



# **Creating New Pathways for Data:**

**The 2021 National Action  
Plan Data Strategy**

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# 1. Introduction

In today's environment, data have become an important resource with the potential to positively or negatively influence policy and decision-making.

For too long, Indigenous Peoples<sup>1</sup> have been identified, analyzed and researched without consent or participation. In other cases, colonial practices mean that many Indigenous individuals and communities have also been misidentified or not identified at all, reinforcing the erasure of Indigenous Peoples in the state's official archive. These methods as a whole have reinforced systemic oppression and harmed relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

In addition, many non-Indigenous methodologies for collecting and analyzing quantitative data have placed Indigenous individuals and communities within a deficit lens, identifying what is wrong with people or with communities, leading to and reinforcing stereotypes that can cause harm and violence. These systems have failed to look for the strengths in Indigenous individuals, families, communities and Nations and as a result, have pursued the wrong solutions, fed by data systems that do not reflect who Indigenous Peoples are.



**1** In this chapter, “Indigenous Peoples” is used when referring to Indigenous collectivities, such as First Nations, Métis and Inuit. “Indigenous people” is used when referring to individuals who identify as part of, as well as outside of, those collectivities.

With that understanding, this chapter describes work that has been undertaken by the Data Sub-Working Group (DSWG), whose members understand the history of this issue and see the possibilities for transforming the data landscape in Canada, starting with a commitment to safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This Data Strategy is intended to be a starting point in measuring progress, presented as a preliminary step in understanding long-term change that must occur in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and that must include monitoring within a much broader lens, beyond the numbers.

The Data Strategy begins by looking at quantitative data, but does not see quantitative data as the whole of what is needed. Instead, this strategy provides some suggestions for a walking forward founded in a recognition of, and respect for, Indigenous Data Sovereignty. It recognizes the essential leadership of Indigenous Peoples in data creation, collection and analysis as the foundation for a monitoring framework that is responsive to the pillars that must support this work.



## The DSWG Process

The DSWG was mandated to develop a Data Strategy for the National Action Plan (NAP). The broad mandate tasked the DSWG to:

- Develop a better understanding of relevant data holdings, including the qualitative and quantitative data upon which the National Inquiry's Report and Findings were based;
- Develop a data framework to support the ongoing development of the NAP to eliminate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual (2SLGBTQQA+) people;
- Identify data needs to support the development of the NAP;
- Define data outcomes and metrics that should be used to track progress on the implementation of the NAP; and,
- Liaise and engage with the Core Working Group and support the activities of other sub-working groups that are related to data.

The DSWG has made progress on its mandate at this point in time through the development of key elements of the NAP Data Strategy and a supporting Quantitative Indicator Framework. DSWG members have acknowledged that work remains to be done and that as the Data Strategy must continue to progress with help

from First Nations, Inuit and Métis and other Indigenous organizations and communities. These Indigenous governments, organizations, and communities are best suited to hold broader conversations to discuss how progress should be measured, and to ensure that high-quality, culturally-relevant, disaggregated and distinctions-based data are available and accessible to Indigenous communities. The NAP Data Strategy detailed in the following chapter is a plan that centers relationships, places First Nations, Inuit and Métis-led data functions at the forefront, and strengthens accountability, evidence-based decision-making, and efficient and effective data governance by First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation.

During the course of its work, the DSWG heard numerous presentations from experts and from other working groups in order to build knowledge and make informed decisions. As a result of many discussions and presentations, DSWG members noted the diverse landscape of data, the unevenness of data holdings on different Indigenous groups including distinctions-based or other populations, and other issues of concern that complicated the idea of creating a comprehensive data architecture applicable for all in such a diverse landscape and with limited numbers of representatives from each group. In addition, the core foundation of the DSWG, Indigenous Data Sovereignty, meant that a one-size-fits-all approach to identify culturally-relevant data would not be possible or desirable.



To better understand the diversity of needs, DSWG members also liaised with diverse contributing partners, including those responsible for the National Action Plan and many of the distinctions-based contributions, to communicate the DSWG’s approach and to gather feedback. The DSWG also worked with different contributing partners in different ways, depending on the needs and priorities they expressed. As such, this chapter reflects different levels of engagement with different contributing partners.

While the distinctions-based and diversity-centered contributions from other contributing partners come directly from them, this Data Strategy as a whole reflects the consensus of DSWG members who provided input into its various components and not necessarily all views on this issue. As a result of this process, this chapter contributes to positioning future work and creating space for continued development of data strategies with distinctions-based groups including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis<sup>2</sup>, from identity-specific groups including urban Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and from organizationally-affiliated groups such as Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) – all of whom have their own, and often overlapping, constituencies.

In addition, as part of the process, the DSWG worked to gain more understanding of relevant data holdings (including the qualitative and quantitative data upon which the National Inquiry’s Final Report was based); identified data needs to support the development of the NAP; and, defined data outcomes for the implementation of the NAP.

A technical group was created from the DSWG as part of the process. It was composed of data experts and data technicians best placed to examine the technical and foundational elements of data sets and indicators. This group assessed the initial quantitative indicators detailed in the questionnaires first sent to DSWG members for data availability and existing gaps based on the recommendations of DSWG members and informed by the feedback of other NAP sub-working groups. This evaluation did not include additional indicators proposed by group members, though the expectation of DSWG members is that a similar process will continue to evaluate the viability of the suggestions, as well as when additional indicators are developed in distinctions-based and identity-based terms, and through partnership tables.

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**2** Indigenous Peoples have an existing and unique constitutional relationship with the Crown, which cites “existing Aboriginal and treaty rights” as “recognized and affirmed” in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Under that Act, Section 35 distinctions-based groups are identified as First Nations, Métis and Inuit. For the purposes of this chapter however, First Nations, Inuit and Métis are terms that are used inclusively of all Indigenous rights holders, including those who may live off reserve or in rural or remote areas, those without status (ie non-status people), 2SLGBTQIA+ people and those who identify differently or in other terms than First Nation, Métis or Inuit. Indigenous people are all holders of inherent Indigenous rights and human rights. As individuals and as collectivities, the DSWG maintains that Indigenous people retain the right to define themselves.

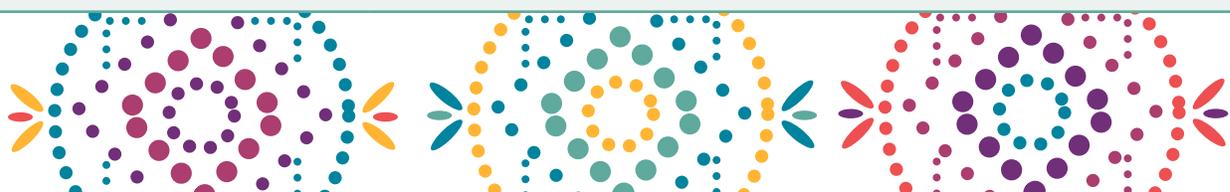
## Membership and Participation

DSWG membership and participation was determined through consultation with families and survivors as well as First Nations, Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women’s organizations. The Chairs of the DSWG were determined by the group members.

The membership of the DSWG remained relatively steady throughout the group’s mandate, and included both full members and participants, as detailed in Box 1. Full members were part of the consensus-based decision-making process, while participants offered their opinions, observations and expertise to support the group’s work.

### Box 1 - DSWG Members and Participants

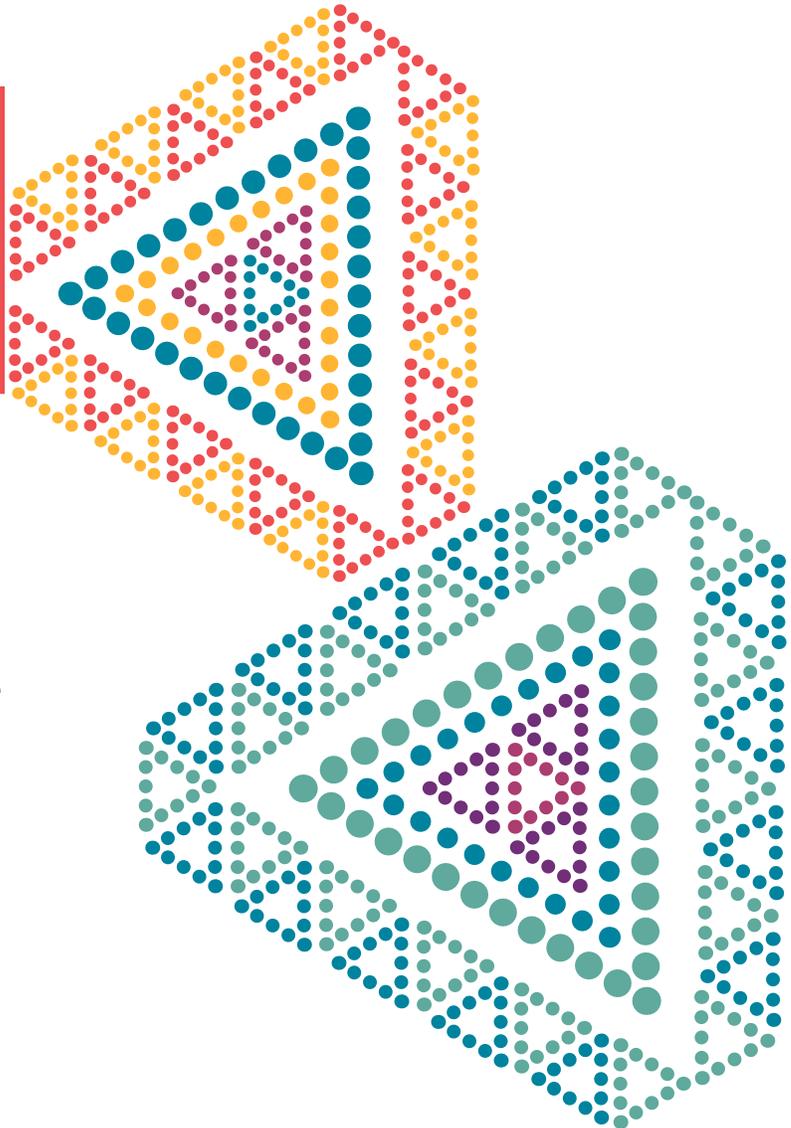
Member	Title/Organization
Karine Duhamel (Co-Chair)	Former Director of Research, National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Carol Hopkins (Co-Chair)	Executive Director, Thunderbird Partnership
Myrna Dawson (Member)	Professor and Director, Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence, University of Guelph
Richard Jenkins (Member)	Project Coordinator, 2Spirits In Motion Foundation
Kiera Ladner (Member)	Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Manitoba
Kyrie Ransom (Member)	Policy Analyst, Assembly of First Nations
Samantha Michaels (Member)	Senior Policy Advisor, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
Lisa Pigeau (Member)	Senior Political Advisor, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak
Nally Rowan-Weetaluktuk (Member)	Statistical Analyst, Inuit Qaujisarvingat (Research) Group, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
Candice Shaw (Member)	Director, Gender Diversity and Social Inclusion, Native Women’s Association of Canada



Elizabeth Blaney (Member)	MMIWG Special Advisor, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
Jonathan Dewar (Participant)	Chief Executive Officer, First Nations Information Governance Centre
Curtis Woloschuk (Participant)	Strategic Policy Director, Data Analysis/Integrated Justice Services/ Government of Saskatchewan
Huda Masoud (Participant)	(Acting) Unit Head/Senior Research Analyst, Centre for Indigenous Statistics and Partnerships, Statistics Canada
Rebecca Kong (Participant)	Assistant Director, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Statistics Canada
Eric Guimond (Participant)	Senior Director, Strategic Research and Data Innovation Branch, Indigenous Services Canada



Family members, survivors and supporters of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have been calling for justice, like during this demonstration in front of Parliament (date unknown). Source: Obert Madondo, Creative Commons license #CC BY-NC-SA 2.0





## Biographies

**Karine Duhamel** is Anishinaabe-Métis and a master's degree and PhD in History from the University of Manitoba. Dr. Duhamel was formerly Adjunct Professor at the University of Winnipeg and Director of Research for Jerch Law Corporation. More recently, Dr. Duhamel served as Director of Research for the historic National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In June of 2020, she began working as part of the Data Sub-Working Group and became its chair in the fall of 2020. She now works full time as Manager and Advisor for the MMIWG Secretariat.

**Myrna Dawson** is a Professor of Sociology and Research Leadership Chair, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences, University of Guelph. She is the Founder and Director of the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence (CSSLRV; [www.violenceresearch.ca](http://www.violenceresearch.ca)) as well as the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice & Accountability (CFOJA; [www.femicideincanada.ca](http://www.femicideincanada.ca)). For 10 years, Dawson held the position of Canada Research Chair in Public Policy in Criminal Justice (2008-2018). She has spent more than two decades researching social and legal responses to violence with emphasis on violence against women, children and femicide.

**Carol Hopkins** is the executive director of the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and is of the Lenape Nation at Moraviantown, Ontario. Carol was appointed Officer of the Order of Canada in 2018. In 2019, she was recognized with an honorary Doctor of Laws from Western University. Carol has spent more than 20 years in the field of First Nations addictions and mental health. She holds both a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Toronto and a degree in sacred Indigenous Knowledge, equivalent to a PhD in western based education systems. Carol has co-chaired national initiatives known for best practice in national policy review and development, resulting in the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum (FNMWC) framework, the Honouring Our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues Among First Nations People in Canada, the Indigenous Wellness Framework, and best practice guidelines for culturally based inhalant abuse treatment.

**Richard Jenkins** is a 57 year old Cree-Métis with Indian Status from the community of Moose Mountain, Alberta. He is a gay Two Spirit cis-gendered man and has been 'out' to friends, family and community since he was 19 years old. He has been working with Indigenous communities throughout Canada as a community developer and health promotions advocate in the areas of addictions, long-term care, HIV/AIDS, sexual orientation and gender identity, family and community healing, child welfare, health policy and programs and urban Indigenous development. He has worked for the following organizations and groups: Nechi Institute, Friendship Centres at all levels, Alberta Health Services and the Federal Government. As well he has volunteered at local, provincial, national and international levels with a notable appointment as the first Canadian Board member to the World Indigenous Nation's Higher Education Consortium (WIN-HEC/2002-04). In the mid-2000's Richard received the community development award from the Alberta Aboriginal Role Model Awards. Richard was the first Director General for the 2 Spirits in Motion Society and is a founding member of the organization when it was first conceived in 2003 at the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Forum on Two Spirit Peoples, HIV/AIDS and Health in Edmonton, Alberta. Richard 'came in' to the 2 Spirit circle in 2001 when he was invited to help bring together 2SLGBTQIA people together in Edmonton. He's stayed in the 2 Spirit circle since then to continue expressing his commitment to helping improve the quality of life of 2 Spirit and gender and sexually diverse people and create safe and supportive social environments for our part of the Indigenous gender diverse community.

**Kiera Ladner** is Canada Research Chair in Miyo we'citowin, Indigenous Governance and Digital Sovereignities and Associate Professor in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba, and former Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Politics and Governance. Her research focuses on Indigenous Politics and Governance; Digital Sovereignities and Archiving (MMIW, PARSD, and CLIP); gender (diversities); women and governance; and resurgence (in terms of both women and youth). Dr. Ladner's publications include *This is an Honour Song: Twenty Years Since the Blockades* (Arbeiter Ring Press) co-edited with Leanne Simpson, and *Surviving Canada: Indigenous Peoples Celebrate 150 Years of Betrayal* co-authored with Myra J. Tait, as well as numerous articles and book chapters on a wide variety of topics. Currently, Dr. Ladner is working on projects with Dr. Shawna Ferris on a community centred digital archive project which is compiling three archives (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls database, Post-Apology Indian Residential Schools Database, the Sex Work Database). She is also working on project on including the comparative constitutional law and Indigenous peoples project (CLIP project), a digital sovereignties and a comparative treaty project focussing on Anglo-settler societies.

**Kyrie Ransom** is currently a Policy Analyst at the Assembly of First Nations. She has served as the Justice Coordinator for the Akwesasne Justice Department and as the lead on legislative development for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, facilitating the enactment of the *Iatathróna Raotiientáhtsera* ‘Couples Property’ Law, Akwesasne *Tekaia’torehthà:ke Kaianerénhsera* (Akwesasne Court Law) and Akwesasne *Oién:kwa Kaianerénhsera* (Akwesasne Tobacco Law). Kyrie has worked on developing legislative enactment and referendum procedures, and established Akwesasne’s *Kaiahnehronsehra iehiontakwa*: Place Where Laws Are Registered – Akwesasne Law Registry. With her knowledge, Kyrie has been asked to present to other First Nations and to share information regarding Akwesasne’s ratification process relating to the enactment laws, and establishing Indigenous Justice Systems.

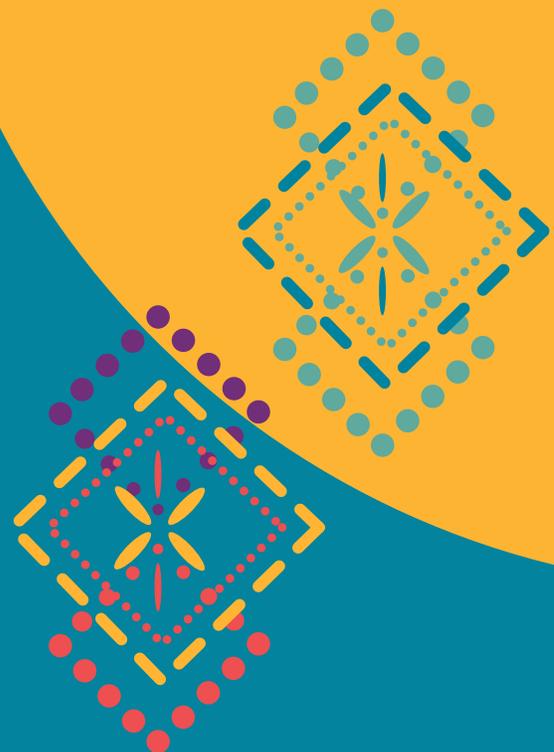
**Samantha Michaels** is a Senior Research and Policy Advisor at Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada. She leads research on issues affecting Inuit women and children to advance policy and program development. Her principal files include shelters, transition and second-stage housing, violence against women and the administration of justice. She also advises on social, economic and health trends. Pauktuutit, incorporated in 1984, is the national representative organization of Inuit women in Canada. It fosters greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, advocates for equality and social improvements, and encourages their participation in the community, regional and national life of Canada.

**Lisa Pigeau** is a Senior Political Advisor for Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation. Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation is a national advocacy organization representing the voices of Métis women. LFMO has member organization representation from the five Métis homeland provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. Find out more at [www.metiswomen.org](http://www.metiswomen.org).

**Nally Rowan Weetaluktuk** is a Statistical Analyst at Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). ITK is the national representational organization protecting and advancing the rights and interests of Inuit in Canada. Its work includes research, advocacy, public outreach and education on the issues affecting Inuit. It works closely with the four Inuit regions to present unified priorities in Ottawa. Nally is involved in and/or leading many priorities of Inuit-led research, including the National Inuit Health Survey and other important projects designed to provide high quality, Inuit-determined and Inuit-owned data to monitor change, identify gaps, and inform decision-making for the benefit of Inuit.

