AN ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS

MISSING AND MURDERED
INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS,
AND 2SLGBTQQIA+ PEOPLE

IN WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA

PREPARED BY
THE WINNIPEG INDIGENOUS EXECUTIVE CIRCLE
We honour all missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, their families, and their communities.

This report is dedicated to them.
"EVERYONE NEEDS TO REALIZE THAT KILLING INDIGENOUS WOMEN IS A CRIME IN CANADA. WHEN A WOMAN IS TAKEN — THEIR WHOLE LIFE IS TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM, THEIR FAMILY, AND THEIR COMMUNITY. FAMILIES ARE LEFT TO WONDER: WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE IF SHE WAS STILL ALIVE TODAY? SHE MISSES OUT ON LIFE. SHE MISSES OUT ON THE BIG MILESTONE EVENTS OF HER FAMILY. IT IS NOT ONE MONTH OF GRIEF FOR MMIWG2S+ FAMILIES — IT HAS A LIFELONG IMPACT."

– MMIWG2S+ Family Member
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We also extend our appreciation to everyone involved in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls for their bravery and leadership in elevating the voices of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ in Canada, and within our traditional territory located on Treaty 1 land in Manitoba – the homeland of the Métis Nation and traditional territory of the Anishinabeg, Anishininiwak, Ininiwak, Dakota, Dene, and Inuit. We acknowledge and honour these Nations as well as Shoal Lake 40 in Treaty 3 territory, which is the primary water source for Winnipeg, and ended a 1997 boil water advisory on September 15, 2021.

“Nothing about us without us” is WIEC’s on-going commitment to support MMIWG2S+ families and Survivors and to establish meaningful relationships with all levels of government and stakeholders to work together to end the genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ in Winnipeg.

This report is grounded in the recommendations from Survivors and MMIWG2S+ families, who will always be at the heart of this work. WIEC worked closely with Angela Lavallee, Co-Chair of the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition, Annetta Armstrong, Executive Director of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre, and Amara LeClair, Trauma Counsellor of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre, to invite Survivors and MMIWG2S+ family members to participate in three sessions focused on understanding their vision of the most important services and actions needed to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. These sessions included participation from eight family members, eight residents of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre, and Survivors of violence. WIEC honours the voices of each and every participant in these sessions. All recommendations put forward in these sessions are captured in this report.

Thank you to the Province of Manitoba for providing funding for this report.

Special thank you to our Writer, Alana Robert for facilitating all of our sessions and capturing our Voices in the writing of this report. Your humility, kindness and love for our Indigenous families strengthened our report and emphasized clear transformational change is needed to end all forms of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples.
The Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle ("WIEC") is a collaborative of over thirty-one Indigenous-led organizations from a wide range of sectors, which collaborate to advance the well-being of Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg – which has the largest Indigenous population of any city in Canada. WIEC provides a united voice of the priorities and challenges facing urban Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg. WIEC prioritizes the following objectives:

- Creating a common vision for urban Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg
- Engaging Winnipeg’s Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities
- Promoting gender equality
- Restoring Indigenous governance systems through reclamation of Indigenous ways of being
- Using self-determination to promote positive dialogue and relationship-building to advance reconciliation
- Forming collaborative partnerships to restore Indigenous ways of being and enhance resources and services to increase positive outcomes for Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg
- Strengthening and advocating for resource equity and sustainability for Indigenous service organizations
- Restoring the rights of Indigenous peoples

WIEC defines Indigenous-led organizations as those which are led by an Indigenous Executive Director, have a board and staff of at least 75 percent of Indigenous peoples, and operate through Indigenous cultural values and practices.

WIEC is guided by the sacred teachings of love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, and truth. WIEC’s work is also grounded in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Calls for Justice from the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls ("Final Report").
WIEC’S EXPERTISE: SERVE URBAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

As a network of urban service providers, WIEC tailors its services to urban Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg. This includes First Nations (Status and Non-Status), Inuit, and Métis, as well as Indigenous peoples transitioning from rural or remote areas into the urban community. WIEC prioritizes serving all Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg – Indigenous status or identity never pose a barrier to accessing services.

WIEC must be recognized as the experts in providing services to urban Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg – leading programing that caters to the unique realities of this demographic. The Final Report does not sufficiently address the unique challenges of urban Indigenous peoples; however, WIEC continues to be a voice for the urban Indigenous population, and works tirelessly to ensure that these experiences and needs are never forgotten.

WIEC’S PRIORITY: SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN FAMILIES

WIEC leads the strategic priorities of Indigenous-led organizations in Winnipeg and fosters reconciliation throughout the city. One of these critical priorities is to **support and strengthen families** to nurture healthy communities. Addressing missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual and gender-diverse people (“2SLGBTQQIA+”) is essential to realizing this priority.

This report was prepared for the Government of Manitoba to help shape its provincial action plan to address the crisis of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA (“MMIWG2S+”). It was developed by the members of WIEC’s Supporting and Strengthening Families Working Group, whose names are listed under “Acknowledgements”.

WIEC’s proposal focuses on preventing the systems that allow violence to be inflicted on Indigenous peoples and restoring service delivery to Indigenous-led organizations. The importance of sustainable funding for Indigenous-led organizations is emphasized throughout this report.

While this report focuses on a series of calls specific to the Government of Canada, it also contains calls for the City of Winnipeg and Government of Canada. WIEC calls on ALL governments to support these actions, and join WIEC in partnership to co-develop and co-manage the pathway forward.
HONOURING THE VOICES OF MMIWG2S+ FAMILIES

“Everyone needs to realize that killing Indigenous women is a crime in Canada. When a woman is taken – their whole life is taken away from them, their family, and their community. Families are left to wonder: what would it be like if she was still alive today? She misses out on life. She misses out on the big milestone events of her family. It is not one month of grief for MMIWG2S+ families – it has a lifelong impact.”

– MMIWG2S+ Family Member

WIEC sought to ensure that MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors were an integral part of this report. WIEC worked closely with Angela Lavallee, Co-Chair of the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition, to invite Survivors and MMIWG2S+ family members to participate in two sessions focused on understanding their vision of the most important services and actions needed to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. These sessions were guided by Knowledge Keeper Leslie Spillett and included community leaders and trauma support workers. These sessions were done in circle and included participation from eight family members.

WIEC also worked closely with Annetta Armstrong, Executive Director of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre and Amara LeClair, Trauma Counsellor of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre, to invite residents, Survivors and MMIWG2S+ family members from the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre to participate in a session on their vision of the most important services and actions needed to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This session was completed pursuant to the protocol of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre and included eight of their residents.

WIEC honours the voices of each and every MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors in these sessions. The guidance and recommendations provided by participants have formed the foundation of this report. These three sessions resulted in a number of recommendations, which are captured by the report. Some of the highlights of these sessions are detailed below.

***

Addressing the Calls for Justice in a meaningful way requires the voices of MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors to be involved at every step. The actions taken by government are part of the healing journey for many MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors.

“No that we have a report, we demand action. Band-Aid solutions are not enough. Our relatives are worth more than Band-Aids. Our children and grandchildren deserve to grow up and live in places that are free from violence. This is lifelong work that we will continue, until all of our children are not the victims of broken systems. We are heading in the right direction. We are waiting for a collective response. And we know that it can be done.”

– Participant
Transforming the violent realities of many Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people requires governments to take their Calls for Justice seriously. Some MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors expressed that they do not want to have to continue repeating the process of sharing some of the most difficult moments of their life. They expressed a concern that repetitive consultation processes will continue, without meaningful action taken in response. As one explained, “I don’t want to have to keep telling my story over and over, with report after report being written – I don’t want my children and grandchildren to have to continue telling these stories. We need the work to start now”.

There is no time left for complacency. MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors need to be listened to, and have their recommendations acted upon. Many called the government to be more transparent in its work to end this crisis of violence, and to keep MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors up to date on progress and response. MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors want to be part of the process, and invited to provide input on drafted strategies, plans, and budget commitments, to help guide the government’s work. To date, many MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors expressed that they do not feel included in this work.

MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors provide critical insight to the pathway forward. Some participants recommended the creation of an advisory circle to provide strategic advice and direction to the government. Additional efforts should be made to ensure that people from remote, isolated, and northern communities are also included.

Other participants highlighted that many MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors were not included in the National Inquiry, and some were not ready to speak about their experiences at that time. A special response is needed to ensure that these voices are included.

Investing in Indigenous Leadership

This crisis is complex. MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors emphasized that while a recommendation may be critical for one person, it will not be essential for another. A holistic and comprehensive response to this genocide is needed. Another participant explained, “there should not be any programs developed in response to the Calls for Justice without Indigenous people in leadership”.

Long-term investments need to be made directly to Indigenous-led organizations in order to be effective. Some MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors explained that resourcing non-Indigenous agencies to serve Indigenous peoples is both ineffective and an extension of oppression. Many MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors observed that investments into large non-Indigenous organizations to serve Indigenous peoples result in low participation rates and sub-optimal experiences. Other MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors expressed that missionary and charity-based solutions are not the answer. These resources need to be re-directed to Indigenous-led organizations to provide more accessible and culturally sensitive programs, which result in higher participation rates.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, violence has only increased against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Meaningful and substantive response to this crisis must include resource allocation to Indigenous-led organizations that is proportional to the need that exists. Investing in Indigenous-led organizations is critical to supporting Indigenous systems and ways of doing, and advances equity.
Increasing Supports for Families

Indigenous-led organizations need to be funded to support families following the disappearance or death of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Currently, MMIWG2S+ Families are often isolated, and left alone to grieve and wonder “Why is this happening? Why is this allowed to happen?” Participants called for increased trauma-informed and harm reduction supports for MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors during these extremely difficult times. This includes the need for 24 hour on call supports to be immediately available. These supports must be available for everyone – including those whose family member’s cause of death was declared undetermined.

Some MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors shared their negative experiences with police and journalists, who have made assumptions about their loved ones following a disappearance or death. For example, one participant was told that their family member “must have been out partying”. In these moments, it is hard for families to speak up because of the trauma and grief they are experiencing. All investigation and reporting practices must be improved, and regulated with minimum standards, to ensure that family members are not further harmed.

The generational impacts of MMIWG2S+ cannot be overlooked – including on children, who must be cared for and provided with special supports. This includes the need for greater cultural programming housed in Indigenous-led organizations, for children of all ages. As one participant explained, “our children’s hearts are broken as much as ours are”.

These supports must be continual. One MMIWG2S+ Family Member and Survivor noted, “many MMIWG2S+ Families have to find healing without having justice”.

Additional Recommendations

MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors called for an intersectional response to the Calls for Justice, and highlighted the following recommendations:

**KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER**

- Make strategic investments that are focused on keeping families together.
- Create an Indigenous-led advisory board to oversee police practices with the aim of reducing the over-policing and over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples.
- Invest in Indigenous communities to prevent Indigenous youth from entering the criminal justice system in the first place.
- Prioritize restorative justice initiatives and recidivism.
- Create justice programs and systems that reflect Indigenous laws and Indigenous ways of doing, rather than continuing to push Indigenous peoples into Canadian systems that are unrecognizable to them. These non-Indigenous justice systems need to be replaced by Indigenous systems.
- Create an Annual Guaranteed Livable income, as poverty intersects with child welfare, justice, education, and health – each of which is a strategy to break up families.
- Increase resources and funding for Indigenous-led organizations to increase their capacity to serve Indigenous families and communities.
- Fund anti-oppression, anti-racism, and anti-sexism training across all systems. This includes ensuring all police officers and service providers take reports of missing and murdered family members seriously in every instance.
- Form reporting and accountability systems to Indigenous peoples on the Calls For Justice, including status updates and soliciting ongoing input from MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors.
- Require all service providers to offer cultural supports and medicines at all hours.
**NOURISHING FAMILIES**

- Provide accessible wraparound services for Indigenous peoples, which include supports for housing (including first stage housing and life skills coaching), children, addictions, and mental health. This should include availability at all hours of the day.
- Increase awareness of existing supports, to ensure that Indigenous people know where to go and who to contact when in need.
- Increase supports for intervening with domestic violence, including the creation of a hotline that can provide immediate assistance.
- Heighten access to ceremony, cultural programming, and land-based teachings for all Indigenous peoples, including 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
- Use inclusive language and create spaces that are safe for all Indigenous peoples, including 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
- Undertake actions to eliminate drug trafficking, domestic violence, and lateral violence.
- Invest in peer workers to support families to be their own leaders.
- Invest in increased cultural programming in the justice system.
- Strike partnerships between the Winnipeg Police Services and social workers.
- Create supports for women and child survivors of sexual violence, including programs akin to those offered by Alberta’s Little Warriors.\(^5\)
- Invest in men’s programming, in recognition of the supportive role that men frequently take in families, who also need access to support in various forms (including one-on-one supports).
- Support 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, including with accessible supports for changing their names, and with affirming surgery as desired.
- Increase debt resolution programs.
- Invest in programs that facilitate pride in identity and belonging.

MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors expressed that these sessions were representative of a small group of families, and that a permanent body needs to be created to monitor the implementation of the Calls for Justice across Manitoba and Canada, with a national center created to focus on research and education.

Indigenous families continue to experience violence and deaths to this day. The group of MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors is continually growing. As one participant explained, “many are not safe right now. At the end of the day, we do this work for the children, and for those who are still coming”. Addressing this genocide is part of reconciliation.

**THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW.**

This report will detail:

I – WIEC’s position on the Final Report
II – the importance of transforming realities in Winnipeg,
III – an action plan for meaningfully addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis over the next five years through grounding this work in seven key pillars, and
IV – specific actions for actualizing the Calls For Justice through co-development and co-management.
I

POSITION ON THE FINAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MMIWG2S+

WIEC accepts the Final Report of the National Inquiry into MMIWG2S+, including its finding that violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people amounts to genocide. WIEC also accepts the Women of the Métis Nation’s report: Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQ2S+ People.

WIEC believes all 231 Calls for Justice from the Final Report of the National Inquiry and 62 Calls for Miskotahâ (Change) from the Women of the Métis Nation need to be implemented to address violence and nurture healthy communities. These Calls are not optional – each is a legal imperative which must be acted upon by all levels of government.

WIEC calls Manitoba to make a permanent commitment to end genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. An authentic commitment to ending genocide necessitates addressing the four pathways of violence identified in the Final Report:

1. Historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma
2. Social and economic marginalization
3. Maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will
4. Ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
WIEC calls Manitoba to ground its work in the Principles of Change detailed in the Final Report:

- Focus on substantive equality and human and Indigenous rights
- Adopt a decolonizing approach
- Include families and Survivors of MMIWG2S+
- Promote self-determined and Indigenous-led solutions and services, including by returning power and control to places from which it has been removed
- Recognize distinctions; and
- Prioritize cultural safety and a trauma-informed approach.
- Need to educate everyone in Canada – from newcomers, to children throughout all ages in school – about the real history and realities of Indigenous peoples in Canada. People need to understand why there was a National Inquiry and the importance of living their Calls For Justice.

The Final Report does not fully address the distinct experiences of violence towards urban Indigenous peoples and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. WIEC calls Manitoba to follow its direction on these areas, as detailed by this report, which identifies and addresses the root causes and systemic drivers of violence. This approach also seeks to ensure that Survivors/victims of violence feel supported, while prioritizing appropriate intervention against perpetrators of violence.
We have heard enough. How many years has this been going on? We have had enough of the reports. It’s time to put the plan in place. We need action now.”

– MMIWG2S+ Family Member

WIEC calls Manitoba to commit to targeted action to address the MMIWG2S+ crisis in Winnipeg. The Final Report was released in June 2019, and detailed 231 Calls for Justice which provide the pathway forward. WIEC seeks to work with Manitoba to re-envision and re-design the possibilities for the province, and eliminate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

This report contains a series of recommendations to holistically and sustainably combat the magnitude of MMIWG2S+ in Winnipeg. WIEC’s recommendations reflect Manitoba’s priorities of prevention, support, and intervention. WIEC shares Manitoba’s view that these areas intersect, and an integrated approach is required to combat violence in the city. WIEC’s report aligns and complements Manitoba’s Framework: Addressing Gender-Based Violence (2020).  

WIEC calls Manitoba to commit to targeted efforts and strategic investments that specifically serve to eradicate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. WIEC is ready to work in partnership with Manitoba to transform the realities of violence in Winnipeg.
WIEC has devised a strategy to ignite meaningful actions to address MMIWG2S+ over the next five years. The following seven pillars have been identified by WIEC members and key stakeholders as essential to this work. These seven pillars are necessary to provide a strong foundation for the specific action items discussed in the final section of this report. WIEC calls on Manitoba and all stakeholders to commit to action moving forward – rather than consultation processes which may replicate the MMIWG2S+ Inquiry. However, it must be recognized that not all of the voices and stories of families were included in the MMIWG2S+ Inquiry, and Manitoba should consider potential consultations, co-designed with those families, to ensure that no one is excluded. Throughout the development of Manitoba’s action plan, MMIWG2S+ families must be included every step of the way.

1. **RECOGNIZE AND CENTER THE VOICES OF MMIWG2S+ FAMILIES**

This work must be centered around the voices of MMIWG2S+ families. MMIWG2S+ families should be involved at every stage of new and revised initiatives and programming. They must be consulted and listened to, and their leadership must be followed. Any work in this area must invest in the meaningful participation of these voices. MMIWG2S+ families must be paid for their engagement, time, and care in this work. Embracing the voices of MMIWG2S+ families requires funding for their gatherings, grassroots organizations, and coalitions. MMIWG2S+ families hold a special place in this work, and nothing should move forward without them.
2. **FORM A PROVINCIAL CABINET COMMITTEE ON MMIWG2S+**

This work requires all major stakeholders and decision-makers across the Government of Manitoba to be brought together. Historically, the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations has been engaged in this work alone. Crafting comprehensive, targeted, and well-resourced solutions requires all major players to be around the table to devise meaningful long-term solutions.

WIEC calls Manitoba to create a dedicated MMIWG2S+ Committee of Cabinet, comprised of all Ministers with portfolios that are relevant to the eradication of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This includes the Ministers of Justice, Health, Families, Education, Economic Development and Training, Finance, Indigenous and Northern Relations, and the Status of Women.

Manitoba already has a Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet. A similarly dedicated Cabinet committee that specifically seeks to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people must be formed to address the challenging individual and systemic realities that confront Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. A focused Cabinet committee with a mandate of addressing violence and investing in transformative solutions.

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3. **ADDRESS SYSTEMIC RACISM TOWARDS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

Manitoba already has a Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet. A similarly dedicated Cabinet committee that specifically seeks to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people must be formed to address the challenging individual and systemic realities that confront Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. A focused Cabinet committee with a mandate of addressing violence and investing in transformative solutions would demonstrate an authentic commitment to addressing MMIWG2S+ in Winnipeg.

Systemic racism and discrimination are built into every institution in the province and country. These institutions fuel violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Addressing MMIWG2S+ means correcting aspects of the system that are broken. Many institutions across Manitoba require substantial reform to meaningfully address the violent realities of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in Winnipeg. In particular, this includes government institutions, health care, policing, justice, child welfare, and 911 dispatchers. Systemic issues related to these specific areas are explored further in this report. The willingness of institutions to adapt is critical.

The Government of Manitoba must create focused committees to review and reform its institutions. These committees must be Indigenous-led, with mandates to perform a substantive review of systems, policies, and practices to address systemic barriers, inequities, and racism. This type of review will transform oppressive systems into inclusive ones. These systemic reviews must be accompanied by investments to train service
providers and institutional leaders to deliver services in a culturally safe and trauma-informed manner. This training will help alleviate the racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia that plagues all institutions discussed in this report.

WIEC calls Manitoba to engage in systemic review and reform, accompanied by training within institutions. This would be a welcome step to demonstrate institutional will to undertake the transformative actions required to ensure that institutions respect and empower Indigenous peoples.

WIEC further calls Manitoba to adopt its definition of Indigenous-led, which requires Indigenous peoples to be represented at a minimum of 75 percent. This must be the standard adopted for the committees performing systemic reviews and reforms.

4. ADOPT A RIGHTS-BASED FRAMEWORK

Each of the Calls for Justice identified within this report captures the rights of Indigenous peoples. Strategic training, systems reforms, and investments into these areas are not just the right thing to do – but are actions required to recognize the inherent, constitutional, and human rights of Indigenous peoples. WIEC calls Manitoba to respect and embrace the rights of Indigenous peoples.

WIEC applauds Manitoba’s The Path to Reconciliation Act, which details the following principles for Manitoba to advance reconciliation:

- **RESPECT**: Reconciliation is founded on respect for Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples. Respect is based on awareness and acknowledgement of the history of Indigenous peoples and appreciation of their languages, cultures, practices and legal traditions.

- **ENGAGEMENT**: Reconciliation is founded on engagement with Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples.

- **UNDERSTANDING**: Reconciliation is fostered by striving for a deeper understanding of the historical and current relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and the hopes and aspirations of Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples.

- **ACTION**: Reconciliation is furthered by concrete and constructive action that improves the present and future relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The Act entrusts the Minister responsible to lead the development of a strategy for reconciliation, which includes: meaningful engagement with Indigenous peoples and nations, a framework to advance reconciliation, and the creation of “immediate and long-term actions that are responsive to the priorities and needs of Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples.” This includes establishing transparent mechanisms which evaluate the measures undertaken by Manitoba.

This report encapsulates the goals of the Act, and reflects the priorities of the urban-Indigenous organizations in Winnipeg.
5. SHIFT RESOURCES TO INDIGENOUS-LED ORGANIZATIONS

Resources must be reallocated to Indigenous-led organizations, which can self-determine the programming and services required to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Manitoba’s current funding allocation largely invests in non-Indigenous organizations to deliver programming to areas that primarily impact Indigenous peoples.

It has been the experience of WIEC organizations that a maximum of 20 percent of provincial funding is allocated to urban Indigenous-led organizations. This is extremely concerning, as non-Indigenous organizations often do not understand the root causes that fuel the realities facing many Indigenous peoples, including the impacts of intergenerational trauma caused by colonization. Indigenous-led organizations are notoriously under-resourced and under-staffed, inhibiting their ability to perform the transformative work that they are capable of.

When root causes are overlooked, funding is distributed to provide band-aid solutions. As a result, provincial funding allocation is sub-optimal, as many of these programs merely maintain the status quo. Manitoba must rectify this moving forward, as challenges facing urban Indigenous peoples are intensifying during COVID-19, causing realities to worsen. The era of providing deficient services to urban Indigenous peoples must end.

WIEC members recently spoke out about issues with funding allocation in relation to Siloam Mission: WIEC emphasizes the importance of Indigenous leadership, investments in Indigenous organizations, and meaningful partnerships with groups that are taking care of our Indigenous relatives.

Indigenous-led organizations understand that responding to the complex challenges confronting Indigenous peoples requires a deeper response. WIEC’s members carry knowledge and expertise about trauma, where it comes from, and how opportunities for healing can be offered to allow individuals to reach their full potential. Indigenous-led organizations have the expertise required to deliver programs and services to create transformative solutions, but require resources to make this possible.

Indigenous-led organizations prioritize the creation of communities that focus and build on our strengths, where Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people can thrive. When funding and resources are allocated, Manitoba must prioritize distribution to Indigenous-led organizations which truly understand the issues. Indigenous peoples have incurred challenges spanning generations, and an understanding of this history and the ways that it informs modern-day realities is essential. Indigenous-led organizations understand this context, know the work that must be done, and should be supported to self-determine the pathway forward. Sustained investments are needed to support this work.

WIEC was formed out of frustration of everyone speaking for Indigenous peoples, and doing things to Indigenous peoples, causing Indigenous voices to be silenced, and often erased. Indigenous-led organizations have the answers, and know the way forward. We require sustained investments from Manitoba to build capacity, become even stronger, and deliver lasting solutions for Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg.

Indigenous-led organizations are more effective at delivering programs and services to Indigenous peoples. Many Indigenous peoples feel apprehensive and even scared to open up to non-Indigenous peoples about their needs, fearing judgment and paternalistic treatment. These fears have been fueled by decades of colonial policies. When accessing services, Indigenous peoples do not want to be treated as though they are stupid because they are unfamiliar with the process. Colonial processes have created hierarchical systems where certain groups exert control and make themselves superior over others. This has formed the basis of systems, laws, and policies across Manitoba and all of Canada that cause intentional harm to Indigenous people. Funding should not simply replicate these systems of hierarchy and disempowerment.
Indigenous-led organizations are a stark contrast to this – where engagement with Indigenous peoples is focused on forming relationships and building on strengths. These organizations are familiar and safe to members of the urban Indigenous community. Indigenous peoples feel at ease when accessing services from Indigenous-led organizations – they do not have to explain every aspect of their reality, such as their identity, history, or experiences of trauma. Indigenous organizations understand the context that has shaped their lives. Indigenous-led organizations focus on intersectionality, healing, and empowerment. This is done through approaching work in a manner that is culturally safe, trauma-informed, and serves to reduce harm. An anti-racism and anti-oppression approach are always adopted.

