



# Métis Nation

## Li Shmayn – Métis Nation Action Plan Summary

The Métis Nation Working Group agreed that all recommendations, policies, programs and services established to end missing and murdered Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks, must be culturally safe, intersectional, strengths-based and trauma-informed. Additionally, LFMO's Métis-specific Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) toolkit should be used to ensure that the unique realities facing Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks are incorporated into Métis-specific programming.

The Métis emerged as a distinct Indigenous people and nation in the historic Northwest during the late 18th century. The Métis Nation defines “Métis” as, “A person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry and who is accepted by the Métis Nation.” The Métis Nation is one of the three rights-bearing Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, within the meaning of Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

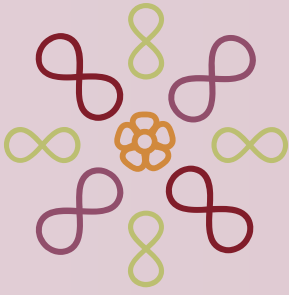


## Métis Traditional Worldviews and Values

The Métis Nation Working Group members recognized the importance of respecting the laws of *Wâhkôtowin* and relationships to eliminate the tragedy of missing and murdered Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks, and address the ongoing violence against them. In English, *Wâhkôtowin* translates into “kinship” or “being related to each other” and it acknowledges the responsibility to families and survivors, to treat each other in a good way, and to honour and respect these relationships and the spirits of the relatives.

 <https://en2.metiswomen.org/>

With colonization, imported Euro-Canadian notions of inequality, racism and gender norms radically transformed our society, leaving Métis women marginalized, vulnerable and subject to targeted violence and negative societal attitudes. An important part of decolonization is re-empowering the voices and the roles of women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks in decision-making for our Motherland.



In keeping with the foundational principles of *Wâhkôtowin*, the Métis Nation Working Group maintained traditional Métis ways of working together, and continued to prioritize collaboration, co-development and community connection. The Métis Nation working group suggests that in the development of the National Implementation Plan, working groups must reject divisive colonial and coercive tactics.

## Foundational change

The Métis Nation working group is proud to present the bold ideas brought forward by survivors and families of MMIWG, Métis Elders and Knowledge Keepers, Leaders, Grandmothers and Grandfathers, Service Providers and Grassroots family and community members in responding to the Calls to Miskotahâ (change).

Throughout our work, five key themes emerged that are not only foundational but fundamental in taking urgent action towards safety and security for all Métis people.

### 1. Justice/Law reform

A comprehensive review of the entire criminal justice system is required to identify where Métis citizens' needs are being met and where they are not. Immediate legislative reform is required to reduce the disproportionate incarceration of Métis, and to remove systemic barriers that further harm Métis involved in the criminal justice system.

### 2. System Navigators

Across every system - institutional or government, in which Métis people interact, there is a fundamental need for "System Navigators" to support culturally safe access. The system navigators will provide essential advocacy, knowledge translation, and wholistic support. This will lead to enhanced outcomes in areas including but not limited to Child and Family Services, Health Care, Housing, Education, Justice, Policing, and Victim's Services.

### 3. The Creation of an Oversight Body

An oversight body must be established and mandated to receive complaints and compel government to take concrete actions on commitments made to end the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks. The Métis Nation must be directly involved in the co-design, co-development, and co-implementation of this important oversight body, including the development of distinctions- and outcomes-based indicators of progress, as defined by the Métis Nation, for the Métis Nation.

### 4. Métis Healing and Wellness Centres

A strategy must be defined for the creation of Métis Healing and Wellness centres. A full suite of services and support must be offered that are responsive to the unique needs of Métis communities. With only limited access currently across the Motherland, these centres should include wrap-around supports for physical and mental health, addictions, trauma healing, fostering wellness and cultural knowledge.

### 5. Accountability

The implementation phase foundational principles and of the priority themes must include a robust accountability framework. The Métis Nation Governments, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, and all levels of Canadian Government (Federal, Provincial, Territorial, Municipal) must work jointly in the creation and validation of the accountability framework and be equally accountable to ensure lasting systemic change. The perspectives of family and survivors will play an integral role in on-going accountability.