**Candice Shaw** is a Policy Director of Violence Prevention & Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA People (MMIWG2S+) at Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). As part of her role, she is representing NWAC on the Data Sub-Working Group and the Urban Sub-Working Group for the development of the MMIWG2S+ National Action Plan. She is also a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at McGill University and has spent most of her academic career examining intersectional inequalities tied to sexism and colonial legacies. Her participation on the Data Sub-Working Group has furthered both her professional and academic motivation to bridge research and policy with tangible calls to action.

**Elizabeth Blaney** is the MMIWG Special Advisor for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. She lives in Wolastoqiyik Territory, along the beautiful Wolastoq on the East coast. Before coming to CAP, Elizabeth was the Director of Administration & Program Development at the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council, a CAP PTO. Her work to address violence against Indigenous women and girls includes participating in the institutional hearings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, sitting on the New Brunswick Advisory Committee on Violence against Wabanaki Women, and co-developing the Looking Out for Each Other project through the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council. Through her work and personal endeavours, she strives to help and effect change and honour the responsibilities she has been given.



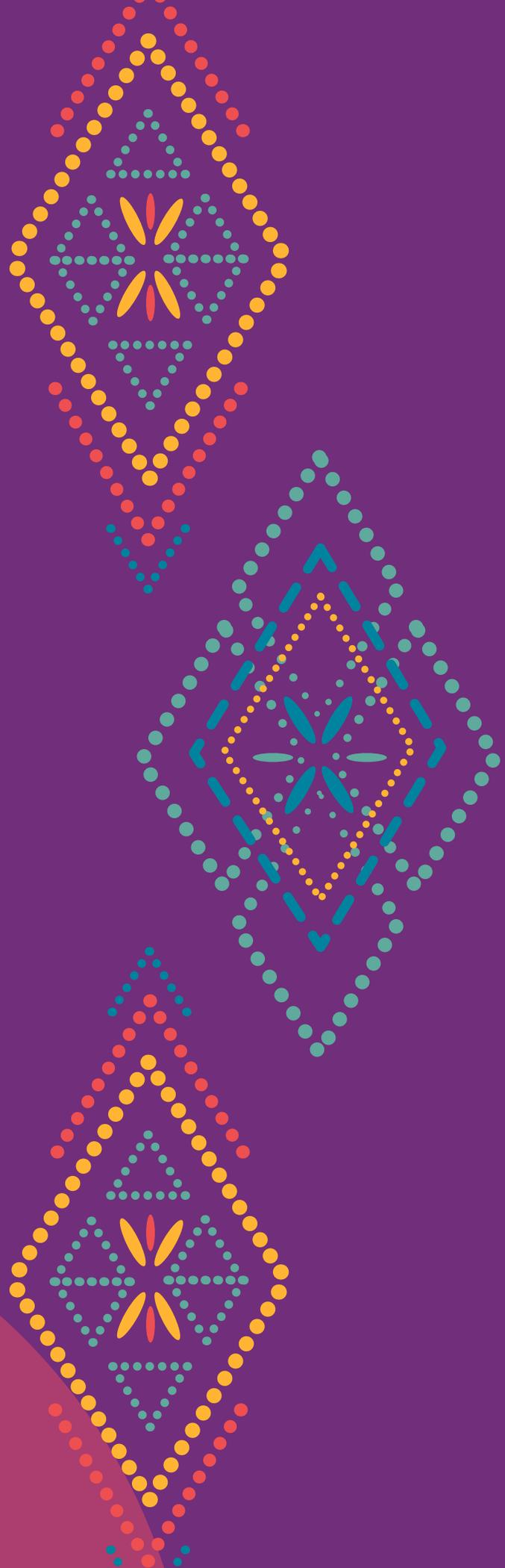
**Jonathan Dewar** is the Chief Executive Officer of the First Nations Information Governance Centre. He has spent most of his 20+ year career directing research and knowledge translation initiatives on behalf of Indigenous-governed national NGOs and has been recognized as a leader in healing and reconciliation and Indigenous health and well-being education, policy, and research. He has published extensively on these subjects, with a specialization in the role of the arts in healing and reconciliation, and has lectured nationally and internationally. From 2012-2016, Jonathan served as the first Director of the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre and Special Advisor to the President at Algoma University, where he led research, education, curatorial, and community service programming, and taught courses in Political Science and Fine Arts. From 2007-2012, Jonathan served as Director of Research at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, where he led the Foundation's research and evaluation efforts. He has also previously served as a Director at the National Aboriginal Health Organization, as a senior advisor within the federal government, and within the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. Jonathan received a doctorate from the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies at Carleton University, where his research focused on the role of the arts in health, healing, and reconciliation. He also holds an appointment as Adjunct Research Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

**Curtis Woloschuk** lives in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, on Treaty 4 land and home of the Métis. He has a degree in Economics from the University of Regina and has spent his entire career dedicated to statistical research and analysis starting with the Ministry of Finance and currently with Integrated Justice Services within the Government of Saskatchewan. Curtis is passionate about helping youth and has spent much of his adult life volunteer coaching and officiating sports such as football, soccer and basketball as well as serving on the board of directors of his local soccer and gymnastics associations. He believes in the power of teamwork and that the power of the collective exceeds the power of the individual.

**Huda Masoud** is a research analyst working in the Centre for Indigenous Statistics and Partnerships (CISP) at Statistics Canada. She has led and worked on numerous analytical and research projects examining the health and socio-economic well-being of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit in Canada and brings her technical, and subject-matter experience from previous roles she's held within the public service in health and social statistics. Her recent work on creating an updated inventory of Statistics Canada data sources relevant to Indigenous people has been used to support analyses for the Data Strategy for the MMIWG National Action Plan.

**Rebecca Kong** is the Assistant Director at the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Statistics Canada. Rebecca has been a part of the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics since 1993. Over her career, she has worked in the subject areas of crime and victimization statistics, family violence, criminal harassment, fraud, victim services, criminal justice workload and performance indicators, and correctional services. She has extensive experience in police-reported data and working with partners inside and outside government on developing new data to respond to information needs. Rebecca graduated in 1993 from Carleton University with a B.A. honours degree in Law with a concentration in Criminology.

**Eric Guimond** is currently Chief Data Officer, Strategic Research and Data Innovation Branch, with the Department of Indigenous Services Canada. In his current role, he is responsible for the development of collaborative research and data strategies, partnerships and agreements that are required to support the improvement of the well-being of Indigenous peoples and communities across Canada, as well as supporting Indigenous peoples in assuming control of the delivery of services, including Indigenous data.



The DSWG recognized that its work would play a crucial role in the development and support of the NAP. Members also reflected on the importance that the work on the Data Strategy be led according to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis values and principles, and as a reflection of the history of their community or cross-cutting identity, however defined, with data.

The process to develop the Data Strategy and the Quantitative Indicator Framework was deliberate and measured. This meant that members were welcome to contribute to meeting agendas in advance, and were encouraged to provide their input during and between meetings. All decisions were confirmed with all participating members.

The DSWG invited experts and representatives from relevant organizations to provide presentations to the group (See Box 2). This provided an opportunity for group members to have a common understanding on the relevant data-related issues that were part of developing the NAP Data Strategy.

## Box 2 - DSWG Presentation Topics

To inform the DSWG members' thinking, presentations and discussions were held on the following topics:

- 

Summary of Indigenous and non-Indigenous frameworks and data sources for possible indicators for the NAP by researchers, government agencies and departments, and other data holders, including from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- 

Overview of Indigenous-led engagement reports by 2 Spirits in Motion, Native Women's Association of Canada, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, and others
- 

Progress presentations from the various sub-working groups, different federal departments, and the government of Yukon
- 

Presentations on available data and data gaps and context on the central indicator (the safety of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people) and on privacy legislation from Statistics Canada, as well as presentations by the RCMP and the Ontario Provincial Police

In addition, the Chair of the DSWG met with each of the other sub-working groups and solicited advice on priorities. This helped the DSWG to work at a similar pace and cover relevant areas similar to the other sub-working groups. It was important to track and measure what all sub-working groups and stakeholders saw as important. This approach meant that the DSWG was well-informed by others' experience and knowledge.

## Building a Foundation

The DSWG intentionally strove to work on the basis of member consensus. In many cases, members representing First Nations, Inuit, Métis, urban and 2SLGBTQIA+ people and organizations wanted to have discussions within their constituencies before providing input to the DSWG. In other cases, not all members were able to attend every meeting. For this reason, a step-by-step process of developing three questionnaires on key topics was agreed upon by group members. The hope was that this would help the DSWG gather meaningful input and feedback, give members enough time to have discussions within their constituencies, and allow the DSWG to develop a strong basis for discussion to inform the NAP Data Strategy.

Initial drafts of questionnaires were developed with the MMIWG Secretariat and shared with DSWG members so they could provide their input on the questions and the way they were presented. The input was used to revised the questionnaires. The refined versions were shared with DSWG members so they could complete them within their respective organizations and governments. DSWG Members gave completed questionnaires to the MMIWG Secretariat and then met to discuss the results.

Questionnaires were shared with the DSWG to determine:

- Whether the themes from the National Inquiry's Final Report were appropriate for the work of the DSWG;
- The criteria for selecting indicators; and,
- Potential quantitative indicators for the NAP Data Strategy

The results from each of the questionnaires have been detailed in the relevant sections of the NAP Data Strategy.

It is important to note that the number of responses per questionnaire varied, and so while the questionnaires point generally to ideas that were shared, the low response rate on some is reflective of the complicated nature of this work, as well as the fact that the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership.

Sister Drummer in Faded Red; Drawing/Painting by Jason Sikoak. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)



## Definitions

The NAP Data Strategy uses terms that might not be understood by everyone. Definitions of some of these terms are provided so that all readers share a common understanding as they read this chapter.

**Indigenous Data Sovereignty** – The right of a sovereign group to govern the collection, ownership and application of its own data (more detail provided in Section 8)

**Criteria** – Refers to a guide, standard or rule to use in selecting an indicator

**Data** – Information collected to be examined, considered and used to increase knowledge or understanding.

**Data source** – The author or location from which data comes

**Data gap** – The situation when data or part of the data for an indicator are missing

**Indicator** – A measure of a concept; a result that indicates the state or level of something

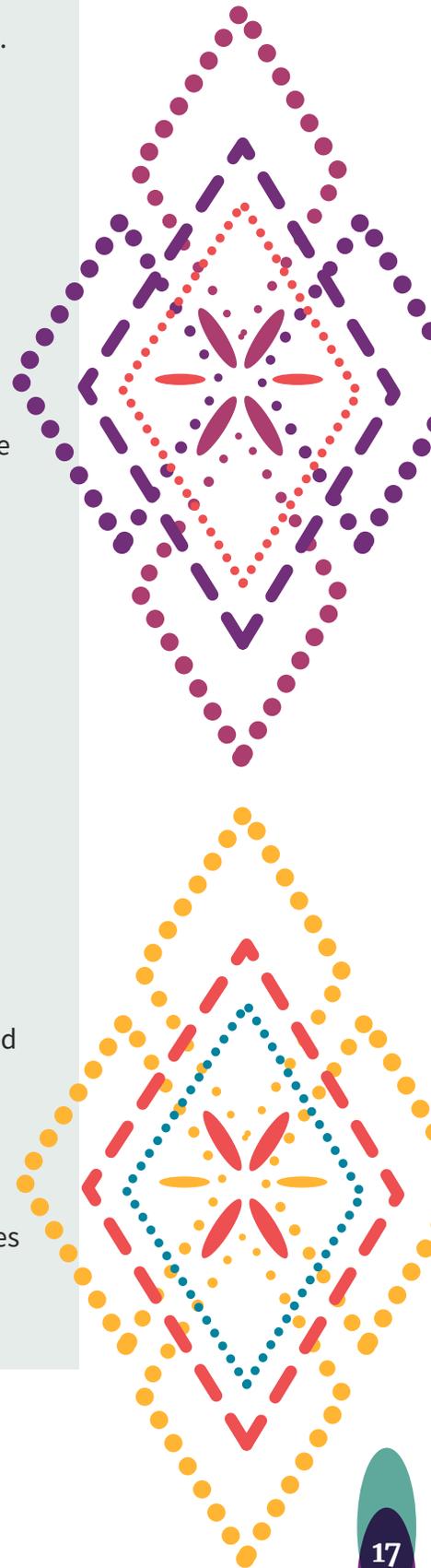
**Indicator framework** – An organized way to look at data from different sources

**Qualitative data** - Information that cannot be expressed as a number

**Quantitative data** - Data that can be expressed as a number, or can be quantified

**Strength-based indicators** – Indicators that emphasize the strengths of individuals or communities

**Deficit-based indicators** – Indicators that emphasize the perceived weaknesses of individuals or communities





## 2. Pillars, Purpose and Objectives of the MMIWG NAP Data Strategy

This Data Strategy is a starting point in an evolving conversation that is anchored in First Nations, Inuit and Métis data governance, as well as in the participation of MMIWG family members and survivors, and of urban, rural/remote, non-status and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

The Data Strategy must align with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis strategies, particularly regarding data governance because data strategies necessarily follow data governance strategies. For First Nations this would include the First Nations Data Governance Strategy. For Inuit, this would include the National Inuit Strategy on Research.

It is a national strategy that is not tied to a particular jurisdiction. Should jurisdictional obstacles arise in reference to data, these obstacles, and the relationships required to navigate and overcome them, will provide an opportunity to reframe approaches to ownership, control, access and possession of First Nation, Inuit and Métis data through a partnership process. These obstacles will also provide an opportunity for provinces and territories to discuss and resolve jurisdictional issues with Indigenous governments and organizations.

This Data Strategy is also evergreen. It is a starting point for an approach that will continually grow and evolve in partnership with rightful data holders and that will be responsive to changing conditions and realities.

### Pillars from the National Family and Survivors' Circle



**NATIONAL FAMILY AND SURVIVORS' CIRCLE**  
*Nothing About Us, Without Us*

The realization of the Data Strategy was guided by four pillars developed by the National Family and Survivors Circle (NFSC). These pillars were used to guide NFSC's work to advocate, educate, and raise awareness to inform and inspire legislative, policy, systems, and behavioural changes. In this context, the pillars served as important points of reflection and analysis as the NFSC progressed in a meaningful way toward positive outcomes.

## The NFSC's pillars include:

### Inclusion:

Inclusion is measured by the full and active involvement of families of MMIWG and survivors of gender-based violence in the process of creating transformative change to Reclaim our Power and Place as Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through substantive equality, equity, and dignity. The NFSC does this by taking a lived experience centred approach in the NFSC component to the National Action Plan (NAP); sharing this perspective with the Core Working Group and sub-working groups; and advocating other NAP components engage families and survivors in the development of their components.

### Interconnectedness:

Interconnectedness is central to Indigenous worldviews. Our Inherent rights are rooted in underlying values and principles within Natural Laws of respect, reciprocity, and interconnectedness.

These principles reflect and reinforce our understanding that everyone and everything has a purpose and contribute to balance. Imbalance has negative consequences. Restoring balance is restoring this deep connection on many different levels. It results in positive outcomes. The NFSC advocates for other NAP components to engage families and survivors on how to effectively restore connectedness through addressing gaps, ensuring accessibility, dignified, and culturally-informed approaches.

### Accountability:

Shared accountability to create and maintain transformative change to bring an end to all forms of gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

This also means having the will to support and carry out transformative changes at all levels and creating and establishing mechanisms to track and monitor our progress. The NFSC continues to advocate for immediate implementation of CFJ 1.7 (National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson) and for other NAP components to engage families and survivors.

### Impact:

Creating meaningful impact at the individual, societal, legislative and policy levels to effectively build, sustain, and gain the momentum needed for transformative change. This will require recognition of one's place within the shared responsibility and accountability of this work; commitment to building relationships that are interconnected, respectful, reciprocal, and responsive; outcomes must be felt on the ground by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families of MMIWG, and survivors of gender-based violence, if the NAP is to be successful; and measuring and monitoring impacts regularly for trends and progress.

## Pillars Adapted to Support Meaningful Data Relationships

The DSWG based the pillars that ground the Data Strategy on the four pillars of the NFSC. Group members were inspired by the way in which NFSC pillars, when applied to data, could help to guide the work ahead. The NFSC pillars were adapted and expanded to highlight their relationship to data, within the NAP Data Strategy.

Within the Data Strategy, the four pillars are based on the NFSC's original definitions, and additionally defined as:

**Inclusion** for the ongoing development of the strategy will also be measured by the full and active involvement of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and of survivors of gender-based violence in the process of creating transformative change. This participation, aimed toward reclaiming power and place as Indigenous women and girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, is based on the principles of substantive equality, equity, and dignity. Inclusion, as specific to data, also means the full and active participation of all Indigenous people, including non-Status, First Nation, Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, regardless of where they live. This means that data must be inclusive, but also be applied as needed in distinctions-based and disaggregated ways.

**Impact**, as it pertains to data, refers to creating meaningful effect on policy, legislation and society at large. The Data Strategy will monitor impact through measurable progress toward the ultimate outcome: safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

**Interconnectedness** is central to Indigenous worldviews. As specific to data, it refers to the way in which the four thematic clusters in the Data Strategy interrelate. It also relates to the data development, and the interconnectedness of quantitative and qualitative data.

**Accountability**, as specific to data, is the shared responsibility to which collecting data leads. It means that once data are gathered and progress is tracked, action can be taken. It also refers to the important relationships that must animate the process for true and meaningful accountability.



*Used with permission from the National Family and Survivors Circle.*

## Objectives of the Data Strategy

The NAP Data Strategy is rooted in and will promote Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

Affirming the right to reliable and accessible data as essential to monitoring, tracking accountability, and supporting the rights enshrined in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Data Sovereignty, the NAP Data Strategy supports positive change towards the achievement of the objectives of the NAP.

It does this in three primary ways, including:

- Identifying existing data sources and the role they may play in reporting and accountability, now and for the future;

- Identifying data gaps that, if addressed, may provide the full range of data necessary to assess progress in reducing violence and promoting safety and justice; and,

- Designing a preliminary Quantitative Indicator Framework addressing current realities that will allow for monitoring progress in reducing violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, as well as monitoring the effectiveness of legislation, policy and programs intended to contribute to the objectives of the NAP.

Members of the DSWG have indicated the importance of expanding data, noting that quantitative data alone are not a sufficient basis for measuring progress, and that future development should include the creation of relevant qualitative indicators, as well as further research in relevant areas as led by Indigenous researchers. Existing data tools in use by governments with respect to Indigenous Peoples and their realities are lacking, and cannot be the only basis upon which results are assessed.



### 3. An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Data

This NAP Data Strategy validates diverse forms of knowledge, including lived experiences, academic research, and traditional First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis knowledge. Grounding First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis ways of knowing and ways of being while also providing holistic data across the four thematic clusters means including both quantitative and qualitative data.

