

Government Response to the Fifth Report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women - Responding to the Calls for Justice: Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in the Context of Resource Development Projects

INTRODUCTION

On December 14, 2022, the Standing Committee on the Status of Women (FEWO), tabled a report in Parliament entitled: [Responding to the Calls for Justice: Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in the Context of Resource Development Projects](#). Recognizing that 470 major resource development projects are under construction or planned from 2022 to 2032, that resource development projects have direct impacts on neighboring communities, and that the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) documented the relationship between resource development projects and violence against Indigenous women and girls, the Committee undertook its study in an effort to ensure that "...resource development projects in Canada are conducted in environments that are free from violence..."

The Government of Canada acknowledges the statements of many witnesses which expressed that violence and barriers to participation in the resource development industry experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are a result of generations of racism, sexism, and colonial laws and policies.

The Government of Canada also acknowledges that:

- Indigenous Peoples are the stewards, rights-holders, and in many cases, title-holders, to the land upon which development takes place; and,
- addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people related to resource development requires a holistic, whole-of-government, and whole-of-Canada response.

Existing Federal Initiatives

In 2017, the Department of Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) launched **It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**, a federal GBV strategy that builds on and coordinates existing federal programs and initiatives and lays the foundation for greater action on GBV.

Since 2021, the Government of Canada has taken steps to address GBV, including allocating specific funding for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. To address the Calls for Justice and Calls for Miskotahâ ("change" in Michif), families and survivors, federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, (F-P-T-I), alongside Indigenous organizations and communities, worked together to develop the **2021 MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People**. The **Federal Pathway to Address MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People** (Federal Pathway) is the Government of Canada's contribution to this plan. Historic investments are associated with this work:

- Budget 2021 provided investments to various government departments and agencies dedicated to address root causes that contribute to the crisis of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, which include poverty, lack of affordable, adequate and safe housing, environmental threats, political repression, social unrest, education, health, housing, mental wellness, denial of cultural practices, disease, food insecurity and human rights abuse. Investments included funding for the wellbeing of families and survivors of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, cultural spaces, Indigenous languages, and health and mental wellness.
- Additionally, Budget 2021 provided investments to advance towards a National Action Plan to End GBV. Of these investments, funds were also allocated to WAGE, to bolster the capacity of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations to provide GBV prevention

programming aimed at addressing the root causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

- These investments were also part of a larger Budget 2021 investment to narrow gaps between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous people, to support healthy, safe and prosperous Indigenous communities, and advance meaningful reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation. Many of these are also linked to addressing MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and the Calls for Justice, including funding for housing, health care, child and family services, education, and infrastructure in Indigenous communities.

On June 3, 2022, Indigenous partners, provinces, territories and the federal government released the **2022 Progress Report on the MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan**. This report highlighted that while some progress was made on the priorities set out in the National Action Plan, work remains to be done and called for several immediate actions. On that same day, the federal government released the first **Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report**, which outlined the progress on the implementation of each of its commitments under the Federal Pathway, the next steps, and the linkages of this work to the Calls for Justice.

Building on the foundation of the federal GBV Strategy, in November 2022, the **National Action Plan to End GBV** was launched. This 10-year plan is an historic milestone that builds on existing federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) approaches and strategies to prevent and address GBV. It is a strategic framework for action within and across jurisdictions, with the goal of supporting victims, survivors, and their families, no matter where they live. Budget 2022 provided investments to WAGE to support provinces and territories in their efforts to implement the National Action Plan to End GBV. The National Action Plan to End GBV is aligned with, and complementary to the MMIWG National Action Plan and Federal Pathway. The Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNAC) and WAGE are working collaboratively with each other and other government departments (OGDs) to advance the implementation of both action plans. WAGE will continue to work with survivors, Indigenous partners, civil society, and others to inform the implementation of the National Action Plan to End GBV in a way that responds to the evolving needs of, and emerging issues, for survivors and victims of GBV.

Addressing the Recommendations

In developing the Government's Response, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and CIRNAC worked with thirteen (13) federal departments and agencies that have initiatives in progress that address in part Calls for Justice 13.1 to 13.5 as well as FEWO's 15 recommendations.

Addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the resource development sector is a joint responsibility between all levels of government and private industry involved in resource development projects. The recommendations and the observation from FEWO's report address a wide range of topics and cut across federal, provincial, territorial and municipal jurisdictions as well as private industry. This Response outlines the ways in which the Government of Canada is already addressing these recommendations by highlighting existing initiatives underway to address Calls for Justice, with a focus on Calls for Justice 13.1 to 13.5. Many of these initiatives include collaboration with all levels of government, as well as Indigenous partners and industry.

Addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people requires the Government of Canada to leverage whole-of-government coordination and collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous Peoples and governments, leaders and representatives, grassroots organizations and families and survivors. This includes leveraging existing governance and oversight mechanisms, such as federal Director General and Assistant Deputy Minister Steering Committees on MMIWG as well as the National Roundtable with Indigenous Leaders and Representatives, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments on MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, which held its first meeting on January 10, 2023. The Government of Canada, through NRCan and CIRNAC, will also continue its grassroot-level engagement with Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and communities to better understand the realities they are facing in the natural resources sector.

Additionally, the Government will leverage various departmental grants and contribution funding to build and increase service capacity for Indigenous communities, as well as work collaboratively with regulatory bodies to ensure consistent policy and regulatory coordination. Finally, the Government of Canada will continue to use current and up to date data on violence against women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people to drive decision-making.

This Government Response addresses FEWO's recommendations below, grouped in three overarching themes that are prominent among the 15 recommendations and observation (outlined in Annex A): 1) Indigenous Rights; 2) Social Infrastructure and Service Capacity; and 3) Increasing Skills, Representation and Opportunities.

Theme 1 – Indigenous Rights (Recommendations 2, 3 and 4)

The Government of Canada is largely supportive of recommendations 2 and 3 as they align with the mandate of all ministers to contribute to the implementation of the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (UN Declaration) and support Indigenous self-government. Recommendation 4 aligns with the mandate of the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations to work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis leadership, survivors, families and communities and with the support of all relevant ministers, including the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth and the Minister of Indigenous Services, to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people by accelerating the implementation of the Federal Pathway and to work with Indigenous partners, provinces and territories to support the implementation of the **2021 MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ National Action Plan**. Addressing violence against MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people is a whole-of-government and industry effort, and is supported by work from the Ministers of Justice, Public Safety, Canadian Heritage, Health, and many others. NRCan is working to specifically address Calls for Justice 13.1 to 13.5 which refer to the extractive and development industries.

Recommendations 2 and 3: Indian Act and Respecting Indigenous Rights

In alignment with Recommendation 2, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is taking action to move beyond the *Indian Act* and addressing registration and membership issues present in the *Act* is a prerequisite for doing so. Engagement sessions with First Nations, Indigenous organizations, and other interested individuals on possible amendments to the *Act* were held between August to December 2022. On December 14, 2022, ISC introduced Bill C-38, *An Act to Amend the Indian Act* (new registration entitlements), and launched information sessions on the Bill in January 2023. Bill C-38 addresses remaining *Indian Act* provisions affecting descendants of enfranchised individuals, the reinstatement of the members (and descendants) of the former Michel Band who enfranchised as a collective in 1958, and provides a legal mechanism to give women, and their direct descendants the option to re-affiliate to their natal bands. The Bill also allows individuals to apply to have their names removed from the Indian Register and a band list maintained by ISC, and addresses outdated and offensive terminology in the estate's provisions. Beyond enfranchisement, other broader issues remain unaddressed in the registration and band membership provisions of the *Act*, such as the issue of second-generation cut-off. ISC has committed to launching a formal consultation process to address these broader issues in registration and membership in 2023.

Additionally, in its report, FEWO highlighted the significance of ensuring that resource development projects in Canada were grounded in the UN Declaration. The **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act** (UNDA) came into force on June 21, 2021. As per the Act, the Government of Canada will work in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, to:

- Take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of Canada are consistent with the UN Declaration;
- Prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration; and
- Develop annual reports on progress and submit them to Parliament.

