



**Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak –
Women of the Métis Nation (LFMO)**

Final Report

“Building a Métis Women’s Blueprint”





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About LFMO

Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak is the recognized voice of Métis women across the homeland. Operating in a democratic, transparent and fiscally accountable manner, we influence public policy and decision-making related to concerns and aspirations of Métis women at all levels of Indigenous and Canadian government. A secretariat of the Métis National Council since 1999, LFMO was incorporated in 2010 at the organization's inaugural meeting.

Our mission is to ensure that Métis women from across the homeland are safe, connected, empowered and have the capacity to work with other Canadian and Métis organizations to help create the conditions for healthy, vibrant and productive communities throughout the Métis Nation.

We are guided by six strategic goals:

1. Build a strong, successful and responsible organization whose voice is heard throughout the Métis Nation;
2. Be caretakers of traditional knowledge and the unified voice of Métis women;
3. Ensure that the perspectives of Métis women are included in community economic development;
4. Foster culturally appropriate learning environments and lifelong learning to improve the educational outcomes for women and all Métis learners;
5. Help Métis people lead healthier lives and help create the conditions for healthy and vibrant communities; and
6. Advocate on behalf of Métis women.

Under the guidance of LFMO's National President, we conduct regular meetings for the Board of Directors, hold general meetings, and provide a communication mechanism between and among Métis Women and the Government of Canada.

Introduction

Building a Métis Women's Blueprint Project

In 2018, LFMO began working on the Building a Métis Women's Blueprint project to better understand and support the vision of Métis women across the Homeland. This project was funded by the Department for Women and Gender Equality Canada. The goal of this project is to: gather evidence on the needs of Métis women from a grass-roots perspective; identify challenges that Métis women face, such as gaps in service provision; summarize best practices from service providers that serve Métis women; report on the lessons learned throughout the project on how to engage with Métis women, and to help identify strategic priorities for LFMO moving forward. This project will help identify where gaps in services exist and will allow LFMO to better advocate for fair treatment of Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people to the Government of Canada.

LFMO represents all Métis women across the Homeland. This includes a diverse set of women and considers the different experiences of women, men, trans and non-binary people. This project uses a GBA+ lens. LFMO seeks to recognize how various identity factors influence the experiences of Métis women. Through the work of this project and other projects, LFMO has used the foundations of GBA+ to create a Culturally-Competent GBA+ model that reflects the unique realities of Métis women and their communities, which will be applied within this report.

There are three different components of this project: 1) Community Engagement, 2) Environmental Scan and 3) Key Informant Interviews. Each of these components builds upon the previous component to create a well-rounded research project.

Methodology

As mentioned previously, this report will be applying a Métis specific GBA+ lens to the project findings. Furthermore, the three major deliverables for this project include 1) Community Engagement, 2) Environmental Scan and 3) Key Informant Interviews.

Community Consultation

The LFMO grass roots participation is the centre of the LFMO Building a Métis Women's Blueprint, as it was designed to bring Métis women together for 1.5 days to discuss needs and to strategize. LFMO hosted a Women's Forum with 1.5 days of the allotted 3.5 dedicated to the Community Engagement for the Building a Métis Women's Blueprint Project. Up to 10 Métis women from each province within the homeland gathered and this event was facilitated using a mix of group discussions, table discussion, and individual paperwork. Information and observations gathered at this event was recorded using notetakers, graphic notetakers, and videographers. The discussions and activities from this event were compiled into a summary within this report. The summary includes the overall trends and themes, located in the Project Findings portion of this report.

LFMO Community Engagement was a coordinated effort between the LFMO staff, the Presidents of Provincial Women's Organizations and the Métis National Council.

Environmental Scan

The LFMO Environmental Scan is designed to provide a better understanding of the services from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia that are available to Métis Women and identify the gaps in services for Métis women and their families.

The LFMO Environmental Scan aims to identify:

- What agencies, service organizations, and other resources exist;
- Where they are located;
- The types of services and resources they provide;
- Whether Métis client information is tracked;
- Whether a Métis lens is applied;
- How the Métis lens was developed; and,
- Where gaps in programming exist.

The LFMO Environmental Scan was completed through research, information gleaned from Community Consultations and in-depth Key Informant Interviews. The scan primarily focused on province-wide services, understanding that specific regions and municipalities may have specialized or exemplary services for Métis women. Summaries of services available in each province, as well as identified gaps, are described after the conclusion of this project to share knowledge regarding what is available as well as a tool to effectively advocate for what is still needed.

Key Informant Interviews

Much like the Environmental Scan, the LFMO Key Informant Interviews were designed to provide a deeper and better understanding of the services from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia that are available to Métis Women and identify the gaps in services for Métis women and their families. The Key Informant Interviews are designed to enhance the information provided in the LFMO Environmental Scan.

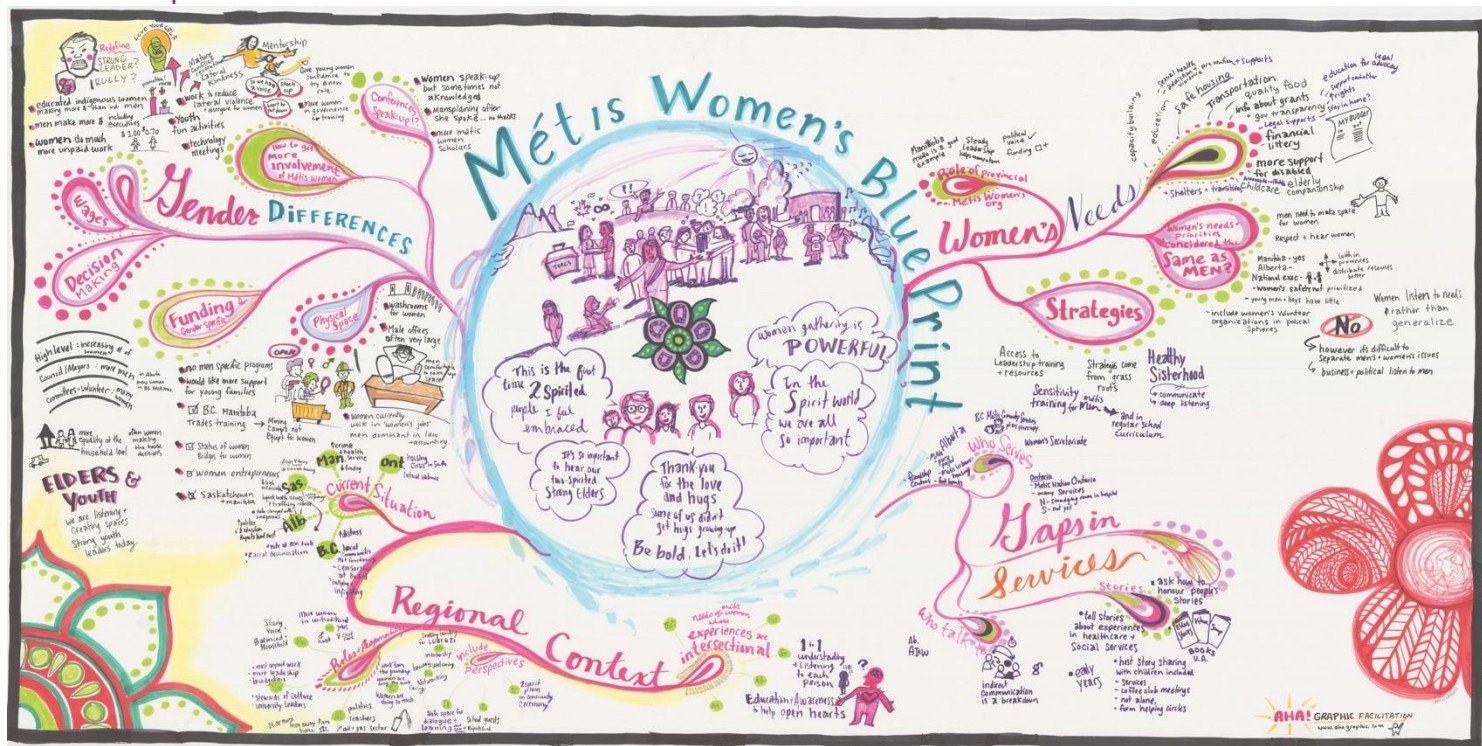
It is further hoped that the Key Informant Interviews allows for the discovery and documentation of best practices in the provinces that can be promoted and shared. Names of those interviewed, or the organizations themselves, were brought forward by Métis women at the LFMO Women's forum or suggested by fellow service providers in the region.

As explained above, the 1) LFMO Community Consultation, the 2) LFMO Environmental Scan and the 3) LFMO Key Informant Interviews, each took a province-wide approach to survey the services available across the Métis homeland. Although all areas of the province are diverse and unique, the study found that there are gaps in services that need to be addressed if the provinces are to ever meet their obligations to the Métis Nation, especially to Métis women. Additionally, this study found that there are some commonalities across the homeland and areas that fall under federal responsibility, requiring national support and advocacy.

Project Findings

Community Engagement

Graphic Notes



This session was dedicated to discussion around the Blueprint. Delegates formed into four breakout groups to consider six different questions. Representatives from each of the separate discussion groups were subsequently invited to report out on their groups' discussion, which prompted the following response:

Participants suggested that this is very dependent on the community or individual households. Many women suggested that household decisions are shared between men and women, whereas community decisions tend to be conservative and often led by men. Some communities have more males in leadership positions whereas it is primarily women on committees and doing volunteer work. Participants agreed that women do most of the unpaid or volunteer work in their communities. Participants also noted the importance of Elders guiding leaders and decision-makers. Additionally, Métis women believe that youth representatives must be empowered, honoured and space must be created for their voices to be heard.

Community and elected officials have the most say in decision-making. Many agreed that in recent years, more and more women are becoming involved in higher political level decisions. Typically, community leaders are men, but the trend is switching to women as they step up and want to be heard. Lots of women have taken roles as community leaders, presidents, vice-presidents, and work within the Métis Nation community.

Some participants discussed regional differences between provinces. Regional offices make decisions in consultation with local communities. Participants from Manitoba suggested that Manitoba has a lot of consultation regionally, often MMF spearheads initiatives that move the entire Métis Nation forward. In Alberta, participants noted that there are many female Métis leaders, but Alberta's provincial government is primarily men. Other regions did not comment on any unique issues they are facing.

When looking at individual households, Métis women suggested that every household differs but some commonalities can be noticed. In the past, men were leaders of the house and made the big decisions, whereas women made the smaller decisions; however, these dynamics are changing with decisions being made equally in many homes and women taking their place in their communities. Participants suggested that there is sometimes pushback from men when women are asserting their place in the community and that more men need to be on board with these changes. Currently, many Métis women make decisions in their households. Participants suggested that there is diversity in family structures.

2. How are wages/salaries distributed between Métis women and men?

There is generally an uneven distribution of wages and salaries between Métis women and men. Participants suggested that in many cases men make more money, and this is often tied to women's role in unpaid labour, the gender pay gap, the higher value being placed on men's labour and inequitable promotion opportunities. Although in many cases Métis men make more money, participants also pointed out the Métis women are graduating from universities at higher rates and these women have a higher earning potential than men in some fields.

One of the themes of discussion was unpaid labour. Many participants suggested that Métis women volunteer more in their communities than men. Métis women are also taking on more care work with children, youth and the elderly in their communities. It was also suggested that many Métis women take on the majority of household labour, such as cooking and cleaning for their families. Participants suggested that if Métis women were paid for all the unpaid labour they do, that women would be paid much higher wages than men.

There were some regional variations discussed in the breakout groups. Participants suggested that in Métis organizations in Alberta, women do most of the work in that environment, so they make more money in this specific workplace. It was also noted that in Saskatchewan, political leaders make the same wages with one noted difference between the Métis Nation Saskatchewan (MN-S) President and the President of Les Filles de Madeleine Association Inc. (the provincial Métis women's organization).

Participants from Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia did not note any unique circumstances in their communities.

Métis women recognize that there is still a gender pay gap and that this gap often widens for Indigenous women. These women suggested that this pay gap shows women's work is seen as inherently less valuable than men's labour. Participants noted that many cite seventy-five cents to every dollar as the gap between women and men in Canada.¹ Further to this, participants recognized that Indigenous women's work is less valued than white women's work. Indigenous women earn sixty-five cents to every dollar a white woman earns (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2019).



