation to matters that are internal to their communities; integral to their unique cultures, identities, traditions, languages, and institutions; and with respect to their special relationship to the land. Our approach honours and respects Indigenous values, philosophies, and knowledge systems. It is a strength-based approach, focusing on the resilience and expertise of individuals and communities themselves.”<sup>3</sup>

An interconnected Principle for Change is *Inclusion of Families and Survivors*:

“ The implementation of the Calls for Justice must include the perspective and participation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people with lived experience, including the families of the missing and murdered and survivors of violence. The definition of “family” is not limited to a nuclear family. “Family” must be understood to include all forms of familial kinship, including but not limited to biological families, chosen families, and families of the heart. We maintain the need for this approach to implementation of all Calls for Justice, ensuring that the specific measures taken fully engage these perspectives and this expertise.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). *Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls*. Summary of the Calls for Justice, at page 2. Available at: <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Calls-Web-Version-EN.docx>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, at pages 2-3.

## 2.3 National Family and Survivors Circle Understanding of the Calls for Justice Principles for Change

The implementation for the Calls for Justice alone will not end the genocide. The exclusion and ignoring of the expertise and agency of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families and survivors is one of the ways the genocide persists today. The genocide continues because we are not included in decision-making about our own lives. Therefore, transformative change through inclusion, decolonization and decolonizing approaches is imperative. This is why implementation must be informed and guided by the seven Principles for Change, which we understand as follows:

### **Focus on substantive equality and Human rights and Indigenous Rights:**

Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are holders of a full bundle of rights. These rights include inherent Indigenous rights, Indigenous rights rooted in treaty and land claim agreements, other constitutionally protected rights, and human rights recognized and protected internationally and domestically. Many of these inherent rights and rights recognized through legal instruments overlap, some do not. Either way, the full bundle of rights that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have must be recognized, protected, and upheld. Further, the goal in upholding these rights must always be that of substantive equality, and the dismantling of inequity.

**Decolonizing Approach:** recognizing inherent rights through the principle that **Indigenous Peoples** have the right to govern themselves in relation to matters that impact their communities. This includes governing how work is done: the approaches taken, and methods used. Decolonizing approaches includes respecting and utilizing Indigenous values, beliefs, philosophies, kinship systems, leadership, priorities, knowledge systems, languages, cultural practices, and laws in our institutions and in the way we work. Decolonizing approaches also require us to all actively dismantle colonial ideas and values that influence us and our institutions.

**Inclusion of Families and Survivors:** full engagement of families and survivors is required to ensure their perspectives, agency and expertise inform decisions and measures taken by governments and institutions. We discuss what full engagement means within our Four Pillars in section 2.3 of this document.

**Self-Determination and Indigenous-Led Solutions and Services:** solutions should stem from Indigenous communities, Nations and Peoples, and these solutions must be prioritized and sustainably and equitably resourced. Self-determination includes the self-determination of families and survivors. Further, in exercising self-determination on a collective level, Indigenous communities, Nations, and Peoples must include Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors and respect their self-determination as well.



**Recognition of Distinctions:** pan-Indigenous approaches have proven to be ineffective and often can lead to further injustice and marginalization. The Calls for Justice must be interpreted and implemented in an equitable and non-discriminatory way, addressing the needs of distinct Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and must take into consideration the factors that make them distinct. These include, but are not limited to, the distinct Indigenous Peoples they are a part of (i.e., the numerous distinct First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), geographical location, residency, language, beliefs, history, etc.

**Cultural Safety:** we must always be free to use our language, practice our culture and ancestral ways, and to do so free from prejudice and discrimination. We must also be free to speak our languages and to bring our culture and ancestral ways with us into all the processes and institutions we engage with. This requires the incorporation of services and processes that welcome, embrace, and empower Indigenous Peoples, their languages, laws, protocols, governance, and ways of knowing and doing. We also use the concept of **Cultural Humility** to further understand the principle of cultural safety, as it speaks to dismantling the ideas that colonial cultures are the norm and superior.

**Trauma-informed Approaches:** violence can impact people in many ways. It is important to be able to recognize the trauma caused by violence and to be able to understand its impact. Further, when working with people who have experienced violence it is important to understand that further harm can be caused when the impacts of violence are not considered. It is important to build trust, be transparent and accountable, and to empower people impacted by violence.

That understood, we prefer the language of **Dignified Approaches**, as the goal must always be to work in ways that respect people and their realities and to uphold their dignity. Dignified approaches begin by acknowledging the inherent human desire for safety, belonging, meaning, equality, and autonomy. Children and adults respond to and resist violence of all kinds, overtly or covertly, depending on the dangers and opportunities present in their unique circumstances. Violence, discrimination, and all forms of oppression, are a humiliation of human dignity and the source of immense physical, mental, social, and spiritual suffering. This is apparent in the first-hand accounts of Indigenous Peoples, including survivors of the prison camps (“residential schools”), and children who were removed from their families and raised “in care”. Dignified approaches highlight our unending desire for dignity and justice that is apparent in our ever-present resistance to violence: where there is violence, there is always resistance. When violence is concealed, deliberately or inadvertently, offenders are empowered to commit further violence and those who are victimized are forced to endure greater violence and suffering. Dignified approaches highlight the essential role of institutional social responses that reveal violence, clarify the responsibilities of people who commit violence, and steadfastly challenges the blaming and diminishing of people who have been victimized and instead honours their response and resistance.

## 2.4 The Four Pillars

For our NFSC contribution in the NAP, we are focusing on the implementation of the Calls for Justice and grounding the implementation work in the Principles for Change. Using our lived experience, expertise, and agency, we have developed Four Pillars for working with families and survivors. We offer them as guiding principles on how to action one of the most important Principles for Change: the inclusion of families and survivors. **The Four Pillars are inclusion, interconnectedness, accountability, and impact.**

### INCLUSION

Inclusion is measured by the full and informed active, moral, and ethical involvement of families and survivors. This includes taking a lived experience centred approach that recognizes their agency, knowledge, experience, and expertise as valuable and as a key part of the information guiding all decisions.

All governments, agencies and organizations with obligations and responsibilities in the implementation of the Calls for Justice and the NAP will be more successful and effective if they fully engage with families and survivors in true partnership. These partnerships must be rooted in a relationship based on mutual respect and the appreciation of the perspectives, approaches and expertise of families and survivors. Respectful relationships require communication, understanding, safety, agency, and accountability.



**Communication:** families and survivors need transparency of process and outcomes and to be kept informed and up to date.

**Understanding:** families and survivors have experienced oppressions, discrimination and injustice and have valid reasons to distrust governments, agencies, and organizations.

**Safety:** the forums and spaces where families and survivors are included need to be culturally safe and use dignified approaches. There must be care and respect for families and survivors.

**Agency:** families and survivors must be free to speak, decide, and act for themselves, in accordance with their own lived experience, knowledge, beliefs, values and principles.

**Accountability:** forums, spaces, and work that includes families need to be clearly defined, with clear mandates, roles, responsibilities, goals, standards of behaviours and performance, and timelines. Further, they need to be sufficiently resourced to ensure full participation.

## INTERCONNECTEDNESS

Interconnectedness is central to Indigenous worldviews. These principles reflect and reinforce our understanding that everyone and everything has a purpose. The root causes of the violence, as well as the solutions to ending it are also interconnected. Being aware of interconnectedness and relationships is the starting point to both understanding and ending violence.

All governments, agencies, and organizations need to ground their work with families and survivors in a way that respects their interconnectedness with each other and the interconnected nature of the root causes and the solutions. It is the lived experience of families and survivors that is the thread that brings light to the root causes and the solutions. The inclusion of families and survivors should not be limited to areas often labeled as women’s issues. Governments, agencies, and organizations must also take a “whole of government” approach in their work to recognize and address the interconnectedness of the issues and solutions. Further, the interconnected relationships and responsibilities of all governments are also required. Jurisdictional cooperation and partnerships are needed among all governments, agencies, and organizations.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Shared accountability is needed for transformative change to occur. There needs to be the will to support and carry out transformative changes at all levels. Further, mechanisms and forums to report on actions taken, and to track and monitor their effectiveness are essential to hold all governments, agencies, and organizations accountable.

These mechanisms and forums for reporting and tracking success must also include families and survivors within them- we know when, how, where, and why our lives have been impacted because we have first-hand experience. Further, they must be accessible and transparent for families and survivors by providing direct, clear, and comprehensive communications. Governments, agencies, and organizations should recognize the need to report to families and survivors directly, not just to other agencies or institutions. Organizations and institutions must engage and include families and survivors in timely or meaningful ways. Accountability is needed in relation to the level and quality of engagement and inclusion of families and survivors. The production and publication of family and survivor inclusion reports by all governments, agencies, organizations, and institutions, must become common practice and a requirement as part of funding agreements.



## IMPACT

Creating meaningful impact at the individual, societal, legislative and policy levels to effectively build, sustain, and gain momentum is required for the transformative change needed to end the genocide. The actions of all governments must be felt on the ground by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. This means that families and survivors and those that should be feeling the transformative change need to be part of the evaluation and monitoring process. Their lived experiences must be central to the reviews on impact.

The NFSC believes these Four Pillars for working with families and survivors are fundamental in properly applying the Principles for Change related to the inclusion of families and survivors as defined in the Final Report. They must further inform the Guiding Principles as defined in section 2.2 of the NAP.



## 2.5 Goals and Objectives

To achieve our vision, we believe the Calls for Justice need to be implemented, and they need to be implemented in a way that is consistent with the Principles for Change and the Four Pillars. The Calls for Justice and their implementation through this NAP presents a pivotal opportunity for the decolonization needed to end the genocide. Giving life to our vision and ending the genocide requires us collectively reaching the following goals:

- 1 Profound and sustained political and institutional will, demonstrated through concrete commitments and responsive actions, both immediately and for the long term, to ensure transformative change through decolonization.
- 2 Keeping families, survivors, and Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people central to decision making, actions, and tracking success. Political will and actions must be exercised in a way that honours the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and families and survivors.
- 3 Actions must be rooted in the recognition of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors as rights holders of inherent Indigenous rights, inherent human rights, Indigenous rights rooted in treaty and other legal instruments. Further actions must respect the unique distinctions and needs of the Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in their Nations and communities and at the national, regional, and local levels. All those that exercise authority that could impact any of the rights of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families and survivors must respect that they have a responsibility to uphold these rights.
- 4 Actions must be designed and implemented through an Indigenous holistic, interconnected lens. This recognizes that the success of one action depends on other actions.
- 5 Measuring success through an Indigenous worldview and through the lived experience of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors.
- 6 Accountability and recourse. Failing to take steps cannot be an option.



## 2.6 Immediate Actions

As the members of the NFSC we believe that all the Calls for Justice are priorities. That said, we recognize the challenges with coordinated implementation and the need to be strategic in order to be effective. Therefore, we have identified actions and the corresponding Calls for Justice that we believe require immediate action. Although the Calls for Justice are organized by the four rights areas of Culture, Health and Wellness, Human Security and Justice, we believe that these Calls for Justice are interconnected and for the implementation of one Call for Justice to be successful, implementation of the other Calls for Justice are required at the same time. The Calls for Justice are interconnected and inseparable. In addition to the four rights areas, we have identified foundational Calls for Justice that are overarching, that further require immediate action as well. We remind you that implementation of the Calls for Justice must be done with families and survivors included as per the Principles for Changes and the Four Pillars. Further, the production and publication of family and survivor inclusion reports must become common practice among all governments, agencies, organizations, institutions, for all those engaging in work on the issue of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.





# FOUNDATIONAL CALLS FOR JUSTICE

**Action 1:** Rights recognition and compliance with domestic and international laws.

## Calls for Justice:

**1.2** We call upon all governments, with the full participation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, to immediately implement and fully comply with all relevant rights instruments, including but not limited to:

- i ICCPR, ICESCR, UNCRC, CEDAW, and ICERD, as well as all optional protocols to these instruments, including the 3rd Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- ii American Convention on Human Rights: specifically, that Canada ratify the American Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women.
- iii All the recommendations of the 2015 UN CEDAW Inquiry Report and cooperation with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on all follow-up procedures.
- iv All recommendations made by international human rights bodies, including treaty monitoring bodies, on causes and recommendations to address violence against all, but specifically Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals.
- v UNDRIP, including recognition, protection, and support of Indigenous self-governance and self-determination, as defined by UNDRIP and by Indigenous Peoples, including that these rights are guaranteed equally to women and men, as rights protected under section 35 of the Constitution. This requires respecting and making space for Indigenous self-determination and self-governance, and the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples to all decision-making processes that affect them, eliminating gender discrimination in the Indian Act, and amending the Constitution to bring it into conformity with UNDRIP.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 18:** Government of Canada to immediately remove all discriminatory aspects from the Indian Act, RSC 1985, c. I-5;

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 19:** The Government of Quebec, municipal governments, and Indigenous governments to approve and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

**17.1** We call upon the federal government to uphold its constitutional responsibility to Métis people and to non-Status people in the provision of all programs and services that fall under its responsibility.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Government of Canada, specifically, the Prime Minister and Cabinet must ensure Canada has ratified all the instruments outlined in Call for Justice 1.2.