Indigenous-led organizations provide services premised on acceptance and meeting people where they are. The more programs and services that are transferred to Indigenous-led organizations, the more that Indigenous peoples will use them, as fears of judgment when accessing services will be alleviated. This will reduce barriers to accessing services. It will also promote awareness of service offerings, which are sometimes lost due to services being offered through a number of disconnected providers.

Indigenous-led organizations are constantly adapting. COVID-19 has increased the need for urban Indigenous peoples to have their basic social and economic rights filled. Many Indigenous-led organizations are in survival mode, and are unable to expand their programming to meet the urgent needs of the urban Indigenous population during the pandemic.

WIEC calls Manitoba to shift resources to Indigenous-led organizations, so that they can provide the programs and services needed by the urban Indigenous community. Where these organizations do not exist for a particular area, Manitoba must invest in their formation and/or in existing Indigenous-led organizations so that they can build the capacity required to deliver services across an expanded range of areas. Manitoba should prioritize funding allocation to Indigenous-led organizations to increase their services before investing in non-Indigenous organizations to perform this work. This is particularly critical where the issue disproportionately targets Indigenous peoples – such as violence, poverty, homelessness, and policing.

WIEC calls Manitoba to collect data on funding allocation, programs and services, and outcomes. Tracking these outcomes will ensure that investments are thoughtfully and strategically made, and yield transformative outcomes.

Manitoba is further called to fund WIEC to monitor the progress of action items identified in this report, and fund WIEC members to perform this work in partnership with Manitoba and other stakeholders to ensure accountability measures are in place.
6. PROVIDE LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS INTO INDIGENOUS-LED ORGANIZATIONS

Solutions to the greatest challenges facing Indigenous peoples will only be achieved through sustained programming and funding – rather than one-off, short-term initiatives. The challenges confronting urban Indigenous peoples are extensive, and will require long-term investments into programming to produce meaningful, long-term, systemic results. Consistency in programming is critical, and yields greater opportunities to achieve transformative solutions.

WIEC calls Manitoba to commit to long-term and sustainable funding for Indigenous-led organizations. This would allow these organizations to perform the essential work to transform outcomes and opportunities for urban Indigenous peoples. These types of investments will allow Indigenous-led organizations to re-design the future of programs, services, and outcomes for urban Indigenous peoples – in a manner that reflects Indigenous knowledge and priorities.

7. ESTABLISH A CENTRE FOR OVERSIGHT AND RESEARCH

All of this work must be continually monitored to ensure that benchmarks for progress are established and achieved. The continuation of violence towards urban Indigenous peoples, and the number of MMIWG2S+ must also be monitored. An oversight body is required to keep governments accountable and ensure that sustained investments, action, and partnership are devised to genuinely strengthen families and communities, and eliminate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

WIEC calls Manitoba to fund an independent centre to provide oversight on the implementation of each Call For Justice, and to monitor and collect data on the experiences of violence of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people across the province.

Until each Call For Justice is meaningfully implemented and actualized – more Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people will become part of the increasing statistic of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and Survivors of violence, thereby continuing to harm children, families, and communities.
The seven pillars above must be embraced in each area requiring government action. The remainder of this report details specific priority areas identified by WIEC to address MMIWG2S+. These areas include social and economic rights, the human rights of Indigenous peoples, culture, health, human security, the justice system, education, child welfare, corrections, and specific actions for 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. WIEC provides this action plan as an initial proposal. WIEC seeks to work with Manitoba to determine which priorities identified will be implemented first. WIEC expects Manitoba to move forward with this strategy through co-development and co-management with WIEC. No programing or initiative should be designed or administered without Indigenous peoples and Indigenous-led organizations as partners.

Nothing about us, without us.

WIEC commits to ensuring that Survivors of violence and MMIWG2S+ families are always included and centered in this work – and will continue to embrace this commitment in all partnerships with Manitoba moving forward.

WIEC proposes a series of calls to the Government of Manitoba. Where the jurisdiction of these Calls overlap with the City of Winnipeg or the Government of Canada, WIEC calls the municipal and federal governments to support these actions, join WIEC in partnership, and be part of the pathway forward.
A. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

CALL 4.1

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

This Call is of critical importance to WIEC’s priorities, as it captures the foundation of social and economic rights for Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg. WIEC uniquely carries tremendous institutional, cultural, and spiritual knowledge across a wide range of service sectors, which plays a critical role in allowing Indigenous peoples to take back their traditional ways of life. WIEC uses its expertise to nourish and advocate for the social and economic rights of urban Indigenous peoples.

Each organization that composes WIEC upholds and advances the social and economic rights of urban Indigenous peoples. WIEC members play an essential role in providing safe and barrier-free services to urban-Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg, and Indigenous peoples rely on WIEC members for access to essential services.

As a key priority, urban Indigenous peoples will not have equitable opportunities until their basic needs are met – safe housing, clean drinking water, and adequate food. Fulfilling Call 4.1 must start with supporting WIEC’s work. The Indigenous-led organizations which compose WIEC are extremely busy working to meet the social and economic needs of Indigenous peoples at the grassroots level. Through sustained investments, these organizations can increase their capacity, and offer even more transformative programs and services to urban Indigenous peoples.
Colonial systems force Indigenous peoples into marginalized positions, and keep them there. As a result, Indigenous peoples are stuck in subpar social and economic conditions. For human security to be actualized, Indigenous peoples should not be living in fear all of the time, and should not have to beg for their basic needs to be met. The way that social and economic issues challenging Indigenous peoples are addressed is also critical, as the humanity and dignity of Indigenous peoples must always be upheld. Indigenous peoples do not want to be looked at like “poor people” but instead, must be viewed as human beings, who have inherent rights and human rights. WIEC knows the way forward to uphold these rights for urban Indigenous peoples – which critically includes the prevention of homelessness. A key priority for WIEC is for all Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg to have accessible and long-term housing. Access to housing must be very low barrier and include wrap-around services. Existing programs in Manitoba, including the recent announcement for funding of the Rapid Housing Initiative from the Government of Canada, continue to pose barriers including:

- Regulations and zoning frameworks which do not align with the housing needs of Indigenous communities;
- Inadequate operational funding for housing models which are permanent and supportive;
- The absence of collaborative trilateral government engagement on advancing Indigenous-led housing solutions; and
- The absence of a national urban Indigenous housing strategy by and for Indigenous peoples.

Manitoba is called to commit to strategic investments to create operational housing for urban Indigenous peoples. As a housing funder, the province is called to immediately invest in at least 200 new units of supportive housing and 470 new units of rent-geared-to-income housing in Winnipeg, while simultaneously maintaining existing housing stock. If housing management is devolved, Indigenous organizations must be prioritized as housing managers.

In Winnipeg, Indigenous peoples experience homelessness at a rate that is five to six times higher than the general population, and poverty rates that are double the general population. At least two-thirds of those experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg identify as Indigenous. Women are more likely than men to experience hidden homelessness, and it is estimated that for every person experiencing absolute homelessness, another three experience hidden homelessness. The Housing First model is effective for chronic homelessness; however, women’s hidden and episodic homelessness leaves this demographic ineligible for many programs through Housing First.

Indigenous peoples disproportionately lack access to core housing. The precariousness of housing and involvement with Child and Family Services create a vicious cycle for many Indigenous families. Child and Family Services may use “unsuitable” housing (stipulated by the National Occupancy Standards, where “suitable” is defined by the number of bedrooms based on family size), as rationale for child apprehension. Yet families cannot secure housing that is “suitable” due to the lack of geared-to-income housing with three or more bedrooms. Without “suitable” housing, families are at risk of child apprehension, or are unable to reunite with their children. Indigenous children represent more than 90 percent of children in care, and more than half of those experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg have been in the care of Child and Family Services.

The waitlist for subsidized housing through Manitoba is at 9,000 households. Approximately 750 women and families are on the waitlist due to family violence. This leaves many women in abusive realities or domestic violence shelters, as they are unable to secure safe and stable housing. Moreover, investments in shelters should instead be transferred into investments in transitional and long-term housing in order to sustainably address homelessness in Winnipeg.

The Governments of Canada, Manitoba, and Winnipeg must all work together to alleviate systemic barriers to housing. There are few accessible housing options in Winnipeg, and many of these homes lack basic features, such as plumbing. Rarely are these houses part of a community of urban Indigenous peoples. This needs to be addressed to secure basic housing and community for urban Indigenous peoples.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

1. Support and invest in Indigenous-led organizations to advance the social and economic realities of Indigenous peoples;

2. Invest in the creation of Indigenous-led transitional housing to provide housing for those in need;

3. Expedite the building of housing and focus investments on building capital and essential features of homes;

4. Commit to working with the Government of Canada and the City of Winnipeg to uniformly address the housing crisis of urban Indigenous peoples through addressing the systemic barriers to housing;

5. Invest in Indigenous-led programming to support newly housed individuals with life skills;

6. Invest in accessible and long-term housing for urban Indigenous peoples as follows: at least 1,340 new units of housing are needed over the next five years to address homelessness in Winnipeg and

7. Allocate at least 70 percent of new housing to be owned and operated by Indigenous agencies, to reflect the proportion of Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness (equivalent to 938 new units of Indigenous-led housing that can be created as an Indigenous-based community).
B. HUMAN RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND GOVERNMENTAL OBLIGATIONS

CALL 1.3

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

CALL 1.8

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

The above Calls go hand-in-hand, and emphasize the importance of how Manitoba determines its budgets. WIEC emphasizes the importance of prioritizing resource allocation to Indigenous-led organizations delivering programming and services.

Manitoba’s process of funding allocation lacks transparency. Indigenous-led organizations are frequently excluded from consultations and discussions on funding distribution. As a result, WIEC is often unaware of how Manitoba is investing service dollars. The ongoing social, economic, cultural, and political realities of urban Indigenous peoples in Manitoba are in part a consequence of misguided funding allocation by the province.

Immediate supports need to be provided to families who have missing and murdered loved ones. Families are often left alone, without any resources or supports. These culture and spiritual supports offered by Indigenous organizations are needed.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

8. Undertake strategic investments into Indigenous-led services;

9. Co-develop a process with WIEC on the determination and distribution of funding for service delivery in the province;

10. Through the co-developed process, publish an annual report card detailing the distribution of funding: into programs, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, and allocated towards actions to realize the Calls For Justice;

11. Fund and co-develop healing programs for families and communities, catered to all age demographics; and

12. Fund and co-develop service teams to provide support to MMIWG2S+ families whose loved ones are missing or murdered – including at the first instance of the family gaining knowledge of their disappearance or death. These supports must be widely available 24/7, including for those whose loved one’s cause of death was undetermined. Families must be contacted and given supports for trauma, culture, and spirituality by properly funded Indigenous organizations.

CALL 1.5

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

Targeted intervention is needed into the factors that fuel the historic cycle of violence. Manitoba has a critical role to play in combatting violence against urban Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This includes targeted efforts to address domestic violence.

While *Manitoba’s Framework: Addressing Gender-Based Violence* (2020) does not have a targeted stream dedicated to combatting violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, inclusion of this demographic is emphasized throughout the framework. This dedication must be expanded upon, prioritized, and adequately funded to create sustainable solutions for combatting violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

13. Prioritize, expand, and fund Indigenous-led organizations to execute Manitoba’s Framework: Addressing Gender-Based Violence (2020);

14. Invest in anti-violence programs like Ma Mawi’s Spirit of Peace program, that are Indigenous-led and grounded in Indigenous ways;

15. Embrace Indigenous leadership, input, and control over service delivery to Indigenous peoples; and

16. Require all homeless shelters in Winnipeg to provide Indigenous-specific programming and services. In the alternative, funding and service delivery for Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness should be transferred to Indigenous-led organizations.