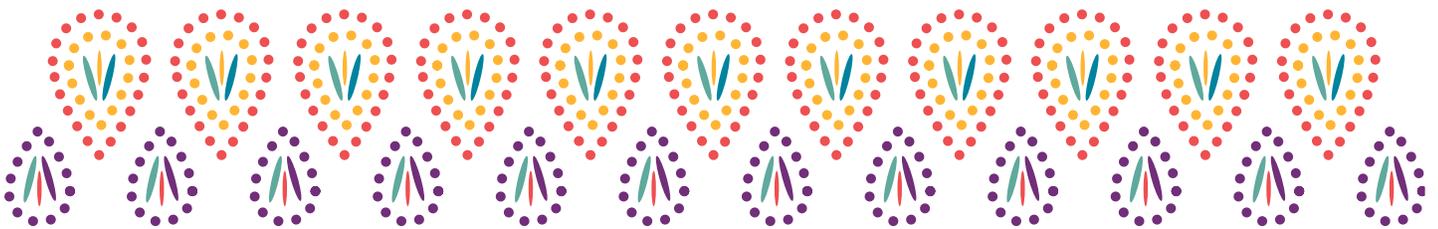


	Qualitative Data	Quantitative Data
<b>Definition</b>	Information that can't be expressed as a number or counted	Information that can be expressed as a number or can be counted
<b>Purpose</b>	Studying individuals' understanding of their social reality	Testing hypotheses, probing for cause and effect, making predictions
<b>Approach</b>	Observed and descriptive	Statistical and structured
<b>Limitations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Difficult to establish cause and effect</li> <li>● Not statistically representative</li> <li>● Analysis is labour-intensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Does not provide reasoning behind responses</li> <li>● Can fail to reach underrepresented populations</li> <li>● Data collection is costly and time-consuming</li> </ul>
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How did this happen?</li> <li>● Why did this happen?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How many?</li> <li>● How much?</li> <li>● How often?</li> </ul>

Briefly explained, quantitative data provides trends and patterns in social phenomena and qualitative data provides the depth of understanding. There is a relationship between the two types of data which can vary depending on the context. In some cases, the data types come together to tell a rich story. In other cases, they may be less closely aligned. Regardless, the story in the data is often told in a relatable way when informed by both types of data.

This framework currently focuses entirely on quantitative indicators. It is a **starting point** as quantitative data sources are already known, and the work to produce quantitative indicators from these data sources is clearer.

The NFSC, along with the members and participants of the DSWG, have identified the importance of qualitative data and of community-based research as a culturally appropriate way to tell the stories of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. As the Data Strategy fills out, future work will be needed to focus on developing qualitative indicators and to support the kind of work needed to move forward and to understand how actions taken to address violence are working.



Commissioner Qajaq Robinson, left, and Barbara Sevigny, right, look on during the lighting of the qulliq by Elder Rebecca Veevee at the Knowledge Keepers and Expert Hearing on a Human Rights Framework in Quebec City in May 2018. Source: [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## 4. Building Blocks: Thematic Clusters

DSWG members had a discussion early within the mandate around the multiple factors that lead to Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people going missing and being murdered, as well as the importance of preventative measures that will improve their overall safety. These factors, both deficit and strengths-based, can be grouped thematically as *clusters* when developing a Data Strategy.

*Reclaiming Power and Place* identified **Culture, Health and Wellness, Human Security and Justice** as the four thematic areas or *clusters* that underpin the “structures and the systems that sustain violence in daily encounters.”<sup>3</sup>

As such, the definitions offered in this chapter are working definitions drawn from the Final Report, intended to orient the reader to general concepts. They are a starting point. In the longer term, these definitions will necessarily evolve and change through work with Indigenous partners.



An image of the Stolen Sister's Statue, located outside of the Saskatoon Police Station. This statue depicts a slightly larger-than-life bronze sculpture depicting a First Nations dancer with her shawl becoming the wings of an eagle. Source: Laserham, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

<sup>3</sup> National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, Volume 1b (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 2019), 118.



## Defining Human Security



In many of the Indigenous worldviews presented within the context of the Truth-Gathering Process during the National Inquiry, the right to security included both a physical right and a social right. As the Report noted,

“This broad sense of human security draws from an approach that places well-being at its very centre, and recognizes that complex economic and social interactions – encounters – work to shape security, or a lack of security, in a person’s life. It moves human security beyond the agenda of the state alone, and instead considers other factors or ‘non-traditional’ threats such as poverty, disease, and the roots of issues such as the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Indigenous women experience threats to human security and to their basic human rights on a daily basis. For them, human security means the ability to live without being under a constant threat of violence or harm. Witnesses discussed security in a physical sense, and as the right to life, liberty, and personal safety, including control over one’s own physical and mental health. They also identified the need for protection and social assistance through essential services in areas of health, housing, access to water, food, and education, and, most notably, the overall reduction of poverty, as it impacts levels of violence. In this context, safety and security are guaranteed through the pursuit and maintenance of relationships that are respectful, equal, and safe. Security is more than a physical condition; it is also a deeply felt experience of belonging, purpose, trust, connection, and harmony with the broader human, natural, and spiritual world.”<sup>6</sup>



6 Ibid., 504.

## Defining Justice



Justice does not necessarily mean the same thing in Indigenous and in Western terms. As the Report noted,

“It is important to consider how “justice” is defined in Indigenous terms and, as guided by the principle of respect, is essential to the well-being of Nations and communities. Justice-related human rights violations against Indigenous people are widely documented. Further, the police, courts, correctional facilities, and other representatives of the criminal justice system are responsible for or complicit in the violation of the rights to justice held by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who experience violence. Indigenous women are also vastly more likely to be incarcerated or otherwise punished by the criminal justice system than non-Indigenous women. In many of these cases, Indigenous women are criminalized for protecting themselves or their children against violence; that is, they are criminalized for the very factor that the justice system is supposed to protect them against. The extent of violence in the lives of Indigenous women and girls cannot be separated from their criminalization.

The failure of justice is not restricted only to cases of MMIWG; rather, the absence of justice, the fight for justice, and the misuse of justice in interactions between the justice system and Indigenous people routinely compromises their rights and allows violence to continue unchecked.”<sup>7</sup>



7 Ibid., 626.

As DSWG group members saw them, all thematic clusters are equally grounded in respect for human and Indigenous rights and instruments through a gendered lens, Indigenous laws and ways of knowing, as well as in the responsibilities of governments to respond in these areas.

*Reclaiming Power and Place* also detailed that these thematic clusters must be viewed as interdependent and indivisible, a concept with which DSWG members agreed.

### Interdependent and Indivisible: Themes from *Reclaiming Power and Place*



The right to access, participate in, and enjoy one’s culture



The right to mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being



The right to live free from violence or injustice



The right to life, liberty, and personal safety

The first questionnaire asked whether these thematic clusters from *Reclaiming Power and Place* should be used in the NAP Data Strategy. Specifically, members were asked whether they would support using each of the four thematic clusters in the NAP Data Strategy. The questionnaire also asked DSWG members to rate the importance of each thematic cluster as well as offered space for general comments and suggestions related to additional thematic clusters.

The results, summarized in Table 1, showed a strong initial agreement on the use of the four thematic clusters originating from *Reclaiming Power and Place*. Members also felt that these thematic clusters were very important to the Data Strategy.

**Table 1 – Questionnaire results on use of four thematic clusters in the Data Strategy**

Response	Culture	Health & Wellness	Human Security	Justice
Yes	100%	100%	80%	100%
No	0%	0%	20%	0%
Very important	100%	100%	80%	100%
Don't know/prefer not to answer	0%	0%	20%	0%
Total Responses	5	5	5	5

*\*\*As previously noted, the number of responses per questionnaire varied. Given the limited response rate, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of all DSWG members on this subject.\*\**



This No More Stolen Sisters chalk drawing was made during a Black Lives Matter sit in at Toronto Police Headquarters on June 19, 2020. Source: Jason Hargrove from Toronto, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

DSWG members suggested additional thematic clusters including:

- Indian Act inclusion/exclusion
- Residential school attendance (including extended family attendance)
- Sixties Scoop
- History of foster care
- Regional considerations
- Demographic information such as education level, socio-economic status, age when missing, etc.
- Exploring the nature of gender identity and the power dynamics and struggles that emerge between the various genders when external influences change or deteriorate cultural activities and practices of nations/groups

In addition, some members suggested the need to define sub-clusters under each thematic cluster.

After some discussion, DSWG members agreed that the additional, suggested thematic clusters were better included under the existing four thematic clusters. Members also felt that the theme of gender should be woven throughout the entire Data Strategy, rather than isolated to any one area.

As an outcome of all discussions, the DSWG recommended that the NAP Data Strategy be based on the following thematic clusters:

-  **Culture**
-  **Health and Wellness**
-  **Human Security**
-  **Justice**



## 5. Building Blocks: Criteria

The second questionnaire focused on the selection of criteria for potential indicators, as DSWG members recognized that there are many potential indicators that could be used in the NAP Data Strategy. Members felt that deciding on criteria – a way to help make choices among the many potential indicators – would allow for easier selection of final indicators.

In the questionnaire, members indicated whether they wanted to include the criteria (yes), did not want to include the criteria (no), or were not sure whether they wanted to include this criteria (maybe). The questionnaire also asked members to add any additional criteria they felt should be included.

Members were careful to include criteria that had been used by First Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations and governments in developing

indicators for frameworks and strategies, in the questionnaire. The possible criteria and the definitions included:

- Comparable – The indicator allows for comparisons across groups and regions
- Connected to thematic clusters – The indicator fits under one or more of the thematic clusters of the NAP Data Strategy
- Culturally-relevant – The indicator wording and concept reflects First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis culture
- Distinctions-based (later reframed as population-specific)<sup>8</sup> – The indicator highlights results for First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis people

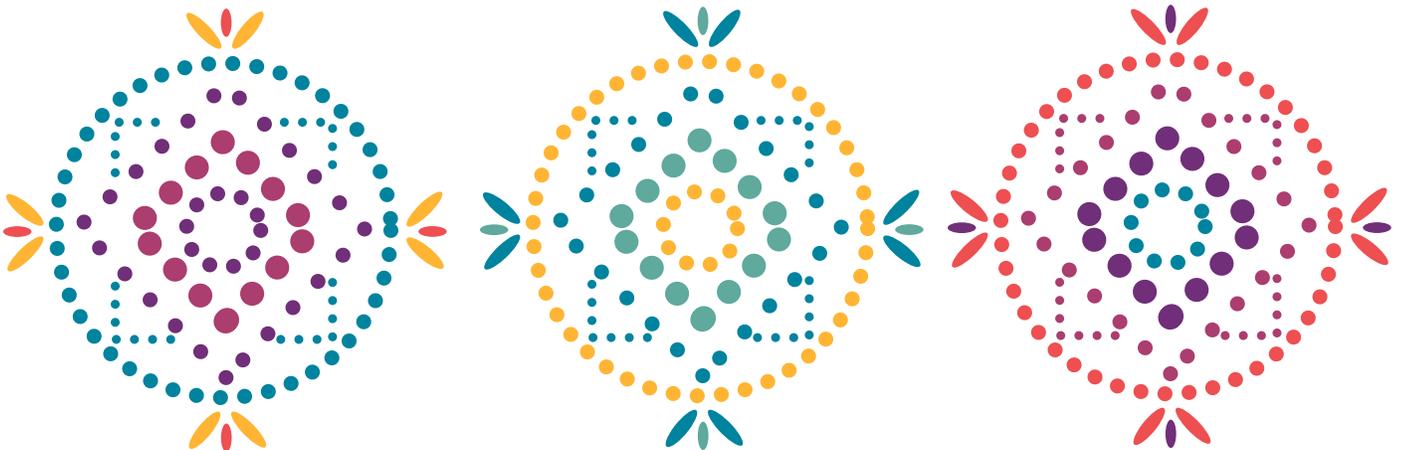


**8** This criteria was, in a later stage of work, reframed as population-specific, to be inclusive to those who are Indigenous but who may not be recognized in colonial frameworks or who may not identify as part of the three distinctions-based groups recognized under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. The population-specific modification was also enacted to reflect the principle of inclusion and to account for the many factors which may make individuals or groups unique, such as diversity of geography, of gender, and in other ways, as well as the intersections where these might appear in data. DSWG members understood the specificity of the term “distinctions-based” and knew that the indicators suggested moved within, across and beyond these distinctions. The Métis representative on the Data Sub-Working Group also noted how current governmental data identifying “Métis” is not based on the definition of Métis used by the Métis Nation. The Métis Sub-Working group and the Métis Nation maintain the importance of definitional precision when discussing the multiplicity of Indigenous viewpoints, and the need to respect, acknowledge, uphold and affirm the centrality of the Indigenous and human rights of those affected. This includes clearly articulating the role of the three rights-bearing Indigenous Peoples in liaising with the government, as rights-holders, and the myriad Indigenous identity-specific interests that can be found within, across, and beyond the three distinctions-based groups.

- Data availability – Data are available now to measure the indicator (noting that available data may not conform to the other criteria for consideration to be considered quality data)
- Data are collected by a First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis organization
- Disaggregated – Data from the indicator can be separated by age, gender, region
- Manageable – The final number of indicators is reasonable
- Strengths-based – The indicators measure the presence of something rather than the lack of something

Questionnaire results, in Table 2, showed that members had strong support for using disaggregated data as a criterion for indicator selection. There was support for using comparability, connection to thematic clusters, culturally-relevant, distinctions-based, and manageability as criteria.

Data availability, having the data collected by a First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis organization and using strengths-based indicators were all criteria with more limited support. In particular, the issue of data availability was a firm criteria for one quarter of the members while the remaining members saw this as a possible criteria. The discussion around this criteria was that the data might not be currently available but could be collected over a period of time. In addition, discussions also noted the fact that available data might not mean quality data – and therefore, data that were not available might not be appropriate to use, even if available. Members also felt that while data should be collected by a First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis organization, this might take place in time but was not possible in the current context. Some members felt that using strength-based criteria exclusively would hide the need for services and programs, particularly for health-focused indicators.



**Table 2 – Questionnaire results on criteria for indicator selection**

Criteria	Yes	No	Maybe	Total Responses
Comparable	75%	0%	25%	4
Connected to thematic clusters	75%	0%	25%	4
Culturally-relevant	75%	0%	25%	4
Data availability	25%	0%	75%	4
Data are collected by a First Nations, Inuit, Métis and/or other Indigenous organization	25%	25%	50%	4
Disaggregated	100%	0%	0%	4
Distinctions-based	75%	0%	25%	4
Manageable	75%	0%	25%	4
Strengths-based	25%	25%	50%	4

*\*\*As previously noted, the number of responses per questionnaire varied. Given the limited response rate, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**



DSWG members also suggested additional criteria including:

- Gender-based – the indicator highlights results for various gender and sexual orientation identities.
- Data are collected by a Two Spirit and/or gender and sexually diverse organization or group
- Data quality - a minimum threshold of data quality and how that would be determined, particularly as it relates to general quality indicators and specific indicators related to Indigenous populations.

Those criteria supported by most members, along with the additional criteria, were considered in the recommendations around final criteria. The final criteria for the selection of indicators for the Data Strategy include:

- Comparable
- Connected to thematic clusters
- Culturally relevant
- Disaggregated
- Distinctions-based
- Manageable

Upon review by the technical group, certain criterion were amended to be more specific and others were added. This work continues and will become part of the implementation phase of the Data Strategy.



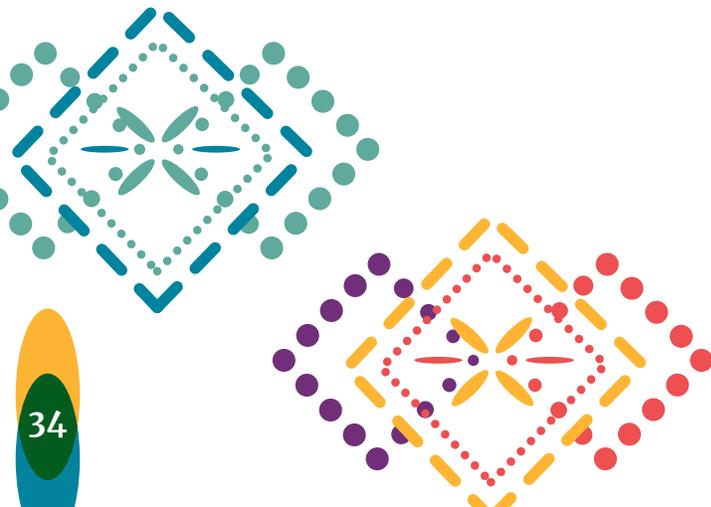
## 6. Celebrating Strengths, Centring Relationships

DSWG members continually discussed the importance of integrating a strengths-based approach to the NAP Data Strategy. Strengths-based approaches are holistic; they focus on the inherent strengths of individuals, families, communities, and organizations. They identify sources of strength and can contribute to understanding what makes Indigenous Peoples strong. In addition, they can point to the solutions to confronting violence through a prevention-based approach.

In contrast, deficit-based discourses, including in data, contributes to a blaming culture in which Indigenous individuals, communities, cultures and Nations are themselves blamed for the systemic inequalities that contribute to violence. Deficit-based data, used exclusively, can also serve to deny Indigenous people information around progress, even when it is substantial, and in doing so, fails to reinforce the power of Indigenous-led and designed solutions.

In group discussions, DSWG members expressed that strengths-based data focused on the knowledge that already exists in communities and reflects what is working (rather than what is not working); may provide clearer causal data for different issues contributing to MMIWG; and focuses on what Indigenous individuals and communities see as important. While not rejecting the value of other kinds of data, DSWG members also saw an opportunity, within this kind of data, for important distinctions-based work. For DSWG members, strengths-based data include quantitative and qualitative data that will need to be more fully developed, given the more deficit-based focus of many current data holdings.

Strength-based indicators were also seen as better able to provide measures for accountability. Members felt that strength-based indicators would provide key data supporting investment into First Nations, Inuit and Métis-designed and led initiatives to confront violence, in distinctions-based terms, and may better support the idea of Indigenous Data Sovereignty.



As a result, the quantitative indicators selected for the first iteration of this strategy represent both strengths-based and other indicators. The strengths-based indicators are factors that members saw as rooted in combatting the four pathways or root causes that contribute to ongoing colonial violence, as documented in the National Inquiry's Final Report, including:

- historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma;
- social and economic marginalization;
- maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will; and
- ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Many of the strengths-based indicators were seen as directly contributing to the prevention of violence in the area of culture, health and wellness, human security and justice.

