Shared Responsibilities

Indigenous Lens Gender-Based Analysis + In Impact Assessments

Report Prepared for the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
By the Invitation to Voices project team

A Collaborative Partnership between Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group (Keepers of the Circle) and AnânauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association

Keepers of the Circle

AnânauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association

Authorship Statements

Alexandra Bridges

Alex is an Oji-Cree woman of the Pike Clan and member of Mattagami First Nation located in Treaty 9 Northern Ontario. She has lived experience with impacts from resource development growing up in the districts of Sudbury and Timmins Cochrane during renewed mining exploration activities, as well as living and working in Northern Alberta during the tar sands boom. She holds a B.A. in Indigenous Environmental Studies with an emphasis on Law and Policy from Trent University and has over ten years experience working in Indigenous non-profit organizations. She sits on the board of directors of several non-profits, cooperatives and Indigenous led organizations across Turtle Island and is a strong advocate for Mino-Bimaadiziwin, the inalienable rights of Indigenous peoples and pursues, with passion, environmental and socio-economic development projects in Northern Ontario.

Britney Zacharuk

Britney graduated from the University of Guelph, receiving a Bachelor of Environmental Science with a Major in Ecology. She wrote her undergraduate thesis analyzing Indigenous-Science knowledge system exclusion trends in federal impact assessments. Britney is a settler living in so-called Canada and seeks to use her privilege to uplift Indigenous people and amplify their voices. She is passionate about intersectional inclusion and climate justice and has committed her professional and personal life to create space for Indigenous people to share their traditional knowledge systems and land stewardship practices. She is committed to unpacking the intersections between environmentalism and social justice and seeks to build a sustainable, equitable future for all.

Johanna Tuglavina

Johanna is an Inuk woman from Nunatsiavut and has advocated for Inuit women and Inuit in general throughout the years by sitting on the board of directors for the Nain Women's Shelter and the Martin Group Home. Johanna has been elected to sit on the board of directors for the Regional Inuit Women's Association and was later elected as Vice-President. Johanna has been involved in social issues for Labrador Inuit women both professionally and voluntarily. In the past Johanna has participated in protests regarding the Voisey's Bay Project and also presented concerns of Labrador Inuit Women to the Environmental Assessment Panel for the Voisey's Bay Project. Johanna has a degree in Sociology from Acadia University and continues to represent Labrador Inuit Women regarding issues facing Nunatsiavut Women. Johanna is also co-author of an article titled: "Reframing Benefit: Indigenous Women and Resource Governance in Northern Canada", in a book titled *Extractive Industry and The Sustainability of Canada's Arctic Communities* published in September of 2022 by McGill University Press.

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Figure 1: Artwork by Deanna Heyde, Mattagami First Nation.

Figure 2: Artwork by Nikki Jo Mattinas from Constance Lake First Nation. See her shop here: nikkijomoonstar.com

Acronym List

Table 1: List of acronyms used within the document and the full term. Each full term will be provided in text upon first mention, followed by the acronym which will be used thereafter.
Ex: Keepers of the Circle (**KOTC**).

ACRONYM	FULL TERM
2SLGBTQQIA+	Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Plus
ATRIS	Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Information System
ATRIWA	The AnanauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association
BEAHR	Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources
CRGBA+	Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis +
EA	Environmental Assessment
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GBA+	Gender-Based Analysis +
GED	General Education Development
GIS	Geographic Information System
IA	Impact Assessments
IAA	Impact Assessment Act of 2019
IAAC	Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
ICSP	Indigenous Capacity Support Program
IBA	Impact Benefit Agreement
ISET	Indigenous Skills Employment Training
IQ	Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit
KOTC	Keepers of the Circle

KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MHFA	Mental Health First Aid
MMIWG	Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
NWAC	Native Women's Association of Canada
OCAP	Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TARR	Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TK	Traditional Knowledge
TPU	Territorial Planning Unit
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
VC	Valued Components

Definitions

Ableism: The unfair treatment or negative attitude held towards disabled people, creating a systemic bias and societal culture which favors able-bodied people (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Accessibility: How easy something is to reach, enter, use, understand, or see. How easy something can be used for its intended purpose for people with various disabilities (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Appreciative Inquiry: A collaborative, strengths-based approach to initiate change in organizations/human systems; To use an approach that discovers an individual's strengths and amplifies them, using them to bring about positive change, rather than focusing on an individual's weaknesses and trying to change them (Moore, 2019).

Assimilation/ Assimilationist: The process of changing somebody, into something else; This can extend to individuals, communities, or entire cultures when forcing them to change rather than giving them the autonomy to remain a separate social, political, or cultural group (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Brownfield Development: The act of building something on land that was previously developed but is no longer in use. The land may contain existing structures that can be updated or must be demolished. Could contain toxic contaminants or pollutants from previous work on the land (Transect, 2023). *See: Greenfield Development.*

Community: A group of people who are unified by; living in the same place, having a particular characteristic in common, whether that be professional interest or shared history; A feeling of fellowship created with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Consensus: For a group to come to an agreed decision; an opinion that all members of a group agree with; a collective opinion (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Cumulative: The accumulated parts that sum by successive additions over time; the total amount of something (Oxford Languages, 2023). In impact assessments, cumulative effects are the combined total effects that occur due to a project, or due to many projects, in one place over time.

Cultural Resurgence: The renewal and revival of cultural practices after disruption or a period of time where they were not active; To re-claim one's cultural identity. (Engage for Change, 2017).

The Declaration: The International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, often referred to as UNDRIP, is a legal international document outlining the specific rights of Indigenous peoples; The Declaration recognizes that Indigenous people have the right to self-determination for local internal government matters (UNDRIP, 2008; Champagne, 2014).

Duty to Consult: A statutory, contractual, and common law obligation that must be fulfilled by the Crown, prior to taking actions or making decisions that may have consequences for the rights of Indigenous peoples in Canada (Irwin, 2018).

Epistemology / Epistemological: The philosophy of knowledge or theory of knowledge, especially with regard to the methodology, validity, and scope of obtaining and sharing information; The investigation of what distinguishes a belief from an opinion (University of Sheffield, 2023).

Effect Pathways / Pathways of Effects: Diagrams used to describe the activities (cause-effect relationships, mechanisms of potential stress) occurring due to a proposed development; Most commonly referring to effects on the aquatic environment but can extend to terrestrial and ecosystem level changes (Government of Canada, 2023).

Free, Prior and Informed Consent: Frequently referenced as FPIC, this concept is a specific right that Indigenous peoples have as recognized in the Declaration (UNDRIP); This concept allows Indigenous people to grant or withhold consent to a project which may affect them or their territories; Free implies that consent is given voluntarily and without coercion, intimidation, or manipulation; Prior implies that consent is sought before any project development begins; Informed implies that all relevant information is provided prior to a decision; Consent meaning that a collective decision was made which can be withdrawn at any stage (FAO, 2022).

Gender Diverse Persons: Persons whose gender identity or gender expression is at odds with what is perceived as being the gender norm at a particular point in time; This extends to those who identify as non-binary, and do not place themselves in the male or female binaries, many transgender people, who identify with a different sex than the one they were assigned to at birth prefer the term gender diverse (UN, 2023). Throughout this report we use persons, rather than people, to recognize that there is no one type of way to be gender diverse, and that there are many kinds of people who are gender diverse, making the collective, inclusive form, persons.

Grassroots: Being, operating, or originating from the most basic level; Where the fundamentals of an organization, project, or activity is decided by ordinary people; The very foundation, source, goal, or approach of this which would be totally new and unique (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Gratitude: The feeling of or expression of thanks. To recognize and appreciate something or somebody (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Greenfield Development: Land that has not been developed, typically in an urban or rural area where land developers would like new development to take place on; A blank slate of land which some desire to use (Transect, 2023). *See: Brownfield Development.*

Grey Literature: Information produced outside of standard academic publishing and distribution channels; Information that is usually not peer reviewed and can therefore, vary in accuracy (SFU, 2023). *Ex: reports, policy literature, working papers, newsletters, speeches, etc.*

Heteronormativity: The assumption that everyone is straight; The idea that romantic and sexual relationships are always between one man and one woman; Assuming that the default sexual orientation is heterosexuality, and that that it is the only normal or natural way to express sexuality and attraction (Resnick, 2022). Heteronormativity is rooted in homophobic, anti-queer mindsets.

Heteropatriarchy: A hierarchical society or culture that is dominated by heterosexual males who hold a bias to those who are female, 2LGBTQQIA+, or hold any different identity features (Dictionary, 2023).

Illocutionary silencing: To have one's words or contributions be stripped of their intent; Changing the intent of what is being shared (Townsend & Townsend, 2020). *Ex: saying 'warning of flooding in this area' and documentation stating, 'floods happen here', removing the intent of warning or caution. See: Locutionary Silencing.*

Impact Assessment: Formal, evidence-based procedures that allow for implications of proposed projects or actions to be determined before the project begins; These can be impacts to people or their environment, social, economic, or health systems which forecast how proposed actions will unfold prior to making decisions; Previously known as environmental assessments, impact assessments extend the scope of impacts from environmental qualities to include social, political, economic, and environmental considerations (Fortuny, 2022).

Intersectional /Intersectionality: A way to map or identify how aspects of a person's social and political identity can combine or overlap to create discrimination or privilege; Intersectional identity mapping allows us to understand how people experience life differently based on their gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, and more (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Intersectional Analysis: Conducting research with the overall aim of exploring intersecting patterns across different structures of power and how people are positioned, in society, in community, in life; Seeking to understand how different social or cultural identity factors affect one another or another variable; Extending to multiple categories of identity (Christensen & Jensen, 2012). See: Intersectional

Land Use Planning: The process of regulating the way that land is engaged with, referring to a wide range of activities which exist in the future (development planning) and the present (development management); The aim being to ensure the optimal use of land within a political, social, cultural, environmental, and economic context is achieved.

Lateral Violence: When people who have been oppressed feel so powerless that rather than fighting back against their oppressor, they release their fear, anger, and frustration on their own community members; Sometimes referred to as internalized colonialism or horizontal violence (We R Native, 2023).

Locutionary silencing: To have one's words or contributions be stripped of their context; Changing the meaningfulness of content between what is said and what is heard or recorded (Townsend & Townsend, 2020). Ex*: saying 'There are endangered species here' and documentation stating, 'There are animals here', context changed. See: Illocutionary Silencing.*

Membership: To be a member of a group, club, organization, or band; To belong and be accountable to the group; To be a part of. To feel connected to...

Mindfulness: The act of remembering somebody or something and considering them when you do something in the future; A mental state achieved by accepting the feelings and thoughts which come to you, a common meditation and wellness technique (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Nationhood: Having a status of belonging or being a part of a nation; a group of people united by a common descent, history, culture, language, or land (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Necessity: The fact that something must happen, or must be done, a dire need for something; A thing that someone cannot live without; Basic needs such as, food, water, etc. (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Patriarchy / Patriarchal: A society, system, or country that is controlled by men; Creating a power imbalance that unevenly distributes power to men (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Place-based knowledge: The understanding or knowing about a place, based on being professionally engaged with the local governance of that place, or a long-standing relationship with place; To have a relationship with the land, to the extent that you hold information and knowledge about a specific place/location/region (Borén & Schmitt, 2021).

Proponent: Someone who proposes something, or supports it by speaking in favor of it, to be the person who proposes an idea, concept, or action (Merriam-Webster, 2023). In resource development projects, the proponent is whomever is proposing to initiate a development project, typically the company.

Qualitative: What something is like, rather than how much of something there is; Descriptive features that are often not tangible amounts but still exist (Oxford Languages, 2023). Ex: the color of bears in a region. *See: Quantitative.*

Quantitative: The amount or numerical value of something (Oxford Languages, 2023). Ex: the number of bears in a region. *See: Qualitative.*

Reciprocity: A situation when two people/ countries/ groups provide help to one another, a give and take, intentionally benefiting one another (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Reconciliation: The restoration of friendly relations; The action of making one's views or beliefs or goals compatible with those of another (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Resurgence: The return and growth of an activity that has previously stopped; A revival or re-popularization after a period of less activity (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Restorative: To be made to feel strong and healthy again; To be connected with resources, treatment or information that allows healing and creates a feeling of wellbeing that may have been previously lost (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Self-Determination: The process by which a person controls their own life, the personal decision to do something or think a certain way; To have free choice over one's actions without external compulsion; People with shared political or cultural organization have the right to self-government and territory. The term became popularized post World War II when European colonies were given the right to form independent nation-states, declare their own territory, and become part of the United Nations. This same level of self-determination was not extended to Indigenous peoples whose traditional territories these colonies were on. However, self-determination was a part of the creation teachings and most Indigenous peoples find the international expressions of self-determination to be not fully acceptable and incongruent with the original land management, spiritual relations, human relations, and overall way of life that Indigenous people practiced (Champagne, 2014). See: *The Declaration*

Solidarity: To receive support by one person or a group of people who share feelings, opinions, or goals; To express support and collective approval (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Sovereignty: To have complete power to govern a country, or land; To be able to self-govern, make decisions, without coercion or manipulation (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Sociocultural: Relating to or combining factors related to society and culture (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Socioeconomic: Relating to or concerned with the interaction of social and economic factors (Oxford Languages, 2023). The social standing, or class of an individual or group is often measured through a combination of education, income, and occupation. Socioeconomic extending from the social standing someone has to their ability to access resources, goods, and services.

Stakeholders: A person or company that is involved in a particular project/system, typically because they have invested money into it; Not only are investors stakeholders, but everyone involved or affected by a project (community, contractors, sub-contractors, etc.) (Oxford Languages, 2023).

State-centric: A theory or way of thinking that prioritizes the role of government, upholds that the state or government has the authority to structure political or social systems (Oxford Languages, 2023).

Strength-based Approach: Focusing or amplifying an individual's strengths or successes rather than focusing on weaknesses; Originated in social work, work practice theory to amplify an individual's self-determination, resourcefulness, and resilience, using what they are already good at or succeeding in as a baseline (Stoerkel, 2019).

Universal Design: To create an environment that can be accessed, understood, or used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability; To create something with the needs of all people in mind. (Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, 2020).

** Upon first mention, each term that is defined will be* **bolded and red.**

Figure 3: Artwork by Haydan Fox, Mattagami First Nation

Figure 4: Artwork by Samantha Mathews.

Positionality

The Invitation to Voices project has created a partnership focused specifically on uplifting Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse peoples to effectively participate in **Impact Assessments** (**IAs**). By supporting women to be confident commenting on projects and providing training to create long term, consistent engagement opportunities, we are training and mobilizing **community** leaders. This initiative is funded by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (**IAAC**) as part of the Indigenous Capacity Support Program (**ICSP**) and hopes to uplift Indigenous women and girls in Northern Labrador as well as in Northern Ontario.

Keepers of the Circle (**KOTC**) started as the Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group, operating as an Aboriginal Family Learning Center in Kirkland Lake and Temiskaming Shores. Our mandate is to maintain quality programming for Indigenous children, women, and families through implementing various projects such as employment training, healthcare, childcare and more. We are an Indigenous-led non-profit group and we are committed to providing a safe space for urban Indigenous Peoples, ensuring their voices are heard and included in federal IA and beyond. KOTC values respectful, judgement-free relationships and is guided by the Medicine Wheel and the Seven Grandfather Teachings uplifting wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, and truth.

The AnânauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association (**ATRIWA**) represents Labrador Inuit Women with the goal of advancing equal participation in all aspects of society; socially, culturally, legally, and economically. This non-profit organization envisions a future where Labrador Inuit women are respected, valued, and have equal opportunities to be engaged with and heard. In 2017, ATRIWA developed *Flames of Change*, a leadership development model for Inuit women's community engagement and a companion document entitled *'Making Steps Together: Women's Group Workbook'* which positions them well to continue their work to strengthen the capacity of Inuit women to participate in Environmental Assessment (**EA**) and Impact Assessment (**IA**) processes.

Figure 5: The AnanauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association logo (right), the Invitation to Voices project logo (center), and the KOTC logo (left).

Opening

The newly implemented Impact Assessment process presents an opportunity for Indigenous women, girls, and **gender diverse persons** to participate in land planning decisions that will shape their futures. This framework provides potential pathways for communities, practitioners, and developers to critically think about how to meaningfully engage and consult with distinct subgroups that have and continue to experience systemic marginalization. In a fast paced and changing world, the time to act in mitigating development risks and to make steps in **reconciliation** for past, present and future harms is immediate and critical to Indigenous communities health and safety. Resource development and extractive industries near Indigenous communities play a significant role in changing cultural practices, removing access to land and by their nature implicitly bring impacts to human and treaty rights. This framework begins by laying the groundwork by outlining an Indigenous Lens Gender-Based Analysis (**GBA+**) Framework and examining leading policies and their functionality within an impact assessment. We then examine practices that increase Indigenous women and gender diverse people's representation, through ways of knowing and ways of doing work. While a distinctions-based approach is most appropriate in specific project applications, we recognize that mitigating project impacts already has a significant foundation of work that outlines the shared realities we as Indigenous people face. We know that issues impacting Indigenous peoples are interrelated, and that while some components of what people are saying fall outside of the scope of the phases of an impact assessment, they remain necessary in analysis of how to best promote meaningful engagement that represents the interests of the people who must live with the consequences of a proposed development.

Through creating inclusive policies and practices, Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons move closer to achieving **self-determination** and reconciling some of the legacies of historical and present harms that have a lasting array of impacts. Reconciliation is not about multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion, an affirmative action exercise, or token roles created for Indigenous people, it is about exposing the truth, justice, and reconciling laws, policies, and practices to provide restitution for Indigenous peoples across Canada (Palmater, 2019). Our goal in this project is to provide actionable solutions for communities, governments, and industries to apply to a broad range of circumstances and explore equity building strategies realistic in IA processes and beyond. This framework contains guidance for actionable strategies to implement in all phases of IA processes and interweaves complex and intermixed issues facing Indigenous women and gender diverse persons. Indigenous women and gender diverse people's voices must be included in IA decision making processes and centered in community environmental governance activities, bringing focus to community well-being and values, rather than isolated within the context of project development activities (Mills, et al. 2022). We hope that the report can provide perspective on the unique challenges facing urban and rural Indigenous peoples and inspire people to want to learn and engage in collective action and advocacy within their own communities. This kind of widespread systematic reform can only happen through allyship and standing in **solidarity** to protect and restore Indigenous worldviews, culture and **nationhood**. We present these findings with the lens of our combined knowledge, teachings and lived experiences.

Visions

She stands in the window; sun is spreading across the land
Just beyond the hills, frost glints in the sun
Red berry picking time, bucket in her hand
Boiler of water on the stove, her chores are never done

Children start stirring as the fire warms up the house
Mother is hard at work mixing her morning bread
Hear one of them scream, "Look out there's a mouse"!
The kids haul on their deerskin boots after they've been fed

The air is crisp and there is light snow on the ground
Everyone busy bottling jams from the berries they picked
They are stacking up wood all around town
It's a rush now to prepare as winter comes quick

Some men are getting ready to head out on their trap line
Soon as the boys are old enough they get invited to go along
Mother never looks forward to this busy time
They can be gone off for months depending on what can go wrong

She rubs her belly; it's growing a bit bigger
She's plodding along but she never complains
Will it be another brother or a new little sister?
She just takes off her apron before it gets stained

The days are getting shorter, oil lamp is now lit
Kids are playing games, moon shining bright
The flame is flickering in the window; mother has a chance now to sit
Knitting socks for the winter under the lamplight

She steps out on the porch to dump out the dishwater
Stopping for a minute to look up high
She whistles at the northern lights dancing above her
Legend says when you do they can swoop down from the sky

The kids come out to look but she rushes them to bed
She's so very tired and there's still more to be done
She can't wait to lay back, her feet feel like led
Dreaming of an easier life for her kids, dancing in the sun

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She sips on her coffee in the morning sunshine
It's time to get going soon and dress up for ski-doo
Kids are on the move, hear a plane flying by
Her mind is busy planning about what she has to do

She's headed to a meeting about some new development
A man is there to explain that it will provide jobs for many
Promises of security and stable employment
It all sounds pretty good but still a cause for questioning

Her husband is happy and willing to take the opportunity
Two weeks home, two weeks gone living in a camp far away
She's thinking about how this might affect her family
This new resource development farther North, up the Bay

She calls up a friend and asks her opinion
Do we really understand what these 'outsiders' have planned?
They make it sound positive but we are worried for good reason
They speak of jobs but what about the land?

The birds and the fish we often share and we give
Environmental impacts are not so clear, have they really considered?
Our culture, our community, our ways, and how we live
There are so many questions left unanswered

She thinks and she thinks about these changes coming fast

The heart of her family, she thinks things through
Development creates jobs but how long will it last?
It affects our way of life, we should protect that too

She wants more information, and they need to be clear
There are so many impacts that are not easy to read
Not much time to understand creating more fear
She expects to be included, not a want but a need

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Her mother is more silent as she lived in a different time
She says, "Daughter be happy there's money coming in"
But she can't help but question if everything will be fine
There is much to consider in this 'new' generation

Stories of hard time and endurance is what she has been taught
It's important to be grateful but at what cost?
She juggles a lot when her husband is gone
Connections to the land and the wildlife swiftly being lost

She thinks back to a time where they didn't have much choice
When they truly depended on the land to survive
As this generation of women, it's time to hear our voice
Not merely surviving but keeping traditions alive

There are many barriers up North, still much to be learned
Childcare, transportation, and healthcare to name a few
Isolation and financial resources are a cause for concern
Education is key, women sharing knowledge is vital too

So she's trying very hard to educate herself
It's her duty to speak up to protect her culture and identity
By being included in talks she can promote better overall health
All the skills that she's learned can benefit the community

Now when she looks across the land with her head held high
She remembers those days when she laid in her bed
Hear the crunching of snow, her mother whistling at the sky
Northern lights coming down, visions of beauty up ahead

Written by
Teri Ann Blake
North-West River

Findings

Laying the Groundwork

Teachings Guiding This Work

Our Values Will Guide Us. When taking we must give, when entering the home of another we bring gifts, when causing harm, we must take great care to protect life. **Reciprocity** is giving something back, like laying down tobacco to show respect and giving thanks for game that gave themselves to hunters, or for plants and medicines that showed themselves to gatherers. Giving back looks like Indigenous people sharing and redistributing food and wealth in their customary way, no part of a 'resource' was wasted (i.e. fish, game, materials) (Simpson, 2008). **Gratitude** is being thankful for all beings of creation and the history of the land, thanking creator for the bountiful territory, practicing **mindfulness** of the gifts from the natural world, and acknowledging and celebrating those gifts and through gratitude and giving thanks, showing gratitude by respecting what is gathered, sharing, and not wasting anything (Kimmerer, 2013). **Necessity** is taking only what is needed, enough to get by and leaving some for others. It is providing sustenance for ourselves without hoarding food or supplies from others (Kimmerer, 2013). **Consensus** within the groups of people, where issues were brought forth and discussed fully until everyone agreed and the words of Elders are respected and valued, as they have lived longer and experienced more. It is the job of the young who are strong and energetic to put into action what Elders instruct them to do. If a decision was controversial, all concerns and viewpoints would be heard, and everyone would work towards a suitable solution until the entire clan achieved consensus (Poucette, 2018).

Respecting all forms of knowledge. Recognizing that culture is foundational to building effective systems requires recognizing the multitudes of knowledge systems that change our ways of being and knowing the world around us. Within Indigenous cultures, there is a great diversity between communities who have coexisted since time immemorial. Prior to colonization, Indigenous nations had elaborate and distinct processes for creating and maintaining diplomatic relationships with one another through self-governance systems. These were guided by common ethics and cultural teachings which emphasized responsibility, reciprocity, respect, peace, and accountability (Simpson, 2008). Because of the relationship that Indigenous people hold to land, Indigenous communities rely on their traditional territories as a means of subsistence, through hunting, trapping, fishing, and gathering (Collins, 2010). The land's inherent value informs Indigenous identity, spirituality, ecology, and reality (Collins, 2010). **Mino-Bimaadiziwin** which means 'the good life' can be achieved through living in balance with ourselves, with one another, and with all the beings of creation.

> **"Treat the earth well: it is not given to you by your parents. It is loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth fromour Ancestors, we borrow it from our children"**
>
> *-The Wisdom of the Shamans: Native American Proverb*

Figure 6: Two Row Wampum and the Dish with One Spoon, artwork by Jesse Buchanan.

The concept of braiding knowledge systems has emerged in academia as popularized by Robin Wall Kimmerer's novel 'Braiding Sweetgrass' which outlines her journey as an Indigenous Ecologist, learning to braid two ways of knowing together (Kimmerer, 2015). Indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge, when used together properly, have great power in letting us learn about the world around us and how to respect and care for one another. Other frameworks have existed for centuries that guide knowledge co-creation such as, the two-row wampum, two-eyed seeing, and dish with one spoon treaty (Johnson, et al., n.d.). These concepts have guided writing this report, as we navigate how to braid knowledge systems together in IA spaces. These demonstrate the kind of considerations Indigenous knowledge could bring into land management discussions and IAs to create better, more inclusive, and more holistic approaches (LaDuke, 2017). To date, western scientific approaches have dominated the environmental monitoring and management domain (Johnson, et al., n.d.). Recognizing that while scientific tools are useful to learn and understand the world around us, they are not the only tools. Using only one way to view the world has created a global biodiversity and climate crisis, demonstrating clearly that a new way to consider and protect the natural world is needed (Johnson, et al., n.d.). Much work is still left to be done in understanding how to respectfully bring knowledge systems together. Significant work is being done to advance the need for Indigenous knowledge to be included early and throughout the entirety of project developments, for gender and age representation to be prioritized, and for

reciprocity to be at the focus of relationship building (Johnson, et al., n.d.). The inclusion of traditional teachings in contemporary research and the exploration of knowledge system engagement is the starting point to eliminating the bias to western knowledge that has intensified since colonization. Uplifting and empowering Indigenous voices starts with creating space for Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (**TEK**) to be included in every aspect of life and to be viewed as an equal counterpart to western scientific methods.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (**IQ**), **ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᖃᐅᔨᒪᔭᑐᖃᖏᑦ** is an Inuktitut phrase that is often abbreviated as IQ. This knowledge system guides Inuit societal values, helping to address challenges and create a future that benefits everyone. IQ encompasses the collective local and community-based knowledge obtained in the daily life of Inuit people, passed down across generations. There are eight Inuit Societal Values rooted in IQ that have become influential in guiding the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB, n.d.). These core societal values are often seen as the core of IQ and Inuit **epistemology** however, it is important to recognize that IQ goes beyond these core principles alone. IQ is an Inuit worldview, with its own distinct knowledge, language, perspective, values, and way of life (Piulia DeCoutu, 2020). These eight principles cannot alone capture the vastness of IQ, but demonstrate only a glimpse into the holistic, interconnected cultural knowledge system that is IQ (Piulia DeCoutu, 2020). As set out by the Government of Nunavut, the eight IQ Principles (NIRB, n.d.):

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Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.

ᑐᙵᓇᕐᓂᖅ | **Tunnganarniq**
Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.

ᐱᔨᑦᓯᕐᓂᖅ | **Pijitsirniq**
Serving and providing for one's family and/or community.

ᐋᔩᖃᑎᒌᓐᓂᖅ | **Aajiqatigiinniq**
Decision-making through decision and consensus.

ᐱᓕᒻᒪᒃᓴᕐᓂᖅ | **Pilimmaksarniq**
Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

ᐃᑲᔪᖅᑎᒌᓐᓂᖅ | **Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq**
Working together for a common cause.

ᖃᓄᖅᑑᕐᓂᖅ | **Qanugtuurniq**
Being innovative and resourceful.

ᐊᕙᑎᑦᑎᓐᓂᒃ ᑲᒪᑦᓯᐊᕐᓂᖅ | **Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq**
Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment.

Two-eyed seeing or ***Etuaptmumk*** is a Mi'kmaw guiding principle envisioned by Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall (Cape Breton University, n.d.). This principle refers to our ability to see from one eye the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and through the other, the strengths of western knowledge (Cape Breton University, n.d.). When we learn to use both of our eyes together, we see and learn more about the world around us, using multiple perspectives to respectfully and intentionally bring together all the

different ways of knowing (Cape Breton University, n.d.). Without expecting either knowledge system to conform to the expectations of the other, the two-eyed seeing approach leaves space for each way of knowing to come together as they are (Cape Breton University, n.d.). Two-eyed seeing is increasingly being used in integrative science initiatives and has potential to extend into IA spaces to allow for equal weight and consideration of Indigenous knowledge as that of scientific knowledge (Cape Breton University, n.d.).

Medicine Wheel Teachings. The earth is our mother, and we are of the earth. We are entering through the Eastern door as babies and leaving through the Northern door as Elders in the circle of life and death, that is why Elders and babies love one another so much, because they are close together in the circle and they feel the connection between each other. Our bodies change completely every seven years, and we pass into a new phase of life. In making decisions we consider the impacts to the next seven generations. Indigenous knowledge precepts create values passed down through orations like storytelling, conveying ideologies and teachings, and prayers that teach values and inform the belief system of those listening (King, 2003). Anishinaabe people always worked to live mino-bimaadiziwin or 'the good life' which is in balance with the natural world and other beings through a system of ethics, values and practices that informed the collective behaviors of the group as a whole (Simpson, 2008). Below is an image featuring the Ontario Native Women's Association and the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council's review on Ontario's action plan to address the inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) (ONWA, 2020). We highlight this because it conveys how traditional teachings and traditional roles can inform ways in which to move forward with current issues and priorities for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons.

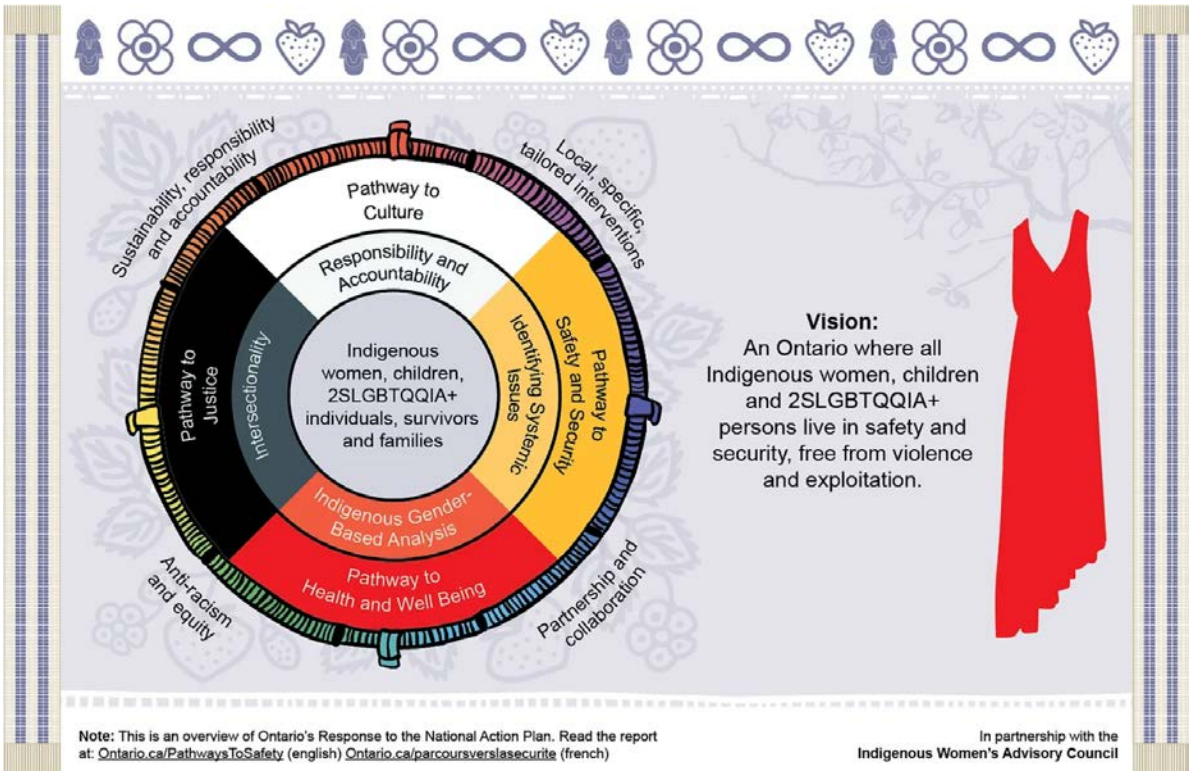

Figure 7: Placemat image sourced from the Overview of Ontario's Pathways to Safety Report: *Reconciliation with Indigenous Women, Changing the Story of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (ONWA, 2020).

The Seven Grandfather Teachings are principles taught by Anishinaabe peoples that will lead to health and wellbeing, while existing in harmony with the beings of creation. The teachings are Truth, Humility, Respect, Love, Honesty, Bravery, Wisdom. Truth is to speak to the extent of what we have lived or experienced. Humility is to think of ourselves in modest importance in relation to all beings of creation. Respect is thinking of and treating others well. Love is unconditional, to know love is to know peace. Honesty is to live with virtue and integrity. Bravery is to be strong and face adversity with strength. Wisdom is to act with vision and purpose on accumulated knowledge.

Figure 8: Seven Grandfather Teachings sourced from Southern First Nations Network of Care (Southern First Nations, 2023).

Strengthening Policies to Create Space for Indigenous Agency

Gender Based Analysis Plus in Impact Assessments

The Government of Canada committed to implementing Gender Based Analysis+ (**GBA+**) in 2015, creating an Action Plan on GBA+ (Government of Canada, 2021). Through a partnership with Status of Women Canada, the Privy Council Office, and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, federal departments and agencies are working to identify barriers to implementing GBA+ and determine how to move forwards to overcome these barriers (Government of Canada, 2021). The three major recommendations were to identify barriers preventing systematic GBA+ implementation, determining how these barriers can be overcome, and informing decision makers how to best include GBA+ moving forwards (Government of Canada, 2021). Assignment of resources to support the reporting and implementation of GBA+ must occur continuously to ensure the widespread success of GBA+ (Government of Canada, 2021). GBA+ implementation cannot be done by the Government alone, while all departments and agencies strive to incorporate GBA+ into their workplaces, all organizations can benefit from gender and diversity sensitive approaches. As part of the Government's efforts to make the use or GBA+ widespread, resources are available online including free virtual training, research guides and checklists, as well as extensive reporting and action plans (Government of Canada, 2021).

The implementation of GBA+ in Canada has taken root to allow comprehensive and robust reporting on gender and diversity related impacts. When employed properly, GBA+ allows a more complete impact analysis of Government initiatives to be considered and allows for bias to be minimized from decision making and policy development (Cameron & Tedds, 2020). Incorporating diversity evidence bases allows for indisputable communication related to gender and diversity, while allowing policy and program designs to be more neutral and inclusive (Cameron & Tedds, 2020). There remains significant work to be done in creating frameworks that deconstruct and remove hierarchical power relations and allow for inclusion and consideration (Cameron & Tedds, 2020). Nevertheless, GBA+ has been linked to success in several ways. One case study where British Columbia used GBA+ to address poverty related concerns was able to identify why Indigenous people are overwhelmingly experiencing poverty and homelessness, showing that poverty patterns have gendered and **intersectional** identity linkages (Cameron & Tedds, 2020).

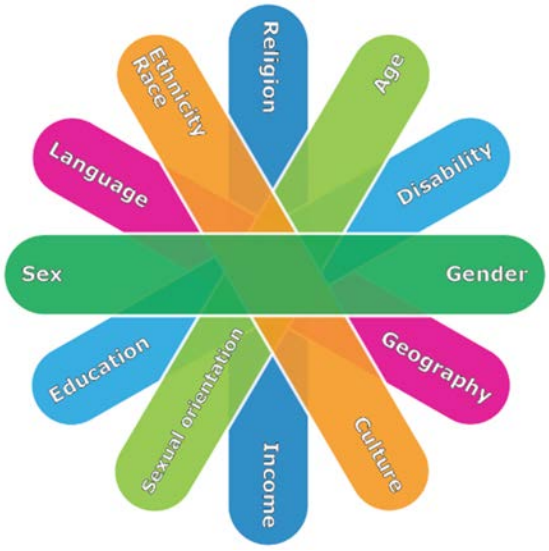

Figure 9: Intersectional identity wheel, sourced from the Government of Canada's GBA+ framework (Government of Canada, 2021).

Articulating these linkages clearly allows for systemic pathways to be reconstructed to design new systems that leave no room for discrimination and power imbalances to prevail (Cameron & Tedds, 2020). GBA+ Frameworks have been critiqued for conflating gender issues primarily with women, tending to focus heavily on GBA as a women's issue rather than include men and examination of equality measures and value for men in spaces of GBA applications (Hankivsky, 2012). There are also critiques that GBA ignores transgendered and intersex persons, instead tending to focus on **heteronormativity** and overall enforcing of gender binaries of a male and female as the only two definable sexes (Hankivsky, 2012; NWAC 2020). Through using the language of 'gender based' there is an implicit assumption that gender is the most prominent structural inequality to consider, in which race, class and other factors are considered an add-on to gender (Hankivsky, 2012).

Indigenous Lens Gender Based Analysis+

A more holistic term that better represents the lived experiences of diverse groups would be to apply an Intersectional-Based Analysis because its focus is on core dimensions of diversity, moving beyond favoring specific categories such as gender, race, or class (Hankivsky, 2012). **Intersectional analysis** allows for more complex and targeted analysis of discrimination and equality, through the shaping of policy interventions that reflect the lived realities and experiences and allows the research of common ground between differently situated groups in society (Hankivsky, 2012). Indigenous people collectively hold a multifaceted and complex range of lived experiences and knowledge, and an intersectional lens takes a whole person approach to equality.