CALL 1.6

We call upon all governments to eliminate jurisdictional gaps and neglect that result in the denial of services, or improperly regulated and delivered services, that address the social, economic, political, and cultural marginalization of, and violence against, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Jurisdictional gaps between federal and provincial responsibility must be addressed to prevent Indigenous peoples from continuing to fall between the cracks. These jurisdictional gaps are illuminated through mobility: Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ are leaving their rural and remote communities to live in Winnipeg, where they encounter new challenges. Member organizations of WIEC provide services through a non-distinctions-based model – anyone can access services. WIEC’s priority is to provide assistance and ensure that supports are available to everyone.

However, jurisdictional gaps continue to exist in areas that are the responsibility of different levels of government – primarily occurring between the federal and provincial governments. The realities of First Nations children continuing to be denied medical services, and persons leaving prison being unable to receive prescription medication once they are released, are examples of the consequences of these gaps.
Jurisdictional gaps have prevailed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Canada initially decided to fund distinctions-based services, such that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis organizations were each provided funding separately. This created tremendous obstacles for urban-Indigenous organizations which are not distinctions-based, which do not receive support and funding from distinctions-based investments. Consequently, urban Indigenous peoples were overlooked initially in COVID-19 response. As a result, urban-Indigenous organizations had to advocate for investments into their uniquely tailored services. While this advocacy was successful, it took 8 weeks for these investments to materialize. This delay resulted in an absence of programs and services during a critical period of the pandemic. The oversight of funding for urban-Indigenous organizations is common, and WIEC emphasizes the importance of investments in urban Indigenous organizations.

Jurisdictional gaps have harmed the urban experience of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+, who are often neglected or turned away by institutions and service-providers. Canada and Manitoba must work together to address jurisdictional issues – which has been proven to be possible through the formation of Jordan’s principle to ensure that First Nations children have access to health care.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

17. **Address jurisdictional gaps** – namely through ensuring the inclusion of urban-Indigenous peoples and organizations in decision-making and investments, to ensure that urban Indigenous peoples do not continue to be failed by the institutions that should be meeting their needs.
C. CULTURE

CALL 2.3

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

Indigenous peoples must have safe and barrier-free access to culture – which is critical to promoting identity and belonging. Cultural programming must always be provided by Indigenous-led organizations. When Indigenous-led organizations receive provincial funding for cultural programming, funding is typically for an individual project or program. This funding must go further. It is critical that Indigenous-led organizations receive long-term funding to support cultural programming. When Indigenous-led organizations provide cultural programming, Indigenous identities are nurtured and revitalized. This promotes healing and reclamation among Indigenous peoples.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

18. Make sustained, long-term investments into Indigenous-led organizations so that they can provide cultural programming to the urban Indigenous community. Strategic investments must be shifted from government-run institutions to Indigenous-led organizations.
CALL 2.6

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

Winnipeg has been named Canada’s “most racist city”, where Indigenous peoples experience prejudicial and discriminatory treatment on a daily basis. WIEC urges Manitoba to take immediate action to educate all residents of the province. All governments must develop an Anti-Racism, Anti-Sexism, and Anti-Homophobia Action Plan to undertake the strategic actions required to foster equity and inclusion across the province. The Government of Manitoba should also provide education and training for all service providers in the province.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

19. Co-develop with WIEC a Provincial Anti-Racism, Anti-Sexism, and Anti-Homophobia Action Plan to combat racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia in the province.

20. Co-create and sustainably fund education and training for all service providers in the province (including but not limited to police, health, education, justice and child welfare authorities).
D. HEALTH

CALL 3.1

We call upon all governments to ensure that the rights to health and wellness of Indigenous Peoples, and specifically of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, are recognized and protected on an equitable basis.

WIEC recognizes that Manitoba is doing some work to promote the health of Indigenous peoples; however, minimal investments have been made into Indigenous-led organizations. The way that health services are provided matters. Indigenous peoples often do not have control or choices about their lived realities – meaning that they have often survived in the ways that they know how. When accessing health services, Indigenous peoples encounter harmful labels, stereotypes, and assumptions about lifestyle choices – which blame them for their realities.

Indigenous peoples often fall through the cracks in the health care system, which is not designed to meet their needs. Indigenous peoples often experience an intersection of complex social and health challenges, and it is not effective – and is often very harmful – to limit their care to inflexible models of health. These issues persist for all ages – from children to Elders.

Individuals from neighbourhoods experiencing high rates of poverty live 18 years less on average. As a result, they experience chronic conditions akin to those in a population nearly two decades older. This makes age an ineffective benchmark for matching supports. Evidently, transformative, structural change is required to reform the system to be one of inclusivity and safety.

Power imbalances exist in any relationship premised on assisting others – including healthcare, where service providers maintain power over patients. Racism and unconscious bias continue to play a role in healthcare delivery. Humility is required to recognize these realities and learn how to transform them. Health must be provided in a manner that is informed by Indigenous history and experiences, culturally safe, and where services are provided without prejudice, racism, or unconscious bias. Indigenous peoples need greater supports to improve their experiences with healthcare providers, which will enhance their health outcomes. Facilitating changes to healthcare service delivery requires extensive education for service providers. A single education session is insufficient – this training must be in-depth, ongoing, and long-term.

Many Indigenous peoples deliberately do not engage health care providers when experiencing a health crisis due to previous negative experiences and/or historical distrust. The difficult reality is that many Indigenous peoples are unable to advocate for themselves when they are in the health care system. This situates Indigenous peoples in a marginalized position when accessing health care, where they are often unable to vocalize their needs. Culturally safe health care experiences must be extended to all Indigenous peoples, including those who experience homelessness and exploitation.

Transferring strategic investments into Indigenous-led and community-based health services will improve access to health care for Indigenous peoples and transform experiences in health care settings. WIEC’s vision is to create health services within community-based organizations. This will allow Indigenous peoples to have health care services and response that caters to their unique needs, and reflect a broader view of health.
The following gaps have been identified with the approach and delivery of health care services in Manitoba:

**Gaps in FASD diagnosis and care**

Health care providers are called to build relationships with those that they serve, including by learning about their history and background. Indigenous peoples are less likely to receive an accurate diagnosis of FASD at an early age. And those who have been the most harmed by the impacts of colonization are more likely to become regular users of emergency services. These individuals often have intersecting experiences of trauma spanning multiple generations. While this is a small population, significant need exists within it. The absence of a diagnosis limits eligibility to obtain status as a vulnerable person and access needs-specific programs. This fuels homelessness, where Indigenous peoples are not able to benefit from the supports that would otherwise be available (such as housing and specialized case management). This leaves this demographic to rely on shelters, which women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons in particular may not feel safe accessing and are not a sustainable solution to homelessness. As a result, they are often forced to rely on other means of survival, including sleeping on the streets or provisional accommodations, where they are vulnerable to exploitation and other harms.

Children with a diagnosis of FASD often do not have transition planning and/or programs as an adult once they age out of care. Even youth who need a group home placement and 24 hour care often do not have these options available for housing once they age out of care. There are extensive waiting times for placements, causing missed opportunities for transitions. The lack of resources for these youth can prevent them from safely transitioning out of care.

These youth may not have family members advocating for them, and instead are overseen by caseworkers who are responsible for a high volume of youth. The current system is not designed to meet their needs, nor support their safety. These youth may also come from remote and Northern communities to urban centers, where new needs materialize and go unmet, leaving them unequipped to provide for their own survival and safety.

**Gaps in mental health supports**

There is a gap in mental health supports for high needs populations. Currently, there are strict criteria for accessing a mental health worker – which typically requires an individual to have a “major disorder.” This creates barriers for Indigenous peoples, who have the high needs related to intergenerational trauma, anxiety and depression, and substance use or may have undiagnosed illnesses – all of which are not classified as a “major disorder.” As a result, many Indigenous peoples do not meet the threshold of accessing mental health services. Indigenous-specific mental health services for various types of needs are called for.

Mental health services available in the city have limited eligibility, and there is a significant gap in case management supports. As the availability of mental health supports expands, Indigenous peoples and agencies must be involved in the design of these programs; otherwise, the addition of mental health services will continue to miss the mark.

All services must be designed to meet people where they are at. This includes not requiring abstinence from drug use immediately when accessing supports like housing. Individuals should not have to choose between coping and a home. Furthermore, harm reduction approaches need to be recognized as best practices.
Gaps in outreach work

While the number of outreach workers are increasing, their level of training, experience, and approach to this work are unknown, as there is high turnover in the industry. Outreach workers must be equipped with the tools required to navigate the system and the pathways for escalating matters. This also requires an understanding of the depth of factors which are often at play. For example, an outreach worker must understand that the needs of a person who is homeless may be more than meets the eye. Multi-disciplinary teams that adopt trauma-informed approaches are needed.

Navigating multiple systems requires intensive knowledge of policies and available resources. Outreach workers and advocates would benefit from pooling what they have learned to create tools and best practices for use across agencies and programs. These outreach workers should also have access to healthcare professionals and Indigenous knowledge keepers who can advise on medical and psychological needs.

Gaps in housing and drug use treatment

It is often difficult for even the most vulnerable to get treatment for drug use. There are very limited options for housing with drug use services – meaning that not everyone has access to housing depending on their degree of dependence. Most residential housing programs promote abstinence from drug use, meaning that these programs are not designed to meet the needs of some people who are trying to overcome homelessness.

For example, while the Bell Hotel accommodates people who use drugs, it has limited capacity and an extensive wait list. These temporary programs do not offer case management supports beyond the short periods that people are accessing housing programs – making it difficult for these individuals to access secure housing, obtain work and identification documents, and receive supports. Those who are provisionally housed or experiencing hidden homelessness are also excluded from these supports.

This highlights the need for Indigenous-run transitional and long-term housing, which serve people where they are at, and are physically accessible for all abilities. Indigenous-run transitional and long-term housing would also be able to provide a wide-range of services focused on health, wellness, spirituality, and healing.

Gaps in the continuum of care

When program participants meet the mandate of the specific program, their supports often expire. Instead, these programs must be longer in duration, in recognition of the time that it takes for relationships to be built between providers and participants, and allow for the time needed to provide the care required. When a program comes to an end, additional services must be in place to ensure that individual needs are met. Service providers want to journey with individuals until they are at a place where they do not require support. However, service providers are often constrained from reaching this point due to funding limitations. Service providers must be able to meet individuals where they are at, and provide supportive services. Moreover, additional supports are needed to assist individuals who are relocating from remote communities due to medical reasons.
Gap between independent living and personal care homes

Indigenous peoples disproportionately experience poor health, higher rates of disabilities, and illness at a younger age. As a result, Indigenous peoples do not always fit into the mainstream personal care model. Presently, some Indigenous peoples are stuck between independent living and personal care homes – and may stay in independent living because they do not meet the age threshold for personal care homes. As a result, if they are in independent living but unable to comply with tenancy requirements (e.g. due to needing additional assistance), they are at risk of being evicted. This results in a tremendous housing gap for Indigenous peoples with disabilities and other needs, which must be addressed. This is a small group of patients who are left out: they are under 65 years old, require 24 hour care, and may also present with complex challenges which may require the same types of supports and services that are available to seniors. However, they may not be accepted into a personal care home due to their age. The ability of individuals under 65 to access personal care homes declines even further if there are behavioural, personal, or mental health challenges. These individuals are often rejected from receiving care, as institutions feel that they cannot meet their needs.

Moreover, this demographic is often at greater risk of eviction, because they frequently lack supports that are typically provided by families. For example, if preparation for bed bug treatment is required, which an individual may be unable to prepare due to disabilities and no family or other supports, they can become at risk for eviction.

Gaps in discharge plans

Health care providers and hospitals can struggle to create safe discharge plans for individuals who have been most harmed. There are many barriers that these individuals experience in terms of being able to access housing, primary care, mental health services, assistance for drug use, and other critical supports. Since Indigenous peoples do not fit into existing options, it can be difficult for these systems to create safe discharge plans. Discharge plans must be able to be crafted through a framework of holistic care and trauma informed strategies for engagement, including catered responses for those with specialized needs.

The bigger picture must also be considered: people do not access healthcare due to barriers, including systemic distrust, which is a typical response to past experiences of harm. Moreover, if a patient is difficult to engage with, a healthcare provider must be aware of the impacts of colonization, and thoughtfully strive to re-build trust. This solution also illustrates the importance of partnership with Indigenous-led organizations.