Community Engagement – Participants

There are also differences in promoting and on-the-job opportunities for Métis men and women in various fields. Participants suggested that women are being provided with more opportunities in business/employment but have a long way to go until there is equality. Many believed that men rise more quickly through the ranks of employment generally speaking, but even in fields dominated primarily by women, this still rings true. The discussion also focused on women being pushed out of previous female-dominated occupations (such as computer sciences) and yet, men are being paid a higher wage than women were. Participants noted that the opposite is also true; women entering into male-dominated occupations are also being paid less.

While much of the discussion focused on an uneven playing field, participants also discussed the successes and resilience of Métis women in their career aspirations. Men still make more at most jobs; however, this is changing. Métis women mentioned that the 2011 household survey noted that after Indigenous women are educated, they make more money than men at certain jobs. Delegates also mentioned that Métis women are getting more and more educated, and with this, we see wages are rising. Additionally, participants were thrilled by the fact that there is a higher rate of Métis women pursuing an undergraduate degree and wanted to support and encourage this trend.

3. Is there funding available for gender-specific programs?

Participants across the homeland agreed that there is limited funding available for gender-specific programs. More programming and support for families is needed; families should not think that limited service availability is the norm. Nationally, there are Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training (ASET), with specific programs for women. For example, there is one program for construction-related jobs for women who are interested in pursuing trades. However, participants noted that women in trades do not have the same resources as men do, pointing to examples such as facilities at resource extraction camps. Métis women also discussed that there is a notable absence of programming geared towards men and boys. For

¹ Statistic confirmed by the Canadian Women's Foundation.

example, participants suggested that the community consultation, where many women's issues were discussed, it is important to make space for men, allowing men to understand the issues and the impact on women.

Regionally, each province had different funding opportunities. Participants from Manitoba discussed the Infinity Women's Secretariat's women entrepreneurship program. This program provides loans and grants for Métis women that own a business or are starting a business. Alberta has a similar program for women entrepreneurs and the Women's Healing Program. Saskatchewan and Ontario discussed how they have worked with the Department for Women and Gender Equality to access national funding opportunities. Ontario noted that they have secured multi-year funding through the department to build leadership capacity and this is essential to developing and running women's programs. In British Columbia, Métis Women of BC and Bridges for Women Society secure various sources of funding to provide programs for Métis women. Participants also mentioned there is limited or no funding available in Saskatchewan or Manitoba for gender-specific programming.

4. Are there any gender-related differences in physical space allocated for men and women?

Métis women from across the homeland discussed differences in physical spaces in individual homes, workplaces and public spaces. Participants noted that men are often physically bigger than women, but this often does not justify the larger allocation of space for men. When looking at the home, Métis women noted that many men in their communities have "man caves" and dominate more space in the home whereas women are expected to claim the kitchen as their own space and often take up less space within the home. In workspaces, there was a lot of discussion about space for men and women. When looking at dialogue in meetings, Métis women suggested that men still take up most of the space and often when women do participate, women tend to apologize for taking up space even if there is an equal distribution between the man and woman. Participants suggested that if you walk into any business office setting, the men often have huge offices whereas women often have cubicles or shared spaces to work in. Women also noted that there are gendered fields of work or businesses, such as men in the trades and women in cleaning, and that it would be great to see more women in the male-dominated workspaces/industries. In public spaces such as planes and other transit, men feel like they can spread out where women feel like they must take up less space. Additionally, Métis women pointed out there is a need for more space in women's and gender-neutral washrooms. Participants noted that stalls in women's and gender-neutral restrooms take up more space than urinals, meaning there are often long waits to use the facilities for women and gender-diverse people.

5. In forums, meetings, working sessions, etc. do Métis women take leadership roles by speaking and asking questions?

Métis women are well represented in political roles. The presidents of Alberta, Ontario, British Columbia are women and both Manitoba and Saskatchewan have strong female representation in their leadership. However, participants suggested that women are often afraid to take up space at meetings and forums. When women do take up space in meetings and forums, women are not acknowledged when they stand up and speak into the microphone. Participants noted that on many occasions a man comes behind to "mansplain" what was just said. Métis women expressed frustration with this and indicated that they are capable of speaking for themselves. Men's passion for their viewpoints is viewed differently than a woman. For example, participants suggested that when men get excited about a topic in a meeting it is seen as

passionate, whereas when a woman gets excited about a topic, she is viewed as dominating the conversation and taking up too much space. However, participants believe we are seeing a shift where women are more confident in stating their opinions and viewpoints. There is still reluctance from male counterparts to accept the views and opinions of Métis women. Métis women noted they are strong leaders in their communities. In schools, healthcare, and academia, Métis women lead the path forward. Métis women are reaching new heights and communities are stronger with Métis women's leadership.

6. How do we get more Métis women involved in governance structures and leadership positions?

There was a robust discussion around what it takes to get more Métis women involved in governance and leadership. Three main topics came up throughout the discussion: focusing on youth development, empowering our Métis sisters, and creating an environment of lateral kindness rather than lateral violence. Overwhelming in the discussion, the topic of ensuring youth have the tools to be leaders of tomorrow was the most frequently discussed of the three main topics.

Participants were clear, in our communities we have strong young women and girls. Métis women need to be strong role models and mentors to our youth. Delegates believe that youth need to be encouraged and supported in their educational pursuits. Métis organizations, businesses, and communities need to come together to create mentorship opportunities for youth to learn leadership skills. Métis women suggested making governance meetings more youth-friendly and using more technology to connect with youth and get them more involved in leadership roles. Getting more involved will help build confidence in our youth and will allow them to develop leadership skills. In sum, there was an immense amount of hope for youth developing new skills to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Moving on from the discussion of youth and leadership, Métis women recognized that although there is good representation of women in leadership roles, more space for Métis women needs to be created so that they can be mentors and role models our youth need. Participants noted that there is a disregard for women which can constrict youth participation. Métis women believe in empowering each other to create more women-friendly spaces and respect for women's voices. There is a need for more support mechanisms and training opportunities to assist young women with an interest in politics and leadership roles. It was also suggested that more accessible childcare and clearer job descriptions would help bring more women into leadership roles. Delegates agreed that women need to share knowledge, ideas, and traditions with future generations to continue to build strong female and gender-diverse Métis leaders. We need to love ourselves and each other; self-love will help empower Métis women to reach their goals and love for each other will

break the cycle of lateral violence that keeps so many women from participating in governance and leadership roles.

Community Engagement – Participant



Participants had a lengthy discussion around lateral violence and how it impedes women from taking on leadership roles. Métis women want to get rid of lateral violence that is still present in politics and board rooms and replace this with acts of lateral kindness and support for one another. Women do not feel safe in governance bodies as it has been an “old boys club” and this can be intimidating and requires more effort for women to have the same presence. There was unanimous support in the room for eliminating lateral violence in Métis governance, businesses, and communities and that violence against Métis women must be addressed to eliminate lateral violence. We need to redefine what strong leadership is; it is not bullying but being a good role model. Again, many participants pointed to the strong Métis women leaders within the Métis Nation as exemplifying the decline of

the “old boys club” and that we need to keep on this path for future generations.

Women’s Needs

This was the second session dedicated to discussion around the Blueprint. Delegates formed into four breakout groups to consider four different questions. Representatives from each of the separate discussion groups were subsequently invited to report out on their groups’ discussion, which prompted the following response:

1. What are the needs of Métis women in your province? Overall goals and specific recommendations are welcome (e.g. gender equality, women’s services in your area, etc.)

This discussion focused on essential services for Métis women and support for Métis women’s organizations. When it came to service provision, participants made it clear that access to services was dependent on location. Many suggested that there were limited services for Métis women across their home province, but the services were even more restricted outside of large urban centres. Delegates strongly believed that there is a need for more equitable access to services in rural and remote communities. It was also suggested that there should be a service directory to help Métis women find and access the services they need. Services need to meet Métis women where they are at and support women in whatever goals they are trying to achieve.

When discussing specific services, grassroots Métis women suggested that there is a lack of Métis-specific and culturally safe services available. Some notable gaps in service areas that were discussed include education/training, childcare, housing/VAW shelters, physical/mental health supports, transportation, cultural supports and access to ceremony. It was also suggested that there is a need to create service hubs

and wraparound services with all of these different areas of service provision provided in a single location. Métis women believe service provision needs to be built from the grassroots level up, with more accountability from all levels of government.

When discussing education and training, there were a variety of topics that arose. Métis women suggested education could encompass knowledge on where to access services, life skills training (such as budgeting and financial literacy), to more formal avenues of education and job training. Participants stated that Métis women need flexibility to be built into education and training initiatives. Métis women often juggle multiple roles as mothers, aunties, daughters, sisters, caretakers, leaders, workers, students, and so much more, meaning flexible education and training initiatives delivered in different ways will allow more Métis women to access these opportunities. Education and training programs need to be affordable to Métis families and grants, bursaries and scholarships should be available to support Métis students. Delegates also suggested that there is a need to have accessible childcare options available for Métis women to support their education and training needs.

Métis women also discussed the lack of flexible, affordable, and culturally specific early learning and childcare opportunities and how this gap in service provision is a barrier to Métis women seeking education, training or employment opportunities. It was noted that there are limited childcare spaces and resources for children with disabilities. In the Early Learning and Childcare section of this report, there will be a more detailed discussion on what flexible, affordable, and culturally specific early learning and childcare looks like for Métis families.

Housing was another key service area that was identified as a gap in service provision. Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people need access to safe, affordable, emergency, and transitional housing. Housing needs to be inclusive of mothers with children to be accessible to many Métis women. Métis women need access to reliable information on violence, prevention, and where to go to access emergency shelter or transitional housing. Lack of affordable and safe housing options often leaves Métis women in violent situations because they simply cannot afford to leave a violent spouse or family member. There is a need for more shelters across the homeland, especially in rural communities. Additionally, Métis women suggested that legal support should be provided to Métis women accessing housing and emergency shelters to navigate the legal system. Creating more accessible housing options would help keep Métis families safe and secure in their communities.

Métis women also identify a need for essential services for physical and mental health. Participants discussed the need for access to treatment centres, family treatment centres and mental health counsellors across the Métis Nation homeland. It was also suggested that there is a need for more Métis women in the healthcare field. Healthcare programs need to consider the diverse needs of Métis women. For example, participants suggested there is a need for more services for ageing and elderly Métis women. Delegates noted that there is also a need for patient advocates in the physical and mental health system. These advocates would help patients navigate services and would be able to explain medical jargon in a way that the patient could understand. Patient advocates allow Métis women to provide informed consent to all medical procedures. Métis women also noted the need for culturally-specific trauma-informed approaches to counselling, therapy, medical treatments, and addiction services. Finally, delegates discussed at length the need for preventive approaches to health such as physical, mental and sexual health education.

Transportation was identified as another gap in service for Métis women. Participants discussed how transportation is connected to many of the services already mentioned. Delegates suggested that rural and remote communities are disproportionately impacted by access to transportation. Limited access to transportation can impact Métis women's ability to access education, training, childcare, housing, VAW shelters, and healthcare facilities. Improved transportation is necessary for many communities to access services to remain healthy and safe. Access to affordable transportation and local service providers are high priority issues for Métis women across the homeland.

Métis women also discussed the need for culturally-based services in their communities. Many suggested that this includes safe and happy places for women to gather in a healing way and to support each other. Delegates suggested that it is the role of Métis women's organizations to create these spaces and support one another, which will be elaborated on in the next question.

Supports for Métis women's organizations were also discussed in the breakout groups. Participants recognize that most Métis organizations are under capacity and under-resourced. Métis women want to see our organizations' capacity growing. Delegates suggested removing funding barriers and restrictions to create sustainable Métis organizations. Métis women would like to be better informed on what projects and grants are available and challenge all levels of government to create better communication strategies around calls for proposals, so Métis communities are well aware of opportunities available and have the chance to apply for these funding or project opportunities. Funding proposals can be very technical and tedious and Métis women would like to see more training opportunities on how to write proposals for grants and funding. Greater levels of funding would allow our organizations to acquire more gathering spaces and places.

2. What is the role of your Provincial Métis Women's organizations (e.g. advocacy, service provision, etc.)?

Métis women's organizations have unique roles in each region. Participants believed that the role of provincial organizations varied. Participants from Manitoba suggested that women in their province are way ahead with more female representatives and strong female leadership in Cabinet and the Manitoba Métis Federation. Delegates suggested that other governing members and Métis women's organizations across the homeland could adopt the Manitoba model. Manitoba participants cited consistent leadership from President Chartrand and MMF has provided opportunities for growth where other provinces have a lot of staff turnover and less stability. Some suggested that there have been requests from other provinces to be more informed about the model being used in Manitoba so they can implement similar practices. Furthermore, it was noted that each province will have its own best practices and it would be best to speak to each governing member and women's organization to learn best practices. Delegates also suggested that provinces must seek assistance if needed and LFMO and MNC can aid and provide guidance from a national level.