In addition to these specific indicators, DSWG group members frequently noted the importance of the process through which this work is conducted, and especially the relationships that undergird it. This is supported by the findings of the National Inquiry and its report. For instance, In the National Inquiry's Final Report, families and survivors frequently began their testimony by pointing to relationships and spaces of encounter as opportunities for learning,

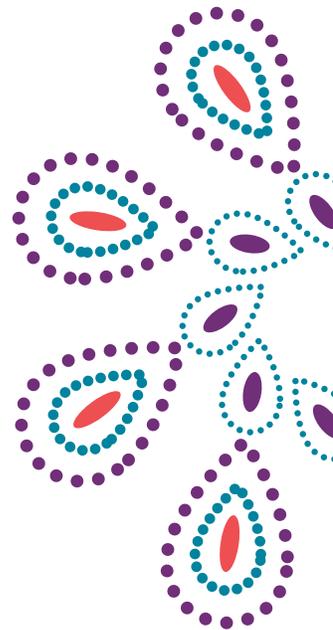
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9 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Executive Summary of *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 2019), 10.

understanding, transformation, and for creating safety. As the the National Inquiry's Executive Summary notes:

These encounters represent a time and space through which the vision, values, and principles that shape families, communities, and individual lives are created. We see these as transformational moments, too; in other words, these encounters can lead the way to harm or to healing, depending on the context. To engage in encounters like these represents an important responsibility and an opportunity to shape the terms of a relationship in a good way.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, DSWG members felt that strengths-based approaches supported good relationships and positive encounters, and represented part of the paradigm shift that is required both in terms of society, but more specifically in terms of the approach to Indigenous data.





## 7. Understanding the impact of the *Privacy Act* on data

Within the context of prioritizing strength and relationships, the DSWG also considered several contextual issues and potential barriers when examining data that was available and data that could be collected for the NAP Data Strategy. One critical issue was legislative restrictions around data collection, usage and access. This examination focused only on federal legislation, although it is important to note that provinces and territories also have privacy legislation that governs the way that data are collected, stored, analyzed and published.

Statistics Canada is governed by a statistical law, the *Statistics Act*, which gives it the mandate and authority to collect, compile, analyze, abstract and publish statistical information. It is also subject to the *Privacy Act*, “a law of general application that provides guidance on how to ensure that personal information is processed in a manner that is fair and consistent in a democratic country.”<sup>10</sup> This legislation was designed to protect individual Canadians’ personal information. It focuses on how to collect, manage and report data.

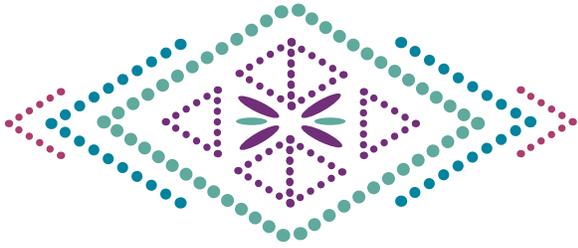
The DSWG saw implications under these legislation for quantitative data collection among First Nations, Inuit and Métis people and communities. Members raised issues for consideration as the Data Strategy was developed. Some of these issues were:

### **Anonymity in quantitative data collection:**

Members of the DSWG were concerned about anonymity in relation to small populations of First Nations, Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The risk to privacy can occur when data are released, shared or reported. For instance, the Census collects information on every single First Nations and Inuit community, and will release it only under specific circumstances that conform to the regulations of the *Privacy Act*. This might mean that the data that could help with community-level decision-making, might not be released by the federal government, under the *Privacy Act*.

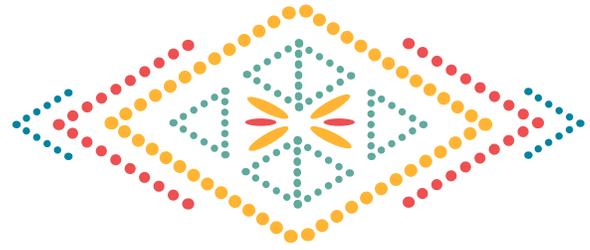
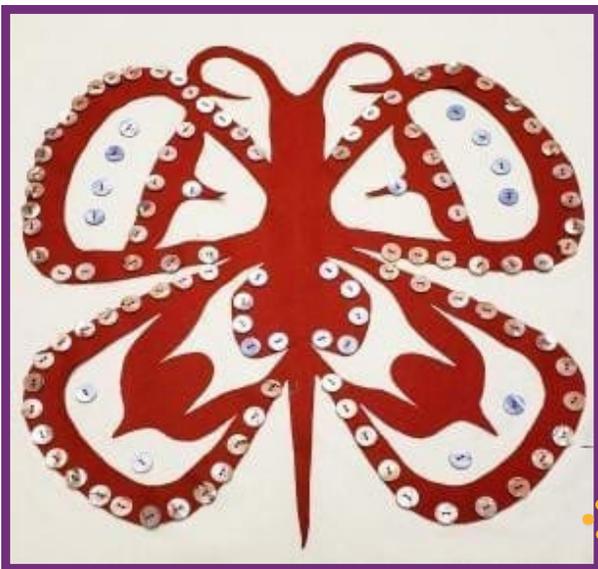


**10** *Privacy Related to Data: An overview of the Statistics and Privacy Acts (2020)*. Pierre Desrochers, Director, Office of Privacy Management and Information Coordination and Chief Privacy Officer. Presentation provided to the MMIWG NAP DSWG.



**Data collection and reporting at a distinctions-based or identity-based level:** Members were clear that data must be collected and reported at a distinctions-based level as well as in terms of identity-groups and for other key identifiers. The *Privacy Act* allows data to be collected for small populations but reporting can be suppressed to protect anonymity.

**Stigma of negative data for communities:** DSWG members pointed out that data highlighting negative elements could be reported to the detriment of community members. Without a reference group and relevant context, negative reporting would ignore the social and structural issues that created it in the first place. This reporting could stigmatize First Nation, Inuit or Métis communities and make community members less likely to provide data in the future.



**Access to data from organizations and Indigenous groups who need them:** For more than two decades, data has been offered to Inuit and First Nations communities and organizations through several different processes and multiple agencies. While services and supports do exist, better communication and increased resourcing is needed to promote its use and growth.

All of these issues would impact appropriate monitoring and accountability within the Data Strategy. In all, members saw resolving these issues as part of affirming Indigenous people's and communities' right to reliable and accessible data.

Members were concerned that legislation would protect individuals in small populations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and, their data would not be able to be reported at a distinctions-based level, making the data less useful for decision-making.

Button Blanket; Decorative/Traditional arts by Samantha Pelkey. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)



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## 8. Supporting Indigenous Data Sovereignty

The DSWG noted a lack of disaggregated, culturally-relevant data as masking the unique needs and conditions of Indigenous Peoples, resulting in their being under-resourced, or inappropriately resourced. This means that the persistent data gaps already identified for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, will continue to exacerbate gaps in outcomes.

As a result, the DSWG identified Indigenous Data Sovereignty as the foundation of the Data Strategy. The DSWG defines Indigenous Data Sovereignty as:

First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples' inherent right to govern the collection, ownership, stewardship and reporting of data, information and knowledge about First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals, communities, groups, cultures, lands, and resources. First Nations, Inuit and Métis people and groups inherently have these rights regardless of where or how the data are held or by whom.

DSWG members also noted that First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, organizations and communities, as included in its understanding of Indigenous Data Sovereignty would be inclusive of family members and survivors and of all Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+

people, regardless of where they may live or be and regardless of colonial barriers to fully enjoying their rights. Inclusive First Nations, Inuit and Métis data strategies were determined to be best placed to hold broader conversations among themselves and with governments who collect data about how safety is measured. Indigenous data holders can also contribute to ensure that high quality, culturally-relevant, disaggregated and distinctions-based data are available for the NAP Data Strategy.

As DSWG members discussed, there is a mutual opportunity to transform the data landscape, beginning with a recognition that sustainable, First Nations, Inuit and Métis-led data functions—including First Nations, Inuit and Métis -led qualitative data development—are a prerequisite for strengthened accountability, evidence-based decision making, and effective Indigenous-led data governance. DSWG members saw reporting, monitoring and evaluation requirements for the NAP Data Strategy as holistic and grounded in Indigenous worldviews. These worldviews include the full diversity of Indigenous perspectives on the importance of both quantitative and qualitative data and on Indigenous ways of knowing and being, articulated in terms that reflect the distinct cultures and worldviews of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people.



In some cases, some basic infrastructure already exists to facilitate these conversations. For instance the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) has existed long enough to develop a mature expression of data sovereignty through the development and rights-holder implementation of the First Nations principles of OCAP®. This infrastructure needs to be strengthened, particularly via support for the implementation of the First Nations Data Governance Strategy, to support growing data demands to resource the NAP Data Strategy. In other cases, for example with Métis-led data functions and as outlined by the Métis sub-working group, infrastructure development is predicated on the 62 Calls for Miskotahâ (Change), and on Métis principles of data sovereignty grounded in the traditional teachings of Métis Grandmothers and Elders. With Inuit-led data functions, infrastructure development will be foundational work required to move the Data Strategy forward as required and expressed by Inuit governments and representatives.

Beyond these and overall, an inclusive data landscape must be strengthened to support all those who represent Indigenous people to generate, store and analyze information and to provide accurate data on all Indigenous people, however they identify or affiliate. This also includes a role for other Indigenous

organizations at the regional and national level in these conversations. As the CAP representative to the DSWG noted, for instance, CAP and other organizations who collect data will play an important role if positive change is to occur for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who live off-reserve and who may or may not be registered. These individuals have the right to be counted; from identifying outcomes to effecting legislative change to developing and implementing standards and accountability frameworks toward resolving the jurisdictional issue. Finally, the DSWG identified that a well-functioning NAP Data Strategy includes tools for data access and repatriation, data gathering, ethics and processes around acquiring data, governance and data relationship management around how data are housed, cleaned, analyzed, and reported. The NAP Data Strategy needs to be articulated along with training and capacity-building so that those who are interacting with the Data Strategy can do so successfully. Members also felt the NAP Data Strategy must be resourced both through funding and through well-trained and knowledgeable Indigenous data experts.

The following excerpt is drawn from First Nations Governance Information Centre, “First Nations Data Sovereignty in Canada,” *Statistical Journal of the IAOS* 35 (2019): 47–69, DOI 10.3233/SJI-180478, with permission from the First Nations Governance Information Centre, which served as a technical participant for the DSWG.

## 6. First Nations data sovereignty

Historically, in international contexts, the notion of “sovereignty” has held many different meanings and definitions. It has been understood to include various aspects of a nation’s or state’s recognized right and legitimacy to exercise authority over its affairs, a right to self-government, non-intervention, and freedom from interference in internal affairs. It also entails a responsibility to protect and ensure the wellbeing of its citizens.<sup>11</sup> A sovereign nation/state has the jurisdiction to govern, make laws, manage, control, and make decisions about their own peoples. With any sovereign authority also comes the right and responsibility to exercise jurisdiction in relation to information governance – to protect and govern all aspects of their citizens and nation’s information and data. Data sovereignty means “managing information in a way that is consistent with the laws, practices and customs of the nation-state in which it is located”.<sup>12</sup>

First Nations have an inherent and constitutionally protected right to self-government. This inherent right stems from sovereignty which existed prior to the arrival of European settlers. This includes jurisdiction over their education, laws, policies, health, and information. First Nations’ rights are also supported by international instruments such as the UNDRIP<sup>13</sup>: “To understand the term sovereignty as Indian people interpret it one has to first understand, in the simplest of terms, the history of the settlement of this country and the Aboriginal/settler relations which evolved from the first moment of settlement by Europeans”.<sup>14</sup>

As sovereign nations, First Nations have the right (inherent and constitutionally-protected) to exercise authority over their data and information. First Nations are accountable to their membership for the use and management of community information. The concept of data sovereignty “is linked with Indigenous peoples’ right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as their right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over these”<sup>15</sup>. Data sovereignty is a crucial step toward realizing full self-government of First Nations.

[..]

11 Glanville L. The antecedents of ‘sovereignty as responsibility’. *European Journal of International Relations*. 2010; 17(2): 233–255. DOI: 10.1177/1354066109346889.

12 Taylor J, Kukutai T. eds. *Indigenous Data Sovereignty: Toward an Agenda*. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR). Research Monograph No. 38. (Features a chapter, “What does data sovereignty imply: what does it look like?”, authored by C Matthew Snipp). Australian National University Press; 2016.

13 Ibid.

14 LaForme HS. *Indian Sovereignty: What Does It Mean?* *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, XI, 2, 1991: 253–266. [cited 2018 Sept 25]. Available at: <http://www3.brandonu.ca/cjns/11.2/laforme.pdf>.

15 Kukutai.

First Nations in Canada have an intimate relationship with and deep connection to their information, knowledge, and data, particularly traditional or sacred knowledge (teachings and ceremonial practices) that have been passed down from many generations to the next. This also applies to human biological data and Indigenous people's spiritual connection and cultural beliefs related to their DNA and genetic information. In Arizona, the Havasupai Tribe were successful in repatriating their genetic data and information following its authorized use in a research study, and celebrated through ceremony. In Canada, there is a strong movement to reclaim First Nation identities through control of information and the ability and authority to telling one's own stories with the data through an Indigenous lens. It has become clear that the next step is for First Nations citizens to rebuild their respective Nations and reclaim traditional systems by "building information governance capacity, enacting our own laws, entering into data sharing and licence-to-use contracts, creating regional data centres and repatriating our data, First Nations are getting closer to exercising full jurisdiction over our information".<sup>16</sup>

*For an exploration of the application of the principles by First Nations through various initiatives and agreements, see pp. 60-63.*

## 6.2. First Nations principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP®)

Since their establishment in 1998, the OCAP® principles have upheld First Nations rights over research that impacts them.

OCAP® acknowledges and respects that the right of self-determination of First Nations includes the jurisdiction and authority to make decisions about research in their communities. It addresses issues of privacy, intellectual property, data custody and secondary use of data. OCAP® was conceived as a result of First Nations interest in protecting their data and information, the legacy of unethical research practices, and the desire to have control over research in their communities.<sup>17</sup>

[...]

FNIGC plays a triple role here:

1. Its survey research and First Nations Data Centre embody OCAP® at its full implementation. Ownership, Access, Control, and Possession are assured through physical possession of the data, First Nations oversight of all stages of data collection, analysis, and storage, carefully maintained access protocols, and First Nations ownership of the data and secondary “intellectual properties.”
2. It supports the efforts of its ten regional members in implementing OCAP® and advancing First Nations data sovereignty, and 3. It helps maintain stewardship (at the national level) of OCAP® outreach and training, including the management of The Fundamentals of OCAP online course.<sup>18</sup>

OCAP® is the de facto standard for conducting research on First Nations, and has grown to include the governance of First Nations information. Through the use of OCAP®, First Nations leadership is able to assert sovereignty over and provide direction on how information can be used to benefit the community in a manner that mitigates any harm. Conversely, First Nations leadership is more accountable to their membership for the use and management of community information.

<sup>17</sup> First Nations Information Governance Centre (Formerly Committee). First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) Code of Research Ethics. Ottawa; [updated 2007 Feb 22].

<sup>18</sup> First Nations Information Governance Centre. [Internet] FNIGC Training: Fundamentals of OCAP® [cited 2018 Dec 21]. Available from: <https://fnigc.ca/training/fundamentalsocap.html>.

The principles of OCAP® are:

*Ownership:* refers to the relationship of First Nations to their cultural knowledge, data, and information. This principle states that a community or group owns information collectively in the same way that an individual owns his or her personal information.

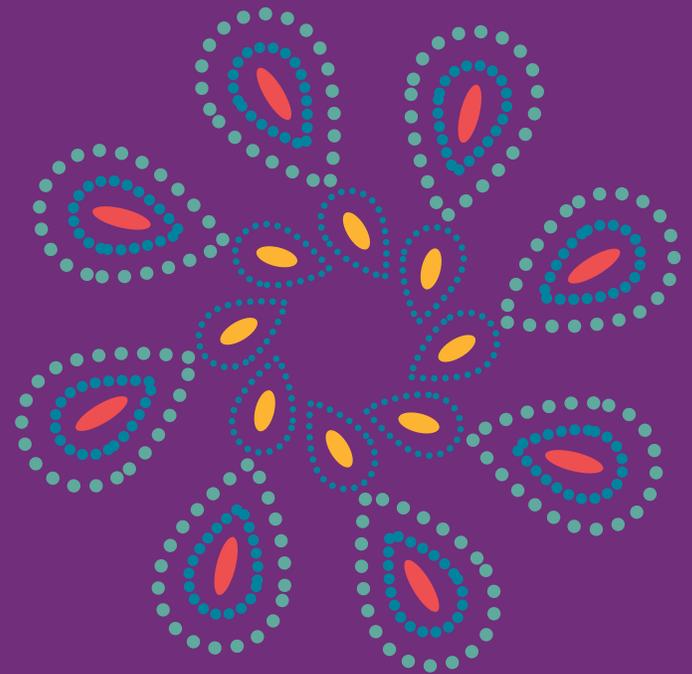
*Control:* affirms that First Nations, their communities, and representative bodies are within their rights in seeking to control over all aspects of research and information management processes that impact them. First Nations control of research can include all stages of a particular research project from start to finish. The principle extends to the control of resources and review processes, the planning process, management of the information and so on.

*Access:* refers to the fact that First Nations must have access to information and data about themselves and their communities regardless of where it is held. The principle of access also refers to the right of First Nations communities and organizations to manage and make decisions regarding access to their collective information. This may be achieved, in practice, through standardized, formal protocols.

*Possession:* While ownership identifies the relationship between a people and their information in principle, possession or stewardship is more concrete: it refers to the physical control of data. Possession is the mechanism by which ownership can be asserted and protected.

To give practical expression to these principles and values in its own operations, the FNIGC also developed a set of governance and structural supports to ensure that data sovereignty was achieved and protected.<sup>19</sup>

To read more about these governance and structural supports, see pp. 63-66.



<sup>19</sup> First Nations Information Governance Centre (Formerly Committee). First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) Code of Research Ethics. Ottawa; [updated 2007 Feb 22].

## 9. NAP Data Strategy Overview

The MMIWG NAP Data Strategy is framed by four pillars adapted from the NFSC and organized into four thematic clusters (Figure 4). The Data Strategy respects the constitutionally-protected Indigenous rights of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, as well as the diversity of those who are Indigenous in Canada. It identifies elements that the DSWG has agreed upon and potential themes that could resonate with distinctions-based Indigenous groups, as well as with gender-specific (e.g. 2SLGBTQQIA+), geography-specific (e.g. Urban), and organization-specific (e.g. NWAC, CAP) Indigenous groups, and other non-affiliated, self-identifying Indigenous partners. In framing its work this way, the DSWG wanted to hold space for people to represent themselves in a good way while remaining connected with these elements.

The Data Strategy includes the four thematic clusters from *Reclaiming Power and Place*. It also is built on four pillars and is centered around the ultimate indicator: the safety of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

As noted in the results of the first questionnaire, the four thematic clusters originating from *Reclaiming Power and Place* were identified by DSWG members as important to the Data Strategy. Members also acknowledged that for the NAP Data Strategy to be meaningful, working definitions from each cluster should be developed more fully and specifically with distinctions-based groups, as well as with other rights holders requiring data specific to other dimensions of identity.