Transforming the health care system’s approach to MMIWG2S+

Those with repeated visits to hospital have often experienced violence, various forms of exploitation, and may use drugs. These realities are not exclusive to women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people – but also include men – who may also be connected to MMIWG2S+ through their families and communities. Men must be included in the work to address MMIWG2S+ – including through increasing access to housing, mental health supports, and single parent supports – with the overarching goal of breaking all cycles of violence.

There has been some recognition of the importance of a broader approach through the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program: eligibility was not limited to those who were immediate descendants – but rather – extended to include broader relations. This is a best kept secret: programs and services for healing must be broadened, and extended to families and communities.

The gaps identified with Manitoba’s health care system emphasize the importance of Indigenous-led organizations having the funding and capacity that they need to expand their services. Unstable funding causes organizations to provide inconsistent services, which often get terminated due to changes in funding. There is also high turnover in staff due to job instability and constant financial cuts. Greater stability is required to allow these organizations to provide quality services that meet the needs of urban Indigenous peoples. Indigenous-led organizations are well equipped to provide culturally safe, equitable, trauma-informed care.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

21. Reform healthcare to ensure that all Indigenous peoples are able to receive quality and appropriate care which requires care to not be denied due to rigid requirements, a comprehensive continuum of care, and safe discharge plans;

22. Commit to ensuring that Indigenous peoples have safe and inclusive experiences when accessing healthcare services by creating ongoing training and competency requirements (including culturally safe service delivery) for all healthcare providers on a regular basis;

23. Transfer strategic investments into Indigenous-led and community-based health organizations to improve access and experiences in healthcare;

24. Address the housing and services gaps for those stuck in between independent living and personal care homes including through input from Indigenous peoples on the design of additional housing options like 24 hour care for individuals under 65;

25. Re-design a model of care catered for individuals with FASD, in partnership with Indigenous-led organizations and Indigenous families;

26. Invest in the development of comprehensive housing and drug treatment services;

27. Re-design shelters to ensure that they are culturally and physically accessible and safe for all abilities;

28. Provide resourced and comprehensive transition planning and services for youth who are aging out of care, including by increasing the availability of group homes;

29. Co-develop toolkits and competency requirements for all outreach workers in Winnipeg, and make investments to increase the number of Indigenous advocates, navigators, and outreach workers;

30. Invest in supports for those requiring homecare and other healthcare services before they are seniors;

31. Invest in broader access to culturally competent and trauma-informed therapy, mental health supports, and case management, including automatic eligibility for those experiencing inter-generational trauma and PTSD;

32. Re-instate community representatives, including those from Indigenous led organizations, onto the Advisory Committee of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority; and

33. Design frameworks to eliminate MMIWG2S+ to include family and community members.
CALL 3.2

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

As detailed above, there are tremendous service gaps in health care for Indigenous peoples. Currently, there are no Indigenous-led 2SLGBTQQIA+ health organizations in Manitoba, despite this demographic having unique needs when accessing healthcare services. Manitoba must invest in Indigenous-led organizations so that they can expand their services to fill these gaps, support 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and better assist persons with disabilities. Indigenous-led agencies want to build capacity to form the programming, services, and organizations required to effectively serve the health of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+, but require sustained investments to do so.

Albert McLeod is leading the recently launched 2Spirits Building From Within. WIEC recognizes and supports this work, which includes healing programming, which critically nurtures community and belonging.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

34. Invest in the co-development of an Indigenous-led 2SLGBTQQIA+ health organization, which will cater to the unique needs for providing health services to this demographic;

35. Invest in Indigenous-led service organizations to allow them to expand their services to support 2SLGBTQQIA+ people;

36. Invest in Indigenous-led organizations to expand programming and services to promote the health and wellness of Indigenous peoples;

37. Invest in Indigenous-led organizations to provide health care services to Indigenous peoples; and

38. Provide sustainable core funding to Indigenous health organizations to allow for effective program administration, including for the foundational positions required by organizations (including but not limited to program managers, finance, human resources, and support services) and to allow for competitive wages with governmental organizations to assist Indigenous organizations with retaining quality talent.

CALL 3.4

We call upon all governments to ensure that all Indigenous communities receive immediate and necessary resources, including funding and support, for the establishment of sustainable, permanent, no-barrier, preventative, accessible, holistic, wraparound services, including mobile trauma and addictions recovery teams. We further direct that trauma and addictions treatment programs be paired with other essential services such as mental health services and sexual exploitation and trafficking services as they relate to each individual case of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
Mental health resources must be specific and unique for Indigenous peoples, with adequate and sustained investments. While the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre currently has mental health workers as part of their team, a specialized team for crisis management is required. This would better allow assistance to be provided to individuals, including for mental health crises and suicide ideation. Greater investments are required to allow service agencies to provide wraparound services – which are currently not possible due to the high demand for mental health services which are unable to be filled. A transition from case management to a team approach is needed. Moreover, service organizations based in Winnipeg often provide services beyond city limits to other Indigenous peoples in Manitoba. The wide reach of services must be recognized, and appropriately invested in.

Additional resources are also required to provide Indigenous peoples with physicians who specialize in 2SLGBTQIA+ health – as adequate services in this area are not currently available.

The current health care model of fee for service does not foster positive health experiences and outcomes for Indigenous peoples. These services are often provided in a rushed manner, where relationships are unable to be formed, and support is not effectively offered. Greater investments are required to allow doctors to take the time needed with those who come through the door, where relationships can be built, and then health care needs can be addressed.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

39. Provide sustained investments for the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg to internally house mental health services (including but not limited to a clinical psychologist, crisis support worker, marriage and family counsellor, and Elder);

40. Resource health providers specializing in 2SLGBTQIA+ health to provide services to Indigenous peoples;

41. Reform the model of health care through investments that allow physicians to take the time needed to build relationships and trust prior to providing health care services; and

42. Invest in accessible wraparound services for Indigenous peoples (including but not limited to mental health, child welfare, housing, spirituality, etc.), with 24/7 availability.
E. HUMAN SECURITY

CALL 4.2

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

Significant investments into social services are needed. Presently, there are a number of services that are not offered by Indigenous-led agencies – not because there is a lack of need, but rather, because there are funding constraints. Service organizations also require physical space and land to develop and grow. Despite Winnipeg’s high population of Indigenous peoples, service organizations do not have the resources and infrastructure required to serve the needs of urban Indigenous peoples.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

43. Fund the design and delivery of programs and services in recognition of the time required to build relationships, and on conclusion, options for subsequent programs and services for participants to allow them to be able to reach a point where they do not require supports;

44. Fund programming expansion for mobile teams to allow organizations to meet people where they are at, instead of requiring individuals to go to an organization;

45. Fund safe injection sites led and administered by Indigenous organizations;

46. Fund drug use treatment programs that are administered by Indigenous-led organizations;

47. Fund specific programming to meet the social and economic needs of men; and

48. Return Indigenous lands to Indigenous-led organizations, to allow them to provide adequate programs and services to Indigenous peoples.

CALL 4.3

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

Winnipeg’s sex industry is particularly harmful for Indigenous people. Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are disproportionately represented in the sex industry, which is the result of many root causes directly linked to colonization, racism, sexism, and classism.

Addressing the sex industry necessitates starting with the cause, and not the symptom. WIEC applauds Manitoba’s Tracia’s Trust – which is the provincial strategy to end sexual exploitation and sex trafficking in Manitoba, and invests $11 million annually to support “prevention, intervention, legislation, coordination, research and evaluation.” However, Indigenous-led organizations again do not receive equitable funding to deliver services and programming related to the sex industry, despite Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ being the primary demographic involved in the sex industry in Manitoba. Funding must be re-allocated to Indigenous-led organizations, so that they are equipped with the resources required to deliver culturally safe, trauma-informed, and Indigenous-specific programming.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+

49. Reform funding allocations under Manitoba’s Tracie’s Trust to provide equitable funding to Indigenous-led organizations, that reflects the disproportionate engagement with the sex industry among Indigenous peoples;

50. Invest in Indigenous-led programs and services for those who are in sex industry and want to leave; and

51. Invest in health and safety tools such as access to cell phones for vulnerable persons.

CALL 8.1

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

Awareness and education are required to end sexual exploitation and human trafficking. More must be done in this area to promote proactive prevention.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to:

52. Invest in and co-develop educational programming across the transportation and hospitality industry in Manitoba to identify and prevent sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

CALL 4.5

We call upon all governments to establish a guaranteed annual livable income for all Canadians, including Indigenous Peoples, to meet all their social and economic needs. This income must take into account diverse needs, realities, and geographic locations.
Indigenous peoples have much lower incomes on average than non-Indigenous people – which is a critical factor in experiences of discrimination and violence. Key to addressing this reality is Guaranteed Livable Income (“GLI”). Income is a tremendous barrier to the recognition of social and economic rights for urban Indigenous peoples, and a lack of income can often fuel violence towards Indigenous people. The guaranteed income regimes deployed during the COVID-19 pandemic have proved that GLI is a realistic and empowering tool to keeping people out of poverty.

Poverty traps people in situations of physical, spiritual and emotional violence. Poverty intersects with health, education, child welfare, and justice – all of which are systems that serve to dismantle families. **Investments must be made to keep families together.** People who rely on Employment and Income Assistance and provincial disability financial support are also well below the poverty line. Those who are able to get paid work have 70 percent of their earnings clawed back after the first $200, and additional benefits such as prescription drugs and dental benefits disappear as soon as they start working. Other income, such as child support, reduces the benefit on a dollar for dollar basis. This makes it difficult to secure stability, access training, and obtain employment that would lead to financial independence. A GLI removes these barriers to independence and allows people to identify and address their own needs.

A full GLI may be challenging for Manitoba to implement without federal support, but the province does have the fiscal capacity to take invaluable steps towards a GLI. Make Poverty History Manitoba (MPHM) has called on Manitoba to implement a Livable Basic Needs Benefit. This benefit would replace the non-rent portion of EIA, become available to all low-income Manitobans including low-wage workers, and phased out gradually as earnings increase so that those who are able to work are not penalized for doing so. The Livable Basic Needs Benefit would be set at a livable level and would not replace Rent Assist or other EIA benefits such as disability or employment training supports. Income assistance must be provided without bureaucracy holding back basic needs when urban Indigenous families need it the most.

The link between poverty and health cannot be overlooked. Those in neighbourhoods experiencing high rates of poverty in Winnipeg die 18 years earlier than those with the highest income levels. Noralou Roos reports that the highest and lowest income areas share the same main causes of death. The Winnipeg inner core has the highest mortality rates in the province, despite having the highest physician and specialist contact rate. Despite high health expenditures – good health is not the outcome – as poor health indicators are a reflection of the consequences of lacking basic income and impacts of colonization. Guaranteed livable income nourishes the systemic roots of health, wellness, inclusion, and child and family development.

WIEC applauds the approach adopted by Canada’s Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Adam Vaughan, who has bundled up all eligibility programs to allow people to automatically have the opportunity to access services, rather than requiring an application. This is a critical example of facilitating low-barrier access to services, as people who are experiencing homelessness may not have access to the technology or transportation required to gain access to services. Manitoba should adopt a similar approach.

Investing in guaranteed income and reducing barriers to accessing other governmental financial supports will produce beneficial impacts for the other major areas identified in this report – most critically, it will help to secure housing for many Indigenous peoples. It will also serve as a means to proactively prevent experiences of poverty and insecure housing, which can create heightened risks of violence for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

Systemic reforms are required to ensure that Indigenous peoples are automatically eligible for financial supports. Manitoba should adopt a no- to low-barrier approach akin to the automatic eligibility of Old Age Security at age 65, where applicants are not subjected to an invasive application process. The model for Old Age Security must be transferred to other financial assistance programs, including those offered by Manitoba. This approach will yield tremendous benefits in advancing the human security of all Indigenous peoples.
Similarly, Employment and Income Assistance for persons with disabilities must also become low barrier. Many Indigenous peoples struggle with trauma and mental health, and should be automatically eligible for provincial disability benefits. WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

53. Invest in the expansion of debt-resolution programming for those escaping poverty;

54. Join with other provinces, municipalities, civil society groups and a core group of Canadian Senators to call on the federal government to implement a Guaranteed Livable Income for all Canadians, including the transition of CERB into GLI;

55. Partner with Canada to provide GLI to everyone through a framework of comprehensive social safety which serves to keep people safe (this includes but is not limited to access to education, well-paying jobs, and other forces to bring people out of poverty and reduce vulnerability);

56. Include Indigenous-led organizations in the crafting of the GLI framework; and

57. Reduce barriers for Indigenous peoples to access financial assistance programs and disability benefits.

F. JUSTICE

CALL 5.4

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

WIEC emphasizes the importance of creating safer experiences for individuals involved with the justice system, especially those who have experienced violence. Currently, the justice system is unfamiliar to many Indigenous peoples. Court buildings are often intimidating, and security processes (including metal detectors and pat downs) are often conducted in an insensitive way that can trigger trauma.