Métis women see their organizations as advocates for change and providers of support to service providers. Participants did not feel provincial organizations could provide services in house at this time. However, it

was suggested that provincial organizations should work closely with frontline service providers. Many felt there is a need for increased capacity and resources in their provincial women's organization. Delegates pointed to the fact that most positions within their provincial organizations were on a volunteer basis and that increased capacity would allow organizations to pay their volunteers and create more job opportunities. Funding is needed for more opportunities to gather [like the Métis Women's Forum] to create change.

Political advocacy should be the main role of Métis women's organizations, concluded the Women's Forum delegates. Métis women want to see their organization creating a political voice and advocating at local, provincial, and national tables. They want to see organizations supporting each other and frontline service workers. These organizations should be built from the grassroots and foster change from the bottom up. Our organizations must be advocates for women, girls, gender-diverse people, and their communities. Métis women want to see these organizations pushing for change in current political structures and carving out space for Métis women's voices in Canada. Métis women see their organizations creating partnerships with the education and justice systems to create training programs for women so they can advocate and support themselves on an individual level.

3. Are the needs, interests, priorities and perceptions of Métis women considered in the same way as Métis men?

Métis women do not feel their needs, interests, priorities and perceptions are considered in the same way as Métis men's. The only exception to this was Manitoba, where many felt that women's voices are just as powerful as men's. Métis men gather outside the home, whereas Métis women often gather inside their homes. Participants believe that men need to create more space for women and their voices. For Métis women, safety is a priority, but men do not necessarily share this priority. Women prioritize their concerns in various forums and men generalize these concerns when it comes to bringing the issues to the bigger political tables. Delegates asserted that Métis women are brave and often have to do twice the amount of work for half the amount of recognition in comparison to male counterparts. Women discussed how political and business leaders are more inclined to listen to men, which is evident in the way men dominate and occupy space. They also suggested that this is an issue that Canadian society at large is facing, not just the Métis Nation. While there is still inequality at political tables and in board rooms, women throughout Canada are making political gains.

Community Engagement – Participant



Traditional worldviews of Métis communities come from a holistic perspective. Therefore, the responses from delegates encompass women's needs, men's needs, youth needs and community needs. Men and women have defined goals and worked together in the past and today. This holistic approach makes it difficult to separate the needs of Métis women from the needs of Métis men and Métis communities at large. Métis women also felt that Métis men and boys should prioritize and have access to some of the same services as women. For example, participants pointed out that women experiencing violent situations have access to resources and advocates whereas young men and boys do not, even those who are sexually abused. Often, young men have no one to represent them and Métis women believe it is their role as mothers and

caregivers to advocate for our young men to have proper representation within provinces and boards, so their voices are heard. Métis women continue to demonstrate their role as caregivers in their communities.

4. What are our strategies to ensure the needs of Métis women and our Provincial Métis Women's organizations are met?

The group discussion on this question circled back to a lot of topics that were discussed in previous questions. Métis women need to be in leadership roles, be recognized, be heard (not silenced), and be respected by everyone. There is a desire for better communication, connection, and listening between Métis women and Métis organizations. Métis women want to have more access to leadership training opportunities. These women want to see more opportunities extended to youth and women to increase their representation on the ballot during elections (within the Métis Nation or more broadly in Canadian elections). We need to connect with the grassroots to put forward strategies for Métis women that support holistic programs for all Métis people. Métis women believe that strength comes in numbers and we must work together in our communities, provincially, and nationally. Delegates stated that Métis women must lead the way in creating opportunities for our women to be role models, to celebrate the successes of our sisters, and foster an environment of lateral kindness where Métis families and communities support one another. Again, the issue of capacity was discussed at length by participants. Increased capacity is required to give more power back to Métis women and to transform our great ideas into realities. Additionally, women felt that various levels of government could assist Métis women's organizations in growing their capacity by providing training on reporting requirements, proposal writing, and assessment tools for government grants and funding opportunities. Finally, delegates also suggested that there is a need for more sensitivity and culturally-relevant training for Métis men and the general public.

Regional Context

This was the third session dedicated to discussion around the Blueprint. Delegates formed into five breakout groups representing each province within the homeland to consider five different questions. Representatives from each of the separate discussion groups were subsequently invited to report out on their groups' discussion, which prompted the following response:

1. What is the current situation of Métis women in the province (e.g. economic status, life experience, health, social, cultural, legal/political status, safety, etc.)?

Ontario

Delegates from Ontario pointed to very different situations in different regions of Ontario. In the south, there are many large urban centres with access to services and supports. One issue that was brought up by participants from the south was access to education. Ontario has the highest tuition fees in Canada, and because of this southern Ontario is seeing a shortage in education funding for youth. Métis women from southern Ontario also discussed challenges in housing. Many communities in southern Ontario are experiencing a housing crisis.

Participants from northern Ontario painted a very different picture of their communities. In the north, there are many rural, remote, and isolated communities. This means there is less access to services in general for northern communities. Additionally, the remoteness of many communities has made it challenging to get

connected to today's high-tech world where the infrastructure for high-speed internet is limited. Similar to the south, participants from northern Ontario are experiencing similar challenges with housing and funding for education. Delegates from the north also discussed challenges with lateral violence and access to cultural resources.

Manitoba

In Manitoba, delegates discussed an array of issues. For Métis people in Manitoba, there is little support from the provincial government and almost all economic support programs must be accessed through the Manitoba Métis Federation. Participants pointed out that there is less access to programming in rural communities and this is problematic as most of the MMF membership is located in rural and remote communities. Many communities have limited access to basic health services, have high poverty rates, high occurrences of crime including high rates of violence against Métis women. These conditions have created safety challenges, specifically in the evening hours throughout the province. Many Métis families and communities in Manitoba are still struggling with a lack of identity and connection to culture. Manitoba Métis women have a lot of lived experience. The hardships of the past continue to make us stronger. Métis women are resilient and breaking down barriers for future generations.

Saskatchewan

Métis women in Saskatchewan also discussed a variety of issues facing their communities. Many suggested that there is still a lot of racial discrimination towards Métis people in Saskatchewan and this has increased the rates of violence against Métis women and girls. Participants stated that women in their communities do more unpaid work (such as household labour or care work) and often get paid less than men do. Women are caregivers to the young and old without receiving credit for all their work. Similar to other regions, Saskatchewan delegates also pointed to a lack of distinctions-based health data in the province. Most statistical information is from a pan-Indigenous approach and there is no respect for the unique culture and experiences of Métis people. Participants pointed to limited data and suggested poor health outcomes will continue until we find better data collection methods.

Delegates from Saskatchewan also had many strengths they wanted to share with the Forum. Métis women are strong leaders in Saskatchewan with a voice at the Provincial Métis Council (PMC). Participants also noted that Métis women can vote at their Métis Nation Legislative Assembly (MNLA). Finally, Saskatchewan delegates felt that their leadership roles are cultivated from the grassroots and include strong female voices.

Community Engagement – Participant



Alberta

When looking at the current situation in Alberta, participants discussed an array of different issues. Some of the current challenges in the province include housing, violence against women, incarceration rates, child welfare, lack of distinction-based knowledge, and high rates of pregnancy in youth. Delegates indicated there is a lack of safe, affordable housing for women and single-parent families, especially in Métis communities. While this is a challenge, there is some housing allocated for Métis women staying in the hospital to support them when there are no other housing options available. There are high rates of violence against Métis women, which is higher than other women and because of this, Métis women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Métis women are more likely to be incarcerated and statistics are not available as Métis women are not tracked from a distinction-based approach, but are often lumped under an “Indigenous” umbrella, meaning it is challenging to understand the true rates of incarceration and provide appropriate supports to incarcerated Métis women. Participants also mentioned the on-going systemic issues in child welfare. Métis children are more likely to be removed from their homes than non-Indigenous children. Another challenge that was discussed was the lack of understanding around who Métis people are in Alberta. Métis women believe that there is not a clear separation between First Nations and Métis for many Canadians. The distinct culture of the Métis Nation is unrecognized or ignored, something that was brought up throughout the Women’s Forum. Participants also noted that there is a higher rate of teen pregnancies in many communities and there is a need for additional support for young mothers.

Women in Alberta also had many practices they wanted to highlight from their communities. Delegates stated that the Department of Health at Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has many programs aimed at higher risk patients with a variety of health issues. Health programming also offers support services for people in rural communities who cannot afford to travel to health appointments. Programs provide transportation and housing support in urban centres while accessing medical care. Participants also discussed a high percentage of women in politics; of the fourteen members of the Alberta provincial council, six are women. Additionally, President Audrey Poitras has been Alberta’s leader for a long time and is a strong female leader. Métis women were excited to share that there are many cultural teachers throughout the province to teach Métis values and traditions such as teaching Michif, beading, jigging, and other cultural activities. Finally, participants were excited about the exceptional funding for programs by Rupertsland Institute to train Métis women in various jobs in trades.

British Columbia

In British Columbia, Métis women feel their communities are struggling. Many women are in distress, overworked, and financially vulnerable. Many Métis locals and chapters are not functioning at full capacity. In various levels of governance, the Directors in charge censor issues brought forward or shut them down completely which has a ripple effect. There is limited communication around dates, times, and locations of gatherings provincially or locally. Many delegates suggested that leaders are not living in ways that honour Métis values. Participants believe that Métis women in power are often isolated. Additionally, Métis women see the challenges at provincial and local governance tables impacting youth participation. Youth are passionate and engaged in British Columbia, but the toxicity within governance at the provincial level paired with local-level in-fighting, create barriers impeding youth participation. Furthermore, Métis women have been experiencing lots of burnout from these circumstances and suggested that sharing resources with other provinces would help Métis families in B.C.

2. What are the roles, responsibilities and participation of Métis women in the province, including stereotypes and patterns in socio-economic sectors?

Ontario

Métis women in Ontario are getting more involved in untraditional roles. For example, women are starting to have a visual presence in untraditional jobs and fields. Delegates also stated that there is increased participation in Indigenous education programs such as Indigenous studies, Aboriginal child welfare, and trauma-informed approaches to psychology.

Manitoba

In Manitoba, participants described strong female leaders in the MMF from its inception. From these leaders, Métis women in the province have very strong role models. Female leaders in the province are committed trailblazers. Leaders are advocates who help and support their sisters locally and provincially. Métis women have a powerful voice at all the tables we sit at. Manitoba has a diverse membership including youth, Elders, single parents, LGBTQ2S+, professionals and non-professionals. Additionally, delegates mentioned having university and college professors involved in the Infinity Women Secretariat, and how this is a huge asset to Métis women across the province.

Saskatchewan

Métis women have a variety of roles in Saskatchewan. Women are stewards of the land, culture and family. Métis women are the caregivers and teachers (both formal and traditional) in their communities. Participants were thrilled that women are moving into bigger leadership roles and that these leaders are coming from the grassroots level. Women help the economy as they are the budgeters of the resources and finances. Delegates also noted that many Elders attending university are women.

Alberta

In Alberta, delegates discussed how many women are involved in government and governance structures. This has created an environment where at general assemblies, women speak their minds and do not fear to do so. The regional representatives and provincial council also have strong female representation. Métis women are teachers and college/university educators who can teach future generations about Métis culture, language and traditions. Participants also noted there are a large number of Elders and Kookums in Alberta. These Elders and Kookums are trappers who bring their knowledge to youth by talking about their own experiences, values, and knowledge. This helps those who are disconnected from communities to have greater awareness and connection to their culture and history. Rupertsland Institute was another asset that women from Alberta discussed. Rupertsland specializes in culturally specific learning and affords women the ability to be anything they want to be. They also offer financial assistance to students in need. In the future, Métis women will be more involved in the oil and gas sectors due to the Rupertsland Institute. Currently, they offer training to help women enter industries that were inaccessible in the past such as the trades encompassed in the oil and gas sector.

British Columbia

Similar to the previous question, much of the discussion focused on governance challenges in the region. Participants felt that their communities are not being supported. Much of the work to improve communities have fallen on women, who happily do the work, as protectors and conveyors of cultural knowledge. Delegates felt strongly about a need for grassroots political organizing and suggested that work in communities should be built from the ground up, not from a top-down approach, where a Board of Directors dictates everything.

