

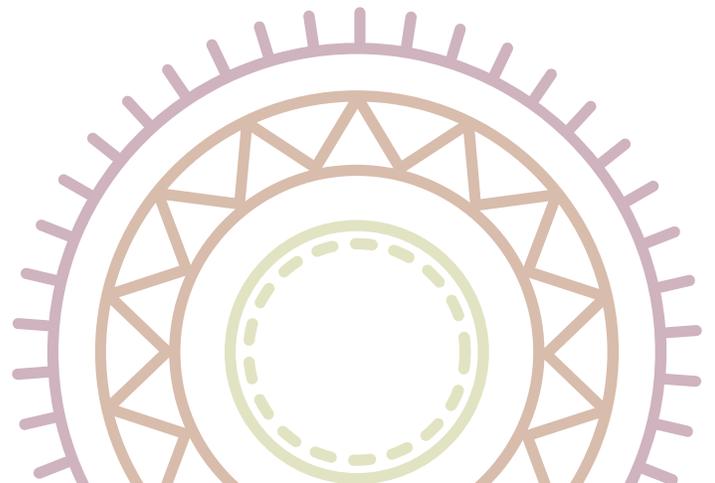
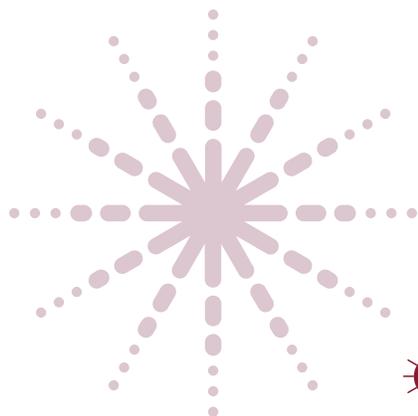


Introductory Statement

Yukon is home to 14 First Nations and 8 language groups with 25% of the territory's population identifying as Indigenous. Far too many families and communities have been significantly impacted by the murder and disappearance of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

This ancient land is home to generations of remarkable leaders, as evidenced by the seminal document "Together Today for our Children Tomorrow" that was delivered to Ottawa in 1973, paving the way to the development and signing of modern treaties between 1993 and 2005 in Yukon by 11 First Nations. Yet we know that traditional territories precede provincial and territorial boundaries, a testament to the need for inter-jurisdictional cooperation, to which Government of Yukon is committed. This commitment extends to all of Canada with Yukon's provision of the Provincial/Territorial co-chair for the National Action Plan Core Working Group since October, 2020.

Yukon is proud of the legacy of strong advocacy and creative partnerships to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the territory. In 2015, shortly after the first Yukon Regional Roundtable on MMIWG2S+, the Yukon Advisory Committee (YAC) was formed to be a catalyst for partnership, to support families and survivors of MMIWG2S+, and to support involvement in the National Inquiry. The YAC represents a unique, decolonized, inter-agency approach, co-chaired by the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate (Government of Yukon), a representative of Yukon First Nations governments, and a representative of Indigenous women's organizations. The YAC also includes representatives of all three Indigenous women's organizations, MMIWG2S+ families and survivors, Two-spirit+ Yukoners, Elders and with Government of Canada and the RCMP "M" Division as ex-officio members.



Current Progress

Upon the release of the Final Report of the National Inquiry on June 3, 2019, the YAC worked together to outline the top priorities for Yukon. This was followed by a comprehensive community engagement tour with First Nations, municipal, and community leadership, and two, COVID-safe, on-the-land gatherings of MMIWG2S+ families and survivors who are at the heart of this work. After adjustment to reflect the feedback of partners and stakeholders, the final version of *Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's MMIWG2S+ Strategy* was released at the Kwanlin Dün Culture Centre in ceremony on December 10, 2020. A declaration to support the Strategy was signed by 52 signatories of the Government of Canada, Government of Yukon, all 14 Yukon First Nation governments, all municipalities, Indigenous women's organizations, the RCMP and other local leaders.

Yukon's MMIWG2S+ Strategy addresses all four key pathways identified by the National Inquiry that continue to enforce the historic and contemporary manifestations of colonialism that lead to additional violence. The Strategy maps 31 action areas under four corresponding paths to dignity and justice:

1. Building Connections & Support
2. Community Safety & Justice
3. Economic Independence & Education
4. Community Action & Accountability

Yukon's MMIWG2S+ Strategy represents an unprecedented commitment to addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-spirit+ Yukoners. It is unique in its "whole of Yukon" approach; not Government of Yukon alone. Based on local priorities, the Strategy will guide Yukon's response to addressing the National Inquiry's finding of genocide and its Calls for Justice over the next 10-15 years.

Priorities and Next Steps

Working from the commitment of the signatories to the 31 action areas in the Yukon MMIWG2S+ Strategy, the Yukon Advisory Committee has now created a Technical Working Group to finalize the Implementation Plan. This will outline concrete and detailed actions for partners and stakeholders.

This Strategy is also meant to build upon, not replace, promising practices that are already underway that will positively affect Indigenous women, girls, and Two-spirit+ Yukoners. This includes, but is not limited to, shared key initiatives like:

- ★ Implementation of the *Putting People First Final Report*, the final report of an independent comprehensive review on health and social services in Yukon. The resulting 2020 report includes 76 recommendations on health and social services;
- ★ *Breaking Trail Together*, a 10-year strategic plan to achieve a representative Yukon public service that is inclusive of Yukon First Nation people, as outlined in Chapter 22 in each Yukon First Nation Final Agreement;



- ★ Implementation of a new universal child care model, based on the principles of affordability, quality, and accessibility, designed to save families up to \$700 per month per child participating in licensed full-time child care programs;
- ★ In collaboration with Yukon First Nation governments and Council of Yukon First Nations, committing to Honouring Connections, a collaborative process developed to address the systemic over-representation of First Nations children in the child-welfare system; and
- ★ Amending the *Employment Standards Act* to provide leave provisions for domestic and sexualized and domestic violence, providing leave to a victim, family member, or close friend, in recognition of broader understandings of family and kinship in Yukon First Nations.

One of the early priorities of implementation of Yukon’s MMIWG2S+ Strategy in 2021-22 is to bring partners and contributors together, when it is safe to do so, alongside family members and survivors. An Accountability Forum will be held in the next year to share successes and efforts, while also hearing evolving priorities and adjusting Yukon’s MMIWG2S+ Strategy, as needed.

Closing Statement

Government of Yukon will continue to work in a decolonized, values-based approach, building strong government-to-government relationships with First Nations, keeping MMIWG2S+ families and survivors at the heart of our work, and with a people-centred approach to wellness that helps all Yukoners - but most importantly Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people – thrive. Government of Yukon is committed to collaborative implementation of Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon’s MMIWG2S+ Strategy and to Canada’s National Action Plan.