In preparing this framework we debated this approach and opted to remain with the term Gender-Based Analysis for our report, because of our tendency to focus heavily on gender specific issues, it would be more appropriate to the overall theme of this work. When applying a distinctions-based lens, the most common shared experiences of women in resource development processes can be directly linked to their gender and sexual identities, a primary example is gender-based violence in and around extractive industries, increased human trafficking rates and the disproportionate distribution of socio-economic and environmental burdens on Indigenous women and gender diverse persons (Bond & Quinlan, 2018). However, both Intersectional and GBA+ are interwoven throughout this framework. We chose this method for two primary reasons, we honour the fact that Indigenous peoples tend to think and do in collectivist ways, there is less of a focus on gender and more on shared experiences, therefore we often use generalized terms such as 'communities, families, peoples, nations, etc.' and articulate methods of achieving equitable inclusion for all. Our second reason is because while we acknowledge that Indigenous people are collectively impacted by resource development projects, Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons experience distinct and acute impacts that must be centered and addressed head on through targeted policies and practices.

Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.

The limitations of GBA+ as a traditionally western feminist concept was formed during a period when feminist writings habitually excluded intersectional factors such as, historical displacement of Indigenous people from their lands and resources, and colonial imperialist influences that have uniquely impacted women and gender diverse people of color in unique and specific ways (Ricci, 2017). An emerging concept in Indigenous feminist circles, advocacy groups and organizations such as the Native Women's Association of Canada (**NWAC**) is the use of Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis+ (**CRGBA+**) applications policy development and implementation (NWAC, 2020). Increasingly, **grassroots** organizations and communities are applying their own processes to address concerns of equity and representation in spaces like industry-community benefits negotiations, EA processes and traditional land use studies. While there remains no singular 'right answer' to GBA applications that represents the unique realities of Indigenous women across Canada, this framework is one contribution of many others to advance equity building practices in IA for First Nations and Inuit women in **land use planning** and development.

Centering Resilience

Indigenous people's bodies and land **sovereignty** are intrinsically linked together, this fundamental concept is why we titled the companion report to this framework as *'An Examination of Barriers in Impact Assessments and the Navigation of Violence to Land and Body'*. We wanted to specifically recognize the shared experience that all Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons face, navigating violence to land and body, when corporate interests alter, destroy, or pollute the natural world. Indigenous women and gender diverse persons face dehumanization, racism and discrimination which transform them into targets for sexual and violently motivated abuses and crimes (Archuleta, 2006). Indigenous women and gender diverse persons are central to intergenerational knowledge transfer, and colonial systems have actively worked to disenfranchise women and their children from their cultural practices and homelands through policies such as, the Indian Act (De Finney, 2017). Under colonial logic, Indigenous women and Indigenous lands were cast as colonial property and both have been devalued and constructed as 'rapeable' (Simpson, 2013). The voices of Indigenous women speaking up to name their enemy, oppressors and experiences of surviving threats and violence are an important process of rhetoric that resists continued violence and helps shape Indigenous feminist theory (Archuleta, 2006). To claim victimhood undermines the agency and ability of Indigenous women and gender diverse persons to formulate and determine their own solutions that can respond to systems perpetuating oppression and colonial impositions on their lands and their bodies.

> **'How do we move past narrow, individualized, depoliticized psycho-social understandings of resilience that ignore the ways the Canadian state has, for centuries, deliberately and systematically attacked and committed genocide against Indigenous communities?'**
>
> *- (De Finney, 2017)*

Definitions of resilience tend to focus on health and individual outcomes rather than systemic processes, in the case of Indigenous women's resilience, historical and systemic processes must be applied and actively interrogated (De Finney, 2017). Focusing exclusively on individualized processes takes momentum away from political, environmental, and economic responses to colonial influences that impact resilience and well-being of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons (De Finney, 2017). Indigenous groups have been displaced and disempowered from their lands. Land is a central factor in shaping resilience, it holds Indigenous cultures and ways of life, it holds us all (De Finney, 2017). Indigenous women's control over their own lands and resources is critical in ensuring safer communities that provide economic self-determination and spiritual and **sociocultural** resilience (De Finney, 2017). It is important to center Indigenous resilience while reading this framework, the research and the topics that have been selected have all been done in the interest of maintaining and perpetuating ways of doing work that equitably include and represent the interests and livelihood of all Indigenous people. In its broadest application, Indigenous resilience is interwoven with the resilience of the land, in conversations about ecological impacts, mitigation options and alternative assessments, the Indigenous **'stakeholders'** involved in these processes bottom lines are not measured in currency, but in health and well-being, and of the ability for future generations to practice ways of being that have existed for centuries.

Indigenous Lens GBA+ Framework Application

The visuals and guide depicted below are specifically oriented around an Indigenous Lens GBA+ in an Impact Assessment. This model is a way to build equity in IAs for Indigenous peoples, while addressing key concerns that government institutions and project **proponents** go from a passive note-taking role to fulfill consultation requirements, to actively contributing to the resilience and livelihoods of communities while minimizing project impacts in progressive, innovative, and informed ways. Figure 10 is a visual graph of Indigenous Lens GBA+ analysis framed within the context of an IA lifecycle (and beyond). This circular model was chosen to indicate a relationship between all IAs, projects that are assessed through the regulatory process cannot be viewed in isolation and instead represent an ongoing process of 'learning through doing', this is to acknowledge that GBA+ applications within an IA are an ongoing process, and an important step in ensuring correct implementation of analysis by both project proponents and government institutions and building on existing key findings that are commonly occurring.

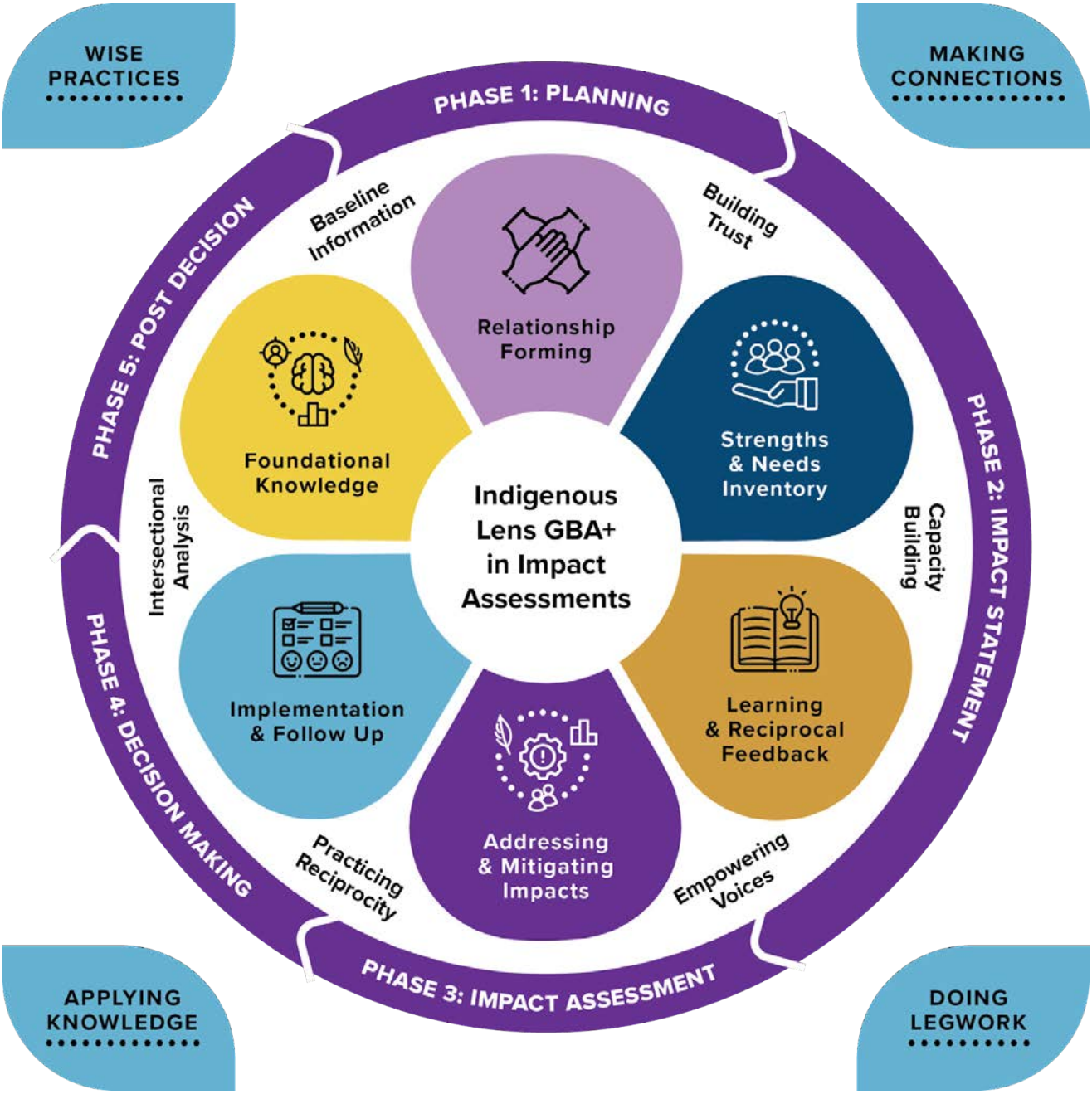

Figure 10: Indigenous lens GBA+ framework for Impact Assessments. This model supports four key recommendations: *Making Connections, Doing Legwork, Applying Knowledge, and Wise Practices.* The model is centered within the 5 Phases of an IA developed by IAAC: *Planning, Impact Statement, Impact Assessment, Decision Making and Post Decision.* This circular model presents a method to achieve equitable intersectional representation in IA processes beginning with *Relationship Forming, Strengths and Needs Inventory, Learning and Reciprocal Feedback, Addressing and Mitigating Impacts, Implementation and Follow-up, and Foundational Knowledge.* These steps overlap to accomplish: *Trust building, Capacity building, Empowers Voices, Reciprocal Practices, Intersectional Analysis,* and contributes to *Baseline Information gathered.*

The exterior of the model shows key theories behind the smaller steps conducting an Indigenous Lens GBA+ Analysis on a given project:

- **Making connections** indicates a willingness to enter a relationship based on mutual interest and willingness to listen and learn from one another, proponents learn about the land and the people in which an operation will take place as the community learns about a proposed project.
- **Doing legwork** is achieved when interested parties in consultations 'make steps' to conduct thorough, meaningful engagement that considers and validates diverse forms of knowledge, and adequately includes intersectional groups of people.
- **Applying knowledge** takes place when project planning and assessment includes conditions that address the feedback given in consultations with tangible, actionable, measurable ways.
- **Wise practices** emerge in following up with project implementation, collecting both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data to analyze for potential applications in future assessments. Core competencies and ways of doing work emerge with reflection.

The following steps must begin to take place *before a project is submitted to the Impact Assessment officially,* this constitutes early engagement and allows Indigenous people to better prepare for timeline restrictions that occur once a project has been accepted.

Before Project Submission - Phase 1: Planning & Phase 2: Impact Statement

Relationship Forming

- Learning about the Indigenous peoples living in proximity to development, learning the history and cultural expectations of the community
- Multiple communications mechanisms implemented early on (ex: personal visits/ calls/ regular meetings/ bulletins)
- Making oneself known in a space, inviting people to learn more about project potentials and planned activities.
- Building in gender equity considerations to early engagement and through project planning

Questions to consider:

- Have all communities responded to notices of a planned project? If not, why?
- Have distinctions based approaches been utilized? (Intersectional representation, nation, age, gender, sexuality, geographic area, etc.)
- Are relationships formed with multiple types of services? (Bands, communities, public, Indigenous non-profits, 2SLGBTQQIA+ groups)

Strengths and Needs Inventory

- Canvassing community services, local organizations to identify where gaps in service exist (clinics, social services, communal infrastructure, cultural support services)
- Assessment of community capacity; identify Indigenous people with existing skills within a community that keep employment opportunities and consultation efforts local
- Understanding the timelines to prepare and familiarize communities with project information
- Co-creation of studies; scoping; timelines; level of participation.

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Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

Questions to consider:

- How am I actively listening and responding to the needs and building on the strengths of the people I engage?
- Is the methodology I am using applying good engagement facilitation methods? Am I using a trauma informed approach?
- Is the work I am proposing placing undue burden on the community? How can I alleviate this?

Learning and Reciprocal Feedback

- Regular updates, open, clear, and transparent communication
- Safe, welcoming, and open sharing environment
- Training and information sessions about developments/ IA processes are regularly held
- Consistent community meetings using various consultation methods
- Implementation of study activities; utilizing participatory engagement strategies

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Working together for a common cause.

Questions to consider:

- How can I make spaces that are accessible and inclusive for all walks of life?
- Are the planned studies sufficiently including an Indigenous GBA+ lens?
- Is the feedback received being applied in a way that respects the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons?

Reflection and Analysis - Phase 3: Impact Assessment, Phase 4: Decision Making & Phase 5: Post Decision

Addressing and Mitigating Impacts

- Actionizing what is shared in tangible and realistic ways
- Solutions oriented discussions and reciprocal problem solving
- Reduction of disproportionate impacts of development (ex: food, water security)
- Going beyond notetaking to implementation of measures that increase community safety, confidentiality, and protect traditional knowledge.

Questions to consider:

- How are the planned mitigation measures including an Indigenous GBA+ Lens?
- Is the proposed impact mitigation plan increasing the scope of benefits while minimizing negative impacts on Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people?

Implementation and Follow Up

- Community interests are represented in project conditions where possible to increase transparency during project implementation.
- Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis occurs at regular intervals post project decision, respecting the principles of Ownership, Control Access and Possession (**OCAP**)

Questions to consider:

- Have the predicted environmental effects been accurate?
- What are the socio-economic baseline conditions before and after project approval?
- Have the proposed mitigation measures been effectively implemented in communities?
- Have we followed up with original consultees about their experiences?

Foundational Knowledge

- Findings from project planning are reviewed and incorporated into a central database, similar findings that occur frequently, with regularity are incorporated into ‘baseline information' for future project considerations.
- Best practices emerge, saving time and effort in future assessments.
- 'Stakeholders' apply more focused and well rounded GBA+ parameters in future assessments

Questions to consider:

- Has this project brought forward useful information for practitioners?
- Are there contributions that could be made to the field of GBA+ in Impact Assessments through project review?
- Has there been sufficient acknowledgement of known, recurring impacts in current detailed project description submissions?
- What can we learn from previous projects moving into the future about respecting the interests and well being of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people?

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report

Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons are targets of killing, rape, and disenfranchisement in North America, and have historically and contemporarily had their political and customary roles eroded or eliminated in Indigenous societies (The Red Nation, 2021). After the Impact Assessment Act (**IAA**) came into legislation, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (**MMIWG**) report was officially released to the public. The report addresses the crisis of MMIWG in Canada and is a ground-breaking source of information and research. True mitigation of project impacts can only occur if the inherent rights of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Plus (**2SLGBTQQIA+**) people are recognized. After decades of silence, a national inquiry has created space for survivors to come forward and share their stories. The sense of power and belonging that was lost will not be restored through the Truth-Gathering process alone, we await tangible responses to the calls to action to be implemented for real change to occur (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). The MMIWG report demonstrates how powerful relationship building is, and that restoring, and rebuilding trust represents a crucial first step in understanding how colonial violence persists today. As outlined in the MMIWG Final Report titled 'Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Volume 1a, 1b', institutional, systematic, and structural colonial violence persists through 4 major pathways:

- historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma;
- social and economic marginalization;
- maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will; and
- ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG, 2019).

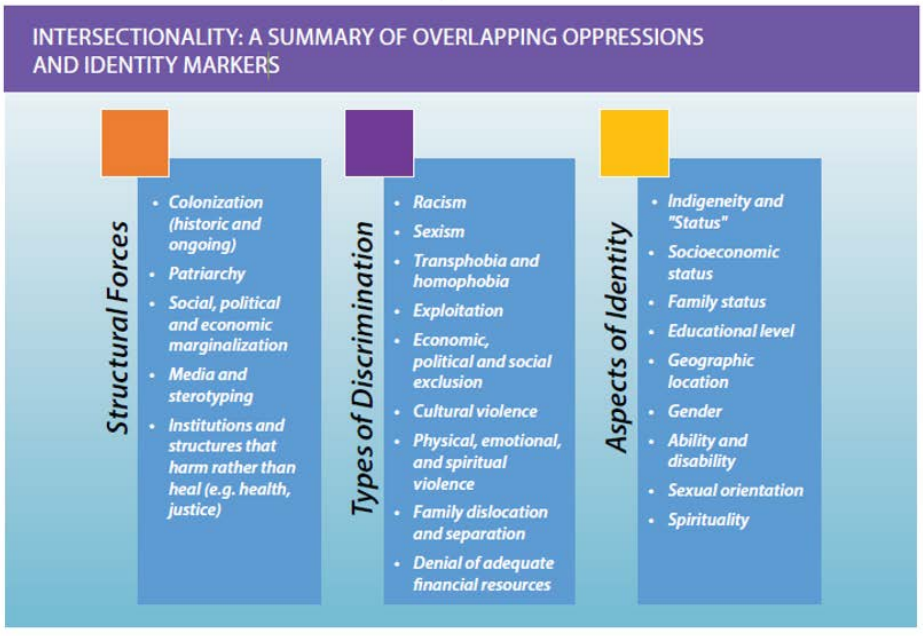

Figure 11: Intersectionality as framed within the MMIWG Final Report, (MMIWG, 2019).

These pathways represent intersecting influences that can be experienced individually or **cumulatively.** Structural forces reinforce discrimination towards various aspects of identity, compounding to create overlapping oppression and exclusionary patterns. Violence is more likely to occur when multiple pathways of colonial violence come together, imposing intersectional barriers of discrimination (MMIWG, 2019). The impacts of colonial violence manifest in the lives of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through increased experiences of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, water insecurity and unemployment (MMIWG, 2019). Access to support networks providing childcare, shelter, counselling, or education is limited due to the economic marginalization that persists and reinforces further social marginalization (MMIWG, 2019). These conditions make it challenging to satisfy basic needs for oneself or to provide adequate childcare and expose Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and their families to higher rates of violence (MMIWG, 2019). Dependency on unsafe employment makes it difficult for victims to come forward and share their truth, survivors clearly identified the role of institutional culture that lacked recognition of these challenges and more so, lacked opportunities to heal and overcome them (MMIWG, 2019). Historical instances of the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people being denied or ignored, make rebuilding relationships and fostering safe spaces more difficult. Lack of accountability and institutional support exacerbate the conditions of violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG, 2019).

Implementing the Calls for Justice in Extractive Industries

The IAAC recognizes the Calls to Justice from the MMIWG report related to extractive industries and encourages their addressment in project planning and development (IAAC, 2020a). The MMIWG Calls for Justice have outlined specific points dedicated to extractive and development industries, they are as follows:

> *[13.1 We call upon all resource-extraction and development industries to consider the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, as well as their equitable benefit from development, at all stages of project planning, assessment, implementation, management, and monitoring.*
>
> *13.2 We call upon all governments and bodies mandated to evaluate, approve, and/or monitor development projects to complete gender-based socio-economic impact assessments on all proposed projects as part of their decision making and ongoing monitoring of projects. Project proposals must include provisions and plans to mitigate risks and impacts identified in the impact assessments prior to being approved.*
>
> *13.3 We call upon all parties involved in the negotiations of impact-benefit agreements related to resource-extraction and development projects to include provisions that address the impacts of projects on the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and*

> *2SLGBTQQIA people. Provisions must also be included to ensure that Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA people equitably benefit from the projects.*
>
> *13.4 We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to fund further inquiries and studies in order to better understand the relationship between resource extraction and other development projects and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. At a minimum, we support the call of Indigenous women and leaders for a public inquiry into the sexual violence and racism at hydroelectric projects in northern Manitoba.*
>
> *13.5 We call upon resource-extraction and development industries and all governments and service providers to anticipate and recognize increased demand on social infrastructure because of development projects and resource extraction, and for mitigation measures to be identified as part of the planning and approval process. Social infrastructure must be expanded and service capacity built to meet the anticipated needs of the host communities in advance of the start of projects. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that policing, social services, and health services are adequately staffed and resourced.]*
>
> - Direct excerpt from the MMIWG Calls for Justice Pg. 30

These calls to justice are foundational to the work of this report, in understanding the wider, systemic experiences of Indigenous women living in, and around, major development projects across Canada. There emerges a broader context of lived experience reported by women impacted by these developments, making adequate inclusion and equity in planning of projects critical in protecting the environmental, socio-economic, health, safety well-being of Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse persons. We highly recommend practitioners read Vol 1a & 1b in any literature analysis conducted about GBA+.

Federal Commitments

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has specific clauses which protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples such as, Section 35 of the Constitution Act which distinctly recognizes and affirms the rights of Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, which extends to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people (Government of Canada, 2021a). Aboriginal and Treaty rights were determined in historic or modern treaty agreements which establish the cultural and social rights of Indigenous peoples as well as their right to self-government and to occupy and use lands for traditional purposes (Government of Canada, 2021a). These same rights are continually reaffirmed in modern legislation, like the IAA, despite being widely critiqued by Indigenous groups and academic institutions as limiting the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination. Canadian legislation explicitly calls for Indigenous engagement as a responsibility of to maintain the honour of the Crown with the **duty to consult**, and more recently IAAC has been investigating methods in which to uphold the Government of Canada's legislative mandate to enact the articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (**UNDRIP**, or **The Declaration**) within existing Canadian law through the UNDRIP Act. This is a

welcome answer to Indigenous nations across Canada advocating for implementation of decision-making processes within the IAAof 2019 , with respect to Phase 4: Decision Making of the Impact Assessment **Free, Prior and Informed Consent** (**FPIC**). The distinction between the duty to consult and FPIC lies in the language, where consent implies that permission was sought, whereas consultation provides no real ability for Indigenous people to veto or reject project developments (Papillon, 2017). UNDRIP outlines inherent rights of Indigenous peoples internationally over lands and resources in their traditionally occupied territories (UNDRIP, 2008). Despite the IAA specifically referencing UNDRIP, a lack of real provisions or tangible plans have yet to surface within existing IAA 2019 legislation. Canada's commitment to implement UNDRIP and reaffirming the duty to consult opens the door for meaningful dialogue and inclusion of Indigenous voices and perspectives; however, there is much left to be done to accomplish reciprocal, meaningful engagement opportunities for all impacted Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons.

The duty to consult is meant to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are meaningfully engaged with, to help make informed decisions that consider multiple perspectives. Yet, in many instances consultation is underfunded, rushed, and overwhelming for the Indigenous communities and organizations expected to participate in ways that suit external government agencies and their timelines. Frequently, smaller communities must manage exponential increases in workload and are in a constant state of reaction to outside engagements. Many nations are being consulted on multiple projects at a time via provincial EAs and IAs while actively facing extensive social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Although committing to these agreements, it remains to be seen how the federal government intends to actionize consultation and seek FPIC in IAs or meet the 26 articles outlined in the UNDRIP Act. Indigenous TEK incorporation and true engagement opportunities are an evolving field of study, with growing evidence that a combination of scientific and Indigenous knowledge is necessary to effectively address localized environmental issues (Alexander, 2011; Wilson, 2019). The new implementation of the IAA has detailed parameters about information collection and open invitation to seek input from communities, however, the agency maintains a broad and non-binding engagement methodology to ensure that the duty to consult will be met (IAA, 2019). Glaringly, Phase 4: Decision Making of the IAA remains a closed process in which legislative authority rests firmly with the ministry and cabinet and does not allow Indigenous people to be a part of decision making, contravening UNDRIP principles of FPIC as well as self-determination and self-governance over traditional territories. How the federal government intends to implement articles of UNDRIP within the boundaries of existing legislation remains unclear until the national action plan is publicized (Justice Can, 2022).

The IAAC has recently published the *'*Indigenous Knowledge Policy Framework for Project Reviews and Regulatory Decisions*'*. This framework specifically references the federal commitments, as recognized, and affirmed in section 35 of the constitution act, the UNDRIP Declaration, upholding FPIC, and ensuring

Indigenous engagement occurs in IAs. To quote this framework, “The Government of Canada recognizes that Indigenous Knowledge improves federal decision-making and strengthens project reviews and regulatory decisions” (IAAC, 2022). The following guiding principles which were provided;

- Respect Indigenous people and their knowledge
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with Indigenous Peoples
- Meaningfully consider Indigenous Knowledge
- Respect the confidentiality of Indigenous Knowledge
- Support capacity building related to Indigenous Knowledge

Each guiding principle is described and paired with specific recommendations for how federal officials can apply these guiding principles. These can be reviewed and referenced during engagement sessions, in written requests, and/or when providing comments on IAs. These guidelines, however, are the responsibility of project proponents, the government, federal departments, and agencies to fulfill. This document focuses on highlighting resources and actions that community members can use to engage more effectively in this process, while also weaving information to guide IA practitioners and other users of this manual to apply an Indigenous GBA+ lens to IAs.

National Strategy Development

The Government of Canada has already created and published an ‘Indigenous Community Development National Strategy’ representing a starting point to building effective and sustainable Indigenous communities (Government of Canada, 2021b), although this kind of national strategy must also be supported by localized grassroots initiatives to be truly effective. Through creating true nation-to-nation partnerships, Indigenous communities’ relations to one another can be strengthened, in turn creating capacity to begin improving Crown-Indigenous relations (Government of Canada, 2016). Only once these relationships have been built can authentic, Indigenous-led structures begin to be implemented across the country (Government of Canada, 2016). In the national strategy, the aim of empowering Indigenous communities is accomplished by gathering data which is categorized as mutually beneficial data (Government of Canada, 2021b). This data is meant to empower Indigenous communities to set informed objectives and measure progress using accurate, current, and relevant information. The Government calls for the use of community-led processes to be developed through holistic, strength-based processes. This strategy is supported by four major pillars which the Government has committed to accomplishing and supporting, which distinctly focus on placing control of community development in the hands of community members (Government of Canada, 2021b). To summarize the Indigenous Community Development National Strategies four pillars (Government of Canada, 2021b):

1. **Supporting community-driven, nation-based planning initiatives and capacity building**
    a. Allocating multi-year funding to planning initiatives for comprehensive community planning

b. Funding community level capacity building initiatives

2. **Supporting Indigenous community-to-community learning**
    a. Allocating funding to bring communities together for knowledge sharing
    b. Funding tools and resource development to share between communities
    c. Creating opportunities to facilitate connections and learning
    d. Supporting implementation of community-led plans
3. **Building and strengthening collaboration and partnerships**
    a. Developing integrated support teams and interdepartmental committees with community participation
    b. Aligning funding with community planning objectives, investing in priorities identified by communities
4. **Strengthen awareness of cultural diversity**
    a. Create Indigenous community development training available to all non-Indigenous community members of transient workers
    b. Host information sharing sessions to showcase Indigenous success stories

Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (**TRC**) published 94 Calls to Action to be taken to address the legacy and lasting impacts of residential schools and initiate the process of reconciliation (TRC, 2015). Throughout the six years of the report's development, over 6,000 survivors came forward to share their truths (TRC, 2015). We thank every one of these survivors for having the courage to be vulnerable and resilient in the face of unspeakable abuse. The report details how students in residential schools were subjected to conditions of extreme malnutrition, to physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and sexual abuse, enduring unsafe living conditions which ultimately led to the deaths of thousands of children (Reconciliation Education, 2022). The exact number of mortalities remains unknown due to a lack of proper record keeping while the residential school system persisted for over a century (Reconciliation Education, 2022). In the spirit of reconciliation for the past harms perpetuated against Indigenous peoples, there remains opportunities to address the calls to action that would remediate past harms in economic development. Implementing where possible TRC recommendations in assessment planning and development promotes equitable representation of Indigenous interests in resource development and would uphold specific Calls to Action, which the federal government is already making steps to implement. Pointedly, Call to Action 92 which states 'we call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the UNDRIP Act as a reconciliation framework and apply its principles, norms and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources' (TRC 2015).

International Sustainable Development Goals

As part of the United Nations (**UN**) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Plan, countries around the globe made a commitment to actionize the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) (United Nations, 2022). These goals address global inequalities through addressing intersectional issues like global health and wellbeing, gender equality, climate action, institutional and infrastructural support and more, which are highlighted in figure 14 (United Nations, 2022). Each of these goals have been thoroughly developed and are backed by publications with detailed support networks, capacity-building guidelines, and annual implementation progress reports (United Nations, 2022). Reading the 2022 report is a harrowing reality check, as statistics and case studies from all over the world outline the dire state of global inequalities (United Nations, 2022). This report urges global systematic reform to be made, advocating for immediate, drastic action. Specific statistics that stood out to us included:

- **Call 5: Gender Equality**
  It would take another 40 years for women and men to be represented equally in national political leadership at the current pace, as women's representation in national parliaments increased from 22.4% in 2015 to 26.2% in 2022 (United Nations, 2022).
- **Call 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**
  The World's water-related ecosystems are being degraded at an alarming rate, over the past 300 years, over 85% of the planet's wetlands have been lost (United Nations, 2022).
- **Call 13: Climate Action**
  Energy-related CO2 emissions increased by 6% in 2021, reaching the highest level ever recorded, while global temperatures continue to rise, leading to more extreme weather (United Nations, 2022).

Figure 12: The 17 Sustainable Development Goals, sourced from the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development Plan (United Nations, 2022).

Ways of Knowing and Doing

Equity Building Practices in Impact Assessments

The government of Canada has made explicit commitments to ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion are values that guide IAs. They define these as:

> **Equity**: Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life (Government of Canada, 2022).
>
> A **diverse** workforce in the public service is made up of individuals who have an array of identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, perspectives, and experiences that are representative of Canada's current and evolving population (Government of Canada, 2022).
>
> An **inclusive** workplace is fair, equitable, supportive, welcoming, and respectful. It recognizes, values and leverages differences in identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, experiences, and perspectives that support and reinforce Canada's evolving human rights framework (Government of Canada, 2022).

IA policies specifically require and outline the duty to consult Indigenous people but, this broad statement leaves much to be done to attain diverse, include, and equal opportunities in impact assessment engagement. To make IAs more inclusive, GBA+ frameworks are being used to pinpoint diverse groups of Indigenous people that are not being adequately represented. Ensuring that not only Indigenous people are involved Indigenous women, Indigi-queer people, Indigenous Elders, Indigenous youth, and all intersectional identities are present in community meetings and planning builds more effective representation in systems. Challenging assumptions about applying GBA+ processes in communities begins with the knowledge that there are distinctions between communities even in a small geographic range; that all community members can benefit equally from resource development; that Indigenous women and gender diverse persons do not want to engage in planning phases of development or do not understand the processes, this can only be found through gathering disaggregated data about intersecting identities to truly understand community context before assessing potential impacts (Forner, 2020).

Representation Matters

Initiatives that promote inclusivity in environmental science have led to an overall trend of fostering leadership opportunities for Indigenous men, however these opportunities did not extend to Indigenous women, non-binary people and/or youth (Dhillon, 2020). These groups remain underrepresented in environmental sciences in partnerships, research studies and core governance studies (Dhillon, 2020).

This is symptomatic of larger and more complex issues however, all the women and gender diverse persons we engaged with called for more representation for Indigenous women in spaces like IAs and EAs, and many explicitly expressed the need for more inclusion from band leadership and tribal councils to be informed about planned projects in the territory.

In reflecting on representation, it's important to understand that there are ways in which information is conveyed in typical engagements commonly occurring across Canada. There is a mapping of rights holders or communities who may hold an interest in being consulted on a given project, the government and proponent then proceeds to open dialogue with the identified communities, through some medium of communication (calls, emails, letters) typically beginning with band offices or tribal councils. In our companion report we argued that there are instances of **locutionary silencing** occurring on a regular basis with various projects, this occurs when the platform (IAAC) employs for group speech (Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons) is occupied by someone who lacks the proper authority to speak for the group (cisgender males) and the opportunity for group speech passes (Townsend, 2020). This has historically been tribal or band leadership speaking on behalf of the **membership**, as is their right as elected officials, however the methodology in which information is collected remains unclear how, or if, Indigenous women and gender diverse persons are being centered in consultations. Furthermore, we argue that **illocutionary silencing** is occurring when Indigenous groups *do* present their interests and speak at engagements and their speech is not given appropriate uptake, and therefore does not prove to be an effective form of engagement (Townsend, 2020). This can, and has, occurred during the process of giving and receiving information, a proponent or government representatives, taking notes of communications received during an information session, and tasked with reducing feedback to key points of a longer meeting may miss meanings of stories, misinterpret the meaning of words, or ignore specific pathways of discussion that cannot be formatted into a summarized values table. These factors interweave into a prevailing issue of silencing of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons voices, effectively muting or changing their concerns and priorities to the worldview of the platform holder (band/ tribal leadership), and worldview of the recipient stakeholder (proponent/government).

Increased representation is critical to ensuring that co-creation of dialogue opportunities exists in communities that are being researched and engaged with, as was called for in testimonials during the National Inquiry (MMIWG, 2019). Decolonizing research and planning processes such as IAs begins with creating structures that promote equitable representation of Indigenous women and gender diverse peoples' interests. Becoming meaningful participants in decision-making processes, particularly in the context of Indigenous engagement and consultation is a fundamental component of undoing legacies of misogyny, patriarchy, and colonialism (MMIWG, 2019). An example of this involves the Inuit women in Nunatsiavut: *[Women's Groups representing the voices of Inuit women participating in EA processes: I) Postville Women's Group; 2) the Tongamuit Inuit Annait (TIA); 3) the Labrador Inuit Women's Association; and 4) the Ad Hoc Committee on Aboriginal Women and Mining and Labrador Legal Services. Women's*

contributions to previous EA processes highlighted broad concerns about the effects of the mine on traditional harvesting, on community well-being, and on the health of individuals and families. Women were also concerned that the benefits of development, namely employment, and especially better-paid jobs, would not be equally shared by women] (Mills, Simmons, Andrew, and Tuglavina, 2022).

While the suggestion of creating policies that keep people cognizant of these factors is critically important in ensuring accountability of all interested people in project planning activities, it is equally important to advocate for mechanisms which would reduce this harm through practical and tangible methods. These include but are not limited to, hiring Indigenous women and gender diverse persons to conduct engagement for their own communities, and to do research and analysis of key issues related to information being collected. Through increased representation, Indigenous values of self-determination and reciprocity replace the rhetoric of diversity when Indigenous women are centered in key functions of engagement and ongoing studies during an IA and carries multiple benefits for all stakeholders. The translation of Indigenous worldviews from Traditional Knowledge (**TK**) to Westernized formats is awkward and has demonstrable difficulty, the filtering of knowledge through non-Indigenous ways of thinking and understanding could be addressed through Indigenous women and gender diverse persons doing the legwork of engaging community members. This approach is already occurring and having success in some areas such as, the work of Chastity Davis-Alphonse in British Columbia (Davis-Alphonse, 2021), Alison Linklater, Omushkegowuk Okimagan (Grand Chief) of Mushkegowuk Council of Chiefs, and the previous work of Roseanne Archibald, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (Somos, 2021).

Giving the platform for Indigenous women to step into doing the work of data collection and engagement creates a sense of ownership and pride. By communicating with people who are familiar, it is more likely to lead to a comfortable and inclusive experience for community members. By having local people doing the work, it means that industry partners and government agencies can commit to doing more in person consultative work and be present at meetings, making sure that people are speaking in safe spaces and to familiar faces which is a highlighted need of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons to be able to explore long-term health and safety issues with less interference from external influences.

Self-Determination as a Guiding Principle

Indigenous led efforts to protect lands and practice self-determination extend to a global context, and decolonization is about self-determination between groups without the colonial state as mediator (Minno Bloom & Carnine, 2016). We have too often heard sentiments of helplessness or feeling insignificant against the wider economic and political push-and-pull that goes on around Indigenous communities. In these moments, we also hear the same message: Indigenous women are powerful, they are knowledge transferrers, and they bring families together. Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse persons are

sacred, and they deserve protection and opportunities to safely participate in industry activities in the ways that they choose, should they wish. Every person that is impacted by project activities matters and deserves the dignity and respect of being listened to and accommodated. Regular families that happen to live near development projects are being impacted, children are growing up alongside mass destruction of the natural environment. We hear stories from grandparents of them being able to drink straight from the lakes and rivers, that this is no longer the reality of the world around them. Historically, Indigenous people have been largely excluded from decisions that have led us to the contemporary socio-political landscape, and now it is our responsibility and our right to take a stand to protect our families, our health, and our futures.

New policies and legislation are emerging all the time, with new consultation and accommodation requirements, Indigenous nations have seen their lands and resources management portfolio's exponentially increase. In rising to meet these new demands, communities must come together and articulate their needs and long-term priorities, both individually and collectively. Shifting from a state of dependency on government institutions to self-determination, being able to have control of setting collective priorities and making decisions is a critical step in achieving authentic engagement.

> **"Rebuilding our Nationhood is a fundamental and ongoing process to obtain self-determination and self-governance. With collective interests, priorities, and shared values we become strong contenders in the fast-paced world of economic development and legislative processes that influence our lands and resources."**
>
> *– Anonymous, 2022*

'Self-determined and Indigenous-led solutions and services' is one of the key principles of the MMIWG National Action Plan (NWAC, 2021). The right to self-determination is an internationally recognized and affirmed right of every human being. During the atrocities of World War II, the UN was formed and began their work by making a declaration about basic human rights. Canada has since become a signatory of this declaration. The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 1 states:

1. *[All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural developments.*
2. *All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of their own means of subsistence.*
3. *The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust*

Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self- determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations] (UNHR, 1966).