WIEC envisions new possibilities for justice systems to be culturally safe and trauma-informed. This includes through designated areas in court buildings, court staff to assist Indigenous peoples, and through culturally safe program delivery.

Technology allows those involved with the court process to join proceedings virtually. Offering the option of virtual participation can foster safety among those who have experienced or are at risk of violence.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

58. Reform security measures in court buildings to be delivered in a culturally safe and trauma-informed manner;

59. Hire court staff to assist Indigenous peoples through legal processes; and

60. Offer witnesses the option to join proceedings virtually to promote safety and security of those who have experienced, or are at risk of violence.

**CALL 5.5**

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

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

ii. There must be civilian oversight bodies with jurisdiction to audit Indigenous police services and to investigate claims of police misconduct, including incidents of rape and other sexual assaults, within those services. These oversight bodies must report publicly at least annually.
While Indigenous policing exists in some First Nations, WIEC calls Manitoba to transfer this call to Winnipeg’s urban setting. The current Indigenous Police Division of the Winnipeg Police Service is a very small team, who focus on promoting community-building with Indigenous peoples. Instead, a larger culturally safe and trauma-informed police team should form and assist urban Indigenous peoples who encounter police or require assistance.

WIEC envisions a process of co-development with the Winnipeg Police Services and violence prevention experts, to craft a strategy for Indigenous policing that goes beyond building relationships with Indigenous peoples. An effective strategy must go further and create a culturally safe model of policing. WIEC emphasizes that the Winnipeg Police Service cannot undergo this work independently, and must partner with WIEC to improve policing in Winnipeg for urban Indigenous people.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

**CALL 5.6**

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

i. Guaranteed access to financial support and meaningful and appropriate trauma care must be provided for victims of crime and traumatic incidents, regardless of whether they report directly to the police, if the perpetrator is charged, or if there is a conviction.

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

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

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

v. Victim services must be independent from prosecution services and police services.
WIEC urges Manitoba to reform victim support services, proposing that these services be provided by Indigenous-led organizations rather than the province. Currently, access to these services require Indigenous peoples to attend unfamiliar government office buildings strictly during business hours, where culturally safe services are unavailable.

Strategic investments can build the capacity of Indigenous-led organizations to provide Indigenous peers to support victims/Survivors of crime. Indigenous-led organizations can offer additional cultural services and programs under the same roof, and allow victims/Survivors of crime to engage in cultural practices while obtaining these services (such as smudging).

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

62. Transfer victim/survivor support services to Indigenous-led organizations; and

63. Provide these organizations with the resources required to sustain these services.

CALL 9.1

We call upon all police services and justice system actors to acknowledge that the historical and current relationship between Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people and the justice system has been largely defined by colonialism, racism, bias, discrimination, and fundamental cultural and societal differences. We further call upon all police services and justice system actors to acknowledge that, going forward, this relationship must be based on respect and understanding, and must be led by, and in partnerships with, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.
CALL 5.7

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

i. Observe and oversee investigations in relation to police negligence or misconduct, including but not limited to rape and other sexual offences.

ii. Observe and oversee investigations of cases involving Indigenous Peoples.

iii. Publicly report on police progress in addressing findings and recommendations at least annually.

WIEC emphasizes the importance of these two Calls, as a substantive and systemic review of policing is overdue. Placing an oversight body over an existing system will not transform the inadequate outcomes of policing in Winnipeg. Instead, policing must undergo a decolonization process and review, to address its oppressive structure and processes which continue to marginalize urban Indigenous peoples in Winnipeg.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

64. Facilitate a partnership between the Winnipeg Police Service and WIEC to undertake a systemic review of policing in the city, to transform police structures and practices to effectively work for and serve urban Indigenous peoples.

CALL 5.9

We call upon all governments to ensure that protection orders are available, accessible, promptly issued, and effectively serviced and resourced to protect the safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
WIEC does not support the emergency protection order process that is currently in place for Survivors fleeing violence. Protection orders are difficult to secure and there are barriers to accessing the agencies that deliver them. Indigenous peoples often do not feel comfortable or safe accessing these services.

WIEC advances that protection orders can be more effectively provided through an accessible process if these services were instead housed and delivered by Indigenous-led organizations. This will allow Indigenous peoples to access information and services about these orders in a safe and familiar environment.

**WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:**

65. Expand training for those involved with issuing protection orders, and allow this training to be completed by employees of Indigenous-led organizations; and

66. Provide Indigenous-led organizations with funding and authority to deliver protection order services and to issue protection orders.

**CALL 5.11**

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

Urban Indigenous peoples involved in the correctional system consistently express the desire to access Indigenous forms of justice, and culturally appropriate programming while incarcerated.

**WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:**

67. Expand access to support services in correctional settings for people who use drugs, including cultural-based treatments;

68. Partner with Indigenous service providers to offer greater access to cultural and spiritual programming in correctional settings; and

69. Invest in restorative justice models as an alternative forum for dispute resolution and sentencing.
CALL 5.13

We call upon all provincial and territorial governments to expand and adequately resource legal aid programs in order to ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have access to justice and meaningful participation in the justice system. Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people must have guaranteed access to legal services in order to defend and assert their human rights and Indigenous rights.

Manitoba is currently undergoing changes to the legal aid system. WIEC must be included in this process, which has not adequately included Indigenous peoples and organizations. WIEC has serious concerns about the proposed changes, which have been echoed by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. WIEC is extremely concerned that Manitoba’s current work to reform the legal aid system will result in a two-tier system, such that individuals will only have access to legal services where they have the financial means – and those who do not will be forced to wait for legal services, should they become available. The proposed revisions to legal aid services further ingrain systemic barriers to legal services for urban Indigenous peoples living in poverty. Many do not have computers, do not understand the legal process, and are unable to pay for various steps such as filing fees.

WIEC emphasizes the importance of being included in the legal aid system revisions, in order to ensure that financial means are not a barrier to Indigenous peoples accessing legal services. Indigenous peoples must be provided with the resources needed to access legal services. WIEC must be part of these critical changes to the legal aid system, to ensure that Indigenous peoples are not left behind.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

70. Include WIEC in the revisions underway to the province’s legal aid system; and

71. Invest in legal aid to provide culturally safe and financially accessible services to Indigenous peoples.
G. EDUCATION

CALL 11.1

We call upon all elementary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions and education authorities to educate and provide awareness to the public about missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and about the issues and root causes of violence they experience. All curriculum development and programming should be done in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, especially Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Such education and awareness must include historical and current truths about the genocide against Indigenous Peoples through state laws, policies, and colonial practices. It should include, but not be limited to, teaching Indigenous history, law, and practices from Indigenous perspectives and the use of Their Voices Will Guide Us with children and youth.
CALL 11.2

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

Education offers significant opportunities. WIEC renews its findings from our State of Equity in Education Report, which has previously been delivered to Manitoba.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

72. Invest in and co-develop educational curriculum and programming to raise awareness among students and the general population about violence against Indigenous peoples;

73. Co-develop educational curriculum to equip students with awareness and understanding of exploitation, and ways to secure help if they are at risk; and

74. Invest in recreational programming and services for Indigenous children.

WIEC further calls the Government of Manitoba to address the Calls to Action identified by their State of Equity in Education Report:

75. Address the under-representation of Indigenous peoples on school boards through allocating designated seats for Indigenous peoples on all governance structures (e.g. elected boards of trustees, appointed advisory councils, etc.) that are proportionate to the population of Indigenous students being served. Decision making based on consensus rather than majority rule should also be mandated to ensure the inclusion of all voices;

76. Address the shortage of Indigenous teachers in Winnipeg through creating targets and monitor representation through the development of an employment equity policy for all Winnipeg school divisions;

77. Develop an employment equity policy and program for all Winnipeg school divisions by modelling the Employment Equity Toolkit for Recruiting and Retaining Educators of Aboriginal Ancestry in British Columbia (2007), which was developed by the Education Partners of British Columbia;
78. Require all Winnipeg school divisions to publically release employment equity reports annually;

79. Review all human resources policies and practices within Winnipeg school divisions to identify barriers and promising practices for the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Indigenous teachers;

80. Create an employment equity policy which establishes targets for Indigenous teachers that are proportionate to the student population in the school division, to allow the number of Indigenous teachers in schools to better reflect the population of students being served;

81. Work with the faculties of education to set equity enrollment targets for Indigenous students similar to the Diversity Admissions Policy established by the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. An annual Indigenous student equity enrollment and graduation report should be released publicly in order to promote transparency and accountability;

82. Work with the Universities of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Saint-Boniface and Brandon to disaggregate and breakdown of employment equity data for each university, and develop annual reports that include: (1) targets for Indigenous faculty and staff; (2) self-identification form completion rates; (3) identification of employed faculty and staff by job categories, including the number of self-identified Indigenous peoples; (4) retention rates of Indigenous faculty and staff; and (5) promotion of Indigenous faculty and staff. This data should be publically released.

83. Publish data through the Department of Education of the Government of Manitoba every three years on the self-identification of students and teachers by school divisions; and
IV. WIEC’S ACTION PLAN: ACTUALIZING THE CALLS FOR JUSTICE THROUGH CO-DEVELOPMENT AND CO-MANAGEMENT

84. Prioritize the inclusion of Indigenous representation and voices at decision-making tables in order to de-colonize initiatives which address the shortage of Indigenous teachers in the City of Winnipeg. Establish a More Indigenous Teachers Initiative in partnership with Indigenous organizations, the Manitoba School Boards Association, the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, the Manitoba Teachers Society, the Deans of the Faculties of Education, which serves to:

- identify the barriers faced by Indigenous peoples to become teachers;
- develop recruitment strategies to increase the pool of Indigenous peoples to become teachers;
- develop and implement teacher education programs for Indigenous peoples that address their needs and aspirations, including: (1) a Bachelor of Education – Indigenous Knowledge program governed by Indigenous peoples that includes a bursary program to address poverty-related barriers and considers the learning time needed to become a teacher; (2) Indigenous educational assistant teacher education laddering programs; (3) Indigenous high school student teacher education stepping-stone initiatives; (4) Indigenous language teachers transition programs; (5) Indigenous teacher education programs that specialize in working with adult learners; (6) federal funding support for student living allowances for Indigenous teacher education programs; (7) federal funding for program and capital infrastructure development requirements for Indigenous teacher education programs, and; (8) continued work on the development of Indigenous curriculum, lesson plans and teaching tools that can be pragmatically implemented in the classroom;
- develop and implement retention and promotion initiatives within school divisions for Indigenous teachers and staff; and
- develop a 5-year action plan with clear benchmarks and timelines, including annual update reports that would be released publicly to promote transparency and accountability.

H. CHILD WELFARE

WIEC endorses the Report of the Legislative Review Committee, “Transforming Child Welfare Legislation in Manitoba: Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth”. The report emphasizes the importance of shifting responsibility and authority over child welfare to Indigenous organizations. The Government of Manitoba has accepted these recommendations.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+

85. Partner with Indigenous organizations to ensure that each recommendation of the Transforming Child Welfare Legislation in Manitoba: Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth report is actualized. Work in this area must always be focused on keeping families and communities together.
CALL 12.2

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

Indigenous organizations must have control over the design and delivery of the child welfare system in order for it to be effective for Indigenous families. Indigenous organizations are uniquely placed to do this work, and carry a deep understanding of the various distinctions-based needs between and among Indigenous families, which further shaped by the urban setting.

While Canada’s Bill C-92: An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, youth and families is a positive development, WIEC emphasizes that the province continues to play a critical role in child welfare services – including as it relates to capacity building and funding. The Government of Manitoba must work with Indigenous-led organizations to ensure that services for urban Indigenous children are not overlooked. For example, a First Nations mother may have a Métis child, which may limit access to programs and services through silo programs based on distinct identities. Laws, processes, and services must be harmonized to ensure that no child is left behind.