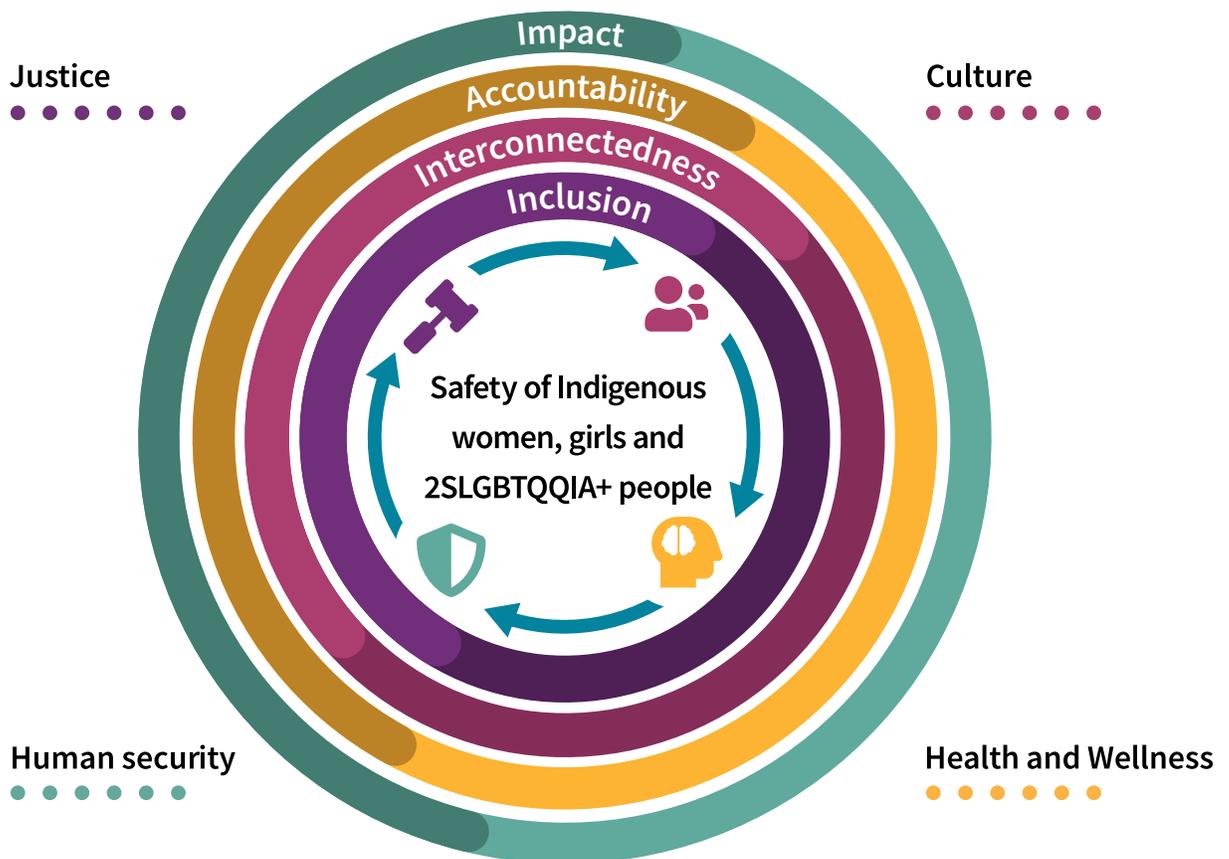
Community Art Piece; Installation by Jessica Slater and survivors and families of MMIWG during the Vancouver Community Hearing. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## Data Strategy at a Glance

The four thematic clusters – Culture, Health & Wellness, Human Security, and Justice - are from Reclaiming Power and Place.

● ● ● ● ● ●  
 Inclusion, as specific to data, means the full and active participation of all Indigenous people, including non-Status, First Nation, Inuit, Métis and 2SLGBTQQIA+, regardless of where they live. This means that data must be inclusive, but also be applied as needed in distinctions-based and disaggregated ways.

● ● ● ● ● ●  
 Interconnectedness is central to Indigenous world views. As specific to data, it refers to the way in which the four thematic clusters in the Data Strategy interrelate. It also relates the data development, and the interconnectedness of quantitative and qualitative data.



● ● ● ● ● ●  
 Impact, as it pertains to data, refers to creating meaningful effect on policy, legislation and society at large. The Data Strategy will monitor impact through measurable progress toward the ultimate outcome, safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

● ● ● ● ● ●  
 Accountability, as specific to data, is the shared accountability that collecting data leads to. It means that once data is gathered, and progress is tracked, action can be taken. It also refers to the important relationships that must animate the process for true and meaningful accountability.



## 10. Measuring Safety as a Central Outcome

An indicator is a specific, observable and measurable characteristic that can be used to show changes or progress that an action or program is making toward achieving an outcome. The Data Strategy names general, versus specific indicators, understanding that the specificity of each one is most appropriate determined in collaboration with the three distinctions-based Indigenous groups of Canada (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), identity-specific Indigenous groups (e.g. 2SLGBTQQIA+, Urban, and others), organizationally-affiliated Indigenous groups (e.g. NWAC, CAP), and unaffiliated, self-identifying Indigenous partners and communities.

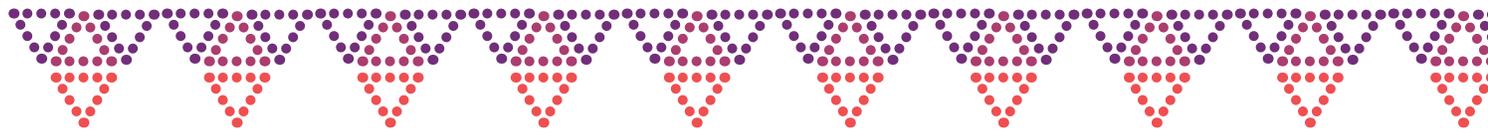
Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have the inherent right to live free from violence and injustice. They have the right to have violence stopped and condemned, with others' support as they confront it as needed. These rights exist both in First Nations, Inuit and Métis people's own terms, as well as within the basic human rights framework that exists to eliminate violence against women in general, and Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in particular.

This is why the ultimate outcome, or indicator, for the Data Strategy is safety. As the ultimate indicator, the DSWG moved away from exclusively using deficit-based indicators (the need to eliminate violence), and instead focused on incorporating the strength-based indicators (the

presence of safety), for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This indicator does not simply measure the absence of violence but focuses on the presence of the factors that need to be in place to actively create a safe environment. This also means that safety must be defined by those involved, as safety means different things to different people, in addition to being supported by other kinds of information.

DSWG members visually centered the indicator of safety in the Data Strategy so that it would remain conceptually centered as work on the Data Strategy evolves. Any evaluation of results of actions must be defined by how impacts are felt on the ground by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors.

Members of the DSWG saw a successful NAP as one that results in safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. For this reason, many of our early DSWG conversations focused on the challenges of existing data around the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. These conversations also highlighted the ways in which members aimed to define safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the NAP Data Strategy and the need to account for cultural understandings of safety in the work ahead.



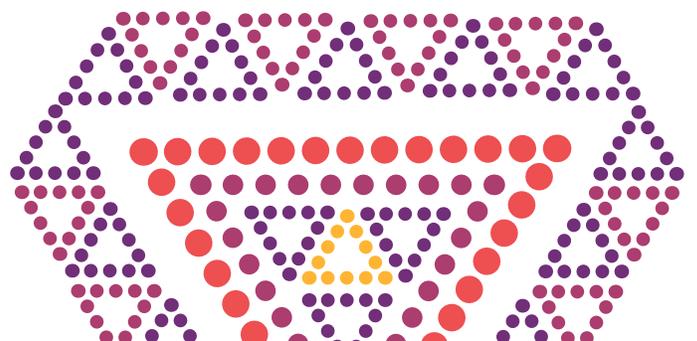
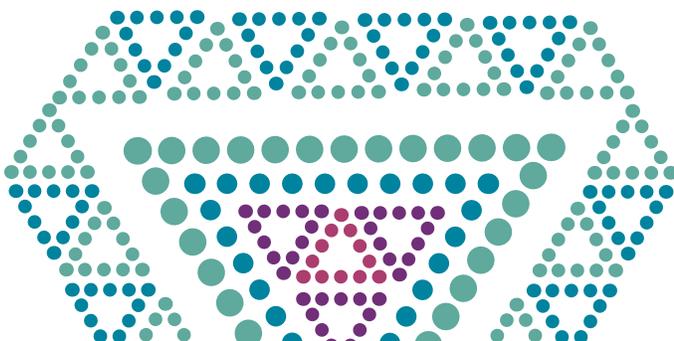
## Challenges Related to Measuring the Number of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People

As the National Inquiry’s Final Report has examined, there are multiple estimates of the numbers of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in Canada. DSWG members felt that the many estimates and related data sources created confusion and highlighted the need for one credible, reliable MMIWG data source. The variation in estimates was recognized as coming from differences in data collection, data analysis and interpretation across jurisdictions, organizations and communities. Variation in the quality of data was seen in systemic biases, timing and logistics, and other data collection challenges.

Members confirmed, for example, that some elements of data collection on missing First Nations, Inuit or Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people can make data inaccurate. For example, police may not provide updates on a case (that could be shifted from “missing” or “suspicious death” into another category), cases may be resolved but not reported to a database,

and jurisdictional inconsistencies may affect when and how a missing First Nations, Inuit or Métis woman or girl or 2SLGBTQQIA+ person is reported as missing. As well, members were aware that RCMP officers used visual identification when reporting cases in the Homicide Survey, noting that this judgement on “how Indigenous” someone looks may not accurately reflect their identity.

Members also identified multiple issues around reporting 2SLGBTQQIA+ cases that ultimately contribute to statistical erasure. For example, the 2021 census will include a question on sex at birth and a question on gender for the first time. Coroner reports currently identify a victim’s gender as their biological sex instead of their gender identity, even though both are needed for accurate coroner data. As a result, currently, Two-Spirit, transgender, and non-binary people continue to be erased or are absent from relevant data. As well, Indigenous identity in the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database has only been collected since 2011, which means that cases before that time were made invisible (and not counted in cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people).



## Defining Safety

The DSWG centered safety of First Nations, Inuit or Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people within the NAP Data Strategy. For the purpose of monitoring progress on this issue, the key components of the definition of safety are a reduction in the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people based on improved data accuracy, and an increase in indicators of well-being.

DSWG members agreed that the definition of safety could begin with identifying the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, while acknowledging that this process includes challenges that will need to be addressed in terms of accuracy. DSWG members also felt that the definition should be expanded to include additional data such as the number of First Nations, Inuit and Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in shelters, in hospitals, and other kinds of police data. Members also wanted to have distinctions-based counts, as that data became more available. This is why the “safety” as ultimate indicator has not been fully elaborated in this Data Strategy, even though it represents its centre.

The second part of the definition, the increase measured by indicators of well-being and strength, some of which are included in the indicator framework, was identified by DSWG members as a step-by-step process. For instance, some quantitative indicators of well-being are currently included in the NAP Data Strategy, while others will be added as distinctions-based and identity-based groups work to identify key additional indicators. Still others will be added or adjusted as the process unfolds.

The Data Strategy will work toward showing what is working to reduce the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people; to accurately reflect the best data available to this point; and to actively work on improving the quality and reliability of this information for the future within an expanded context that includes culturally-informed notions of safety. This includes working within complementary qualitative approaches that can capture individuals’ varying perceptions of safety.



Brown Baby Moccasins; Decorative/Traditional arts donated by the women of the Conseil de bande d’Unamen Shipu. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## 11. An Introduction to Core and Population-Specific Quantitative Indicators

DSWG members understood that it was possible to measure some parts of each thematic cluster at a given time but that given the complexity of each thematic cluster, it was unlikely that every part could be measured at the same time. In addition, not all DSWG members agreed that the construction of each quantitative indicator would be the same for each Indigenous group. Taken together, DSWG members suggested that it might be helpful to have “core” quantitative indicators that were used across all data and measurement. Members felt that these indicators would be helpful to provide an overall picture of the progress being made under the four thematic clusters.

In addition, members suggested that additional or modified quantitative indicators, identified in this context as “population-specific indicators,” may provide additional insights only for specific populations or identities to best reflect the diversity of experiences of Indigenous individuals, communities and Nations and could represent additional development or subgroupings of core indicators. Population-specific indicators are not necessarily the same as distinctions-based indicators, and the DSWG maintains that appropriate mechanisms to refine distinctions-based indicators rests in Indigenous Data Sovereignty and within the distinctions themselves.

### Deciding on Quantitative Indicators

At this time, the DSWG has identified a suite of potential indicators that will be refined over time based on work that continues with Indigenous data partners. As such, the process identified here, as well as the Quantitative Indicator Framework detailed in the next section proposes a list of topics for further exploration and consideration in more specific terms.

To begin, the DSWG used a questionnaire in order to determine potential quantitative indicators to include in the NAP Data Strategy. Those indicators provided in the questionnaire were offered as a starting point and were based on quantitative indicators that are in existing data strategies, frameworks, and research papers, as well as those that group members suggested during meetings.

DSWG members decided whether the indicator should be included in the Data Strategy by responding “yes”, “no” or “maybe”. If they felt the indicator should be included, they indicated whether the indicator was a core or a population-specific indicator. In many cases, the discussion also extended to whether the indicators should be a distinctions-based indicator, as well. Members also proposed additional indicators. In many cases,

“yes” or “maybe” responses were discussed further to better understand how to apply the indicator in distinctions-based or identity-based terms, and group members agreed that further work would be needed, within the context of partnership tables, to more clearly refine the indicators as a reflection of their value and meaning to distinct Indigenous Peoples and diverse identity populations.

The indicators proposed in the initial questionnaire include:

### Culture



- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that speak or understand a First Nations, Inuit or Métis language, even if only a few words.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who access traditional food.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that practice traditional spirituality and/or have access to regular ceremony.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to culturally significant sites or traditional land bases.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have regular contact with Elders.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis children who live with biological family members or family designates.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel a sense of belonging and/or connection to their cultural group.



**20** In later feedback, one group member suggested amending this indicator to be inclusive of accessing services wherever people may be. While the initial questionnaire was not modified due to the timing of the feedback, DSWG supports access to health care for all women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, wherever they may be seeking to access services, whether in their own community or elsewhere.

### Health and Wellness



- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their health is excellent (on a scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor).
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to adequate health services (physical, mental, etc.) in their own community.<sup>20</sup>
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to a culturally-safe health practitioner.
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to culturally-safe addictions services.
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their mental health is excellent (on a scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor).
- The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel they are in healthy relationships.



## Human security



- Median household income for First Nations, Inuit or Métis (compared to all Canadians).
- Employment rate for First Nations, Inuit or Métis (compared to all Canadians).
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who consider the main water supply in their home safe for drinking.
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who consider themselves to be food secure.
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have the access that they need to public transportation.
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their housing is excellent (on a scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor) compared to proportion of all Canadians who say their housing is excellent.
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who are enrolled in post-secondary education (distance or in-person).

## Justice



- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis communities that have community-led police forces.
- Proportion of justice personnel that have received cultural training and education on First Nations, Inuit and Métis (as a proportion of all justice personnel).
- Proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have been involved with the justice system.
- Proportion of justice personnel that have received training on working in a trauma-informed way (as a proportion of all justice personnel).
- Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that they trust the police.

Questionnaire results in Tables 3 to 6 show that DSWG members supported many of the proposed indicators (core, distinctions-based and identity/population-specific) under each of the clusters. DSWG members also provided a rationale for the inclusion of additional indicators.

These results are provided in detail in the following pages.



Sisters in Strength; Installation by Women participating in the 1st Annual Sisters in Strength Wellness Retreat. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## Questionnaire Results – Culture



### Support for Proposed Indicators

DSWG members proposed seven indicators for consideration. The DSWG was most supportive of using indicators to measure the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that practice traditional spirituality and/or have access to regular ceremony, and the proportion that has access to culturally significant sites or traditional land bases. Members were also extremely supportive of measuring the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have regular contact with Elders, and the proportion who feel a sense of belonging and/or connection to their cultural group.

Members gave slightly less support to an indicator measuring the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that speak or understand a First Nations, Inuit or Métis language, even if only a few words (17% said “maybe” to using this). Slightly less support was also shown for the indicator measuring the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis children who live with biological family members or family designates. There was a view from a small proportion of members that the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis children who live with biological family members or family designates should not be used as an indicator. See Table 3a for detailed results.

DSWG members were least supportive of an indicator measuring access to traditional food, with two-thirds agreeing to use this indicator and one-third showing limited support for its use.

### Core and Population-Specific Indicators

DSWG members showed mixed reviews of their support for using proposed indicators as core indicators. There was majority support for using six of the seven proposed indicators as core indicators. A majority of DSWG members supported using the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who access traditional food as a distinctions-based indicator, as well as exploring the usefulness of this indicators in different identity contexts.

Table 3A - Support for Proposed Culture Indicators

Indicator	Yes	No	Maybe	Core	Population -specific	No Response
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that speak or understand a First Nations, Inuit or Métis language, even if only a few words.	83%	-	17%	67%	17%	16%
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who access traditional food.	67%	-	33%	33%	67%	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that practice traditional spirituality and/or have access to regular ceremony.	100%	-	-	67%	33%	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to culturally significant sites or traditional land bases.	100%	-	-	67%	17%	16%
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have regular contact with Elders.	100%	-	-	67%	17%	16%
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis children who live with biological family members or family designates.	83%	17%	-	67%	-	33%
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel a sense of belonging and/or connection to their cultural group.	100%	-	-	83%	-	17%

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**

## Additional Indicators

Members proposed seven additional indicators (four as “core” and one as “population-specific”) under the **Culture** thematic area (See Table 3b). These were proposed for a number of reasons, including:

- A high proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis have become disconnected from their ancestry and lineage (ex. child welfare, incarceration, Tuberculosis, forced relocation, residential schools, intergenerational trauma, and legislation such as the Indian Act and related legislation).
- Understanding the cultural access MMIWG had and whether they used the services available can inform how the safety of women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people could have been enhanced based on what was available in their communities. This is especially true if resources are gendered in their distribution and may not reach every individual in the same way. This indicator will also aid in moving beyond blaming individuals for circumstances beyond their control in terms of accessing safe spaces or cultural knowledge.
- Indicators should also focus on family structures (biological and/or designated family) as a pillar of traditional wellness practice, and resilience related to spiritual practices.

The proposed additional indicators are detailed in Table 3b.

Table 3B - Additional Proposed Culture Indicators

Indicator	Core	Population-specific
The proportion of First Nations/Inuit/Métis people who have a connection to lineage and ancestry.	X	-
Whether women/girls who disappeared or were killed spoke their traditional language, etc.	X	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel a sense of disconnection from culture due to Residential and/or Day Schools.	X	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel a sense of disconnection from culture due to the Sixties Scoop (i.e. foster care, adoption, group homes).	X	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have not lived with biological family members or family designates due to Residential and/or Day Schools and/or the Sixties Scoop.	-	-
Cultural awareness within certain professions/ institutions i.e. calls for Health Care providers or other service providers.	-	X
Indicators to address unique needs and perspectives of individuals in custody.	-	-

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**

**In all thematic areas**, the additional indicators proposed were either rolled into existing indicators, or indicators were modified to include these ideas. Where the proposal was for a population-based indicator, it was set aside for the work that will proceed at partnership tables and within the context within an Indigenous Data Sovereignty framework.