The assertion of this basic human rights Covenant in Canada can be authentically achieved only when the means of achieving self-determination are restored to all identity groups in Canada. This is where the UNDRIP Article 3 *[Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development]* links together (UNDRIP, 2008). Canada has long been a supporter of self-determination and therefore, in thinking of this guiding principle, we must view it as a commonly held belief between nations. The UN General Assembly has clearly identified colonialism as a violation of the human rights of those people subject to the colonial state, leaving self-determination as the only clear path forwards (Manuel & Derrickson, R. 2016).

1. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the UN, and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation.
2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development (UNHR, 1960).

The concept of self-determination is key to understanding the integrity of how Indigenous peoples wish to be consulted in industrial development and major projects, laying a foundation of respect and cooperation for Treaty negotiations, and honoring of relationships. A key takeaway from these declarations is that there cannot be self-determination without consent and mutual agreement on the terms of what constitutes self-determination for each nation. Indigenous people have the right to determine the way in which they live, and resource development projects impacting them must consider their rights to live and to use the land and follow their respective traditional and cultural practices.

Recognizing Indigenous Resurgence is Place-Based

Indigenous communities are at varying levels of readiness to participate in development opportunities occurring in and around their territories, and around the places that they currently reside. Reclamation of **place-based knowledge** and cultural practices is a key component of nation self-determination and is in some regions in constant danger of being lost. It is thus critical to approach community readiness with an open heart and mind to the lived realities and priorities of individuals and communities. Through interacting with colonial structures such as resource development activities, there are a myriad of interrelated factors that contribute to facilitating or impeding Indigenous people's involvement in industry and government activities to varying degrees of success. There is a fundamental and ingrained connection between land and body in Inuit and First Nations cultural worldviews, and diverse ways in which to seek

Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.

representation and organize within each region respectively. In spaces where impacts are being discussed, the new comment processes demonstrate an intermixing of impacts with existing cultural knowledge, traditional roles, and environmental considerations. **Resurgence** activities are examined by leading scholars and activists across the nation. We highlight the work of Jeff Corntassel in his study of self-determination pathways explored below. We seek to highlight key aspects of resurgence within the context of industry imposition on lands occupied by Indigenous peoples, applying his theory as it relates to Indigenous resurgence in contemporary Canadian context.

Rights to Responsibilities

The current discourse around rights to property, occupancy, political sovereignty, and justice is centered around Westernized worldviews (Shrinkjhal, 2021). Indigenous rights in current times come from **state-centric** forums, in contrast, Indigenous responsibilities to the natural world come from a long-standing and deeply rooted relationship to their homelands, before the existence of state systems in the area (Corntassel, 2012). Framing engagements within a context of not only strength of territorial assertion or claim to land but the upholding of values that all interested parties have committed to is critical in meaningful consultations. Both Federal and Provincial governments have committed to strengthening trust relationships with Indigenous communities, through increased transparency, and **accessibility** of information (IAAC, 2020). Indigenous communities continually advocate for values integration such as spiritual connection to space and place, relations to the beings of creation and respect for living beings and mother earth (AFN, 2013) as they assert these values into project planning and implementation. We explore this topic in more detail under the subheading *'Rights Based Approaches in Impact Assessments'*.

Reconciliation to Resurgence

When reflecting on the topic of Indigenous resurgence, it's important to view the concept of reconciliation with a level of scrutiny and critical analysis. Reconciliation without restitution to compensate Indigenous peoples for past harms maintains colonial injustices and harms to present day (Corntassel, 2012). An alternative method in which to approach issues of land is to consider community-centered resurgence through renewal of practices that increase continuity and transference of principles and values (Corntassel, 2012).

Resources to Relationships

Transactions are normative in current consultations, and corporate creation of wealth is measured in numbers alone, not in contributions to the well-being of families and communities (Corntassel, 2012). This highlights a crucial diversion between worldviews. When viewing engagements with Indigenous peoples quantified through costs alone, the age-old criticism of nation to corporation is effectively upheld and reinforced in private spheres to this day. The federal government's acknowledgement of the need for nation-to-nation relationships must be enforced with courage, strength and support of conditions that protect Indigenous people's relationships to the natural world, in doing so, benefitting all demographic

groups impacted by development. Acknowledging, supporting, and protecting relationships between one another and the natural world is a shared responsibility for all interested parties.

Empowering Indigenous Women, Girls, and Gender Diverse Persons

Promote and Support Indigenous Women as Leaders

Across the nation, people are paying closer attention to issues that have gender specific impacts which are exacerbated by intersectional issues that influence the lives of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons in distinct and significant ways. Communities are taking a closer look at issues of gender-based violence across the nation, and the provincial and federal governments are recognizing these disparities in the lived realities of Indigenous women and other races and ethnicities that have been previously marginalized. Many reports are emerging that outline the overwhelming statistics of violence against women, lack of access to affordable housing, rates of housing insecurity, and other systemic barriers that maintain the status quo of colonial imposition and perpetuate colonial violence.

The UNs SDG publication indicates that women and girls have experienced physical or sexual violence at a rate of 1 in 5 in the last 12 months (United Nations, 2022). The fly in and fly out model of industrial camps has led to various new challenges in resource development and extraction projects. Transient workers pose risks to Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons because of heightened disposable income and weakened connection to the community (Gibson, 2017). This reality, combined with the systematic dehumanization of women, leads to instances of violence, abuse, and sexual assault against Indigenous women at significantly higher rates than other demographic categories (Morin, 2020). Major project developments, such as the Alberta oil sands, have historically and presently had devastating impacts on Indigenous women, who have been on the fringes of development projects. The implications of provincial and federal priorities to expand on mining development and resource development are directly oppositional to their priorities to achieve reconciliation and prioritize the overall health and safety of Indigenous people. With the recent critical minerals' strategy announcement in Ontario and other current regional assessments ongoing, like the Ring of Fire and Offshore Oil and Gas exploratory drilling off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, investigations into the parameters of focus and implications for Indigenous communities in the region can, and should, be informed by impacted Indigenous peoples of the regions. Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons must be front and center in these conversations to effectively recognize the needs and concerns of all.

> **"This isn't the 1950's where it's a man's world, the time for women leaders to take a seat at the table is here and it isn't going away"**
>
> *- Anonymous 2021*

Ensuring that women, girls, and gender diverse persons can participate and are thoroughly included when conducting IAs is essential to adequately consider the diversity of perspectives that exists in

communities. From our engagement with Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons from remote northern communities, we learned that most of them either don't know how to participate in IAs or don't feel comfortable doing so. 100% of participants in our workshops expressed that they felt that Indigenous women have not been included, engaged with, or considered in policy development. These women expressed worries related to health and wellbeing, environmental impacts, noise disturbance, safety, and fears related to how an influx of transient workers could affect local women and children. Participants outlined that the path forwards would require policy change and redevelopment, where youth and elder engagement was prioritized for an equal inclusion of voices, and a solution-oriented approach.

> **"Not about us, without us at the table."** (Inuit Perspectives)
>
> *– MMIWG Report Pg. 88*

The responsibility of ensuring this inclusion is unfolding rests with all parties and requires 'boots on the ground' work by both government and industry proponents, doing the legwork necessary to be present in the community and ensuring that messaging, meeting formats and engagement methodology are sound, rigorous, and accessible. In turn, bands must ensure that all membership is informed in a timely way and that membership lists are kept as current as possible, using a variety of methods for outreach not limited to social media but door to door knocking, flyers, cold calls, and letters both on paper and through email. The women we spoke with reported in several instances that they either never knew community meetings were taking place, or they would find out after that had already occurred.

> **"In Nunatsiavut, not all women are familiar with Government Policies and human rights. Most women here are not familiar with impact assessments, let alone participate in them. When it comes to participation in workshops or focus groups, in Nunatsiavut, it's mostly the same women from different communities that are chosen to participate, ultimately excluding other perspectives that would benefit communities or projects. We need more women's voices included in consultations and engagements."**
>
> *- Anonymous 2022*

When women are leaders and decision makers in their communities, they bring the priorities and experiences of the women they represent forward, true leaders of our community will stand up for the people and their beliefs. We must encourage them, support them, and help them succeed. A good leader is a good listener, they have honesty and integrity and core beliefs that reflect the community they represent. Good leaders have relationships with other community members and make a consistent effort to sit down and engage with people from across the community. Being vocal and advocating for our priorities is critical in large scale projects that have known implications for Indigenous women.

> **'Giving learning opportunities for young women and girls to learn important teachings from a young age, how to organize, learning about making themselves heard, and how to take up space is critical for laying a foundation of empowerment and involvement in policy development and community ongoings later in life'**
>
> *- Ann Batisse, Founder of Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group*

The success that comes with making investments in learning opportunities for Indigenous youth is not a new concept, nor is preventative education that teaches youth and their support networks to identify risks related to human trafficking, abuse in many forms, and how to seek help. There are really excellent examples of programs that build Indigenous women and girls' empowerment, such as '*Their Voices Will Guide Us*' engagement guide (Bearhead n.d.) published on the MMIWG website, see citations. Exploration of important topics such as, respect for ourselves and for others, identity, and relationships, seven generation and seven grandfather teachings, help us to see why and how Indigenous women, girls and two spirit people are sacred. By exploring the role of women, youth are given the chance to think about their place in their own community and families, about the roles we have traditionally taken on and what roles we can take on in a contemporary context.

We must not only help other women rise to places of power and leadership, but we must also lead by example and bring our children, our young girls, and young women into spaces where they can learn about important issues such as resource development activities. Children have traditionally been allowed into meeting spaces where community issues were discussed, they are learning even while they are playing or running around, they need to be part of these spaces so that they become familiar with them. The colonial context of having professional working age adults only in meeting spaces takes context away that is critical to youth being able to make informed decisions later in life. By being consistently given a space in these environments, children are more likely to develop empathy and responsibility to their community. Our retirees and our youth matter in these spaces and must be included.

During our project activities a repeatedly reported barrier to participation in consultations was that there was a lack of access to childcare to be able to attend meetings. Our research demonstrates a shared solution in that women simply bring their children and extended family to community meetings, and that the people who are hosting these meetings provide childcare support and safe play space for children to access. This is a **restorative** practice and addresses barriers to Indigenous women's participation while also honoring ways of doing of the past. There are various methods in which to promote leadership and teaching ourselves and our children about positive role models who are leaders today is a method to promote characteristics and discuss the things we view as leadership traits, then we talk about how we can achieve those things through actions and steps. We know that children are our future and by making sure they have role models and teachings about women's traditional responsibilities, we ensure they have a strong foundation to carry forward with us into the future.

Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.

Stronger in Solidarity

Land and environmental destruction are foundational to colonized systems which neglect Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (Hall, 2017). **Heteropatriarchy** and **patriarchal** positioning within our family structures and community hierarchy's perpetuate violence and violability of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples (Hall, 2017). Environmental and gendered violence work together to subsume Indigenous voices and lived realities, reclamation of traditional roles and responsibilities contributes to efforts of resurgence of non-hierarchical, place-based health and well-being. Queer Indigenous and Two-Spirited peoples feminist principles emphasize relationality and kinship (Red Nation, 2022). Traditionally, sexual diversity was not discriminated against and instead held in special regard in many communities across turtle island. Patriarchal and heteronormative values have led to the 'othering' of gender diverse persons within Indigenous communities, actively addressing this issue and creating space for all in processes that have significant impacts everyone, such as IAs with respect to large scale development projects is not only necessary but crucial in ensuring the protection of 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples and including their priorities into project planning and development.

AVATITTINNIK KAMATSIARNIQ

IQ PRINCIPLE

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Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment.

Lateral violence takes many forms in our communities, through making derogatory comments, insults, and gossiping about one another. By engaging in behaviors of bullying, exclusion, shaming we are perpetuating lateral violence against one another (Korff, 2020). Those who are subjected to lateral violence experience lowered confidence and self-esteem, we teach our children and normalize this behavior so they in turn, perpetuate it against one another. Teasing is a big part of many cultures, including First Nations and Inuit peoples, however there are certain behaviors that go beyond simply joking around and turn into abusive or bullying behaviors and being cognizant of this is important in lifting each other up instead of tearing one another down. **Self-determination** plays a key role in addressing this issue, communities resolve to make their own decisions and engage in conflict resolution in healthy and culturally appropriate ways and ensure that the well-being of all community members is addressed and taken seriously. Indigenous women play a key role in getting to the root of this pervasive issue by teaching ourselves and in turn, our children and families more positive relationship building. We can set an example by not engaging in lateral violence behaviors and calling out instances where it occurs and relying on the IQ principles and Seven Grandfather teachings for guidance.

Indigenous, women, girls and gender diverse persons suffer from epidemic rates of violence and **socioeconomic** inequities in Canadian society (De Finney, 2017). Indigenous women have endured hundreds of years of **assimilationist** policies, racism and marginalization and demonstrate the resilience to carry on and make positive changes in their communities. There is a long history of community organizing and resistance to protect

PIJITSIRNIQ

IQ PRINCIPLE

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Serving and providing for one's family and/or community.

what is sacred. Learning to work in harmony and without harming one another along the way is an important step in the healing of our nations. Historically, Indigenous women have united to form committees, advocate for civil and human rights, and have managed triumphs which lay the foundation for future generations and daughters to succeed. Promoting unity, respect, and appreciation for each other's strengths and knowledge is key in aligning community messages.

Strengths Based Participation

A **strength-based approach** to participating in IAs ensures that the person who is being engaged in IA consultations is allowed to contribute in ways that work within their strengths and attributes in a positive way, this approach can lead to positive and empowering experiences. Making the most out of participants' positive qualities contributes to preserving the dignity of people and allows people to contribute their qualities to help forward positions in ways that make sense for those impacted. When using deficit-based approaches, outcomes tend to be negative and can lead to feelings of oppression and inferiority, when orienting dialogue towards strengths and empowerment, it becomes better suited to facilitate solutions and protective measures (FNIGC, 2020). Identifying contributing factors that are both negative and positive is important, to understand and contextualize needs and priorities of communities and not to ignore or deny the historic and contemporary experiences of Indigenous communities (FNIGC, 2020).

We looked at 6 strategies that have been highlighted in the field of social work and have adapted them to apply in the context of Impact Assessment participation. The strategies we list here have been used in community asset building exercises (Rapp, 2005)

1. **Goal Setting:** Set targets and objectives to accomplish and address key priorities. Having a goal allows the breakdown of smaller steps that would lead to accomplishing a bigger task, goals can be revised as more information is gathered and learned. *Ex: Writing a group submission in an IA; Becoming involved in data collection and studies about a given project; Attaining training or employment opportunities.*

2. **Strength Assessment:** When people consider their own strengths, and what could be considered an asset when engaging in development projects. Everyone has different styles of learning and doing, some prefer reading and writing, others prefer speaking and interacting, and others prefer to listen and see visual examples of information. Questions to ponder could be: When do I do my best work? What am I good at doing? How can I apply my skills to helping my community? *Ex: A good listener might consider listening to the oral histories of community members over coffee; A good writer might record comments for a written submission to the government or proponents about a project; A good speaker might liaise with industry and ask questions that bring more insight to technical issues.*

3. **Inventory Resources:** Look for strengths and opportunities in the community and find out what organizations are nearby, is there someone that has skills or expertise that could be approached to help with specific issues? If there is a lack of access to space or reliable internet, is there an organization that could serve as a meeting space so everyone can be equally included? Who else is participating in the same IA or EA? *Ex: Looking at what environmental groups are preparing for impacts to wildlife/ fish habitat; Reaching out to band staff to get support from lands and resources and other staff; Accessing meeting space at a local library or organization; Sharing information with other Indigenous groups to make sure priorities that align are affirmed.*

4. **Manage the Approach:** Now that you have set a goal, assessed your strengths, and consider what resources are available, the next logical step is to assign roles and responsibilities. It's important to include all voices, age groups, and education levels in voicing community priorities. *Ex: Roles and responsibilities can look like planning meeting times; writing things down for Elders and youth; reading technical documents and more. No one person will be able to do everything all the time and supporting one another through dividing tasks by ability and capacity to give time is important in sharing the burden of work and preparation.*

5. **Build Positive Relationships:** Treating everyone as equal and deserving of having a voice is critical in ensuring that people aren't left behind, everyone has something of value to offer. Making sure spaces are welcoming, purposeful, and empowering is key to building positive relationships. Through positive relationships people feel more open and willing to contribute, and sometimes messages can be difficult to convey but, by having good relationships with key interested parties creates a space that is receptive and open.

6. **Choices Mean Agency:** Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons are the experts of their own lives. The pace of the work, who does what and the amount of commitment required to accomplish the goal is left up to the person who wants to participate. Determining priorities and solutions to potential problems is up to each person and navigating personal circumstances rests firmly within the authority of each person.

Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons have demonstrated their resiliency and ability to meet challenges, both historically and modernly, with resolve and strength. People have the strengths, resources, and abilities to overcome issues and challenges that arise and meet development demands in ways that preserve their livelihoods and well-being. This also includes perspectives of goal accomplishments and seeking potential accommodations, as well as mitigating risks (Hammond, 2010). In practice, in industry-government relationships, this might look like not only identifying the increased risk of sexual violence and human trafficking around a resource development operation, but also seeking out tangible safety measures, like the forming of a coalition of authority figures, grandmothers, police, social services, educational institutions to identify risks and immediately take action to prevent and deter crime in the community. It could also look like water keepers advocating for planning changes in a project to prevent effluent discharge into bodies of water. It might look like employment retention policies that

include consideration of workers with dependents, having a safe culturally appropriate space to access on a work site, and the list goes on. There is no one best way or right way to do this work.

Key principles for implementing a strength-based approach. These principles were outlined by (Hammond, 2010) and guides the methodology in which to implement the strength-based approach.

- Every person has unique potential and capabilities and possesses self-determination.
- Our focus becomes our reality if we focus on strengths and view challenges as capacity cultivation.
- Peoples' perspective of reality is their story and achieving value in engagement starts with what is important to the impacted person, not the project.
- Capacity building is a process, it is dynamic and a journey.
- To achieve inclusivity and a participatory process, it's essential to value differences in people and their perspectives.

Proponents and governments entering engagements trying to understand community values must commit to contributing to the resilience and functionality of healthy Indigenous communities. Major developments in rural northern communities can be distressing and drive anxiety and fears for the future. Whereas spaces that operate with respect and compassion for the viewpoints of all interested parties drives meaningful consultations. For the women and gender diverse persons utilizing these strategies, building on each other's respective strengths gives everyone the opportunity to make themselves heard in a unified voice, centering resiliency and empowerment in shared spaces, and gives everyone an opportunity to contribute.

Appreciative inquiry

Appreciative inquiry requires searching for the best in everything and amplifying existing strengths and opportunities (Moore, 2019). This is a strength-based approach that can be used to create a fundamental positive shift in change making processes (Moore, 2019). Rather than centering an identification of what is wrong and highlighting the negative, this approach instead focuses on what is right and detailing how to support, uplift, and extend positive outcomes for better results (Filleul, 2010). Much of the work to date relating to assessing resource extraction project impacts on communities focuses on identifying issues. Although issue identification is key to understanding, as we must learn from the past so that we have the tools to be able to build a better future, it is also essential to be able to turn the page to create actionable solutions and build new resilient systems. By employing appreciative inquiry, groups are engaged in self-determined change and play an active role in shaping their future (Moore, 2019).

Appreciative inquiry is designed to build on positive experiences to create further positive change, whether that be in an educational environment, a community, a workplace, or within a specific resource extraction project. Through honoring the expertise of community members, long-standing organizations, or businesses, tailored best practices can be identified for different communities (Moore, 2019). This method resonates with Indigenous people because it centers personal experience, sharing through stories, and

bringing people together to learn from one another to achieve a common goal. This process is inclusive, collaborative, and prioritizes equal consideration of many voices to co-construct knowledge, rather than extract knowledge from a community and turn it into something else, as science and western projects often have done in the past (Filleul, 2010). Driven not by numerical data, but by human experience, appreciative inquiry could be the key to authentic, intersectional considerations taking root in impact assessment processes.

Case Study: Vancouver School District

In a case study from the Vancouver School District, appreciative inquiry was employed to improve educational environments, aiming to bring together the insights of students, parents, and teachers to build a more inclusive system (Filleul, 2010). A four-phase approach was taken, consisting of Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny phases (Filleul, 2010). Firstly, the ***discovery phase*** created space for people to be able to tell stories, come together and reveal the strengths and successes that have already happened in this space (Filleul, 2010). These insights were brought together to shape the ***dream phase***, creating a vision that maps how future projects could look, allowing an innovative and collaborative brainstorm to determine what an ideal space would look like for as many people as possible (Filleul, 2010). Then, in the ***design phase*** the collective dreams of multiple groups can be brought together to map structures, processes, and plans that ensure these strengths and successes are being intentionally included and uplifted (Filleul, 2010). Finally, the ***destiny phase*** moves from vision to reality, where the design transforms into an actionable plan to be disseminated to all participants and stakeholders, becoming the outcome of their collaboration (Filleul, 2010). This kind of approach should be mirrored in IA processes, allowing communities to help design and actively participate in planning their futures.

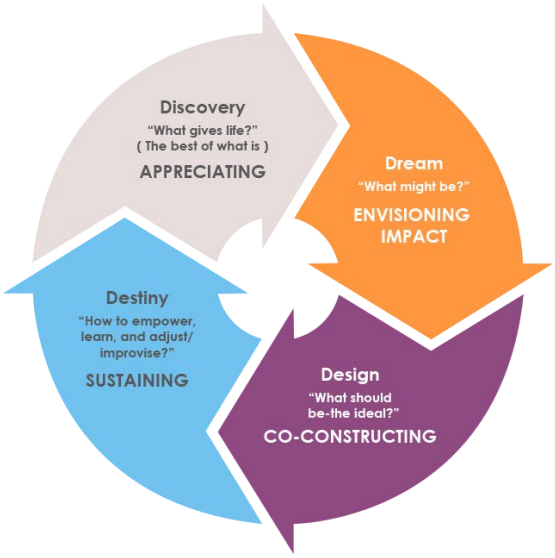

Figure 13: 'Discover, Dream, Design, Destiny' Framework Image, displaying the approach used in the DMCA Report, 'That Will Enable Fellows to Discover, Dream, Design' (Filleul, 2010).

Teaching vs Presenting

There is a significant amount of technical language and information shared in engagements and it's important to understand the importance of teaching instead of presenting. Teaching people about testing methods, methods of information collection, and ways in which scientific data will be utilized is integral to engagement. Though it is not the mandate of development corporations to become educators, there remains a fundamental responsibility in meaningful engagement that requires going beyond simply presenting information in a PowerPoint, but preparing multimedia sources of information, having technical experts available to describe methodology in detail and ensuring everyone leaves with clear understanding of project plans. Multimedia sources of information could include pictures of equipment, tests, sites, specimens etc. Inclusion of video tutorials of the specific testing and reasoning could be shown as a demonstration, and relaying stories of how the site planning was done and interesting facts and exploration points that have led to the pursuit of development in the region.

We have prepared the following recommendations based on the experiential learning model that KOTC utilizes in their *Culture Confidence and Competence* employment and skills development training, based on the principles of respect and human dignity (KOTC, 2021):

- Making sure that each person receives individual attention and a chance to ask questions in spaces
- Holding spaces for quiet people and ensuring everyone has the chance to get clarification, using a talking stick or round robin method
- Preparing questions that need to be answered during project activities, research questions and engaging learning opportunities through shared insights.
- Using evocative methods, hands on learning opportunities and taking every possible opportunity to provide examples of what is being discussed
- Being mindful of non-verbal cues and body language
- Ensuring a respectful and supportive environment
- Co-creating rules of engagement; mindful of group process
- Trained facilitators that can manage group sharing spaces effectively
- Keeping materials properly paced to not overwhelm people with information, taking regular breaks to be able to digest and reflect on what has been shared.

Ensuring that enough time is taken to go through all project questions and materials and ending the meeting once people are satisfied and have had their questions answered, not during an allotted time that is adhered to strictly. This might look like having an afternoon dedicated to engagement activities and not simply a typical presentation time of 1-2 hours with time for questions or committing to having multiple meetings over a period. Working together to be able to answer questions completely may lead

to feedback and insights not previously discussed, give people a chance to take what they have heard, and come back together to share after reflecting.

Everyone has different learning styles, some learn through reading and writing which is the predominant style of teaching in all our schools and institutions. The amount of written information in technical reports and in the Impact Assessment Agency's public registrar can be discouraging when documents can be upwards of 300 pages in many cases. So, what can we do to make this information more accessible, and include our knowledge keepers, trappers, and harvesters who may have had interrupted educations, or no formalized western scientific training? This is a fundamental question that plagues the procedural aspects of how we communicate as professionals, versus how we would as human beings. Humanizing empirical data is not an easy task. This begs a question of preparation materials for targeted audiences, the information collected is to satisfy regulatory requirements and scientific studies, and the responsibility of knowledge translation and dissemination is still largely placed on lands and resources staff to share with the membership. Although summary reports are helpful, they remain firmly embedded into written formats, reaching a limited range of learning styles in its presentation. Though there have been significant advancements to make written materials available in Indigenous languages, we applaud these efforts by the government to make them available.

Universal Design

Increasing accessibility makes space for people who are at various levels of education, who may be experiencing chronic illness or other factors that may potentially be a barrier to making themselves heard. Some key considerations when planning consultations can lead to quality engagements that reduce the likelihood of people being excluded or unable to participate fully. The following is a list of key considerations for increasing information accessibility as outlined by Michelle Xie in the 'Introduction to Community Organizing Toolkit' we selected these practices as a means to challenge **ableism,** and providing accommodations for all walks of life, while being mindful of **universal design** in consultation strategies.

Practices for increasing accessibility in consultations:

- **The date and time:** Are meetings falling on a day of cultural significance? Are there opportunities for people who are working or in school to participate?
- **Surveying access:** Are there known barriers that can be accommodated in advance of a planned meeting? (Translation services; captioned meetings or headsets for hard of hearing attendees; mental health supports)
- **Clear communication:** Establishing a point of contact for follow up; making sure people coming to in person meetings are greeted and guided to the space

- **Community guidelines:** Establishing consensus about how the space will be made welcoming and safe to contribute; making sure everyone understands what is being shared
- **Alleviating costs:** Ensuring that the burden of attending a meeting is alleviated, for people who don't have access to transportation this could mean providing a ride service; covering the cost of taxis; removing any financial hardship from attendees
- **Distance:** Is there public transit? If not, how are people getting to the meeting? Making sure everyone has a ride or means to get a ride to an in-person meeting; making sure people have access to technology to attend online meetings, this might mean organizing at a local library or institution for very remote regions
- **Breaks:** Taking breaks to be able to take medication, and relax and process information
- **Schedule:** Having a detailed agenda available; ensuring people have the materials to be covered in advance
- **Participation:** Multiple formats of participation used at once such as in-person and virtual meeting hybrids; option for online submissions; ensuring adequate time for people to think about their responses and provide their feedback
- **Physical space:** Are there comfortable chairs for Elders or people with mobility issues? Is the space large enough to accommodate strollers or assistive equipment such as walkers?
- **Digital accessibility:** Are image descriptions provided? Are text fonts easy to read? Are live captions used?
- **Food and beverages:** Having food and beverages available for people with consideration of dietary restrictions helps address underlying health considerations or needs of participants
- **Childcare:** Could there be a person in charge of minding children at the meeting? Making activities available for anyone who brings kids
- **Language:** Is there an adequate definition of technical jargon in the meeting? Could a glossary be compiled in advance of the meeting to contextualize what is being shared? What is the assumed level of knowledge of the participants?
    - (Xie, *Introduction to Community Organizing Toolkit* Pg. 38-40. n.d.)

Figure 14: Artwork by Norval Morrisseau "Observations of the Astral World"

Trauma Informed Engagement

Trauma informed approaches or trauma informed care is an approach used in human social services that recognizes symptoms of trauma and how it may shape an individual's life and wellness (Buffalo Center for Social Research, 2015). This approach centers on creating environments of healing and recovery, focusing on developing systems of positive development, rather than unintentional re-traumatization (Buffalo Center for Social Research, 2015). Re-traumatization occurs when an individual is put into a situation or environment that is similar to the one they experienced trauma in, which can be anything that triggers feelings or reactions related to the original trauma (Buffalo Center for Social Research, 2015). This often occurs unintentionally but can intensify trauma related symptoms and delay progress in healing. Trauma informed approaches center questions about "what has happened to this person?" rather than asking "what is wrong with this person?". By approaching issues of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse by providing support rather than trying to treat, fix, or change symptoms, people are given space to heal while feeling heard, respected, and valued, rather than judged (Buffalo Center for Social Research, 2015). It is recognized that when people undergo trauma, either directly or indirectly, they could be affected through intergenerational trauma or through personal experiences, it affects their beliefs, their sense of self, and their ability to trust others (Buffalo Center for Social Research, 2015). Trauma-informed approaches are guided by five core principles, safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, and empowerment.

> **"I feel that even though the Elders in our communities experienced extreme abuse in residential and federal day schools, their love for us as their descendants is stronger... to be able to fight past the violence to preserve the culture. We as their children and families are born on to this earth as a result of the accumulation of love passed down through all of our ancestors before us. The Elders do not give up on us and they believe in us to revive the culture, so we cannot fail them."**
>
> *– Bryanna Brown, 2022*

Trauma-informed engagement prioritizes relationship building through humility to accept that we can't know everything, and we can't learn without recognizing what we don't know (Duhamel, 2021). Grounding ourselves in the fact that Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons are the experts of their own lived experiences, their own lives, and listening deeply to their concerns and needs, is central to ensuring that those listening are respecting the lived experience of those who are sharing. Considering what interested 'stakeholders' know as their truth, and who is considered an expert in specific spaces is critical in knowing and articulating needs and specific priorities of the people being impacted. Trauma discourse has become a more central narrative of how Indigenous issues are perceived.

- Compassionate communication and listening with empathy are required to conduct community engagements; training in this field is an essential skill.

- Those who experience trauma do not need to be saved, they need to be heard and respected and supported in ways that make sense for them.
- Holding space for Indigenous people who have trauma empowers them.
- Engaging takes as long as it takes, holding space means listening until what needs to be shared is shared.
- Co-create engagement processes from the outset to promote ownership, relationship building and trust

Traumatic experiences are brought forward and viewed through the lens in isolated personal narratives, the singular experiences of one person's life. However, when viewed from broader perspectives this is indicative of larger systemic issues such as, violence to land and body, and structural barriers that exist and perpetuate gender-based violence against women and gender diverse persons (Dupuis-Ross, 2018). Holding space for developing new roads and practices that lead to changemaking in spaces (Duhamel, 2021). Being a changemaker requires doing work for the benefit of the impacted peoples in developments.

> **'Deep listening, deep connections and deep relationships are necessary to engage in a trauma informed way'**
>
> *– Dr. Karine Duhamel*

Figure 15: The Future is Indigenous, Illustration by Karlene Harvey.

Engagement Methodologies

As discussed in other sections of this report, a consistent theme during our project activities denoted a lack of familiarity with current legislation, many Indigenous women did not know about IAs and have limited knowledge of previous EA processes. A glaring issue to conducting consultations within Indigenous communities is that there are mixed levels of capacity to engage with the ministry and proponents, some communities have developed highly effective work plans, land use policies, and personnel to meet increased demands of consultations, while others operate from project-to-project basis, with their primary focus being to react to current projects as they unfold. Increased attention needs to be paid to how engagements are conducted, beyond making information available and accessible. Through supporting community-led engagement methods, multiple goals are accomplished, community capacity is built-on rather than taxed further, relationships are formed, and key leaders emerge to do work, community priorities are collectively established, ownership over research is created, and reciprocal sharing opportunities increase.

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Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.

There are specific types of engagement methodologies that we highlight as beneficial to promoting meaningful consultations. The first is ***community education*** engagement that focuses on providing instructional services in an objective way, ***community organizing*** which brings people together to investigate solutions and advance local issues and ***community engaged research*** which maps community assets, contributing to solutions to challenges and benefits communities while furthering data requirements under IAA 2019 legislation.

Community Education

The purpose of community education is that Indigenous communities have varying levels of capacity to be consulted, opportunities to apply context to an assessment and meaning to consultations generates more in-depth participation. Intersecting factors create a great deal of variance in participants' understanding of technical materials. Ensuring that communities have the tools and information they need to relate to project details is critical. All participants are equals in a teaching space, and education is a shared process. Facilitation is a critically necessary skill, allowing participants to direct the learning process and identify their own learning needs, while the facilitator maintains this learning environment and provides expertise as necessary. Community education is an advocated way to respond to social exclusion and systemic inequalities, centering excluded people and ensuring equal participation is a key principle in community education (CEFA, n.d.). The ability for participants to critically reflect with contextualization of contemporary legislative changes

is crucial to community education, being able to analytically reflect and experience the process of learning from one another builds better social cohesion for all stakeholders within consultation activities.

Key principles of community education as outlined by the Centre for Community Education and Social Change are that it [education and engagement]:

1. Centers lived experiences as the starting point
2. It responds to disadvantage and social exclusion
3. It works at an individual, community and political level
4. The community group is the deliverer of community education (CEFA, 2011)

This context provides an opportunity to create a 'learning community' where various stakeholders come together to provide services based on learning opportunities for communities. This process is led by participants who identify what they wish to know more about, and this information is delivered by objective facilitators and supported by relevant experts in a specific field. This also provides a unique opportunity for public involvement, leveraging existing community assets to provide supportive services. In collaboration with key organizations identified by the community, supportive learning environments can be greatly expanded in reach. Examples of this could include; utilizing a local high school computer room to cover online materials collectively; urban Indigenous people accessing safe spaces and familiar faces at a friendship center; bringing in Indigenous Elders/Leaders to discuss governance and cultural considerations; connecting experts such as, an archeologist to discuss historical occupancy, an environmental engineer to present about risk mitigation in a project; government representatives brought in to discuss specific facets of IAA 2019 or other legislation; the list goes on.

'Service learning' prioritizes community education engagement, combining learning goals and community services to enrich learning experiences and strengthen communities' ability to interact with technical information (Brandy, 2011). Community engagement can combine learning goals such as, how the process of IA works, what science will be applied and the policy and legal context of consultations community goals, a combination of formats, including *experiential learning* opportunities to participate in baseline data collection activities.

There is currently no effective teaching mechanism within the ministry beyond IA Training Level 1 & 2 that focuses on pre-emptive education of communities being consulted, and a fundamental question of responsibility to actionize this with consent of Indigenous groups. We advocate for this method to be offered as needed by Indigenous communities and put into motion by the IAAC with support from the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. This would allow proponents to have a supportive role in providing technical expertise and services as needed, while community assets such as, local

service organizations, could serve to broaden and strengthen contextualizing and spreading awareness and education to interested Indigenous communities and urban membership through a variety of formats that are currently beyond the scope of IAAC mandates.

Community Organizing

Allowing groups to collaboratively investigate and undertake collective and sustained action regarding social issues of mutual concern (Christens & Speer, 2015). The purpose of community organizing is to build community power- through knowledge, resources, and ways of knowing and doing. There are three core capacities that exist within this sphere, *the capacity to organize, to deepen equity, and to cultivate leadership and leaders* (Misra*, et al*., 2020). These capacities are reinforced by others, the ability to sustain networks; to change governance structures; to carry out research effectively; to advocate community priorities and to implement policies (Misra, *et al.*, 2020). Community power is the ability to recognize structural inequity and grow, develop, and sustain an organized base of people who act in unison through established governance structures to cultivate ongoing relationships that foster accountability with decision makers and change systems to advance community priorities (Pastor, *et al.*, 2020). There is no way to create a 'one-size-fits-all' framework to achieve capacity building, the interconnectedness and constantly shifting issues create distinct circumstances and are influenced heavily by geographic region and cultural practices. A major barrier to capacity building is to be able to organize effectively is the time needed to fully establish community procedures, while working through social, cultural, historical, and environmental considerations (Chino & Debruyn, 2011). Collectively acting on shared interests can be difficult in situations where many demographics, nations and priorities come together for a shared cause. The contextual information required to form input to projects is significant for the average citizen. The legal and policy context of any number of large-scale development projects has been highlighted as difficult for experts in those fields respectively, which makes the timelines for input to be considered on the IAAC site daunting for most people. There is a massive amount of work involved in long term community planning and land use priorities and interests and this time extends well beyond the scope of the IA process, while remaining a fundamental component in being an equitable relationship with the crown and with prospective developers.

The lack of representation of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons is maintained through lack of effective processes within communities. Long term community health, well-being and ability to practice ways of knowing and doing is intrinsically intertwined with access to lands and resources that have not been altered or destroyed by human activities. Dodging controversial issues such as environmental racism, class, gender, corporate concentration or impacts of a transnational economy on Indigenous traditional territories ignores contributing factors that impact Indigenous communities, particularly with demographic groups that are not positioned to uptake benefits of development projects such as Elders, children, and women who do not participate in development

activities. When membership is fully informed and involved in land issues it keeps Indigenous leadership and staff from inadvertently straying from collective priorities of the group as a whole.