The Government of Canada is currently working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation to implement the UNDA. Engagement is proceeding in two phases. Phase one, now

complete, focused on working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to better understand priorities to help shape the draft action plan to protect and promote Indigenous rights, including the right to self-determination, self-government, equality, and non-discrimination and to identify potential measures for aligning federal laws with the UN Declaration. Proposed measures related to resource development on Indigenous territories have been included. The action plan, informed by the priorities identified by Indigenous partners is under development, and is scheduled for release in Spring 2023.

Budget 2022 provided funding to Justice Canada to accelerate work towards implementing the UNDA, including the co-development of an action plan with Indigenous partners. In addition, funds were also provided to support NRCan's work with industry and Indigenous partners to support Justice Canada with the development of the UNDA action plan, which must be completed by June 2023.

NRCan remains committed to continue its meaningful engagements with Indigenous Peoples and natural resources industry stakeholders, and its work with OGDs and agencies to ensure that the implementation of the UNDA, and associated action plan will lead to meaningful and positive change to how Indigenous Peoples, communities, and businesses participate in sustainable natural resources development. This will include exploring measures to help the resource sector consider Free, Prior and Informed Consent, as well as measures supporting Indigenous Peoples having a seat at the table for decisions that affect their communities.

Some of this work will begin in Spring 2023 when NRCan will conduct engagement sessions on the parameters and scope of natural resources-related UNDA action plan measures with Indigenous partners, including National Indigenous Organizations, Indigenous economic development organizations, Indigenous industry associations, National Indigenous Women's Organizations, as well as and other key stakeholders, including industry as well as provinces and territories.

Relatedly, the **Impact Assessment Act** (IAA), which came into force in late 2019, was uniquely positioned to include a direct commitment to implementing the UN Declaration in its preamble. As such, resource development projects assessed under the IAA are legislatively grounded in the UN Declaration and supported by additional policy guidance.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) is committed to centering reconciliation in its work, creating the ethical space needed to collaborate with Indigenous Peoples, continuing to work with Indigenous Peoples to help evolve best practices, and further respecting the rights affirmed in the UN Declaration.

IAAC and partner departments and agencies have allocated funding to continue to partner with Indigenous Peoples in assessment processes and to advance reconciliation in partnership with Indigenous Peoples. Partnering and engaging with Indigenous groups in IAA-related activities is critical to understanding and addressing the potential impacts of projects on Indigenous Peoples, including on their rights.

- Outside of project assessments, IAAC and partner departments/agencies have developed various programs and initiatives aimed at improving partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, including the development – or co-development – of policies and guidance, and to increase the capacity of Indigenous groups to participate in or lead some or all of an assessment.
- Activities under this theme largely relate to:
 - Shifting from transaction-based engagement and consultation to an approach focused on relationship building;
 - Meeting expectations and legal obligations related to meaningful engagement and dialogue, in particular, moving beyond the duty to consult on project-specific consultation;
 - Partnering and collaborating with Indigenous groups, including through the co-development of policies, regulations, and guidance, and project assessment-related outputs; and

- Building capacity among Indigenous groups to maximize Indigenous partnership in assessment processes.

IAAC will also continue to support CIRNAC in modern treaty, self-government and Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination discussions that include impact and environmental assessment components.

The IAA and its supporting policy framework provide Indigenous communities the opportunity to:

- collaborate with IAAC to conduct parts of an assessment;
- work in partnership with IAAC;
- undertake Indigenous-led assessments;
- lead parts of IAAC's assessment through delegation; and,
- substitute an Indigenous jurisdiction's process for the federal assessment process.

This model supports the Government of Canada's aim to consider Free, Prior and Informed Consent throughout the impact assessment process for all decisions that affect Indigenous Peoples' rights and interests. The approach to achieving Free, Prior and Informed Consent is based on ensuring meaningful and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples from the outset and will vary based on the project impacts and the interests of Indigenous Peoples in the vicinity of the project.

In alignment with the UN Declaration and in continued support of Indigenous self-determination, **Wah-ila-toos, the Clean Energy in Indigenous, Remote and Rural Communities Initiative**, which is a partnership between NRCan, ISC, CIRNAC, Infrastructure Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada, will support broader efforts to advance Indigenous climate leadership through clean energy. Overseen by an external **Indigenous Advisory Council**, and made up of seven Indigenous leaders, the initiative is responsible for supporting Indigenous and remote communities in their self-determined transition to clean energy. The initiative and Indigenous Advisory Council will provide advice and direction to the federal government on program implementation and future strategy.

Additionally, CIRNAC is working towards the renewal of the **Federal Initiative on Consultation** and of the duty to consult guidelines for federal officials. The Federal Initiative on Consultation, which received funding from Budget 2021, provides funding for the co-development of consultation protocols agreements. Protocols are roadmaps for how to engage and consult with Indigenous Peoples on their terms, in other words, a tailored approach to Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Recommendation 4: Calls for Justice

The Government of Canada is committed to ending violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through action in the four interconnected thematic areas that address the root causes for this violence identified by the National Inquiry: culture, health and wellness, human safety and security, and justice. The initiatives that are being implemented to support this goal are outlined in the Federal Pathway, the Government of Canada's contribution to the National Action Plan.

In 2022, the Government of Canada, alongside Indigenous organizations and partners, as well as provinces and territories, released the first annual progress report on the MMIWG National Action Plan. Additionally, in 2022, the Government of Canada also released its first annual progress report on the Federal Pathway, which provides an overview of commitments that were announced in the Federal Pathway (June 2021) and funded in the 2020 Fall Economic Statement, Budget 2021 and Budget 2022. It also notes the Calls for Justice and Calls to Miskotahâ to which the initiatives are linked. The Federal Pathway is evergreen and new initiatives are added every year that address MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Some of the initiatives outlined include new programs and services such as the **Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative**, part of the **Comprehensive Violence Prevention Strategy** (Calls for Justice 1.8, 3.4, 7.3, 16.29, 17.20, and 17.23); and funding from Budget 2022 to address critical housing needs in Indigenous communities (Calls for Justice 4.1, 4.6, 12.4, 16.19, 18.25).

The federal government has created policies that support important focus areas directly responding to the Calls for Justice, such as community safety initiatives, and justice and policing, through various strategies and action plans such as: the National Action Plan to End GBV (Calls for Justice 1.5 and 1.6), **Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy** (Call for Justice 2.6), **Distinctions-Based Mental Health and Wellness Strategies** (Calls for Justice 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 7.2, 7.3, 17.4), and the **Indigenous Justice Strategy** (Calls for Justice 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 7.2, 7.3, 17.4).

Key legislation has also been passed such as the *Indigenous Languages Act* (Calls for Justice 2.3, 2.4), the *Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families* (Calls for Justice 2.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.6), and the UNDA (Call for Justice 1.2v).

The FEWO report also outlined observations from witnesses, which called for accountability and reporting mechanisms outlined in Calls for Justice 1.7 (which calls for an Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson and tribunal) and Call for Justice 1.10 (which calls for an independent oversight mechanism that can report annually to Parliament on the Calls for Justice), including in the National Action Plan and its 2022 Progress Report. The Government is moving forward on these Calls:

- On January 10, 2023, Jennifer Moore Rattray was appointed as Ministerial Special Representative, who will provide advice and recommendations, through engagement with survivors, families, partners and organizations, in support of Call for Justice 1.7 to create an Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson; and
- Innovation 7, an Indigenous organization, has been chosen to develop recommendations for an oversight mechanism to enhance accountability and progress in ending violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through engagement with Indigenous partners, families, survivors and organizations.

The Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples' report *Not Enough: All Words and No Action on MMIWG*, also sought more information on the federal implementation of the Calls for Justice. As outlined in the Government Response to the Senate Report, the Government of Canada will more clearly communicate and strengthen the focus in its reporting on how its initiatives are linked to the Calls for Justice in the 2023 Federal Pathway annual progress report. The Government of Canada will also develop an online compendium of federal initiatives addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and will link these to the 231 Calls for Justice.