Further the Government of Canada, led by the Minister of Justice, as well as Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Justice, Attorney Generals, as the case may be, must ensure all Federal, Provincial and Territorial laws, policies, practices, and programs are in harmony and in compliance with the rights instruments outlined in Call for Justice 1.2.

The Government of Canada, the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as well as Provincial and Territorial Premiers, as well as their respective cabinets, must also take immediate and special measures to ensure the full implementation of the rights instruments outlined.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice must oversee the immediate removal of all sex discrimination within the Indian Act.

Without undermining the self-determination of Nations, the AFN, and all Indian Act Bands (i.e., Chiefs and Council, and administration) must ensure they discontinue any policies or practices rooted in the sex discrimination within the Indian Act.

Led by Solicitors-General, implementation, compliance, and special and immediate measures is also required of all Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments to ensure compliance with the rights instruments outlined in Call for Justice 1.2.

**Action 2:** Prioritization, political will, and equitable funding. Further, funding models need to be decolonized to support communities' work being done to repair and recover from acts of genocide.

## Calls for Justice:

**1.3** We call upon all governments, in meeting human and Indigenous rights obligations, to pursue prioritization and resourcing of the measures required to eliminate the social, economic, cultural, and political marginalization of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people when developing budgets and determining government activities and priorities.

**1.8** We call upon all governments to create specific and long-term funding, available to Indigenous communities and organizations, to create, deliver, and disseminate prevention programs, education, and awareness campaigns designed for Indigenous communities and families related to violence prevention and combatting lateral violence. Core and sustainable funding, as opposed to program funding, must be provided to national and regional Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQQIA people's organizations.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, all the Provincial and Territorial Premiers and Finance Ministers, as well as Indigenous leaders, must ensure the political and financial prioritization of the measure required to end, repair, and heal from the genocide. This includes making long term financial and political commitments.

**Action 3:** Restore women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people to their rightful place in decision making.

## Calls for Justice:

**1.4** We call upon all governments, and in particular Indigenous governments and Indigenous representative organizations, to take urgent and special measures to

ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are represented in governance and that their political rights are respected and upheld. We call upon all governments to equitably support and promote the role of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in governance and leadership. These efforts must include the development of policies and procedures to protect Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people against sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and racism within political life.

**16.41** We call upon governments and Inuit representative organizations to work with Inuit women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people to identify barriers and to promote their equal representation within governance, and work to support and advance their social, economic, cultural, and political rights. Inuit women, Elders, youth, children, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must be given space within governance systems in accordance with their civil and political rights.

**17.3** We call upon all governments to ensure equitable representation of Métis voices in policy development, funding, and service delivery, and to include Métis voices and perspectives in decision-making, including Métis 2SLGBTQQIA people and youth, and to implement self-determined and culturally specific solutions for Métis people.

**18.9** We call upon First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leadership and advocacy bodies to equitably include 2SLGBTQQIA people, and for national Indigenous organizations to have a 2SLGBTQQIA council or similar initiative.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

Indigenous governments, including self-governing Nations, Indian Act Bands/ Chiefs and Council, delegated agencies, and all Indigenous representative organizations (national, regional, and local), must immediately begin the work of decolonizing their governments and institutions to restore Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people back within governance and leadership in accordance with their inherent rights and Indigenous laws.

**Action 4:** Eliminating jurisdictional gaps and neglect.

## Calls for Justice:

**1.6** We call upon all governments to eliminate jurisdictional gaps and neglect that result in the denial of

services, or improperly regulated and delivered services, that address the social, economic, political, and cultural marginalization of, and violence against, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 13:** WE CALL UPON the Ministère de la Sécurité publique [Ministry of Public Security] to coordinate between the various police forces to provide Indigenous people with access to effective public safety services regardless of jurisdictional barriers;

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All levels of government including the Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments must work collaboratively and in keeping with the same principles that inform Jordan's Principle, to eliminate jurisdictional gaps and neglect and to ensure services are provided and needs are met.

**Action 5: Accountability and Recourse. Oversight of the Implementation for the Calls for Justice.**

**Calls for Justice:**

**1.5** We call upon all governments to immediately take all necessary measures to prevent, investigate, punish, and compensate for violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**1.7** We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, to establish a National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson, with authority in all jurisdictions, and to establish a National Indigenous and Human Rights Tribunal. The ombudsperson and tribunal must be independent of governments and have the authority to receive complaints from Indigenous individuals as well as Indigenous communities in relation to Indigenous and human rights violations, and to conduct thorough and independent evaluations of government services for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people and communities to determine compliance with human and Indigenous rights laws.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 4:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec to establish an independent, multi-jurisdictional civilian entity to protect Indigenous citizens, with the mission

to safeguard rights, receive complaints, investigate, and report on the quality of public services provided to the members of Indigenous communities as is proposed in Call for Justice 1.7 of the National Report. We call upon the Government of Quebec to ensure this body has jurisdiction and authority within the province of Quebec.

**1.10** We call upon the federal government to create an independent mechanism to report on the implementation of the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice to Parliament, annually.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 1:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Quebec to establish an independent mechanism to report annually to the Quebec National Assembly on the implementation of the Calls for Justice included in this and other volumes of the Final Report.

**15.8** Help hold all governments accountable to act on the Calls for Justice, and to implement them according to the important principles we set out.

**16.43** We call upon all governments and service providers within the Inuit homelands to ensure there are robust oversight mechanisms established to ensure services are delivered in a manner that is compliant with the human rights and Indigenous rights of Inuit. These mechanisms must be accessible and provide for meaningful recourse.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, Federal, Provincial, Territorial, and Indigenous governments, must establish the National Indigenous Rights and Human Rights Ombudsperson and Tribunal. They must further empower it through legislation and funding, to ensure it serves as effective independent oversight and provides for meaningful recourse and remedy for Indigenous people, especially Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people when their rights are infringed.

Oversight of the work to implement the Calls for Justice requires independent oversight. The Federal Government and the Government of Quebec, as well as all Provinces and Territories, have an obligation to build mechanism of independent reporting on process. The National Indigenous Rights and Human Rights Ombudsperson needs to be established to play this role.

All Canadian have a role in holding governments at all levels to implement the Calls for Justice.

**Action 6: Data collection and use, and Indigenous Data Sovereignty.**

## Calls for Justice:

**5.24** We call upon the federal government to amend data collection and intake-screening processes to gather **distinctions-based** and intersectional data about Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

*Other Calls for Justice regarding data, data collection and use include: 16.16, 16.31, 16.43, 17.2, 18.3, 18.4, and **Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 11.***

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

This requires action by all levels of the Federal Provincial, Territorial, and Indigenous governments. Including all departments, all agencies and all institutions that provide services to Indigenous Peoples and that work for/or with Indigenous Peoples.

**Action 7: Accessibility of services, specifically the need for all services to be no-barrier (including language and culture).**

## Calls for Justice:

**1.1** [...] As part of the National Action Plan, we call upon all governments to ensure that equitable access to basic rights such as employment, housing, education, safety, and health care is recognized as a fundamental means of protecting Indigenous and human rights, resourced, and supported as rights-based programs founded on substantive equality. All programs must be no-barrier and must apply regardless of Status or location.

**16.3** We call upon all governments with jurisdiction in Inuit Nunangat to recognize Inuktitut as the founding language, and it must be given official language status through language laws. Inuktitut must be afforded the same recognition and protection and promotion as English and French within Inuit Nunangat, and all governments and agencies providing services to Inuit must ensure access to services in Inuktitut and invest in the capacity to be able to do so. Furthermore, all government and agency service providers must be

culturally competent and educated in Inuit culture, laws, values, and history, also well as the history of colonial violence perpetuated by the Canadian state and government agents against Inuit.

**17.5** We call upon all governments to eliminate barriers to accessing programming and services for Métis, including but not limited to barriers facing Métis who do not reside in their home province.

**17.6** We call upon all governments to pursue the implementation of a distinctions-based approach that takes into account the unique history of Métis communities and people, including the way that many issues have been largely ignored by levels of government and now present barriers to safety.

**18.2** We call upon all governments and service providers to be inclusive of all perspectives in decision making, including those of 2SLGBTQQIA people and youth.

**18.5** We call upon all governments and service providers to ensure that all programs and services have 2SLGBTQQIA front-line staff and management, that 2SLGBTQQIA people are provided with culturally specific support services, and that programs and spaces are co-designed to meet the needs of 2SLGBTQQIA clients in their communities.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 8:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Canada, the Government of Quebec and municipal governments to fully train Quebec based public service workers so that they can adapt their interventions to the socio-cultural realities of Indigenous people and the particular challenges faced by them.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Prime Minister and cabinet, along with all Provincial and Territorial Premiers and cabinets, including Federal, Provincial, and Territorial agencies and institutions providing services to Indigenous Peoples, all have obligations.

Indigenous governments, organizations, agencies, and institutions that provide services must also ensure their services are barrier free for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.



# CULTURE

**Action 8:** Preservation, protection, and recognition of Indigenous culture and languages.

## Calls for Justice:

**2.1** We call upon all governments to acknowledge, recognize, and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples to their cultures and languages as inherent rights, and constitutionally protected as such under section 35 of the Constitution.

**2.4** We call upon all governments to provide the necessary resources and permanent funds required to preserve knowledge by digitizing interviews with Knowledge Keepers and language speakers. We further call upon all governments to support grassroots and community-led Indigenous language and cultural programs that restore identity, place, and belonging within First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities through permanent, no-barrier funding and resources. Special measures must include supports to restore and revitalize identity, place, and belonging for Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been isolated from their Nations due to colonial violence, including 2SLGBTQQIA people and women who have been denied Status.

**16.2** We call upon all governments to create laws and services to ensure the protection and revitalization of Inuit culture and language. All Inuit, including those living outside Inuit Nunangat, must have equitable access to culture and language programs. It is essential that Elders are included in the development and delivery of these programs.

**18.16** We call upon all governments and educators to fund and support specific Knowledge Keeper gatherings on the topic of reclaiming and re-establishing space and community for 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**18.17** We call upon all governments, service providers, and educators to fund and support the re-education of communities and individuals who have learned to reject 2SLGBTQQIA people, or who deny their important history and contemporary place within communities and in ceremony, and to address transphobia and homophobia in communities (for example, with anti-transphobia and anti-homophobia programs), to ensure cultural access for 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Prime Minister and cabinet, along with all Provincial and Territorial Premiers and cabinets, municipalities, as well as Indigenous governments, must pass laws, and make political and financial commitments.

Specifically, the Minister of Heritage, and their counterparts at the Provincial and Territorial levels, must lead the work on these Calls for Justice.

Indigenous governments and representative organizations and cultural institutions also have a role.

**Action 9:** Ensure access to culture, language, identity, and belonging. Making sure Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors can be active in restoring, reclaiming, and revitalizing culture and language. Properly financially supporting this work, and empowering Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors as they do this work.

## Calls for Justice:

**2.3** We call upon all governments to ensure that all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are provided with safe, no-barrier, permanent, and meaningful access to their cultures and languages in order to restore, reclaim, and revitalize their cultures and identities. These are rights held by all segments of Indigenous communities, from young children to Elders. The programs and services that provide such access should not be tied exclusively to government-run cultural or educational institutions. All governments must further ensure that the rights of Indigenous children to retain and be educated in their Indigenous language are upheld and protected. All governments must ensure access to immersion programs for children from preschool into post-secondary education.

**2.5** We call upon all governments, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, to create a permanent empowerment fund devoted to supporting Indigenous-led initiatives for Indigenous individuals, families, and communities to access cultural knowledge, as an important and strength-based way to support cultural rights and to uphold self-determined services. This empowerment fund should include the support of land-based educational programs that can assist in foundational cultural learning and awareness. This empowerment fund will also assist in the revitalization of distinct cultural practices as expressed by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, with eligibility criteria and decision making directly in their hands.

**16.4** Given that the intergenerational transfer of Inuit knowledge, values, and language is a right that must be upheld, we call upon all governments to fund and support the recording of Inuit knowledge about culture, laws, values, spirituality, and history prior to and since the start of colonization. Further, this knowledge must be accessible and taught to all Inuit, by Inuit. It is imperative that educational institutions prioritize the teaching of this knowledge to Inuit children and youth within all areas of the educational curriculum.