Practices for community organizing:

- Investment in sustained forms of leadership, staff, and professional development strategies for communities
- Providing membership opportunities to learn more about key issues, structures, and racial justice
- Collective determination of a vision of solidarity that is a touchstone for membership
- Creating spaces that people can challenge one another without shaming and instead focus on reflection and collective learning, to achieve shared values and analysis
  (HoSang, Hall, & Piana, 2022)

The work of *Change Elemental* highlights capacity building methods which can be applied in a variety of contexts. For our research, we chose to focus specifically on equitable inclusion of Indigenous women and gender diverse persons in community organizing through the lens of our collective knowledge passed on to us from our Elders and women in our circles and applying the context of building capacity to participate in development activities.

Capacity building to bring deeper equity:

- **Nurturing Inner Work:** requires being attentive to healing, well-being and traditional ways and sacred practices with regularity. Grounding in spiritual practices activates the senses, emotions, and physicality to deconstruct embodied habits, this serves to ground people, promoting balance within oneself to be in balance with others and the planet.
- **Embracing love-centered approaches:** Love centered organizing fosters solidarity and practices based on compassion and mutual understanding. Love for oneself, for others and for opposition. Strengthening solidarity within and between communities can highlight shared experiences and interdependencies that link communities together. Building relationships across intergenerational, racial, and gender diverse identities keeps communities accountable to one another. Love centered organizing aligns with the Seven Grandfather Teachings and is already a fundamental component of many Indigenous nations.
- **Adopting Practices of Liberation:** Liberatory practices contribute to transforming systems that contribute to oppression by strengthening connection to spiritual practices, reclaiming one's body, engaging the senses and amplifying people's stories. This takes form in decolonization efforts and centering Indigenous epistemological values in land use planning, resource development and IA assessments. Disrupting the habit of white supremacy culture through efforts to increase representation of Indigenous people in decision making about large scale developments, measuring success of projects in their potential for sustainability, and assessing community health and wellbeing outside of conforming to western norms.
  - *Essential Capacities for Equitable Communities* (Misra, Bamda, & Winegar, 2020)

This process can be supported by Indigenous-led organizations such as Women's and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations, non-profits or Native Friendship Centers that focus on supporting people who are most affected by inequitable systems. However, this work remains firmly rested within the responsibility of impacted First Nations and Inuit communities. While institutions and other organizations may lend supportive capacity to communities through collaboration, funding, providing technical expertise, the governance, and work done must be done by community members for community members. Governance structures and capacity building within communities is foundational for self-determination, the realizing of rights and reconciliation.

Community Engaged Research

Involving researchers and communities to work together to advance project goals, through community based participatory research. There is a huge potential for various methodologies falling within community engaged research that could (and are) being applied in current assessments such as, citizen science programs, participatory action research, co-operative inquiry, decolonizing methodology and Indigenous methodologies, among others (CSP, 2022). Indigenous groups across the country are being engaged at various levels for projects, we argue that simply informing communities of projects and having a handful of opportunities for information exchange undermines the spirit and intent of relationship rebuilding and meaningful consultation. Government and developers must make every effort to involve Indigenous people in key aspects of the project, aim to collaborate effectively in the decision making and share ownership of studies conducted. The highest level of engaged research is to have communities leading project studies with collaboration and support from developers wherever possible.

Below is highlighted Canadian Science Publishing's key components of community engaged research, applying a lens of Indigenous GBA++:

- **Relevance:** Developers must learn about the land and the people on which the project is planned to take place, and ensure the goals, concerns and interests of consulted groups are reflected in planned studies. Ensuring that the purpose of planned studies adds value to communities (Ex: Impacts to Traditional Roles of Women as Water Keepers)
- **Design:** The study designs are informed by the impacted communities, ensuring that there is consistency with cultural protocol, is respectful and considers community history and ways of knowing (GBA+ analysis led designs and led by Indigenous women, informed by Indigenous research). Any studies are reviewed and approved by the community before being initiated, with consideration for harm during study activities.
- **Equity:** Developers and Indigenous groups have a partnership and workplan that is mutually agreed upon and beneficial to all parties. Impacted communities are involved to the fullest extent of their desire and capacity. Indigenous expertise and ways of knowing are respected and are integrated into analysis (Ex: Lived experience, TK, TEK, oral traditions, etc.). Indigenous groups have access to all data and results and are provided opportunities to understand and use results. Communities have control and access over research findings as outlined by IAAC guidelines of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP).
    - *Community Engaged Research* (CSP, 2022)

There are unique opportunities to go beyond researching census demographics to apply a GBA+ lens to projects, such as co-created and designed studies that can further inform communities of various initiatives and can serve multiple purposes (Ex: Inclusion of lived experience advisory group in housing impacts mitigation). Indigenous women and gender diverse persons are the experts of their own lives and possess the agency necessary to interact and participate in study guidelines and health, culture, and socioeconomic impact determinants. This changes planning of development activities from something that is happening to them to something that is happening with them.

The engagement methodologies outlined above highlight the complex and often overlapping dynamic of shared responsibilities of the work being done right now. The cumulative knowledge of our research and findings demonstrates that community education about new IAA 2019 legislation needs to take place in increased and broadened formats to give people the information needed to relate to planned projects. We highlight a growing movement of community organizing as a means of advancing local needs and interests, and empowering communities to determine their path collectively. Finally, we highlighted community engaged research that can contribute to significantly advancing current GBA+ analysis in IA practices. The methodologies described above are typically applied in conjunction with one another, however this leads to engagements taking place that do not adequately represent Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons because of a lack of processes for engagement within community, and intersecting factors that act as barriers to interaction with planned development activities notably, a lack of familiarity with context of IA engagements. Finally, developers have newly been required to apply a GBA+ lens to IA processes and have leaned heavily on census demographics and key informants to provide insights into projected impacts on Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons, with how recent this transition has been it remains to be seen how involved impacted groups have been included into study designs and baseline data collection activities. While it is beyond the scope of the agency to provide training materials much in advance of proposed projects, there must be a mechanism that can give communities the time and space necessary to learn more about new policies, and where needed organize to create engagement protocols and land use strategies, so that once developers are in the process of early engagement that communities are in the best position to proactively become involved in project planning and development.

Participation Strategies

The engagement strategies outlined in this portion outline grassroots engagement strategies that nonprofits and community groups have utilized effectively in the past. The goal is to create an avenue for families and ensure that people can participate in comfortable and engaging spaces. More formalized

gatherings currently taking place include committee meetings, community meetings, social media engagement groups, and virtual platform meetings because of covid constraints. These are excellent methods that have had much success in spaces that aren't rural/remote Indigenous communities. There is no one correct way to engage communities and so, employing mixed methods of engagement is strongly encouraged. Multiple opportunities to hear the same information must be provided, having recorded sessions and presentations for people who cannot be present is already being actionized by some proponents with much success. IAAC's publications of current *Indigenous Engagement and Participation Plans* are actionizing strategies that can increase Indigenous involvement in IAs. This list of suggested meeting formats and gatherings is meant to act in complement to the work currently being done. One great strategy being utilized is having community representatives organize and bring information to their own membership, with technical and policy support from proponents and ministry as needed. An important way to create ownership of engagement is to have communities help determine what would constitute criteria of meaningful participation.

By creating a newsletter or community email distribution list that alerts interested community members when a project is meant to occur in their area and disseminating information locally would help to ensure these intersectional identities are not being overlooked. Moving beyond relying on email or internet broadcasts and using public notice boards, radio advertising, or newspaper advertisements extends the reach and involvement community members can play in participating in IAs. For this strategy to work, it is crucial that community members keep their addresses and mailing information up to date with their local band office/ Nunatsiavut Government so that information can be disseminated easily. Best practices such as, keeping detailed mailing lists for all participants, and understanding the geographic differences require varied strategies to ensure the widest promotion of planned project activities. A localized example would be to use radio advertisements like is done along the coast of Northern Labrador, in both English and Inuktitut whereas, radio ads may be less frequently listened to in urban centers with reliable internet availability, so using a combination of emails and general post-delivery might be more effective in rural Northern Ontario. In all communities canvassing methods of distributing flyers and surveys can be important but must not be relied upon as the sole method of collecting feedback.

We have compiled a list of suggested activities that promote consultations attendance and comfortable participation for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons

Key concessions in *all consultation* activities undertaken:

- Include training and learning opportunities about IAs and EAs to a general audience; on a rotating basis and as frequently as needed.
- Create meeting spaces that are for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people specifically.
- Have onsite child-care available for women to bring their children.
- Make transportation to a meeting space available and for no cost to participants.
- Have culturally appropriate food and beverage options available.
- Involve Elders and youth in discussions and to give feedback.

Suggested consultation strategies that could be used:

- **Coffee and chat:** Visiting Elders with coffee (and tobacco as required) and having one-on-one discussions about their thoughts on a proposed project, allowing Elders the platform to give their full thoughts and feedback on proposed projects in one-on-one, comfortable settings.
- **Door to door knocking** and **flyer distribution** in communities to access people with technology barriers.
- **Learning and talking circles:** Areas of concern for projects emerge, careful attention to details that require further investigation and learning as a group. Depending on what location, a talking stick may be used to give everyone an equal chance to speak on issues.
- **Youth Specific Programs:** Experiential learning opportunities about IA and related contextual information, workshops and activities designed to allow youth to provide insights in creative ways
- Building on momentum from pride activities or **community gatherings:** Ex: Planning wider consultations around pow-wow weekends or festivals where possible.
- **Lunch and learning workshops:** Groups can learn together about IA phases and get a good insight about project timelines and expectations; a component of community guided learning
- **Craft Circles:** Doing art mediums or busywork while listening to information keeps 'doers' engaged. A proven success is having multiple formats to be able to receive information and people who work with their hands need to have outlets to be able to focus, this may help to bridge some of the heavy reliance on oral and written materials.
- **Formation of working groups:** Indigenous women could form working groups and collectively go over information, allows for sharing across nations especially applied in urban living contexts
- **On the land activities:** Place based recollections are important especially with Elders, visiting the planned site if possible, or nearby is grounding and activates the senses more. (Ex: Having medicine walks, visiting trap lines, storytelling outside around a fire, etc.)
- **Peer to peer pairing:** Pairing small groups of people to tackle key considerations; a person records or presents orally key takeaways collectively to the larger group
- **Open Inquiry:** Participants pose questions about potential impacts and investigate them, developing methods and expected conclusions to present to the larger group
- **Values Mapping:** Use whiteboards and break into smaller groups to discuss values impacts, participants can format their responses in ways they choose (list; tree; web; venn diagram; etc.)
- **Brain breaks:** Debriefing after learning to discuss key takeaways; areas to explore further and questions emerging from materials; allows people to get up and stretch, discuss material
- **Prepare open ended questions:** Developing questions that have multiple answers or can be explored further than simple agreement/ disagreement can spur discussion and help tackle targeted issues to explore further

These suggestions are by no means an exhaustive list, there are numerous ways in which to give a platform that is highly engaging, interactive, and supportive of inclusion in engagement. *Detailed Project Descriptions* and *Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines* can be considered dry and difficult to read for some people and facilitating ways to create more information accessibility benefits communities and enriches consultation processes.

Effective Weaving of Knowledge Systems

Addressing Power Imbalance of Knowledge Systems in IA

Indigenous Knowledge, Indigenous Science, IQ, TK, and TEK are terms commonly used to represent these complex knowledge systems. No single term can effectively capture the sophisticated network of Indigenous knowledge that is unique to each nation and person. Through the collection of information gained from one's ancestors combined with one's own unique experiences, Indigenous people combine spiritual and physical teachings over many generations. This knowledge and understanding of the world are often best conveyed not in English, but in traditional languages that have their own distinct words, concepts, and meanings embedded within information about the world and our relationships within it. The technical jargon in IAs does not translate to traditional languages or dialects well, forcing Indigenous people to describe words in alternative ways in the language. For English speakers, Indigenous people participate in a way that is tolerable to the western system. Western knowledge emphasizes empirical facts and what can be proven, while Indigenous culture centers a holistic approach relying on cumulative observations gathered across generations.

> **"Innu Elders say we have the responsibility to use the best available information, no matter where it comes from"**
>
> *(Courtois, key informant interview, September 2018; Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022)*

Indigenous knowledge systems, like TEK and traditional knowledge (**TK**), are a body of knowledge and beliefs transmitted through oral tradition and firsthand observation. Ecological aspects are closely tied to social and spiritual aspects of Indigenous knowledge systems. The quality and quantity of TEK varies among each individual community. TEK is dynamic and cumulative, growing from the earlier experiences of generations before and understanding to adapt to modern changes present. When considering the worldviews of Indigenous and European people regarding the natural world, there are many similarities in the ways in which people have come to know nature. Both Indigenous and European people's knowledge emerged from the need to make sense of the natural world to understand how to take care of themselves. Both systems are a culmination of knowledge gathered through observations, and each share intellectual processes such as questioning, looking for patterns, predicting, verifying, problem solving, adapting, and more (Aikenhead, 2011). Over time, each has grown and evolved to encompass a separate set of priorities, and therefore types of knowledge collected. The concept of what constitutes knowledge has diverged, Indigenous peoples are more holistic, relational and place based in their ways of knowing, and tend to focus on spirituality, emotion, physical, and mental balance.

Contrastingly, European, or western knowledge has shifted towards reductionist, anthropocentric, and generalizable knowledge that has a strong focus on intellectual and physical growth (Aikenhead, 2011). Indigenous knowledge is used in different senses and for various purposes. It could relate to specific

empirical knowledge around a specific geographical location or *local knowledge*, there is *collective knowledge* which describes a distinct sociopolitical perspectives and interests, rooted in shared histories, and notably, *epistemological* knowledge which relates to what it means to be a human being, how to live in the world and understanding our responsibilities and place (OECD, 2020). The third way of looking at what constitutes knowledge is inextricably weaved into consultative feedback received by proponents and government representatives.

Indigenous people pursue ecological protection through their beliefs in animacy, and of the relationships between humans and the natural world. New innovations are emerging in industry Indigenous relations, epistemological approaches allow for a more meaningful involvement of Indigenous people in the planning process of development projects. Industry scientists are striving towards utilizing Indigenous expertise in local regions to identify priority areas for testing and research and for selecting sample sites (Arsenault, 2019). This process carries risks in that from a western scientific stance, the emphasis tends to be on extracting tangible data from Indigenous people's knowledge and narrowing the knowledge down to 'palatable' information (Arsenault, 2019). To exemplify how Indigenous knowledge is changed throughout the IA process, an example from Baker & Westman, 2018 highlights how colonialism continues to shape the way Indigenous people experience the world. When presented with anything that was not accepted in the western scientific world, the information was changed. Mentions of creatures living in the Northern Cree territory such as, dog-sized frogs, sasquatches, or little people were recorded as spiritual or ceremonial sites (Baker & Westman, 2018). This deduction of the information fundamentally alters its meaning, intention, and discourages Indigenous people to feel comfortable sharing this information.

This same experience was seen in IAs at Muskrat Falls, where Innu concepts linking the spiritual and physical dimensions at Spirit Mountain were shared and completely misunderstood (Baker & Westman, 2018). To respect the animal masters that occupy this land, Inuit have distinct local practices and traditions that must be acknowledged and respected in impact assessment protection plans, whether proponents understand them or not, respect is paramount (Baker & Westman, 2018). This abuse of knowledge has caused a sense of mistrust among some Indigenous groups, the mishandling of TK creates a sense of hesitation and a lack of engagement (McGregor, 2014a). However, with development projects occurring at a continuous rate, the need to express and share information that can inform environmental governance and resource management jurisdiction (McGregor, 2014a). Indigenous people engage in these consultations out of a need to preserve their relationships and their responsibilities to the earth.

The environment and humanity are fundamentally related. In teachings of many Indigenous nations, ancestral lifestyles and cultural identity grow from connection to the land. TEK is an important component alongside biological diversity and within methods of valuing lands and the resources that come with the land, ecosystems, and human rights. The importance of understanding treaties as covenants with the natural world must be federally *as well as*

provincially acknowledged and upheld. These agreements between nations require an honoring of responsibilities to the natural world and through this context TEK becomes fundamental to the complete understanding of treaties and in turn Indigenous principles of responsibility to the natural world (McGregor, 2014a). Understanding these principles offers a way forward in attempts to achieve a sustainable way of life. The issue Indigenous peoples face in sharing TEK is that this knowledge requires more than simply engagement or input into policy initiatives, instead necessitating the application of TEK into guiding policy implementation (McGregor, 2014b). There has been a great separation from Indigenous ways since colonial contact. Reconnecting human diversity to biological and ecological diversity, reconnecting culture and nature is essential for environmental protection (Wildcat, 2014). Indigenous knowledge acknowledges that there is no best way to live, and the way you live depends on where you are, who you are and what your traditions are (Wildcat, 2014). For practitioners and proponents valuing Indigenous knowledge translates to acknowledging Indigenous knowledge holders as experts. Indigenous women's inclusion and collaboration in IA processes would likely lead to collaborative solutions, and alternative assessments and outcomes in project development (Manning. *et al.* 2018).

Increasing Information Accaccessibility

We argue that the methods in which information is presented to communities continues to use predominantly limited engagement formats, typically relying on a handful of information sessions with an often-limited target demographic of a given membership within a project area. While efforts to apply plain language and bring in technical expertise are a welcome component of early engagement meetings, there remains issues with making information accessible to the widest demographics possible and conducting engagement sessions that are presented to wider audiences in accessible formats. The Canada Institute of Health Research has published an insightful 'best practices' compilation including methods such as: engaging with the ethics of knowledge translation; drawing on historical context to build on ways of knowledge sharing; ensuring communities are active partners in research conducted; and including communications and media engagement strategies conferring with industry experts to refine knowledge translation messaging wherever possible (Estey, *et al.* 2009). Methods for increasing information accessibility could include mobilizing multimedia platforms and ways of information conveyance. This includes inclusion of infographics and visuals at every possible opportunity, holding conference style presentations where presentations are conducted in multiple formats. The practice of making plain language reports and summaries is already underway and is a good practice being undertaken in many government departments and remains a difficult obstacle to overcome in environmental impacts planning and management. Good facilitation and preparation for meetings can make a huge difference in reception in any given context, not everyone will be an industry expert or environmental science savvy and it's critically important to take that into account.

Some facilitation practices for explaining technical information that can create a more reciprocal space:

- **Reading the room;** Keeping tabs on the cues and body language of the receiving audience, and presenting materials with energy and passion
- **Incorporate storytelling;** Conveying data and information through a storytelling format, how the information was gathered, enhancing presentations with the experiences of the project team during studies or how specific studies have helped or hindered other similar projects in the past
- **Use visuals;** Wherever possible include visual examples of what is being shared, tests, trends, planned site activities in presentation materials
- **Using humor and humility to explain technical information;** making things more comfortable and less formalized in meetings to avoid people feeling disconnected or as though they are being spoken down to
- **Avoid technical jargon;** This practice is already being used in many project contexts and continues to be a good practice of using layman's terms to keep people from becoming disengaged, where unavoidable consider putting in a term of reference or definitions list for people to refer to
- **Focusing on impacts when referring to technical concepts;** Instead of explaining things in terms of what is/will be done, explain in terms of why things are/will be done.
- **Ongoing information sessions;** breaking up engagement sessions into smaller pieces and fully explaining planned projects has a higher impact than trying to get through a lot of information in one session, making sure that all parts of technical materials are covered adequately is more important than ensuring that a meeting timeline is adhered to

Some best practices for making written technical materials more accessible for people who may need it:

- Avoid abbreviations or acronyms where possible
- Ensure that font size is 12 point minimum or larger
- Document layout needs to be clearly formatted, avoiding watermarks, and ensuring that images are correctly aligned and relevant to the text
- Consistently use the same style and format when giving written information
- Use clear plain language, avoiding technical language where possible, if unavoidable explain technical terms in a definitions reference or within the text.
- Avoid putting too many different pieces of information on the same page, ensure that graphs displaying information and trends are adequately explained in a written format
- Ensure enough contrast between the background color and text, avoiding patterned background or in front of images
- Have electronic versions and paper versions of materials to allow people to use accessibility technologies where needed (text to audio software, magnification option for visually impaired)

While these methods are outlined within the context of early engagement and phases of an IA, the broader implications of making information accessible to Indigenous communities deserve to be addressed. A key issue in consultation activities is that Indigenous communities have varied levels of knowledge about the IA / EA process in general, or the contextual background about opportunities for

participation, baseline data collection, or contributions to project planning that are available to them. The practice of Indigenous led assessments in this context is paramount in ensuring that the time in the early planning phases of an IA is used effectively and efficiently, Indigenous communities can request support and commitments necessary to form good relations and build process certainty (FNMPC, 2020). In practice this might look like a long period of information sharing and learning about contextual information, in other situations it could mean that communities have well established processes of doing work and can focus on other aspects of a planned project. In any case, there remains significant gaps in information accessibility for many communities that are being consulted with, and that promoting Crown-Indigenous relations historical and contemporary contexts is an ongoing process of community capacity building.

Launch Technology Access Programs

Ensuring that community members can access technology is becoming increasingly essential to being able to fully participate in IA projects, stay informed on regional project developments and more. It is not fair to expect all community members to choose to spend personal income on acquiring expensive technology, which is why community access programs are the best way to advocate for equal information access for all. These community access programs could provide publicly available computers, laptops, or tablets at libraries or schools. These could be linked to used technology collection programs, accepting donations from surrounding communities, businesses, or schools who have old technology to be repurposed for community use. These spaces could host technology lessons for Elders or community members who are not confident accessing online resources. Advocating for access to technology would benefit the community at large, increasing channels of communication with other surrounding nations. Several remote Indigenous communities do not have reliable internet connection or access to technology, as such IA engagement methods cannot become fully virtual and claim they are still inclusive and accessible. When technology is not widespread and available throughout a community, it must be the responsibility of the IAAC to create in-person engagement opportunities or fund technology access programs. Indigenous People should be able to express a lack of access to technology as a barrier and be met with accommodation from federal government agencies.

Investment Into Technical Skills Training and Sciences Education

There remain significant gaps in the ability for communities to pivot to new information and participate in scientific studies conducted on the land. There are numerous opportunities to conduct studies about ecological impacts, traditional land use, and investigation of cumulative effects on traditional territories. Education bridges technology gaps and allows people to walk in two worlds effectively, leading to better community outcomes in consultations. It's no understatement to say that education of youth and young adults to undertake technical jobs and fields of study is absolutely critical to equitable representation within project planning and development opportunities.

Investment into human capital in Northern communities closes education gaps and grows the professional capacity of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons in rural, remote communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, call 10 outlines specific parameters to draft

new educational legislation that would commit to sufficient funding to address issues within the existing Indigenous Education Legislation, outlining two specific principles (TRC, 2015). Firstly, to provide sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation and secondly, improving education attainment levels and success rates (TRC, 2015). Indigenous people represent one of the youngest populations in Canada, with one sixth of the entire Indigenous population being between ages 15 and 24 years of age, with the median age of an Indigenous person being 33.6 years of age (Anderson, 2021). Population growth is expected to continue to increase, with an even larger population proportion made up of youth in the coming decades (Anderson, 2021). Educational achievement of Indigenous groups across Canada have continued to improve, with higher completion rates of high school diplomas and with adults returning for further education such as acquiring a General Education Development (**GED**) and other adult learning services. Though numbers of Indigenous people leaving formal education remain relatively high compared to other demographic groups, there remains a significant number that return to formal education as adults and succeed in achieving higher education, particularly with women and this trend has led to better labour market outcomes (O'Donnell & Arriagada).

Indigenous women and girls account for nearly three quarters of the female population living in very remote areas, and completion rates for high school or a higher level of education is lower in more remote areas (Beakney & Melvin, 2022). Overall, educational attainment for Indigenous women obtaining a bachelor's degree as of 2016, was 14% for women in more remote areas (Beakney & Melvin, 2022). There are significant intermixing factors that contribute to this, including lack of access to reliable internet and needing to leave home communities to be able to access urban centers to attend school. There remain significant socioeconomic differences between First Nations and Inuit women and gender diverse people by the level of remoteness of the community (close to urban centers or fly in fly out worksites), and First Nations women living on and off reserve as well as Inuit living in and outside of Inuit Nunatsiavut (Beakney & Melvin, 2022). There are commonalities occurring in each respective region such as, rates of high school completion or higher levels of education declining with levels of remoteness of communities. For Inuit women living along Labrador Coast; the benefits of resource extractive industries have given some economic benefits to Inuit families and have contributed to greater levels of employment for women who had not acquired their high school diplomas or GEDs (with significant impacts as discussed in other areas of this report).

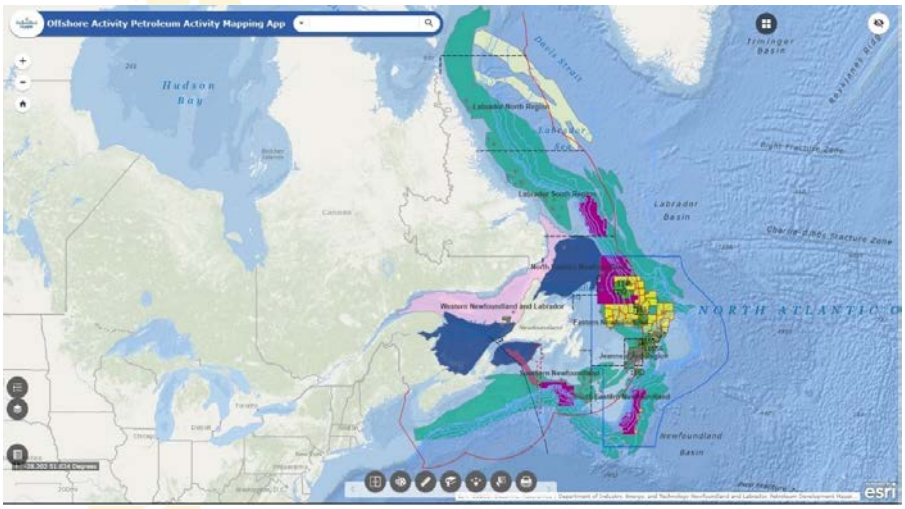

Figure 16: Offshore Petroleum Activities; Active Claims (Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.).

Resource extractive industries are prevalent in northern regions, these include timber and logging, hydroelectric dams, and mineral and metal mining, and in the case of Newfoundland and Labrador, offshore drilling of oil and petroleum, with planned major developments of renewable energy turbines. Resource extractive developments are prevalently occurring in more rural remote areas and continues to be a heavy weight contributor to job opportunities available in the north. It is expected that mining will continue to be a dominant economic driver for northern communities, this has mixed implications for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons living in relative proximity to these developments. Rural remote communities are experiencing more acute capacity issues because of a lack of access to services and combined socioeconomic barriers. In tandem, a significant industry represented in IAs are mining operations and energy projects, with many staking claims in advance exploration across the north. In the coming years there will be more technological advancements and new career pathways available, creating a higher need for skilled workers in northern communities. While immigration of skilled workers is a potential pathway, investment into Indigenous communities already in project vicinity upholds federal commitments to Indigenous peoples and provides a tangible pathway to reconciliation.

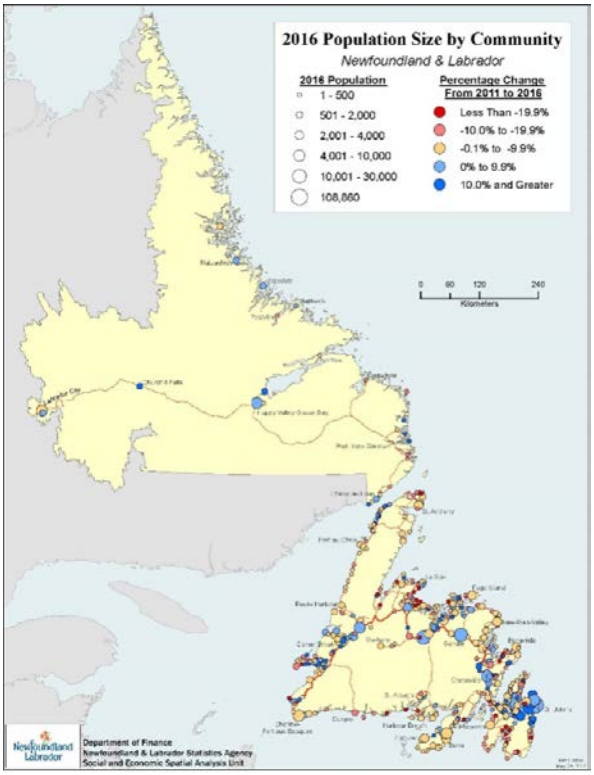

Figure 17: Population Size by Community, Newfoundland and Labrador (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016).

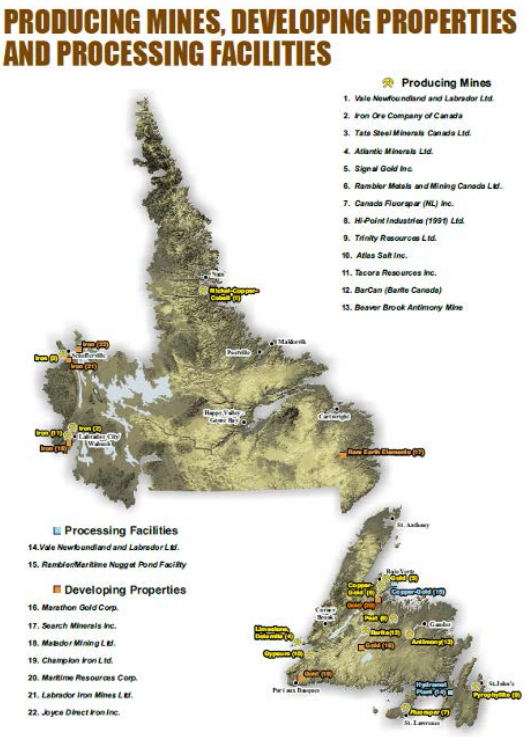

Figure 18: Active and Developing Mines Chart 2022 (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2022).

As shown in Figures 17 and 18, current mining developments take place primarily in rural remote communities in Ontario. In the past, there have been mining developments and other activities that couldn't be accessed by First Nations peoples on and off reserve because of a minimum requirement to have a Grade 12 Diploma or equivalent and Underground Common Core in addition to other barriers such as substance abuse or criminal record that prohibited them from accessing jobs. These barriers

were highlighted through renewed booms in mining development across the Northeastern part of Ontario. To address these issues there has been significant investment into training and skills development of skilled trades training in sectors across the board to increase the skilled labor force of Indigenous peoples. This is exemplified in programs and services funded by Government departments like, Employment and Social Development Canada which has heavily invested into Indigenous organizations to increase capacity of people to be able to participate in resource development activities. This has helped organizations like KOTCs run the Aboriginal Women in Mining program, now Culture Confidence and Competence (KOTC, 2021), and currently the NWAC's new National Apprenticeship Program aiming to increase Indigenous women's participation in Red-Seal Trades (NWAC, 2022a). Government funding and proponent investment has given great momentum to Indigenous communities who have entered Impact Benefit Agreement (**IBA**), Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) or other agreements, particularly in the mining sector. IBAs are designed so that the benefits generated by resource extraction projects can be shared between industry proponents, Indigenous groups, and community members. This indicates the commitment of industry and government in ensuring there is capacity within the community to uptake benefits that emerge from development happening on traditional territory.

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Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

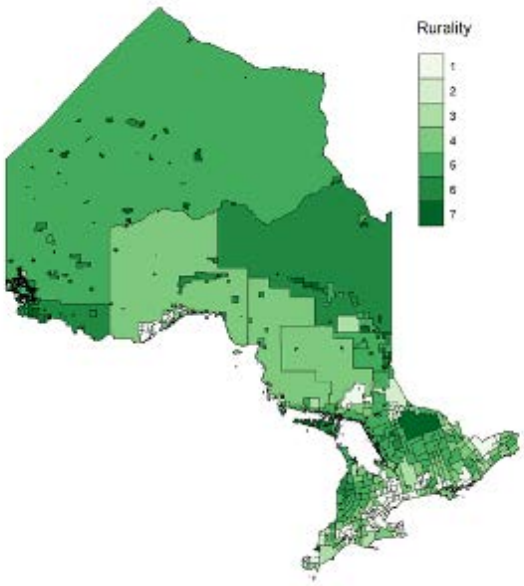

Figure 19: Rurality by Census Subdivision ON 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Figure 20: Advanced Minerals Projects in Ontario (Ontario Mining Association, 2022).

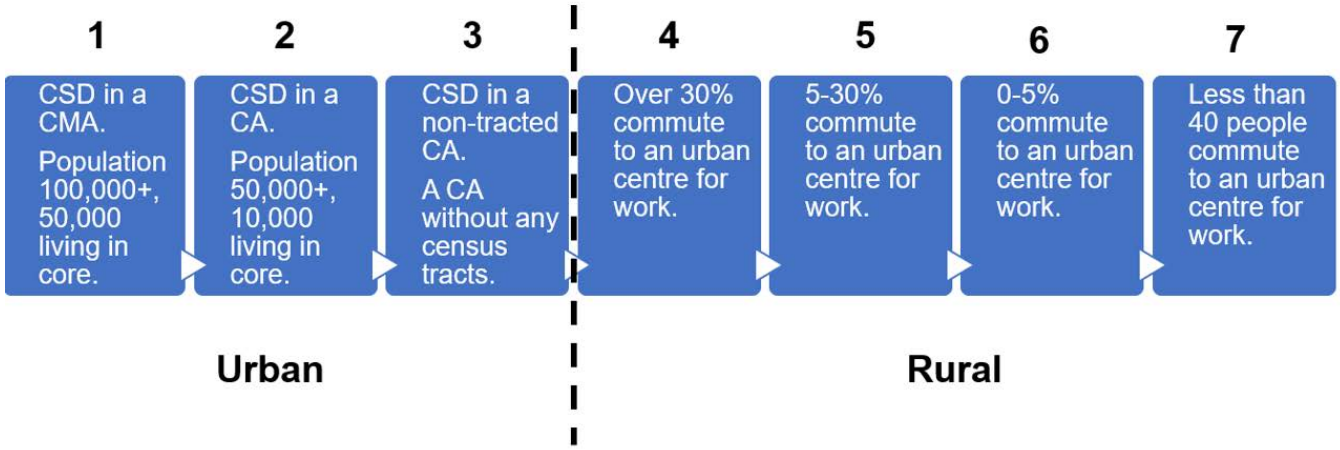

Figure 21: Statistical Area Classification Codes, (Ahmed, 2019).

Mineral and metal industries continue to be one of the largest employers of Indigenous people in rural and northern communities (NRCan, 2012). Indigenous people account for approximately 12% of the workforce of mines and is a leading industry for Indigenous representation (NRCan, 2022). There are expected increased economic opportunities for Indigenous peoples with the announcement of the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan the Federal Government and majority of provinces and territories have committed specifically to support greater participation of Indigenous women in engagement processes through elimination of barriers to employment and ensuring women have access to leadership roles (Government of Canada, 2022a). Ontario is one of the two provinces who have not yet signed on to the Critical Minerals and Metals Plan and have instead opted to generate their own 'Critical Minerals Strategy', which notably contains no explicit mention of Indigenous women, girls, and/or gender diverse persons, skirting all mention of women besides statistics on representation in the workforce and outlining that efforts will be made to attract and train underrepresented workers in its appendix on strategy commitments (Ontario, 2022). While there has been substantial advancement in skills training and development to benefit from activities of resource extractive industries after approvals have been acquired, less focus has been on proactive education and skills development to ensure participation in the planning and development of projects, in many cases effectively rendering vulnerable Indigenous groups such as women, girls, and gender diverse persons to passive rather than active participants in resource development engagement activities, depending on their region and capacity to respond to consultations.

There is a critical need to invest into post-secondary education and technology skills training, to proactively meet increasing development demands including but not limited to the sciences, legal, business, and information technology with respect to on-reserve and remote communities across Northern Ontario and Northern Labrador. IBA's and MOUs are proponent driven and are heavily dependent on project viability in a specific region. Once engagement with a community is occurring timelines for development are already in place, particularly with mineral exploration where advanced exploration occurs. IAs are driven by the Federal Government and have strict timelines that begin at

project submission to the agency. Both pathways limit the time necessary to respond to community capacity needs. Needs assessments are already a common practice in planning, however Indigenous agency is limited when communities are forced to outsource work to consultancy groups which can become costly and repetitive, or worse aren't able to participate in IA processes entirely.

Investment into post-secondary education over a longer-term period, through combined efforts by all interests (government, proponent, community) leveraging the success of previous employment training initiatives and adult learning programs for Indigenous peoples is desperately needed to build capacity of Indigenous communities to be able to respond equitably to the imposition of development on traditional territories. There is evidence that a significant portion of the underrepresentation of women in traditionally male dominated fields, such as resource extraction, is partly because *they do not want to participate*- for a variety of reasons (NWAC, 2015; Pauktuutit 2022). Indigenous women and gender diverse peoples are an untapped workforce that has continually experienced negative impacts from resource development while being unable (or unwilling) to uptake benefits that have largely been centered around post EA/IA decision activities. Giving youth and working age groups the opportunity to learn career pathways that would promote inclusivity in ways that are self-determined by impacted people respects their agency as human beings, and generates alternative pathways for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons to contribute to their community's socio-economic development.