The Government also committed to exploring further avenues to ensure that implicated departments and agencies take the Calls for Justice into account in their work. As part of the whole-of-government commitment to addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, CIRNAC is working with government departments and agencies to clarify the linkages of their work to the Calls for Justice. This includes considering the Calls for Justice when designing and implementing all future legislation, policies, programs and initiatives.

In an effort to better respond to the Calls for Justice, NRCan and WAGE are working collaboratively to conduct an **environmental scan** of key F-P-T-I, non-profit and industry-led research, programs, services and initiatives related to the five Calls for Justice for the resource development sector (13.1 to 13.5). The environmental scan includes options for visualizing research, programs, services and initiatives for Indigenous partners, and collaborative progress on reporting on Calls for Justice 13.1 to 13.5. The Government will also use the knowledge gained through the environmental scan to identify and address potential gaps in research and programming related to these Calls for Justice.

Theme 2 – Social Infrastructure and Service Capacity (Recommendations 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and Observation 1)

The Government of Canada recognizes that Indigenous communities should have access to social infrastructure and culturally relevant services that help improve socio-economic outcomes and reduce and prevent GBV, particularly in relation to resource development projects.

The Government of Canada is largely supportive of recommendations 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. However, the Government of Canada also notes that coordination and support from various jurisdictions, including FPT, municipal, and private industry jurisdictions will be required as many aspects of health, housing, transportation, and security (which includes police services) are regulated by provinces and/or municipalities. For this reason, the Government will need to work collaboratively with, and receive support from all levels of government, Indigenous partners and industry.

Recommendation 11: Services for Survivors of Violence

FEWO's report highlighted the importance of funding for Indigenous survivors of sexual violence and GBV. Through Budget 2021, the Government of Canada is providing funding to support the wellbeing of families and survivors on their healing journeys. The **Support for the Wellbeing of Families and Survivors of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQA+ People Program** supports Indigenous groups and organizations that provide assistance and services for the healing journeys of survivors and individual Indigenous family members who have lost loved ones due to violence. Between 2021 to 2023, 20 Indigenous organizations from across Canada were funded through this program, with projects ranging from small-scale activities to larger activities.

On November 9, 2022, the National Action Plan to End GBV was officially launched by FPT Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women. The National Action Plan to End GBV is a 10-year strategic framework to end GBV in Canada. The implementation of the National Action Plan to End GBV is supported by funding from Budget 2022. This investment will enable provinces and territories to implement the National Action Plan to End GBV in their respective jurisdictions.

WAGE collaborated closely with FPT officials, as well as with Indigenous partners and stakeholders to develop this historic plan. From 2020 to 2021, WAGE held approximately 11 engagements with Indigenous partners and community leaders and engaged National Indigenous Leaders and Representatives (NILRs) through the FPT forum to identify Indigenous priorities and recommendations for the National Action Plan to End GBV. The National Action Plan to End GBV was also informed by over 1,000 recommendations from stakeholders and partners.

The National Action Plan to End GBV is aligned with and complementary to the 2021 MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQA+ people National Action Plan and the Federal Pathway. Pillar 4 of the National Action Plan to End GBV was developed in collaboration with Indigenous partners and is focused on implementing Indigenous led approaches that are coordinated and support sustainable progress towards ending GBV against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQA+ people, no matter where they live.

Pillar 4 of the National Action Plan to End GBV is also the point of alignment with the MMIWG 2SLGBTQQA+ National Action Plan. Budget 2021 provided funding to bolster the capacity of Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQQA+ organizations to provide GBV prevention programming as a key investment under the Human Safety and Security theme of the Federal Pathway, while also serving as a first investment under the National Action Plan to End GBV. This investment is further complemented by additional funding for Indigenous-specific GBV prevention and justice programming provided through **It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address GBV** (federal GBV strategy) launched in 2017. This whole-of-government approach to ending GBV identifies Indigenous Peoples as a priority group. Bilateral negotiations with provinces and territories to support the implementation of the National Action Plan to End GBV are currently underway. Concurrently, WAGE is working closely with Indigenous partners and stakeholders to support the ongoing implementation of the National Action Plan to End GBV.

In 2019, the Government of Canada launched the Public Safety-led **National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking**, which brings together federal efforts under one strategic framework. In December 2020, the Government of Canada announced funding to support projects designed to prevent and address human trafficking and support at-risk populations, victims, and survivors, including Indigenous women and girls.

- This includes specific funding for WAGE to develop the **Continuum of Care Prevention and Interventions for Vulnerable Populations** initiative. This initiative provides funding to eligible organizations to develop, deliver and test innovative prevention programs for at-risk populations, including Indigenous women and girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ and gender non-binary people, children and youth, as well as provide short-term continuum of care interventions to support victims and survivors while they transition out of human trafficking, reintegrate into their communities, and begin their healing and recovery process. WAGE is also funding approximately 19 **anti-human trafficking projects** that include supports for Indigenous populations.
- Public Safety is supporting the **Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline**, a multi-lingual, toll-free service available 24/7 that refers victims to local law enforcement, shelters and a range of other supports and services. The Hotline is a trauma-informed, inclusive, and accessible option which has access to interpretation services in over 200 languages, including over 27 Indigenous languages.

The criminal justice system is a shared responsibility in Canada and all levels of government have an important role to play in addressing the needs of victims and survivors of crime. A key vehicle to support cross-jurisdictional collaboration is the **Federal Victim Strategy (FVS)**, led by Justice Canada. Working with a wide range of partners, the FVS seeks to improve the experience of victims and survivors of crime in the criminal justice system and increase access to justice for victims and survivors through policy development, criminal law reform, and funding through the Victims Fund.

Using 2022-23 grants and contributions funding, the **Justice Canada Victims Fund** supports non-governmental organizations and provincial and territorial governments in their efforts to raise awareness about the needs of victims and survivors of crime and increase access to culturally-grounded and trauma-informed victim services and supports. For example, funding has supported the design and delivery of responsive forms of assistance to victims of human trafficking, survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and child victims. Funding has also continued to support the design and delivery of Indigenous-led victim services and supports.

Most recently, on February 23, 2023, the Minister of Justice announced the Government's intention to provide ongoing support for **Family Information Liaison Units (FILUs)**, which are culturally safe services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Available in every province and territory, FILUs are specialized teams dedicated to supporting families and Indigenous victims of crime and ensuring they have access to information and all available supports.

The Government of Canada will seek new opportunities to increase collaboration with Indigenous partners and organizations and with provincial and territorial partners to improve availability and access to Indigenous-led, culturally safe, and trauma-informed victim services and supports for Indigenous survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

Public Safety is also working to develop survivor-centric, trauma-informed, and culturally relevant guidelines for front-line community workers on how best to support Indigenous victims and survivors of sexual exploitation.

Recommendation 12: Access to Housing

In its recommendations, FEWO outlined the importance of safe and affordable housing in Indigenous communities. With the goal of reducing chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by fiscal year 2027-2028, the Government of Canada has committed multiple investments to **Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy** (including funding through Budget 2017, the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the Fall Economic Statement 2020, Budget 2021, and Budget 2022.) Of these investments, specific funding has been committed to address Indigenous homelessness. This includes funding to support community-based approaches to Indigenous homelessness through **Reaching Home's Indigenous Homelessness Stream** (including funding through Budget 2017, the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the Fall Economic Statement 2020,

and Budget 2021). This also includes investments for distinctions-based approaches to addressing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis homelessness (including funding through Budget 2017, the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the Fall Economic Statement 2020, and Budget 2021).

Recognizing the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples among those experiencing homelessness, the 2019 launch of **Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy** introduced a significant focus on Indigenous homelessness, with dedicated funding to address the unique needs of Indigenous Peoples who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. This funding supports programs and services that are Indigenous-led and culturally relevant. Funding is available to urban, rural, and remote communities, as well as for distinctions-based approaches led by four distinctions-based National Indigenous Organizations and Modern Treaty Holders.