**17.7** We call upon all governments to fund and to support culturally appropriate programs and services for Métis people living in urban centres, including those that respect the internal diversity of Métis communities with regards to spirituality, gender identity, and cultural identity.

**17.24** We call upon all governments and educators to fund and establish Métis-led programs and initiatives to address a lack of knowledge about the Métis people and culture within Canadian society, including education and advocacy that highlights the positive history and achievements of Métis people and increases the visibility, understanding, and appreciation of Métis people.

**17.25** We call upon all governments to fund programs and initiatives that create greater access to cultural knowledge and foster a positive sense of cultural identity among Métis communities. These include initiatives that facilitate connections with family, land, community, and culture; culturally specific programming for Métis 2SLGBTQQIA people and youth; events that bring Métis Elders, Knowledge Keepers and youth together; and mentorship programs that celebrate and highlight Métis role models.

**18.10** We call upon all governments and service providers to provide safe and dedicated ceremony and cultural places and spaces for 2SLGBTQQIA youth and adults, and to advocate for 2SLGBTQQIA inclusion in all cultural spaces and ceremonies. These 2SLGBTQQIA-inclusive spaces must be visibly indicated as appropriate.

**18.19** We call upon all governments, service providers, and educators to educate the public on the history of non-gender binary people in Indigenous societies, and to use media, including social media, as a way to build awareness and understanding of 2SLGBTQQIA issues.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Prime Minister and cabinet, along with all Provincial and Territorial Premiers and cabinets, municipalities, as well as Indigenous governments, have obligation to do this work through law reform, and through political and financial commitments.

This work must be prioritized by all departments and ministries responsible for education.

This work must be prioritized by all culture and heritage departments and ministries.

All public educational and cultural institutions throughout Canada and under all levels of government have obligations.

**Action 10: Anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-homophobia, and anti-transphobia.**

**Calls for Justice:**

**2.7** We call upon all governments to adequately fund and support Indigenous-led initiatives to improve the representation of Indigenous Peoples in media and pop culture.

**2.6** We call upon all governments to educate their citizens about, and to confront and eliminate, racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia. To accomplish this, the federal government, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and provincial and territorial governments, must develop and implement an Anti-Racism and Anti-Sexism National Action Plan to end racist and sexualized stereotypes of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The plan must target the general public as well as public services.

**10.1** We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, and Canadian law societies and bar associations, for mandatory intensive and periodic training of Crown attorneys, defence lawyers, court staff, and all who participate in the criminal justice system, in the area of Indigenous cultures and histories, including

distinctions-based training. This includes, but is not limited to, the following measures:

- i All courtroom officers, staff, judiciary, and employees in the judicial system must take cultural competency training that is designed and led in partnership with local Indigenous communities.
- ii Law societies working with Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must establish and enforce cultural competency standards.
- iii All courts must have a staff position for an Indigenous courtroom liaison worker that is adequately funded and resourced to ensure Indigenous people in the court system know their rights and are connected to appropriate services.

**15.2** Decolonize by learning the true history of Canada and Indigenous history in your local area. Learn about and celebrate Indigenous Peoples' history, cultures, pride, and diversity, acknowledging the land you live on and its importance to local Indigenous communities, both historically and today.

**15.5** Confront and speak out against racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia, and teach or encourage others to do the same, wherever it occurs: in your home, in your workplace, or in social settings.

**16.27** We call upon all governments to ensure that in all areas of service delivery – including but not limited to policing, the criminal justice system, education, health, and social services – there be ongoing and comprehensive Inuit-specific cultural competency training for public servants. There must also be ongoing and comprehensive training in such areas as trauma care, cultural safety training, anti-racism training, and education with respect to the historical and ongoing colonialism to which Inuit have been and are subjected.

**17.8** We call upon all governments, in partnership with Métis communities, organizations, and individuals, to design mandatory, ongoing cultural competency training for public servants (including staff working in policing, justice, education, health care, social work, and government) in areas such as trauma-informed care, cultural safety training, antiracism training, and understanding of Métis culture and history.

**18.1** We call upon all governments and service providers to fund and support greater awareness of 2SLGBTQQIA issues, and to implement programs, services, and practical supports for 2SLGBTQQIA people that include distinctions-based approaches that take into account the unique challenges to safety for 2SLGBTQQIA individuals and groups.

**18.18** We call upon all governments and service providers to educate service providers on the realities of 2SLGBTQQIA people and their distinctive needs, and to provide mandatory cultural competency training

for all social service providers, including Indigenous studies, cultural awareness training, trauma-informed care, anti-oppression training, and training on 2SLGBTQQIA inclusion within an Indigenous context (including an understanding of 2SLGBTQQIA identities and Indigenous understandings of gender and sexual orientation). 2SLGBTQQIA people must be involved in the design and delivery of this training.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 9:** WE CALL UPON the Ministère de l'Éducation et Enseignement supérieur [Ministry of Education and Higher Education] and all educational institutions in Quebec to incorporate in the mandatory curriculum training developed together with Indigenous organizations on the socio-cultural, historical and contemporary realities of Indigenous Peoples.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, and levels of governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments have an obligation.

All ministries of education at all levels of the education systems.

All educational institutions, public service agencies, and institutions.

All media institutions and outlets, including social media platforms.

All professional associations, regulatory bodies, and unions, especially those involved in justice, educational and health systems.

All civil society organizations and bodies.

All Canadians.





# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Action 11: Indigenous Self-Determination in Health and Wellness and Health System Transformation.

### Calls for Justice:

**3.2** We call upon all governments to provide adequate, stable, equitable, and ongoing funding for Indigenous-centred and community-based health and wellness services that are accessible and culturally appropriate, and meet the health and wellness needs of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The lack of health and wellness services within Indigenous communities continues to force Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people to relocate in order to access care. Governments must ensure that health and wellness services are available and accessible within Indigenous communities and wherever Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people reside.

**3.6** We call upon all governments to ensure substantive equality in the funding of services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, as well as substantive equality for Indigenous-run health services. Further, governments must ensure that jurisdictional disputes do not result in the denial of rights and services. This includes mandated permanent funding of health services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people on a continual basis, regardless of jurisdictional lines, geographical location, and Status affiliation or lack thereof.

**7.1** We call upon all governments and health service providers to recognize that Indigenous Peoples—First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, including 2SLGBTQQIA people—are the experts in caring for and healing themselves, and that health and wellness services are most effective when they are designed and delivered by the Indigenous Peoples they are supposed to serve, in a manner consistent with and grounded in the practices, world views, cultures, languages, and values of the diverse Inuit, Métis, and First Nations communities they serve.

**18.15** We call upon all governments, educators, and those involved in research to support and conduct research and knowledge gathering on pre-colonial knowledge and teachings about the place, roles, and responsibilities of 2SLGBTQQIA people within their respective communities, to support belonging, safety, and well-being.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 6:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec to fund the establishment and long-term operation of culturally appropriate resources, such as healing lodges, culturally appropriate shelters and halfway houses, for Indigenous women and girls, including members of 2SLGBTQQIA communities, in urban areas and in all Indigenous communities throughout Quebec.

### Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:

All Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health, Ministers of Child and Family Services, and Finance Ministers, as well as Indigenous governments, departments, and agencies, including delegated agencies, have obligations.

All professional associations, regulatory bodies and unions associated with health and wellness services and child and family services.

### Action 12: Address the health and wellness needs of the children and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

### Calls for Justice:

**3.7** We call upon all governments to provide continual and accessible healing programs and support for all children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people and their family members. Specifically, we call for the permanent establishment of a fund akin to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and related funding. These funds and their administration must be independent from government and must be distinctions-based. There must be accessible and equitable allocation of specific monies within the fund for Inuit, Métis, and First Nations Peoples.

**12.5** We call upon all levels of government for financial supports and resources to be provided so that family or community members of children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA

people are capable of caring for the children left behind. Further, all governments must ensure the availability and accessibility of specialized care, such as grief, loss, trauma, and other required services, for children left behind who are in care due to the murder or disappearance of their caregiver.

**16.40** We call upon all governments to focus on the well-being of children and to develop responses to adverse childhood experiences that are culturally appropriate, and evidence based. This must include but is not limited to services such as intervention and counselling for children who have been sexually and physically abused.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 5:** WE CALL UPON the Ministère de la Sécurité publique [Ministry of Public Security] to establish a multi-disciplinary crisis team for cases of missing Indigenous women and girls, including members of 2SLGBTQQA communities, in Quebec;

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Prime Minister and cabinet, along with all Provincial and Territorial Premiers and cabinets, municipalities, as well as Indigenous governments and services providers, share these obligations.

Provincial and Territorial governments, along with Indigenous governments exercising the inherent jurisdiction over child and family services, as well as delegated agencies, must take special measures to implement these Calls for Justice.

**Action 13:** Indigenous representation in mainstream health systems, improved accountability for funding received for Indigenous populations, equity, cultural safety, dignified services, interjurisdictional issues, wrap around services and recovery from violence.

**Calls for Justice:**

**7.7** We call upon all governments, educational institutions, and health and wellness professional bodies to encourage, support, and equitably fund Indigenous people to train and work in the area of health and wellness.

**7.8** We call upon all governments and health service providers to create effective and well-funded

opportunities, and to provide socio-economic incentives, to encourage Indigenous people to work within the health and wellness field and within their communities. This includes taking positive action to recruit, hire, train, and retain long-term staff and local Indigenous community

**7.6** We call upon institutions and health service providers to ensure that all persons involved in the provision of health services to Indigenous Peoples receive ongoing training, education, and awareness in areas including, but not limited to:

- the history of colonialism in the oppression and genocide of Inuit, Métis, and First Nations Peoples;
- anti-bias and anti-racism;
- local language and culture; and
- local health and healing practices.

**12.10** We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to immediately adopt the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal 2017 CHRT 14 standards regarding the implementation of Jordan's Principle in relation to all First Nations (Status and non-Status), Métis, and Inuit children. We call on governments to modify funding formulas for the provision of services on a needs basis, and to prioritize family support, reunification, and prevention of harms. Funding levels must represent the principle of substantive equity.

**16.7** We call upon all governments to ensure the availability of effective, culturally appropriate, and accessible health and wellness services within each Inuit community. The design and delivery of these services must be inclusive of Elders and people with lived experience. Closing the service and infrastructure gaps in the following areas is urgently needed, and requires action by all governments. Required measures include but are not limited to:

- i The establishment and funding of birthing centres in each Inuit community, as well as the training of Inuit midwives in both Inuit and contemporary birthing techniques.
- ii The establishment and funding of accessible and holistic community wellness, health, and mental health services in each Inuit community. These services must be Inuit-led and operate in accordance with Inuit health and wellness values, approaches, and methods.
- iii The establishment and funding of trauma and addictions treatment and healing options in each Inuit community.

**16.8** We call upon all governments to invest in the recruitment and capacity building of Inuit within the medical, health, and wellness service fields. Training and competency in both contemporary and Inuit medical, health, and wellness practices and methodologies are essential for effective services in these fields.

**17.21** We call upon the federal government to recognize and fulfill its obligations to the Métis people in all areas, especially in health, and further call upon all governments for services such as those under FNIHB to be provided to Métis and non-Status First Nations Peoples in an equitable manner consistent with substantive human rights standards.

**17.22** We call upon all governments to respect and to uphold the full implementation of Jordan's Principle with reference to the Métis.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

Federal, Provincial and Territorial and Indigenous government, and all educational institutions, share this obligation.

All health and wellness related educational institutions and bodies.

All health and wellness related professional bodies, regulatory bodies, and unions.

All health and wellness related service providers.

**Action 14: A cultural lens and understanding of health based Indigenous ways of being.**

## Calls for Justice:

**3.3** We call upon all governments to fully support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities to call on Elders, Grandmothers, and other Knowledge Keepers to establish community-based trauma-informed programs for survivors of trauma and violence.

**3.4** We call upon all governments to ensure that all Indigenous communities receive immediate and necessary resources, including funding and support, for the establishment of sustainable, permanent, no-barrier, preventative, accessible, holistic, wraparound services, including mobile trauma and addictions recovery teams. We further direct that trauma and addictions treatment programs be paired with other essential services such as mental health services and sexual exploitation and trafficking services as they relate to each individual case of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**16.27** We call upon all governments to ensure that in all areas of service delivery – including but not limited to policing, the criminal justice system, education, health, and social services – there be ongoing and comprehensive Inuit-specific cultural competency training for public servants. There must also be ongoing and comprehensive training in such areas as trauma care, cultural safety training, anti-racism training, and education with respect to the historical and ongoing colonialism to which Inuit have been and are subjected.

**17.20** We call upon all governments to fund and support programs for Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, including more access to traditional healing programs, treatment centres for youth, family support and violence prevention funding and initiatives for Métis, and the creation of no-barrier safe spaces, including spaces for Métis mothers and families in need.