> **"I feel that we are fighting for the opportunities for Indigenous communities all across the country, we are fighting for Indigenous dreams to have a chance to be fulfilled, a fair and square chance. We deserve the chance, we deserve the chance to prove what we as Indigenous peoples of the country can do, provided that we have the right relevant support systems in place. To have a chance."**
>
> *- Anonymous 2022*

Support Programs for Struggling Students

From a systemic view, there is an overarching need to strengthen strategies to address discriminatory stereotypes and structural barriers that impact students. These barriers that deter students from progressing beyond secondary education must be addressed to foster spaces students want to thrive in. Addressing the reality that most Indigenous students in post-secondary must move away from their community and lifestyle to enter an unfamiliar environment could be mitigated by increasing Indigenous spaces on campuses or on worksites. Clubs or community groups for Indigenous people to be able to find like-minded people who they can relate to and be more comfortable in new environments, finding a sense of belonging and connection. The school system has become increasingly westernized and Indigenous students often feel they do not see the purpose of completing school. By decolonizing the

educational system, teaching on the land, teaching traditional and cultural ways, Indigenous students would be more likely to complete education and feel that they connect with academic content. These feelings of otherness can also manifest for adults working in western workspaces. Creating culturally respectful spaces, forming support programs, or leading Indigenous knowledge workshops can go a long way in helping people feel comfortable, safe, and connected to their colleagues or peers.

The youth are crucial to building resilient communities, ensuring that from a young age youth are being connected with opportunities and encouraged to pursue them is essential. Mobilizing high school students to know how to access education or training to become hire-able and what different kinds of career paths look like allows them to make informed decisions. Programs must be community-led to yield real community benefits. When more community members are accessing education and learning new skills, the need for transient workers is limited and allows jobs to be obtained by people already living in the community. Employment training initiatives could allow established professionals to be partnered with other community members, serving as a type of mentorship that allows women, girls, and other marginalized groups to see people like them succeeding right at home in their own communities. These mentorship relationships would allow people to share the successes and challenges they faced while getting to where they are now, allowing communities to learn collectively and eliminate barriers from persisting. When people are ready to leave the workforce or are thinking of retiring, they could be paired with youth and young working professionals to pass on their valuable knowledge and insight, ensuring that the next generation is prepared to succeed.

Case Study: Keepers of the Circle (Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group)

KOTC offers the Culture, Confidence, and Competence Program, which is an employment training program focused on supporting Indigenous women, helping them to secure economic security and career advancement opportunities. The curriculum builds cultural connections that inspire confidence in participants, drawing on principles of interconnection, respect, human dignity, caring for one another, safety, and wellbeing to uplift Anishinaabe cultural knowledge and traditions. The program focuses on transforming economic systems through policy changes to address barriers to employment faced by Indigenous women. This is accomplished by development of industry-specific women's employment pathways that identify career pathways and entrepreneurial opportunities to design localized economic development plans. By establishing formalized partnerships with corporate industries, greater intercultural understanding is built to support the diversification initiatives and create more authentic and inclusive workplaces.

Case Study: NWAC ISETS and National Apprenticeship Program

The NWAC offers an Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (**ISET**) program which helps Indigenous women and gender-diverse people be able to fully participate in economic opportunities (NWAC, 2022b). NWAC believes that empowered Indigenous women are the foundation for strong families and communities, and that education can be a major avenue of empowerment (NWAC, 2022b). To help Indigenous women reach their employment and skills training goals, the program helps provide support through living allowances, childcare, tuition, and resources for those seeking work (NWAC, 2022b). This program is a partnership with Employment and Social Development Canada, showing the Government of Canada's commitment to addressing barriers Indigenous women, trans-gender, two-spirited and gender diverse people face in the workplace (NWAC, 2022b). NWAC also offers a newly formed National Apprenticeship Program to connect Indigenous women looking to enter skilled trades through connecting to red seal certified businesses to enter into apprenticeships in a more culturally safe and gender sensitive environment, learn more here: https://nwac-nap.ca/

Case Study: ECO Canada's Environmental Training Programs

It is important to minimize effort duplication and ensure that Indigenous people are made aware of what projects already exist and how they can access these resources. Environmental Careers Organization of Canada, also known as ECO Canada, offers programs and job boards for careers in the environmental industry (ECO Canada, 2021). Through partnerships with Indigenous communities, this project exemplifies how Indigenous training programs can be tailored to specific communities to provide entry-level job opportunities in the environmental field (ECO Canada, 2021). The Indigenous training program focuses on helping First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities across Canada train and develop local environmental champions to foster job creation in the green economy (ECO Canada, 2021). This project is called the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (**BEAHR**) Indigenous Training Course which has partnered with over 220 Indigenous communities across Canada since launching in 2006 (ECO Canada, 2021). ECO Canada customizes programs to make accessible and meaningful career development training programs (ECO Canada, 2021). Community members can request assisted facilitation and training partnerships to have courses delivered in their communities (ECO Canada, 2021). These courses include, but are not limited to, training for Environmental Core Skills, Environmental Monitoring, Reclamation Specialization, Climate Change Adaptation, Leadership in Energy Management, Land Use Planning and more (ECO Canada, 2021).

Figure 22: NWAC Logo after rebranding in 2020; Offering services such as career pathways training to Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse persons (NWAC, 2022).

Figure 23: BEAHR Indigenous Training Program logo, ECO Canada's initiative to help First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities across Canada develop local environmental champions and foster job creation in the green economy (ECO Canada, 2021).

Ethical and Empowering Research

Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse peoples have long been ignored in decision making processes and included in the research that affects them most. Because of the influence of traditional roles, Indigenous women and gender diverse peoples are considered keepers of specific types of TK as such, being equally represented in research to have the opportunity to protect that knowledge is of paramount importance (McGregor, 2008). A fundamental principle when researching with Indigenous communities is to establish a relationship and mutually determine parameters of study, timelines, and work plans that create a clear and accountable way of conducting research and data gathering (FNMPC, 2020; Indigenous Innovation Initiative, 2021; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2016;). There are many methods of collecting data that uplift knowledge system translation, a topic that is being studied heavily in other institutions and organizations. Specific to this framework, we outline practices that directly influence the representation of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons in IA processes. The IAAC is already actively looking at the interpretation of Indigenous knowledge in respectful ways, ensuring that the communications received by impacted Indigenous peoples is interpreted with the appropriate context and intent of what is shared (IAAC, 2022b).

Figure 24: Artwork by Jonathan Thunder "Grave of the Giant"

Knowledge system interpretation and translation has had mixed results in application for current assessments such as the Upper Beaver Gold Project and Crawford Nickel projects which are currently in process. Comments received by Indigenous peoples continue to be condensed into bullet points with little to no context behind why these comments were shared, instead sticking to broader themes that tend to be reductive in nature. A key principle in conducting research with Indigenous peoples is to meaningfully engage with Indigenous groups to ensure the knowledge is shared in a respectful way, and that any knowledge that is shared is given appropriate context (Ninomiya, et al., 2017). Conducting research about community impacts could also allow for the inclusion of **'grey literature'** sources in which tend to have higher representation of Indigenous research (Ninomiya, et al., 2017). This could also allow for communities to submit studies or reports of their choosing to support positionality on a given subject to avoid delays through repetition of work, an example could be reference to existing studies on a national scale such as the MMIWG reports, and others originated by women's organizations such as Pauktuutit or NWAC covering broader systemic issues as baseline indicators and building on this knowledge to conduct distinctions-based studies that are localized to specific regions.

The MMIWG Vol 1b outlines ethical and empowering approaches to research on page 87 and 88, we highlight the following two recommendations: **Validate diverse forms of knowledge; Adopt a strength-based approach to research** (MMIWG, 2017. Vol 1b Pg 87)

1. Validate Diverse Forms of Knowledge

Validating diverse forms of knowledge includes lived experience, TK, and academic research (MMIWG, 2017 Vol 1b). Indigenous women do not dissociate from lived experiences, and concerns flow from collective experiences to inform theories about issues that impact their own lives (Archuleta, 2006). This upholds key hallmarks of Indigenous ways of doing, incorporating knowledge keepers, experiences of impacted intersectional identities and makes space for trust. Through validating diverse forms of knowledge, project proponents and the agency can uphold these essential calls to justice and implement key practices of Social Impact Assessment (**SIA**). SIA includes consideration of people's ways of life, their culture, community, their environment, health and wellbeing and their fears and aspirations (Vanclay, 2005). There is compelling research that outlines methods in which to incorporate ways of knowing such as storytelling, the recounting of oral traditions, and the sharing of traditional roles and responsibilities in research conducted on Indigenous communities. This makes space for reported sightings and historical knowledge and occupancy to be incorporated into study planning on specific regions, putting into motion additional research parameters that may not have otherwise been considered.

2. Adopt a strength-based approach to research

In ethical research relationships there must be governance mechanisms in place (Vanclay, *et al*., 2015). There could be an oversight committee formed to verify project findings and studies such as an Elder's advisory council, or the formation of a committee representing the various interests in major project development with multiple communities involved. Good practice includes the establishment of research protocols in advance of engagements, which might include monitoring of activities taking place, providing advice on engagements to practitioners and to participants to handle complaints independently (Vanclay, *et al*., 2015). Good governance processes include a full reporting of the methods being utilized in research and a full disclosure of analytical instruments used in each study to allow replication and peer review of all studies being conducted (Vanclay, *et al*., 2015). However, publication of sensitive information such as, Indigenous knowledge studies may be prohibited by the community and this confidentiality must be respected.

Strengths based approaches in research include, focusing on ethical, epistemological, and methodological areas of focus, which means respectful ways of engaging with various forms of knowledge, culturally appropriate methods and inclusion of Indigenous values and worldviews

(FNIGC, 2020). Researchers must always consider if they have appropriately captured contextually relevant issues (FNIGC, 2020). Strength based participation in engagements are cited in earlier portions of this framework.

Data Collection

Meaningful data is critical to understanding and addressing multiple systemic issues which cumulatively impact Indigenous peoples. While communities may be queried for information, there have been many historic and contemporary interpretations and presentations of findings that have largely excluded them from the process (McBride, n.d.). Data should be collected in ways that maximize the benefits, while simultaneously minimizing harm to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities while maintaining their data sovereignty (Indigenous Innovation Initiative, 2021). The Indigenous Innovation Initiative published key principles around the collection of data and knowledge from communities:

- Free prior and informed consent of data being collected and authority of the sharing of data.
- Self-determination including leadership and full participation in aspects of data collection.
- Maintain ownership and access to any knowledge and data that is collected about them, including intellectual property.
- Determining how to be acknowledged when their knowledge or data is used.
- Meaningfully benefit from the collection and use of their data and knowledge. (Indigenous Innovation Initiative, 2021)

The Indigenous Innovation Initiative also outlines practices for knowledge and data collection, we encourage those who are seeking to conduct research about impacts to Indigenous communities to apply these practices. Many components of our report are complimented by this excellent protocol. We wish to amplify other areas of focus in this report which state that it is crucial to engage inclusively and diversely with women, Elders, youth, two spirit, queer, trans, and gender diverse youth with a focus on lived experience leaders (Indigenous Innovation Initiative, 2021).

Another principle that is useful to data collection efforts is to negotiate a research relationship in advance of doing studies, making sure that data collection and types of studies conducted are acceptable and suitable for communities (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2016). Duties and responsibilities can be clearly established, this might lead to opportunities for training and employment within communities to conduct activities, sharing the burden of responsibility equally (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2016). Data can be useful in characterizing Indigenous-Industry relationships, highlight inequalities, and bring evidence-based insights into project planning and development. Data about First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples has been misused and misappropriated in the past which has led to broken trust. There are calls for improved performance and accountability through data monitoring and collection efforts, leveraging existing data to address issues of equity and injustice and inform evidence based decision making for land planning.

Data collection opportunities are numerous, as demonstrated in *any typical Tailored Impact Statement Guideline Report* on any given project currently in process. These studies have broad reaching potential in project planning and development. There are known limitations with conventional data as collected by institutions such as, Statistics Canada however, this has been recognized as a shortcoming in current data availability and efforts have been made to mitigate this. Statistics Canada offers a program focused on helping First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people access publicly available data and learn how to navigate the Statistics Canada database. The Indigenous Liaison Program is tailored specifically to help Indigenous People and Indigenous organizations build statistical capacity. There are also recognized Indigenous data governance systems such as the First Nations Information Governance Centre that have cultivated Indigenous specific data and studies and made them available via an online portal.

Improving researcher and community capacity to uptake and learn new methods of research and participation is crucial in establishing respectful relationships. The complexities of achieving this within a project timeline is extremely difficult to achieve, as explored in other parts of this report would require more long-term investment with key development areas planned. Researchers hired on by proponents must have existing knowledge, training, and the ability to conduct research in partnership with community based on mutual respect and learning and have a thorough understanding of the principles of OCAP and their applicability in a community context (McBride, n.d.).

Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (**KPI**) is a method in which to map strategic factors that outline critical success factors in EA project implementation. These KPI can measure the quality of IA reports, the effectiveness of IA implementation, how well conditions are being implemented in project development and the overall effectiveness of an IA in Indigenous rights and environmental protection (Dwyer, *et al.*, 2014). The IAAC uses knowledge and experience from previous IAs in writing new *Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines*, and this can include results from follow up programs. However, because the new IAA 2019 legislation has not yet been able to conduct studies about project implementation post decision under the new act, there remains an opportunity to establish broader KPI's that include socio-economic impacts for informing baseline data or 'foundational knowledge' especially relating to Indigenous-Industry relationships post decision during monitoring and follow up activities to a certain degree. There have been calls for more data characterizing Industry-Indigenous relationships in resource development, however, IBAs are negotiated outside of the IA process, and this creates a lack of transparency in ensuring that agreements are followed through and prevents sharing of information and best practices between communities (Manning, *et al*., 2018).

KPI's allow us to determine a socio-economic baseline that is relevant for decision making and documenting social changes, to determine pre-impact state and allow for ongoing evaluative activities and updates to community status after development is actively occurring (Vanclay, 2015). Applied within a GBA+ context this can provide tangible and concrete insights into the degree of success for impact mitigation strategies and create a level of procedural alignment between IA projects. While a

distinctions-based approach is necessary to adequately make relationships with individual Nations, there remains fundamental shared experiences between sub-groups such as Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons that have been studied extensively, with known negative impacts from resource development that have been highlighted in research on a global scale. It is critical to evaluate if IA project conditions are adequately addressing these known impacts as a general principle, in addition to the concerns of impacted groups from a localized perspective.

Qualitative Analysis of Project Implementation

The IAAC and project proponents may commit project conditions which contain social and development goals which require additional follow up to ensure that what has been committed has actually been achieved. There are a wide variety of instruments that can assist with measuring and evaluating the successes, or lack thereof, in implementing project conditions and addressing the concerns and feedback of Indigenous peoples. The primary reason to do this is to help improve future processes and inform other on-going projects. We suggest utilizing both a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection, quantitative can be useful in predicting trends and getting concrete facts about projects. A complimentary method that better addresses the diverse and unique ways in which feedback is received and incorporated into project development is qualitative analysis. The practice of using qualitative analysis methods can measure if the social effects of a project or planned activity reached the intended beneficiaries as expected, or lead to unintended consequences (Copestake & Remnant, n.d.). It can highlight variations and provide insights into implementation for intended beneficiaries, though it does not reveal the magnitude of changes it is particularly useful for measuring levels of predicted contributions (Copestake & Remnant, n.d.). Both qualitative and quantitative analysis can be complimented and scoped by KPI early in project planning, instruments can be selected that are mutually affirming and beneficial to one another in measuring qualitative and interpretive approaches to assessing change and measuring impacts (Copestake & Remnant, n.d.).

Case Study: Sharing Circles as a Qualitative Research Method

The practice of gathering stories through sharing circles is comparable to focus groups on qualitative research where a researcher gathers information about a particular subject through group discussions (Lavallee, 2009). All participants including the facilitator are equals and aspects of information, spirituality, and emotional intelligence are shared and valued equally (Lavallee, 2009). The inclusion of traditional practices can be incorporated as is guided and deemed respectful by the participants, facilitation of the discussion should be done only after the establishment of an ethical relationship and establishment of the positionality of all who are in attendance.

Participatory Research

Participatory research enables ordinary people to play an active and influential role in decision making processes (Participatory Methods Organization, n.d.). Participatory learning is used to actionize the critical reflection and insights of local people, driven by citizen partnerships and engagement opportunities which are used to help shape project outcomes (Participatory Methods Organization, n.d.). When using participatory approaches, people are not just listened to, but are also heard, included, and their voices shape project outcomes. This well recognized methodology is upheld by key principles outlining that:

- All people have a right to participate and shape decision-making processes
- Safe spaces are needed to ensure marginalized or frequently unheard or ignored voices are listened to and intentionally included
- Local people have valuable expert knowledge that varies by individual and creates a more informed view of the world when considered cumulatively
- Releasing preconceptions, being prepared to learn from community members and unlearn any misconceptions or biases is essential to authentically employ participatory methods
- Industry experts must be prepared to sit back and build relationships with local people, giving them space to come to the table as they are, without imposing expectations (Participatory Methods Organization, n.d.)

As discussed in previous sections, community engaged research is emerging as a reliable practice to generate ownership over studies about issues impacting communities, the merits of this practice have already been covered however it is important to critically reflect on data collection and useability for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons in the context of current IA processes.

> [Participatory action research encourages; reciprocal education of the study partners; implementation of actions, solutions, and corrective measures; emergency of social change; sharing of knowledge and expertise in a respectful relationship, from equal to equal; sharing of responsibilities, costs and benefits leading to satisfactory results]
>
> *– Basile, S. 2012*

Case Study: County of Antigonish partnership with Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation

To exemplify the success of participatory methods, we draw on case studies to highlight best practices in collaborative partnerships across Canada. The first is a project that began in 2016, in the County of Antigonish in partnership with Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). The project focuses on planning and building a major economic development that will share benefits across municipal government agencies and First Nations across Nova Scotia (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). Through leading a joint workshop, both traditional and modern land-use practices were mapped to better plan community

economic development and inform annual work plans (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). At the first joint council-to-council meeting, regional collaboration strategies were developed to form a Joint Steering Committee with specific and well-defined plans (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). Using input from Indigenous-led organizations and insight of community members, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and the County of Antigonish were able to inspire other communities in Nova Scotia to pursue relationship building and build First Nation-Municipal partnerships for more inclusive and beneficial land use planning initiatives (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022).

> **"The CEDI initiative provides a new and fresh perspective on how community and economic development can flourish through partnership with our local municipal neighbours. We are a community within communities and through our joint efforts we are exploring new and innovative ways to improve the lives of all our residents."**
>
> *- Chief PJ Prosper, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation*

Baseline Data Collection in Impact Assessments

There are numerous opportunities to provide baseline data in project planned studies. These opportunities to meet input invitations as outlined in the *Tailored Impacts Statement Guidelines* in current *Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines* as exampled in the Upper Beaver Gold Project sections 10.1., 10.2., 10.3 & 10.4 and their subsections (IAAC, 2022). Phase 1 of the IA process is a crucial point in time for Indigenous peoples, organizations, and communities because when a proponent registers their project under IAAC, a timeline of 180 days is triggered to do a series of planned studies and scoping of work to be done.

Baseline data collection can involve identifying Valued Components (**VCs**), defining temporal and spatial boundaries, and the collection of baseline information (The Firelight Group, 2013). VCs can be classified as tangible biophysical components of the environment, or less tangible socioeconomic, cultural, and knowledge-based values (The Firelight Group, 2013). Site specific values are considered spatially distinct and can be mapped, and can indicate instances of historic and current uses, and may be interrelated with a broader series of VCs, every site-specific location therefore, can be linked to non-site-specific activities practices and relationships and may expand the geographic area of impact (The Firelight Group, 2013). Non-site-specific values may include the transference of knowledge from one generation to the next, access or impaired use to specific sites and contamination of the natural environment (The Firelight Group, 2013).

Engaging with potentially affected groups helps to fill gaps in data, baseline data should be supplemented by additional information and expertise from locally affected groups (IAAC, 2020a). The ministry recognizes the need for a broad range of data collection methodologies to be applied, including looking at evidence and previous projects findings to discover data trends and analysis tools applied in previous assessments (IAAC, 2020a). Disaggregating data by intersectional components in baseline data can identify vulnerable groups and identify groups that are positioned to benefit from project activities

(IAAC 2020a). A critical component of this is factoring in Indigenous lens GBA+ to **effect pathways** which allows proponents to investigate how impacts may be experienced differently by diverse subgroups of people, allowing for more targeted project impact mitigation, and ensuring predicted effects are realized (IAAC 2020a). In the case of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons this could entail intersectional factors and predicted effects that may maintain and/or perpetuate structural violence.

It may not always be realistic to rely on communities to produce their own experts in baseline data collection opportunities, though this remains a significant long-term goal to bring equitable inclusivity, it may be prudent to attain a localized collection approach and outsourcing research opportunities to Indigenous researchers and organizations to actionize community assets. Though every opportunity to involve diverse sub-groups in data collection opportunities is paramount in building community capacity and ownership of studies conducted. This can include site visits, citizen science campaigns, water a soil sampling practicums, conducting interviews and literary reviews pertaining to key impacts.

Traditional Land Mapping

Traditional Land Use studies are increasing in momentum and frequency across Canada. While it is beyond the scope of this research to detail the benefits of land use planning, there are significant innovations that communities are undertaking that present an opportunity for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons to participate in ways that allow them to practice values-based participation in land use and development. Capacity building can take place in a community and there are opportunities to build technical skills and knowledge for people without being confined within an IA. By creating a policy that demonstrates how land in and around communities is being used could be a huge asset in ensuring community perspectives and lifestyles are maintained in community land-use planning and organizing. These maps could outline areas that experience high traffic or high collision rates to be able to improve infrastructural planning. These would make it easier to prove the need for new roads, zoning, additional signage, new traffic lights, changing speed limits or improvements to road conditions to create a safer community.

The land is strength, the land is prosperity, it is health, and it is nationhood. Indigenous peoples across the nation have experienced stiff opposition when fighting against the economic exploitation of lands and resources. In the past, Indigenous peoples have resorted to public demonstrations, using sit-ins, blockades, and protests, exemplified in historical incidents of Ipperwash, Oka, and most recently, Idle No More. Collectively acting on shared interests is a way to achieve unity and strength as well as combat systemic barriers. Political shifts in leadership create a change in ideas and projects as the priorities and worldview of those in governance changes. Some nations and regions such as, Lílwat First Nation CLUP (Lílwat Nation, 2015), the Labrador Inuit (Nunatsiavut Government, 2023), Tahltan Nation in British Columbia (Tahltan Central Government, 2022) and Six Nations in Southern Ontario (Six Nations of the Grand River, 2013) have generated land stewardship documents and

agreements which provide opportunities for knowledge transference between leadership, youth, and those who wish to conduct project activities on their traditional territories. While it is beyond the scope of this report to create guidelines of how to generate this type of documentation, we wish to highlight that each person possesses the capability to bring their skills, passions, and talent to their home communities.

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Serving and providing for one's family and/or community.

Advocating and helping spread awareness about exemplary documents that act as a type of governance policy creates space for more people to participate. Rather than only speaking with agency representatives on a project-by-project basis but, forming real foundational relationships where fundamental questions about where communities are going in the future, and the means of getting there together can be answered. Guiding documents allow leadership work to continue, although leadership changes may occur, these documents can establish a continuity of voices and priorities. Grassroots people have an opportunity now to organize and generate their own guiding documents, breaking free from the cycle of dependency that the Indian Act imposes on communities (Manuel & Derrickson, 2016). Land Use Protocols are already being established, Walpole First Nation and Alderville First Nation have developed regionally specific consultation protocols. They include, the legal terms of reference, purpose and application, legal status, principles guiding consultation, notice requirements, consultation process, potential costs incurred, statement of accommodation and dispute resolution measures (Alderville First Nation, 2015; Walpole Island First Nation, n.d.). Alderville First Nation includes detailed maps showing traditional use areas, and which Treaties apply (Alderville First Nation, 2015). Walpole Island outlines a structured work plan and accountability measures in their protocols as well as specifically notes the region in which an outstanding land claim exists (Walpole Island First Nation, n.d.). For smaller reservations, there may exist the potential for adoption with modifications of existing consultation protocols by another band. This could serve as a cost saving pathway, with changes to reflect the distinct and unique community priorities and guiding principles, legal status, and documentation.

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Working together for a common cause.

We submit that in this work, exploration of the relationship between root causes of violence against women, girls, and gender diverse persons should be investigated fully, and community wide discussions around the implications of loss of land and access to traditional territory would mean for all membership. Does development on territories interfere with the right to self-determination? If so, how is that being mitigated? Are the potential impacts of development going to impact key areas of priorities for community members? (Ex: access to clean drinking water; key species impacts; etc.). Depending on where communities are located geographically, their size and demographic composition enable some communities to lead policies, frameworks and publications outlining key priorities and strategies for their communities in unity, this exercise can have powerful impacts in EAs and IAs. Having a proactive response in ways that are outlined by Indigenous communities on their own behalf is a critical foundation to Indigenous led assessments.

Case Study: Squamish Nation in British Columbia

The next example comes from the Squamish Nation in British Columbia, where a partnership and working relationship was formed to formalize information sharing, improve communications, address mutual interest, and generate comprehension of Squamish First Nation title and rights (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). This partnership formalized co-operative protocols, creating an annual meeting space where principles of trust, respect, and mutual understanding would allow collaboration efforts to achieve conservation and cultural preservation to be prioritized in natural resource development projects (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). This collaborative effort created a long-term land tenure which expands economic opportunities through local job creation and encourages community level involvement in forest management (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). As a result, nearly half of the Community Forests in BC are operated by First Nations, allowing Squamish Nation to manage local forest resources in their own way, while allowing conservation and preservation of cultural and spiritual sites to be led by Indigenous people directly (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022). The result of this partnership has created a Community Forest which prioritizes recreation and education, bridging western management with Indigenous knowledge (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2022).

> **'Women are the first environment'**
>
> *- Cook, K. 2003*

Figure 25: Intergenerational Trauma, artwork by Tsista.

Reducing Impacts

Holistic Framing of Rights in IA

Section 35 Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

A significant amount of engagement practices are centered around impacts to rights, Indigenous rights to hunt, fish, trap, and maintain subsistence practices, when framed within this context the 'rights holder' communities vs communities with 'interest' in specific areas of planned development (Wang, 2022), they become separated into hierarchical categories tiered by level of priority. This rights-based narrative exacerbates pressures on First Nations communities and the Nunatsiavut Government to register land claims, territorial assertions and participate in modern lands claims processes to ensure that there is an acknowledgment of their existence within a proposed project area. Having recognition as 'rights holders' strengthens their positions to enter IBAs (Keilland, 2015). When framing impacts within a rights-based approach, topics of focus center heavily on constitutionally protected rights promised to Indigenous peoples under the Constitution Act of 1982, Section 35 from which flows the crown obligation to consult with Indigenous peoples (IAAC, 2020).

Project consultation feedback often comes from a place of cultural responsibility, tradition, and spiritual connection to the land. Restoration and preservation of traditional practices can be viewed as a threat or impediment to state sovereignty and territorial authority, especially if it contravenes economic development opportunities supported by political governing bodies. Though it is beyond the scope of our research to weigh the merits of Crown and Indigenous sovereign practices, it becomes apparent that the current allocation of Indigenous rights within the context of the Canadian constitution effectively limits the ability for nations to define and actionize their own identity and rights (Shrinkhal, 2021). Considered within the context of current IA guidelines for information collection and application this limitation, therefore effectively prevents the full exercise of responsibilities to the natural world as confines rights discourse to the Canadian Constitution and historical and modern Treatises and related rights and titles (if any). Fundamental questions on how narratives are interpreted in proponents and government analysis of feedback received indicated a strong need to summarize feedback in ways that can be mitigated in the project planning period; however, what mechanisms exist that consider larger questions such as inherent ecological value? Spiritual significance of a space and place? The agency is currently limited to summaries that indicate the need for *'assessment of impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and/ or treaty rights'* distinguished by category and characterization of scientific implications (IAAC, 2022). The tendency to intermix rights and responsibilities is apparent in current engagement summaries (IAAC, 2022), partly out of necessity to protect Indigenous knowledge and partly because of a need for certainty and tangibility in suggested impact mitigation options.

Through development activities, especially with **greenfield developments** there are serious impacts to affected communities within the vicinity of project areas. Knowledge interruption occurs when communities can no longer practice values renewal because Indigenous knowledge, principles and values are intrinsically tied to the natural world. Such values are with increasing frequency interrelated to depleted, destroyed, or altered biophysical environments and have led to negative and at times permanent consequences to the futures of impacted Indigenous communities. This is the case with nations in and around the Alberta Oil sands developments particularly around the vicinity of the Athabasca River, which is widely considered to be both an economic boon for developers, and a climate and health disaster for concerned Indigenous nations and the public (Kusnetz, 2021).

Further aggravating an already complex system of consultation requirements is where people are located geographically, each province and territory has their own mandates and agendas with mixed levels of success in relationship building with Indigenous peoples. Provincial and territorial relationships between First Nations and Inuit people are unclear, and have demonstrable instances of open disregard of Indigenous priorities as exampled in *Nunatsiavut Government v. Newfoundland and Labrador* where the Newfoundland provincial government and Voisey's Bay project developers came to a 'Development Agreement' for a smelter at Long Harbour on the island of Newfoundland without consulting the Nunatsiavut Government, and nested deductions of constructing the smelter against Voisey's Bay 5% annual revenue profit sharing agreement with Inuit Labrador people (Crane, *et al.,* 2020). The court ruled that the province had improperly calculated the revenue share from the Voisey's Bay mine and did not discharge its duty to consult the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, and that the Inuit were entitled to damages (Crane, *et al.,* 2020).

While the province of Ontario has committed to revising provincial EA legislation, 'Class EA' project approvals continue to move forward with little to no consultation of Indigenous communities, this includes Forest Management through the Ministry of Natural Resources (Lindgren & Dunn, 2010). Treaty 9 First Nations Chapleau Cree, Brunswick House and Missinabie Cree are suing the Ontario provincial government over claims of mismanagement of the boreal forest, acting in response to widespread complaints of pesticide spraying and clearcutting away large swaths of forest (Rabski-McColl, 2022). Neskantaga First Nation is suing the province over inadequate consultation in the Ring of Fire development (Turner, 2021). Attawapiskat, Fort Albany and Neskantaga First Nations have all declared a moratorium on development until they have equitably been included in the Regional Assessment for the Ring of Fire (Attawapiskat, Fort Albany & Neskantaga First Nations, 2021). The proposed developments within the Ring of Fire promises revenue that would position Ontario as a leader in global mining activities, with projections in the tens of billions (Hjartarson, *et al.,* 2014), with premier Doug Ford citing opportunities for intergenerational wealth. The time to listen to impacted Indigenous nations is now, and the responsibility to accommodate Indigenous values and perspectives has never been more critical to ensuring meaningful accommodation to Indigenous people's values, principles, and responsibilities.

In considering historic failures to adequately consult and accommodate Indigenous perspectives in previous EA legislation, the new IAA legislation is a welcome step forward at the Federal level, and there

have been measurable steps forward in reconciliation measures undertaken by the Federal government. As noted above, there remains significant deviance in provincial mandates and priorities, and varying levels of significance placed on Indigenous perspectives in economic development. The provincial government's relationship to Indigenous people is just as important at the federal level of government because of the restoring of control of natural resources within provincial jurisdiction, decisions made at the provincial and territorial level have broad reaching and serious implications for Indigenous communities.

Human Rights

Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons are holders of inherent, treaty, constitutional and human rights, these rights are violated by development projects that have not adequately reflected mitigation measures in project planning. Indigenous women have the right to culture, health, security, and justice (MMIWG, Vol 1a Pg. 124). Through the recognition that inequality, discrimination, and marginalization deny people their fundamental human rights, approaches can be created which focus on protecting human rights by deconstructing power relations (United Nations, 2020). Positive transformation can occur when human rights and economic development are viewed together, weighted as equally important (United Nations, 2020). This type of work has been supported by the Canadian Human Rights Commission, who have highlighted 30 distinct human rights, which in Canada are protected under federal, provincial, and territorial laws (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2021). The Canadian Human Rights Act protects people from discrimination and harassment, based on race, age, gender, and/or sexual orientation (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2021). Under this legislation, every Canadian has a right to be treated equally, granting everyone the freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and freedom of religion (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2021). These declarations highlight the autonomy of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people to participate in IA projects as they are, without having to conform to the expectations of law makers. A Rights Based Approach system has also been developed by the UN's Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG, 2022). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has become the standard for preserving quality of life and ensuring well-being of all people is prioritized (UNSDG, 2022). This conceptual framework focuses on analyzing inequalities and discriminatory practices to ensure that policies are created to prioritize equality (UNSDG, 2022). The Human Rights Based Approach extends to civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights and focuses on encouraging rights-holders to claim their rights, while ensuring that those in power meet their obligations to maintain and protect every person's basic human right (UNSDG, 2022).

Acting in synergy to this is early engagement with various groups of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons, and including Indigenous people living in an urban setting. There remains little data demonstrating engagement with Indigenous women living in proximity to resource extractive industries whose home communities fall outside of communities captured within an area of impact in extractive industries, Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Information System (**ATRIS**) reports or Indigenous

communities with unregistered claims in outlying areas. A human rights-based approach must be applied in an IA to mitigate the social issues that arise with large scale developments (FIO, 2019). Preservation of human dignity and practicing sustainable development principles in business, particularly with resource development projects is emerging as a globally accepted and necessary requirement to project implementation. A human rights-based approach encompasses aspects of Indigenous consultations that cannot be captured adequately by simply looking at Aboriginal Title or Treaty rights impacts, this lens fails to mitigate known risks associated with large scale developments such as increased gender-based violence in communities, influx of substance abuse and criminal activities, sexual assaults, and human trafficking risks, increased housing costs and costs of living in city centers, among others. Insufficient attention is given to socio-economic and health consequences for Indigenous women in IA processes (Manning, 2018).

> *It's not enough to look at impacts to treat aboriginal rights as awarded under Section 35, applying a human rights lens allows for broader context of impacts to be included in development planning. Consulting with Indigenous 'rights-holders' must shift to Indigenous 'human rights holders' to adequately scope GBA+ analysis and advance reconciliation measures. The context of human rights impacts can be applied to both legacy impacts and potential impacts, and* ***causal, contributing, or directly linked impacts of development*** *(IPIECA, 2013).*

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Decision-making through decision and consensus.

Figure 26: Image from the Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies Report, (Women's Earth Alliance & Native Youth Sexual Health Network, n.d.).

Community Capacity Building

Indigenous self-governance

Indigenous self-governance models existed and thrived for thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers. These intricate systems extended to social and economic governance, supporting systems of education, health, and uplifting cultural ways of being, reflecting the diversity of Indigenous cultures living in harmony across Turtle Island (OECD, 2020). Each governance structure varied from region to region, depending on the unique collection of community members, their needs, priorities, and capacities. It is important to recognize that each Indigenous nation has its own original legal framework and constitution, which have been under attack since colonization. Through the revitalization of the traditional roles of women, they can once more be equally included in governing structures and pursue equal representation of women in political and public life structures. Equal representation and inclusion of women in all levels of governance is key to ensuring self-governance structures are considering the true diversity of communities.

Across the country, Indigenous people are re-establishing these self-led government structures. Decades of resistance in response to the lack of democratic control and loss of traditional land has influenced change, allowing equity and harmony to be restored through holding difficult, yet critical, conversations about how to conduct nation-nation relationship renewal in a good way (OECD, 2020). Currently, there are 25 self-governance agreements across Canada which involve 43 Indigenous communities, with 50 additional self-governance negotiations in process across the country as the value and positive effect of these decolonized governing structures are becoming clear (Government of Canada, 2020). Inuit have established their own governance systems in four regions in so-called Canada which include Nunavik, Nunavut, Inuvialuit and Nunatsiavut. Nunatsiavut in Northern Labrador obtained self-governance on December 1, 2005. Nunavut in the high arctic, Nunavik in Northern Quebec, and Kativik Regional Governments, and Inuvialuit serve as examples of self-government bringing self-determination back to Indigenous communities (OECD, 2020a). The Nunatsiavut Government finally got self-governance on December 1, 2005. Under the Indian Act, band administrations were created as a form of on reserve governments which have been criticized for serving the interests of the Canadian colonial state not First Nations interests (OECD, 2020a). Modern treaties, while problematic and often cited as extinguishment or assimilationist policies, have been signed to create public governments owned jointly by Indigenous people and residents of the territory, collaborating in a comprehensive land agreement. Although flawed, these systems allow for greater local input and for creating space for Indigenous people to work with Indigenous-led organizations to accomplish political advocacy, economic development, service delivery, and more.

Language Revitalization

Language revitalization has been called for in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action to promote and enhance policies, programs, and services that increase language revitalization efforts across Canada. Language is more than just a form of communication; it is a way to convey knowledge and reflects a spirit centered worldview that sees all of creation as animate beings (FNIGC, 2020). The subject of language revitalization has been extensively researched and many publications exist which support the benefits associated with increased access to language support services. Within the context of this framework and a crucial component of this work, is to center resilience in communities, bringing forward practices and opportunities for intergenerational language and knowledge transference. This kind of learning can be done through activities associated with community land use planning, an exploration of TEK at the local level, conducting community led EAs/IAs and much more. Some researchers and communities have used practices of Geographic Information System (**GIS**) mapping to rename places of interest (Wotjtuszewskam, 2019), by integrating historical land use, language, and storytelling into interactive maps, creating documented information about land use practices. It is important to acknowledge that the privacy and confidentiality of these information systems must be decided by communities. Although many Nations chose to keep mapping and documented TEK strictly confidential to individual communities as private information, there are many opportunities for knowledge holders to reach extended membership, like community members living in urban settings, providing important historical context while also continuing to teach language and traditional teachings to younger generations.