While a lack of safe and adequate housing affects all members of Indigenous communities, it can disproportionately affect women, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, youth and children. The Government of Canada recognizes that safe and affordable housing is an important social determinant of health and provides a foundation for improving socio-economic outcomes and well-being for Indigenous communities who continue to experience some of the worst living conditions in Canada. In response, the Government of Canada has announced investments since 2016 to support the provision of housing in Indigenous communities. Building on these investments, Budget 2022 provided additional funding to ISC and CIRNAC to accelerate work in closing Indigenous housing gaps as follows:

- Funding to support First Nations housing on reserves;
- Funding to support housing in First Nations Self-Governing and Modern Treaty holders communities;
- Funding to support housing in Inuit communities;
- Funding for housing in Métis communities; and
- Funding to co-develop and launch an **Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy**.

The Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund supports immediate demands, as prioritized by Indigenous partners, with shovel ready infrastructure projects for First Nations, including those with modern treaty and self-governing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities.

Investment made by ISC through the **Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund** in the areas of housing, school facilities and access to health care infrastructure, will help communities address critical infrastructure gaps and alleviate the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has had on Indigenous Peoples. As of December 31, 2021, ISC provided funding to 172 First Nation communities in support of the following projects:

- 181 housing projects to address on-reserve housing needs, including new builds, retrofits and renovations;
- 21 school facilities projects to support new construction and/or renovations to existing schools; and
- in 2021-2022, ISC provided funding in support of 16 health infrastructure projects.

Access to safe and adequate housing is critical to improving health and social outcomes and essential to advancing self-determination and reconciliation. For on-reserve First Nations members, housing needs are significant and longstanding. To address on-reserve housing needs, ISC works in partnership with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to support housing projects in First Nations communities, including new builds, retrofits, and renovations.

Since 2016 and as of September 30, 2022, ISC and CMHC have jointly supported the construction and repair of homes for First Nation households and communities on reserve. This includes 9,539 new homes, of which 61% or 5,788, are complete, and the repair of 18,231 homes, of which 73%, or 13,371, are complete.

Furthermore, CMHC, on behalf of the Government of Canada and in collaboration with Indigenous partners, is launching public engagement on the co-development of an **Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy**.

The National Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Coalition, independently formed by Indigenous housing and service providers, will provide knowledge and expertise, as well as lead an engagement session. There will also be Indigenous-led engagements by National Indigenous Organizations, other Indigenous representative organizations including Indigenous Women's Organizations, and modern treaty and self-governing nations. Indigenous-led engagement sessions will help bring forward opinions and input from groups that have not yet been engaged on an Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy.

The co-development of the Strategy will be ongoing throughout the engagement process. CMHC will collaborate with partners to validate the findings and options from the engagement sessions and will support engagements in cooperation with ISC, CIRNAC, and Infrastructure Canada. Meeting the housing needs of Indigenous communities is a priority under **Canada's National Housing Strategy** (NHS). Projects serving the needs of Indigenous Peoples and families are prioritized for funding under all NHS programs. As of September 30, 2022, the NHS has committed funding towards meeting the housing needs of women and their children, which includes funding for the construction, repair and support of approximately 349,764 housing units. Funding delivered for Indigenous and Northern housing includes:

- Funding through the **Shelter Initiative for Indigenous women and children escaping family violence**, announced in 2020 which has resulted in the selection of 12 emergency shelters within Indigenous communities and the North.
- Investments through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund to support the construction and repair of housing in the Northwest Territories and Yukon; funding through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund to repair 560 units in the existing urban Indigenous community housing stock; funding to help offset the higher need and cost of housing in the northern territories.
- The **Rapid Housing Initiative** (RHI) was launched in 2020-2021, with an investment to rapidly build housing for vulnerable Canadians under the NHS. Total RHI investments have since increased with a second and third round of funding announced in 2021 and 2022. The first two rounds of RHI funding is expected to create over 10,000 new affordable housing units and the third round of RHI funding aims to create at least 4,500 new affordable housing units. Of the total units committed between the first two streams, 4,246 units are for Indigenous Peoples, and both rounds 2 and 3 require at least 25 per cent of funding directed towards women-focused housing projects.

Additionally, funding will be provided through the **Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative** to build a minimum of 38 shelters and 50 new transitional homes for Indigenous women, children and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people escaping GBV. This joint initiative with ISC will provide shelters and homes with support services for Indigenous women, children and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people facing gender-based violence. The review of applications is ongoing, and the selection of eligible applications will be conducted in phases twice a year at a minimum. Depending on the number of projects selected during each phase and available funding, it is expected that applications will continue to be accepted up until end of 2023-2024.

In 2021-2022, CMHC and ISC formed committees to support the review and evaluation of eligible applications. Input and participation were sought from representatives of National Indigenous Women's Organizations, including First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Indigenous 2SLGBTQQIA+ and urban communities, as well as subject matter experts and persons with lived experience of shelter and/or transitional housing needs.

ISC launched a call for proposals to fund culturally relevant supports for Indigenous Peoples facing GBV. ISC will invest funding for the operational costs of new shelters and transition homes and expand culturally relevant family violence prevention supports across Canada.

As of February 2023, the initiative is currently in its third round of proposal reviews. This initiative is focused on reducing GBV for Indigenous Peoples, including women and their children and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This initiative is an expansion of the **2020 Shelter Initiative for Indigenous Women and Children**, which received funding for the build (CMHC) and funding for operations

(ISC) and resulted in the selection of 12 emergency shelters within Indigenous communities and the North.

Recommendation 13 and Observation 1: Policing Services

FEWO's recommendation noted the importance of culturally relevant training for all police and non-police professionals working in Indigenous communities. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is continuously working towards building and strengthening relationships and delivering responsive, culturally sensitive, and trauma-informed policing services for Indigenous communities and peoples across Canada. The RCMP has a mandate to enforce the law, to support victims/survivors and create crime prevention initiatives to help reduce and respond to violence.

In June 2019, following the release of the MMIWG National Inquiry's final report, the RCMP Commissioner issued a statement to thank the National Inquiry Commissioners for their important work. The Commissioner also thanked the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and survivors, who courageously spoke their truths.

In June 2020, the RCMP Commissioner issued a statement to reaffirm the RCMP's commitment to improving relationships with Indigenous communities, supporting survivors and families, and ensuring that investigations are robust, professional and result in justice for the victims and their families.

The RCMP created **awareness campaigns** featuring posters created in partnership with the Native Women's Association of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations. The focus of this campaign is to:

- encourage victims of family violence to report incidents to police;
- encourage people to report cases of missing persons without delay; and,
- highlight why every detail associated with a missing person is important.

The RCMP supports the Government of Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address GBV. As part of this strategy, the RCMP received funding to develop two new courses, the **Cultural Awareness and Humility** course and **Using a Trauma-Informed Approach** course. This training aims to improve capacity across the RCMP to effectively respond to GBV in a trauma-informed manner that is gender and culturally sensitive. This includes responding to violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Other courses the RCMP has available for employees includes Consent Law and Common Sexual Assault Myths, Indigenous Learning Series, Restorative Justice, Uniting Against Racism and a newly launched course on Survivor-Led Human Trafficking Detection Training.

As an RCMP National Police Service, the Canadian Police College (CPC) carries a non-jurisdictional mandate, to provide advanced and specialized training to police services across Canada. As part of a broader strategy to support reconciliation, the CPC continues to work with organizational and community partners to develop additional cross-cultural content through a multidisciplinary lens that aims to integrate intercultural competence as a key component within course training standards for advanced and specialized training for front-line, manager and executive levels in policing.

The RCMP's **National Human Trafficking Section (NHTS)** centrally facilitates the RCMP's effort in countering human trafficking through awareness, education, community outreach, as well as through building and enhancing partnerships, supporting operations, and advancing operational policy and internal/external reporting.

