



Congress of Aboriginal Peoples

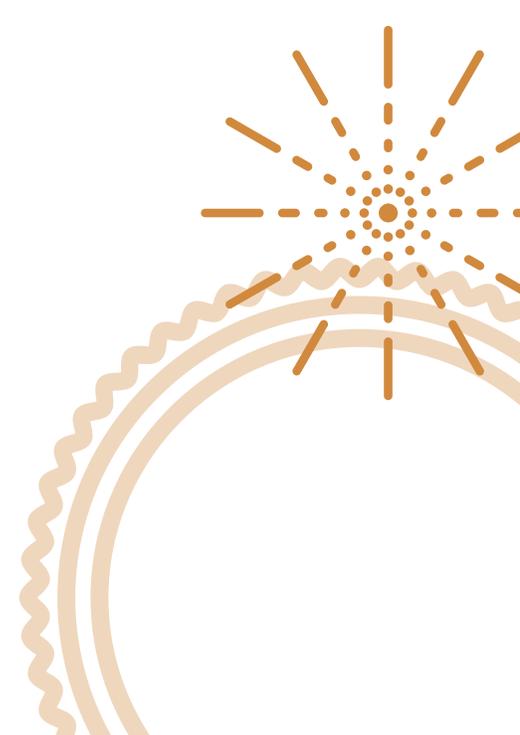
Key Highlights

In the past year, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) created a MMIWG Senior Advisor and Project Coordinator position to engage with community members, federal and provincial governments, and Indigenous partners. CAP undertook a National Engagement Initiative, hosting MMIWG events with each of the affiliated Provincial and Territorial Organizations (PTOs). These sessions focussed on gathering critical feedback on the 2021 National Action Plan and gaining a better understanding of the diverse unique community needs and approaches to ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The accumulation of voices from these sessions has led to the creation of CAP's *MMIWG2S+ National Action Plan*, released June 3, 2022.

CAP established a policy table with the federal government to advance priorities identified through the nation-wide engagement strategy with PTOs. Overarching priorities incorporate a rights-based approach including the application of the Daniels lens to all MMIWG2S+ action and implementation plans. Immediate and long-term priority areas align with the CAP MMIWG2S+ National Action Plan. They include: equitable access to long-term sustainable funding for local resources and supports for victims and survivors; addressing systemic discrimination and anti-discriminatory approaches in the delivery of justice including policing; identification of opportunities for resolutions of jurisdictional barriers; developing inclusive accountability measures; establishing diverse and cross-jurisdictional partnerships toward CAP's inclusion at policy tables; and conducting research toward developing a plan to address missing and murdered Indigenous men and boys.

Keeping all work family and survivor focussed through group meetings, sharing circles, counselling, vigils, and creating safe spaces for families and women to share their stories are all promising practices adopted by CAP affiliated PTOs. The combination of interdisciplinary, multistakeholder, and community-based approaches to address the crisis of MMIWG2S+ continues to be a success.

In partnership with CAP affiliate New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC), CAP and NBAPC released the *Guidelines for Journalists Reporting on Missing Indigenous People*, a culmination of the efforts from consultations with Indigenous community members, partnerships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous media professionals, and schools of journalism.





Progress/Successes

Keeping to the vision that families and survivors are central, the work of CAP and affiliated PTOs focussed on created safe spaces for individuals to share their stories.

The development and creation of CAP's National Action Plan is foundational to advancing the rights of urban, rural Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Through the CAP national engagement with the PTOs and as illustrated in CAP's National Action Plan, the safety and security for all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, regardless of status or location, is a priority. To support moving forward with this priority, CAP obtained funding to develop wellbeing indicators and create evidence-based methodologies to measure the safety of Indigenous people who live off-reserve. This work will be foundational to measuring the success of implementing CAP's National Action Plan.

A key success has been the collaborative work at the Canada-CAP policy table. The table continues to push forward substantial and transformative change with a focus on systemic issues, policy, capacity building, and partnership development.