Indigenous Men As Allies in Healing and Resurgence

Cultural resurgence and capacity building cannot effectively take place without the involvement and allyship of Indigenous men. To achieve widespread healing and cultural resurgence, or for the lived reality to be equitable inclusion of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons in land use planning and development, men must do the work too. Land plays a fundamental role in Indigenous resurgence, spiritual regeneration, and cultural resurgence unfold in distinct ways for men and gender diverse persons. Intergenerational trauma has impacted Indigenous people collectively, recognizing that men too have experienced abuses in every form and are continually working to heal from generations of trauma and oppression. In many communities, men bear the responsibility of leading their people. Simply pointing to past traumas generalizes and subverts localized efforts taking place where Indigenous men are practicing resurgence with their families and communities. Jeff Corntassel and Mick Scow examine acts of resurgence within the context of Indigenous fatherhood and ‘everydayness’:

- **Everydayness:** Small scale transformative resistance and resurgence takes place in the form of directed mentorships, informal community leadership where practices of personal decolonization can occur.
- **Convergences of time and place:** Place based community consciousness examines how current everyday struggles over the land are interwoven with both the past and the future, this helps to keep resurgence practices strong and immediate.
- **Politics of intimate settings:** The politics of relating to families, communities and to friends reveals the resilience and sharing and interpreting knowledge, language and living histories. Intimate spaces are where relational accountability takes place, Knowledge interruption occurs when communities can no longer practice values renewal because Indigenous knowledge, principles and values are intrinsically tied to the natural world.
- **Gender-relationships:** Everydayness helps challenge heteropatriarchy and gender binaries by linking decolonization and resurgence to 2SLGBTQQIA+ movements for social justice and realizing gendered values that are shared with future generations in the context of homes and families.
  (Corntassel & Scow, 2017)

Perpetuating Indigenous nationhood means that cultural practices are done in everyday actions. Everyday actions cumulatively embody leadership, governance, and community (Corntassel & Scow, 2017). While these principles do not encompass a one-size fits all to resurgence practices, we highlight this work to promote many teachings about good relations, cultural values, and honoring families and homelands. Men teach their children, mentorship relationships between men plays a crucial role in ensuring governance practices are done in a good way. Many of our men never had access to these types of relationships as children and attention must be given to the emotional, spiritual, mental, and physical well-being of men in communities to heal from this intergenerational trauma.

There remains significant work to be done in academic literature and studies done about men's health and well-being should apply an intersectional lens to gendered issues. Understanding gender necessitates looking at issues that specifically impact Indigenous men, who navigate historical oppressions and marginalization within Canadian society in a colonial context. Establishing that men can also be victims of violence and harassment is a frequently overlooked aspect of creating encompassing and representative education, prevention, and support systems. It is crucial that both men and women are taught how to identify violence in their own lived-experiences and know what avenues exist to be able to come forward and seek support in coping with these instances. Being able to unpack the negative implications of misogyny and toxic masculinity is essential for men to be comfortable receiving support. Increasing the awareness and understanding of men in their ownership in healing and resurgence practices helps them to become agents of change and stand in solidarity with the women in their lives.

Indigenous men and boys can create space and facilitate transformative opportunities for gender equality. Indigenous men play an essential role in shifting power and privilege dynamics towards

achieving equitable change. In consultations, there is a mutual and reciprocal relationship between communities and the crown. Communities who marginalize their own Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse membership from consultation processes are not in a good faith relationship (Bond & Quinlan, 2018). Consultation processes must be mutually validated by both the government and Indigenous communities to ensure that the patriarchal thoughts that were imported into Indigenous communities are removed and in turn, that the voices of Indigenous women and gender diverse people are restored (Bond & Quinlan, 2018).

Case Study: Frontiers of Sanitation Program

One program that focuses on 'Engaging Men and Boys for Gender-Transformative Learning' is the Frontiers of Sanitation program which was developed in 2018 (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). This project's objective was to create transformative change in gender roles, attitudes and allow for sustainable change to be made in reducing gender inequalities across households, communities, organizations, and policies (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). This program teaches individual and interpersonal responsibility, encouraging men to become involved in traditionally feminine roles like, preparing nutritious meals and cultural dishes, inclusion in this way have made younger men become more involved in child rearing, fetching water, and other community care roles (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). This program also has parenting classes, providing training for fathers covering topics of gender equality, effective couples' communication, and resources to help unlearn other individual or personal biases (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). The next level of the Frontiers of Sanitation program focuses on tackling organizational barriers, which persist in workplaces, schools, and other institutions; the program focuses on engaging men to support the voices of women and diverse groups to encourage these women to be more involved in decision-making and high responsibility roles (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). Next, the program extends to a community level scope, working with men to advocate for equal power relations and encourage transformative social change at the community level by becoming a public ally and role model (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). The final phase extends to public policy change, referring to government policies, planning, programing, budgeting, and regulations which must integrate gender-based considerations (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022). This program has found success in several countries, encouraging men and boys to understand the burden placed on women and girls and to become agents of change advocating for gender-transformative practices to be implemented across all levels of society: individual, community, organizational, and governmental (Cavill, Huggett & Mott, 2022).

Increasing Communication by Hosting Regular Community Meetings

Establishing pre-determined dates and spaces allows people to plan and ensure they can be available to attend and participate. It is recommended that these types of community meetings happen three times a year, at least, which would mean that a meeting is scheduled every 4 months. These meetings would be an open invitation, where all community members would be welcome. They must be advertised well in

advance, perhaps with the date of the next meeting established at the previous meeting. Ensuring that all age groups, gender identities, sexual identities, income levels and other intersectional identity features are invited and respected in these meeting spaces is essential to allow them to be effective. The purpose of these community meetings would be to clarify and establish common goals of the community, once these shared goals are established, strategies for action can be framed where community members express their capacity or interest in supporting specific projects. This creates a network where interested people, who have time to participate, can be contacted throughout the year to help support the projects they are interested in. This creates a network of community leaders who would like to take on specific tasks or lead project organization and a network or volunteers who would be available to help in smaller roles. Often, youth and high school students need to complete a certain amount of community service, these meetings could put them on contact lists so they can be paired to volunteer in projects that interest them and benefit the community.

Revenue Sharing Agreements

Negotiating agreements between communities and government entities to share revenue generated from resource development projects promotes community wellbeing. Often, resource extraction projects are concentrated in communities that are isolated from seeing their profits and benefits. Inversely, proponents and government agencies operate from well outside of these communities and are isolated from seeing the reality and negative implications resource extraction projects create. By reinvesting some of the revenue from projects directly back to communities, a stronger, more powerful workforce is built. These are referred to as IBAs, which are often created in tandem with the IA process. Some of the things IBAs can fund include creating training and professional development programs for community members, allocating revenue from projects to create and mobilizing a new generation of workers for long-term project development. Revenue could also be allocated to support high school students in completing their education, creating job fairs, and building awareness for what kinds of careers exist and developing training and capacity building projects to ensure that anyone can aspire to work in the resource extraction industry. Most community members are not aware of what kinds of careers exist, how to prepare and train for these careers, or how to ensure diverse perspectives exist in those spaces. Ensuring that everyone has a space at the table and that everyone, regardless of their gender, income, or any other identity factors have equal opportunities to secure economic benefits from development.

> Nunatsiavut resembles other regions in northern Canada with respect to Inuit aspirations for rights over lands, resources and self-governance that were intimately tied to resource extraction. The resolution of the Labrador Inuit Association only began in earnest after the Labrador Inuit Association asserted territorial rights to stop road construction at the site through a court injunction and through protests held co-jointly with the Innu Nation. These activities ensured that an EA was conducted and that an IBA was signed prior to further construction. It also sped up progress on the negotiation of their land claim... In 1997, the Labrador Inuit Association, the Innu Nation and the

> Federal and provincial governments established a joint EA process for the Voisey's Bay mine and mill development which culminated in 1999... In the case of Nunatsiavut, women's groups were formally involved in the EA process. Moreover, gender was considered in the negotiation of the IBA between Vale Inco Newfoundland and Labrador and the Labrador Inuit Association which was signed in 2002. A gendered discussion of the Voisey's Bay mine took place both during the EA process prior to development, and ten years after the mine began production in a focus group co-organized by the researchers and the Nunatsiavut Government. Unlike the Sahtu, women were formally involved in the discussions about resource extraction in their communities. The Voisey's Bay case also diverged from the Sahtu in that initial discussions about resource extraction followed state mandated EA processes and were not Inuit-led.
>
> *(Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022)*

Case Study: Meadowbank Gold Mine in Labrador

The Meadowbank gold mine is operated by Agnico Eagle Mines and is located north of Qamani'tuaq, the nearest Inuit community (Manning, *et al.,* 2018). As part of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, all proponents must negotiate IBAs with Inuit communities (Manning, *et al.,* 2018). Meadowbank gold mine implemented GBA+ methodology to identify how resource development projects are uniquely affecting Indigenous women. IAs are often perceived as a very formal, one-sided, colonial process, and it can be very intimidating for Indigenous People to participate, especially women. Through conducting a GBA+ analysis, the unequal relationships between genders are explored. Ensuring that Inuit and Innu women have equitable access to employment requires that the challenges women face through gender-based discrimination be examined closely. The major challenges of women in this area were a lack of access to affordable childcare, and a lack of access to education, or limited availability of training programs, as well as safety concerns related to gendered and racialized discrimination. The fly-in-fly-out rotational schedule of remote worksites, like Meadowbank gold mine, and so many other resource extraction worksites, creates a culture where families are disconnected and in turn, cultural traditions are disrupted. It was seen that these issues, despite being identified in the GBA+, were not addressed in IBAs.

IBAs tend to focus on employment and economic development and neglect to include cultural, traditional, and spiritual considerations. Generally, IBAs lack consideration of health and social factors at all. Beyond this, IBAs often do not consider impacts through a gendered lens, which ultimately ignores the unique concerns and experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). To come back to the Meadowbank gold mine case study, the established IBA focused on wellness, requiring an annual wellness report to monitor how the mine has affected employee physical and mental health (Manning, *et al.*, 2018). Despite being a key component to the IBA agreement, these wellness reports were never completed, demonstrating the performative nature of these agreements (Manning, *et al.,* 2018). IBA procedures must have transparent policies, where proponents are required to meaningfully act on the agreed provisions and protect communities from illegitimate agreements. Without this, the IA process loses credibility and may become perceived as being a waste of community time, money, and capacity.

Case Study: Voisey's Bay Nickel Mine in Labrador

Voisey's Bay is a nickel mine operating on the north coast of Labrador, in an area known to the Inuit as Tasiujatsoak, and known to the Innu as Kapukuanipant-kaushat (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). This mine was approved in 1999 and has been operating since 2005, and is anticipated to continue until 2032 (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). The Voisey's Bay Project could not begin until the IBA was signed by the Province of Newfoundland, nor until the IBA was in effect. The agreement stated that Innu and Inuit people should have the first chance at obtaining employment, prior to anyone else who was seeking work in Voisey's Bay, provided they are qualified to do the work. This extended to any training opportunities or career advancement initiatives that might come up, outlining that Innu and Inuit must be considered first for training opportunities. (Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, 2005). The Nunatsiavut Government and the Innu Nation have both signed IBAs, distinctly agreeing to ensure that Inuit and Innu women can access employment opportunities from Voisey's Bay Nickel Mine operations (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). Despite pledging to ensure equal opportunities for Indigenous women, the quality of this employment remains concerning. Women working at Voisey's Bay mine report high levels of racialized harassment and experiencing discrimination based on their gender (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). There is a dire need to create specific action plans to engage with and consider the perspectives of women and embed action plans directly into IBAs. Creating transparent and accountable systems that promote diverse, safe, and inclusive workplaces is needed to ensure that the benefits from IBAs are reaching the community level.

No More Stolen Sisters: Addressing Gender-based Disparities in Resource Development

Indigenous women in northern Canada are disproportionately negatively impacted by resource development projects, simultaneously these women experience a lack of access to most of the potential project benefits (Steinstra, *et. al.* 2016). Industrial projects impose changes that have lasting impacts on the overall health and well-being of Indigenous communities who must live with the long-term consequences of development on traditional territories. Indigenous women who have worked in extractive industries experience higher rates of racism, discrimination, and sexual harassment (PIWC, 2020; NWAC, 2020a). Resource extraction and development in the north and the

Figure 27: Portrait of Patience Commanda from Rama First Nation, artwork by Chief Lady.

complex interchange of information that goes on between Indigenous communities, industry proponents, and government has been evolving and new opportunities for inclusion and protection of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people are coming to light.

It is common for land use studies to focus on hunting, fishing, and trapping but, it is important to note that these are traditionally men's roles. For many Indigenous communities, women have different responsibilities and therefore, different sets of knowledge and understanding. Women often carry the responsibilities of harvesting food and medicinal plants, protecting water, preparing food, teaching, and caring for children and Elders, giving them unique insights on the needs of their community. The lived experiences that women gather in both maternal roles and in governance roles, situates them well to map how project impacts could affect family and community dynamics (Manning, *et al.,* 2018). When the insights of women, children, and Elders are not represented in IA procedures, those same groups are left to face a disproportionate burden of the negative effects they create (Manning, *et al.,* 2018). By ensuring that not just men, but women and gender-diverse people are being represented in IA engagement is essential.

Generating Sustainable Benefits in Resource Development

Strategic Procurement

Procurement policies in partnerships between Indigenous businesses and industry are already taking place all over Canada. This strategy allows for wider opportunities for reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and Canadians. The government of Canada has committed to increasing procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses, to help Indigenous businesses grow, and increase self-reliance and employment and training opportunities for Indigenous peoples (CIRNAC, 2020). Indigenous business capacity has steadily risen, and the ability for industry sectors to meet diverse needs of communities, to name one example infrastructural improvements, are extremely low. The dynamics of building equity for Indigenous communities extends beyond the scope of an IA Assessment yet, is still integral to approaching industry development from planning outset with sustainable practices, including socio-economic perspectives. The purchase of goods and services from industrial sectors, such as mines, provides additional value for Indigenous communities to be able to pick up contracts and access resources, including mentoring and business management guidance, while accessing economic benefits of business growth (CCAB, n.d.). Many businesses take the approach of Indigenous business procurement to meet IBA requirements, however, there remains a strong case to enact procurement practices with or without legal requirements to do so. The creation of reliable supply chains would allow the social license to operate, to minimize transportation costs and inefficiencies, and to diversify local economies (CCAB, n.d.). Hard procurement targets are still not considered normative and instead tend to be relegated to more easily attainable contracts, such as janitorial services, catering, and security over more profitable contracts in technical fields such as drilling or electrical services (CCAB, n.d.).

While there is a growing trend of Indigenous business procurement happening across Canada, Indigenous women are tending to be left out of the conversation entirely. A big part of this is that there remains a greater need to understand supply chains in resource development and support in creating targeted business ventures (WEKH, 2022). Supplier diversity programs initiated by developers create more chances for Indigenous women entrepreneurs to procure contracts (WEKH, 2022). A longer-term goal is for the government to expand and enhance Indigenous women's entrepreneurship programs and strategies, exemplified by the contracts awarded to NWAC and Pauktuutit to strengthen the participation of Indigenous women entrepreneurs (Cline, 2017). What remains clear is that procurement remains a powerful tool in community capacity building and that women who do not wish to work directly in resource extractive industries onsite, for a variety of reasons, still have accessible opportunities to make a living for themselves and their families.

Worker Retention Strategies

Policy Development Supporting Indigenous GBA+

One of the major working conditions that pose challenges to the success of Indigenous women working in development industries are the flexibility in work arrangements. Fly in fly out work culture is a major barrier to the ability of Indigenous women to accept remote site work (Bond & Quinlan, 2018). Recognizing this is unavoidable in circumstances of operations being inaccessible by road, some sites maintain work rotation schedules that keep workers on site in camps, even if they are from surrounding communities that are within a short driving distance from home. The necessity for workers to always remain on site is largely dependent on the type of job being done. Critically examining the necessity for work rotations should be studied and articulated in the project planning phase, some communities may have specific input and requests that could be implemented early on. To exemplify a possible accommodation, day shift workers with children must return home at night to be with their children are allowed to do so, and then families can adapt work schedules to ensure one parent is always present with the children or family members are available to support the family in taking care of their children. The development of policies that address a range of issues which pose threats to the success of women and gender diverse peoples entering (and staying) in the industry is a necessity to create accessible and inclusive worksites. Recommendations that support GBA+ practices are varied and benefit from localized inclusion approaches.

The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (**OXFAM**) is a collaborative effort of 21 independent organizations working to alleviate global poverty and increase women's inclusion in all aspects of society (OXFAM, 2022). Their website states, *[Gender is the most persistent predictor of poverty and powerlessness in our world today... When women's rights are respected, women are healthier, better educated and better paid. Children thrive and so do communities, organizations, and societies, creating lasting benefits for generations to come.]* (OXFAM, 2022). OXFAM has recommended specific practices that can be applied in policy development, these include; making public commitments to GBA+; consistently training of workforces; generating internal learning opportunities; collaborating on pilot

projects focusing on Gender based IA; leveraging industry association frameworks; and implementing the MMIWG Calls for Justice (OXFAM, 2020). A significant driver in policy development is the scrutinization of internal processes currently in existence through varied means such as, expert analysis, anonymous surveys of the current workforce, complaints processes in human resources and identifying areas of weaknesses and strengths.

One aspect of OXFAM's recommendations that we seek to uplift is keeping an accountable workforce through training on cultural sensitivity and sexual violence and harassment (OXFAM, 2020). Currently, some companies are rolling out rigid precautionary practices, one example being that if any complaints of violence against women are received, even if unfolding off-site, there is an immediate discharge of the employee from their role. Though his process may seem punitive, the safety of people living in and around project sites is a high priority and incidents that occur in surrounding communities should be reported to the company immediately for intervention measures to take place. While this example is anecdotal, we chose to write about it in a confidential format because this exact situation occurred at a local mine in Sudbury District and is a good example of zero-tolerance policies becoming more commonplace to address perpetrators of violence against women. While this example is harsh, it sends as a strong message that violence will not be tolerated in or around work sites. Having a strong process in place for grievances to be received and a work process that enforces accountability, including formal grievance mechanisms, dispute resolution processes and ongoing communication with surrounding communities is beneficial for women, children, and workers alike.

OXFAM are not the only ones doing this work, there are major corporations starting to stand in solidarity with communities and are prioritizing equitable inclusion. One example is Teck, one of Canada's leading mining companies, listed in the 2023 Global 100 *'Most Sustainable Corporations'* list; they are currently in the process of strengthening their governance and accountability processes in specific ways (Teck, 2021). By announcing equity and inclusion policies and making statements that clearly outline their commitment to Indigenous relations, by creating accountability and resources with the complete involvement of their board of directors and senior leadership; implementing policies and standards that guide relationships with Indigenous peoples; and building membership, partnerships and external commitments to various organizations and programs that support Indigenous communities (Teck, 2021).

Rehabilitation over Penalization

A key relationship hallmark for successful relationships between industry and Indigenous communities is the prioritization of employment opportunities for people in and around project sites. Socioeconomic circumstances of individuals indicate higher likelihood of being heavy drinkers, meaning people who are experiencing poverty and financial insecurity are more likely to abuse substances such as alcohol (Corbiere, 2019). It's logical to recognize that the people who are experiencing issues of financial insecurity and/or a lack of reliable employment are the demographic of people who most need and depend on the opportunities provided by resource development activities in the region. Many Indigenous people are navigating substance abuse issues, often in isolation due to the lack of services,

especially in rural remote regions. Going 'cold turkey' and suddenly removing all uses of drugs and alcohol while on site and only taking recreational substances when off-site creates a dichotomy of lifestyles, creating feelings of otherness or confusion. Addressing issues around health and access to services are explored more in depth in other sections of this framework, however it is sufficient to say that the distinct lived realities of people who are seeking employment opportunities within industry, and the mirage of conflicting pressures create circumstances that exclude people who are struggling with addictions.

> **"Take for example, the Voisey's Bay Mine Project; it is well known that many Indigenous people suffer from intergenerational trauma and knowing that Vale should consider employees who drink alcohol and smoke weed during their turn around. They should understand why workers tend to drink and smoke weed during their time off. Policies should reflect what our federal and provincial governments already say they know about trauma and Indigenous Groups. If they know that which they say they do, then why not reflect that in their policies. Employees should be able to apply to work in Voisey's Bay after losing their jobs. OR they should allow for these employees to take some time off to address their addictions so that they can keep their jobs. OR at least be given the opportunity to reapply after a period of time. They shouldn't be banned from ever seeking employment there again, after all people can learn from their mistakes but shouldn't have to pay for it for the rest of their lives."**
>
> *– Anonymous 2022*

The Canada Human Rights Act contains instructions that employers must take steps to adjust rules, or policies and practices that have a negative impact on individuals or groups of people which is referred to as the duty to accommodate (CHRC, 2017). Employees that are found to be under the influence on worksites, especially in environments where there is risk of serious injury or death, are removed immediately from worksites to keep the safety of others as highest priority. This type of policy is essential for the protection of all employees and the liability issues arising from workplace accidents. Employees are given an opportunity to seek addictions services or go through treatment and are then invited to return after proving they have done so and may be required to pass a drug test. If an employee relapses, there may be a requirement to enter into a return-to-work agreement, to agree to regular subsequent drug and alcohol testing, and in some cases, there is a need for a relapse prevention or last chance agreement (CHRC, 2019). There are principles that are recommended by the Canadian Human Rights Commission about how to navigate suspected substance abuse, including: being respectful and compassionate; being confidential; clearly explaining workers' rights; offering of services or workplace support (CHRC, 2019). The practice of creating treatment agreements has already been picked up by many resource development companies as a means to accommodate workers personal issues, and navigating circumstances that place undue hardship on companies through risk of workplace incident or injury, while also respecting the health needs of their workers can be difficult.

> **'Workers that have addictions will be caught with something at work, pills or whatever and be kicked off site. If they don't follow the rules they lose their job, they bounce around to contracted companies around the site and some don't address their issues. They run out of chances, and no one wants to hire them so they're back at home doing the same drugs that got them in trouble and no job'**
>
> *– Anonymous 2021*

A promising approach, that can be integrated into IA, is the consideration and commitment to recognizing the reality of fly-in-fly-out workers and building in accommodations for workers health directly into project planning and development. This could be done by sourcing a counseling group which could provide contractual on-site services to employees, a step further would be to ensure that counselors are Indigenous or educated in Indigenous issues and cultural precepts. Construction planning could design dedicated locations for practicing of culture, such as smudging, circles, prayer, singing, and quiet reflection directly at worksites or on-site accommodation. However, this extends beyond providing a room or a counselor, and must address the systemic issues of conducting work in a culturally inappropriate way, policies that implement Indigenous relations and GBA+ must work in harmony with physical services that strengthen workforce unity and promote cultural safety and diversity.

Case Study: Mental Health Services at Voisey's Bay

Having mental health services on resource extraction sites would greatly benefit Indigenous people. Indigenous workers on site are not permitted to use alcohol and drugs while working in camp. Having said that, it is a great opportunity for healing and personal development since workers are more 'clear headed' or more in tune with themselves when they are not drinking or smoking drugs. We had one individual who came home on his two-week time off. During his time off, he attended mental health services in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Before his two weeks was up to go back to Voisey's Bay, he had lost hope and taken his own life. If there were mental health services available on resource extraction sites, then perhaps this wonderful person would still be with us today and would have been able to access resources much earlier, rather than waiting to seek help during their time off. Having consistent access to mental health support systems is essential, especially on remote and isolated work camps. It's hard enough being away from family and friends while working, being unable to access healthcare and support services should not be an additional stress for workers. They have doctors on site already anyhow, why not have mental health workers on site as well?

Discourage Occupational Segregation & Promote Intersectionality

Changing the perception surrounding what roles are 'feminine' and what roles are 'masculine' requires an intentional and introspective evaluation of why these perceptions have found space in workplace culture at all. Gender-typed work is characterized as any type of work that is dominated by one gender identity over others (Clarke, 2020). Occupational segregation through gender-typing is common in labor

intensive roles, it is typically assumed that men will naturally be better to work in these types of positions and that women are more suited to become caretakers in remote work camps. This notion is an unfounded bias that leads employers to believe that women cannot work in physically demanding roles, or that they are not as well suited as men to be managers or supervisors. Case studies show that gender-based segregation manifests through status and pay disparities, which allow bias and discrimination to persist (Clarke, 2020). Ensuring that all employees are receiving equal compensation, benefits, and recognition for doing similar roles is essential to creating an equitable workplace. Ensuring that wages are evenly allocated between people doing the same roles is essential since often, women make less than men when working the same jobs representing an unjust and unfounded bias.

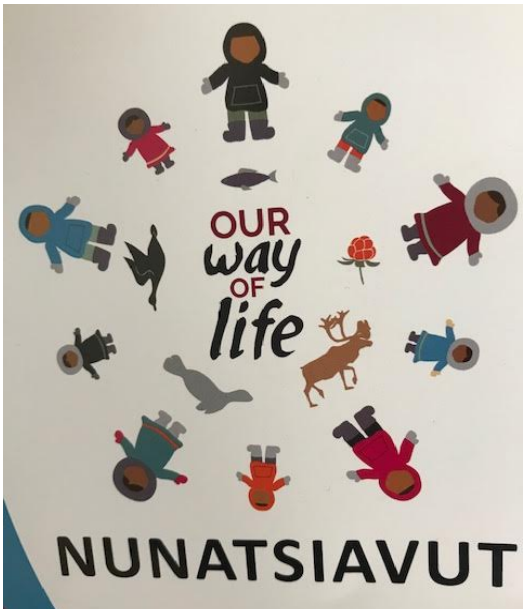

Figure 28: Nunatsiavut Resource Center Logo - by artists Sandra Dicker and Frances Harris

One way to address the unequal distribution of men and women between roles would be to create quotas and minimum representation standards to ensure women and gender-diverse people are intentionally included in every workplace. This would create more opportunities for women to obtain full time employment, ensuring that familial caretaker roles can be met by both men and women. Creating a workplace culture that establishes equality and diversity as a priority creates a more welcoming environment for people with under-represented identity factors. Conducting a CRGBA+ is a great way to identify the systematic inequalities that could unintentionally be persisting in a workplace. These inequalities are not just concentrated on biological sex-based discrimination or socially constructed gender-based discrimination but can extend to race, ethnicity, religion, age, income, mental, or physical disability and how they change the way different people experience the world (Government of Canada, 2022a). To properly apply a CRGBA+, a gender and diversity sensitive approach is needed, this method has been endorsed by the Government of Canada which has free training and information available to help you implement a GBA+ in your workplace (Government of Canada, 2022a).

Case Study: Muskrat Falls Mining Project near Happy Valley Goose Bay, Labrador

In Happy Valley Goose Bay, the community raised health and environmental concerns prior to the Muskrat Falls Mining Project beginning (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). This area has been used as a site for trapping, hunting, and fishing by Indigenous peoples for many generations. Many community members were worried about how mining developments and hydroelectric projects might impact their harvesting and gathering (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). These valid concerns were mostly ignored under previous EA policies whereas now, the IA process begins to consider

economic, cultural, social, and traditional insights. Despite new legislation being designed with these localized considerations in mind, communities are seeing limited measures taken to alleviate or mitigate against the negative implications that resource extraction projects bring to communities (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). Charlotte Wolfrey, the Nunatsiavut Beneficiary, said that "women in Labrador are facing more violence now than before Muskrat Falls hydroelectric and Voisey's Bay mine developments" (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). There have been no additional resources allocated to communities, no increase in RCMP or policing, no funding for violence prevention programs or additional support, hospitals are strained dealing with increased alcohol, drug, and violence related issues to the extent that they cannot provide the community with baseline medical care (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). Wolfrey also shared that the process seems to be biased, specifically towards the voices of Indigenous women, who the process continuously ignored or dismissed (Mills, Simmons, Andrew & Tuglavina, 2022). This community is unfortunately one of many examples that highlight how identifying impacts alone is not enough, the IA process must actively mitigate and address the impacts that project developments bring. When neglecting to include the feedback of all intersectional identities, some members of the community will be left to face a disproportionate number of negative consequences.

Colonialism and capitalism are alive and well in Canada, and prominently in Newfoundland and Labrador. Presently, the Newfoundland Government is allowing the Muskrat Falls Project to go ahead without considering the valid concerns of the people within the region, those who are being impacted by this hydroelectric project (Crocker, 2019). The government has stated that they will provide compensation for the damages caused by this project, as if that will alleviate the valid concerns of the people, as if this compensation will 'fix' or address the very serious concerns of contamination (Crocker, 2019). The Newfoundland governments' offer of compensation and proposed testing with advisories regarding the consumption of fish, for example, does not do justice to the people, not to mention to the environment and the natural resources (Crocker, 2019). The Government does not care about the local people being impacted, they only care about how much money will be made from this project.

This leads us to wonder; would the Newfoundland Government approve this project if it were in their own backyard? For example, if this project was to be near St. John's, would they ignore the concerns of the local people in that area? Or would they take time to really evaluate the benefits versus the risks? Would the project still go ahead? Or is this just another example whereby the government is ignoring the rights and concerns of Indigenous people? Given the fact that this project is going ahead despite the concerns raised by the Inuit, one cannot help but to conclude that the Government does not truly care about the impacts to the Inuit, the environment, or to the resources. Another real concern is that Inuit heavily rely on the local resources that the environment offers, such as fish. How are Inuit expected to adhere to any advisory about consumption? Our Minister of the House of Assembly, Lela Evans, raised valid concerns during the ICSP conference held in Gatineau, Quebec on January 16, 2023, regarding consumption. For example, how are Inuit expected not to eat the fish, when for thousands and thousands of years Inuit have survived because of the local resources available to them? Is it then realistic to expect Inuit to completely stop eating or even limit the amount of fish consumption just because the

government has put out an advisory? It is evident that the government does not value any of the serious concerns of contamination being brought forward by the Inuit. It is evident that colonialism and capitalism are alive and well in Newfoundland and Labrador, even in this day and age, in 2023. The Government expects to build trustworthy relationships with Indigenous Peoples, and then they go ahead with approving projects that are very likely to be detrimental to the health and well-being of the Inuit people in the region. How can we build trust when governments continue to ignore our valid concerns, but to knowingly contaminate the people and the environment just to make a buck. The Government has agreed to contaminate the people of today and the people of the future, for thousands and thousands of years to come. There is no truth and reconciliation, at all, it's just words written and spoken of; nothing more and nothing less.

Acknowledge Experiences of Sexual Assault or Sex Trafficking

The National Inquiry into MMIWG begun in 2016, aiming to reveal the human rights violations and abuses that were experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG, 2019). During this investigation, the stories of 2,380 survivors were shared, we want to recognize the strength of these people for breaking the silence and for having the courage to be vulnerable and initiate the path towards healing (MMIWG, 2019). This truth sharing process allowed 231 Calls for Justice to be developed in which Governments, institutions, social service providers, industries, and Canadians can begin to reconcile the shameful history Canada has (MMIWG, 2019). It should be a priority to all these groups to address the impacts of colonial and patriarchal policies which have created intergenerational trauma, poverty marginalization, prominent conditions of insecure housing, barriers to accessing education, fair employment, health care, and mass loss of cultural (MMIWG, 2019). A new framework focused on relationship building, consistent with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing and being will allow learning, understanding, and transformation to take root in communities. Creating lasting change requires widespread efforts to deconstruct systemic beliefs that have allowed violence to happen for far too long. Recognizing that women are at the heart of their Nations and communities is key to addressing gender-based disparities and restoring communities to balance. The *Reclaiming Power and Place* reports are fantastic resources which have guided us in the development of the following recommendations for communities to acknowledge and address experiences of male violence towards women and begin to build systems to empower and protect women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG, 2019).

Case Study: Firelight Group Research Report

In a research report conducted by The Firelight Group, an assessment of Indigenous Communities and Industrial Camps was conducted to promote healthy community development in settings of industrial change (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). This report reviewed the impacts of industrial camps, finding that cumulative negative effects make the already vulnerable populations of women and children even more at risk (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Industrial camps are linked to increased demand for sex trafficking and sex work, increased incidents of sexual harassment and assault, inequity gaps in childcare, increased road safety concerns, specifically for women, as they travel to remote industrial camps, through intensified

capacity strains on social and health services linked to the influx of transient workers and impositions of additional constraints on the ability of local Indigenous people to engage in traditional land use practices (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). As these risks combine and 'pile up' on vulnerable populations, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are disproportionately negatively impacted (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). It was found that sexual assaults are not being reported at alarming rates, rising from 78% of unreported cases in 1999 to 88% in 2004 (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Whether victims are choosing not to report incidents due to a lack of authentic support and trauma-informed approaches, where systems in place force them to be re-traumatized, a lack of accountability, a fear that they might lose their job or become victimized in their communities, a lack of access to healthcare resources to be able to be assessed, or a lack of confidence that people will believe them (Gibson, *et al.*, 2017). This research report was done in collaboration with Lake Babine Nation and Nak'azdli Whut'en but represents an example of what remote communities across the province and Nation are experiencing when resource development projects occur with limited planning and consideration of the effects on local populations (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017).

Develop a Coordinated Approach to Addressing Sexual Assault & Harassments

It is crucial to have predetermined approaches to identify and address violence, sexual assault, and harassment in both the workplace and the community. Best practice principles identified in a violence prevention strategic community approach report included using a variety of teaching methods, focusing on creating positive adult relationships with youth, and employing socio-culturally relevant approaches (Clarke, 2012). By using gender and culturally sensitive methods and trauma-informed approaches, women and youth are more comfortable sharing their experiences and initiating their healing journey (Clarke, 2012). Dedicating resources to healthcare centers and training staff in methods that consider the intergenerational trauma, and the historical mistreatment of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people is critically needed in Indigenous communities. Once people feel safe in sharing their experiences, crisis support teams with distinct crisis support plans, resources, and trained personnel would be able to respond in more beneficial ways (Clarke, 2012). It should be a priority to ensure that at least one female staff member is present throughout treatment to ensure comfortability and safety of the victim is being prioritized. Coordinated approaches could include providing sex education, historical education, ensuring healthcare centers have resources needed to provide Sexually Transmitted Illness (**STI**) and Sexually Transmitted Disease (**STD**) prevention, ensuring contraceptive options and information is made accessible, and that support groups and resources for victims are made available.

Create Safe Spaces focused on Preventative Education

Coordinated approaches are particularly important for youth presently, very limited curriculum guidelines include sexual violence prevention education (Clarke, 2012). It is important that community-based programs are offered to teach about safe sex and consent, explore the role of drugs and alcohol in sexual violence, provide youth with complaint procedures and connecting them with available resources

(Clarke, 2012). These new curriculums could teach about STI and STD prevention, provide education on available contraceptive methods, teach about safe abortion access, and explain what sexual assault is (Clarke, 2012). Teaching about the different types of violence that can exist and the differences between verbal, physical or structural violence, and how to identify them. These types of programs would allow more people to be prepared to deal with these situations, should they ever arise, people need to know what support options are available to them. These programs could be coupled with social workers present in schools and at worksites, providing support that goes beyond just counseling, but being able to recognize signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (**PTSD**) and conducting culturally relevant training to cope with trauma and intergenerational trauma. This type of comprehensive learning is key in ensuring youth and children learn how to be confident setting boundaries from a young age, creating a new generation that has the tools that were taken from previous ones. These methods would move beyond the western standard of just monitoring and establishing healing programs and would use traditional methods like sage cleansing and meditation.

Using trauma-informed approaches is essential to building wellness and increasing self-esteem and confidence in youth. By providing community activities that build relationships and bring together people from on and off reserves, between locals and transient workers and, between youth and Elders, people become more connected to one another and value one another's safety and wellbeing. That is why these programs need to be made available not just for youth, but to people in all phases of life, creating an inclusive environment built on accepting and respecting one another. The same workshops used in schools could be tailored for workplaces and participation from all employees mandated to establish a strict no-tolerance policy backed by preventative education and training. Creating support networks that focus on intersectional, gender and sexuality diverse education will help people build confidence to come forwards with their experiences and receive support and help prevent these patterns from persisting.

Establish community reporting systems

"There remains a significant gap in research on the numbers of Indigenous women who experience commercial sexual exploitation or human trafficking. This is due to a lack of data and a lack of tracking methods" (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Creating channels that would enable women to report incidents of violence anonymously and privately to employers and law enforcement bodies would promote accountability and justice. Ensuring that women feel safe to report, without being required to re-live their experiences over and over promotes a healing-centered and trauma-informed approach. Beyond creating safe spaces for women to report these incidents, further education is needed to ensure women are aware of what can be classified as abuse and sexual assault, how structural violence persists in the workplace and are encouraged not to tolerate these conditions. Ensuring that when reported, incidents are documented and disseminated to other regional workplaces, ensuring that a no-tolerance policy is upheld, ensuring that workplaces actively take steps to remove individuals who have created unsafe environments.

Conduct Community Mapping to Identify Existing Resources

Often, victims of violence do not seek aid because they simply don't know where to go to receive help and support. Creating a map of culturally safe services, would help provide Indigenous people with the resources they need to feel comfortable seeking support. These could include crisis lines, safe houses, counseling services, STI and STD testing centers, reproductive health centers, and this type of data would be able to identify gaps and resources that are lacking in communities. Mapping tools could identify language accessibility at each location, outlining where services can be provided in traditional languages. Indigenous people have the right to be treated and receive care in their traditional language, they have the right to advocate for culturally specific centers to be created with staff that are fluent in traditional languages or at least have a translator on site to help. Women and girls also have the right to request treatment by a woman, especially in cases of violence, ensuring that victims feel safe communicating their experiences needs to be a priority. This kind of mapping initiative has already been done on a national scale by the NWAC who have created a Culturally Safe and Trauma-Informed Knowledge Hub. Here you can find an interactive online database that will help you find services and support near you and a variety of online resources (NWAC, 2022). Figures 29 and 30 below highlight the scarcity of cultural resources available in Northeastern Ontario and Northern Labrador, highlighting an opportunity for Indigenous people to request improvements on these services and advocate for more cultural treatment centers to be made available (NWAC, 2022).