The RCMP has been working at modernising their tools and awareness products to focus more on higher risk populations such as, Indigenous communities, youth and the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community. The NHTS completed a full review of awareness products and courses that were available in Canada and abroad and has since created new products for law enforcement including one for youth. These products are available in both official languages (French and English):

- A human trafficking victim interview guide;

- An operational police officer’s handbook on human trafficking (to replace the previous law enforcement “I’m Not for Sale” toolkit);
- A presentation for front line police officers on human trafficking and how to detect it;
- A presentation for youth audiences on human trafficking and healthy relationships; and
- A human trafficking safety pamphlet available in Ukrainian, Russian, French and English.

The RCMP is also supporting the delivery of culturally appropriate and engaged policing services by increasing the capacity of the **National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR)** to support law enforcement, medical examiners and chief coroners with missing persons and unidentified remains cases on a national level. Budget 2022 invested funding for NCMPUR to conduct outreach in Indigenous communities and improve missing persons and unidentified remains investigations in Canada, including for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The RCMP has enhanced its operational response with a **Missing Persons Strategy** and by updating its **Missing Persons Policy**. In addition to reinforcing the investigative priority and supervisory oversight of missing persons cases and providing enhanced training and guidance for investigators, these changes also aim to:

- demonstrate accountability;
- develop strong partnerships with other agencies;
- support families of missing persons; and
- increase public awareness.

The RCMP is committed to improving relationships with Indigenous communities, supporting survivors and families, and ensuring that investigations are robust, professional and result in justice for the victims and their families.

Additionally, the Minister of Public Safety, alongside the Ministers of Indigenous Services and Crown-Indigenous Relations, have been mandated to co-develop, with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), federal legislation that recognizes First Nations police services as an essential service. In 2021-2022, relationships with the AFN, the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association (FNCPA) and First Nations Police Governance Council were established, and contribution agreements set with AFN and FNCPA. Bilateral engagement with these organizations is ongoing. Similarly, the Minister of Public Safety, alongside the Ministers of Indigenous Services and Crown-Indigenous Relations, has also been mandated to continue to engage with Inuit and Métis on policing matters. In 2021-2022, Federal-Provincial-Territorial Indigenous Policing Committees were established to ensure that the federal legislation is informed by provincial/territorial perspectives and is complementary to existing provincial/territorial police legislation and regulations.

Public Safety has also begun preliminary work with Inuit and Métis Nation partners, ISC, CIRNAC, and provinces and territories to identify policing and community safety priorities that may be supported by the Government of Canada. This will support the development and implementation of the proposed engagement process in 2022-2023.

Recommendation 14: Transportation

Findings from the National Inquiry into MMIWG found that a proximate cause of the vulnerability and exposure to violence and risk for Indigenous women and girls in remote areas of Canada were related with the lack of affordable ground transportation. As such, Call for Justice 4.8 calls upon all levels of government to ensure that adequate plans and funding are put into place for safe transportation services and infrastructure for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people living in remote or rural communities.

To improve infrastructure and transportation services, ISC is collaborating with First Nations and other stakeholders to build, repair, upgrade and maintain roads and bridges to ensure lasting and positive outcomes that reach beyond the roads themselves and allow communities to fully realize the benefits of other infrastructure projects. Since 2016 and as of December 31, 2022, ISC has invested targeted funds (excluding operating expenses) to support 274 **Roads and Bridges projects**, 186 of which are complete. These projects will benefit 191 communities serving

approximately 219,000 people. Investing in transportation infrastructure in remote communities will help reduce vulnerabilities for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who are targeted in these areas.

In addition to the construction of roads on reserves, ISC is also supporting remote communities that rely on winter roads for transportation of construction materials, major goods, needed commodities, and services. While winter roads are mainly supported by fixed contribution agreements between federal and provincial governments, ISC monitors winter roads and provides some targeted infrastructure funding for their construction. ISC has invested funds specifically for winter roads, including targeted investments since 2016 and as of December 31, 2022. Multi-use pathways, trails, and sidewalks to encourage and facilitate active transportation in remote communities are also eligible for funding.

Transport Canada is also working to make Canada's transportation system safe, secure, efficient and environmentally responsible. Transport Canada is undertaking the **Remote Passenger Rail Program**, which supports the provision of passenger rail service to certain remote communities, with no alternative means of surface transportation as outlined in Budget 2021.

Infrastructure Canada's **Rural Transit Solutions Fund (RTSF)** is the first federal fund to target the development of locally driven transit solutions in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. Launched in 2021, RTSF provides federal funding with a minimum of 10% of the total fund amount allocated to projects that benefit Indigenous populations and communities. The RTSF seeks to help Canadians get around their communities more easily for day-to-day activities, such as going to work, school and appointments and to help them connect with nearby communities. It also helps to establish safe and secure transit systems that can improve the safety of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Recommendation 15: Funding Community Organizations

From December 9, 2022 to February 3, 2023, WAGE held a call for proposals to address GBV by funding promising practices and community-based research. The call includes two streams: 1) **Promising Practices** to fund projects to develop, put in place, and evaluate or scale promising practices to strengthen the GBV sector (part of investments WAGE received through Budget 2021 to enhance its GBV Program); and 2) **Community-Based Research** to fund research projects that build knowledge to help address the needs of the underserved in the GBV sector, including Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (part of investments WAGE received through Budget 2021 for GBV research and knowledge mobilization).

Budget 2021 provided investments to Justice Canada for integrity funding to the **Indigenous Justice Program**, including **victims support training**, as well as funding for **civil and family mediation programs**. The **Indigenous Justice Program** provides funding directly to community-based Indigenous led organizations providing justice-specific programming.

Budget 2021 also provided funding for the **Indigenous Courtwork Program -Indigenous Family Courtwork Services**. While the Indigenous Courtwork Program- Indigenous Family Courtwork Services funding is provided primarily through provinces and territories to Indigenous organizations on a cost-shared basis, the program has also provided funding directly to Indigenous community organizations to build frameworks to expand these services. The **Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of British Columbia**, the **Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network** (Nova Scotia), the **Prince Albert Indian Métis Friendship Centre** (Saskatchewan) and the **Native Counselling Services of Alberta** have received combined funding (2022-2023) to support Indigenous Family Courtwork Program activities.

The Call for Proposals for the project component launched in July 2021 and closed in August 2021. 31 projects have been approved to date, with a few remaining decisions and agreements yet to be finalized. Funding agreements with Indigenous community-based recipients for Gladue Casework/Aftercare have been signed in those same jurisdictions.

ISC's **Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative** is providing funding to support

Indigenous-designed projects which contribute to greater community safety and well-being, recognize holistic models of community safety and well-being, and address existing and emerging needs relating to the safety and well-being of Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. In fiscal year 2021-2022, the Pathways Initiative provided funding to six community safety and well-being initiatives. Recipients included 3 partner organizations (regional and national), and three First Nations. Individual projects will support: a community safety and wellness program that increases access to Cree cultural and land-based activities; enhance lawmaking capacity to support development of bylaws and customary laws; create an outreach worker position to support vulnerable off-reserve First Nations through wellness checks; provide after-school youth recreational and land-based programming, and support expansion of a platform dedicated to research on MMIWG.

CIRNAC is providing dedicated longer-term project funding through the Budget 2021 initiative, to support Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations to increase capacity within national, regional, and grassroots organizations to engage with Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people to bring forward their unique priorities and needs, including those living in rural areas to inform the development of policy, program and legislation. In the first two years (2021-2022 and 2022-2023) the initiative has provided funding through 40 projects to Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations.

Theme 3 – Increasing Skills, Representation and Opportunities (Recommendations 1, 5 6, 7, 8, 9 10)

NRCan and CIRNAC, with support from OGDs and agencies, are largely supportive of recommendations 1 and 5, but acknowledge that recommendations 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 require coordination and support from provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments and organizations, F-P-T-I's and industry.

Recommendation 1: Data collection

Maintaining updated data on violence against women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people allows the Government of Canada to identify gaps and drives effective decision-making.