**18.26** We call upon health service providers to educate their members about the realities and needs of 2SLGBTQQIA people, and to recognize substantive human rights dimensions to health services for 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

Federal, Provincial and Territorial and Indigenous government, including delegated agencies, share this obligation.

All educational institutions.

All service delivery agencies: including but not limited to agencies, including delegated agencies, with responsibility in health, wellness, child welfare and policing services.

All health and wellness related educational institutions and bodies.

All health and wellness related professional bodies, regulatory bodies, and unions.

All health and wellness related service providers included delegated agencies.

**Action 15:** Focus on mental wellness and addressing intergenerational and complex impacts of violence, including trauma caused by all forms of violence. There must be support for people to recover from violence.

## Calls for Justice:

**3.5** We call upon all governments to establish culturally competent and responsive crisis response teams in all communities and regions, to meet the immediate needs of an Indigenous person, family, and/or community after a traumatic event (murder, accident, violent event, etc.), alongside ongoing support.

**7.2** We call upon all governments and health service providers to ensure that health and wellness services for Indigenous Peoples include supports for healing from all forms of unresolved trauma, including intergenerational, multigenerational, and complex trauma. Health and wellness programs addressing trauma should be Indigenous-led, or in partnership with Indigenous communities, and should not be limited in time or approaches.

**17.23** We call upon all governments to provide Métis-specific programs and services that address emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions of well-being, including coordinated or co-located services to offer holistic wraparound care, as well as increased mental health and healing and cultural supports.

**16.12** We call upon all governments and service providers to ensure that Inuit men and boys are provided services that are gender- and Inuit-specific to address historic and ongoing trauma they are experiencing. These programs must be Inuit-led and -run, and must be well resourced and accessible.

**18.27** We call upon health service providers to provide mental health supports for 2SLGBTQQIA people, including wraparound services that take into account particular barriers to safety for 2SLGBTQQIA people.

## Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:

Federal, Provincial and Territorial and Indigenous government, led by Ministries of Health, share this obligation.

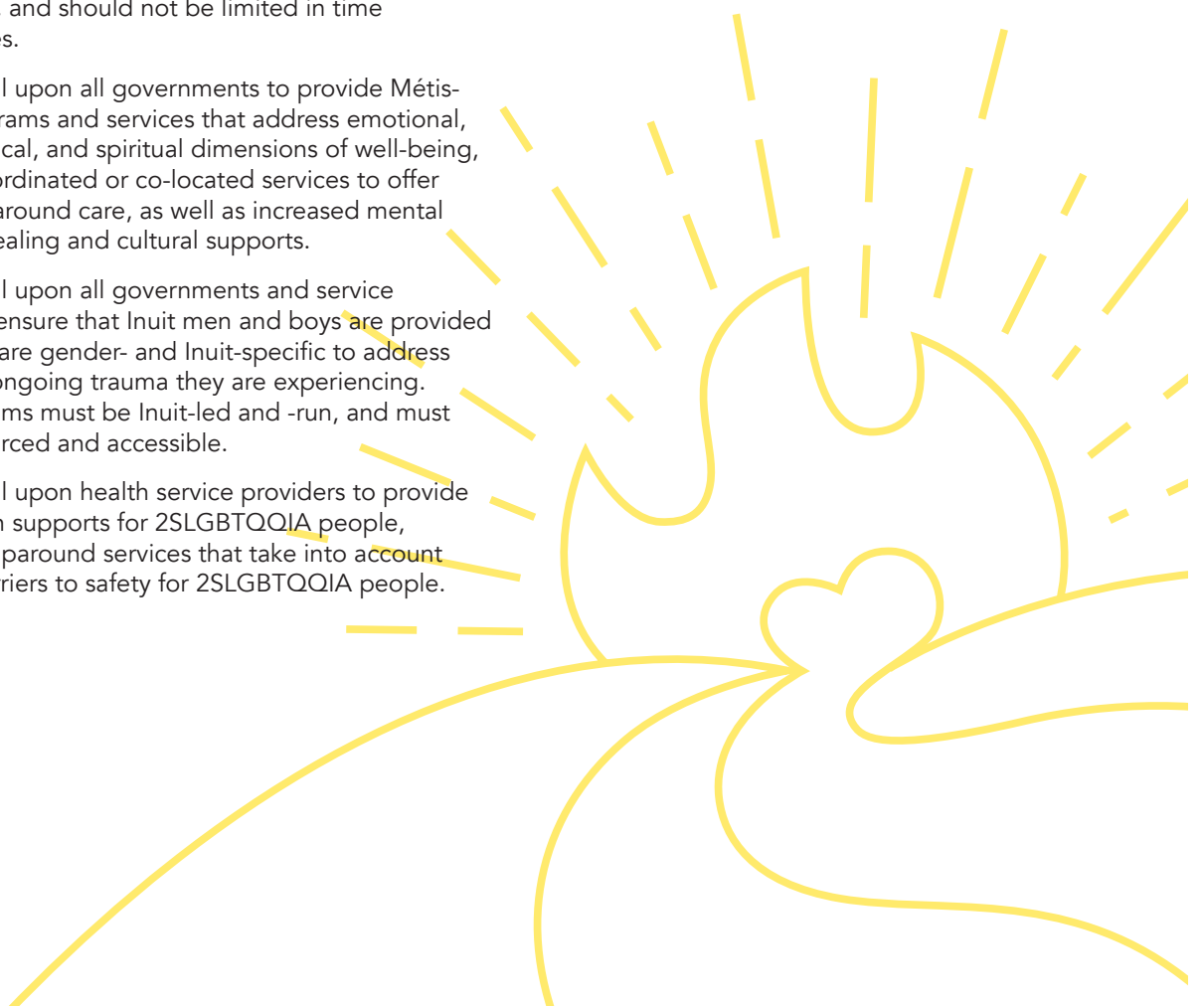
All educational institutions.

All service delivery agencies, as well as delegated agencies: including but not limited to, health, wellness, child welfare and policing service delivery.

All health and wellness related educational institutions and bodies.

All health and wellness related professional bodies, regulatory bodies and unions.

All health and wellness related service providers.





# HUMAN SECURITY

**Action 16:** Uphold the social and economic rights of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. Special measures are needed for those that have been disenfranchised.

## Calls for Justice:

**4.1** We call upon all governments to uphold the social and economic rights of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people by ensuring that Indigenous Peoples have services and infrastructure that meet their social and economic needs. All governments must immediately ensure that Indigenous Peoples have access to safe housing, clean drinking water, and adequate food.

**4.6** We call upon all governments to immediately commence the construction of new housing and the provision of repairs for existing housing to meet the housing needs of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This construction and provision of repairs must ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people have access to housing that is safe, appropriate to geographic and cultural needs, and available wherever they reside, whether in urban, rural, remote, or Indigenous communities.

**4.7** We call upon all governments to support the establishment and long-term sustainable funding of Indigenous-led low-barrier shelters, safe spaces, transition homes, second-stage housing, and services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people who are homeless, near homeless, dealing with food insecurity, or in poverty, and who are fleeing violence or have been subjected to sexualized violence and exploitation. All governments must ensure that shelters, transitional housing, second-stage housing, and services are appropriate to cultural needs, and available wherever Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people reside.

**16.18** We call upon all governments to immediately invest in safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing within Inuit communities and for Inuit outside of their homelands, given the links between the housing crisis and violence, poor health (including tuberculosis) and suicide. Immediate and directed measures are required to end the crisis.

**16.19** We call upon all governments to develop and fund safe houses, shelters, transition houses, and second-stage housing for Inuit women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA

people fleeing violence. These houses and shelters are required in all Inuit communities and in urban centres with large Inuit populations. Shelters must not require full occupancy to remain open and to receive funding. Further, they must be independent from child and family services agencies, as women may not seek shelter due to fear of agency involvement. This action includes the establishment and funding of shelters and safe spaces for families, children, and youth, including Inuit who identify as 2SLGBTQQIA, who are facing socio-economic crises in all Inuit communities and in urban centres with large Inuit populations.

**17.4** We call upon all governments to fund and support Métis-specific programs and services that meet the needs of Métis people in an equitable manner, and dedicated Métis advocacy bodies and institutions, including but not limited to Métis health authorities and Métis child welfare agencies.

**18.24** We call upon all governments to address homelessness, poverty, and other socioeconomic barriers to equitable and substantive rights for 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**18.25** We call upon all governments to build safe spaces for people who need help and who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, which includes access to safe, dedicated 2SLGBTQQIA shelters and housing, dedicated beds in shelters for trans and non-binary individuals, and 2SLGBTQQIA-specific support services for 2SLGBTQQIA individuals in housing and shelter spaces.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, led by the Minister of Indigenous Services and all Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministries responsible for housing and health, share these obligations.

Significant political and financial commitments are urgently needed to address these Calls for Justice.

Civil society groups and all Canadians play a role in advocating for these measures.

**Action 17:** Safety for sexually exploited and human trafficked people.

## Calls for Justice:

**4.3** We call upon all governments to support programs and services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in the sex industry to promote their safety and security. These programs must be designed and delivered in partnership with people who have lived experience in the sex industry. We call for stable and long-term funding for these programs and services.

**7.9** We call upon all health service providers to develop and implement awareness and education programs for Indigenous children and youth on the issue of grooming for exploitation and sexual exploitation.

**8.1** We call upon all transportation service providers and the hospitality industry to undertake training to identify and respond to sexual exploitation and human trafficking, as well as the development and implementation of reporting policies and practices.

**16.24** We call upon all governments to fund and to support programs for Inuit children and youth to teach them how to respond to threats and identify exploitation. This is particularly the case with respect to the threats of drugs and drug trafficking as well as sexual exploitation and human trafficking. This awareness and education work must be culturally and age-appropriate and involve all members of the community, including 2SLGBTQQIA Inuit.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments share these obligations.

All education Ministries and educational institutions.

All child and family services and health Ministries.

All industries, and unions, involved in transportation, hospitality, and the extraction industry.

**Action 18:** Focus on prevention, strengths-based approaches, and developing empowerment skills, with special consideration of children, youth, disabled people, and families and survivors.

## Calls for Justice:

**4.2** We call upon all governments to recognize Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the pursuit of economic social development. All governments must support and resource economic and social progress and development on an equitable basis, as these measures are required to uphold the human dignity, life, liberty, and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. All governments must support, and resource community-based supports and solutions designed to improve social and economic security, led by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This support must come with long-term, sustainable funding designed to meet the needs and objectives as defined by Indigenous Peoples and communities.

**4.4** We call upon all governments to provide supports and resources for educational, training, and employment opportunities for all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. These programs must be available within all Indigenous communities.

**17.19** We call upon all governments to address Métis unemployment and poverty as a way to prevent child apprehension.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, led by Ministries responsible for education and economic development, share these obligations.

**Action 19:** Address economic marginalisation and poverty.

## Calls for Justice:

**4.5** We call upon all governments to establish a guaranteed annual livable income for all Canadians, including Indigenous Peoples, to meet all their social and economic needs. This income must take into account diverse needs, realities, and geographic locations.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

Led by the Prime Minister and Cabinet, all governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments share these obligations.

**Action 20:** Safe, accountable, and accessible transportation.

## Calls for Justice:

**4.8** We call upon all governments to ensure that adequate plans and funding are put into place for safe and affordable transit and transportation services and infrastructure for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people living in remote or rural communities. Transportation should be sufficient and readily available to Indigenous communities, and in towns and cities located in all of the provinces and territories in Canada. These plans and funding should take into consideration:

- ways to increase safe public transit;
- ways to address the lack of commercial transit available; and
- special accommodations for fly-in, northern, and remote communities.

**17.9** We call upon all governments to provide safe transportation options, particularly in rural, remote, and northern communities, including “safe rides” programs, and to monitor high recruitment areas where Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals may be more likely to be targeted.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments share these obligations. In particular this must be a priority of all transportation Ministries.



## Action 21: Dignified and culturally competent Child and Family Services.

### Calls for Justice:

**12.2** We call upon on all governments, including Indigenous governments, to transform current child welfare systems fundamentally so that Indigenous communities have control over the design and delivery of services for their families and children. These services must be adequately funded and resourced to ensure better support for families and communities to keep children in their family homes.

**12.3** We call upon all governments and Indigenous organizations to develop and apply a definition of “best interests of the child” based on distinct Indigenous perspectives, world views, needs, and priorities, including the perspective of Indigenous children and youth. The primary focus and objective of all child and family services agencies must be upholding and protecting the rights of the child through ensuring the health and well-being of children, their families, and communities, and family unification and reunification.

**12.4** We call upon all governments to prohibit the apprehension of children on the basis of poverty and cultural bias. All governments must resolve issues of poverty, inadequate and substandard housing, and lack of financial support for families, and increase food security to ensure that Indigenous families can succeed.