# Questionnaire Results – Health and Wellness



## Support for Proposed Indicators

The DSWG proposed six indicators under this thematic cluster. The DSWG was most supportive of using indicators to measure the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to adequate health services (physical, mental, etc.) in their own community, and access to adequate health services in general, as well as the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to a culturally-safe health practitioner.

There also was strong support for measuring the percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their health is excellent and the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to culturally-safe addictions services.

Members were slightly less supportive of using the percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their mental health is excellent as an indicator. Similarly, members were slightly less supportive of measuring the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel they are in healthy relationships.

## Core and Population-Specific Indicators

DSWG members had mixed support for using proposed indicators as core indicators. That being said, there was unanimous support for using the three proposed indicators focused on access to adequate health services, access to a culturally-safe health practitioner, and access to culturally- safe addiction services. A majority of members supported using the remaining three indicators as “core” indicators within the Data Strategy.

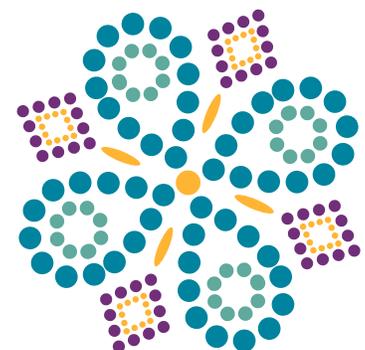
Of note, 17 percent of members said “no” to using self-rated measures of health and mental health as indicators. A few members were tentative around measuring the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel they are in healthy relationships (33% said “maybe”), the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis with access to culturally-safe addictions services (17% said “maybe”), and the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their mental health is excellent.

A majority of DSWG members also did not respond to the positioning of the indicator on mental health as “core” or “population-specific.” See Table 4a for detailed results.

Table 4A - Support for Proposed Health and Wellness Indicators

Indicator	Yes	No	Maybe	Core	Population-specific	No Response
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their health is excellent (on a scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor).	83%	17%	-	83%	-	17%
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to adequate health services (physical, mental, etc.) in their own community.	100%	-	-	100%	-	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to a culturally-safe health practitioner.	100%	-	-	100%	-	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have access to culturally-safe addictions services.	83%	-	17%	100%	-	-
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their mental health is excellent (on a scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor).	67%	17%	17%	50%	-	50%
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel they are in healthy relationships.	67%	-	33%	67%	17%	16%

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**



## Additional Indicators

DSWG Members proposed nine additional indicators to measure **Health and Wellness**. Four were proposed as “core” indicators and two were proposed as “population-specific” indicators. Three of these indicators were neither identified as “core” nor “population-specific.” These additional indicators were proposed for several reasons that were discussed during DSWG meetings. A few of these reasons are outlined as:

- Indicators surrounding traditional healers will help provide context into the robustness of the countrywide healing network.
- Availability of services indicators must also capture the logistics of whether or not those services are being used, as well as the definitions of what “services” mean (ex. resources, formal services, grassroots, or community-based).
- Conversations surrounding “Mental Health” can often be shame-based, so culturally-sensitive language is useful here.

The proposed additional indicators are included in Table 4b.



Table 4B – Additional Proposed Health and Wellness Indicators

Indicator	Core	Population-specific
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who are traditional healers.	x	-
Availability, accessibility and utility of services (noting that available services do not mean they are equitably accessible or useful (culturally-appropriate) to those they are meant to serve).	-	-
Whether women/girls who disappeared or were killed spoke their traditional language (with respect to above indicators).	-	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel that the term “Mental Wellness” is preferred vs. “Mental Health” as the latter term is a colonial construct and carries stigma.	x	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel that the Sixties Scoop impacted their Mental Wellness/Mental Health and Wellness.	x	-
The proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who feel that Residential and/or Day Schools impacted their Mental Wellness/Mental Health and Wellness.	x	-
Accessibility to Indigenous midwives.	-	x
Culturally-appropriate health support in Corrections Service of Canada institutions.	-	x
Additional questions specific to 2SLGBTQQIA+ experiences in this area.	-	x

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**

## Questionnaire Results – Human Security



### Support for Proposed Indicators

The DSWG considered ten indicators to measure the **Human Security** thematic cluster. Members unanimously supported using the percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who consider the main water supply in their home safe for drinking, those who consider themselves to be food secure, and those who say that their housing is excellent within this thematic cluster. Most members supported using the remaining seven proposed indicators to measure **Human Security**. However, using a personal connection to any women, girls, or 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who have gone missing/ been murdered as an indicator was only supported by half of the members, with another quarter of the membership saying “maybe” to using this as an indicator. In fact, between 17% and 25% of members were unsure about using six of the proposed indicators.

### Core and Population-Specific Indicators

Between 50% and 83% of DSWG members supported using these ten proposed indicators as “core” indicators in the Data Strategy. Members most strongly supported using the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who consider the main water supply in their home safe for drinking, those who consider themselves to be food secure, and those who say that their housing is excellent, as core indicators. Members were least supportive of measuring the personal connection to any women, girls, or 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who have gone missing/ been murdered, and measuring access that they need to public transportation, as core indicators.

See Table 5a for details on DSWG members’ support for and positioning of proposed indicators.

Table 5A – Support for Proposed Human Security Indicators

Indicator	Yes	No	Maybe	Core	Population -specific	No Response
Median household income for First Nations, Inuit or Métis (compared to all Canadians).	83%	-	17%	67%	17%	16%
Employment rate for First Nations, Inuit or Métis (compared to all Canadians).	83%	-	17%	67%	17%	16%
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who consider the main water supply in their home safe for drinking.	100%	-	-	83%	17%	-
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who consider themselves to be food secure.	100%	-	-	83%	17%	-
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have the access that they need to public transportation.	83%	-	17%	50%	50%	-
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that their housing is excellent (on a scale of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor) compared to the proportion of all Canadians who say their housing is excellent.	100%	-	-	83%	17%	-
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who are enrolled in post-secondary education (distance or in-person).	83%	-	17%	67%	17%	16%
Self-rated sense of personal security (i.e. “Do you feel safe?”).	75%	-	25%	75%	-	25%
Personal connection to any women, girls, or 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who have gone missing/ been murdered.	50%	-	25%	50%	25%	25%
Employment rate of First Nations, Inuit, or Métis by Economic Sector.	75%	-	-	75%	25%	-

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**

## Additional Indicators

DSWG members proposed nine additional indicators to measure **Human Security**. Three of these indicators were identified as core. Members felt that it was important for these additional indicators to:

- Incorporate the fact that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people experience gendered violence at disproportionately high rates compared to non-Indigenous women.
- Highlight the issue where proximity to urban centres and the role of transient workers/corporations also impacts the security of women and their communities.
- Track the experiences of 2SLGBTQIA+ people across all indicators.

Table 5b provides the additional proposed indicators and their suggested position within the Data Strategy as “core” or “population-specific.”

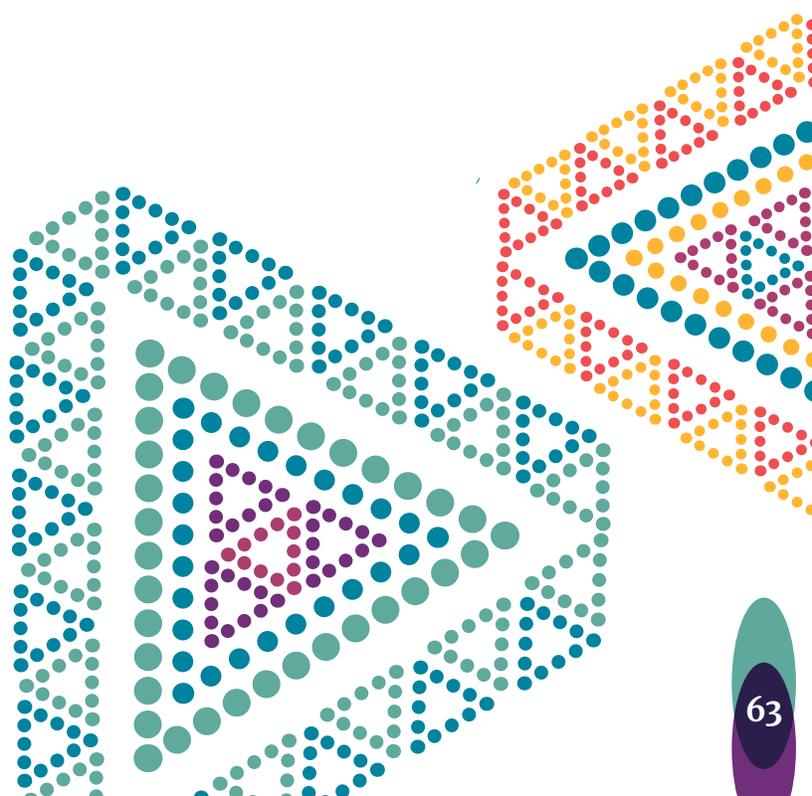


The National Inquiry’s Red Willow Basket was created by a group of Indigenous women in Manitoba, called the Miskwaabiimaag Collective (Red Willow Collective). This basket calls upon the strength and the solutions that lay within Indigenous communities. Source: [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

Table 5B – Additional Proposed Human Security Indicators

Indicator	Core	Population-specific
Proximity of community to urban centres/cities and proportion of transient workers that may be living in/moving through communities.	-	-
Types of industries/corporations (e.g. resource extraction projects) that are located in communities which may bring outside visitors.	-	-
Self-rated sense of personal safety (i.e. “Do you feel safe?”).	x	-
Self-rated sense of cultural safety (i.e. “Do you feel culturally safe?”).	x	-
First Nations, Inuit or Métis who identify as living at or under the poverty line.	-	-
First Nations, Inuit or Métis who spend more than 30% of their income on housing.	-	-
First Nations, Inuit or Métis who identify as precariously housed.	-	-
First Nations, Inuit or Métis who utilized food banks or other food security support services.	-	-
Levels of homelessness (including those who are 2LGBTQQIA+).	x	-

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**



## Questionnaire Results – Justice



### Support for Proposed Indicators

DSWG members proposed five indicators to measure the justice thematic cluster. About 83% of members supported using each of these five indicators while 17% were more tentative in each case.

### Core and Population-Specific Indicators

Most members supported using each of the indicators as “core” indicators in the Data Strategy. Strongest support was for using the proportion of justice personnel that have received cultural training and education on First Nations, Inuit and Métis, the proportion of justice personnel that have received training on working in a trauma-informed way, and the percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say they trust the police. There was slightly less support for using the percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis communities that have community-led police forces (67% said “core” and 17% said “population-specific”). One member also noted the need to examine the provision of Indigenous policing models outside of what we traditionally consider “communities”, drawing on new kinds of policing models that were discussed during the National Inquiry and in other fora. Half of DSWG members felt that the proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who would have been involved with the justice system should be a core indicator (see Table 6a).



In My Heart; Decorative/Traditional arts by Hermina Joldersma.

Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive,  
[www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

Table 6A - Support for Proposed Justice Indicators

Indicator	Yes	No	Maybe	Core	Population -specific	No Response
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis communities that have community-led police forces.	83%	-	17%	67%	17%	16%
Proportion of justice personnel that have received cultural training and education on First Nations, Inuit and Métis (as a proportion of all justice personnel).	83%	-	17%	83%	-	17%
Proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have been involved with the justice system.	83%	-	17%	50%	-	50%
Proportion of justice personnel that have received training on working in a trauma-informed way (as a proportion of all justice personnel).	83%	-	17%	83%	-	17%
Percent of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who say that they trust the police. (As one member noted, this mistrust may be present for other parts of the justice system, beyond the police, and may be modified in the future to reflect other kinds of mistrust).	83%	-	17%	83%	-	17%

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**

## Additional Indicators

Members proposed an additional ten indicators, two of which were identified as “core.” These additional indicators were proposed for the following reasons:

- Indicators that track Indigenous workers in the justice system will capture which sectors have more or less Indigenous support, and identify places where non-Indigenous justice workers could improve upon their services.
- Justice indicators should incorporate the larger context of governmental legislation and policies that inform how Indigenous communities are treated as a whole.
- Conversations surrounding justice must centre Indigenous conceptual understanding and practices as a way to combat colonial approaches of recidivism, and cycles of poverty/violence as enabled in part by colonial structures, institutions and systems.

The additional indicators proposed by DSWG members are detailed in Table 6b.



Table 6B – Additional Proposed Justice Indicators

Indicator	Core	Population-specific
Number of Indigenous people who are lawyers, courtroom staff, judges, court workers, police, justice liaisons, probation officers, etc.	x	-
Proportion of community members who were missing/murdered and what the justice outcomes are/were (i.e. justice outcomes for relations of missing/murdered Indigenous women/girls).	-	-
Levels of acceptance of violence and victim-blaming attitudes by service and criminal justice providers, including racist stereotypes and discrimination.	-	-
Lack of resources and training for DV service providers, including police).	-	-
Percentage of First Nations, Inuit or Métis that say they need a culturally safe and culturally competent definition of justice vs. a continued colonial and western construction of justice.	x	-
Proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have been involved with the justice system, specifically as a victim of crime.	-	-
Proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have successfully accessed support services like victim services.	-	-
Proportion of First Nations, Inuit or Métis who have attended Indigenous court processes and services.	-	-
2SLGBTQQIA+ people and their treatment by justice personnel.	-	-
Percentage of jurisdictions that have an “x” marker (or something similar) to record non-binary individuals in terms of coroners, police, etc.	-	-

*\*\*The number of responses per questionnaire varied. As such, the results may not necessarily represent the totality of views of the DSWG membership on this subject.\*\**



## 12. Quantitative Indicator Framework

DSWG members identified that the Quantitative Indicator Framework was an initial and necessary step in developing the Data Strategy. They planned the structure of the framework to be organized into four thematic clusters: **Culture**, **Health and Wellness**, **Human Security**, and **Justice**. Each thematic cluster is intended to include core indicators and population-specific indicators. The framework was intended to have all of the indicators—whether core or population-specific—contribute to the ultimate indicator: the safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

The DSWG identified a suite of potential indicators that could serve as core or population-specific measures within the Quantitative Indicator Framework. After this process, the DSWG established a technical group to examine each of these potential indicators for possible inclusion within the Data Strategy. The technical group began this work by examining data sources, data gaps, and data ownership and governance for each of the indicators. This work will continue as the Data Strategy evolves. The DSWG has confirmed that the indicators will broadly include those currently identified under each thematic cluster, although the work of the technical group has noted the need for more refinement and development in several cases.

The **Culture** thematic cluster will include one or more measures for each of the following: access to traditional food; access to spirituality/ ceremony; connection to culture for children, youth, adults and seniors; a sense of belonging/ identity; language retention and revitalization; and cultural mentorship. The **Health and Wellness** thematic cluster will include measures of self-rated health; access to health services; perceptions of healthy relationships; distance to services; self-rated mental wellness; access to land; and, access to traditional medicines and healers. Under the **Human Security** thematic cluster, the DSWG will include indicators measuring employment rate; graduation rate; access to education and training; access to broadband; levels of poverty; transportation; housing conditions; safe spaces/ shelters; emergency infrastructure; community safety and social supports; food insecurity; access to traditional systems of protection; and, industries in communities. Finally, under the **Justice** thematic cluster, the DSWG will place indicators measuring Indigenous police forces or the law enforcement connection to community; training of justice personnel; numbers of Indigenous justice personnel; cases before courts/ arrests; confidence in the justice system; restorative justice/ traditional justice programs; and Navigator programs, i.e. Family Information Liaison Units, Two-Spirit-, and trans-specific issues such as gender designations on identity documents.

Figure 6 provides a detailed graphic of the Quantitative Indicator Framework.

## Quantitative Indicators

### Culture



- Access to traditional food
- Access to spirituality/ceremony
- Connection to culture for children, youth, adults and seniors
- Sense of belonging/ identity
- Language retention and revitalization
- Cultural mentorship

### Health & wellness



- Self-rated health
- Access to health services
- Perception of healthy relationships
- Distance to services
- Self-rated mental wellness
- Access to land
- Access to traditional medicines and healers

### Human security



- Employment rate
- Graduation rate
- Access to education and training
- Access to broadband
- Poverty
- Transportation
- Housing conditions
- Safe spaces/ shelters
- Emergency infrastructure
- Other community safety and social supports
- Food insecurity
- Access to traditional systems of protection
- Industries in communities

### Justice



- Indigenous police forces or law enforcement connection to community
- Training of justice personnel
- Indigenous justice personnel
- Case before courts/ arrests
- Confidence in the system
- Restorative justice/ traditional justice programs
- Navigator programs ie FILU
- 2SLGBTQQIA+ – specific issues

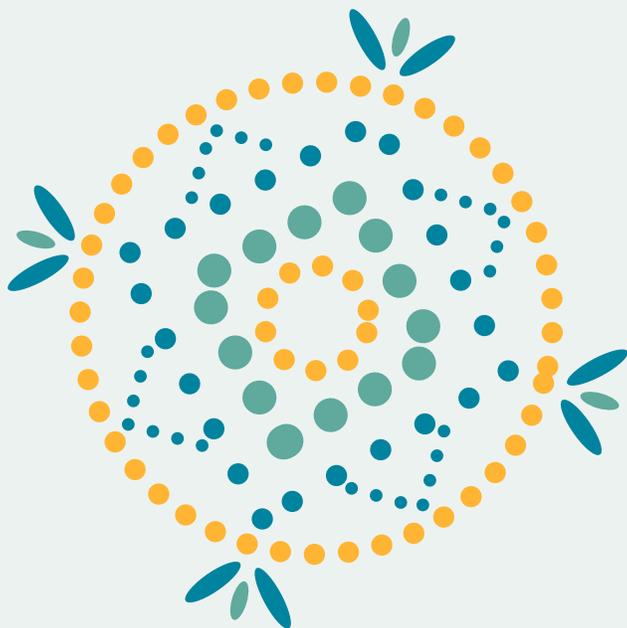
These indicators reflect the importance of strengths-based data and prevention, linking elements Indigenous people, communities and Nations know are strengths to the ultimate outcome: the safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. At the same time, the framework also outlines priorities for action that draw on non-strengths-based models, to provide an entry point or a way to start that does not rely entirely on the process of generating brand new data that may not already exist.



## 13. Distinctions-Based and Identity-Based Contributions to the Data Strategy

As part of seeking to understand the perspective of all National Action Plan contributing partners as well as a reflection of the pillar of inclusion upon which this strategy is built, the DSWG felt it would be a good idea to ask partners to contribute their perspectives around priority areas and needs for diverse Indigenous populations. These contributions also reflect the importance of Indigenous Data Sovereignty in supporting the path forward and of including all Indigenous voices in conversations around how to improve data to ensure they are inclusive.

The following contributions were submitted by National Action Plan contributing partners and are representative of their own views and perspectives on the question of data as relevant to specific distinctions, populations or communities.