Statistics Canada (StatCan) and WAGE are currently leading an initiative on disaggregation and new data collection called **Statistics on GBV and Feelings of Safety** funded through the federal-based GBV Strategy and contributing to the Federal Pathway. Based on gaps in releasable data from the first cycle of the **Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces**, WAGE will be collaborating with StatCan and Indigenous Peoples to obtain disaggregated data for First Nations, Inuit and Métis women and ensure more reliable data collection for Inuit women. The collection of data on GBV and feelings of safety is aimed at allowing researchers, policymakers, service providers and others to better understand the prevalence and patterns of GBV in Indigenous communities and how that is changing over time and thus to respond appropriately to MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and related issues.

Budget 2021 provided WAGE with an investment specifically for GBV research. The community-based research is being undertaken collaboratively with community organizations representing those most at risk of GBV, including Black and racialized women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

In addition, and as mentioned above, WAGE launched a call for proposals from December 9, 2022 to February 3, 2023, to address GBV through promising practices and community-based research to enhance its GBV Program. Research will be community-driven and action/change-oriented, producing knowledge to help improve services to at-risk groups, including Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

WAGE also supports GBV research as it is partnering with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to support academic researchers, in partnership with research-focused and community-based organizations, to advance knowledge on, and analyze the causes and persistence of GBV in Canada under the **GBV Research Initiative**. This initiative seeks to support a

diverse portfolio of projects aligned with specific themes, including natural resources, work camps and sexual violence.

In 2021–2022, WAGE promoted research related to GBV and access to justice in Canada. In addition, WAGE funded and addressed knowledge gaps related to GBV and commissioned StatCan to complete two analytical studies on experiences of GBV by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women in Canada and by women in rural and remote communities in Canada.

WAGE's innovative GBV Knowledge Centre organized 11 knowledge-sharing events in 2021–2022, which reached 2,071 individuals from federal, provincial and territorial governments, academic institutions, Indigenous organizations, non-governmental organizations and other experts in the GBV field. These events are opportunities to increase knowledge uptake and knowledge mobilization of GBV-related content and to share research, information, statistics, and resources to support and inform policies, programs, and services.

Over the course of 2022-2023, WAGE supported research that led to more than 40 publications, and also commissioned StatCan to complete several reports, including research on the experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women in the workplace.

IAAC delivers on its mandate to conduct high-quality impact assessments that consider both positive and negative environmental, economic, social, and health impacts of potential projects. Of key importance is consideration of impacts to Indigenous communities, including Indigenous women as a unique subgroup.

IAAC has funding programs to support research and policy development and capacity building that can contribute to addressing the Calls for Justice and support Indigenous organizations wishing to enhance their participation and capacity related to impact assessments and the effects of resource development on Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. These programs include the Agency's research program, the Indigenous Capacity Support Program, and the Policy Dialogue program.

IAAC will continue knowledge dissemination amongst proponents, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders, as well as seek to better understand the correlation between resource projects and violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and how to address this.

Agreements funded through the Budget 2021 **Initiative Supporting Indigenous Women's and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Organizations** includes a focus for the three National Indigenous Women's Organizations to develop culturally-relevant Gender Based Analysis (GBA) Plus toolkits for use by federal departments to implement an informed intersectional approach to policy and program development, including in departments that have mandates touching on resource development, land management, and economic reconciliation.

The initiative also supported regional and grassroots Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations to undertake environmental scans or needs assessments at the regional level, to establish a baseline and to develop and implement organizational data strategies to collect disaggregated regional data and measure outcomes.

While not specific to resource development projects, CIRNAC funds Indigenous-led data research projects through the **Indigenous-led Data Research Projects Program (ILDRPP)**. This program funds projects to develop innovative and Indigenous-centered methodologies to better understand the issue of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The ILDRPP program launched on August 12, 2021. The first call for proposals, which closed on October 31, 2021, resulted in the funding of 19 new data research projects from 17 organizations across the country, inclusive of all distinctions.

Budget 2021 also provided funding to establish a **National Indigenous Data Advisory Group**. Convened by CIRNAC, the **National Indigenous Data Advisory Group on MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people** will assist with the further development of indicators, the improvement of

reliable baseline data, and advise on identified data gaps regarding MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This program, which is expected to launch in summer 2023, will fund projects to develop innovative and Indigenous-centered methodologies to better understand the issue of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

CIRNAC and StatCan are collaborating on a **National strategy to ensure consistency in practices for reporting missing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people**, aimed at engaging with Indigenous partners and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police to ensure police have consistent reporting mechanisms (National Standards) of information on missing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and other missing persons to ensure thorough reporting and investigation.

Recommendation 5: Impact Assessment and GBA Plus

The Government of Canada supports the need to expand the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, including further GBA Plus data as it relates to resource development projects and violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. IAAC is currently working to expand GBA Plus data gathering from industry and all levels of government, which aligns with recommendation 5 from FEWO's report.

Under the *IAA*, impact assessments of designated projects must apply a GBA Plus to the assessment of effects in relation to diverse populations who may experience effects differently. This is reflected in tailored, project-specific information requirements and in IAAC guidance (e.g. [Gender-Based Analysis Plus in Impact Assessment - Canada.ca](https://www.iaac.ca/guidance/gba-plus)) and training. IAAC's Guidance provides reference to Indigenous led culturally relevant GBA Guidance.

IAAC will continue to provide support to project proponents in adopting culturally relevant GBA Plus to inform the impact assessment process. While avoidance of adverse effects and impacts is the goal of impact assessment, where that is not possible, tailored mitigation measures would be considered.

Like the *IAA*, the *Canada Energy Regulator (CER) Act* is explicit both in its preambular and substantive clauses about the importance of, and requirements to assess the effects of the facilities it regulates with respect to the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors. GBA is not new to impact assessment at the CER and the CER's filing manuals provide guidance around the conduct of a GBA Plus to project proponents. The CER's filing manuals are updated periodically to incorporate best practices, including those developed through IAAC. An update to the Environmental and Socio-economic and Lands section of the CER's pipelines filing manual has been scheduled, with public engagement beginning in Spring 2023.

In 2021-22, under the dedicated and longer-term project funding for national, regional and grassroots Indigenous organizations, CIRNAC provided project funding to the three National Indigenous Women's Organizations to support funding agreements to develop culturally relevant GBA Plus toolkits for use by federal departments to implement an informed intersectional approach to policy and program development and decision-making.

Recommendations 6, 7, 8 and 10: Inclusion and Corporate responsibility

The Government of Canada is largely supportive of FEWO's recommendation to require resource development projects and companies to enhance their corporate social responsibility as it relates to addressing and preventing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. However, recommendations 6, 7, 8 and 10 requires significant collaboration with F-P-T-I partners, given complicated jurisdictional implications.

Recommendation 6: Inuit Employment

Pilimaksaivik, the Federal Centre of Excellence in Inuit employment in the Government of Canada is responsible for coordinating the whole-of-government **Inuit Employment Plan**. The objective of Article 23 from the *Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and*

Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada which is to increase Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level, applies to nine departmental/agencies in Nunavut. Each of these have a departmental Inuit Employment Plan to guide how medium-term Inuit employment targets will be met.

Employment and Social Development Canada funds the **Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program** which is a distinctions-based labour market program designed to support First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban/non-affiliated Indigenous Peoples to improve their skills and meet their long-term career goals. Indigenous service delivery organizations retain the operational flexibility of all elements of these programs to better respond to their unique needs, contexts and realities, including those of Indigenous women and girls. ISET supports and enhances the capacity of Indigenous service delivery organizations and structures to customize culturally appropriate services to support First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in achieving their employment goals throughout the employment continuum. The ISET program is helping to address the social and economic marginalization of Indigenous women and girls and ensuring equitable access to employment.

Investments made to the ISET program will contribute to a reduction in the employment and skills gaps between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous people. Based on its distinctions-based approach, the new program provides funding for:

- a First Nations stream;
- an Inuit stream;
- a Métis Nation stream; and,
- an urban/non-affiliated stream.

From April 2019 to December 2022, the ISET Program has served over 149,000 clients, with over 58,700 finding employment and over 18,300 returning to school for further training.