**12.6** We call upon all governments and child welfare services to ensure that, in cases where apprehension is not avoidable, child welfare services prioritize and ensure that a family member or members, or a close community member, assumes care of Indigenous children. The caregivers should be eligible for financial supports equal to an amount that might otherwise be paid to a foster family, and will not have other government financial support or benefits removed or reduced by virtue of receiving additional financial supports for the purpose of caring for the child. This is particularly the case for children who lose their mothers to violence or to institutionalization and are left behind, needing family and belonging to heal.

**12.11** We call upon all levels of government and child welfare services for a reform of laws and obligations with respect to youth “aging out” of the system, including ensuring a complete network of support from childhood into adulthood, based on capacity and needs, which includes opportunities for education, housing, and related supports. This includes the provision of free post-secondary education for all children in care in Canada.

**12.13** We call upon all governments and child welfare agencies to fully implement the Spirit Bear Plan.

**16.14** We call upon all federal, provincial, and territorial governments to review and amend laws in relation to child and family services to ensure they uphold the rights of Inuit children and families and conform to Inuit laws and values. Inuit parents and guardians must be provided access to Inuit-specific parenting and caregiving teachings and services.

**17.16** We call upon all governments to provide support for self-determined and culturally specific needs-based child welfare services for Métis families that are focused on prevention and maintenance of family unity. These services will also focus on: avoiding the need for foster care; restoring family unity and providing support for parents trying to reunite with children; healing for parents; and developing survivor-led programs to improve family safety. These services include culturally grounded parenting education and interventions that support the whole family, such as substance abuse treatment programs that accommodate parents with children and that are specifically suited to Métis needs and realities. We also call upon all governments to provide long-term stable funding for wraparound services and exceptional programs aimed at keeping Métis families together.

**17.17** We call upon all governments to provide more funding and support for Métis child welfare agencies and for child placements in Métis homes.

**17.18** We call upon all governments to establish and maintain funding for cultural programming for Métis children in foster care, especially when they are placed in non-Indigenous or non-Métis families.

**18.32** We call upon child welfare agencies to engage in education regarding the realities and perspectives of 2SLGBTQQIA youth; to provide 2SLGBTQQIA competency training to parents and caregivers, especially to parents of trans children and in communities outside of urban centres; and to engage in and provide education for parents, foster families, and other youth service providers regarding the particular barriers to safety for 2SLGBTQQIA youth.

### Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, as well as delegated agencies, share these obligations. Ministers of health wellness, children and families, justice, and all child welfare agencies (Indigenous and non-Indigenous focused).

Child and youth advocates should be engaged in this work.



**Action 22:** There is urgent need to address and reduce the impact of extraction and development projects.

## Calls for Justice:

**13.1** We call upon all resource-extraction and development industries to consider the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, as well as their equitable benefit from development, at all stages of project planning, assessment, implementation, management, and monitoring.

**13.2** We call upon all governments and bodies mandated to evaluate, approve, and/or monitor development projects to complete gender-based socio-economic impact assessments on all proposed projects as part of their decision making and ongoing monitoring of projects. Project proposals must include provisions and plans to mitigate risks and impacts identified in the impact assessments prior to being approved.

**13.3** We call upon all parties involved in the negotiations of impact-benefit agreements related to resource-extraction and development projects to include provisions that address the impacts of projects on the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Provisions must also be included to ensure that Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA people equitably benefit from the projects.

### **Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments share these obligations. This must be a priority of all Ministries with a role in the approval of project. These issues must be addressed before projects are approved and be part of monitoring

Indigenous governments and representative bodies must prioritize these issues over their involvement in these projects as proponents. They must demand these issues be addressed in all benefits/certainty negotiations with project proponents.





# JUSTICE

**Action 23:** Dismantling of colonial structures and approaches within the Criminal Code.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.2** We call upon the federal government to review and amend the Criminal Code to eliminate definitions of offences that minimize the culpability of the offender.

**5.3** We call upon the federal government to review and reform the law about sexualized violence and intimate partner violence, utilizing the perspectives of feminist and Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

The Federal Government, specifically the Federal Minister of Justice.

**Action 24:** Distinct and independent Indigenous policing agencies in each province and territory.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.4** We call upon all governments to immediately and dramatically transform Indigenous policing from its current state as a mere delegation to an exercise in self-governance and self-determination over policing. To do this, the federal government's First Nations Policing Program must be replaced with a new legislative and funding framework, consistent with international and domestic policing best practices and standards, that must be developed by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments in partnership with Indigenous Peoples. This legislative and funding framework must, at a minimum, meet the following considerations:

**i** Indigenous police services must be funded to a level that is equitable with all other non-Indigenous police services in this country. Substantive equality requires that more resources or funding be provided to close the gap in existing resources, and that required staffing, training, and equipment are in place to ensure that Indigenous police services are culturally appropriate and effective police services.

**ii** There must be civilian oversight bodies with jurisdiction to audit Indigenous police services and to investigate claims of police misconduct, including incidents of rape and other sexual assaults, within those services. These oversight bodies must report publicly at least annually.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 12:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec to ensure the continuity of tripartite agreements with Quebec's Indigenous police forces by granting increased, long-term funding to cover all needs, specifically with respect to staff, training and equipment.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments share these obligations.

This must be a priority of Justice and Public Safety Ministers and Indigenous governments.

All Indigenous Police Forces.

**Action 25:** Multiple actions to improve current policing agencies.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.5** We call upon all governments to fund the provision of policing services within Indigenous communities in northern and remote areas in a manner that ensures that those services meet the safety and justice needs of the communities and that the quality of policing services is equitable to that provided to non-Indigenous Canadians. This must include but is not limited to the following measures:

- i** With the growing reliance on information management systems, particularly in the area of major and interjurisdictional criminal investigations, remote communities must be ensured access to reliable high-speed Internet as a right.
- ii** Major crime units and major case management must be more accessible to remote and northern communities on a faster basis than the service is being delivered now.
- iii** Capacity must be developed in investigative tools and techniques for the investigation of sexualized violence, including but not limited to tools for the collection of physical evidence, such as sexual assault kits, and specialized and trauma-informed questioning techniques.
- iv** Crime-prevention funding and programming must reflect community needs.

**5.7** We call upon federal and provincial governments to establish robust and well-funded Indigenous civilian police oversight bodies (or branches within established reputable civilian oversight bodies within a jurisdiction) in all jurisdictions, which must include representation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, inclusive of diverse Indigenous cultural backgrounds, with the power to:

- i** Observe and oversee investigations in relation to police negligence or misconduct, including but not limited to rape and other sexual offences.
- ii** Observe and oversee investigations of cases involving Indigenous Peoples.
- iii** Publicly report on police progress in addressing findings and recommendations at least annually.

**9.2** We call upon all actors in the justice system, including police services, to build respectful working relationships with Indigenous Peoples by knowing, understanding, and respecting the people they are serving. Initiatives and actions should include, but are not limited to, the following measures:

- i** Review and revise all policies, practices, and procedures to ensure service delivery that is culturally appropriate and reflects no bias or racism toward Indigenous Peoples, including victims and survivors of violence.
- ii** Establish engagement and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, communities, and leadership, including women, Elders, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA people from the respective territories and who are resident within a police service's jurisdiction.
- iii** Ensure appropriate Indigenous representation, including Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, on police services boards and oversight authorities.
- iv** Undertake training and education of all staff and officers so that they understand and implement culturally appropriate and trauma-informed practices, especially when dealing with families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**9.4** We call upon non-Indigenous police services to ensure they have the capacity and resources to serve and protect Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. We further call upon all non-Indigenous police services to establish specialized Indigenous policing units within their services located in cities and regions with Indigenous populations.

- i** Specialized Indigenous policing units are to be staffed with experienced and well trained Indigenous investigators, who will be the primary investigative teams and officers overseeing the investigation of cases involving Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
- ii** Specialized Indigenous policing units are to lead the services' efforts in community liaison work, community relationship building, and community crime-prevention programs within and for Indigenous communities.
- iii** Specialized Indigenous policing units, within non-Indigenous police services, are to be funded adequately by governments.

**9.5** We call upon all police services for the standardization of protocols for policies and practices that ensure that all cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are thoroughly investigated. This includes the following measures:

- i** Establish a communication protocol with Indigenous communities to inform them of policies, practices, and programs that make the communities safe.
- ii** Improve communication between police and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people from the first report, with regular and ongoing communication throughout the investigation.

**iii** Improve coordination across government departments and between jurisdictions and Indigenous communities and police services.

**iv** Recognize that the high turnover among officers assigned to a missing and murdered Indigenous woman's, girl's, or 2SLGBTQQIA person's file may negatively impact both progress on the investigation and relationships with family members; police services must have robust protocols to mitigate these impacts.

**v** Create a national strategy, through the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, to ensure consistency in reporting mechanisms for reporting missing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This could be developed in conjunction with implementation of a national database.

**vi** Establish standardized response times to reports of missing Indigenous persons and women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people experiencing violence, and conduct a regular audit of response times to monitor and provide feedback for improvement.

**vii** Lead the provincial and territorial governments to establish a nationwide emergency number.

**9.6** We call upon all police services to establish an independent, special investigation unit for the investigation of incidents of failures to investigate, police misconduct, and all forms of discriminatory practices and mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples within their police service. This special investigation unit must be transparent in practice and report at least annually to Indigenous communities, leadership, and people in their jurisdiction.

**9.9** We call upon all levels of government and all police services for the establishment of a national task force, comprised of an independent, highly qualified, and specialized team of investigators, to review and, if required, to reinvestigate each case of all unresolved files of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people from across Canada. Further, this task force must disclose to families and to survivors all nonprivileged information and findings.

**16.32** We call upon police services, in particular the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), to ensure there is Inuit representation among sworn officers and civilian staff within Inuit communities. Inuit are entitled to receive police services in Inuktitut and in a culturally competent and appropriate manner. The RCMP must ensure they have the capacity to uphold this right. Within the Nunavut Territory, and in accordance with Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the RCMP has obligations to recruit, train, and retain Inuit. The RCMP must take immediate and directed measures to ensure the number of Inuit within the RCMP in Nunavut, and throughout the Inuit homelands, is proportionally representative.

**16.33** We call upon all governments to invest in

capacity building, recruitment, and training to achieve proportional representation of Inuit throughout public service in Inuit homelands.

**16.36** We call upon all governments to ensure there are police services in all Inuit communities.

**17.12** We call upon police services to build partnerships with Métis communities, organizations, and people to ensure culturally safe access to police services.

**17.13** We call upon police services to engage in education about the unique history and needs of Métis communities.

**17.14** We call upon police services to establish better communication with Métis communities and populations through representative advisory boards that involve Métis communities and address their needs.

**17.15** We call upon all governments to fund the expansion of community-based security models that include Métis perspectives and people, such as local peacekeeper officers or programs such as the Bear Clan Patrol.

**18.12** We call upon all police services to better investigate crimes against 2SLGBTQQIA people and ensure accountability for investigations and handling of cases involving 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**18.13** We call upon all police services to engage in education regarding 2SLGBTQQIA people and experiences to address discrimination, especially homophobia and transphobia, in policing.

**18.14** We call upon all police services to take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of 2SLGBTQQIA people in the sex industry.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 13:** WE CALL UPON the Ministère de la Sécurité publique [Ministry of Public Security] to coordinate between the various police forces to provide Indigenous people with access to effective public safety services regardless of jurisdictional barriers.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 14:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Quebec to amend all laws governing the institutions responsible for training police officers and monitoring police work so as to impose the appointment of Indigenous representatives, including at the Commission de formation et de recherche [training and research commission] of the École nationale de police du Québec [Quebec National Police School] and at the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes [Independent Investigation Bureau].

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 15:** WE CALL UPON Quebec's police forces and the École nationale de police du Québec [Quebec National Police School] to train all active police officers and police cadets on the socio-cultural realities of Indigenous people and the particular challenges faced by them, the issue of missing and

murdered Indigenous women and girls, including members of 2SLGBTQQIA communities, and the importance of being familiar with the particular reality of each community to which they are assigned.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 16:** WE CALL UPON the École nationale de police du Québec [Quebec National Police School] to hold specialized English training sessions every year and offer specialized training sessions to Indigenous police forces, specifically on investigating.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All governments, including Federal, Provincial, Territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, led by Solicitors-General, share these obligations.

This must be a priority of Justice and Public Safety Ministers and Indigenous governments.

All Police Forces.

As well as Police unions, police associations, associations of chiefs of Police and any/all Police Boards and governing bodies.

All police training and educational institutions.

Indigenous Police Forces.

Led by Chief Judges, Chief Constables, Chiefs of Police, Law Society leadership, Law School Deans, heads of Police Colleges and the Commissioner of the RCMP.