3. What is the division of labour (community and household) between Métis women and men? Does this differ in families with LGBTQ2S+ members?

Ontario

The division of labour between Métis men and women in Ontario is still very much divided by traditional roles. Participants from Ontario stated that men are the trappers and fishers in their communities; women are the caregivers, teachers, and holders of traditional knowledge for the Ontario Métis communities. Delegates from this breakout group did not have any personal experience living in an LGBTQ2S+ family; therefore, they did not feel comfortable responding to the latter part of the question.

Manitoba

In Manitoba, participants strongly believe that Métis men and women share responsibilities equally. Often tasks are divided by skill set and preferences. Métis families often have balanced households between traditional and non-traditional roles. One example that was brought up was that men are trapping in Manitoba communities but men are also doing dishes at home. Delegates also discussed the diversity of families in Manitoba, pointing out that no two families are alike. Lastly, Métis women in Manitoba are pursuing more non-traditional jobs for women such as driving trucks and working on oil rigs.

Saskatchewan

Participants from Saskatchewan echoed participants from Manitoba when discussing the diversity of Métis families in their communities. There are different dynamics from family to family. Some households may have traditional family structures, whereas many Métis families are single-parent households. Most often, single-parent families are led by Métis women. In Saskatchewan, there are more women at the community level laying the groundwork, whereas men are in leadership positions taking credit for the work women are doing at the community level. Additionally, participants from Saskatchewan discussed a difficult situation for LGBTQ2S+ families. When LGBTQ2S+ people are coming out in their workplace, it can be negative or positive which affects their workplace experiences. Many believed that there are employers that create positive experiences for LGBTQ2S+ employees, but the majority believed that there is a long way to go for most employers in their relationship with the LGBTQ2S+ community.

Alberta

In Alberta, a lot of the discussion centred around resource extraction work in the oil field. Families are often structured around the work that Métis men and women do to support their families. There are a variety of

different family structures, but the trend is for men to work away from home while women work inside their homes or community. When looking at Fort McMurray, there are many men in work camps for 1-3 weeks at a time. Most of the employees at camps are men, as they can be dangerous for women and employers provide little to no resources for female employees. Lastly, Métis women in Alberta feel that more men and women are sharing household labour load, while it may not be completely equal, men are more likely to help out around the house than previously. Within the LGBTQ2S+ community, household chores are divided equally between partners.

British Columbia

British Columbia delegates feel that there is little to no division of labour in their households. Métis women are doing a lot of work in the community while still doing the majority of household chores and caring for children and the elderly. In LGBTQ2S+ households, gender is looked at differently so the division of labour is usually more equitable.

4. How do we include the perspective of Métis women who represent: lone-parent families, seniors, Two-Spirit or LGBTQ2S people, people living with a disability, have precarious housing or are street-involved, involved in the justice system or incarcerated, involved in the child welfare system?

Ontario

Ontario delegates focused their discussion around the LGBTQ2S+ community. The LGBTQ2S+ community has a defined voice within the Métis Nation of Ontario and are seeking funding specific to LGBTQ2S+ inclusion. This inclusion work focuses on identifying issues, educating communities on LGBTQ2S+ issues and making all Métis events and spaces inclusive of LGBTQ2S+ members. Participants suggested that this type of inclusivity work could be extended to include some of the other mentioned groups.

Manitoba

Participants from Manitoba see their communities taking care of each other. This has allowed for more networking and support for Métis families and communities, including lone-parent families, seniors, Two-Spirit or LGBTQ2S+ people, people living with a disability, have precarious housing or are street-involved, involved in the justice system or incarcerated, involved in the child welfare system. All Métis people in Manitoba are sharing the responsibility of being more inclusive at assemblies. This has allowed Métis communities to become more inclusive, welcoming, inviting and caring. Communities are taking care of each other and supporting everyone's well-being, modelling the holistic community values that Métis families have traditionally practiced.

Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, participants discussed the need for more safe spaces to be more inclusive of lone-parent families, seniors, Two-Spirit or LGBTQ2S+ people, people living with a disability, have precarious housing or are street-involved, involved in the justice system or incarcerated, involved in the child welfare system.

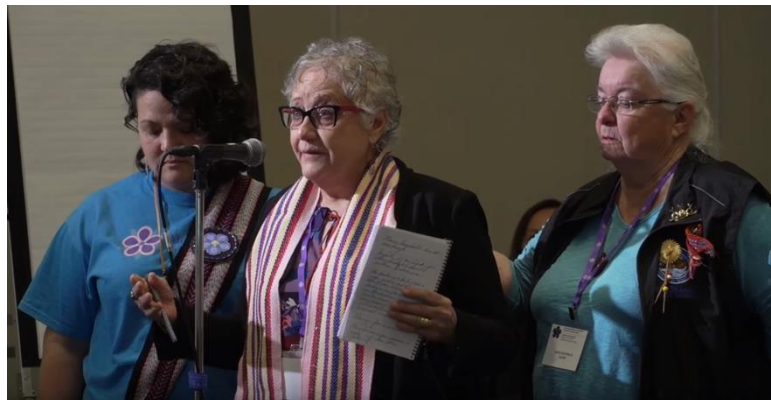
There needs to be space for open dialogue and questions at governance and community tables. Delegates felt that the best way to create these safe spaces is to go back to the grassroots system and return to the traditional ways of knowing, learning, and being.

Alberta

Delegates from Alberta believed that it was challenging to assess the needs of so many Métis people. When looking at including lone-parent families, seniors, Two-Spirit or LGBTQ2S+ people, people living with a disability, have precarious housing or are street-involved, involved in the justice system or incarcerated, and those involved in the child welfare system, each group needs to be approached and consulted individually to provide a better understanding. Métis women from Alberta felt that the time dedicated to this question was far too limited, and each one of the above-mentioned groups should be individually consulted to better understand their individual needs. While LFMO did call for delegates that represented these different areas, participants at the policy forum felt that much deeper conversations were required to paint the full picture of what different Métis women and their families need throughout Alberta.

British Columbia

Participants in British Columbia echoed many of the concerns raised by the Alberta breakout group. When looking at including lone-parent families, seniors, Two-Spirit or LGBTQ2S people, people living with a disability, have precarious housing or are street-involved, involved in the justice system or incarcerated, and those involved in the child welfare system, each group has different needs.



Métis communities need to continue to build relationships and be more inclusive of these diverse groups. B.C. participants also strongly felt that there is a need to ask how we are approaching various groups, and adapt outreach to be more inclusive of different needs within communities. Delegates from British Columbia also felt it was important to refer back to traditional values and all relations to be more inclusive of all Métis people in the province.

5. What are the needs of Métis women whose experiences are intersectional (many factors at play that increase their marginalization; for example, a two-spirited Métis young woman)?

Ontario

When looking at what are the needs of Métis women whose experiences are intersectional, Métis women from Ontario stated there is a need for safer spaces to gather and discuss issues. Delegates suggested that LFMO could create these spaces by hosting more policy forums in the future with a focus on the diverse

experience of Métis women. More roundtable and community discussions are needed to understand the diversity of issues that exist for Métis women with intersectional experiences. Participants discussed the MNO and the possibility of starting a mentor program for children and Elders to be together. This mentorship program would teach boys from a young age how to respect Métis women and girls.

Manitoba

Participants from Manitoba shared similar ideas with other provinces. To understand the intersectional needs of Métis women, these women need compassion, acceptance, support in their communities. This generation of Métis women has more knowledge than our grandmothers before us. Our grandmothers worked towards the formation of the Métis Nation and its governance structures. In Manitoba, participants shared that they are becoming more non-judgemental and accepting of all Métis women from different walks of life. Métis women are showing more empathy for each other and those who are struggling. Additionally, Manitoba women need a safe gathering place and suggested that there should be regional gatherings similar to a women's retreat, where we bring women from across the province to bring forward a strong provincial voice and support the work LFMO does on a national level.

Saskatchewan

To understand the intersectional needs of Métis women, we must look at the unique experiences of individual women. Everyone experiences their intersectionality in different nuanced ways. Delegates from Saskatchewan see LFMO and provincial organizations as providing all-encompassing ways to bring awareness, education, and advocacy to Métis communities and the Canadian public. Participants want to see our women's organizations elevating the voices of grassroots women.

Alberta

Participants from Alberta felt that on-going and meaningful engagement and consultation opportunities are the best way to represent the intersectional needs of Métis women. Each intersection has unique issues, meaning each group must be approached individually to understand and address unique issues. Alberta delegates feel that this approach will make the Métis women's voice stronger across the Métis Nation.

British Columbia

British Columbia participants focused their discussion around the intersectional needs of two-spirit Métis women. Métis women in the region want to be more inclusive. Participants discussed the influence of colonization on Métis gender roles and that there is a need to return to traditional teachings around gender roles. Delegates noted there are many two-spirit people in the region so there is a need for two-spirit teachings. During ceremonies, when the gathering is divided into men and women, two-spirited people experience shaming, bullying, and isolation. Métis women want to see the shame and stigma lifted for two-spirit people. Teaching decolonized gender roles to Elders and youth will help tackle transphobia and homophobia. After these learning sessions, participants can educate their peers and communities.

Eliminating the discrimination that two-spirit people face will help two-spirit Métis women feel loved and included in their communities.

Gaps in Services

This session was dedicated to discussion around the Blueprint. Delegates were divided into provincial discussion groups to consider three different questions. Representatives from each of the regional groups were subsequently invited to report out on their regions' discussion, which prompted the following response:

1. Who serves the needs of Métis women in the province? Have you or someone you know accessed these services? Are provincial or mainstream services accessible and culturally-relevant to Métis women?

Ontario

Ontario delegates focused their discussion around health and wellness service providers. The Métis Nation of Ontario provides services to its citizens, including Métis women. The health and wellness branch of the MNO offers support to Métis families. The programs and services offered by MNO and other providers often differ from northern Ontario to southern Ontario. Your access to services and the quality of service provision depends on where you are located in the province. In northern Ontario, hospitals have rooms set aside for smudging. One hospital even has an eternal flame. Southern Ontario delegates felt there is a need to offer consistent programming to Métis families, regardless of where they live.

Manitoba

The Manitoba Métis Federation and the Infinity Women Secretariat serve the needs of Métis women in the province. Regional offices and locals are the first point of contact to access programs and services. The Vice-President in regional offices or your local Métis Association Board of Directors can help connect you to the appropriate supports. The programs and services by MMF and Infinity Women Secretariat are offered on a need's basis, meaning there are criteria that you must meet to qualify for a particular program or service. Métis women from Manitoba believe that services by and for Métis people are the most accessible and culturally-safe options. However, Métis women did note that there are still areas that could be improved in Métis service provision. One example of this was extending services to be more accessible to the Métis two-spirit community. Additionally, many rural communities still have challenges accessing the same services offered in large cities. If services could be expanded in rural areas, there would be no need to provide transportation services to larger cities. Métis women also suggested that some outside agencies and mainstream service providers have adequate cultural knowledge and are accessible and safe to Métis clients.

Saskatchewan

There are many services available throughout the province of Saskatchewan, but they are not specifically for Métis women. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan and Les Filles de Madeleine Association Inc. provides programs and services to Métis families but currently cannot create gender-specific programming due to

limited capacity. Even more challenging, the majority of services for Métis people are in the cities which excludes rural citizens.

Alberta

Participants from Alberta focused their discussion around specific service providers in the province. Some service providers are created by and for Métis people. Some examples include the Métis Nation of Alberta, New Dawn Métis Women's Society of Alberta, Métis Child and Family Services, the Rupertsland Institute, and Métis Urban Housing. Some pan-indigenous providers were noted as accessible and somewhat safe for Métis women including The Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW), the Purse Project, Shining Mountain, the Edmonton 2-Spirit Society, Native Friendship Centres and Native Counselling. Delegates also mentioned some mainstream services that meet the needs of Métis women such as food banks, shelters for women and homeless people, youth centres and hostels, and addictions treatment centres. Métis women noted that services provided by Métis organizations are the most culturally appropriate, whereas mainstream services may not be culturally appropriate or safe.

British Columbia

Attendees from British Columbia discussed a few different service providers in this breakout session. In Kelowna, the Métis Community Services Society of BC (MCSBC) serves the needs of Métis families. This was held up as a best practice in BC as they provide services to Métis women and children through trauma-informed therapy and play therapy. MCSBC provides wrap-around services at its centre. Similarly, Métis people have access to programs at Friendship Centres that are quite welcoming if needed.