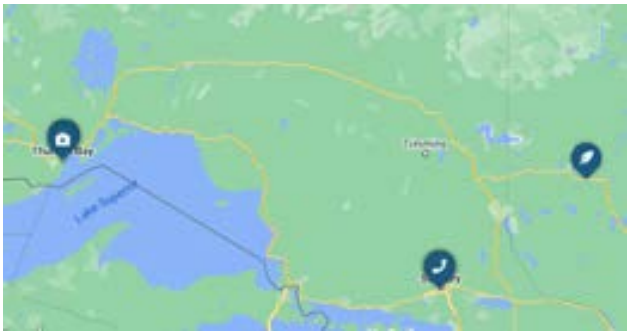

Figure 29: Map sourced from NWAC's online database identifying culturally safe and trauma-informed services and supports across Canada. Focus on Northern Ontario, outlining that there are only 3 locations where support services are identified: a crisis line in Sudbury, an Indigenous Friendship Center and Harm Reduction Center in Thunder Bay and an Indigenous Services Center in Val-d'Or (NWAC, 2022).

Figure 30: Map sourced from NWAC's online database identifying culturally safe and trauma-informed services and supports across Canada. Focus on Northern Labrador, outlining that there is only 1 location where support services are identified: the Labrador Friendship Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay (NWAC, 2022).

Supporting Family and Caregiver Obligations

Childcare Services on/near Project Sites

Having no childcare services on or near project sites has been frequently cited as a major barrier to Indigenous women's participation in industry activities. There have been repeated calls to address a lack of supportive services for women employees such as on-site daycare and counseling services (Pauktuutit, 2021).

Women are more frequently identified as the primary caregivers of children, due to limitations in accessibility, affordability, or availability of childcare services, women are often prevented from obtaining full-time employment (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Widespread requests for daycare and youth programming are being observed in remote communities, specifically for cultural youth centers which could reconnect children with traditional languages, culture, and ways of life (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). These types of programs are linked to increased self-confidence and a sense of cultural identity in youth, while decreasing harmful interactions between children and transient workers, protecting them from sexual abuse and violence, limiting premature exposure to drugs and alcohol and other traumatic experiences (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Realistically, many intersecting identities have family and caregiver and obligations, accommodations such as on-site childcare services not only open the door for Indigenous women but for multiple families across the country.

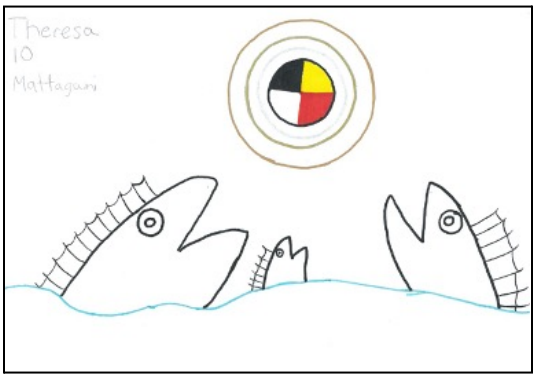

Figure 31: Artwork by Theresa McKay, age 10; submitted as part of the Artwork Competition held in 2022.

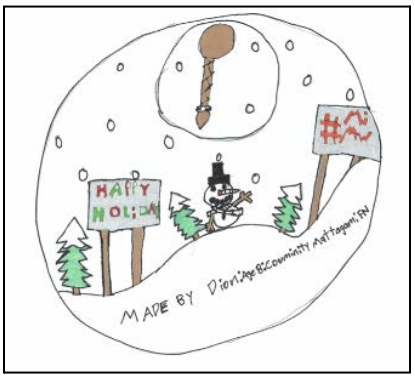

Figure 33: Dion Boissoneau, age 9; submitted as part of the Artwork Competition held in 2022.

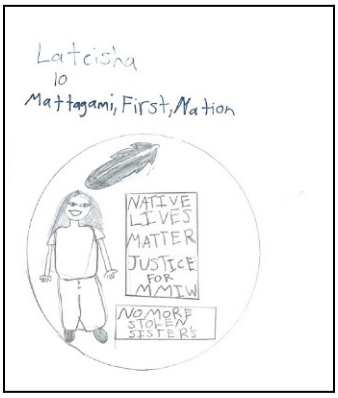

Figure 32: Lateisha Lewis, age 10; submitted as part of the Artwork Competition held in 2022.

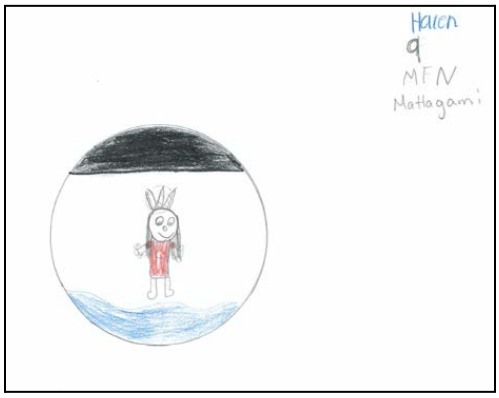

Figure 34: Halen Belisle, age 9 from Mattagami First Nation; submitted as part of the Artwork Competition held in 2022.

Promote Community-Based Childcare Services

Mapping the affordable options that exist in communities is a great way to support local small businesses and create an accessible resource for parents to find close and affordable options. Making a publicly accessible resource for parents to see what options exist, learn how to enroll in services, and read reviews from other parents relating to safety and quality of care improves the confidence of parents to be able to trust other people with their children. Entrusting someone to care for your child is not an easy task and building confidence through referral and review systems makes the stress parents face when seeking childcare more manageable. Community-based childcare services not only make it easier for parents to drop off and pick up children, but also create unique opportunities for children to stay close to home and connect with the land. By ingraining cultural learning curriculums and cultural revitalization as part of childcare programming ensures that youth begin to have a good relationship with the land from an early age.

Educational Services and Training for Childcare Workers

Confident and competent childcare workers are essential for alleviating family and caregiver obligations from parents. By improving self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth in childcare workers, they can instill these values back into the youth. This can be accomplished by establishing educational services which can teach CPR, Safety and First Aid, Cooking Classes, and babysitting certifications. These educational services would benefit teens and young adults to be equipped with all the essential knowledge and resources needed to be a confident childcare provider. A network and publicly distributed resource list of certified childcare workers could then be created of individuals who have completed the training program(s). This could create a network of trained caregivers that are seeking employment which in turn, supports parents in need of childcare. Establishing safe spaces in childcare is essential for both childcare workers and for the children in care to know and understand.

Figure 35: Family Strength by artist Simone McLeod.

Practicing Reciprocity

Building Up Health Support Services

Healing From Intergenerational Trauma

The colonial legacies of separating Indigenous peoples from their lands, from their families and from traditional ways of life has led to spiritual impacts and increased rates of suicide and substance abuse in Indigenous youth across the north (Talaga, 2018). Intergenerational trauma can also be referred to as transgenerational or multigenerational trauma and is defined as trauma that has been passed down from those who experienced an event directly onto the next generation (Franco, 2021). Traumatic events experienced by a group of people, sometimes an entire community, ethnic or national group, who experienced widespread impacts, collective suffering from malicious intent led to widespread intergenerational trauma (Franco, 2021). This phenomenon was first identified in children of Holocaust survivors and has been observed in Indigenous populations across North America who endured decades of genocide, cultural assimilation, and abuse (Franco, 2021). The effects of intergenerational trauma can manifest in many ways such as suicidal thoughts, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and confidence, extreme anger, tendencies of violence, or difficulties in emotional regulation (Franco, 2021).

Figure 36: Artwork by Norval Morrisseau “Artist and Shaman Between Two Worlds”

To undo the effects of intergenerational trauma, cultural revitalization is needed to be able to recover traditions, philosophies, languages, practices, and ways of life which were lost. Once these are restored, Indigenous people can begin to heal and participate effectively in IAs, obtain secure employment, and improve their quality of life. Without dismantling the systems that traumatized Indigenous people, intergenerational trauma will continue to be passed on and healing will be delayed.

Recognizing that many residential school survivors passed away before receiving any compensation for the experiences they faced while in residential schools. For those who have passed, it would contribute to reconciliation if their compensation were transferred to their surviving children. They can contact the residential school lawyer, sign documents in front of a justice of the peace and provide the justice of the peace's signature. Then the money that would have gone to the survivors of residential schools can be divided between their remaining children, providing restitution, and contributing to some part of healing intergenerational trauma. Without taking steps to actively write the wrongs of the past, the wounds inflicted by colonization and cultural assimilation cannot heal.

Build Cultural Connection and Healing Spaces for Indigenous People

Creating spaces where Indigenous people who are experiencing the effects of intergenerational trauma can come together and learn in a safe, inclusive, and respectful space is paramount to beginning their healing journey. Some people might be well-versed in the experiences of residential school survivors, having learned directly from Elders or family members, and others might be learning about this horrific past for the first time. These spaces would be a place where learning could occur, allowing those looking for ways to reconnect with their culture to find that knowledge, connection, and engage in the information sharing opportunities they are looking for. Welcoming people who have been disconnected from their culture and building relationships where they can reconnect with traditional stories, philosophies, ways of life, languages, and more would be a priority of these cultural training sessions.

By fostering land-based learning that is uniquely developed with the community in mind, being mindful of what resources exist locally, what plants, medicines, foods, and animals co-exist with the community and how to engage with and learn from the land. The loss of cultural knowledge that has occurred because of knowledge transference disruption due to colonial impositions must be actively restored through community-based connections, creating spaces for knowledge to be transferred to the next generation. Developing language revitalization programs and spaces where Elders can come together and speak their traditional languages would allow for connections to be built that are rooted in culture and connection. Promoting vertical knowledge transfers between generations is key to ensuring that Indigenous knowledge is not lost between generations. By teaching traditional languages, people can begin to read, write, and understand traditional teachings and reconnect with words, concepts, and ways of life that simply do not translate into English. These types of learning spaces ensure that TK is being retained, mobilizing a new generation that can communicate the importance of protecting all the beings of creation and participate in IAs guided by ancestral knowledge.

Implementing rigorous and well-funded cultural programming that promotes healthy families and knowledge about medicines and healing must be integrated across a wide range of institutional services and geographic regions. Through investment into addressing these issues, multiple targets can be achieved, contributing to breaking cycles of trauma and abuse, recognizing and trying to make right past harms while uplifting key findings of the MMIWG report Calls to Justice, specifically the Calls 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 for Health and Wellness Service Providers (MMIWG 2019, Pg. 191, 192).

Create Cultural Training Specifically for Non-Indigenous People

Often the history of Canada is not properly taught and the trauma that Indigenous peoples endured is misunderstood or completely unknown to non-Indigenous people. It is essential that this history is taught and understood, especially for people living in Indigenous communities, working with Indigenous people, and settling on ancestral lands. Moving beyond recognizing and acknowledging the land requires the history of residential schools and the attempted genocide of Indigenous people to be taught. The institutional and governmental role in allowing these acts of violence to become so widespread must be taught so we can learn from our history and pledge never to allow it to be repeated. Outlining the traditional governance models, key teachings, ways of life, and highlighting the successes and prosperity of Indigenous communities across the continent prior to colonization is needed to help people understand what was lost and what must be rebuilt. Training courses on how to be an ally, how to be actively anti-racist, and how to respect Indigenous cultures are needed on a widespread scale but particularly for transient workers entering Indigenous communities, for settlers living in Indigenous communities, and those in positions of power who make decisions on behalf of the community. Advocating for these types of learning experiences is not the responsibility of Indigenous peoples but must be requested and uplifted by non-Indigenous people, showing institutions and government agencies that a desire for reconciliation is widespread and cannot be ignored. To exemplify and highlight existing resources for these types of trainings, a list of existing online programs is outlined below:

- Canadian Race Relation Foundations Anti-Racism Workshop
- The Canadian Diversity Initiative workshops on;
    - Unconscious Bias
    - Respect and Inclusion in the Workplace
    - Diversity and Inclusion Training for Volunteers
    - LGBTQ2+ Diversity and Inclusion training for workplaces
- Indigenous Awareness Canada's Indigenous Awareness Training
- Indigenous Relations Academy's Reconciliation Primer Self-Guided Training
- NVisions Indigenous Cultural Awareness Learning & Cultural Competency course
- Reconciliation Canada's workshops on;
    - Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop

    - Reconciliation Learning Experiences for Organizations
- KAIROS Canada's Blanket Exercise Program
- And many more

Mental health is defined as someone's emotional wellbeing or psychological state of being, which can be influenced by a variety of health, social, environmental, and economic factors (Government of Canada, 2022b). These can be situational conditions like having a secure income, having access to education, or your relationship with your community, friends, and family (Government of Canada, 2022b). Mental health can also be shaped by situations that were indirectly experienced, such as historical traumas like, the legacy of residential schools which have been linked to intergenerational trauma, imposing increased post-traumatic stress disorders, substance abuse, depression, anxiety, or more on survivors and their families (Government of Canada, 2022b). Building culturally mindful mental health support systems is the key to creating new support networks that foster healing and prioritize wellbeing. These remedy centered approaches focus on communication, acceptance, understanding, and building systems of communal support (Montesanti, *et al.,* 2022). This type of holistic healing centered approach is the antithesis of a colonized mental health care approach, where professionals yield diagnosis and prescriptions without finding the root cause and healing it (Montesanti, *et al.,* 2022). Decolonizing workplace culture would allow collective healing to occur, improving employee wellbeing and productivity, building systems for healthy community connection, and beginning to address some of the barriers which affect Indigenous people from participating in IAs and working on resource extraction projects.

Figure 37: Artwork by Camilla Perkins for Mosaic.

Decolonizing and Destigmatizing Discussions of Mental Health

The legacies of colonization and the oppression of Indigenous cultures has created severe mental health disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations across Canada, where Indigenous people must cope with economic, social, and political inequalities without access to culturally appropriate health care (Montesanti, *et al.,* 2022). Roundtable discussions on how to decolonize and destigmatize mental health care found that understanding the realities of Indigenous peoples; designing a holistic and culturally rooted treatment system; fostering engagement and collaboration on service delivery; and focusing on children and youth are key themes in addressing Indigenous mental health issues (Montesanti, *et al.,* 2022). Encouraging people to be open about their mental health and engaging in transparent discussions about mental health can create a culture of acceptance, allowing people to come together and support one another better (Montesanti, *et al.,* 2022). This can be done both in one's personal life and in the workplace, encouraging workplaces to train HR or hiring a wellness counselor to have someone to talk to and be guided to resources can make a huge difference in employee wellbeing. Advocating for mental health days to be part of official sick day policies gives people space to prioritize wellness and healing, creating more productive employees overall.

Talking about mental health isn't for adults alone, schools should begin teaching about self-care and mental health from a young age, equipping youth with the skills necessary to be able to check in and identify signs of burnout and how to address these needs before they become lifelong problems. Having wellness counselors in schools would help youth learn effective strategies to monitor and maintain a positive relationship with their mental health, transforming into skills that will help them navigate life. Youth hubs can be established where counseling, tutoring, extracurricular activities, land-based learning, and/or mentorship programs are made available to support children and youth in the community. It is necessary not only to destigmatize discussions of mental health, but to remove the tendency for colonial influences to reject or criminalize Indigenous healing practices (Li, 2020). Through decolonizing and destigmatizing mental health care, we can heal multi-generational wounds and address the impacts of colonization, global inequity issues, and rebuild cultural connections (Li, 2020). Decentering heteronormative, patriarchal, gender-binary restrictive approaches to mental healthcare leaves space for culturally affirming practices to thrive (Li, 2020).

Develop and Implement a Cross-Jurisdictional, Standardized Data System

Proper reporting is essential to understanding where additional support is needed, making it easier for communities to advocate for increased support, and providing a guide for government or industry partners to allocate funding to these support systems. By creating a reporting system that can allow health care workers to anonymously document attempted suicides and mental health crisis events, the need for additional services and support avenues can be clearly outlined. This would allow resource

development projects to concentrate efforts in providing support and focus on areas with high rates of reported incidents. Baseline statistics on mental health allow for decision makers and urban planners to recognize local context and better support communities (CSG, 2018). We know that mental health is influenced by a multitude of health, social, environmental, and economic factors so, these data systems can also outline the need for services that would address other factors, to build resilient mental health systems that address the root causes, not just numb the problem. These could include safe drug use sites; supportive addiction treatment in areas where substance abuse issues are common; safe walk home programs where sexual assault or violence is prevalent; connecting community members with mental health support groups; community wellness events; and much more (CSG, 2018). Understanding what communities need to heal is an essential first step to creating systems that foster widespread, long-term healing and addressing the barriers that are affecting Indigenous people at work, at home, and in life.

Create an Improved Mental Health Crisis Response System

Often people experiencing a mental health episode simply do not know where to go or who to turn to. When reaching out to police or emergency services through 911, community members are often met with poor support. In a study on police interventions with people with mental illness, it was found that barriers to effective interactions include inadequate information systems; neglecting to gather information about the current situation; lack of documentation for histories of intervention; a lack of appropriate training and education about mental illness; and a lack of access to hospital emergency departments and properly trained medical professionals (Adelman, 2003). Research to date has found that police officers' knowledge about mental health is comparable to that of the general public, due to a lack of proper education or training, police often have misconceptions about how to deal with people in crisis, creating high rates of victimization and blame surrounding those in crisis (Adelman, 2003). People with mental illnesses are more likely to be arrested than the general population, whether that be due to a lack of police training to be able to adequately help these people or because there is a prevalent culture that stigmatizes and criminalizes people with mental illnesses (Adelman, 2003). A well-documented history of systematic racism shows that Black, Indigenous, and other racialized communities face disproportionately higher rates of violent and intrusive police enforcement measures (Toronto Police Services, 2022). According to the Toronto Police Services 2020 *Race-Based Data Collection Report*, Indigenous people are 30% more likely to be strip searched, 40% more likely to be subjected to the use of force by police, and 60% more likely to be involved in a police enforcement action in Toronto compared to other members of the public (Toronto Police Services, 2022). These patterns of abuse have ingrained fear in Indigenous communities, making them fearful of seeking support, and making it difficult for Indigenous communities to heal from intergenerational trauma.

To mitigate these issues, specialized responses using trauma informed approaches are needed for mental health related care (CSG, 2018). These

could include joint police and mental health team responses, where trained medical professionals respond to calls accompanied by a police officer (CSG, 2018). Inversely, proper training for police officers should include teaching mental health care focused on training first responders to be specialized in addressing mental health, developing accessible information sharing services with health care professionals, and destigmatizing mental health treatment and care (CSG, 2018). The overall theme is that police do not have sufficient information, training, or systems in place to properly respond to mental health crises and that police need training to be able to recognize and help people with mental illnesses (CSG, 2018). These types of projects are already in place and yielding successful results. One example can be found in Woodstock, Ontario where police services have partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association to develop a Mental Health Engagement and Response Team (Saylors, 2019). This program pairs police officers with crisis workers to respond to mental health or addiction related calls (Saylors, 2019). After only nine months, the project has been linked to greater access to help with fewer people in emergency rooms, connecting over 400 people to community services (Saylors, 2019). This program allows trained clinicians to take the lead in addressing patients, once police have deemed the environment as safe, this creates a relationship where clinicians are first responders and continue to follow-up and create long-term care plans (Saylors, 2019). By increasing people's access to resources, we reduce repeat encounters with law enforcement, minimize arrests, and alleviate the burden on the law enforcement system, creating healthier communities (CSG, 2018).

Develop and Support First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Frameworks

Indigenous Services Canada published the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework, which identifies ways to enhance service coordination and promotes culturally safe delivery of services (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015). Through focusing on connecting mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional behaviors through purpose, hope, meaning and belonging, this framework centers traditional approaches to addressing mental health (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015). Building relationships in communities through kinship, clan, and connections with Elders, allows a network rooted in unity and understanding to be built (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015). This framework recognizes the diverse population identities that make up each community and how every community has a unique collection of intersectional identities who experience the world around them differently and therefore, require personalized support systems (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015). Essential services are built to address these various specific needs, extending to systems of community development, early identification and crisis response, trauma-informed treatment, support, and aftercare programs (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015). Indigenous social determinants of health are used to inform education, language revitalization, cultural heritage restoration, and other programs designed to improve quality of life and reconnect people with their traditional roots (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015). This is done by using culture as a foundation to every approach, hiring cultural practitioners, engaging in ceremonies, encouraging holistic approaches and land-based learning for a decolonized approach to healthcare (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015).

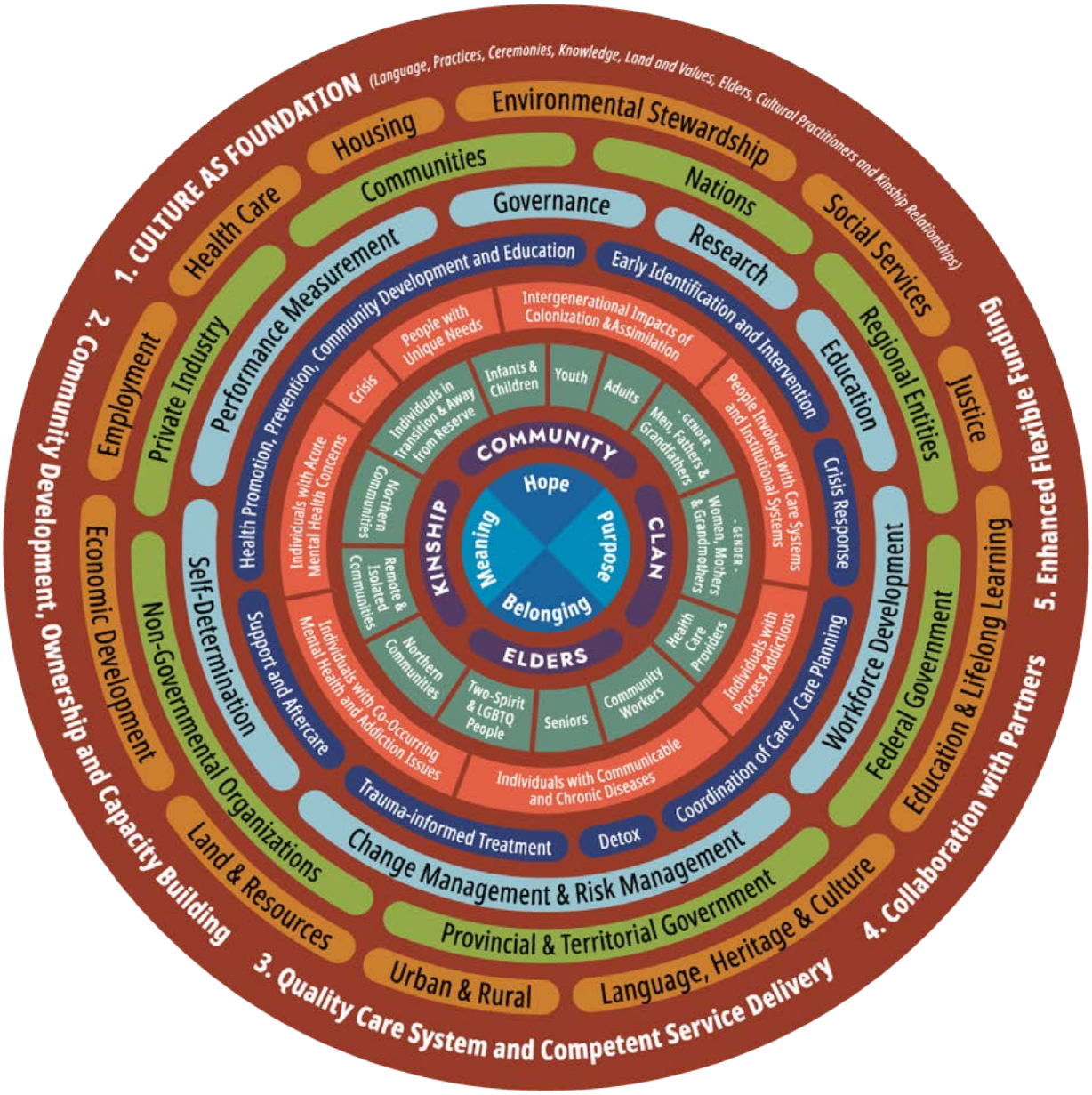

Figure 38: Culture as intervention model, from the *First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework* (Indigenous Services Canada, 2015).

Indigenous Services Canada has brought together resources on mental health designed with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people in mind. All these resources are available on the Government of Canada's website page titled 'Mental Health and Wellness in First Nations and Inuit Communities' (Government of Canada, 2022b). They include:

- National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy
- National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program
- Mental Health Counselling Benefits
- Indian Residential Schools Mental Health Support Program
- Hope for Wellness Indigenous Help Line

The Mental Health Commission of Canada has specific training guides focusing on providing Mental Health First Aid (**MHFA**), where facilitated virtual training sessions are available to train informed, community-based first responders (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2022). You can register to attend training and educational courses as an individual, or for a group. These courses are tailored to address different identity groups, with courses for both the public and professionals, seeking to learn about mental health disorders and how to support yourself, your family, friends, colleagues, and community. These courses are fantastic resources and demonstrate a detailed and intersectional approach necessary to create mental health support systems that work for different people. We would like to specifically highlight the Indigenous training courses which allow participants to reflect on their life experiences, acknowledge the historical context of Canada's colonization, and begin a path to move forwards, restoring balance on a personal journey to mental health and wellness (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2022). The following courses are available:

- Standard MHFA
- MHFA First Nations
- MHFA Inuit
- MHFA Northern Peoples
- MHFA Supporting Youth
- MHFA Supporting Adults
- MHFA Supporting Seniors or Elders

MHFA Inuit is a course designed by Inuit, for Inuit and for those who work with Inuit or are Inuit, who are seeking culturally relevant resources. It provides a foundation from which participants have an opportunity to learn from their own people in a culturally safe, and competent environment. It is vitally important for healthcare professionals, as well as teachers and RCMP members, who mainly come from outside communities to take the course on MHFA Inuit so that they get a clear understanding of how to deal with individuals who are experiencing mental health issues. This course should be mandatory for outsiders coming in and working in Inuit communities. Furthermore, for Nunatsiavut communities, if Inuit need to see a doctor or go to a specialized appointment, they are required to leave their home communities for extended periods of time. Sometimes patients can be away from their home for weeks, whether that is due to weather or to flight schedules not being able to accommodate patients return home, this can be extremely stressful and isolating. Independent Torngat Mountains Districts Minister of House of Assembly, Lela Evans, discusses this in detail, stating that this has gone on so long now that communities are being pitted against one another. For example, saying: "well they are flying to Nain but not Hopedale, always flies to Nain first and leaves out the rest of the communities." Stuff like this is being said, creating a separation between Inuit communities, rather than fostering connection. Patients must be flown out to St. Anthony, St. John 's, Happy Valley Goose Bay, Corner Brook or even as far as Halifax to receive healthcare. There are situations where patients will cancel their reservations because they don't want to miss too much time off work. All these factors only add to problems with mental health, if it affects our mental health worrying about our families back home, wonder how the children are getting on without us, wonder how their spouses are dealing with the prolonged stay away from home. Doctors are only flown in every three months on average and it's mostly emergency cases that get seen by the visiting Doctors.

Responsibilities to the Natural World

All My Relations

Human violence towards one another is matched by violence towards the earth. Terrestrial and oceanic ecosystems are collapsing, the climate is warming and there are extinctions of species occurring at an accelerated rate, across the globe (IPCC, 2021). Through grounding ourselves in the fact that we are in a reciprocal relationship with the earth, we require the services she offers to survive, we must recognize that we are all in a collective relationship (Abram, 2021). The earth is giving everything to the human species with very little reciprocal giving back. By neglecting to include ecological protection measures in all aspects of society, by not adamantly including sustainability practices into project planning to firmly uplift ecological protection we have changed the world we live in, and not for the better.

Beings of creation are in constant motion; changing, transforming, decomposing, growing; nothing is ever stagnant in the natural world (Little Bear, 2000). Knowledge of all creation is impossible for any one person to have, and therefore, TK is not uniform across different Indigenous cultures (Battiste, 2000). Cognitive and cultural pluralism have been practiced by Indigenous groups over centuries, the ability to not only tolerate, but celebrate and respect diversity, will lead to peace and cooperation for a sustainable future (Nelson, M. 2008). Everything is interrelated and connected to each other, humans are part of this web of life too (Little Bear, 2000). *'If everything is animate, then everything has spirit and knowledge. If everything has spirit and knowledge, then all are like me. If all are like me, then all are my relations'* (Little Bear, 2000). In an animated world, the water is alive, the rocks are alive, the wind is alive, thunder and lightning are alive. The concept of all my relations is a reminder of relationships with family, relatives, and all the beings of creation. We each have an extended relationship with all human beings, and this kinship extends to all animate and inanimate forms that can be imagined (Government of Alberta, 2004).

Relationships, and establishing the right balance between them, are a significant focus of Inuit and First Nations ways of being. Each person is born sacred and complete, and a person's sense of place and identity is fundamentally tied to lands and waters that have provided life (Government of Alberta, 2004). In this spirit, we consider the land as a life giver, providing everything that is needed to live a good life. What impacts the land, in turn, impacts us; the health and well-being of all humans is fundamentally tied to the health of the land. There are frequently overlapping issues that impact Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons in these exchanges. We must recognize that gender-based violence, silencing, and exclusion continues to be perpetuated, and that we cannot permit worldviews that harm specific groups, nor exclude them from spaces in which they have a platform to bring forward their priorities and perspectives. The livelihood and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples is impacted by resource development projects, the destruction of ecosystems for development purposes destroys and erodes Indigenous peoples' ways of knowing and doing. Practicing reciprocity benefits all of the beings of creation and keeps us all in good relations with one another and with the natural world. Indigenous women and gender diverse peoples tend to center ecological responsibilities, it is time to listen to perspectives that ground is in teaching that can lead to better project planning and implementation.

Inuit Women's Traditional Roles: A Mud Lake Perspective

Inuit women have long been traditionally the only people who would sew, cut, and clean fur, long before colonization, the Inuit woman would also be responsible for sewing the Kayak. This mode of transportation, aside from the commonly known Dog Teams, was essential to the survival of the families. The fur and hide tasks always fall on the responsibility of an Inuit woman. The main purpose for an Inuit woman is to keep her family alive and well, particularly when you consider the harsh cold climates in which Inuit live in Northern Canada. The mitts, the boots, the pants, and coats were instrumental in being able to not only survive the harsh temperatures, but also allowed the Inuit men to confidently go out into the cold winter days and nights hunting for food, to ensure that the family is being adequately fed. Inuit worldview is influenced by animism, showing respect for all living beings. Knowing and respecting the land go hand in hand, and knowledge about the land meant survival, and showing respect for hunted animals ensured reciprocity between hunted and hunter. An example of this is following protocols around anirniit (spirit), Hunters treat animal remains with respect, and always observe protocols of respect to ensure they would not offend the animals anirniit. All living beings have spirit. Inuit peoples respected and even worshipped animals, viewing them as relatives. An Inuk might view an animal as having ideas and the ability to think as humans do and are considered to some as possessing magical abilities or great power. This demonstrates the synergistic way that values can influence gender dynamics, sustenance, and the ability for traditional roles to be honored and upheld. Even today, in Northern Labrador, we understand the value of keeping warm in the long cold winter months. The Nunatsiavut Governments' Department of Social Health and Development offers programs to keep this tradition of sewing fur and hide, not only to sustain our way of life, but to also respect and keep our traditions alive. We must pass this knowledge to future generations.

The Churchill Falls area is an area where trappers have collected fur for thousands of years. The fur not only ensured their survival, but also provided monetary income. When the Muskrat Falls Development Project began construction back in 2013, many local and regional members of Labrador expressed serious concerns about the potential impacts. One main concern was the possibility of flooding. It wasn't long before that possibility became a reality. In May of 2017 the small community of Mud Lake flooded, forcing about a hundred souls to evacuate their homes. This flooding came as a direct result of the Muskrat Falls Hydro Development Project because proponents did not take it seriously when these concerns were brought forward. The blatant disrespect and disregard of the surrounding communities around the major development project directly negatively impacted people and their traditional ways of life, the animals, the resources, interrupting a way of life which has existed for thousands and thousands of years. Ultimately, in only four years the worst-case scenario came to reality when Mud Lake flooded because of the Muskrat Falls Hydro Development Project. These examples must serve as a warning to developers to implement feedback into project planning in future projects and respect the concerns and localized knowledge of the communities during engagements.

Cumulative Impact Assessments

Indigenous Peoples have a deep, cultural connection to the land. As environmental degradation occurs, cultural practices such as fishing, harvesting, and hunting are being altered and changing how Indigenous People can practice wellbeing and engage with the natural world. Through ensuring that environmental degradation is limited, we begin to preserve and conserve, not only natural spaces but spaces essential to healing and healthy living. This can be accomplished by ensuring Indigenous people have power in decision making processes throughout all stages of decision making. By including Indigenous knowledge in all decision-making structures, in equal weight of consideration as science, would begin to restore the bias to western worldviews and create a more holistic and encompassing system. Adhering to the commitments the Government of Canada has made to achieving reconciliation, like UNDRIP, the Duty to Consult, FPIC and ensuring the 94 calls to action are accomplished completely and without delay is essential and represents a minimum standard. Moving beyond these agreements to increase funding for Indigenous-led and community-based projects would create capacity for this work to be done in a good way. Building frameworks that move beyond considering environmental impacts on a project-by-project basis but consider the whole, interconnected nature of projects and their cumulative impacts is essential (ICCE, 2021).

Cumulative effects are any changes to environmental, social, and economic values that are caused or created by past, present, and future human activities which alter natural processes (Government of British Columbia, 2015). Cumulative effects being assessed and documented is the best way to make decisions with all the available information and to truly consider ecosystem function and prioritize conservation (ICCE, 2021). Supporting the development of tools, protocols, and frameworks to undergo cumulative effects documentation is in the best interest of the community and all the beings of creation (ICCE, 2021). With planned developments in heavily developed areas already, ecosystem thresholds are taxed to unknown extents. Relying on predictions leaves room for a lack of scrutiny into the long term repercussions of developments. With new legislation there is a growing movement to consider factors that extend beyond the silo of individual projects, there remains fundamental limitations on how we understand the ecosystems we impact. It's not enough to plan projects by how financially feasible they are for shareholders.

Figure 39: Artwork by Daphne Odjig " The Indian in Transition"

Food and Water Security

Food Security

Indigenous food systems have thrived for centuries, where communities have relied on locally hunted, fished, and harvested foods. The First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study is the first food guide that addresses environmental contaminants and the role they play in traditional food availability, showing how IAs and land-use management policies have neglected to prioritize food and water security (FNFNES, 2021). The report brought insights from over 6,000 participants from 92 First Nations together in a comprehensive review (FNFNES, 2021). It was revealed that over half of all Indigenous adults interviewed reported that industry-related activities and climate change are negatively affecting traditional food availability and that almost half of all First Nations families are food insecure (FNFNES, 2021). The inaccessibility of healthy food options is leading to compromised health trends and families with children are being most negatively impacted (FNFNES, 2021). Communities often face intensified rates of poverty and food insecurity due to the extreme prices found in remote communities and on reserves (FNFNES, 2021).

Access to healthy foods is a major barrier that people in Indigenous communities' face. Produce like fresh vegetables and fruit are becoming increasingly expensive, with prices in First Nations communities being much higher than in urban centers (FNFNES, 2021). By creating systems to supply healthy foods at community events, in schools, and in workplaces, people could obtain food that would otherwise be inaccessible to them. Having hot meals and culturally specific dishes available at meetings, at schools, and on worksites helps alleviate food insecurity, creates jobs for community members and increases the wellbeing of everyone involved. Access to healthy food is linked to elevated mood, energy, and self-esteem, reduced patterns of anxiety and stress, creating happier and healthier employees and students. Employers are responsible to provide a safe and healthy workplace and that extends to encouraging healthy lifestyles through healthy eating (CCOHS, 2020). By offering healthy eating workshops, lunch-and-learns, traditional food programs, on site cafeterias, or other similar initiatives, workplace cultures can be improved for happier, healthier employees (CCOHS, 2020). Often, work camps are very western spaces where Indigenous people do not see their culture and are made to feel uncomfortable. Through establishing traditional food programs on worksites, Indigenous people begin to feel comfortable and want to work in these environments. By teaching practices for growing food, teaching about what a healthy diet is, teaching how to prepare traditional dishes, people are better prepared to lead a healthier life. Leading small lunchtime workshops or cooking classes would help build capacity and confidence to prepare traditional, healthy foods and build a better workplace culture. Encouraging traditional food to be made available and prepared on worksites or in schools exposes non-Indigenous people to the beauty of Indigenous cuisine and creates a positive cultural bridge to be able to come together and share food. These initiatives

represent tangible ways for community members and workplaces to move beyond data collection and problem identification and create actionable opportunities where community members can be involved and lead traditional food programs.