## Threads Identified: Priorities and Themes

The Métis Nation Working Group discussed and identified threads that were categorized thematically. Each of the threads was recognized as being foundational to “*Li Shmayn*” (trail) forward. Together, these themes are critical to a violence-free future, and are as inextricably linked as the interwoven threads of a Métis sash. Accordingly, the following threads symbolize the connection, strength, resilience, and support of Métis women, children and 2SLGBTQIA+ folks in the face of ongoing violence and threats to their existence. These threads also emerged through our consultation phase of developing our Métis Nation Implementation Framework.

### THREAD #1 – Gathering and Evaluating Data

Refers to the collection of Métis-specific baseline data in order to protect, analyze, contextualize and share information about Métis people. Capacity is required to seek out Métis disaggregate data to ensure that the realities of Métis people are accurately portrayed and not within a pan-Canadian or pan-Indigenous context.

### THREAD #2 – Relationship Building

Points to creating protocols, forming and fostering relationships, and supporting grassroots, regional, and national engagement processes. Relationship building is important as part of on-going collaboration, co-development, and will further the effectiveness of our accountability framework.

### THREAD #3 – Service Planning and Delivery

Focuses on developing, designing and delivering Métis-specific programs within strengths-based, trauma-informed, culturally safe and accessible frameworks. Métis distinctions-based services are required in addition to the urgent actions as defined above such as system navigators and Métis Healing and Wellness centres.

### THREAD #4 – Child and Family Services

Ensures equal access to a suite of culturally safe services and supports to all Métis children and youth in care, and those aging out of care. Interaction with Child and Family services has been traumatic, debilitating and damaging with a legacy of inter-generational impacts. These services must continue prior to and throughout the process of Child and Family services being devolved to Métis Nation Governments.

### THREAD #5 – Healing and Wellness

Includes the safety, security, and healing of all Métis persons, including equal access to health services and benefits, through culturally grounded care, free from racism and responsive to individual preferences. Urgent action must begin to address the gaps in access to health services, and ensure equal and equitable access for Métis people.



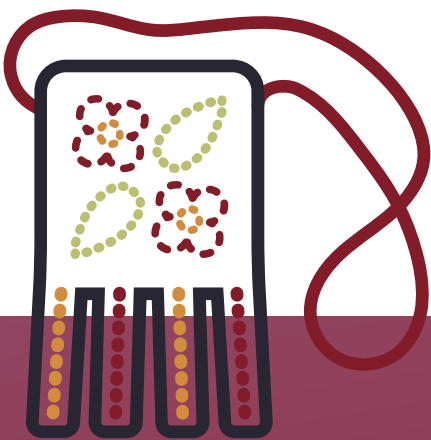
## THREAD #6 – Justice and Policing

Highlights Métis-specific approaches to restorative justice, respectful treatment and support for Métis victims of crime, and legislative and programmatic reforms to support Métis people interacting with the justice system. Improvements in the areas of justice, public safety and victim's services are required to reduce the over- representation of Métis people interacting with the justice system. Access to Métis-focused Gladue Reports reflective of Métis realities, that address current Gladue factors and relevant release to community, as well as program capacity shortages must be immediately actioned.

## Ongoing vision and next steps

The Métis Nation Working Group upholds that the priorities and themes outlined in the Métis Nation way forward “*Li Shmayn*” be advanced through nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship agreements, and support the work of the Canada-Métis Nation Permanent Bilateral Mechanism process. This alignment will be crucial to next steps of implementation, negotiation of resources, and policy development to end the tragedy of missing and murdered Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks, and to address violence against vulnerable Métis persons across the Motherland.

As we move forward, the Métis Nation will hold our survivors and families at the center of this important work. We encourage all readers to explore our Métis Nation Action Plan, *Weaving Miskotahâ*, for further information.



“Words need to turn into action; we are still losing women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ folks. The more we stay idle, the more our people are becoming colonized; with work and love, we can get through the pain that happened within our provinces for Métis women.”

*-LFMO Engagement session participant.*