**Action 26:** Culturally appropriate, barrier-free resources for families and children of MMIWG2S+, and survivors.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.6** We call upon provincial and territorial governments to develop an enhanced, holistic, comprehensive approach for the provision of support to Indigenous victims of crime and families and friends of Indigenous murdered or missing persons. This includes but is not limited to the following measures:

- i Guaranteed access to financial support and meaningful and appropriate trauma care must be provided for victims of crime and traumatic incidents,

regardless of whether they report directly to the police, if the perpetrator is charged, or if there is a conviction.

- ii Adequate and reliable culturally relevant and accessible victim services must be provided to family members and survivors of crime, and funding must be provided to Indigenous and community-led organizations that deliver victim services and healing supports.

- iii Legislated paid leave and disability benefits must be provided for victims of crime or traumatic events.

- iv Guaranteed access to independent legal services must be provided throughout court processes. As soon as an Indigenous woman, girl, or 2SLGBTQQIA person decides to report an offence, before speaking to the police, they must have guaranteed access to legal counsel at no cost.

- v Victim services must be independent from prosecution services and police services.

**16.29** We call upon all governments and service providers, in full partnership with Inuit, to design and provide wraparound, accessible, and culturally appropriate victim services. These services must be available and accessible to all Inuit and in all Inuit communities.

**Kepek-Quebec Call for Justice 10:** WE CALL UPON the Government of Quebec to guarantee the permanent provision and availability of victim services in all Indigenous communities and in urban areas.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All Federal, Provincial and Territorial, and Indigenous governments. All department, agencies, and services providers. With specific responsibility being with the Ministers of Health, Ministers of Child and Family Services, Justice and Finance Ministers, including their equivalent within Indigenous governments, departments, and agencies.

Solicitors-General for all jurisdictions also have a role to play.

**Action 27:** Barrier-free legal services for women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people fleeing violence.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.9** We call upon all governments to ensure that protection orders are available, accessible, promptly issued, and effectively serviced and resourced to protect the safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All Federal, Provincial and Territorial, and Indigenous governments. All Police forces. With specific responsibility being with the Ministers of Justice and Public Safety.

**Action 28:** Increased Indigenous representation and practices.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.10** We call upon all governments to recruit and retain more Indigenous justices of the peace, and to expand their jurisdictions to match that of the Nunavut Justice of the Peace.

**5.11** We call upon all governments to increase accessibility to meaningful and culturally appropriate justice practices by expanding restorative justice programs and Indigenous Peoples' courts.

**5.12** We call upon federal, provincial, and territorial governments to increase Indigenous representation in all Canadian courts, including within the Supreme Court of Canada.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All Federal, Provincial and Territorial, and Indigenous governments. With specific responsibility being with the Ministers of Justice and Public Safety.

**Action 29:** Proper implementation and monitoring of Gladue.

## Calls for Justice:

**5.15** We call upon federal, provincial, and territorial governments and all actors in the justice system to consider Gladue reports as a right and to resource them appropriately, and to create national standards for Gladue reports, including strength-based reporting.

**5.17** We call upon federal, provincial, and territorial governments to thoroughly evaluate the impacts of Gladue principles and section 718.2(e) of the Criminal Code on sentencing equity as it relates to violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**14.12** We call upon Correctional Service Canada and provincial and territorial correctional services to provide programming for men and boys that confronts and ends violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**16.28** Given that the failure to invest in resources required for treatment and rehabilitation has resulted in the failure of section 718(e) of the Criminal Code and the Gladue principles to meet their intended objectives, we call upon all governments to invest in Inuit-specific treatment and rehabilitation services to address the root causes of violent behaviour. This must include but is not limited to culturally appropriate and accessible mental health services, trauma and addictions services, and access to culture and language for Inuit. Justice system responses to violence must ensure and promote the safety and security of all Inuit, and especially that of Inuit women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**17.27** We call upon all governments to pursue the development of restorative justice and rehabilitation programs, including within correctional facilities, specific to Métis needs and cultural realities, to help address root causes of violence and reduce recidivism, and to support healing for victims, offenders, and their families and communities.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All Federal, Provincial and Territorial, and Indigenous governments, led by Ministries of public safety and Solicitors-General.

With specific responsibility being with the Ministers of Justice and Public Safety.

All courts and judges.

All prosecutors and defense lawyers.

All involved in the court system with a role in Gladue work.

**Action 30:** Support for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in custody.

**Calls for Justice:**

**14.6** We call upon Correctional Service Canada and provincial and territorial services to provide intensive and comprehensive mental health, addictions, and trauma services for incarcerated Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, ensuring that the term of care is needs-based and not tied to the duration of incarceration. These plans and services must follow the individuals as they reintegrate into the community.

**14.8** We call upon Correctional Service Canada to ensure its correctional facilities and programs recognize the distinct needs of Indigenous offenders when designing and implementing programming for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women. Correctional Service Canada must use culturally safe, distinctions-based, and trauma-informed models of care, adapted to the needs of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

**18.21** We call upon federal and provincial correctional services to engage in campaigns to build awareness of the dangers of misgendering in correctional systems and facilities and to ensure that the rights of trans people are protected.

**Governments, Agencies, Institutions and Organizations that, with the inclusion of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, have obligations to take action:**

All Federal, Provincial, Territorial, and Indigenous governments.

All Departments of Corrections and jails/prisons throughout the jurisdictions.



## 2.7 Accountability Framework

Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors, and their communities participated in the National Inquiry with cautious hope. Many are skeptical that the political will required to make the paradigm shift called for by the Commissioners exists. Many fear that the truths shared and the Calls for Justice will end up sitting on shelves collecting dust. The skepticism and fear is valid. As families and survivors, we have participated in years of engagement, consultation, reports, studies, court cases and other processes that have resulted in empty promises and performative action. We feel this fear and skepticism about the NAP development process and with its implementation as well. After all, what you see in this NAP is words and not actions.

It is due to this pattern of empty promises and performative action that an accountability framework needs to be built around the implementation of the Calls for Justice and the NAP. This accountability framework requires the following characteristics:

**Independent Oversight Body:** this body must be arm's length from governments, agencies, and organizations, and it must have the legal authority to require reports from all governments, agencies, and organizations with responsibility to implement the Calls for Justice and the NAP. It should be inclusive of families and survivors and be Indigenous-led in its structure. We believe the best body for this would be the National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson as called for in Call for Justice 1.7. All governments should take concrete actions towards establishing this position before June 3, 2022. In the interim and while the office of the Ombudsperson is being established, the NFSC believes Canada must engage international bodies, such as the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and/or the Committee Against Torture, to play an oversight role in Canada's implementation of the Calls for Justice and the NAP.

**Safeguards:** timelines for implementation as well as safeguard mechanisms are needed to ensure implementation can continue even when government or organizational leadership changes.

**Transparency and accessibility:** Indigenous families, survivors, women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people should be able to easily access information about actions being taken. There must be clear and frequent communication directly with families and survivors.

**Recourse:** inaction and failure to implement cannot continue to go unaddressed. We have been asked to trust that the same governments, agencies, and organizations that have played a dominant role in perpetrating and allowing Indigenous rights and human rights violations and abuses to occur, will now do the work of reversing it. This is a level of trust that cannot be extended. An independent, Indigenous led, accessible, specialised, and trusted place for recourse is needed. To date the Canadian legal system has not only failed to provide recourse, but it has also been a tool of the genocide. Therefore, we believe the best mechanism for recourse is found in Call for Justice 1.7. All governments should take concrete actions towards establishing this Tribunal before June 3, 2022. In the interim and while the National Indigenous and Human Rights Tribunal is being established, the NFSC believes Canada should engage international bodies, such as the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and/or the Committee Against Torture, to play a role in providing recourse.



The accountability framework must also include measures of transformative processes and transformative outcomes.

### **Measuring Transformative Processes**

Data collection and proper data use will be so imperative for measuring the transformative change we all want to see. However, we must be mindful of how we do this work. Decolonizing data and data infrastructure framework based on Indigenous data sovereignty is vital. Families and survivors need to be central in this work as well. The Principles for Change and the Four Pillars must guide the processes used to measure success. When doing the work of better understanding Indigenous Data Sovereignty, families and survivors need to be recognized as a unique collective and be involved in the growing understanding of data collection, use, control, access, and protection. Data gathering and use must be ethical. Families and survivors are the owners of their data: their data sovereignty must be respected. When seeking to collect the data of families and survivors it must be ensured that their free prior and informed consent is given. Further, the process must be dignified, culturally safe, beneficial to data owners, utilize Indigenous data collection and research methodologies, and be in conformity with the established research ethics of distinct Nations, Peoples, and communities. The responsibility of governments, agencies, and organizations to protect this information must also be considered. The intellectual property right and privacy rights of families and survivors must be protected and upheld throughout these processes. We believe that these are foundational considerations when developing processes for measuring the impact of implementing the NAP and the Calls for Justice.

### **Measuring Transformative Outcomes**

Existing ways of measuring and data collection misses a lot of the lived experience of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. These measures cannot be the way of evaluating success and measuring change. The focus must be on dignity and a dignified life. Violence is an attack on the dignity of the person and their loved ones. Dignified approaches aim to uphold the dignity of the person and community by acknowledging responses and resistance to violence, working for personal and community safety, respecting the best hopes and aspirations of each person, celebrating diversity and inclusion, honouring cultures and the lands, exposing misrepresentation and ongoing colonial practices, and by working to address violence of all kinds. We must measure how we value the lives of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors how systems and encounters with systems uphold their dignity. Therefore, we must find ways identifying and capturing, in data, the lived experience of dignity and a dignified life.

A focus on measuring the lived experience of justice is also key, as it is rights violations and abuses are the tools of the genocide. Measuring the lived experience of rights being recognized, upheld, and protected is a key measure of transformation. Therefore, we must find ways of identifying and capturing, in data, the lived experience of justice and of the experience of one's rights being upheld and protected.

Measuring lived experience can only be done through direct engagement with families, survivors, and Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Tools and structures are needed for this direct engagement. We support the work of the Data sub-working group and look forward to working with them to develop the pathways to include and engage with families and survivors in accordance with the Principles for Change and the Four Pillars.

## 3.0 The National Inquiry Final Report Findings and Calls for Justice Key Highlights

On June 3, 2019 the Chief Commissioner, the Commissioners, the National Families Advisory Circle, and the Grandmothers and Elders of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls delivered their final report entitled the “*Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*”<sup>5</sup>, as well as the *Supplementary Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Kepek-Quebec*<sup>6</sup> and A Legal Analysis of Genocide<sup>7</sup>, to the Government of Canada and to all the Provinces and Territories. Included in the Reports were 231 Calls for Justice directed at all levels of government, institutions, and the Canadian public and an additional 21 Calls for Justice directed at the Governments with responsibility in Quebec. The 231 Calls for Justice further included specific Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people Calls for Justice.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report is rooted in the sacred truths of the thousands of families and survivors shared with the Commissioners, as well as the testimony of experts, institutional witnesses, Knowledge Keepers, and the thousands of reports and records gathered during the National Inquiry. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report outlines what the Commissioners came to understand as the root causes of all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and the solutions needed to end it.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls affirmed what we already knew and continue to know. Colonial structures and perpetrators of diverse forms of violence have persistently targeted Indigenous people, including girls, women, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The actions and omissions of those who commit and fail to address past and present violence are deliberate and strategic. They include efforts to conceal the violence, obscure the responsibilities of those committing violence or enabling the violence, by concealing the responses and resistance of those who are victimized. Further, they continually frame those who are victimized as deficient, ill, disordered, passive, complicit, lacking insight, uncooperative and to blame for the violence. All governments, and all levels of government, are culpable. The horrific violence we are subjected to is not accidental: it is caused by the deliberate historic ongoing abuses and violations of our human rights and Indigenous rights, both inherent and treaty.

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<sup>5</sup> *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Volume 1a and Volume 1b.* Available at: [https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final\\_Report\\_Vol\\_1a-1.pdf](https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf) and [https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final\\_Report\\_Vol\\_1b.pdf](https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1b.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). Reclaiming Power and Place Volume 2, A Supplementary Report, Kepek-Quebec.* Available at: [https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final\\_Report\\_Vol\\_2\\_Quebec\\_Report-1.pdf](https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_2_Quebec_Report-1.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). A Legal Analysis of Genocide, Supplementary Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.* Available at: [https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Supplementary-Report\\_Genocide.pdf](https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Supplementary-Report_Genocide.pdf)

“ The significant, persistent, and deliberate pattern of systemic racial and gendered human rights and Indigenous rights violations and abuses—perpetuated historically and maintained today by the Canadian state, designed to displace Indigenous Peoples from their land, social structures, and governance and to eradicate their existence as Nations, communities, families, and individuals—is the cause of the disappearances, murders, and violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and is genocide. **This colonialism, discrimination, and genocide explains the high rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.** An absolute paradigm shift is required to dismantle colonialism within Canadian society, and from all levels of government and public institutions. Ideologies and instruments of colonialism, racism, and misogyny, past and present, must be rejected.<sup>8</sup>

We are grateful to all the families and survivors and participants in the National Inquiry for speaking to these truths.