2. Who should we talk to understand what services are available? We are looking for suggestions for Key Informant interviews.

For Key Informants in Manitoba, attendees suggested speaking with: Regional Vice-Presidents at MMF and Métis Local Executives, Métis Nation citizens, MMF head office staff and regional offices' staff, Friendship Centres, and community Elders. Delegates from Saskatchewan were unsure who they should recommend for Key Informant interviews, as many organizations are struggling to maintain basic operations. Métis women from Ontario suggested that the elected women's representatives for the MNO's Women's Council would be a good place to start, but all requests must be made through the proper channels. Attendees from Alberta also believed that Métis Nation offices should be contacted for interviews. This would allow LFMO to provide Métis women with information on what services are available and who to contact for support. Additionally, Alberta participants recommended many interviewees outside of the Métis Nation governance such as IAAW, Elder's Caring Shelter, Shining Mountain, and Native Counselling. Similar to other provinces, BC participants suggested connecting with Métis local offices to find interviewees.

3. What case studies or family stories are needed to put a face to our experiences? How will we seek permission and honour these stories?

Participants from all regions shared similar ideas about how to share and honour Métis family stories. The majority of delegates agreed that consent is a big part of sharing family stories. They suggested asking Métis women to share their stories by asking how they want their story to be honoured and have a safe, comfortable, and supportive environment where women can share their experiences. Offering transportation supports, food, gifts and childcare also go a long way in making sure that sharing these stories is not at a cost to Métis women. Support resources must be available, such as an Elder, a counsellor, family supports, and friends. One way of creating these spaces would be to host a coffee club type meeting where childcare and other supports are available, would provide an avenue for women and girls to tell their stories and understand they are not alone. Furthermore, participants felt strongly about including children in this process to give them knowledge of the support system that is available. Many participants felt that creating a collection of books was the best way to share family stories. Some even suggested that books be broken down into categories such as Elder's stories, memories of Residential Schools, Michif language, and Métis veterans. Many participants volunteered to share their personal and family stories with LFMO. Finally, attendees suggested that Métis leaders should be approached to honour and share their stories as well.

Environmental Scan

The Environmental Scan compiled a list of service providers in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. A total of 861 service providers were identified across the Métis Nation homeland and approximately 37% of these service providers responded to the environmental scan survey by email or phone. Each service provider that was listed also had information on what types of services they provide and contact information for the organization. Services were categorized into the following areas: Métis specific service providers, HIV/AIDS services, child and family services organizations (mainstream and Indigenous-focused providers), counselling/mental health providers, medical centres, crisis lines/call centre services, employment and training, housing, legal assistance, friendship centres, policing, women's shelters, and youth programs. The following will analyze the results from the Environmental Scan by service category and province. Overall, the response rate from each province ranged from 30% - 47% with British Columbia and Alberta seeing slightly lower response rates when compared to other provinces. Due to the difference in time zones from the eastern provinces to western provinces, it was a little more challenging to connect with service providers on the west coast.

Governing Members and Service Provision

Ontario

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is the largest Métis specific service provider in Ontario. Many other service providers that were contacted for the environmental scan will refer clients to MNO for culturally-appropriate services and support. Through the work of the environmental scan, LFMO was able to connect with MNO Healing and Wellness Branch to discuss the services available to Métis women and their families. Staff at MNO provided LFMO with the following outline of how their programming operates.

The Métis Nation of Ontario provides direct services to a variety of Métis clients. The MNO consists of several Operations Branches through which particular services are provided through specific programming. The 2 primary client service Branches are the MNO Education and Training Branch and the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch. The following discussion will outline the programs within the Healing and Wellness Branch. All programs have specific eligibility requirements for clients to access them.

1. The MNO Healing and Wellness Branch provides client support through 2 “streams” of programming – 1. *Clinical Services Programming* and 2. *Community Operational Programming*.
2. *MNO Healing and Wellness Clinical Services Programming* is essentially a series of partnerships through which MNO contracts expert level service providers associated with mental health, healing and wellness to provide streamlined access to psychology, psychiatry and formal family assessment services. MNO works on an ongoing basis with our mental health vendors to provide online and in-person support to individuals and families; client eligibility criteria are specific for different mental health and wellness services.
3. *MNO Healing and Wellness Community Operational Programming* provides community level, social determinant support to individuals, families and communities through several programs, each with its specific mandate:

The Aging at Home Program is funded by the province through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). This program provides activities and services to support the ageing and elderly population to remain in-home safely and healthily manner for as long as possible. The AAH program helps to reduce isolation, facilitates home safety and supports healthy living environments by providing in-home activities and by contracting services for lawn maintenance and snow removal. Key goals include providing transportation for key errands such as banking appointments, home visits to create a baseline for safe/clean living environments, teaching clients to enhance their ability to maintain their homes and providing access to services that alleviate exterior property risks associated with basic lawn care and snow removal. There are eligibility requirements to access the AAH program:

1. In-home supports require a referral from a physician detailing client restriction(s).
2. Lawn care and snow removal services require a financial assessment.

The Community Action Program for Children is funded by the Federal Government through the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). This program offers support to families with Métis children 0-6 years of age who are living in conditions of risk and experiencing a higher than normal incidence of family poverty, abuse or neglect, poor health and nutrition, developmental delays, social and emotional problems, family break-down and injury or disability. Emphasis is on bringing families into cultural venues and activities to achieve learning objectives. The primary intervention strategy is service provided through participant gatherings, however, individuals wishing to engage in enhanced individual support with CAPC program coordinators are welcome to enter into a client relationship.

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program is funded by the Federal Government through the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). This program offers support to families with Métis children 0-6 months of age to provide the necessary knowledge, cultural perspective and access to resources to achieve healthy pregnancies, childbirths and new parenting skills.

The Community Support Services Program is funded by the province through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). This program provides activities and services to ensure that the elderly and chronically ill populations are provided equitable access to medical and other services required to promote independence, quality of life and increased engagement in personal health, healing and wellness. The CSS program utilizes a structured and vetted network of volunteers to support the program mandate and increase the ability for people to think about their ongoing health determinants in a timely and culturally sensitive manner. Key goals include providing transportation to medical services, home visits to reduce isolation, safety checks, reassurance calls and general family support.

The Community Wellness Worker Program is funded by the province through the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy (IHWS). This program supports holistic approaches to promote healthy living, safe communities and the prevention of family violence. The CWW program delivers a variety of client-based, participant-based and community development services to individuals, families and children with the primary focus to address their health, healing and wellness concerns. Programming is available for people of all ages to ensure culturally vibrant and safe ways of life for everyone. Prevention of violence and mitigation of its impacts are achieved through addressing current and imminent concerns, providing opportunities for culturally sound education and enhancing the protective and cohesiveness elements of communities. Key goals include empowering women, teaching men about their roles in the prevention of violence and facilitating access to opportunities to learn, heal and thrive.

The Métis Family Wellbeing Program is funded by the province through the Ontario Indigenous Child and Youth Strategy (OICYS). This program supports holistic approaches to promote healthy living, safe communities and the prevention of family violence. The MFWB program delivers a variety of client-based, participant-based and community development services to individuals, families and children with the primary focus to address issues related to children and youth in care, youth in the justice system and prevention of violence in families with children and youth. Prevention of violence and mitigation of its impacts are achieved through addressing current and imminent concerns, providing opportunities for culturally sound education and enhancing the protective and cohesiveness elements of communities. Key goals include connecting with the justice system to create referral and support networks, teaching families to communicate effectively and providing alternative community options as an opportunity for children and youth to engage in positive, healthy activities.

The Community Mental Health and Addictions Program is funded by the province through the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy (IHWS). This program supports opportunities to create improved navigation of support systems for consumers of mental health/addictions services, activities to enhance the ability for self-reflection, self-esteem and confidence for clients and community development/public education to remove community stigmas associated with mental health, healing and wellness in the Kingston area. A cultural lens is used to support knowledge translation for clients, Citizens and community service providers associated with improving mental health outcomes. This is a non-clinical support-level program.

The Métis Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Program is funded by the province through the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy (IHWS). This program provides activities and services to ensure that new and emergent families with children aged 0 – 6 years have an equitable opportunity to access the knowledge, resources, cultural lens and opportunities necessary to thrive. Home visits are utilized as the primary tool to monitor family progress and interact in a meaningful and supportive manner. Key goals include monitoring major developmental milestones for children and supporting necessary referrals to

expert level services, supporting the development of healthy family environments and engaging in play-based learning with families to impart a variety of information and cultural perspective.

Manitoba

The Manitoba Métis Federation has a variety of programs and services for its citizens. LFMO connected with the staff at the Southwest Regional Office. Some of the programs currently being offered in this region include ISETS, youth programs, early learning and childcare, child and family services, citizen/harvester registration, food programs, housing services, community liaisons and a fundraising bingo hall.

The ISETS Métis Employment & Training Department offers all the services in regards to employment and training. Some of the different aspects of ISETS programming includes: employment counselling, summer career placements, resume writing, and funding or sponsorship to training or attend post-secondary education. These services are all culturally-based and allow Métis families to receive the support they need.

Youth programs are also offered by the Southwest Region of MMF. These programs engage youth across the Region to get involved in youth groups locally and provincially. Within the Youth Department, there are also work placement opportunities and various events youth are allowed to attend. Finally, this department works towards connecting youth with cultural workshops and Elders for historical and cultural learning opportunities.

This region also has the Southwest Early Learning Center, a daycare that has been operating since 1988. This centre has thirty-two childcare spaces. At least of fifty percent of these spaces are reserved for Métis children. All of the centre's programs are culturally-appropriate learning for children. Similarly, the MMF also operates four child and family service agencies across the province.

The Citizen & Harvester Card Department assists Métis families to get registered and have proper paperwork processed for citizenship applications. They also work with people who were adopted out by child and family service agencies to find their birth family information and help people to reconnect with their kinship networks. Additionally, this department provides services and tags to our harvesters that are hunting and trapping according to their section 35 rights.

The Garden Bed program is run similar to a community garden. There are thirty gardens which are reserved for Métis families but are opened up to the at-large community if some plots are not filled. This program considers the unique needs of seniors and people with disabilities by reserving beds that are higher off the ground for individuals that may have challenges bending and squatting. There are also lower beds available for those who can bend more easily to look after their gardens. Each year there is a large yield of produce from these gardens. Within this program, there is also an Elders group. This group shares their produce with Elders/seniors who cannot garden anymore. Additionally, harvesters that go out hunting share some of these meats with the Elders/seniors and disabled members who cannot participate in Métis harvesting.

Housing is another area where MMF and its regional offices provide services to citizens. Over the past five years, this program has been serving Métis families in need and has opened its doors to the larger community. This program has been so successful in the last five years that recently a new two-year agreement was signed to continue to offer the service and grow program opportunities within this service.

Families in need of services can connect with the Métis Community Liaison Department. The staff in this department work directly with families to help navigate programs and services. Within this department, there is an eyeglass program for seniors, a prescription drug program for seniors, financial assistance for the relief of poverty, help with applying for a pension, social assistance, workers compensation, and other government-run social-assistance programs. Similarly, the Southwest Region of MMF has a fundraising program for families in need. A regular bingo hall is hosted in the region and all of the proceeds are used to purchase food, clothing, medicine, and anything else that a struggling family may need support with.

Saskatchewan

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan (MNS) represents the province's Métis citizens. The Métis Nation Legislative Assembly is the governing authority of the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MN-S) and has the authority to enact legislation, regulation, rules and resolutions governing the affairs and conduct of the Metis in Saskatchewan. The MNS has a variety of programs and services run through their various ministries including Health, Housing, Education, Registry, Family & Community Justice. Additionally, MNS is affiliated with the following organizations: Back to Batoche, Clarence Campeau Development Fund, Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan, Gabriel Dumont Institute, and Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation. Departments and affiliates offer programs to Métis families in the province.

MNS and affiliates have a variety of service models that should be considered best-practice models. MNS and Back to Batoche celebrate Métis history and host an annual event with a variety of cultural activities, sporting events, music, dancing/jigging, and many different performers. Métis families can enjoy this annual event that celebrates their history, culture and is fun for all that participate. Métis families from across the homeland travel far and wide to participate in this event.