Moreover, reunification of families must be prioritized. The North Star Lodge of the Indigenous Women’s Healing Centre in Winnipeg invites Indigenous women to voluntarily join. Women agree to live in the centre for one year, and commit to intensive counselling and programs. This type of residential programming allows women to join when they are ready, and helps to address a wide range of challenges (e.g. poverty, homelessness, drug use, and reunification with children). However, programs of this nature are limited, and presently have long wait lists (which are further exacerbated by space limitations to comply with COVID-19 public health requirements). Greater investments would allow more women to be able to access these types of programs, which promote healing and empowerment, and help keep families together.
WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

**CALL 12.5**

We call upon all levels of government for financial supports and resources to be provided so that family or community members of children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are capable of caring for the children left behind. Further, all governments must ensure the availability and accessibility of specialized care, such as grief, loss, trauma, and other required services, for children left behind who are in care due to the murder or disappearance of their caregiver.

Families and communities are losing multiple generations to violence. Children are left without their loved ones. Care and support for children of MMIWG2S+ cannot be overlooked.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

89. Invest in financial supports for children of MMIWG2S+ to be able to remain with their families and communities.
CALL 12.9

We call for the establishment of a Child and Youth Advocate in each jurisdiction with a specialized unit with the mandate of Indigenous children and youth. These units must be established within a period of one year of this report. We call upon the federal government to establish a National Child and Youth Commissioner who would also serve as a special measure to strengthen the framework of accountability for the rights of Indigenous children in Canada. This commissioner would act as a national counterpart to the child advocate offices that exist in nearly all provinces and territories.

Manitoba has yet to create a specialized Child and Youth Advocate for Indigenous youth.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

90. Establish a well resourced Child and Youth Advocate specifically for Indigenous children in the province. In the alternative, Manitoba is called to create a specialized jurisdiction for the existing Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth.

CALL 12.11

We call upon all levels of government and child welfare services for a reform of laws and obligations with respect to youth “aging out” of the system, including ensuring a complete network of support from childhood into adulthood, based on capacity and needs, which includes opportunities for education, housing, and related supports. This includes the provision of free post-secondary education for all children in care in Canada.
The needs and realities of children seldom transform on the passing of a birthday – but this does not hold true for children in care. WIEC condemns the current model where children age out of care. Aging out of care creates multiple risks of sexual exploitation, gang recruitment, and violence. The majority of homeless youth in Winnipeg have aged out of care.

Child welfare often has intergenerational impact on families. WIEC emphasizes the importance of program development to ensure that an age cut off does not cause homelessness among youth, nor deprive them of access to necessary supports and services.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

91. Co-develop a model that supports children currently aging out of care to have access to housing, supports, and services. This includes the creation of programs and supports specific to men.

CALL 12.4

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

To advance this Call for Justice, Calls 4.1 and 4.5 on low barrier housing and GLI must be invested in, as discussed above.

WIEC further calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

92. Undertake sustained investments in alleviating poverty, housing insecurity, and homelessness; and

93. Commit to keep families together by prohibiting the apprehension of children based on poverty, and instead, work with families experiencing poverty to provide assistance.
I. CORRECTIONS

CALL 14.1

We call upon Correctional Service Canada to take urgent action to establish facilities described under sections 81 and 84 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have options for decarceration. Such facilities must be strategically located to allow for localized placements and mother-and-child programming.

CALL 14.6

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

Mental health impacts are a product of incarceration. A more holistic model of support, healing, and community is needed. Individuals need to feel that someone is there to support them, and have a sense of belonging. This goes beyond western notions of mental health services, and must extend to Indigenous forms of support.

Indigenous women are the highest proportion of those in jail. In Manitoba, there is nowhere for federally sentenced women to go. As a result, they are all forced to leave their home province, and serve their sentence elsewhere. This creates limited access to family visits and supports.

While greater programming exists in federal correctional facilities, such programming is gravely deficient in provincial correctional facilities. In Manitoba, the Women’s Correctional Centre for those serving sentences under two years is extremely over-crowded and lacks substantive programming for inmates to set goals and work towards them. Under-staffing also leaves women without support. Moreover, there is only one halfway house for women in Winnipeg. The lack of spaces in halfway houses is a factor in the over-crowding of jails, as many are unable to be released into the community.
There are only two federal healing lodges for women in Canada, which are not run by the government-administered Correctional Services of Canada. One of these lodges is Eagle Women’s Lodge, which is located in Winnipeg. The limited availability of healing lodges is a huge deficiency given the representation of Indigenous peoples in corrections. Healing lodges – not jails – should be expanded, invested in, and prioritized. These healing lodges should be run by Indigenous peoples and organizations. Moreover, alternatives to incarceration must be envisioned even for those who are classified as serial offenders.

There is an intersection between the cycle of violence and the over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous women have long shared that their path to prison stems from self-defence in incidents of domestic violence. Partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations must be struck to identify ways to address this reality, including re-designing justice processes to not continue to fuel the over-representation of Indigenous women in prison from instances of domestic violence. Women should not be thrown in jail for defending themselves, and instead, a more proactive response to this issue must be deployed.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

94. Develop and fund Indigenous-led halfway house spaces and community housing programs as alternatives to jail;

95. Partner with Indigenous organizations to develop diversions to incarceration, including for: (1) all degrees of offenders; and (2) addressing the over-incarceration of Indigenous women in prison due to self-defence in instances of domestic violence;

96. Invest in and expand long-term residential programming focused on healing and empowerment, to create programming capacity that reflects the high demands for these programs.

97. Partner with Indigenous-led organizations to adopt a holistic model of support, healing, and community for those at risk of, leaving, or are incarcerated. This includes providing Indigenous forms of support, such as aunties, kokums, and Elders; and

98. Invest in and expand healing lodges for Indigenous offenders, including for provincial offences. These healing lodges should be operated and managed by Indigenous-led organizations, rather than government entities. Substantial investments in this area are required to meet the current demand, and potential of such programs to transform Indigenous families and communities.
J. 2SLGBTQQIA+ PEOPLE

CALL 18.1

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

CALL 18.5

We call upon all governments and service providers to ensure that all programs and services have 2SLGBTQQIA+ front-line staff and management, that 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are provided with culturally specific support services, and that programs and spaces are co-designed to meet the needs of 2SLGBTQQIA+ clients in their communities.
Action is required in response to the Calls for Justice on 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and must be lead by members of this community. 2SLGBTQQIA+ people share experiences of high rates of violence – often stemming from harmful stereotypes about pronouns, gender binaries, gender identity, and gender expression. All aspects of services must be assessed and re-designed to ensure that 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are included every step of the way. This includes accessible washrooms, educational curriculum, housing, and social services.

Funding allocation also harms 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations and services. Presently, non-Indigenous organizations receive funding to deliver Indigenous programs that are under-subscribed to – primarily because of non-Indigenous leadership and location. These investments would be best served through Indigenous organizations which can provide programming that is connected to community.

Greater investments are required to ensure that 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have access to ceremony, both within and outside of city limits. Funding must also be made available for this demographic to have accessible physical re-construction surgery, where desired.

WIEC calls the Government of Manitoba to adopt the following actions to address the urban realities of MMIWG2S+:

99. Require 2SLGBTQQIA+ inclusion in all spaces (including infrastructure, education, social services);

100. Co-develop educational curriculum with 2SLGBTQQIA+ to create content that serves to address the challenges faced by this community and provides supports;

101. Invest in accessible housing programs which provide designated spaces and units for 2SLGBTQQIA+;

102. Allocate funding to Indigenous-led organizations to administer 2SLGBTQQIA+ programming, including a drop-in centre for community members;

103. Invest in cultural and spiritual programming designed and delivered by 2SLGBTQQIA+ people; and

104. Invest in resources for community members to have access to physical reconstruction surgery where desired.
WIEC’S STRATEGY: ACTIONS FOR ADVANCING THE CALLS FOR JUSTICE TO ADDRESS THE URBAN REALITIES OF MMIWG2S+
I. GROUND ALL WORK THROUGH THE PILLARS OF WIEC’S ACTION PLAN

1. Recognize and Center the Voices of MMIWG2S+ Families
   • Involve MMIWG2S+ families at every stage of this work and follow their leadership.
   • Fund the participation of MMIWG2S+ families in all work to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

2. Form a Provincial Cabinet Committee on MMIWG2S+
   • Create a dedicated committee of all relevant Cabinet Ministers with a mandate of addressing violence and investing in transformative solutions to ensure that work to address the MMIWG2S+ crisis is continually prioritized.

3. Recognize and Address Systemic Racism Towards Indigenous Peoples
   • Deploy reviews, reforms, and training for all institutional actors that serve urban Indigenous peoples.
   • Adopt WIEC’s definition of Indigenous-led, which requires Indigenous peoples to compose a minimum of 75 percent of staff within an organization.

4. Adopt a Rights-Based Framework
   • Recognize the inherent, constitutional, and human rights of Indigenous peoples and respect these rights in all work with urban Indigenous peoples.
   • Listen to the priorities identified by urban Indigenous peoples and work with Indigenous-led organizations to craft meaningful responses to the issues challenging urban Indigenous peoples.

5. Shift Resources to Indigenous-led Organizations
   • Prioritize investments into Indigenous-led organizations.
   • Allocate funding to Indigenous-led organizations based on the proportion of Indigenous peoples requiring service.
   • Invest in the formation of tailored to service Indigenous-led organizations where they do not yet exist.
   • Collect data on funding allocation, programs and services, and outcomes to track investments and results.
   • Monitor the progress of actions identified by this report.

6. Provide Long-Term Investments into Indigenous-led Organizations
   • Commit to long-term sustainable funding for Indigenous-led organizations to deliver transformative programming to urban Indigenous peoples.

7. Establish a Centre for Oversight and Research
   • Fund an independent centre to provide oversight of the implementation of each Call For Justice and collect data on the experiences of violence of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
II. ACTUALIZE THE CALLS FOR JUSTICE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS OF CO-DEVELOPMENT AND CO-MANAGEMENT

All of the action identified in this report and connected to addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis must be developed and managed in partnership with Indigenous-led organizations.

A. Social and Economic Rights

1. Support and invest in Indigenous-led organizations to advance the social and economic realities of Indigenous peoples.
2. Invest in the creation of Indigenous-led transitional housing to provide housing for those in need.
3. Expedite the building of housing and focus investments on building capital and essential features of homes.
4. Commit to working with the Government of Canada and the City of Winnipeg to uniformly address the housing crisis of urban Indigenous peoples through addressing the systemic barriers to housing.
5. Invest in Indigenous-led programming to support newly housed individuals with life skills.
6. Invest in accessible and long-term housing for urban Indigenous peoples as follows: at least 1,340 new units of housing are needed over the next five years to address homelessness in Winnipeg.
7. Allocate at least 70 percent of new housing to be owned and operated by Indigenous agencies, to reflect the proportion of Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness (equivalent to 938 new units of Indigenous-led housing that can be created as an Indigenous-based community).

B. Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Governmental Obligations

8. Undertake strategic investments into Indigenous-led services.
9. Co-develop a process with WIEC on the determination and distribution of funding for service delivery in the province.
10. Through the co-developed process, publish an annual report card detailing the distribution of funding: into programs, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, and allocated towards actions to realize the Calls For Justice.
11. Fund and co-develop healing programs for families and communities, catered to all age demographics.
12. Fund and co-develop service teams to provide support to MMIWG2S+ families whose loved ones are missing or murdered – including at the first instance of the family gaining knowledge of their disappearance or death. These supports must be widely available 24/7, including for those whose loved one’s cause of death was undetermined. Families must be contacted and given supports for trauma, culture, and spirituality by properly funded Indigenous organizations.
14. Invest in anti-violence programs like Ma Mawi’s Spirit of Peace program, that are Indigenous-led and grounded in Indigenous ways.
15. Embrace Indigenous leadership, input, and control over service delivery to Indigenous peoples.
16. Require all homeless shelters in Winnipeg to provide Indigenous-specific programming and services. In the alternative, funding and service delivery for Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness should be transferred to Indigenous-led organizations.

17. Address jurisdictional gaps – namely through ensuring the inclusion of urban-Indigenous peoples and organizations in decision-making and investments, to ensure that urban Indigenous peoples do not continue to be failed by the institutions that should be meeting their needs.

C. Culture

18. Provide sustained, long-term investments into Indigenous-led organizations to provide cultural programming to the urban Indigenous community. Strategic investments must be shifted from government-run institutions to Indigenous-led organizations.