We agree with the finding of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report, and we continue to advocate for the acknowledgment of the genocide, and the immediate need to end the violence, uphold our rights and human dignity, ensure there is justice and reparations for the damage caused and to support the return to culture. We must understand that we are now in this situation because of intentional actions and inaction of people in positions of power who wanted to assimilate or eliminate us as Indigenous Peoples. Many of these efforts were directed specifically at Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, because of the role we play as the heart of our families, communities, Nations, and Peoples. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report recognized the unique acts of violence and acts of genocide directed at Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Its finding was:

“ The Canadian state has displaced Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA people from their traditional roles in governance and leadership and continues to violate their political rights. This has been done through concerted efforts to destroy and replace Indigenous governance systems with colonial and patriarchal governance models, such as the Indian Act, and through the imposition of laws of general application throughout Canada. Indigenous governments or bands as established under the Indian Act or through local municipal governments do not have the full trust of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Indigenous bands and councils and community leadership who have authority through colonial law are generally seen as not representing all of the interests of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019)*, vol 1b, at pg. 174.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, at page 175.

Understanding that the rights violations and abuses were and continue to be deliberate, and understanding the specific way Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people were, and continue to be targeted, is necessary because these are the root causes of the disappearances, murders, physical violence and the political, economic, social, and systemic violence Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people experience. Confronting this requires an absolute paradigm shift through decolonization, and this cannot happen if the truth about the root causes is not understood, acknowledged, and accepted. We must always start with truth, as there is no reconciliation without truth.

In addition to understanding the root causes, it is important to understand why the violence continues today. For this we look to the four pathways the National Inquiry identified as the ways in which the genocide and colonial violence is maintained in Canada today. These four pathways are namely:

- Historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma.
- The social and economic marginalisation of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
- The maintaining of the status quo and the lack of political and institutional will.
- Ignoring of the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.<sup>10</sup>

We agree with the findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report on how these four pathways play a role in maintaining the genocide. We further believe that implementation of the Calls for Justice and measures designed to end the genocide must address and disrupt these four pathways. We continue to demand acknowledgment of the genocide in all its forms.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report represents the truths and the lived experience of hundreds of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The 231 Calls for Justice, including the Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Calls of Justice and the 21 Calls for Justice for Quebec, are evidence based and rooted in Indigenous rights, including Inherent and Treaty rights, Indigenous laws, and human rights laws. They are therefore legal imperatives, meaning that they are not just suggestions, but rooted in legal instruments that are binding on all governments and government actors. For the NFSC the implementation of the Calls for Justice must be the foundation and the goal of any NAP. We will continue to stress the need to end the violence immediately, uphold the rights and human dignity of the Indigenous Peoples, ensure that justice is practiced interpersonally and institutionally, reparation for damages caused, the growth of Indigenous cultures and nationhood with Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people restored to their rightful place and power.

In addition to guiding the work of the implementation of the Calls to Justice, the Principles for Change has guided our work in the NAP process. In our work we have strived to do our work in a manner consistent with the values and approaches outlined in the Principles for Change. Honouring our distinct experiences, knowledge, cultures, histories, and agency, we have tried to work together in ways that are decolonized and decolonizing.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, at page 167.

## Understanding Genocide

Many struggle to accept the use of the word “genocide”. It is the word used by many families, survivors and witnesses that shared their truths with National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report ultimately concluded that the violence Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are subjected to amounts to a race-based genocide. They wrote:

“ The violence the National Inquiry heard amounts to a race-based genocide of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, which especially targets women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This genocide has been empowered by colonial structures evidenced notably by the Indian Act, the Sixties Scoop, residential schools and breaches of human and Indigenous rights, leading directly to the current increased rates of violence, death, and suicide in Indigenous populations.<sup>11</sup>

Even without legal analysis, families and survivors will tell you that they know they are targeted for assimilation and elimination because they are Indigenous and female or 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and because perpetrators know that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are not protected by the state and instead are subjected to state racism. Negative responses from the state condone further violence and avoid responsibility and commitment. The conclusion of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report is based on the application of international and domestic legal understanding of genocide to the truths shared and evidence gathered by the National Inquiry. In the Supplementary Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, it states:

“ The thousands of stories of violence heard by the National Inquiry over the three intense years of its mandate lifted the veil over the existence of a genocide perpetrated by the Canadian state against Indigenous peoples. This genocide was enabled by colonial structures and policies maintained over centuries until the present day and constitutes a root cause of the violence currently being perpetrated against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Legally speaking, this genocide consists of a composite wrongful act that triggers the responsibility of the Canadian state under international law. Canada has breached its international obligations through a series of actions and omissions taken as a whole, and this breach will persist as long as genocidal acts continue to occur and destructive policies are maintained. Under international law, Canada has a duty to redress the harm it caused and to provide restitution, compensation and satisfaction to Indigenous peoples. But first and foremost, Canada’s violation of one of the most fundamental rules of international law necessitates an obligation of cessation: Canada must put an end to its perennial pattern of violence against and oppression of Indigenous peoples.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019), A legal Analysis on Genocide*, at page 50.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, at page 26.

The NFSC believes that genocide is the appropriate word to describe the violence which Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are subjected to. It is not a mere tragedy. It is not accidental. The reality we live today is because of intentional actions and omissions directed at Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in an attempt to assimilate and eliminate us as individuals and as Peoples. If we do not call this what it is, how can we honestly expect to end it? Efforts to end the genocide, to repair the harm caused and heal individually and collectively, must now match, and exceed the intentions and actions that fueled the genocide.

## 4.0 Path Forward

The development of the NAP has been challenging at times. That said, it has been ground-breaking to have so many partners at the table working towards the common goal of ending race and gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Through this process governments, Indigenous organizations, the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community, urban Indigenous community and families and survivors have worked together. This is important as we all know the solutions, and all carry an obligation to work towards transformative change through decolonization. We must do this work grounded in equitable, dignified, and respectful relationships and from a position of strength.

As the holders of expert knowledge and experience, the NFSC members and all families and survivors, are all subject matter experts. Our expertise is the evidence upon which decisions need to be made. We are prepared to work with all partners to coordinate and validate efforts. All families that want to be part of the process must be provided pathways for engagement with partners in the NAP implementation work to come. Mutual and clear understanding of structure, process, roles and responsibilities now and moving forward will be key to supporting relationships. Families and survivors must see their expertise and agency in processes and in the outcomes. This cannot be limited to the NFSC: all families and survivors, especially families and survivors from distinct Nations, Peoples, and communities, should see their expertise and agency inform and be included by partners responsible for implementation of the NAP and the Calls for Justice. Further, their inclusion must respect their agency, freedom and independence of thought, perspective, and beliefs. When families and survivors are engaged through various pathways, these pathways, and the work to be done transparently will provide certainty of roles, responsibilities, and expectations.



As the members of the NFSC we take our role in this process as a sacred responsibility. We know that we have the lived experience and expertise to bring about transformative change through decolonization. The NAP development process has centered families and survivors in a way that starts to honour our experience, expertise, and agency. As the NFSC members we remain committed to this process and we remind all partners to think about how we work together. We all know that to make transformative change, and real impacts, we need to work in transformative and decolonizing ways. We must continue to see decolonizing approaches in process and relationships to ensure we are creating transformative change through decolonization for our women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. As we move into the work of implementation of the NAP and the Calls for Justice, families and survivors must remain central to informing the work and evaluating success. We have provided a path forward to guide our collective efforts. The Principles for Change must guide the work of implementation, and the Four Pillars must guide the pathways for families and survivors to remain centered in the work. This is the path towards ending the genocide through decolonization.



## 5.0 NFSC Members



**Hilda Anderson-Pyrz** is a member of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and the co-chair of the National Family and Survivors Circle. For the past 20 years, she has been a fierce and tireless advocate for ending gender- and race-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Through her grassroots advocacy work, Hilda has relentlessly told truth to power, holding governments accountable in addressing the ongoing genocide of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. It is her firm belief that every member of society has a responsibility—and is part of the solution—in ending all forms of gender- and race-based violence.

Since 2017, Hilda has been the Program Manager for Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.'s Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Liaison Unit, and the former co-chair of the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition. Her work in raising awareness of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people has earned her recognition, becoming a recipient of the 2019 RESOLVE Manitoba Community Award, and being named a Manitoba Honour 150 Recipient in February 2021.

Her continued determination to center the voices and expertise of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people is guided by her own life experience as an impacted family member. Hilda has found healing through her work, which she bases in the recognition that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are sacred and can heal themselves and their communities through their resilience, agency, and lived expertise. She is passionate about the need for Indigenous-led solutions using collaborative and culturally affirming approaches.

Through her courageous advocacy for families and survivors, her strength in the face of significant grief, and her powerful voice, Hilda continues to create a safer world for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people built on accountability, inclusion, and interconnectedness.



**Denise Pictou Maloney** was born in Boston, Massachusetts, USA and moved to Nova Scotia, Canada when she was 9 years old. She is a member of the Sipekne'katik First Nation and was raised just outside of K'jipuktuk (Halifax). She maintains strong familial connections to several Indigenous Communities in Mi'kma'ki. Denise was raised with a strong work ethic based in traditional protocol, ethics, morals, inherent rights, and a deep respect for her connection to land and water.

At a young age, Denise and her sister suffered the murder of their mother under tragic circumstances. Before completing university, where she was studying the fields of microbiology, sociology, and psychology, she made the decision to put her education on hold to prioritize and focus on raising her two children while attending multiple trials for her mother's murder, an ordeal that spanned over ten years.

Denise has campaigned for over 20 years for justice and often speaks publicly about her family's journey. She is an advocate for inherent Indigenous rights and has spoken on behalf of her mother at the United Nations, academic institutions, and conferences for civil rights and journalism to bring awareness to the injustices of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

For the past 15 years, Denise has been employed by the Halifax Regional Center for Education (HRCE), and most recently worked as a Mi'kmaq Indigenous Student Support Worker. She took a two-year leave of absence to work at the national level for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. She is a strong advocate for justice, equity, and change so that one day Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people can reclaim their rightful inherent place to "continue their cycle in this Universe."





**Ann Maje Raider** is a Kaska grandmother and a member of the Wolf clan in the unceded Kaska Territory in the Southeast Yukon. As the former Chief of Liard First Nation—and the first to be democratically elected—Ann has demonstrated over 25 years of service, leadership, and activism, advocating to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

In 1998, along with a small group of Kaska women, Ann joined the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS). The Society acquired legal standing during the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and its submission provided recommendations from Yukon women on ending gender- and race-based violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

As the Society's Executive Director, Ann has implemented numerous and innovative social response initiatives related to cultural wellness and social justice. Recently, the Society and the RCMP came together to implement a ground-breaking community safety protocol called "Together for Justice", which was recognized for Best Practices by the United Nations and earned Ann the Yukon Government Community Safety Award for Outstanding Project in 2016.

Today, Ann co-chairs the Yukon Advisory Committee, which is helping develop the "Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon MMIWG2S+ Strategy". Her current role as a member of the National Family and Survivors Circle furthers her passion for advocacy, which comes from her lived experience of giving a voice to her sister, who was murdered. Her abilities to engage her community in a consistent path of development and blend traditional and Western therapeutic models of practice have earned her recognition, including the 2017 Governor General Polar Award.



Land defender, activist, artist and master carver, **Bernie Williams (Gul-Giit-Jaad)**, is of St'langng Jaanas/Laanas clan in Haida Gwaii. A long-time resident in Vancouver's Downtown East Side, Bernie is a passionate advocate and frontline worker rallying against the gender- and race-based violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. As a survivor and family member, Bernie seeks to empower these groups with the belief that "sovereign women lead to a sovereign nation".

In 2005, Bernie co-founded Walk4Justice, an organization that marches to create awareness of escalating violence towards Indigenous women and girls. Walk4Justice led seven walks across Canada and three walks over the Highway of Tears, bringing national attention to the Highway of Tears and Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Walk4Justice eventually led a march to open the first BC symposium into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2006. The momentum eventually helped propel the Government of Canada's decision to create a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2016.

In April of 2018, Bernie testified at the National Inquiry in Richmond. The truths she courageously spoke were included in the National Inquiry's Final Report, which created 231 Calls for Justice for governments across Canada.