The MNS Ministry of Education and the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) collaborate to provide education and training for Métis families in the region. GDI is a Métis owned post-secondary education facility and cultural institute. They have offices in and deliver programs in thirteen different communities. GDI is run by a thirteen-member Board of Directors with twelve regional representatives and one chair. They offer MNS citizens culturally sensitive education. One program within GDI (and other local universities) is the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program. This is a four-year Bachelor of Education program that is in partnership between GDI, the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan.

Similarly, the Ministry of Health at MNS also works with partners and affiliates. Currently, the MNS has a signed MOU with the Saskatchewan Health Authority. They also have a partnership and MOU with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. Additionally, the Ministry of Health also works with MNS affiliate the Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc. MACSI is a provincial community-based addictions agency with locations in three cities across the province, Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert. MACSI's programs and services are unique. They are informed by a broad spectrum of influences. This includes knowledge of our Métis heritage, traditional Aboriginal teachings, the 12-step recovery model, Saskatchewan's Clinical Principles for Alcohol and Drug Misuse Services in Saskatchewan, up-to-date research and emerging trends in the field of addictions.

MNS also has programs and services under the Ministry of Housing, the Citizenship Registry, and Métis Family and Community Justice Services. One of the programs under the Ministry of Housing is a first-time homebuyers program that is accessible to Métis families in Saskatchewan. The Citizenship Registry formalizes and clarifies citizenship requirements and aids in the accurate return of statistical data about Saskatchewan's Métis citizens. Métis Family and Community Justice Services are currently engaging with Métis families on the new federal Child and Family Services Legislation and what this means for families in the region.

Alberta

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) strives to create, promote, and support initiatives to improve the quality of life for Métis people. MNA has four departments that run programs and services that achieve their above-mentioned goal the Métis Identification and Registry Systems Department, the Health, Children and Youth Department, the Métis Rights and Accommodations Department and the Communications & Citizen Engagement Department. Métis Identification and Registry Systems is responsible for issuing citizenship and will assist applicants with filling out or accessing any required documentation. The Health, Children and Youth Department advocates for the needs of families and children. They provide culturally-appropriate health and wellness supports and ensure that the rights of all Métis families in the child welfare system are respected while supporting the needs of Métis children, youth and families. The Communications and Citizen Engagement Department engage with citizens on a variety of issues and promotes the many MNA programs and initiatives.

The Health, Children and Youth Department has a variety of programs for MNA citizens. When reaching out to a representative at MNA, we discussed some of the health and wellness programs they offer. One of these programs provides temporary housing in Edmonton for medical-related appointments or hospital visits. One 1 bedroom and one 2 bedroom fully accessible apartments are available on a need's basis. Applications are available by contacting the MNA Health email or phone line. There is also a new pilot program available to MNA cancer patients in regions one, five and six. This program provides transportation support to and from cancer-related appointments and will hopefully expand to other regions shortly.

The Métis Nation of Alberta also has a variety of affiliated organizations that provide programs and services to the MNA. Some of these affiliates include Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. & Pinnacle Business Services Ltd., Métis Crossing, Métis Urban Housing Corporation & Métis Capital Housing Corporation, Rupertsland Institute, and Cree Productions. All of these affiliates work directly with MNA to create programming by and for Métis families.

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. & Pinnacle Business Services Ltd. is a service provider in the employment and training sector. They provide financing to Métis entrepreneurs and provide business advisory services in areas such as business plans, marketing, accounting/bookkeeping, management support, and hosting workshops/seminars for business owners. They have helped to create over one thousand Métis businesses in Alberta.

Métis Crossing is a cultural interpretive centre that focuses on preserving and sharing Métis culture and traditions. This is a Métis owned and operated tourist site. This property is comprised of five river lot titles from original Métis settlers in the late 1800s. Some of the cultural activities that take place here include a program called Paddle to the Past, unique Métis trapper tent accommodations, camping, historical photograph exhibit, museum tours, and hand-crafted Métis art. Paddle to the Past is an immersive experience linking the fur trade to Métis Crossing and Victoria Settlement Provincial Historic Site.

Métis Urban Housing Corporation & Métis Capital Housing Corporation both provide affordable rental housing. MUHC has over eight hundred units in fourteen urban centres with rent based on twenty-five percent of the family's gross income. MCHC has over three hundred and forty-five houses in five urban centres and rent is based on eighty percent of market rent costs. MCHC has a variety of resident services including Nihgi Métis Seniors Lodge, Renaissance Tower, Voyageur Manor, and the Family Reunification Program (by CFS referral only). Both the MUHC and MCHC operate under the governance of a Board of Directors with representation from all six regions of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Many of the former tenants in these programs have gone on to become successful homeowners.

Rupertsland Institute is another MNA affiliate. In February of 2010, the MNA's Labour Market Development Program evolved into the Rupertsland Institute - Métis Centre of Excellence (RLI). The RLI has three specific mandates education, training, and research. The Education program has established a Métis Scholars Award at fourteen post-secondary institutions in the province and has the Higher Learning Completion Program which provides additional financial support to reduce the cost of higher education for Métis students. The RLI also has a Métis Training to Employment Program which focuses on preparing for, finding and keeping employment. This program is accessible throughout the province in RLI's Mobile Employment Units. RLI also focuses on research enabling a better understanding of Métis identity and the social, economic and cultural conditions of Métis people. It is because of this mandate the RLI has created the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research in collaboration with MNA and the University of Alberta.

Similarly, Cree Productions is another affiliate of the MNA. Cree Productions is a publishing company prioritizing the acquisition, development and publishing of learning resources about Métis people for the students in all Alberta schools. They have over eighty copyrighted resources. The most notable resource they have available is the Cree/English Dictionary which has been authorized for use in Alberta school curricula.

British Columbia

Métis Nation of British Columbia is one of the largest Métis specific service providers in the province of B.C. Many other service providers that were contacted for the environmental scan will refer clients to MNBC locals or provincial offices for culturally-appropriate services. Through the work of the environmental scan, LFMO was able to connect with MNBC Women's Programs and Employment and Training Programs branches to discuss the services available to Métis women and their families. Staff at MNBC provided LFMO with the following outline of how their programming operates.

The Métis Nation of British Columbia provides direct services to Métis clients. The MNBC consists of several Ministries through which particular services are provided through specific programming. The

four primary client service areas are the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment and Training, and the Ministry of Health. The following discussion will outline the programs within the Ministry of Women and the Ministry of Employment and Training. Similar to other regions, many programs have specific eligibility requirements before clients can access them.

The Ministry of Women at MNBC works with Métis Women of British Columbia to offer supports and programming. Both the MNBC Ministry of Women and the Métis Women of British Columbia are focused on empowering Métis women to fulfill their potentials in all aspects of their lives: physical health and well-being, cultural connection, community involvement, family well-being, education, and economic security. The Métis Women of British Columbia are entrusted to enhance and empower the rights of Métis Women and to ensure that Métis Women's voices and political representation are prioritized at the community, regional, provincial and national level. There are two different programs specifically geared to the needs of Métis women. Governance and leadership training for women is offered regularly for those that want to participate. Additionally, women are also allowed the opportunity to participate in cultural workshops that focus on traditional roles and values of Métis women.

LFMO was also able to connect with the Ministry of Employment and Training at MNBC. The Ministry of Employment and Training is an Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ISETS) (formerly ASETS) holder, meaning Service Canada provides funding to MNBC to administer their employment and training services. Within this Ministry, three different programs were mentioned by MNBC staff. All of these different programs fall under the ISETS umbrella. Two of these programs are geared towards employment for Métis people, the Employment Support Program and the Wage Subsidy Program. Additionally, there is an education support component to MNBC's Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy. Support for students in post-secondary studies includes tuition, mandatory fees, books, supplies, and for full-time students, a living allowance and relocation costs are also available. Currently, this program is not accessible for Masters or Ph.D. students, and other eligible students receive a maximum of 64 weeks of support. For all of the Ministry's Employment and Training Programs, applicants must demonstrate financial need, prove residency in B.C. and provide evidence of citizenship in Métis Nation of British Columbia.

HIV/AIDS Services

Ontario

There was one Indigenous HIV/AIDS service provider that LFMO connected within Ontario. In this area, with only one service provider included in this category of the Environmental Scan, there was a one hundred percent response rate. For future research projects, more mainstream service providers should be surveyed to assess their level of cultural knowledge and this category should be expanded to include organizations specializing in sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBI) education/treatment as many organizations are working under a broader umbrella than HIV/AIDS.

The organization LFMO was able to connect with was not a direct service provider, meaning they do not provide clinical treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS but instead do education work, advocacy, outreach, and provide referrals for clinical services. As an Indigenous service provider, this organization took a pan-Indigenous approach to service provision and provides culturally-sensitive educational

materials and support to all Indigenous people regardless of status or nation. While they do use a pan-Indigenous lens, the organization will do other things to recognize the unique needs of Métis people, such as provide greetings and other small phrases in Michif. This organization works from a trauma-informed and harm-reduction approach, creating a safe environment for Métis clients seeking support. Unfortunately, this organization is located in a major urban centre and does not track how many Métis clients they serve, so it is difficult to understand if this provider is accessible to and is used by Métis women and their families.

Manitoba

LFMO surveyed three different HIV/AIDS service providers in Manitoba. One of the organizations was unreachable as their phone number was no longer in service and no other contact information was provided online. This was a common occurrence throughout the Environmental Scan; because many organizations are struggling for funding, websites were often down or phone lines had been disconnected, making organizations unreachable as they are likely closed down permanently. Additionally, all three organizations included in the Environmental Scan are (or were) located in Winnipeg, making these services often inaccessible to Métis families in rural and remote communities of Manitoba.

Of the three organizations surveyed, two responded, giving a response rate of sixty-seven percent. One of the respondents was a direct service provider with clinical support, educational resources, and outreach to those having difficulty connecting with care. This service provider operates from a pan-Indigenous scope and demonstrated little knowledge about Métis culture and how to apply a Métis lens to their programming. The other respondent was not a direct service provider, but a support line that provides workshops and education on sexuality, substance use, mental health (including body image), and anti-oppression to youth. While taking a broad approach to diversity, this organization demonstrated knowledge of Métis history and culture and operates from a decolonizing and anti-oppressive lens when providing workshops and other programs for youth.

Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, LFMO discovered two HIV/AIDS service providers. Both of these providers responded to the Environmental Scan survey, giving a response rate of one hundred percent. One of these organizations is located in Regina and the other is located in Saskatoon. Both Regina and Saskatoon are larger cities, leaving rural and remote communities with limited access to these services. This was a common theme throughout the Environmental Scan that was often compounded by the lack of accessible public transportation options in rural and remote communities.

One of these service providers focused on Indigenous approaches to HIV/AIDS service provision. This organization takes a pan-Indigenous approach and does not track how many Métis clients they serve or offer any Métis specific programming. The second organization is a mainstream service provider that connects clients with resources related to HIV/AIDS. Programming from this organization does not have an Indigenous or Métis lens and no demographic data is tracked. While this organization does not normally take an Indigenous approach, it has in the past worked with communities and other organizations to create culturally appropriate materials on various issues. Both of the organizations

surveyed in Saskatchewan were focused on education, advocacy and outreach work rather than providing actual clinical service.

Alberta

Twelve different HIV/AIDS-related organizations or service providers were surveyed in Alberta. Six of the twelve organizations responded to LFMO's Environmental Scan, giving a fifty percent response rate in this category. Unlike other regions, HIV/AIDS service providers are more geographically spread out. Some service providers are located in large cities like Edmonton and Calgary, but others are located in smaller communities such as Red Deer, Medicine Hat and Brooks. This means that services are more easily accessible to rural and remote communities, but there may still be challenges related to transportation to and from service providers.

Only one of the five service providers in this category offered any distinctions-based services that meet the unique needs of Métis people. One of the organizations noted they do not provide direct services but are a provincial organization that serves member organizations. They did not provide any information on which organizations are members or provide direct services to clients. Another organization declined to participate due to limited statistical data collection within the organization and did not provide any information on their programming or services. Additionally, the website for this organization was down, therefore LFMO was unable to get any information on the services offered to Métis women and their families.

Two of the five organizations in this category operated from a pan-Indigenous or First Nations approach. Pan-Indigenous organizations often rely on Métis staff to provide cultural supports to Métis clients or adapt programming to meet the needs of Métis clients, as was the case for one of the organizations surveyed in Alberta. This was a trend that was common across the Métis Nation homeland and is very challenging for Métis staff. Staff want to support their clients but also should not have to represent an entire culture in their workplace. Organizations need to make better connections with Elders and communities to create programs that meet the needs of Métis families and not place this heavy burden on Métis staff alone. One of the organizations noted that they operate from a Blackfoot lens and often work with Métis Elders and communities to adapt programming to the needs of Métis families. Both of these organizations operate from a harm-reduction approach and offer education, advocacy, outreach and navigational support when accessing clinical services.