19. Co-develop with WIEC a Provincial Anti-Racism, Anti-Sexism, and Anti-Homophobia Action Plan to combat racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia in the province.

20. Co-create and sustainably fund education and training for all service providers in the province (including but not limited to police, health education, justice and child welfare authorities).

D. Health

21. Reform healthcare to ensure that all Indigenous peoples are able to receive quality and appropriate care which requires care to not be denied due to rigid requirements, a comprehensive continuum of care, and safe discharge plans.

22. Commit to ensuring that Indigenous peoples have safe and inclusive experiences when accessing healthcare services by creating ongoing training and competency requirements (including culturally safe service delivery) for all healthcare providers on a regular basis.

23. Transfer strategic investments into Indigenous-led and community-based health organizations to improve access and experiences in healthcare.

24. Address the housing and services gaps for those stuck in between independent living and personal care homes including through input from Indigenous peoples on the design of additional housing options like 24 hour care for individuals under 65.

25. Re-design a model of care catered for individuals with FASD, in partnership with Indigenous-led organizations and Indigenous families.

26. Invest in the development of comprehensive housing and drug treatment services.

27. Re-design shelters to ensure that they are culturally and physically accessible and safe for all abilities.

28. Provide resourced and comprehensive transition planning and services for youth who are aging out of care, including by increasing the availability of group homes.

29. Co-develop toolkits and competency requirements for all outreach workers in Winnipeg, and make investments to increase the number of Indigenous advocates, navigators, and outreach workers.

30. Invest in supports for those requiring homecare and other healthcare services before they are seniors.

31. Invest in broader access to culturally competent and trauma-informed therapy, mental health supports, and case management, including automatic eligibility for those experiencing inter-generational trauma and PTSD.

32. Re-instate community representatives, including those from Indigenous led-organizations, onto the Advisory Committee of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.
33. Design frameworks to eliminate MMIWG2S+ to include family and community members.

34. Invest in the co-development of an Indigenous-led 2SLGBTQQIA+ health organization, which will cater to the unique needs for providing health services to this demographic.

35. Invest in Indigenous-led service organizations to allow them to expand their services to support 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

36. Invest in Indigenous-led organizations to expand programming and services to promote the health and wellness of Indigenous peoples.

37. Invest in Indigenous-led organizations to provide health care services to Indigenous peoples.

38. Provide sustainable core funding to Indigenous health organizations to allow for effective program administration, including for the foundational positions required by organizations (including but not limited to program managers, finance, human resources, and support services) and to allow for competitive wages with governmental organizations to assist Indigenous organizations with retaining quality talent.

39. Provide sustained investments for the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg to internally house mental health services (including but not limited to a clinical psychologist, crisis support worker, marriage and family counsellor, and Elder).

40. Resource health providers specializing in 2SLGBTQQIA+ health to provide services to Indigenous peoples.

41. Reform the model of health care through investments that allow physicians to take the time needed to build relationships and trust prior to providing health care services.

42. Invest in accessible wraparound services for Indigenous peoples (including but not limited to mental health, child welfare, housing, spirituality, etc.), with 24/7 availability.

E. Human Security

43. Fund the design and delivery of programs and services in recognition of the time required to build relationships, and on conclusion, options for subsequent programs and services for participants to allow them to be able to reach a point where they do not require supports.

44. Fund programming expansion for mobile teams to allow organizations to meet people where they are at, instead of requiring individuals to go to an organization.

45. Fund safe injection sites led and administered by Indigenous organizations.

46. Fund drug use treatment programs that are administered by Indigenous-led organizations.

47. Fund specific programming to meet the social and economic needs of men.

48. Return Indigenous lands to Indigenous-led organizations, to allow them to provide adequate programs and services to Indigenous peoples.

49. Reform funding allocations under Manitoba’s Tracia’s Trust to provide equitable funding to Indigenous-led organizations, that reflects the disproportionate engagement with the sex industry among Indigenous peoples.

50. Invest in Indigenous-led programs and services for those who are in sex industry and want to leave.

51. Invest in health and safety tools such as access to cell phones for vulnerable persons.

52. Invest in and co-develop educational programming across the transportation and hospitality industry in Manitoba to identify and prevent sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

53. Invest in the expansion of debt-resolution programming for those escaping poverty.

54. Join with other provinces, municipalities, civil society groups and a core group of Canadian
Senators to call on the federal government to implement a Guaranteed Livable Income for all Canadians, including the transition of CERB into GLI.

55. Partner with Canada to provide GLI to everyone through a framework of comprehensive social safety which serves to keep people safe (this includes but is not limited to access to education, well-paying jobs, and other forces to bring people out of poverty and reduce vulnerability).

56. Include Indigenous-led organizations in the crafting of the GLI framework.

57. Reduce barriers for Indigenous peoples to access financial assistance programs and disability benefits.

F. Justice

58. Reform security measures in court buildings to be delivered in a culturally safe and trauma-informed manner.

59. Hire court staff to assist Indigenous peoples through legal processes.

60. Offer witnesses the option to join proceedings virtually to promote safety and security of those who have experienced, or are at risk of violence.

61. Facilitate the co-development of a strategy between the Winnipeg Police Services and WIEC to create a culturally safe model of policing, which includes the use of social workers and bodies of Indigenous-led police.

62. Transfer victim/survivor support services to Indigenous-led organizations.

63. Provide these organizations with the resources required to sustain these services.

64. Facilitate a partnership between the Winnipeg Police Service and WIEC to undertake a systemic review of policing in the city, to transform police structures and practices to effectively work for and serve urban Indigenous peoples.

65. Expand training for those involved with issuing protection orders, and allow this training to be completed by employees of Indigenous-led organizations.

66. Provide Indigenous-led organizations with funding and authority to deliver protection order services and to issue protection orders.

67. Expand access to support services in correctional settings for people who use drugs, including cultural-based treatments.

68. Partner with Indigenous service providers to offer greater access to cultural and spiritual programming in correctional settings.

69. Invest in restorative justice models as an alternative forum for dispute resolution and sentencing.

70. Include WIEC in the revisions underway to the province’s legal aid system.

71. Invest in legal aid to provide culturally safe and financially accessible services to Indigenous peoples.

G. Education

72. Invest in and co-develop educational curriculum and programming to raise awareness among students and the general population about violence against Indigenous peoples.

73. Co-develop educational curriculum to equip students with awareness and understanding of exploitation, and ways to secure help if they are at risk.

74. Invest in recreational programming and services for Indigenous children.

75. Address the under-representation of Indigenous peoples on schoolboards through allocating designated seats for Indigenous peoples on all governance structures (e.g. elected boards of
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76. Address the shortage of Indigenous teachers in Winnipeg through creating targets and monitor representation through the development of an employment equity policy for all Winnipeg school divisions.

77. Develop an employment equity policy and program for all Winnipeg school divisions by modelling the Employment Equity Toolkit for Recruiting and Retaining Educators of Aboriginal Ancestry in British Columbia (2007), which was developed by the Education Partners of British Columbia.

78. Require all Winnipeg school divisions to publically release employment equity reports annually.

79. Review all human resources policies and practices within Winnipeg school divisions to identify barriers and promising practices for the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Indigenous teachers.

80. Create an employment equity policy which establishes targets for Indigenous teachers that are proportionate to the student population in the school division, to allow the number of Indigenous teachers in schools to better reflect the population of students being served.

81. Work with the faculties of education to set equity enrollment targets for Indigenous students similar to the Diversity Admissions Policy established by the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. An annual Indigenous student equity enrollment and graduation report should be released publicly in order to promote transparency and accountability.

82. Work with the Universities of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Saint-Boniface and Brandon to disaggregate and breakdown of employment equity data for each university, and develop annual reports that include: (1) targets for Indigenous faculty and staff; (2) self-identification form completion rates; (3) identification of employed faculty and staff by job categories, including the number of self-identified Indigenous peoples; (4) retention rates of Indigenous faculty and staff; and (5) promotion of Indigenous faculty and staff. This data should be publically released.

83. Publish data through the Department of Education of the Government of Manitoba every three years on the self-identification of students and teachers by school divisions.

84. Prioritize the inclusion of Indigenous representation and voices at decision-making tables in order to de-colonize initiatives which address the shortage of Indigenous teachers in the City of Winnipeg. Establish a More Indigenous Teachers Initiative in partnership with Indigenous organizations, the Manitoba School Boards Association, the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, the Manitoba Teachers Society, the Deans of the Faculties of Education, which serves to:
   • identify the barriers faced by Indigenous peoples to become teachers;
   • develop recruitment strategies to increase the pool of Indigenous peoples to become teachers;
   • develop and implement teacher education programs for Indigenous peoples that address their needs and aspirations, including: (1) a Bachelor of Education – Indigenous Knowledge program governed by Indigenous peoples that includes a bursary program to address poverty-related barriers and considers the learning time needed to become a teacher; (2) Indigenous educational assistant teacher education laddering programs; (3) Indigenous high school student teacher education stepping-stone initiatives; (4) Indigenous language teachers transition programs; (5) Indigenous teacher education programs that specialize in working with adult learners; (6) federal funding support for student living allowances for Indigenous teacher education programs; (7) federal funding for program and capital infrastructure development requirements for Indigenous teacher education programs, and; (8) continued work on the development of Indigenous curriculum, lesson plans and teaching tools that can be pragmatically implemented in the classroom;
• develop and implement retention and promotion initiatives within school divisions for Indigenous teachers and staff; and
• develop a 5-year action plan with clear benchmarks and timelines, including annual update reports that would be released publicly to promote transparency and accountability.

H. Child Welfare

85. Partner with Indigenous organizations to ensure that each recommendation of the Transforming Child Welfare Legislation in Manitoba: Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth report is actualized. Work in this area must always be focused on keeping families and communities together.

86. Entrust Indigenous organizations with the mandate and funding required to design and deliver child welfare services to Indigenous families.

87. Co-develop with Indigenous organizations a provincial strategy to ensure that no child falls between the cracks (through recognizing current jurisdictional issues and limitations), with particular attention to urban Indigenous children.

88. Invest in and expand long-term residential programming focused on healing and empowerment, to create programming capacity that reflects the high demands for these programs.

89. Invest in financial supports for children of MMIWG2S+ to be able to remain with their families and communities.

90. Establish a well resourced Child and Youth Advocate specifically for Indigenous children in the province. In the alternative, Manitoba is called to create a specialized jurisdiction for the existing Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth.

91. Co-develop a model that supports children currently aging out of care to have access to housing, supports, and services. This includes the creation of programs and supports specific to men.

92. Undertake sustained investments in alleviating poverty, housing insecurity, and homelessness.

93. Commit to keep families together by prohibiting the apprehension of children based on poverty, and instead, work with families experiencing poverty to provide assistance.

I. Corrections

94. Develop and fund Indigenous-led halfway house spaces and community housing programs as alternatives to jail.

95. Partner with Indigenous organizations to develop diversions to incarceration, including for: (1) all degrees of offenders; and (2) addressing the over-incarceration of Indigenous women in prison due to self-defence in instances of domestic violence.

96. Invest in and expand long-term residential programming focused on healing and empowerment, to create programming capacity that reflects the high demands for these programs.

97. Partner with Indigenous-led organizations to adopt a holistic model of support, healing, and community for those at risk of, leaving, or are incarcerated. This includes providing Indigenous forms of support, such as aunties, kokums, and Elders.

98. Invest in and expand healing lodges for Indigenous offenders, including for provincial offences. These healing lodges should be operated and managed by Indigenous-led organizations, rather than government entities. Substantial investments in this area are required to meet the current demand, and potential of such programs to transform Indigenous families and communities.
J. 2SLGBTQQIA+ People

99. Require 2SLGBTQQIA+ inclusion in all spaces (including infrastructure, education, social services).

100. Co-develop educational curriculum with 2SLGBTQQIA+ to create content that serves to address the challenges faced by this community and provides supports.

101. Invest in accessible housing programs which provide designated spaces and units for 2SLGBTQQIA+.

102. Allocate funding to Indigenous-led organizations to administer 2SLGBTQQIA+ programming, including a drop-in centre for community members.

103. Invest in cultural and spiritual programming designed and delivered by 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

104. Invest in resources for community members to have access to physical reconstruction surgery where desired.
REFERENCES


5. Little Warriors is a national charitable organization, https://littlewarriors.ca/