### National Inuit Strategy on Research, 2018

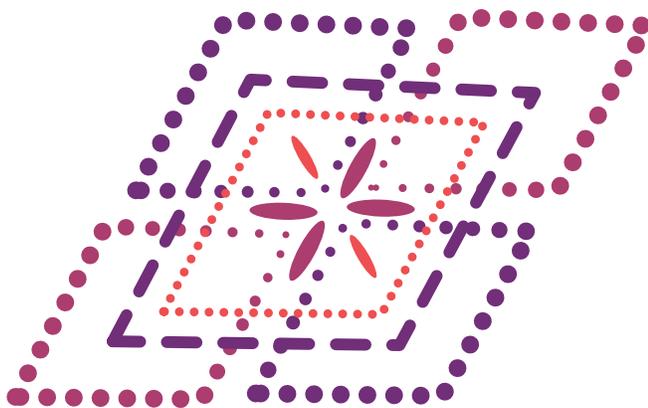
*Note to Reader: The National Inuit Strategy on Research is excerpted with permission from Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. Readers are also encouraged to consult the Inuit Chapter of the National Action Plan, which provides further information on research and data needs specific to MMIWG.*

The National Inuit Strategy on Research (NISR) was launched in 2018 to support a new direction in research that occurs in Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homelands. The NISR notes how the relationship between Inuit and the research community has been one of racism and of exploitation. To combat this, the NISR targets governments and research institutions, identifying areas for partnership and action that can strengthen the impact and effectiveness of Inuit Nunangat research for Inuit.

In particular, Priority Area 4 provides guidance to ensure Inuit access, ownership and control over data and information. The following is an excerpt taken directly from the NISR (2018), that further explains the importance, the objectives, and the necessary actions that must unfold for ongoing and future research.

#### Priority Area 4: Ensure Inuit access, ownership, and control over data and information

Ensuring Inuit access, ownership, and control over data and information gathered on our population, wildlife, and environment is a key pillar of achieving Inuit self-determination in research. Inuit representational organizations are the rightful gatekeepers of Inuit Nunangat research and are best positioned to determine how our information should be utilized and shared to maximize benefits and minimize harm. Enduring challenges in this area include the aggregation of Inuit-specific data with that of other Indigenous peoples, making relevant information impossible to discern or utilize. At a more basic level, Inuit-specific data is inconsistently shared by researchers who may act unilaterally to publish and disseminate data without first seeking the consent of Inuit representational organizations or Inuit-appointed institutions. Researchers and their affiliated institutions must partner with Inuit in order to seek consent and guidance about the political and social context of research and the potential impacts of sharing or publishing results. More broadly, greater transparency and coordination of data sharing with Inuit is required to remedy these challenges among federal granting agencies, researchers, and research institutions.



#### Objectives

- Advance Inuit self-determination in collecting, verifying, analyzing, and disseminating Inuit-specific data and information
- Invest in Inuit-led data and information technology and infrastructure
- Ensure ownership of Inuit data by Inuit-appointed entities
- Utilization of Inuktitut (the Inuit language) in data platforms and information management

#### Actions

4.1 Advocate for the consistent production and sharing of Inuit-specific and Inuit-relevant indicators and data, including the Inuit Health Survey

4.2 Invest in culturally-relevant, community-based technology to facilitate access to and management of data and information

4.3 Develop Inuit-specific guidelines on data accessibility, ownership, and control

4.4 Create and invest in digital Inuit Nunangat data repositories that are inclusive of Inuit knowledge in ways that are respectful of its distinctive forms as well as the Inuit norms that govern its use and sharing

Read the whole strategy here: [National Strategy on Research — Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2018](#)

## Métis Perspectives

*Note to Reader: The following has been excerpted, with permission, from Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak's, [Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ2S+](#), which outlines the 62 Calls for Miskotahâ (Michif word for “change”) and describes various factors informing a Métis-specific database of this nature, including identity, data collection, research, sources, scope, partnerships, purpose, housing and maintenance of data holdings.*

### **On the importance of a distinctions-based approach to Indigenous Data Sovereignty:**

Métis are one of the three rights-bearing Indigenous Peoples of Canada, alongside First Nations and Inuit. A Métis-specific Data Strategy to address the disproportionate rates of violence against Métis women, girls, Two-Spirit and gender diverse Métis, will necessarily be premised on Métis principles of data sovereignty. This principle-based approach to the identification, collection, analysis, sharing and holding of Métis-specific information related to MMIWG, will be guided by the Métis values outlined in the 62 Calls for Miskotaha (Change), and grounded in the traditional teachings of Métis Grandmothers and Elders.

### **On estimating the number of missing and murdered Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+:**

It is difficult to estimate the number of missing and murdered Métis women and girls because there is a lack of data to assist in reaching a better understanding of the problem. Similarly, there is no data on violence against Métis women, as most agencies do not collect, record or even identify Métis as a separate and distinct group of Indigenous peoples. (p. 10)

### **On how data gaps affect how the police perceive the needs of Métis women and girls:**

The lack of identity data that is collected has impacted the way that municipal and provincial police, as well as the RCMP, understand the circumstances of Métis women and girls, as well as how they respond to them. (p. 13)

### **On the need for a Métis-specific database on MMIWG:**

Though a number of databases exist to track the MMIWG crisis, there is currently no database that speaks to distinct Métis experiences of MMIWG as they are often misidentified as “Aboriginal” and even “non-Aboriginal”. The creation of a Métis-specific database would touch on issues such as citizenship, location and self-identification, among others. This is a distinct need in order to understand the unique risk factors for violence against Métis women, to bring forward unique policies and solutions to address the issue and to better facilitate the healing and honouring processes of Métis families. (p. 13)

### **On the data gaps around Métis victims:**

One of the main issues facing Métis women, girls and LGBTQ2S+ people is that there is a great lack of identity data (i.e., racial, ethnic, and Indigenous data) on victims of violence gathered and shared by provincial police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (the “RCMP”). There are some policies in place regarding the collection of victims’ identity data across the country; however, collection is often still not common practice and is not guaranteed. Furthermore, even if there is such data being collected, the likelihood it is being shared with third

parties such as outside organizations, stakeholders, communities or families is unlikely due to privacy concerns or the possibility of potential misuse of information. (p. 74)

Within the Métis Nation, there is currently no national missing and murdered database that exists. It was noted in the MMIWG National Inquiry Interim Report that Indigenous peoples each have their own distinct cultures across Nations, and that because of these differences, there is no pan-Indigenous approach. That being said, so far there has been little action on the part of police to ensure Métis women, girls and LGBTQ2S+ peoples are being identified with their differences when they are victimized. At this time, more than ever before, it is critical with the issue of MMIWG, for police to cooperate and assist in any way they can to stop this epidemic. Without such cooperation, it is difficult to both identify and understand this issue as statistics and data are crucial for any analysis. (p. 77)

#### **On the purpose and partnerships of a potential Métis-specific database:**

A final consideration, and possibly even the most important consideration, would be determining the purpose of a Métis specific database. Unlike some other efforts to collect information on MMIWG, it is important to ensure the information being collected is not simply thrown into a spreadsheet never to be looked at again. The content collected must be meaningful and useful in combating violence against Métis women and girls. (p. 99)



There may be many intended purposes for a Métis database, such as the facilitated sharing of information with police across jurisdictions as well as RCMP. Should it be decided to partner with law enforcement, the database could act as a resource for them to understand risk factors for violence against Métis women, and could potentially bring new information to light for use in their investigative processes. Furthermore, this information could assist police in creating relevant policies to address the issue of Métis women and girls being murdered or going missing as it would address their unique intersectionality, which is often overlooked. However, for this partnership to be truly meaningful, there needs to be an expressed commitment by police to endeavour to also take part in the collection of relevant data for Métis. (p. 99)

This database may also be used to help Métis families and communities in the healing and honouring process. This information could be used to create partnerships within our Métis communities and governing members across Canada to honour our Métis women. Through these partnerships, awareness would be brought to the issue of missing and murdered Métis women, girls, and LGBTQ2S+ people who are so often forgotten or left out of other MMIWG spaces. Through community partnerships, measures could be made to educate women and girls across the country in hopes of decreasing the likelihood of further violence against Métis women, girls, and LGBTQ2S+ people. (p. 100)

# Urban Indigenous Perspectives

## The Urban Reality

Urban Indigenous people can have very complex identities and backgrounds, may not fit easily into one category or another, and may or may not be attached to their homelands or communities for various reasons. Complex identities can be the result of such things as being taken away, forced out, intermarriage amongst distinctions-based groups or additional factors such as sex, gender, residency, geography, ability, and age. These complex identities have important implications for data, resulting in many “falling through the cracks” when data are collected, protected, interpreted and analyzed.

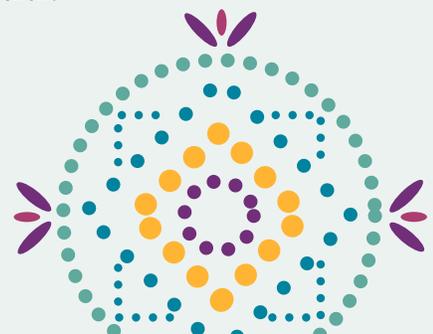
Although there are major data gaps and concerns with how data are collected, protected and interpreted, what information we do have tells us a majority of First Nation, Inuit and Métis people live in urban and rural areas but not necessarily on reserves. This makes capturing data on the realities of urban Indigenous experiences by urban Indigenous communities a real priority going forward.

As the Urban Sub-Working Group, we have a bold and strength-based vision for urban Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, with a focus on addressing violence, but also ensuring a bright future for them. Ensuring urban legitimacy is recognized and that data are available to support this vision is a pressing and urgent priority that can lead to improved access to human rights, culturally appropriate programs and services and drastically improved socio-economic outcomes.

## Principles for Data in the Urban Context

The Urban Sub-Working Group has identified a number of important principles and priorities as related to data and performance measurement. These begin with the inclusion of Urban Indigenous people in **co-development**, and a necessary reestablishment of the relationship between data and urban Indigenous people, to ensure adequate provision of programs and services based on residency as understood in the urban lens. As related, **Indigenous Data Sovereignty** means, in part, supporting urban Indigenous organizations in their efforts to collect, analyze and protect data and protecting the rights of those who contribute data to **informed consent** and for ethical and authentic data collection and protection. Communities should be able to lead research into basic demographics to fill existing data gaps.

Supporting urban co-development, Indigenous Data Sovereignty, and informed consent also emphasizes the importance of **culturally appropriate lenses, including the importance of supporting strength and resiliency** in data analysis and performance measurement. In other words, understanding the complexity of urban Indigenous identities requires different lenses that take these into account. In addition, data that doesn't just focus on deficits and instead, speaks to what makes us strong, is critically important to those most impacted by violence and to Indigenous youth in particular.



Culturally appropriate and strength-based research is also **holistic**. We understand and affirm the value of **disaggregated data, personal experience and first-person voice** in data development and in research. Strong comprehensive data will be important to support accountability and to determine future pathways for action through evidence-based decision-making. This should be informed by both **quantitative and qualitative data and analysis**, as well as **research that incorporates lived experience** that can best provide insight into urban Indigenous realities.

We acknowledge the legacies of broken trust in doing this work. Data analysis has often been used as a weapon against Indigenous people, promoting erasure, stereotyping and further targeting. As such, we understand why many Indigenous people are hesitant to identify as such in data collection because they don't trust how the data will be used. There are many concerns that data may be used for surveillance or that people may be penalized for duplication of service (despite the fact that there are a lot of families that need to access multiple programs to get the support they need). This is why we affirm that in all data collection, analysis, and storage, **privacy must be protected** and control over personal information retained. Further, safer mechanisms for self-identification are needed which **respect the complexity** often found in urban centres, noting that there are many urban Indigenous people who do not fit neatly into existing colonial categories of identity.

We believe that data collection and analysis can be transformed and trust restored through the proper collection, analysis and dissemination of information in ways that support and affirm the strength, power and place of Indigenous people wherever they reside and however they choose to identify. As such, a Data Strategy that works to support change by **identifying indicators that best speak to impact** in the lives of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, will be an important pathway forward for ongoing co-development. Identifying indicators that can best support change means looking at the people that programs are reaching, and how they might best be served in an urban environment.



Motherly Love; Drawing/Painting by Dee-Jay Monika Rumbolt. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## Priorities for Urgent Action

Given the principles expressed for data, as well as the unique perspectives that encompass urban Indigenous experiences, there is an urgent need for action in the realm of capacity development. Urban Indigenous people and communities must be supported to bring forward their own solutions and come up with their own tools for data collection, analysis and research, with dedicated long-term investment. Funding that often goes to non-Indigenous researchers or colonial institutions must be sent back into communities, where it belongs.

In addition to this overarching need, specific and urgent actions are required to support the development and use of data and information that accurately captures urban priorities and needs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Directed funding and resources for urban Indigenous-led organizations to build capacity for collecting, analyzing and storing data;
- Establish First Nations, Inuit and Métis self-identification data collection standards across all governments which includes urban and 2SLGBTQIA+ people reflecting the complexity of urban Indigenous identities;
- Collect disaggregated data based on race, ethnicity, and cultural background, as well as data on urban Indigenous people who are service users in a uniform manner and publish to ensure inclusivity in the distinctions-based approach and to ensure effectiveness of service delivery;

- Develop and institute outcome measurement data required to track urban social conditions and improvements;
- Establish an oversight mechanism/ monitoring body, with the full participation of urban Indigenous people. The urban community and 2SLGBTQIA+ people must be included in monitoring the approval and implementation of the National Action plan, to continue the joint prioritization and review of indicators;
- Address jurisdictional wrangling/Urban governance issues, particularly those related to data.



Unspoken Words; Decorative/Traditional arts by Mikhayla Patterson in collaboration with the students of the Social Work Program at MacEwan University. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Perspectives

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) was first founded in 1971 as the Native Council of Canada (NCC) to represent the interests of Métis and non-status Indians. In 1993, the organization was reorganized and renamed as the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples to represent the interests of the off-reserve Status, non-Status, Métis and Southern Inuit. CAP arose as a representative for the “forgotten people” in response to the structural and systemic exclusion of Indigenous peoples in federal government policy. CAP’s constituency spans from coast to coast to coast and is comprised of diverse Indigenous identities.

Today, nearly 80% of Indigenous peoples live off-reserve in Canada.<sup>21</sup> Off reserve and non-status Indigenous peoples are among the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups in Canadian society,<sup>22</sup> an unfortunate reality deeply rooted in colonialism and its impacts. There are severe and lasting damages to Indigenous peoples who are not recognized or registered as Status Indian such as poorer health, higher rates of poverty and violence, and overrepresentation in the Canadian justice and correctional system.<sup>23</sup> CAP works collectively with its ten provincial/territorial affiliates<sup>24</sup> to address these inequities, and advance common interests, collective and individual rights, and the needs of its constituents.

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**21** Statistics Canada. (2017). Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census. Online: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm>

**22** See *Daniels v Canada (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development)*, 2014 FCA 101 at para 70, 371 DLR (4th) 725 [*Daniels FCA*].

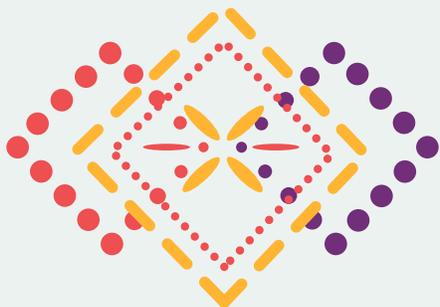
**23** Canada. (2016). A Backgrounder on Poverty in Canada. Online: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/backgrounder.html>; Canada. (2006). Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, *Aboriginal Children’s Survey, 2006: Supporting Data Tables*. Online: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-634-x/89-634-x2008005-eng.pdf>

**24** CAP’s provincial and territorial affiliate organizations include: NunatuKavut, Native Council of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council, Alliance Autochtone du Quebec, Native Council of Nova Scotia, Ontario Coalition of Indigenous People, Coalition of Indigenous Peoples of Saskatchewan, Indigenous Peoples Alliance of Manitoba, Aboriginal Congress of Alberta Association, North West Indigenous Council.



The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples has long advocated for the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and will continue the work required to improve outcomes and find justice. However, governments continue to fail to recognize the rights of many of our constituents, restrict their access to programming, reinforcing divisions and disadvantage, all of which undermines the right to self-determination. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls identified the persistence of colonial structures and policies and constitute as a root cause of violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The right of self-determination and the remediation of harmful past exclusion demands a principled and inclusive approach to ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The remainder of this brief brings attention to key data issues for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples as they relate to the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. The brief begins with the overarching recognition of Indigenous Data Sovereignty which is at the root of inherent rights to self-determination as sovereign entities. While CAP recognizes that further work is needed to implement Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles, CAP is committed to a greater level of involvement and partnership in gathering culturally relevant and meaningful information.



## Data Sovereignty

Data sovereignty is connected to the right of Indigenous peoples to have authority over the management, preservation, control, and protection of their own knowledge. It is connected to the rights and responsibilities concerning the use of community-held knowledge. In the words of a CAP Elder “our knowledge is our intellectual property”. For Indigenous organizations to collect accurate, inclusive, far-reaching, and impactful data requires capacity building, funding, and resources. CAP envisions the creation of data governance and data sharing agreements that align with its authority to manage its own data including identifying the data needs of its constituents and their communities.

## Building Indigenous data infrastructure

Data infrastructure has been found insufficient with respect to Indigenous identification and creates concerns about under counting and therefore underestimating inequities. This lack of Indigenous identification creates gaps and inconsistencies in data. CAP recommends that Indigenous peoples’ ways of identifying should be made the norm and that safety protocols be developed for Indigenous peoples to self-identify. With sufficient resource capacity to build data infrastructure, Indigenous organizations such as CAP can help to ensure that information is reliable, policy and practice relevant, and that programming is based on evidence in a timely and sensitive manner. This will have the added effect of providing experts with tangible skill assets and empowers and centres community members as the leaders and expertise carriers.

## Acknowledging intersectionality and complex identities

Indigenous peoples are simultaneously members of more than one identity group based on gender, sex, ancestry, age, ability, language, socioeconomic factors, residence, “Status”, family, geographic location, etc. These complex identities are the result of many factors (such as personal truths, family connections, and colonial policy). Recognizing the diversity of Indigenous peoples and the families and communities in which we live increases the effectiveness of data and matches data with the goals of communities. Acknowledgement of the intersections between identity factors may also help to improve understandings of how racism and sexism currently play a role in contemporary data collection processes. A way forward is research partnerships with Indigenous organizations like CAP who are connected to their constituent communities.