Two of the organizations in Alberta were clear that they centre their approach around Métis worldviews. One organization noted that its approach is governed, designed, and evaluated by Métis people. This organization supports Métis families by providing workshops, referrals, support, and information on sexual health, sexually transmitted infections and bloodborne pathogens, harm reduction, addictions and mental health. This organization demonstrated cultural knowledge of Métis communities and Métis history while also creating programming that is by and for Métis families. The other organization primarily works with Métis women but noted they are not exclusive to Métis women, or they would not be eligible for funding opportunities. This was another common theme heard in many different regions and service areas: funding for Indigenous programs are often tied to status laws, meaning Métis specific programming must be inclusive of other Indigenous peoples that meet the eligibility requirements for "Indian Status" under *the Indian Act*. Despite these funding restrictions, this organization is one of the only ones to provide Métis specific cultural information and Métis specific information related to sexually

transmitted bloodborne infections (STBBIs) (including HIV/AIDS). Both of these organizations use models that should be considered best-practices for Métis service provision.

British Columbia

British Columbia has eight different organizations working on services for people with HIV/AIDS. LFMO struggled to connect with these service providers. All eight service providers were contacted by email (or website contact form) and by phone. Messages and voicemails were left at all of these organizations and none responded to any email messages or voicemails. LFMO was able to identify that one of these organizations was likely no longer in operation as their phone line was disconnected. Of these organizations, only one was located outside of Vancouver, demonstrating a similar pattern to other provinces, extremely limited accessibility of programs to Métis families in rural and remote communities. It is still unclear if there are any distinctions-based or Métis focused supports for people living with HIV/AIDS in British Columbia.

Child and Family Services

Child and family services are administered by provincial governments, meaning there are very different approaches to service provision taken in the different provinces within the Métis Nation homeland. Furthermore, with the federal government introducing new legislation around Indigenous Child and Family Services, it is still unclear how these changes will impact service provision at this point.

Ontario

Ontario administers its child and family services through the Children's Aid Society. The Society has locations across Ontario. The Children's Aid Society operates one location dedicated to Indigenous services, Native Child and Family Services in Toronto. Additionally, many reserves in Ontario operate Child and Family Services offices. In Ontario, LFMO attempted to connect with sixteen different service providers.

While Children's Aid Society has many different locations, the regional offices were counted as one service provider, Native Child and Family Services was counted separately, due to the Indigenous focus, and on-reserve agencies were all counted separately. With five of sixteen service providers responding to LFMO's Environmental Scan survey, we achieved approximately a thirty-one percent response rate.

Mainstream CAS agencies do not offer a Métis lens to their programs. When clients request cultural support, CAS will refer clients to other service providers. Native Child and Family Services did not respond to LFMO's survey, so it is unclear what types of cultural programming the CAS offers to Métis families. The majority of CAS locations are in larger cities, leaving rural and remote communities underserved.

The majority of agencies surveyed that are located on-reserve, could not serve Métis clients due to funding restriction or band-specific rules. One of the on-reserve agencies will serve Métis clients. Although they serve Métis clients, this organization noted that they do not have any culturally-specific programs for Métis families.

Through the Environmental Scan, LFMO was not able to find any distinctions-based programming or Métis-specific services. It is unclear where the CAS and other service providers are sending Métis families that require culturally-based services. This demonstrates a clear gap in service provision for Métis families in Ontario.

Manitoba

In the province of Manitoba, there is a mixed approach to Child and Family Service Provision. The provincial government operates the Child Protection Branch and different regional agencies fall under this branch. Additionally, authority is granted to Indigenous service providers to create culturally based programming for Indigenous families. LFMO identified thirty different mainstream and Indigenous Child and Family Service Providers in Manitoba. Eleven of these service providers responded to the Environmental Scan survey, giving a response rate of approximately thirty-seven percent. All Manitoba Child and Family Services agencies were spread out geographically with many rural and remote areas having access to services.

Two different mainstream providers responded to LFMO. One of these providers would serve Métis clients without question, while the other is only able to provide counselling services. Both of these providers did not have any culturally based programming. Other mainstream providers did not respond to LFMO.

There are four Métis specific Child and Family Services agencies in Manitoba. LFMO was able to connect with one of these three agencies. The Métis specific agency was one of the only Child and Family Service providers in the province that had culturally-based programming for Métis families. This agency works with communities and Elders to develop supports for Métis families. Again, this model should be held up as a best-practice as the programming is created by and for Métis communities, and focuses on prevention over apprehension, keeping Métis families together in their communities.

There are also a variety of First Nations and pan-indigenous service providers in Manitoba. LFMO connected with eight of these organizations. First Nations based organizations often did not provide service to Métis children and families. These organizations receive funding to provide service to status First Nations clients, excluding Métis families. Other service providers that take a pan-indigenous approach serve Métis clients, but one agency noted that if Métis identify themselves as Métis, they must be transferred to one of the Métis specific agencies. Other pan-indigenous service providers did not make this distinction. All of the pan-indigenous service providers used a broad Indigenous lens to service provision and did not have any Métis-specific or distinctions-based programming.

Saskatchewan

There are a total of twenty-one Child and Family Services agencies identified in LFMO's Environmental Scan. Of these agencies, two are mainstream providers and nineteen are Indigenous service providers. LFMO was able to connect with ten out of twenty-one agencies identified by the Environmental Scan,

giving a forty-eight percent response rate for this category. There is one Métis-specific Child and Family Service agency in Saskatchewan, but when LFMO tried to connect with this agency, their phones were disconnected leading us to believe they have closed their doors. However, there are many First Nations agencies located on-reserve and some pan-indigenous service providers. Service providers were dispersed geographically, covering many rural and remote communities of Saskatchewan.

Both mainstream service providers are located in large cities of Saskatchewan, making it challenging for rural and remote Métis communities from accessing these services. These agencies do not provide any cultural lens or programming for Métis families. Additionally, the one agency LFMO spoke with demonstrated a very shallow understanding of Métis culture, only referencing smudging, missing and murdered Indigenous women, and one Michif word as their cultural lens. Furthermore, this agency relied on Métis staff for any Métis cultural programming and did not work with Elders and communities to develop these supports.

First Nations service providers were often not accessible to Métis families. These agencies often have their funding restrict them from serving clients without “Indian status.” Some of the First Nations providers did not have this restriction but were only able to serve Métis clients that live on a reserve. Therefore, the majority of First Nations service providers are inaccessible to Métis families and none of these agencies can provide distinctions-based services to Métis clients. Many of these agencies are located in rural and remote communities of the province.

There are few pan-indigenous Child and Family Services providers across Saskatchewan. LFMO was able to connect with four different agencies that take a pan-indigenous approach to service provision. Many of these agencies focused on prevention over apprehension which is in line with the values of Métis women and their families. While these agencies serve Métis families, they often demonstrated little to no knowledge of the history and culture of the Métis Nation. In Saskatchewan, there is a clear gap when it comes to distinctions-based or Métis specific Child and Family Services provision.

Alberta

In Alberta, there are nine mainstream Child and Family Service agencies. Eight of these are directly administered by the provincial government and the other organization is an advocacy organization representing foster parents and families in the province. All of the provincially administered offices provide the same programs and services and the Assistant Deputy Minister of Child Intervention provided a coordinated response for all eight agencies. Additionally, Alberta has twenty-two Indigenous Child and Family Service providers that LFMO identified. Three of these providers are Métis-specific and the rest are pan-indigenous or First Nations agencies. A total of fourteen of the thirty-one agencies identified responded to LFMO’s survey, giving a response rate of approximately forty-five percent.

The Alberta government claims all Métis families can access culturally-based supports. Child and Family Services’ involvement with Métis families honours their Métis heritage, traditions and unique culture. Families’ Métis experiences, connection to the land/community, and extended family living on Settlement are all taken into consideration during involvement. The community connection worker promotes the culture and consults with extended family and Métis Settlements. The Alberta approach focuses on Métis Settlements and does not acknowledge the Métis Nation of Alberta and communities that are not tied to a land base. The focus on Métis Settlements rather than the Métis community at large demonstrates limited

knowledge of Métis communities in Alberta. Further research is needed to know if Métis women and their families find these services culturally appropriate or safe for their families.

Métis-specific Child and Family Services agencies are the only providers to apply a Métis lens to all client programs. Three agencies take a distinctions-based approach focusing on Métis families. These agencies consistently talk about how they apply a Métis lens and re-evaluate how they do things. Some of the areas considered when developing programs are including ceremony, recognizing the unique culture and traditions, use healing circles, and including Métis Elders in developing programming. These agencies create services by and for Métis families and should be considered a best practice. Two of these agencies are located in Edmonton and Calgary, meaning there is limited accessibility to rural and remote Métis families.

All of the First Nations service providers that LFMO connected with were not able to serve Métis clients. These delegated Child and Family Services agencies only provide services to band members of First Nations families with status. LFMO also identified two pan-indigenous organizations but was unable to connect with them by email or phone, so it is unclear if these service providers have any distinctions-based or culturally-specific programming.

British Columbia

In the research phase of the Environmental Scan, LFMO identified nineteen mainstream Child and Family Services providers and twenty-two Indigenous providers. LFMO was able to connect with nineteen of these CFS providers giving a response rate of approximately forty-six percent. The majority of mainstream service providers are concentrated in Vancouver and Victoria with some representation in smaller communities. Métis-specific, First Nations, and pan-indigenous providers are spread out in different areas of B.C.

Mainstream service providers lacked Métis cultural knowledge and would often refer out clients for culturally-based support. Additionally, many mainstream organizations do not use distinctions-based tracking systems, meaning it is difficult to know if these organizations serve Métis families. Many of these mainstream providers do take a trauma-informed approach to their work, but without understanding Métis historical and contemporary trauma, it is unclear if the approach is working for Métis families.

Métis-specific organizations are the best options for Métis families looking for Child and Family Services programming. These agencies are committed to working collaboratively with Métis families and the Métis community to increase their capacity to nurture and care for their children in a manner that supports family wellness and celebrates Métis history and culture. These agencies are guided by the principles of the seven sacred teachings: humility, love, honesty, respect, truth, bravery, and wisdom. Many of these organizations work from a community-needs perspective, meeting each community where they are at. Additionally, many of these agencies provide wrap-around supports for the whole family. Again, the organizations run by and for Métis families should be held up as the best-practice models for Child and Family Services.

When connecting with First Nations Child and Family Services providers, LFMO found that some did serve Métis clients, while others only served First Nations band members or families with First Nations “Status”. The agencies that did serve Métis families, noted that many of their clients have mixed Métis

and First Nations heritage. While these agencies attempt to provide cultural support to Métis families, they acknowledge that they do not apply a distinctions-based or Métis-specific lens to their programming.

Counselling/Mental Health

Ontario

Through the Environmental Scan research, LFMO identified four different counselling or mental health service providers. LFMO was not able to connect with any of the service providers identified. Although LFMO was not able to connect with these organizations directly, one of the organizations identified is the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, and LFMO did contact many of the member Friendship Centres. The services provided by Friendship Centres will be discussed in the Friendship Centre category.

Manitoba

In Manitoba, LFMO identified thirteen different counselling or mental health service providers. Six of the thirteen responded to the Environmental Scan survey giving a response rate of approximately forty-six percent. Many of the mental health service providers specialized in providing services to women, LGBTQ2S+, Indigenous communities, and youth. All thirteen of the service providers identified are located in Winnipeg, demonstrating there is a large gap in service provision to rural and remote communities. One of these service providers has established a wrap-around support program. Participants at LFMO's Women's Forum identified wrap around supports as a best practice for service providers with Métis families as clients. Additionally, these organizations all apply a pan-indigenous or reconciliation lens to programming, leaving another gap for Métis families seeking distinctions-based or Métis specific supports.

Saskatchewan

Five different counselling or mental health service providers identified in the Environmental Scan research. Three of the five organizations responded to the survey, giving a response rate of approximately sixty percent. Two of the five organizations were located in Regina. Another two organizations had multiple locations including some in small rural and remote communities. The last organization was located in a small rural town. These organizations are dispersed geographically, making them more accessible to Métis families. However, of the organizations contacted, all responded they are "open to everyone" and do not have culturally based supports. One organization conflated First Nations and Métis people, noting that the organization is building better relationships with local reserves as a response to the question about a Métis lens or Métis-specific programming. While these organizations are geographically accessible to many Métis families, it is clear that many of these service providers are not distinctions-based or culturally safe for Métis women and their families. Therefore, there is a clear gap in Métis specific mental health and counselling services in Saskatchewan.