Thinking about how the land will be impacted by resource extraction processes and how land use must be intentionally managed during and well beyond the life of these projects is imperative. Creating plans that will adequately restore land and remediate sites to be able to grow food and sustain life in a holistic and regenerative way requires diligent planning for local, community-led, and culturally rooted food systems. Promoting community-rooted initiatives that grow and distribute food locally is one of the best ways to give community members the tools they need to control their access to healthy foods. Establishing community gardens, where people can get their hands in the soil, grow their own food, and build a sense of connection to both the land and other community members is one strategy that has found success in some First Nation communities. These community gardens can be a space to lead land-based learning initiatives, giving people the opportunity to receive education on how to grow food, when to plant, when to harvest, and pass along intergenerational knowledge. Engraining land-based learning in youth education promotes cultural revitalization and could be a way to bring Elders and youth together, ensuring that culturally rooted knowledge and methods are being passed down to future generations. Recognizing that during most of the year in Northern Ontario, and all the year in Northern Labrador, growing food outside is not a possibility due to cold conditions and permafrost soil, communities could explore other options, like creating a greenhouse. An indoor gardening initiative would combat climate-related issues and allow people to still be able to learn from and connect with the land. Remote work camps could create greenhouses on site to ensure that access to traditional, healthy foods is available year-round.

Protecting Freshwater Supplies

During the process of planning for mining development, mines may dispose effluent and treated tailings into fish inhabited waters under the amended Metal and Diamond Mining Effluent Regulations (Government of Canada, 2022c). There have been a limited number of studies done on the effects of mining and mineral depositions into the Boreal watersheds, despite the increasing number of resource development sites across the boreal zone (Kreutzweiser, 2013). As such, an understanding of ecosystem thresholds and localized aquatic system biodiversity and resilience trends remain largely unknown, though newer research suggests these risks can be minimized with more environmentally sound management techniques (Kreutzweiser, 2013). Scientific evidence suggests that the effluent discharge, sulfate, and nitrate emissions into aquatic systems poses a high risk to aquatic organisms, with significant reductions in fish abundance downstream of operation sites, noting that these risks can be mitigated with proactive environmental and conservation goals embedded into initial planning stages of development (Kreutzweiser, 2013). Disruption of freshwater flowing Northwards affects the timing and spring breakup of ice in the lower reaches of the river, and any changes in downstream flow have

negative implications for aquatic organisms in those habitats (Kreutzweiser, 2013). The practice of weighing economic benefits as reasonable priorities over environmental impacts continues to be a theme in the regulatory decision making of the Ministry of the Environment. The current practice of offering Fish compensation packages to communities who experience impacts to Section 35 rights to fish for sustenance continues in current IBAs. Notably, there remains significant questions of how the impacts over the rights and livelihood of Indigenous women, who are water keepers, are being accommodated. If development projects cannot find economically viable alternatives than to dispose of effluents into fish inhabited waters or into navigable waters, then it is reasonable to discern a systemic violation of the rights of Indigenous peoples which may be potentially mitigated by IBA agreements.

Mining and resource extraction activities affect freshwater stores in many ways. As water is used to process ore, gold, and other minerals, discharged mine effluent intensifies water pollution (Safe Drinking Water Foundation, n.d.). Seepage from tailings and waste rock impoundments threaten freshwater stores, while mine construction often redistributes water channels, altering ecosystem functions entirely (Safe Drinking Water Foundation, n.d.). Well beyond the lifespan of a mine, for decades, perhaps even centuries after operations cease, conditions of water pollution will persist and will need to be managed diligently to prevent communities from losing access to water, which is a fundamental human right (Safe Drinking Water Foundation, n.d.). This poses unique dangers to the health and livelihood of aquatic species, in **brownfield developments** there is a greater risk of pushing environmental thresholds beyond their limits. As technological advancements allow more rock and ore material to be processed than ever before, productivity of mines is increasing thus increasing the rate of water quality decay (Jhariya, Khan & Thakur, 2016). Mining and resource extraction projects are often concentrated in Indigenous communities and these increasingly mechanized mining processes allow companies and proponents to be even further removed from monitoring water quality and enforcing compliance with environmental regulations (Jhariya, Khan & Thakur, 2016). Although water is a fundamental human right, some communities are experiencing water advisories for up to 25 years, such as Neskantaga First Nation in northern Ontario, who are still under a drinking water advisory today (Xue Luo, 2021). Ontario has the highest number of clean drinking water, supplying water to other provinces, and countries across the globe, as such, water protection must remain as one of the highest priorities here, even if that leads to reductions in mineral productivity (Xue Luo, 2021). Ultimately, cleanup costs are always more expensive than provisional methods, so proactive and preventative approaches should always be taken to protect freshwater (Jhariya, Khan & Thakur, 2016).

The Canadian Environmental Law Association (**CELA**), has resources to provide summary advice on legislative cases, aiming to mobilize communities to protect their clean drinking water stores (CELA, 2021). Development of environmentally sound planning is key in protecting communities, and these planning tools must be developed with individual community-level insights and engage with multiple communities ensuring the inclusion of urban, rural, and remote Indigenous perspectives. One program offered by CELA is the Healthy Great Lakes Program, which enhances the capacity of organizations working to influence freshwater policies, engage a broad network of individuals to understand, shape, implement and make use of laws and policies to promote health, specifically in Ontario (CELA, 2021). In

their 2021 Annual Report, CELA outlines their extensive role in teaching community members how to use existing tools and legal documents to participate in applications and actively protect drinking water stores (CELA, 2021). Recognizing the role of poorly planned or improperly regulated land use and how the cumulative adverse impacts from resource extraction projects alter freshwater stores is essential to conducting IAs (CELA, 2021). By using the training and educational resources available from organizations such as CELA, Indigenous People can be better prepared to voice their concerns and create real, lasting changes in regulations and policies.

Ensuring that the youth is knowledgeable about the importance of safe drinking water and using educational resources to inspire them to work in these fields will be critical in creating a next generation of water protectors (Safe Drinking Water Foundation, n.d.). The Safe Drinking Water Foundation offers kits which can be ordered by educators to teach students to become confident in conducting water quality analysis of their local drinking water then, comparing their results to the Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines (Safe Drinking Water Foundation, n.d.). Several curriculums and educational programs are available for free on the safe water organization website, which is a phenomenal resource to learn about preserving water.

Case Study: Voisey's Bay Water Quality Testing

The first season of water quality checks in Voisey's Bay were conducted in the summer of 2003, from July to November (Tobin, 2005). Instruments were placed to begin monitoring water quality at three different locations: Upper Reid Brook; Camp Pond Brook; and the Lower Reid Brook (Tobin, 2005). These monitoring instruments were removed in November, when the rivers started to freeze and the methodology was repeated annually, collecting information from July-November (Tobin, 2005). These three locations were chosen for various reasons; the Upper Reid Brook has pristine water quality; the Camp Pond was chosen to capture any emerging water quality events due to new developments nearby, specifically by the mine/mill site; and finally, the Lower Reid Brook was chosen because it heads down stream towards the ocean (Tobin, 2005). In 2005, it was documented that there were some issues in checking these areas due to the lack of helicopter or staffing availability (Tobin, 2005).

Figure 40: Artwork by Christi Belcourt
"Water is Life"

This is unacceptable, proponents always ensure that work and productivity is not hindered, they always make sure that there are employees on site to do the work needed to extract the materials in Voisey's Bay. Why then, is the same initiative not taken to ensure water quality and environmental monitoring? It is estimated that with every boat that travels to Voisey's Bay, the Umiak I, leaves the site with about $750,000,000 worth of ore (Tobin, 2005). It is, therefore, unacceptable to state unavailability of equipment to be the reason for monitoring to be canceled, the revenue generated by these types of projects must be used to ensure that the environment is being preserved, to the highest degree possible. If proponents can make sure that production doesn't get hindered, they should ensure that water quality checks do not get hindered either.

Since then, the environmental monitoring system in place has continued to improve, adding an additional water quality monitoring station. According to the most recent water quality report, published in 2021, which measures the temperature, pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity at each location, water quality remains mostly excellent (Newfoundland and Labrador, 2021). The difference between water quality between deployment and removal remained consistent in 67.5% of cases, improved in 20% of cases, and decreased in quality in 12.5% of cases (N=80) (Newfoundland and Labrador, 2021). This shows the importance of consistent monitoring, as even 20 years into a project's development, conditions continue to fluctuate monthly. Many communities in Labrador rely on local drinking water, most families collecting water directly from streams and the Government and proponents must prioritize monitoring and cleaning these waterways, during and long after the Voisey's Bay mine has closed.

Infrastructural Considerations

Aging Infrastructure in Rural Remote Communities

There are significant issues that act as a barrier to Indigenous communities being able to participate efficiently in IAs, consultations, and other activities around development. For example, to open a business, there is a serious lack of adequate infrastructure, both physically and communications wise. People are calling for answers to these issues, for governments to actively build, or repair infrastructure, to repair or create new roads, to provide internet access and these are things that cannot be adequately addressed by industry or revenue sharing agreements such as IBA's. These are indicative of a wider responsibility of government entities to modernize and repair aging community infrastructure, especially in rural remote communities. Housing insecurity and urbanization of Indigenous peoples continues to influence the accessibility of membership to ongoing consultations. Though it is beyond the scope of this research to expand on this issue, it remains a consistent and pervasive barrier to Indigenous peoples participation in IA processes, and forms part of a systemic issue of diaspora of communities. Though consultation requirements rely on systems such as the Aboriginal Treaty Rights Information System and correspondence with central offices such as bands or organizations, there are many urban Indigenous peoples living in and around planned developments that are never reached because their bands are too

far away. Though these people face the same impacts as rights holders, they are lost among the 'public' stakeholders during outreach activities. When basic needs of people are not met, and people are facing housing insecurity and lack of access to basic services and safe infrastructure, the level of attention that can be paid to consultations is unrealistic and unreasonable.

Safe Transportation Options

Although industrial camps and resource extraction projects often create funding to pave roads, create new highways, and bring new opportunities to communities, they are also associated with several negative impacts on transportation corridors (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Increased traffic, specifically from workers finishing long shift work, imposes a safety concern where increased accidents, reckless driving, and/or excessive noise have been reported by communities (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017). Local infrastructure is aggravated by heightened transportation associated with resource development projects and imposes risks on workers and locals, especially when there is a lack of police presence and monitoring allowing reckless driving and speeding to go unchecked (Gibson, *et al.,* 2017).

Create Safe Transportation Services Using First Nation Owned Companies

Often, community members cannot work directly in the community but must travel to work which makes them rely on having access to their own vehicle. By establishing employee shuttles that could bring people to-and-from work, more people would be able to obtain employment. Additionally, fewer workers would be traveling after long shift work, creating safer communities overall. If a formal shuttle service would not be possible, companies could establish safe ride-sharing programs for employees, encouraging people from the same areas to carpool. Similar programs could be created for kids to be transported home after school with reputable and verified programs. Beyond school and work commitments, these shuttle services could be a benefit to community members to be able to taxi home. These initiatives create safer roads, safer communities by preventing instances of over-tired driving, drunk driving, or reckless driving.

Create Cultural Signage in Communities

Reminding people of cultural contexts could be a great way to connect local people and transient workers, reminding everyone that the land is a sacred and shared space. Displaying cultural symbols on signs would remind visitors and engrain localized TK in the community. These signs could have traditional place names, teach about animals or plants, teach about hunting, fishing, and mark traditional

gathering practices, sharing stories and creating widespread language revitalization opportunities. This type of signage could provide an opportunity for local artists to design art to be displayed and shared in the community and be an avenue for passing on cultural knowledge.

Acknowledging the history of the land and creating public land acknowledgements that recognize the original stewards of the land would be a great way to establish respect and encourage learning. Not only educational signs, but community safety signs could be created. Neighborhood watch programs could be established with clear signage establishing safe zones, connecting people with resources in case of emergencies and more. In school zones or high foot traffic areas for example, speeding related fines could be displayed and remind drivers to slow down and be mindful.

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Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

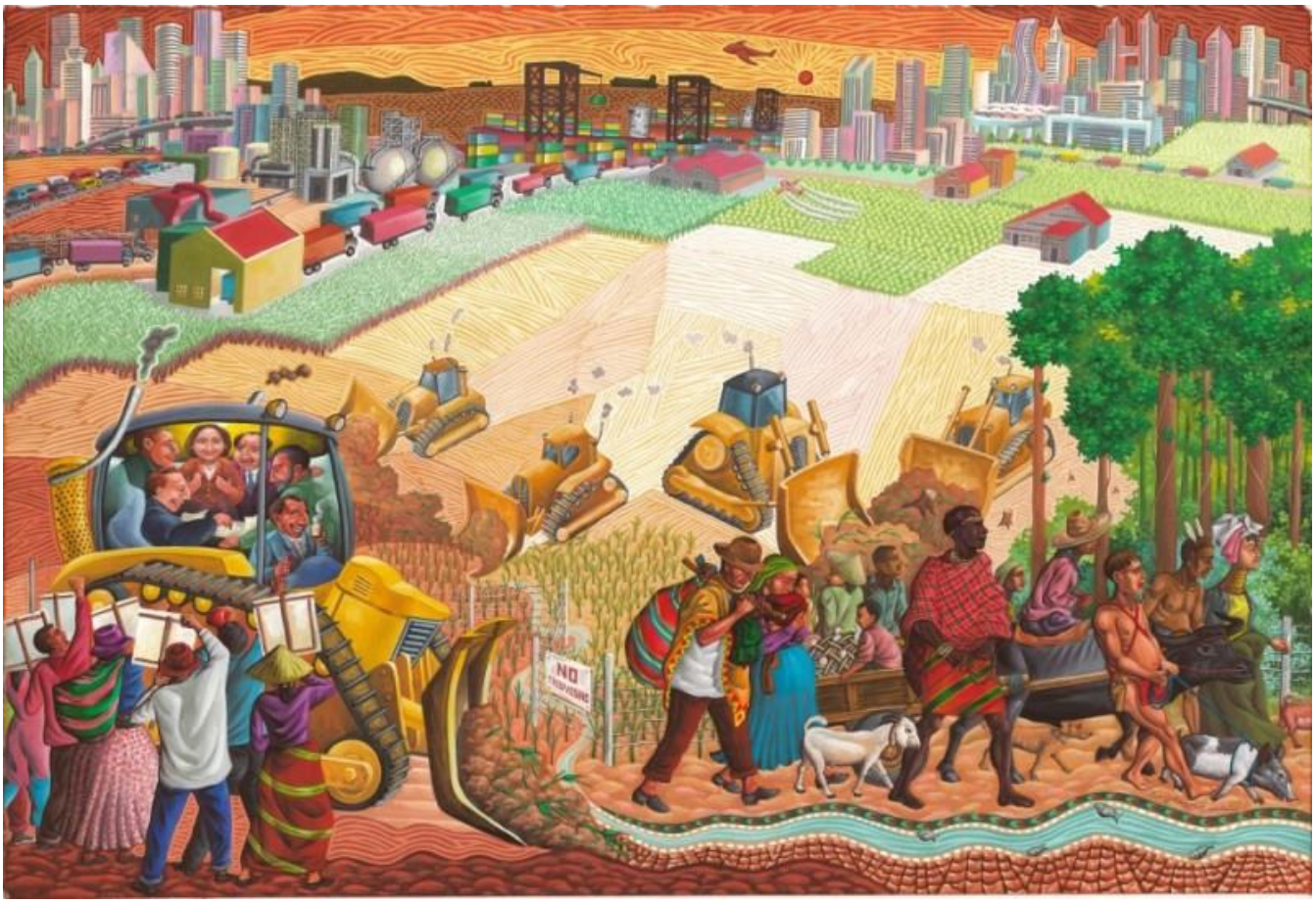

Figure 41: “Land Grab” by artist Federico Boyd Sulapas Dominguez.

Spotlighting Indigenous Led Initiatives

Indigenous Initiatives

There are several Indigenous-led companies which are creating systems to support Indigenous peoples across the country and by uplifting projects with aligned values, effort duplication can be minimized while maximizing impact and success. We believe that this work cannot be done by any one person, community, company, or organization, but will take an intersectional, multi-disciplinary approach where people from all walks of life will have to come together and reinvent our governance and land use systems. Below are highlighted outstanding organizations and work we have come across during our project activities.

Uplifting The Work Of Indigenous Clean Energy

The first organization we would like to highlight is Indigenous Clean Energy (**ICE**) which is leading development towards securing a renewable, sustainable future for all. Their focus is on uniting community members, industry partners, public agencies, and municipalities in accomplishing these tasks. In their report on Indigenous clean energy leadership for Canada's clean, electric future they have mapped main areas for Indigenous leadership and action (ICE, 2022). These strategies include integrating power generation and energy storage, leveraging the potential of hydropower for renewable electricity, reducing diesel reliance in remote Indigenous communities, and supporting Indigenous net zero entrepreneurship (ICE, 2022). This kind of initiative exemplifies the power of Indigenous knowledge when given the funding and capacity to be implemented across society and the way it creates cascading, positive impacts for all. ICE has generated a circle of Indigenous clean energy opportunities exemplifying how multiple stakeholders can come together to secure a green future. ICE offers a variety of capacity-building programs such as: the 20/20 Catalyst Program connecting Indigenous people to mentors and specialists for clean energy development projects, Bringing It Home is a national initiative focused on funding projects to retrofit homes and facilities in Indigenous communities with clean energy, Generation Power an Indigenous Youth clean energy career training program, and ImaGENation an Indigenous Youth mentorship program.

Uplifting the Grand Council Treaty #3 Framework Development

Grand Council Treaty #3 is made up of 28 First Nation communities who came together in 1997 to create **Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, the Great Earth Law.** This was developed in collaboration between all communities, with approval of the Elders and knowledge keepers and was validated through traditional ceremonies. This framework was created to ensure that people have guiding principles on how to be proper stewards of the land. The Great Earth Law established that the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 should maintain all rights to lands and water, as well as in any development occurring in Treaty #3 territory. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin teaches the duties and responsibilities that the Anishinaabe have to the land, which "last forever, in spirit, in breath and in all of life, for all of eternity" (GCT3, 2022). When Indigenous people are given the agency to come together and gather knowledge, applying lessons from the past to create resources to guide future generations, better, more meaningful IAs can be conducted. When traditional land rights and nation-based law-making processes are given space, Indigenous people feel more comfortable participating, feeling heard, considered, and valued throughout the process. This example of community cooperation, collaboration, and shared success can inspire other Nations to work together to harmonize their land protection efforts.

Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is an eco-centric law, considering and acknowledging that all things on Earth possess spirit and life (GCT3, 2022). This natural law goes beyond establishing rights but establishing the responsibilities that all of humanity has, a collective obligation to care for Mother Earth (GCT3, 2022). This framework can be valuable in guiding IAs, establishing that Indigenous people have the right to meaningful engagements and to uphold their Treaty rights. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin establishes that it is unlawful to proceed with any developmental project within Treaty #3 land without seeking consent, fostering a foundational system of respect and reciprocity (GCT3, 2022). The modern applications of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin are of irreplaceable value in guiding IAs. We want to uplift the work of Grand Council Treaty #3 in coming together, developing guiding frameworks, public information systems, and fostering opportunities for intergenerational knowledge transfer. We would like to highlight the following resources, which demonstrate the value of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and can be used to inspire similar framework development and community mobilization in other regions.

- The Economic Development Guide
  A business planning resource, featuring the Grand Council Treaty #3 investment groups 2020-2024 strategic plan, the Pwi-Di-Goo-Zing-Yaa-Zhing advisory services program, and highlights community leaders within Treaty #3.

- The Territorial Planning Unit (**TPU**)
  Uses an interactive GIS land use mapping system to create a resource for community members to access, learn about traditional land use, and share their distinct local knowledge, ensuring these spaces can be protected.

- The Nuclear 101 Guidebook
  Created to help inform decision making on future nuclear energy projects, using scientific knowledge and traditional teachings to create interactive, self-reflective activities.

- The Nibi Declaration Toolkit
  A way for Treaty #3 to explain the Anishinaabe relationship to Nibi (water). Reflecting the sacred teachings, relationships, and responsibilities that the Anishinaabe have to water, water beings, lakes, and rivers.

- Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research (**TARR**)
  Case studies from specific legal claims, how to navigate the legal obligations of the Crown, how to ensure accountability for breaches of agreements, and connecting Treaty #3 residents to specialized support.

- The Manito Aki Inakonigaawin Pathways Forward Documentary
  A documentary is in the works which began filming in June 2021, recording interviews with Elders and knowledge keepers about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and highlighting the success of Grand Council Treaty #3.

Uplifting Indigenous Climate Action

Next, we would like to highlight the work of Indigenous Climate Action who have developed an extensive toolkit which connects educators, professionals, and community members with resources. The Climate Curriculum Toolkit focusses on navigating the climate crisis, showing how Indigenous peoples will be uniquely affected by the climate effects of climate change (ICA, 2021). Featuring guides on how to facilitate and train groups, how to work with Knowledge Keepers, Elders or Community Members, how to use the training methodology, interactive activities, case studies and much more (ICA, 2021). The toolkit's purpose is stated to support Indigenous people to become climate change experts, support communities to develop regionally relevant and effective strategies, actualize Indigenous rights, center Indigenous knowledge and systems, and build a network of Indigenous-led climate change experts and strategies (ICA, 2021). With 14 detailed exercises and interactive activities, this toolkit can be used in classrooms, in workplaces, or in community workshops to get people thinking about the climate crisis and how to lead grassroots activism. Indigenous Climate Action has also published a Youth Needs Assessment (ICA, 2020), a report on Decolonizing Climate Policy in Canada (ICA, 2021a), and will soon publish a report on The Risks and Threats of 'Nature-based Climate Solutions' for Indigenous Peoples (ICA, 2022).

Figure 42: Indigenous Climate Action logo (ICA, 2022).

Uplifting the National Inuit Strategy on Research

As colonial research approaches continue to dominate, Indigenous people are neglected from making decisions and controlling how research and decision-making is unfolding (ITK, 2018). A shift in how research, policy development, and practices unfold is needed to truly respect Indigenous self-determination and restore lost power balances (ITK, 2018). A National Inuit Strategy on Research was developed to improve the usefulness of research for Inuit. This can only occur if authentic partnerships with Inuit organizations are made, at all levels of governance (ITK, 2018). Historically, the research community has upheld one-way relationships with Inuit, othering them as something to be studied rather than creating respectful and equal partnerships (ITK, 2018). Inuit remain largely marginalized through access to funding, to accessing data and information, controlling research outcomes, secure career advancement, or from experiencing any potential benefits from research (ITK, 2018).

Figure 43: Respectful and Beneficial Research priority areas identified from the National Inuit Strategy on Research (ITK, 2018).

The National Inuit Strategy on Research document was created to help create meaningful research projects and can guide impact assessment engagement with Inuit. This guideline document promotes self-determination, requiring research priorities to be established in partnership with Inuit. The five priority areas identified for coordinated approaches to generate respectful and beneficial research for all Inuit are identified below in Figure 44.

Figure 44: Where we need to go: Supporting Inuit Self-Determination in Research (ITK, 2018).

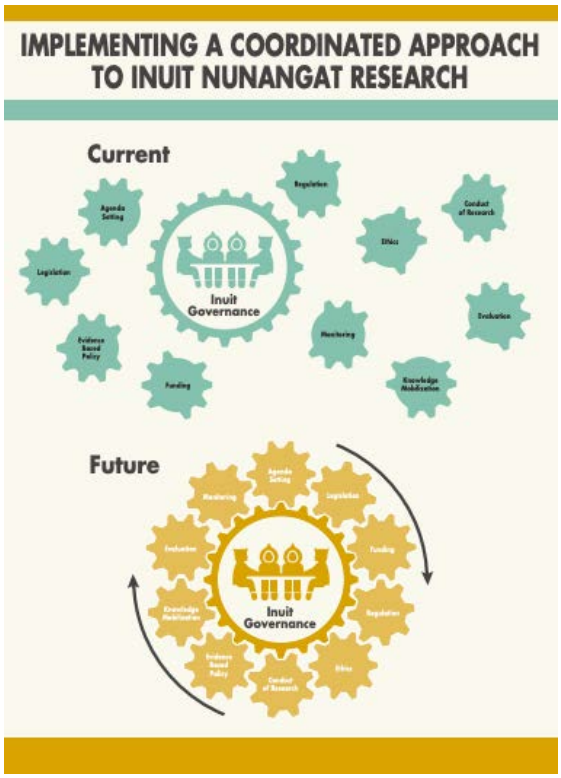

Figure 45: Implementing a coordinated approach to Inuit Nunangat research (ITK, 2018)

Uplifting First Nations Information Governance Centre

FNIGC | CGIPN
First Nations Information Governance Centre
Le Centre de gouvernance de l'information des Premières Nations

The First Nations Information Governance Centre (**FNIGC**) was formed to protect First Nations data sovereignty in alignment with each nation's distinct worldviews. FNIGC supports development of governance processes and data management at the community level. An innovative program they offer is the Fundamentals of OCAP training program. FNIGC is spearheading national efforts to develop data sources that are inclusive, meaningful, and relevant to First Nations, promoting accessibility and partnership connections.

Uplifting the Indigenous Climate Hub

The Indigenous Climate Hub is an Indigenous-led project that has created a national online platform for Indigenous people to learn, share and connect with each other. Created by Okwaho Equal Source, an Indigenous consulting and design firm in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. The website was created to connect Indigenous people with resources and information about climate change, and to connect them with other Indigenous projects and people. The website features resources like; a summary of Current Funding Opportunities for Indigenous People, the Environment and Climate Change National and International Directory which highlights both Indigenous-led and Canadian environmental and climate change organizing groups, organizations and networks, the Indigenous Climate Change Searchable Library, and highlights Indigenous Community Adaptation Projects.

Government Projects for Indigenous Support

The Government of Canada is in a period of focused reconciliation in the past few years. As new concepts are being introduced, new legislation, and policies are also being created to amplify Indigenous agency, sovereignty, and self-determination and thus, more opportunities exist for Indigenous organizations to receive support. These include projects like: The Canadian Centre for Climate Services which connects Canadians with climate resources, climate information, a climate service support desk, and climate data; The Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program focuses on supporting climate change adaptation projects in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Nunatsiavut; The Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program which provides funding for long-term climate monitoring initiatives in Indigenous communities; and finally the ICSP which focuses specifically on increasing the capacity of Indigenous peoples to participate in IAs. There are many more projects highlighted in the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) website that could help Indigenous groups receive the funding they need to be successful and turn plans into action.

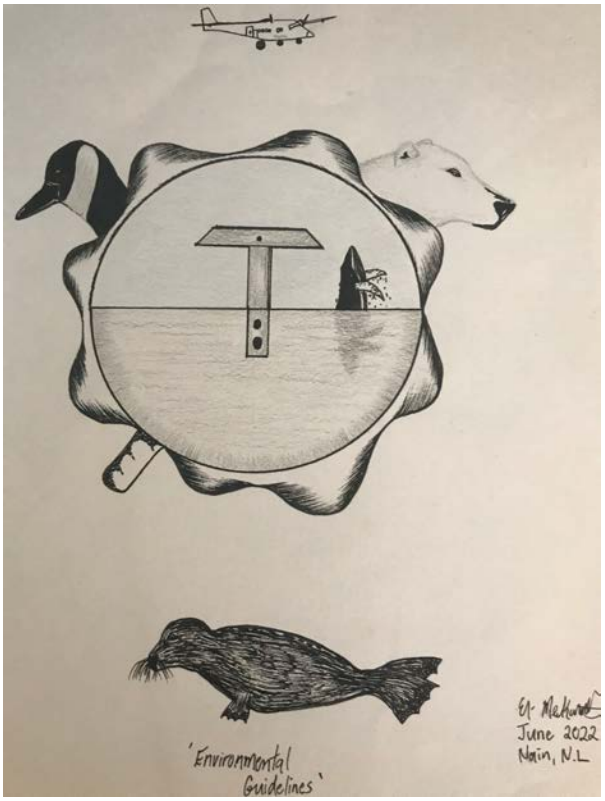

Figure 46: Artwork by Eli Merkuratsuk
"Environmental Guidelines"

Closing

Closing

The phrase “All my relations” is frequently used in Indigenous teachings to exemplify the interconnected nature of everything in the universe. This teaching reinforces the fact that everything and everyone has a purpose, is worthy of respect and care, and has a role to play in life. By rooting relationship building in this principle, we can engage with one another in a holistic and meaningful way. This connection extends to all people, to Mother Earth, all plants and animals, and everything in the universe. By recognizing that all these aspects have teachings to offer us and giving space for all our relations to be respected and heard, we build authentic, inclusive relationships.

Throughout the project research, we have held panel discussions and sought guidance from a variety of Indigenous women leaders and people with lived experience who have guided this work. In following the research principles, we outline in this report, we place trust in the collective knowledge and lived experience of the women that have collaborated in this research, we intermix Indigenous and western ways of doing to expand on key research pathways. One limitation emerging is that the length of this document and amount of reading required, we have leaned heavily into methods of reviewing written works and literature review, as well as presented our findings in written format for this framework, this effectively limits the scope of accessibility for some target demographics we seek to reach. We underscore that it is not necessary for someone to be an expert to implement the principles of GBA+, more so that people with lived experience can have the opportunity to work through applications of research and have further opportunities to co-create new elements of research and provide insights into existing research methodologies. In other words, putting this framework into practice within the context of Indigenous women participating in an assessment remains an essential component in producing results that work best for Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people in a variety of contexts and geographical locations. Our team came across the term *‘relational implementation’* during our research, which is a way to relate to the material, going from written instructions to the practice and implementation of GBA+ frameworks (Sanchez-Pimienta, C. *et al.* 2021). This approach allows us to bring the work we’ve been doing to our existing relationships and sister organizations and ground the context of IA participation within the principles of Indigenous GBA+ in community relationships. It is important to go through this phase to apply lessons learned and strengthen this framework within a variety of contexts such as, grassroots people and organizations, Indigenous communities, IAAC, and development proponents.

Relationship building is one of the core principles outlined in the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report (MMIWG, 2019). These relationships need to be made across individuals, communities, nations, and governments. Conducting historic trauma training, ensuring that all non-Indigenous people understand the historical impacts of colonization and oppression, and how these forces persist today as intergenerational trauma is essential. Coming to the table

knowledgeable and informed is important so that the burden to educate is relieved from Indigenous groups, allowing them to focus on community capacity and land governance priorities. Nation-Government relationships can be strengthened by fostering systems of collaborative decision making, ensuring that previously marginalized groups of women, girls, Elders, and youth are included in all phases of IA as well as between projects.

Representation matters and networks of information sharing are needed to ensure intersectional participation is being seen at all phases of Canadian decision-making. Ensuring that equal access to IA activities is provided to all communities is key in building equitable relationships where everyone has a seat at the table. Relationship building requires decolonizing processes, eliminating impositions rooted in western ways, to allow Indigenous people to participate in ways that are rooted in traditional knowledge, thinking, and doing. This includes creating more realistic timelines that consider local capacities to engage in consultations and feedback sessions and give groups additional time to make submissions. Efficiency in process can be better accomplished once information sharing networks are strengthened and expanded to promote information dissemination to community members who are not typically involved.

Developing specific, actionable plans to address socioeconomic conditions that affect Indigenous women, their families, and their communities cannot be done in isolation. To be effective, these initiatives will have to have intersectional lenses with mechanisms to address the disparities that Indigenous women experience uniquely. To overcome these barriers, mechanisms which expand beyond the scope of an IA are required to right past harms and create equitable sharing spaces that promote mutual growth and prosperity for all interested parties. Supporting women, both on and off reserve, will require creating an environment where people are able to come together to generate effective and proactive solutions which are guided by community values, Indigenous knowledge, and shared respect for one another. Fostering systems that combat patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes is as fundamental as how consultation meetings are planned and actionized, there is no shortcut to healing and significant steps that contribute to impact mitigation and promote reciprocal sharing and learning is paramount.

There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to generating solutions to the socioeconomic, environmental, and health impacts that Indigenous people face due to resource development projects and large-scale industry operations. Addressing these issues is a shared responsibility of all people. Indigenous people and nations across Canada are in an emergent state of cultural and spiritual revitalization, and the implications of resource development projects on traditional territories have long lasting effects for the people living in proximity to them. Addressing a complex dynamic of interrelated issues can be achieved through actionizing what is heard in consultations, and not simply serving as a note taking exercise to complete a checklist requirement. The practice of industries working towards a social license to operate for the sake of shareholder buy-in is not sufficient to participate as an ally to Indigenous nations of this

land, nor to Indigenous peoples on a global scale. Too often economic feasibility of a project is used to justify archaic practices in resource extraction, as has been demonstrated prominently time and again, particularly in mining and mineral development projects. Canada's Federal Government balances economic development and environmental protections in project assessments and has been often incongruent with Indigenous (and at many times public) interest. This leaves the people whose territories are being impacted to suffer the consequences of development after project abandonment, the new IA legislation and financial plans for closures have promising potential for future applications. What remains clear is that while distinctions-based approaches are necessary, there are distinct shared experiences that acutely impact Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons that have been well researched and documented, and that baselines studies must begin with acknowledging existing harms not as a potential, but as a known and predictable impact from development operations.

Many Indigenous communities are in the process of healing from intergenerational trauma and are navigating systems that have newly opened for Indigenous voices. Consultations processes offer pathways for people to preserve their well-being, dignity, and the right to self-determination, and it is a sign of respect and mutual concern and care for this land, that we begin to frame dialogues around project feasibility, not solely centered around the amount of currency generated. Human and ecological impacts are inextricably linked, and consideration of the needs and concerns of Indigenous peoples is a method in which to generate localized and tailored solutions to community needs in project implementation. In the spirit of self-determination and resilience, it also gives communities in the process of recovering culture, languages, and practices the autonomy and agency to make their voices heard about impacts that pose unacceptable risks to people, spirit, and place. We hope that this framework serves as a jumping point to increase the quality and meaningfulness being achieved in consultations in IAs across Canada, for the benefit of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse persons, and all our relations.

Miigwetch • Nakummek

Thank You

Resources Found Within

- Keepers of the Circle
- AnânauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association
- IAAC of Canada
- The Impact Assessment Act of 2019
- Braiding Sweetgrass'
- Section 35 of the Constitution Act
- duty to consult
- Free, Prior and Informed Consent
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Indigenous Knowledge Policy Framework for Project Reviews and Regulatory Decisions
- 'Indigenous Community Development National Strategy'
- Action Plan on GBA+
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report
- Truth and Reconciliation 94 Calls to Action
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Canadian Race Relation Foundations Anti-Racism Workshop
- The Canadian Diversity Initiative workshops on;
  - Unconscious Bias
  - Respect and Inclusion in the Workplace
  - Diversity and Inclusion Training for Volunteers
  - LGBTQ2+ Diversity and Inclusion training for workplaces
- Indigenous Awareness Canada's Indigenous Awareness Training
- Indigenous Relations Academy's Reconciliation Primer Self-Guided Training
- NVisions Indigenous Cultural Awareness Learning & Cultural Competency course
- Reconciliation Canada's workshops on;
  - Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop
  - Reconciliation Learning Experiences for Organizations
- KAIROS Canada's Blanket Exercise Program
- First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework
- 'Mental Health and Wellness in First Nations and Inuit Communities'
  - National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy
  - National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program
  - Mental Health Counselling Benefits
  - Indian Residential Schools Mental Health Support Program
  - Hope for Wellness Indigenous Help Line
- Mental Health First Aid
  - Standard Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
  - MHFA First Nations
  - MHFA Inuit
  - MHFA Northern Peoples
  - MHFA Supporting Youth
  - MHFA Supporting Adults
  - MHFA Supporting Seniors or Elders
- The Firelight Group
- Culturally Safe and Trauma-Informed Knowledge Hub
- interactive online database
- Engaging Men and Boys for Gender-Transformative Learning'
- Women's National Housing & Homeless Network
  - National Housing Strategy Act
  - "Homeless on Homelands: Upholding Housing as a Human Right for Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit and Gender-Diverse People'.
  - Literature Review of the State of Women's Housing Needs & Homelessness in Canada
  - The Pan-Canadian Women's Housing & Homelessness Survey.

    - A Rights-Based, GBA+ Analysis of the National Housing Strategy
- The First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study
- Canadian Environmental Law Association
- Healthy Great Lakes Program
- 2021 Annual Report
- Safe Drinking Water Foundation
    - curriculums and educational programs
- Culture, Confidence, and Competence Program
- BEAHR Indigenous Training Course
- an Indigenous Skills and Employment Training
- Indigenous Clean Energy
    - the 20/20 Catalyst Program
    - Bringing It Home
    - Generation Power
    - ImaGENation
- Grand Council Treaty #3
    - The Economic Development Guide
    - The Territorial Planning Unit (TPU)
    - The Nuclear 101 Guidebook
    - The Nibi Declaration Toolkit
    - Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research (TARR)
    - The Manito Aki Inakonigaawin Pathways Forward Documentary
- Indigenous Climate Action
    - The Climate Curriculum Toolkit
    - a Youth Needs Assessment
    - Decolonizing Climate Policy in Canada,
    - on The Risks and Threats of 'Nature-based Climate Solutions' for Indigenous Peoples
- The National Inuit Strategy on Research
- Indigenous Liaison Program
- Indigenous Climate Hub
    - Current Funding Opportunities for Indigenous People
    - Environment and Climate Change National and International Directory
    - Indigenous Climate Change Searchable Library
    - Indigenous Community Adaptation Projects.
- The Canadian Centre for Climate Services
- The Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program
- The Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program
- Indigenous Capacity Support Program
- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

Figure Appendix

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