Today, Bernie continues the frontline volunteer work she began over 30 years ago, searching for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and supporting impacted family members and survivors. Bernie's resilience in the face of resistance, willingness to speak truth to power, and ability to educate have made her a powerful voice for those suffering from gender- and race-based violence and gentrification in her community.



**Charlotte Wolfrey (Pottle)** was born on the land in the Rigolet area of Nunatsiavut. Strongly rooted in her Inuit heritage, she practices her culture and lives from the animals and plants from her community.

Known regionally and nationally for her advocacy work for the rights of women and children and for speaking against family violence, Charlotte has held a variety of senior management positions in healthcare and municipal administration, including serving on the Community Council and Labrador Inuit Association.

In addition to being involved in research since the early 1980s, she has served many local, provincial, national and international committees and organizations, including Canadian Inuit Circumpolar Health Society, Atlantic Aboriginal Health Research, and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

In recognition of her decades of service and advocacy, she was named Pauktuutit's Inuit Woman of the Year in 2011 and became a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013. In 2012, Charlotte was selected to be an Honorary Witness for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. For two years, she served on the National Family Advisory Circle, which helped provide recommendations and guidance to the Commissioners of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. After years of speaking out and advocating for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, she is hopeful that transformational change will be possible.

Charlotte is now active as a board member of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and is also currently serving as AngajukKâk (Mayor) of Rigolet. She is proudest of being a wife, a mother to her four children, a grandmother, and a great grandmother.



**Jana Schulz** is Métis and is a citizen of the Métis Nation of British Columbia. She resides in the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Nation in Cranbrook, BC. As a passionate advocate for change who believes in using her voice to stand up for communities, Jana was recently elected as the Regional Women's Representative for the Kootenays in the MNBC 2020 election and is a past president for her local Métis chartered community.

In her elected role, Jana represents the East and West Kootenays, advocating for women's rights, community safety, and meaningful community connections. Her decision to run in the election was made after discovering difficulties in accessing resources; she now guides individuals and families in navigating community resources and finding solutions.

Jana testified at the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2018 and is currently working through informal resolutions with local RCMP as a result of a referral that was sent to the RCMP Commissioner and Minister of Justice based on her testimony. In this process, she helps illuminate best practices in trauma-informed responses, including exploring the creation of Indigenous-based victims services, domestic violence liaisons, and better training for first responders supporting victims of violence. It is her hope that her advocacy will lead to building better connections and partnerships that provide more supports and safety for Indigenous women and girls within her community.



**Jenny Lay** is Cree from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in northern Manitoba, and her traditional name is Wawatew Iskwew. Jenny currently lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba and is Assistant Coordinator to the National Family and Survivors Circle.

Jenny has been personally impacted by the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG2S+) through the domestic homicide of her mother. She uses this experience to advocate for other children who have been impacted by violence and left behind due to the loss of their caregivers. Jenny participated in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls during the Winnipeg hearings in October 2017, where she detailed her experiences as an impacted family member and survivor of violence and provided her recommendations.

In 2019, Jenny presented as a panelist on her experiences as a child impacted by MMIWG2S+ at the United Nations CSW63 in a parallel event hosted by the Institute for International Women's Rights – MB. She currently works as the Project and Event Coordinator for the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Liaison Unit, where she uses her experiences to help others impacted by the issue of MMIWG2S+. Jenny has found healing through her work and continues to use her voice to create change for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.



**Kim McPherson** is a proud member of Peguis First Nation in Manitoba and is a mother of two sons aged 29 and 15 years.

An impacted family member, Kim's family tragically lost two beautiful women: her sister, Jennifer Dawn McPherson, in 2013 and aunt, Jennifer Johnston, in 1978. Since Jennifer's murder, Kim had to find a way to grieve and heal.

Today, Kim tries to honour her memory by promoting awareness of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the community. She carries on her spiritual healing journey by working with her younger sister, Gerri-Lee Pangman, to create art via mediums such as beaded jewelry, stained glass, and holiday dreamcatcher ornaments. They have honoured their sister's memory by naming their home business J.D.M Indigenous Designs. It is Kim's goal to empower

her community and work towards reclaiming the culture inspiring Indigenous women and girls.

Kim has attained two degrees—a Baccalaureate of Nursing and a Bachelor of Laws—and has a combined 18 years experience working with the Province of Manitoba in the departments of Health and Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Indigenous and Northern Relations). She also has spent two years working at Indigenous organizations, including the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and most recently at the Southern Chiefs' Organization. Kim has a strong understanding of intergovernmental relations and national matters, such as health and Indigenous relations.

As her family testified at the National Inquiry, Kim's wish is to see a National Action Plan developed and implemented to address the urgent and long-term challenges to end the violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and reclaim their rightful place in Canada as First Peoples.



**Melanie Morrison** is a strong Mohawk wife and mother from the Mohawk territory of Kahnawake. For nearly twenty years, she has been an employee of Caisse Populaire Kahnawake. As a conscientious local advocate who thoroughly enjoys working for her community, she is also a member of the Action Team for the Food Sovereignty Group of Kahnawake.

Melanie has been an activist for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people since 2006, when her sister Tiffany Morrison went missing and whose remains were found in 2010, a murder that remains unsolved to this day. She uses her lived experience to speak at conferences across the country on policing to emphasize the need for systemic changes in the way cases are handled, including the 2016 Justice Practitioners Summit on Missing and Murdered Women and Girls in Canada, and the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association in 2018.

Melanie's relentless drive and resilience have led her to advocate passionately on behalf of impacted families and survivors. She was a member of the National Family Advisory Circle for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, guiding the Kepek-Quebec supplementary report and the forensic team. In addition, she was the Lead Facilitator for her healing circle's "Women are Sisters" project in 2019.

Melanie's years of advocacy work have earned her recognition, including receiving the Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award in 2017, and being featured in the Amnesty International Francophone "Writes for Rights" campaign in 2018. Now, as a member of the National Family and Survivors Circle, Melanie hopes her work will engender changes that ensure no other family has to go through what hers did.



**Myrna LaPlante:** In September 2007, Myrna's aunt, Emily Osmond, age 78, disappeared from her rural residence near Raymore, SK. After years of intense searching, Emily Osmond currently remains missing. This disappearance led Myrna on many years of activism, awareness, and advocacy of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG2S+). She first participated in MMIWG2S+ activism in 1996, by supporting an Indigenous family whose daughter was murdered. During 2017 – 2019, she sat on the National Family Advisory Circle (NFAC), a group of impacted families from across Canada that provided guidance to the Commissioners during the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

She has been an activist on many issues and topics related to Indigenous peoples and marginalized groups since the mid-1970s and has participated with numerous community and agency boards and groups over the years. Myrna is Co-chair of Iskwewuk E-wichiwitochik (Women Walking Together), the Saskatoon-based volunteer support group for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse persons.

In 2011, the LaPlante and Wolfe families faced another family crisis when 17-year-old nephew, Cody Ridge Wolfe, went missing at Muskowekwan First Nation, Lestock, SK. Sadly, Cody was located deceased in May 2020.

Using these lived experiences and her innate strength, Myrna continues to volunteer and do part-time work for MMIWG2S+ activities, community and special events. She offers her search coordination, project management, and support skills as required.

Myrna is a member of the Day Star First Nation, Touchwood Agency Tribal Council, Treaty 4, and resides in Saskatoon. She completed a 30-year career in adult education and Aboriginal employment development. Myrna has one daughter and three beautiful grandchildren.



**Tanya Debassige** is Ojibwe and Odawa from Mnidoo Mnising, Manitoulin Island. She was born and raised on her Anishinabek traditional territory within the Robison Huron Treaty, and is the mother of two amazing grown children and a proud grandmother. As the granddaughter of a residential school survivor and having attended an Indian Day School in her formative years of her life, she has learned resilience, patience, and tenacity.

As an impacted family member, and an impacted community member who has witnessed the results of systemic racism and violence, Tanya uses her lived experience to advocate for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and survivors of gender- and race-based violence. After finding challenges in accessing resources, she now helps impacted families and survivors navigate provincial, federal, and First Nations programs.

Tanya ensures her advocacy and teaching is rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing, which she credits to her parents. Her father, Adam Debassige, instilled in Tanya the importance of education, and now, despite overcoming learning disabilities, Tanya holds two degrees. As a key part of her family's healing, Tanya's mother, Lorraine, is a firm believer in language in ceremony after overcoming the mentality of needing to hide her cultural practices. These values have allowed Tanya to be a better advocate and a better educator in providing information to other families and survivors.

Now, as a member of the National Family and Survivors Circle, Tanya is a solutions-focused change agent educating the world that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are sacred. Her fervent hope is that the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry's Final Report are implemented, and that every Canadian understands their responsibility in ending gender- and race-based violence.



**Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster**, elected in 2019, currently serves as Deputy Mayor for the City of Iqaluit. She is a profound Inuk artist using art as a catalyst for discourse and civic engagement on femicide, trauma and survival.

As an active social political activist and feminist, she works endlessly to better her community and the lives of Inuit. Pitsiulaaq devotes her career to organizing community engagement projects and northern development initiatives and advocacy for artists, homelessness, and MMIWG2S+.

She is a survivor and crusader for systemic change in policy, legislation, and the criminal justice system to stop gender-based violence against women. Pitsiulaaq has been impacted by the loss of family members, including her aunt Sylvia Ann Lyall, who was murdered in 2003, and her cousin Angela Pitseolak Meyer, who has been missing in Yellowknife since 2010. She testified at the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2018.

A mother of three, parent and ningiuq to her aunt's orphaned son and his daughter, Pitsiulaaq became known throughout Iqaluit for transforming graffiti into positive messages by covering the previous offensive images and statements with words of kindness and support.

# Appendix A – Glossary of Key Terms

Words have power. With our words we convey ideas, intention, roles, and responsibilities. When used in the wrong way or without understanding the intentions behind words, the teachings they carry can be lost and the voice of the speaker can be silenced. To ensure our words are understood and our voices are not silenced, we are providing you our understanding of key words and concepts. We acknowledge that other users of these words may have different interpretations and intentions with them; for our part in the NAP, we want you to understand our interpretation and intentions from the words we use.

The NFSC understanding and usage of key terms are as follows:

**“Agency”**; the autonomy of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors to think, speak, and decide for themselves as Rights holders, based on their own worldview, beliefs, faith, lived experience, expertise, aspirations, and self-determination, with dignity.

**“All governments”**; includes federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments as well as agencies and organizations with delegated authority

**“Decolonization”**; process of resisting and dismantling colonial ideas and the impacts of colonization through re-building and reasserting Indigenous Nations and institutions based on ancestral and contemporary Indigenous values, laws, philosophies, and knowledge systems. It requires continuous individual and collective critical questioning and dismantling the ways we have all been influenced by colonialism.

**“Decolonizing approaches”**; when we speak of decolonizing approaches we are talking about processes and methodologies that support the ongoing work towards decolonization. As a first step, Indigenous-designed and -led, using our Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, based on our right to self-determination, in confronting and dismantling colonial structures and rebuilding our Nations. Building understanding and empathy and shifting behaviours and attitudes for meaningful change.

**“Distinctions-based”**; looking at all the unique and distinct histories, realities, needs, and aspirations of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. This could include the Nation or Peoples they are a part of their geographic location, distinct language, cultures, worldviews, and unique relationship with the Canadian state. It relates to inclusivity and interconnectedness in that we must be responsive to everyone’s needs because looking after one another is a part of who we are as Indigenous people.

**“Families of the heart”**; We acknowledge and honour the concept of chosen family.

**“Indigenous”** and **“Indigenous Peoples”**; we would like to honour and respect the many unique and distinct Nations and Peoples that have existed on these lands since time immemorial, and prior to colonization. The most respectful way would be to use the non-colonial names Nations and Peoples use to identify themselves, such as Lnu, Haida, Kaska, Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, Dakota, Nehiyaw, Inuit, Métis and the many other Nations and Peoples. We struggle with the term Indigenous and Indigenous Peoples because it lumps all the Nations and Peoples into one group and erases their distinctness. However, we use it in our chapter for efficiency and in accordance with the international legal understanding of the term. Further, when we use these terms, we do so in a manner that reject all ways that the distinct and unique Peoples and Nations have been erroneously lumped together.

**“Pathways”**; Diversity of approaches, opportunities, means and ways, for new solutions within the National Action Plan to be conceived, driven, and managed by those most affected so that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people continue to reclaim power and place within their families, communities, and Nations and in their day-to-day encounters within Canadian institutions, systems, and broader society.

**“Transformative Change”**; when we speak of transformative change, we speak of transformative change through decolonization and decolonizing approaches. Further it speaks to the need to be transformative in the way we do things and for the outcomes to be transformative in the lives of Indigenous women, girls 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. Transformative change in the context of ending the genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people cannot be separated from decolonization.