In Nunavut there are three Inuit ISET program service delivery organizations that focus on a variety of skills development and training initiatives in Inuit communities.

- Kakivak Association;
- Kitikmeot Inuit Association; and
- Kivalliq Inuit Association.

From April 1999 to December 31, 2023, the three associations have served over 8,357 clients, with over 3,066 finding employment and over 560 returning to school for further training. Since 2019, these three associations have served 2,524 women and youth with 336 gaining employment. Currently, approximately 49.8% of clients served under ISET Program are female and 52.4% of Nunavut's clients are female.

The **Inuit Labour Market Strategy (ILMS)** is one of the four Labour Market Strategies under the ISET Program. The ILMS reflects the Government's commitment to a renewed relationship with Inuit, one that is framed by principles of reconciliation, including recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, partnership and self-determination.

Recommendation 7: Workplace Policies

The Government of Canada is working to co-develop initiatives and efforts to address the five Calls for Justice related to resource development projects in alignment with the key principles under UNDA.

NRCan has an important role in continuing to support Indigenous communities as the natural resource sectors are the largest private employer of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Indigenous businesses in general are 40 times more likely to be involved in the resource extraction sector as the average business. In the minerals and metals sector alone, there are 600 Indigenous communities located within a 100-kilometre radius of at least one major project. Oil and gas related occupations represent the top six highest paying occupations for Indigenous women in

Canada. While these figures imply an opportunity to support long-term socio-economic opportunities for communities, NRCan acknowledges that more needs to be done to support the participation of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQA+ people in resource development and that issues of safety and security and addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQA+ people are of paramount concern.

In 2017, NRCan and the CER co-developed the Indigenous Advisory and Monitoring Committees for the Enbridge Line 3 (IAMC-Line 3) and Trans Mountain Expansion Project (IAMC-TMX) with Indigenous partners, in response to a request from communities to the Prime Minister. Indigenous partners on the IAMC-TMX identified concerns associated with the pipeline expansion and MMIWG as an early priority. This led to the creation of a Socioeconomic Subcommittee in 2018 to focus on addressing community concerns. The Socioeconomic Subcommittee works to mitigate the potential negative impacts of the five work camps and other worker influxes associated with TMX in rural communities, and specifically reducing the potential for harm to Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQA+ people. The IAMC-TMX is also actively involved in the monitoring and regulatory oversight of the project, including activities that support the capacity of Indigenous communities to participate in this work.

Budget 2022 provided NRCan with funding towards the renewal of the IAMC-Line 3 and IAMC-TMX, which includes the **IAMC-TMX's Temporary Work Camps and Influx of Workers Initiative**. This initiative will continue the development and implementation of community driven approaches to support safe communities during the construction and operation of the TMX pipeline. This builds on the IAMC-TMX's work to date in co-developing this initiative with Indigenous and federal partners, and collaborating with Trans Mountain Corporation, to increase Indigenous participation and identify and address socioeconomic, cultural, health and well-being risks and benefits of major resource projects.

The CER's regulatory framework contains a number of legislative, regulatory and administrative tools that, among other things, support and guide companies in developing applications and operating regulated infrastructure in a manner that anticipates and addresses impacts to the rights and interests of Indigenous Peoples, stakeholders and the public. The CER places significant importance on preventing all forms of violence and harassment, including against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQA+ people. In 2021, the Government of Canada's new **Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations** came into effect and apply to both the federal public service and the federally regulated private sector. The new regulations require companies to develop effective preventive policies and mandatory training. At the time, the CER advised regulated companies that it would require federally regulated companies to update their policies and stated that it would verify compliance with these regulations by conducting reviews of documents and policies relating to harassment, discrimination and violence prevention as well as through inspection activities.

Recommendation 8: Tracking Mechanisms

The CER verifies compliance with the **Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations** by conducting reviews of documents and policies relating to harassment, discrimination and violence prevention as well as through inspection activities. The CER has a system in place for its employees to report potential hazards, hazardous occurrences, and incidents related to workplace harassment and violence. The CER Employee Reporting Portal is provided by an external vendor and is anonymous, confidential, easy to use, and available 24/7 from any location. Separately, the CER receives, tracks and handles confidential disclosures related to alleged non-compliances for CER regulated pipelines and facilities through [ClearView's reporting system](#). As mentioned above, the CER has advised regulated companies that it will verify compliance with the Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations by conducting reviews of documents and policies relating to harassment, discrimination and violence prevention as well as through inspection activities.

Similarly, IAAC is committed to identifying best practices for project monitoring and follow-up, including Indigenous led monitoring committees in monitoring, tracking and reporting on incidences of harassment and violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQA+ people.

Recommendation 10: Training for Workers

In its 2021 letter to all CER regulated companies on the Government of Canada's new **Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations**, the CER emphasized that employers must have effective preventive measures in place, including training for all employees, supervisors and management on their respective roles and responsibilities. In 2022, during early engagement activities for its review of the CER's Onshore Pipeline Regulations, there were many recommendations made by Indigenous Peoples related to violence and harassment prevention and required cultural competency improvements. The CER will review these recommendations as part of its ongoing regulatory framework improvements.

The **Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF)** funded by ESDC is a project-based program that funds partnerships between Indigenous organizations and industry employers to provide skills training for Indigenous Peoples linked to economic opportunities at the local, regional and national levels. By increasing access to training that is demand-driven, the SPF plays a key role in directly linking training efforts and Indigenous Peoples to specific jobs to improve their employment outcomes.

The most recent SPF call for proposals launched in 2022 included a requirement related to Cultural Awareness Training to ensure that potential employers provide a respectful and inclusive workplace for Indigenous employees.

Recommendation 9: Indigenous Women's Representation

The Government of Canada is committed to working closely with Indigenous partners to explore and support measures to increase safety, security and equitable benefits for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the resource development sector, including through increased participation in leadership positions.

NRCan is working to increase Indigenous economic participation (including for women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people) in natural resource development by supporting projects that contribute to Canada's natural resource development goals and to the Department's net-zero objectives through the **Indigenous Partnerships Office** and its **Indigenous Natural Resource Partnerships (INRP) Program**. Since 2019, the INRP has provided funding for 69 Indigenous-led projects. Budget 2022 provided additional investments to expand INRP nationally and across all natural resource sectors. Preference may be given to projects that support the participation of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in natural resource developments. NRCan has also launched early engagement on the development of a new **National Benefits-Sharing Framework** to ensure that First Nations and Métis Nation communities directly benefit from major resource projects in their territories, and that Inuit communities benefit from major resource projects in Inuit Nunangat. Measures to ensure that women and other underrepresented groups can safely participate in, and benefit, from the natural resource sector and measures to mitigate the impacts of natural resource development on GBV will be considered as part of this Framework.

NRCan also leads the **Indigenous Forestry Initiative (IFI)**, delivering funding to 134 projects that encourage Indigenous participation in the forest economy creating almost 800 jobs and providing training opportunities to nearly 1,000 Indigenous individuals. In total, 607 Indigenous women participated in IFI-funded projects from 2017-18 to 2020-21.

NRCan's **Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan (CMMP)** was informed by robust engagement with Indigenous Peoples across the country to ensure the Plan appropriately reflected Indigenous perspectives. From 2017-18, this included numerous bilateral and multilateral conversations with Indigenous communities, groups, and businesses across Canada, culminating in a National Forum with over fifty Indigenous representatives and bilateral discussions with the National Indigenous Leadership and included a co-developed report that informed the development of the CMMP. The Plan is currently pursuing focused research on Indigenous Women in the Minerals and Metals Sector to identify barriers to, and opportunities for, greater Indigenous female representation in the minerals sector.

The Government of Canada is also taking steps to build meaningful relationships with National Indigenous Women's Organizations and Indigenous 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations to reach grassroots levels, who will be a critical part of helping us understand the realities that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people face, particularly regarding natural resource development opportunities.