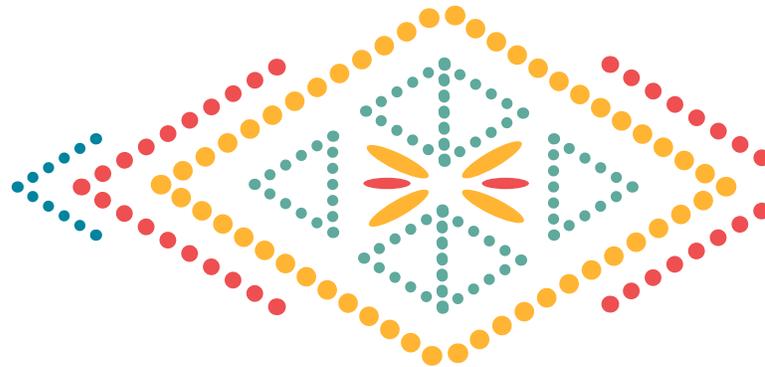
## Resolving jurisdictional issues and increase data quality

Some of the gaps in Indigenous data can be attributed to the failure of governments to resolve jurisdictional disputes and the status- and residency-based exclusions that have created a “jurisdictional wasteland”<sup>25</sup> with huge gaps and inconsistencies and little accountability. One of the gaps created by Indigenous data exclusion is that it allows for underfunding of essential services, even though the lack of services is felt by Indigenous communities.<sup>26</sup> A related gap created by Indigenous data exclusion

relates to responsibility and accountability to Indigenous populations for achieving improved outcomes and service delivery. CAP plays an important role if positive change is to occur for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who live off-reserve – who may or may not be registered and who have the right to be counted; from identifying outcomes to effecting legislative change to developing and implementing standards and accountability frameworks toward resolving the jurisdictional issue.

## The need for disaggregated data

A related issue is the need for disaggregated data that better reflects where Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people reside, how many Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people there are, and how they are doing in relation to fulfilling the goals set forth by the National Inquiry Calls for Justice. Grassroots Indigenous organizations such as CAP are connected to the growing off-reserve populations that enables us to communicate and implement Indigenous sensitive decisions and programs and identify what indicators should be used to measure the success of goals of the National Inquiry.



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<sup>25</sup> Daniels SCC at para 14.

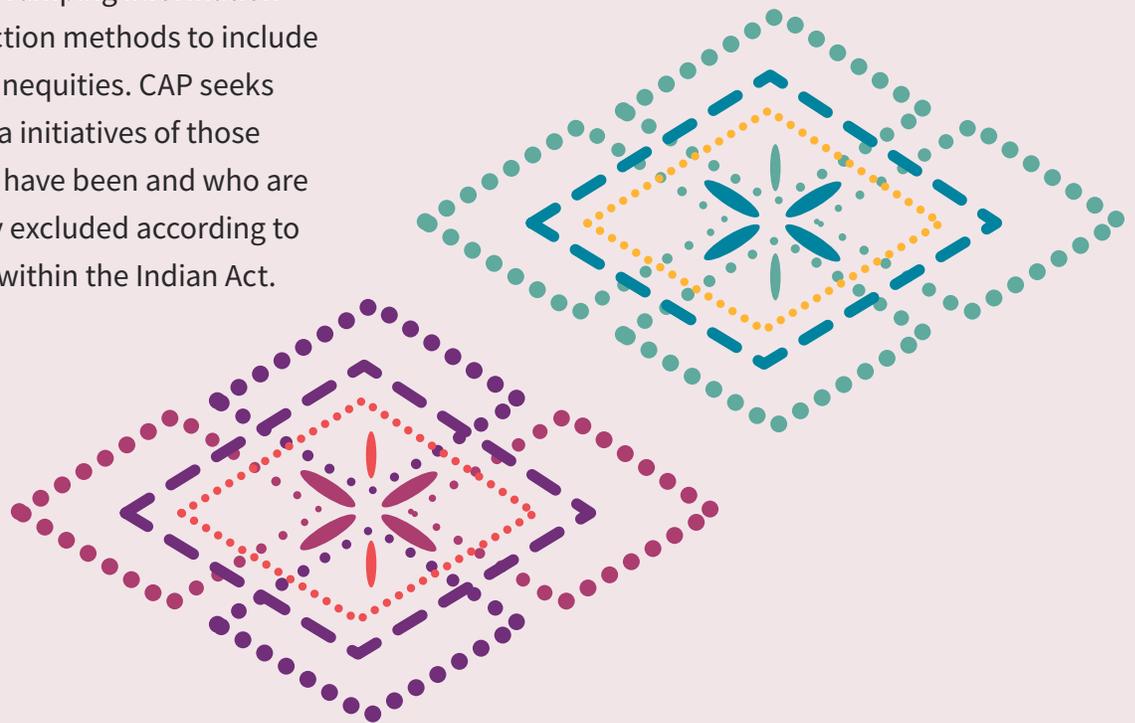
<sup>26</sup> Metallic, N.W., Friedland, H., Craft, A., Morales, S., and Hewitt, J. (2019). *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families Does Bill C-92 Make the Grade?* Yellowhead Institute. Online: <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/bill-c-92-part-5-data-collection.pdf>

## Tracking inequities and contextualizing Indigenous identifiers

The racial misclassification of data has resulted in the invisibility of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. If Indigenous peoples are not identified, the data are flawed, inequities rooted in sexism, racism, colonialism, and genocide are missed, and the specific issues relating to Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are left unaddressed. These inequities are not highlighted in present data collections creating difficulties for Indigenous organizations who know what is needed but are unable to support service and programming decisions. Nor is current data contextualized to expose disparities and explain systemic issues and the source of the issues.<sup>27</sup> Indigenous organizations that are fully and centrally involved in data decision-making can strengthen data integrity and assist in revamping information systems and data collection methods to include measures that address inequities. CAP seeks the inclusion within data initiatives of those Indigenous people who have been and who are currently systematically excluded according to residence or groupings within the Indian Act.

## Supporting Indigenous methods of collecting information

Indigenous methods of collecting information such as engaging with communities, and the use of methodologies like observation, sharing circles, oral histories and traditional storytelling are connected to Indigenous values and that may not be reduced to statistics. Such approaches can strengthen data gathering capacities and help to address community concerns, provide data to inform policy and community planning in a meaningful way, and enable communities to fully participate in multiple levels of decision making. Moving forward CAP recommends Indigenous methods for collecting information and developing data indicators that are aligned with Indigenous peoples' perspectives and are useful to the individuals and populations whose data are being gathered.

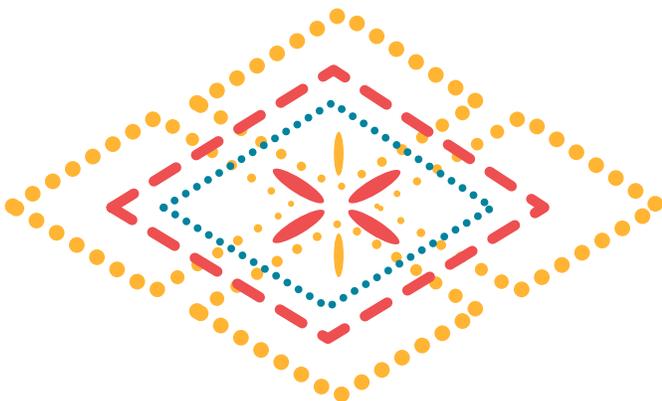


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<sup>27</sup> Wuttannee, R. (2019). Indigenous Equity Data: Substance Use, Mental Health, and Wellness. Report prepared for Social and Policy Projects, City of Vancouver. Online: [https://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/2019-67\\_Indigenous%20Equity%20Data%20Substance%20Use\\_Wuttannee.pdf](https://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/2019-67_Indigenous%20Equity%20Data%20Substance%20Use_Wuttannee.pdf)

## Adopting strengths-based approaches

While deficit-based indicators help to track improvements to resolve social inequities, they tend to report on disparities that contribute to harmful stereotyping and marginalization. Strengths-based approaches that contextualize data help to create space where Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people can share their experiences, successes, and recommendations for fair and equitable access. Strengths-based approaches can create space where inequities and systemic issues can be identified and help to broaden understandings of critical concepts of violence. Rooted in community, Indigenous organizations such as CAP that are broad with regional affiliates are able to contextualize data and bring forward Indigenous women's stories of strength and resiliency. Our organizations are able to develop our own data gathering research and strength-based approaches. We are able to ask research questions that highlight experiences including the gathering of stories specific to our perspectives on violence, develop meaningful pathways to safety and healing through stories, songs, traditions, histories etc., with tools to measure successes that are useful and connected to our communities.



## Building trust and capacity

Canada has a legacy of harmful use of data by colonial governments. Examples of the effect of the misuse of data against women and their communities are registries, the residential school system, and the 60's scoop. This history has contributed to a mistrust among Indigenous peoples with how data will be used and the withdrawal of Indigenous peoples from sharing personal information and from data collection systems. Trust and accountability in why and how information is collected, held, accessed, and used requires building the data and information governance capacity of Indigenous-led organizations that are respected by local Indigenous peoples and responsive to their needs and aspirations. There is much work to be done and with appropriate resources, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples can help provide a way forward.



Memorial for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; Sculpture/Carving by Mary Ann Grainger. Source: MMIWG Legacy Archive, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## 2SLGBTQQIA+ Perspectives

The 2SLGBTQQIS Sub-Working group discussed the data required to identify, address, monitor and evaluate impact of the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersexual, Asexual (2SLGBTQQIA+).

### Limitations of Existing Approaches

The 2SLGBTQQIA+ SWG tabled concerns with the existing data gathering documents that the Federal Government uses, including but not limited to:

- Census of Population
- Aboriginal Children's Survey
- Canadian Community-Health Survey
- First Nations Labour and Employment Survey
- National Household Survey

Various concerns were raised with respect to issues present throughout, including only providing the two gender binary options as identifiers, historical fear and trauma as linked to non-participation in survey instruments, degree of responses and risk to being identified as a 2SLGBTQQIA+ person or "out", living conditions prohibiting participation, lack of education attainment representing barriers to responding to survey questions, and methods of data collection. In design and delivery, these data instruments continue to be strong reflections of a colonial approach.

Over several different meetings, the 2SLGBTQQIA+ SWG tabled concerns about the process and moving forward. The first set of concerns set out dealt with having no reliable data about the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community. Significant efforts to establish basic baseline demographic information is required. 2SLGBTQQIA+ group members started to design relevant baseline information requirements specific to 2SLGBTQQIA+ as including, but not limited to:

- gender identification along a continuum of non-binary options;
- Indigenous identity which would not be restricted to First Nation, Métis and Inuit;
- age;
- residency;
- education attainment;
- health status (physical, mental, disabilities and addictions);
- relationship descriptors;
- employment;
- contact with child welfare, police, courts, corrections;
- experience with violence, including sexual abuse

## New Data Requirements

We then looked at the next level of data requirements and were able to identify some alternative approaches used by members during the HIV/AIDS “crisis” including direct engagement by 2SLGBTQQA+ researchers, engagement of Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and design and implementation early on within the context of the National Action Plan. This would be a distinct approach, not to be integrated into gender-based organizations or other data gathering models and distinct from reporting processes being designed to measure outcomes and success. It would also be distinct from Indigenous HIV/AIDS efforts.

## Reclaiming Expertise, Power and Place

We want to emphasize the requirement that this be approached differently so as to begin to disassemble the colonial process of researchers, academics, research funding bodies and “non-Indigenous expertise” in this field. The 2SLGBTQQA+ community’s lack of information and recognition of “experts” outside of our community contributes to our loss of power and place.

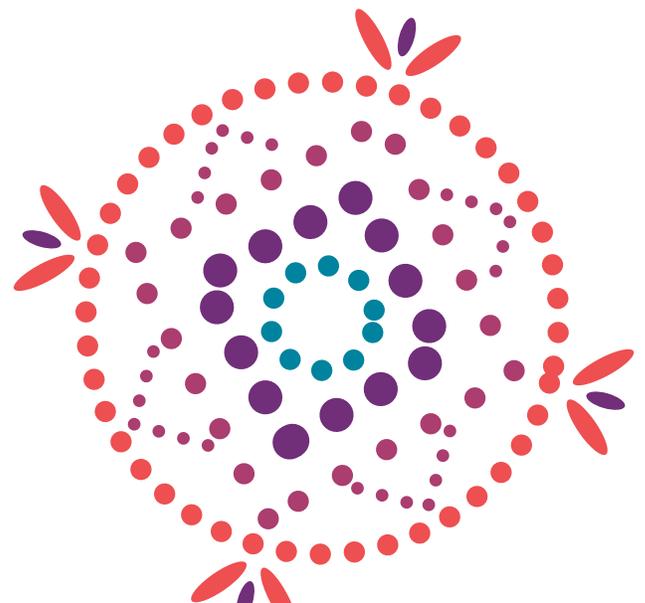
The architectural design for data and for research with respect to monitoring and assessing impact and effectiveness must build 2SLGBTQQA+ community capacity and ownership. Availability of funding, technology and skill development will require investments. The architectural design must move beyond male/female definitions, deal with residency and follow the themes of the National Action Plan: culture, health and wellness, human

safety and security and justice. We want to ensure that data gathering, analyzing, housing of the data and publishing is in the hands of 2SLGBTQQA+ community members.

In summary, in designing and implementing the National Action Plan data approach we must ensure that:

- 2SLGBTQQA+ are returned to “power and place”, not an add on to other groups;
- receive direct supports to assess ending and preventing further violence and deaths;
- ensure community based and 2SLGBTQQA+ led process;
- major funding bodies must review their practice and approach with 2SLGBTQQA+ funding;
- the words “data sovereignty” will only be meaningful when “Indigenous” precedes the words

Finally, the National Action Plan must include specific 2SLGBTQQA+ success and impact indicators which can be reported on the basis of sound 2SLGBTQQA+-led data development.





## 12. Conclusion: Creating New Pathways for Data

### Considerations for the Next Stages of Work

As this Data Strategy represents the closing of one chapter, so too does implementation and the questions for moving forward represent the opening of a new one; the next step. DSWG members were clear throughout the process that implementation must be deliberate and thoughtful, and must begin with acknowledging and addressing certain questions and challenges that exist.

To begin, determining how family members and survivors will be included in the work is key. The value of lived experience, so poignantly demonstrated by the National Inquiry's Final Report and other work supporting the value of this knowledge, will need to be integrated into what governments see as valuable information. Expanding the frame of reference beyond a simple list of quantitative considerations is work that must begin as soon as possible. Relatedly, incorporating these perspectives within decision-making and within the evaluation of programs, services, and initiatives is a vitally important task that requires governments to listen deeply to what families, survivors, organizations, governments and advocates have been saying.

Also important is having this next stage of work developed by First Nations, Inuit and Métis participants, using their First Nations, Inuit and Métis lenses, cited by DSWG group members as a critical approach. Using Indigenous Data Sovereignty as a foundational element for developing and implementing the Data Strategy will increase participation and trust in the process and should continue along the path charted by DSWG members, entrenched in First Nations, Inuit and Métis people and organizations' fundamental rights toward their data.

Throughout the process, the DSWG identified the interjurisdictional administrative data collection and reporting challenges not only as a consideration, but as a fundamental barrier that needed to be addressed. In addition, privacy legislation, identified earlier in this chapter, is a further consideration. To truly support the Data Strategy with national accountability within the NAP, barriers to how data are defined, collected and shared in a limited way is not acceptable to members. These challenges will need to be addressed at partnership tables and reflected upon to ensure that data collected about Indigenous people is accessible to them, and can help us understand the true measure of progress in creating an environment where Indigenous women, girls,

and 2SLGTQQIA+ people are safe. Specifically, pursuing new ways to obtain appropriately disaggregated data, while balancing legislated guidance that supports privacy is a pressing issue.

As implementation moves forward, understanding how we are measuring progress through the creation of baseline distinctions-based or population-based data will also be a key question. This baseline will not only provide a starting point for evaluating success in the long term, but will serve to highlight significant data gaps in areas that have not been addressed by the DSWG. An inventory of data that already exists, including work already completed or underway, will provide an important support as work moves forward.

In addition, and as reflected by the diversity of DSWG membership, DSWG members brought their diversity of culture, lived and professional experience to highlight the fact that consistency and cultural-appropriateness is needed regarding the definitions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, lands and communities. In this way, grounding the Data Strategy in First Nations, Inuit and Métis data sovereignty, as well as including those in conversations with cross-cutting identities or concerns, including non-status people who are not currently counted, will enhance the data that comes from the strategy, and the outcomes that can be reached as a result.

Finally, the DSWG identified and repeated the importance of future exploration of qualitative indicators and data development. For members, these types of data and indicators would include methodologies that centered First Nations, Inuit and Métis ways of knowing and being. Qualitative indicators and data would highlight the importance of relationships and would be much more culturally-appropriate, as it would reflect the ways in which First Nations, Inuit and Métis people and communities have engaged in data and research since time immemorial.



The National Inquiry provided gifts of reciprocity to those who participated in the Truth-Gathering Process. This gift giving symbolized the relationships that will also need to be the foundation of the implementation of the Calls for Justice. Source: [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca)

## Centring Indigenous Ways of Knowing, and Reconsidering Process

Centring Indigenous ways of knowing, including basing new knowledge in the context of partnership and relationship, are part of processes that will affect not only the outcome of the Data Strategy, but how it contributes, in and of itself, to the reclamation of power and place. Process matters—and DSWG members have noted the need to take time to elaborate an implementation plan that will take into account the Principles for Change from the Final Report, as well as those Principles for Change and the Pillars of the NFSC. With respect to data, understanding and centring the pillars adapted and elaborated within this Data Strategy means changing how we do things and rethinking data through a new and more holistic lens. The pillars within this Data Strategy are important, and speak to the way in which data has served to historically marginalize Indigenous Peoples and individuals, and has contributed to the outcomes we see today. Undoing or reversing these outcomes means looking back—looking to how we know what we know—to imagine something different.

The DSWG emphasizes that inclusion, for the ongoing development of the strategy, will be measured by the full and active involvement of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and survivors of gender-based violence as well as the full and active participation of Indigenous Peoples in the creating of a path forward. As related, the impact of new ways of collecting, analyzing, and managing data, according to principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, means that the work must create a meaningful effect on policy, legislation and society at large. Part of this measurement will rest in the interconnectedness of our strengths and of the challenges we face, as well as in a fuller reporting that includes quantitative and qualitative frameworks. Finally, accountability, as specific to data, refers to the important relationships that must animate the process for true and meaningful responsibility.

This work to develop the NAP Data Strategy is informed by the opportunity to recognize that sustainable First Nations, Inuit and Métis-led data functions are a prerequisite for strengthened accountability, evidence-based decision-making, and efficient and effective data governance. Indigenous Data Sovereignty lenses that are distinctive, yet inclusive of all Indigenous perspectives, will continue to define what is important to measure and inform how this work is advanced.

DSWG members understand the urgency of building a Data Strategy that will move the NAP forward in a good way. They are committed to a First Nations, Inuit and Métis-led process that centres family and survivor perspectives, as well as those of other partners. First Nations, Inuit, Métis and other Indigenous organizations and communities are best placed to hold broader conversations among themselves and with all governments about how the safety of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people is measured. In addition, they will work in partnership to ensure that high quality, culturally-relevant, disaggregated and distinctions-based data are available to be used by and for them.

Walking forward, relationships underpinning the NAP Data Strategy will recognize diverse Indigenous strengths and knowledge, keep parties accountable to each other during decision-making processes, and aid in efficient and effective data governance. This path will support the fundamental right to safety and security for all Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