As CAP collaborates with the Government of Canada to advance shared policy priorities through our Political Accord Tables, there have been successes in partnership with the PTOs which advance the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The NBAPC LOFEO project has accomplished ground-breaking work in working with Canadian institutions on policing standards and procedural protocols for missing persons investigations, focussed efforts around missing person's legislation, guidelines for journalists reporting on missing Indigenous Peoples, a helpline for crisis support, navigation and resource guide, and staff training. Indigenous Peoples Alliance of Manitoba hosted a cultural healing and gathering with Elders, teaching their culture, having healing circles, making space for one-on-one conversations, and having an evening feast in memory of MMIWG2S+. Spaces for healing and wellness have been created through yearly gatherings, celebration of life, and Indigenous youth fun day. These on-the-ground initiatives are all part of progressing safety, security, healing, and wellness for urban, rural Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

CAP partnered with affiliate NBAPC to host the 3rd Looking Out For Each Other (LOFEO) project symposium entitled *MMIWG2S+ Supporting Better Outcomes*. This online event included presentations, workshops, and discussions from the LOFEO project network and others doing work in the same MMIWG2S+ field. This platform provided an opportunity to raise awareness of collective work to develop and support the creation of Indigenous-led responses that will lead to better outcomes for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

CAP hosted the first *Gender Symposium Mobilizing Indigenous Two-Spirit History*. It was an interdisciplinary discussion that aimed to foster partnerships, community engagement, and networking opportunities. The symposium aimed to mobilize knowledge sharing on the history of Two-Spirit and non-binary individuals to increase awareness and understanding of 2SLGBTQQIA+ history and enhance public awareness about Two-Spirit identity and how crucial Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer leaders are to the movements of change.

Throughout 2021, CAP was involved in numerous presentations including: before the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples as part of the Review of the Final Report of the National Inquiry; the Federal Provincial Territorial (FPT) Senior Officials Committee Responsible for Human Rights on the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and Women and Gender Equality FPT meetings.



Next Steps/Priorities

Our focus moving forward is the implementation of CAPs National Action Plan. A key component of implementation includes capacity building for CAP and PTOs. Through the Canada-CAP Political Accord MMIWG2S+ Policy Table, CAP is focussed on establishing permanent, no-barrier, equitable, and sustainable funding to move forward on implementation. Applying the Daniels lens is foundational, ensuring all Indigenous Peoples have equitable access to programs and services, and organizations have the capacity to meet their communities' unique and diverse needs. NBAPC will continue to focus on policing reform, developing media guidelines for families, and continuing their work on shelters and helpline expansions. This priority will support PTO capacity to progress on their work and enhance their initiatives through the development of their own MMIWG2S+ action and implementation plans.

CAP is working with the Government of Canada through the MMIWG2S+ Policy Table to identify policy gaps, barriers, and opportunities to support the implementation of CAPs National Action Plan. The immediate policy priority areas include health and wellness, as well as justice and accountability. Indigenous Peoples Alliance of Manitoba hopes to host a multi-day gathering where people can gather as a community, where women can work with their hands to support their healing process, and where talking circles and crafting activities are available. The advocating of healing and wellness on a policy level will be key in supporting such initiatives. As CAP continues their partnership with NBAPC, moving forward on influencing missing person's legislation creation and amendments will be a priority for the Canada-CAP Political Accord MMIWG2S+ Policy Table. In collaboration with the Government of Canada and the PTOs, CAP will continue to provide informed, effective, and relevant policy analyses and recommendations to support the implementation of CAPs National Action Plan and the development and implementation of PTO action plans.

Reports/Publications

CAP partnering PTO NBAPC reports regarding community needs, identifying policy gaps and barriers, and provision of mainstream services: https://nbapc.org/lofeo-research-reports/?preview_nonce=0c53a93667&preview=true.

Newsletters, news and press releases as a mean to disseminate information and keep families, communities, partners, stakeholders informed of the Looking Out For Each Other project: <https://nbapc.org/lofeo-news>.

Policing – standards and procedural protocols for missing persons investigations, <https://nbapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/UQAM-LOFEO-Final-report.pdf>

Law – missing person's legislation, curriculum for law students at UNB, <https://nbapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/LOFEO-legislation-and-standards-draft-report-July-2021-FINAL.pdf>

Media – guidelines for journalists reporting on missing Indigenous people, curriculum for journalism students at Canadian public institutions, <https://nbapc.org/programs-and-services/lofeo-media/>

Helpline – development in NB, crisis support, navigation and resource guide, staff training. Expansion of helpline to other Eastern provinces, <https://nbapc.org/lofeo-helpline>