NRCan, on behalf of the Government of Canada, also leads **the international Equal by 30 Campaign**, which encourages the public and private sector to advance the meaningful participation of women and all marginalized communities in the energy sector by 2030. Equal by 30 was launched in 2018, under the Clean Energy Ministerial, in recognition that the transition to a low-carbon future must be equitable and inclusive, and that the empowerment of underrepresented groups in the decision-making and implementation of clean energy initiatives is essential for this transformation to be successful. In addition to the campaign's goals to achieve equal pay, leadership, and opportunities for all in the sector, it also recognizes and aims to increase dialogue and data collection efforts around safety and non-violence for marginalized groups, particularly Indigenous women, working in the energy sector. To this end, in 2021, the campaign conducted a survey of campaign signatories and their workforces, alongside algorithm-based research, to provide evidence-based recommendations for energy organizations. This public report demonstrated that the most significant challenge in the energy sector as reported by women, women of colour, women with a mental health challenge and women with a disability was workplace safety. The report makes specific recommendations on actions that can be taken by energy sector organizations to enhance workplace safety.

Additionally, ESDC is leading the **Union Training and Innovation Program**, which supports union-based apprenticeship training, innovation and enhanced partnerships in the Red Seal trades. The program provides investments to support unions by sharing the cost of training equipment and materials and providing funding for projects that use innovative approaches to improve apprenticeship outcomes (union involvement is required). A key objective of this program is to support equity-deserving groups such as Indigenous Peoples (including women), newcomers, persons with disabilities and racialized communities to enter and succeed in the trades. Budget 2022 announced additional funding to double funding for the UTIP, which will help apprentices from equity deserving groups to begin and succeed in careers in the skilled trades through mentorship, career services, and job-matching.

ESDC and ISC are also leading an initiative called **Increasing access to employment and skills development for First Nations and Inuit youth (FNIYES)**, funded through Budget 2021. Additional funding for the FNIYES has been implemented to support both the FNIYES and a one-year pilot partnership between ISC's Income Assistance and FNIYES programs (the IA/FNIYES Pilot). Approximately 374 recipient organizations accessed FNIYES funding by March 31, 2022. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how to resolve violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, the federal government will also work in partnership with National Indigenous Women's Organizations and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations, the IAMC-TMX and the IAMC-Line 3, industry and provinces and territories, to engage with communities impacted by existing and proposed natural resource development projects to share experiences, wise practices and identify priorities related to safety, security and equitable benefits while collaboratively developing and implementing actions to address root causes of resource development related violence.

Conclusion

The Government of Canada extends its gratitude to the members of the Standing Committee for their work in identifying and recommending ways the federal government can continue to address the five Calls for Justice related to the resource development and extractive sector.

The Government is making progress towards responding to the Calls for Justice through the implementation of the Federal Pathway as part of the National Action Plan to address the interrelated systemic inequities for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and is committed to continuing this work. The Government reiterates its commitment to ensuring that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are safe and secure in the context of natural

resource development and beyond. The Government of Canada will continue to strive to accelerate its efforts in bringing justice to Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and the communities who support them in redressing historical wrongs.

The Report's recommendations align with the Government of Canada's commitment to addressing and preventing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people by addressing Calls for Justice 13.1 to 13.5. The Government of Canada will continue to work closely with F-P-T-I's to address these Calls for Justice and accelerate the implementation of the Federal Pathway and associated initiatives. The Government will also continue to work to ensure that resource development in Canada respects the rights of Indigenous Peoples; increases social infrastructure and wraparound services for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the resource development sector; and increases skills, representation and opportunities for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the natural resources sector.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATION FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS
Recommendation 1 – Data Collection
That the Government of Canada increase funding to relevant federal departments and other organizations, in particular to Indigenous-led research projects, that are studying violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals, to expand their capacity to collect qualitative and quantitative data on the relation between resource development projects and Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit individuals' experiences of violence.
Recommendation 2 – Indian Act
That the Government of Canada, in its commitment to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including respecting the right to free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples, work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to undo federally imposed systems of governance and administration in favour of control and delivery, including working with Indigenous Peoples to support them in their work to rebuild and reconstitute their nations, advance self-determination and, for First Nations, facilitate the transition away from the <i>Indian Act</i> and toward self-governance.
Recommendation 3 – Respecting Indigenous Rights
That the Government of Canada ensure the full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) under Canadian law, and that resource development in Canada is grounded in UNDRIP.
Recommendation 4 – Calls for Justice
That the Government of Canada implement all Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls that are directed to the federal government.
Recommendation 5 – Impact Assessment and GBA Plus
That the Government of Canada ensure that a culturally relevant Gender-based Analysis Plus is undertaken by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada in each natural resource development project review with the goal of informing decision-making and identifying mitigation measures that could be implemented to prevent violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals for approved projects.
Recommendation 6 – Inuit Employment
That the Government of Canada, as per its commitment in the <i>Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada</i> , work to increase Inuit employment to a representative level in the federal public service in Nunavut, and that accountability mechanisms be implemented if companies fail to meet the agreed upon requirements outlined in Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreements.
Recommendation 7 – Workplace Policies
That the Government of Canada, with the goal of preventing and addressing incidences of violence and harassment against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals by individuals employed for resource development projects, respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, require companies conducting these projects to develop corporate social responsibility policies that include addressing and preventing violence and harassment.
Recommendation 8 – Tracking Mechanisms
That the Government of Canada, with the goal of preventing and addressing incidences of violence and harassment against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals by individuals employed for resource development projects, respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, require companies conducting these projects to establish tracking mechanisms for the reporting of incidences of harassment and violence.
Recommendation 9 – Indigenous Women's Representation
That the Government of Canada, respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, require companies conducting resource development projects to increase and ensure Indigenous women's participation in all aspects of these projects, including by:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that Indigenous women and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual and other gender and sexually diverse people have equitable access to, and are included in, consultations and the decision-making process related to resource development projects in their region; and <p>exploring options to increase Indigenous women’s representation in the workforce at all levels on resource development projects, including through accessible skills development training.</p>
Recommendation 10 – Training for Workers
<p>That the Government of Canada, with the goal of preventing and addressing incidences of violence and harassment against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals by individuals employed for resource development projects, respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, require companies conducting these projects to implement mandatory training for all employees on gender-based and sexual violence, anti-racism, cultural safety, diversity and inclusion, as well as the effects of colonization on Indigenous Peoples.</p>
Recommendation 11 – Services for Survivors of Violence
<p>That the Government of Canada provide funding to organizations offering culturally appropriate supports and services for Indigenous survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, to ensure that Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit individuals who experience violence in the context of resource development projects have access to adequate resources to heal.</p>
Recommendation 12 – Access to Housing
<p>That the Government of Canada, respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, increase funding to ensure the right to deeply affordable, safe, and high-quality housing in Indigenous communities, including for shelters and second-stage housing.</p>
Recommendation 13 – Policing Services
<p>That the Government of Canada require the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to review its programming for Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous communities located near resource development projects to ensure that it is culturally relevant for residents and to provide training to its members on gender-based violence, trauma-informed and harm reduction intervention strategies, and that jurisdictional issues are addressed to deal with non-Indigenous perpetrators of violence.</p>
Observation 1 – Policing Services
<p>The Committee recognizes that, in many regions of Canada, policing services are not delivered by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but by provincial, territorial, municipal, or Indigenous authorities. All policing programming in Canada should be culturally relevant for Indigenous Peoples, and all police forces should work towards developing more respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples’ historical and ongoing mistrust of police forces was highlighted by both the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress. Therefore, the Committee urges provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous police forces to implement this report’s Recommendation 13.</p>
Recommendation 14 – Transportation
<p>That the Government of Canada, respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, develop solutions to increase transportation options in rural and remote communities.</p>
Recommendation 15 – Funding Community Organizations
<p>That the Government of Canada, through relevant federal departments and respecting the jurisdictions of and in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous communities, provide sufficient and sustained multi-year capacity funding for Indigenous community organizations that offer programming for Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals, and ensure that funding provided to organizations serving women living in rural areas is adapted to meet the needs in those regions.</p>