Alberta

LFMO's research identified one counselling or mental health service provider. This provider specializes in Indigenous service provision. Delegates at LFMO's policy forum also recommended surveying this organization about the services they offer to Métis families. Unfortunately, LFMO was not able to connect with anyone at this organization. Therefore, it is difficult to understand what services and supports they provide. This organization is located in Edmonton and would be difficult for rural or remote communities to access their programs. With no other organizations identified in the Environmental Scan, there is a clear gap in service provision to Métis communities outside of Edmonton and it is unclear if there are any distinctions-based or Métis specific programs offered.

British Columbia

The Environmental Scan identified seven counselling or mental health service providers in British Columbia. LFMO was able to speak with two out of the seven organizations, giving approximately twenty-nine percent response rate. All of these organizations were dispersed across the province, making services accessible to many Métis families in rural and remote communities. Both of the organizations that LFMO connected with lacked any Métis specific or distinctions-based programming. Additionally, both organizations recognized this gap existed within their organization but relied heavily on Métis staff to fill this gap. One organization noted they didn't have any Métis staff and their only First Nations counsellor provides supports from a pan-indigenous lens. From these conversations, it was clear that many organizations lack any knowledge of Métis history or culture, and these spaces may not be culturally appropriate or safe for Métis families.

Medical Centres/Healing Services

Ontario

In the research phase of the Environmental Scan, LFMO located twenty different Medical Centres or Healing Services. Five of the twenty service providers responded to LFMO's survey, allowing for a twenty-five percent response rate. Of these service providers, the majority of Medical Centres and Healing Service from an Indigenous lens were located on reserve and access was restricted to band members or First Nations people with "Status." Other service providers that use a pan-indigenous approach were located in larger cities and were accessible to Métis clients but only some of these service providers had any Métis-specific programming. LFMO was also able to connect with one mainstream healthcare service, but they acted as a service directory and did not provide any clinical or frontline services. This organization completed a search for Métis women's service and Métis services and only came up with two pan-indigenous organizations that LFMO had already identified in the Environmental Scan. This demonstrates that outside of the Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch, there are no Métis specific or distinctions-based health-related programs for Métis women and their families.

Manitoba

Nineteen different Medical Centres or Healing Services. LFMO was able to contact ten of the nineteen service providers, giving a response rate of approximately fifty-three percent. Of all of the organizations, LFMO only identified three located outside of Winnipeg, leaving a huge gap in service provision for Métis families in rural and remote areas of Manitoba. Two of the organizations LFMO contacted, had phone lines that were no longer in service, leading us to believe these facilities have closed their doors permanently. Additionally, all of the other service providers LFMO spoke with are operating from a pan-indigenous lens. Only one of the pan-indigenous service providers offered any distinctions-based programming or demonstrated any historical or cultural knowledge of the Métis Nation. Again, the lack of distinctions-based or Métis specific service providers points to a gap in culturally appropriate and culturally safe services for Métis communities.

Saskatchewan

While completing the Environmental Scan research, LFMO found three Indigenous Medical Centres or Healing Services. Two of the three organizations responded to the survey, giving a response rate of approximately sixty-seven percent for this category. The organizations that responded to the survey both operate from a pan-indigenous lens and noted they work mainly with First Nations and Métis clients. These organizations act as patient advocates connecting people with medical supports and assisting in the navigation of the provincial health care system. A patient advocate program or service was discussed at the Women's Forum, and participants saw this as a best-practice method for health care and legal services. Although both organizations are supporting Métis families, there are still challenges for Métis families accessing healthcare services. Similar to other regions, there are no distinctions-based or Métis specific programs offered outside of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, leaving a clear service gap for many families. Additionally, all three identified service providers are located in Regina or St. Paul, leaving many rural and remote communities without any access to Medical Centres or Healing Services.

Alberta

In Alberta, LFMO identified seven Medical Centres or Healing Services for Indigenous peoples. Three of these seven organizations responded to the Environmental Scan survey, giving a response rate of approximately forty-three percent. One of these organizations was unreachable and their phone line was disconnected. This is a pattern that is common throughout the Environmental Scan as many Indigenous service providers rely on inconsistent or unsustainable funding opportunities from various levels of government. Only one of the providers that LFMO spoke with offered a Métis lens to their programming. This lens was developed in conjunction with local Métis Elder and Métis communities. The other service providers operate with a pan-indigenous lens. Of the seven total organizations within this category, only two were located outside of Calgary or Edmonton, demonstrating a similar pattern to other services and regions, where there is limited accessibility for Métis families in rural and remote communities.

British Columbia

There are a variety of Medical Centres and Healing Services in British Columbia. LFMO was able to connect with ten of forty-one of these service providers, giving approximately a twenty-four percent response rate for this category. Approximately half of these service providers were located in Vancouver

or Victoria, while the rest were dispersed in smaller towns throughout the province. The geographic distribution of these service providers makes services more accessible to Métis families in rural and remote parts of B.C.

Two of the service providers LFMO spoke with, were not suitable for Métis families. One organization conflated Métis and First Nations people and clearly did not understand they are distinct cultural groups. Another organization was administered by a First Nations band office only worked with Métis children if they have Métis root on the patrilineal bloodline and had roots with this particular First Nation on the matrilineal bloodline. This organization noted that there has only been one case of this kind that their organization has served.

The majority of service providers that LFMO surveyed, used a pan-indigenous approach to service provision. One of these service providers worked with Indigenous clients with disabilities. This was a service area that was absent in other regions. Another service provider has a patient advocate program for Indigenous clients. As mentioned previously, this was identified as a best-practice by Métis women at LFMO's Women's Forum. Ultimately, these pan-indigenous service providers indicated they do not provide distinctions-based services and did not indicate if they had any historical or cultural understanding of Métis families.

Only one Medical Centre or Healing Services provider in British Columbia mentioned Métis-specific supports. While this organization does serve all Indigenous peoples, they provide a culturally-informed and empathetic perspective and direction specific to the needs of each client. This means that Métis families lead the way in accessing the supports they need from this organization. They use trauma-informed approaches to all of their services. This was the only culturally appropriate and culturally safe service provider in this category of the Environmental Scan, meaning there is a large gap in distinctions-based healthcare services for Métis families and communities in B.C.

Crisis Lines/Call Centres

Generally speaking, it was difficult to connect with crisis-line or crisis-support services. Many of the service providers do not have any contact information other than the crisis-line. LFMO felt it was inappropriate to direct a research request to an emergency line, and was unable to connect with any organization that fits this criterion. Some of these crisis-lines were national services and are accessible in multiple regions, for example, Kids Help Phone.

Ontario

In Ontario, the Environmental Scan research identified eight different crisis-line services. Only one of these crisis lines had additional contact information. Therefore, LFMO was only able to reach one crisis-line in Ontario. This organization has Indigenous initiatives led by an Indigenous Advisory Council which includes Métis members. These members, in addition to individual Métis subject matter experts and our upcoming Indigenous champions program, ensure a Métis lens is applied to all programs and services. This organization was one of the nationally accessible crisis lines and is accessible across the Métis Nation homeland. All other crisis-lines identified, LFMO was unable to reach for this research.

Manitoba

Eight different crisis-lines were identified in Manitoba. Three of the eight organizations responded to the Environmental Scan, giving a response rate of approximately thirty-eight percent. One of these organizations was the national crisis line discussed previously. The other two crisis-lines LFMO was able to connect with, were regionally specific to Manitoba. These two crisis-lines both operate from a reconciliation lens, putting the Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action in their organizational practices. These service providers both expressed that cultural safety is an important part of their programming, they did not demonstrate how a Métis specific lens is applied to their work, or provide any type of insight into the organization's current level of Métis historical and cultural knowledge. It is unclear if these organizations provide distinctions-based supports to Métis families.

Saskatchewan

There are two regional crisis or phone-based service providers in Saskatchewan. One of these organizations is a service directory for the entire province, while the other is a more traditional mental health crisis-line. LFMO was unable to connect with either of these service providers. It is unclear if there is a Métis lens applied by either of these service providers. The one national service provider that was identified in Ontario, is also accessible to Métis families in Saskatchewan.

Alberta

There are no regionally specific crisis-line services that LFMO was identified in Alberta. The only service that applies to this category is the national crisis-line service that is accessible across the Métis Nation homeland. With no other easily identifiable service providers, there is a clear gap in service provision for Métis women and their families in Alberta.

British Columbia

Similar to other regions, there were very few crisis-line services identified in British Columbia. LFMO discovered one crisis-line that is regionally specific, and also identified one national crisis line that is accessible to the entire Métis Nation homeland. Regrettably, LFMO was not able to connect with the one regional service provider. Consequently, it is unclear if there are any regional distinctions-based services. Further research into how crisis-lines develop programming and service delivery models is required to fully understand if these services are accessible to Métis women and their communities.

Employment and Training

Ontario

LFMO discovered six different Indigenous employment and training service providers. Four of these six providers responded to the Environmental Scan survey. This allowed us to achieve a response rate of

approximately sixty-seven percent. The vast majority of these service providers were located in northern Ontario, with some organizations located on-reserve and some located in larger cities like Thunder Bay. Only two of these service providers were located in southern Ontario, both located in Toronto. This leaves a large gap in services for Métis families in most rural and remote communities and outside of the GTA in southern Ontario.

One of the organizations noted that they do serve Métis clients, but they are not funded to do so, so it is unclear the level of service Métis clients receive without any funding. Additionally, this organization operates from a pan-indigenous lens with no distinctions-based or Métis specific programming. Another organization LFMO connected with noted that they only serve First Nations clients from seven different bands, and refer all Métis clients to MNO for service. The other two service providers that LFMO connected with serve all Indigenous clients using a pan-indigenous approach. One of these providers did note that Métis clients must be able to demonstrate citizenship within the Métis Nation of Ontario and this is policy based on the funding they receive. Furthermore, one organization did not believe employment and training service could be delivered in a culturally-specific way, making it unclear if this is a service provider that is culturally-appropriate or safe for Métis families. Outside of the employment and training programs offered by the Métis Nation of Ontario, there is a large gap in distinctions-based and Métis specific employment and training services in Ontario.

Manitoba

In Manitoba, LFMO was able to identify thirteen different employment and training service providers. Eight of these service providers had an Indigenous focus or culturally-based services for their clients. Only one of the thirteen different organizations are located outside of Winnipeg, and this service provider is located on-reserve and is only accessible to status First Nations clients. With all of the service providers accessible to Métis families located in Winnipeg, LFMO has identified another large geographic gap in service provision for Métis families in rural and remote communities of Manitoba. None of the mainstream employment and training service providers responded to the survey, so it is unclear if they offer any distinctions-based or Métis specific programming.

One of the organizations LFMO connected with focuses on employment and training services for youth. This organization does not apply a cultural lens to programming and demonstrated little to the knowledge of Métis history and culture. Another organization LFMO spoke with focuses on employment and training services for people interested in entering the trades. This organization has a paid training program and does provide cultural supports but from a First Nations lens. LFMO also connected with one employment and training service provider that specialized in leadership training. This organization building custom programs to meet the needs of each client. They have one Métis facilitator on staff that helps build programs from a Métis lens and the client's wishes.

Saskatchewan

While researching the Environmental Scan in Saskatchewan, three different employment and training agencies were identified. Two of the three agencies responded to LFMO's survey, giving a response rate of sixty-seven percent. All three of the agencies are Indigenous employment and training service

providers. Two of these agencies are located in Saskatoon and the other is located in Regina, leaving a large gap in service provision in rural and remote communities of Saskatchewan.

The two organizations that responded to the survey both track clients, but one only tracks First Nations or status clients, not Métis clients. This is a common theme across different service categories. Often organizations are tracking First Nations clients or status holders due to funding arrangements with various levels of government or other organizations. One of the organizations focuses on employment and training services in the construction sector and they use a pan-indigenous lens when developing their programs. The other organization has a First Nations focus but also provides services to the general public. This service provider accepts Métis clients but uses a First Nations lens when developing their programming. Both of these organizations do not offer any distinctions-based or Métis specific programming, leaving Métis clients with no access to culturally safe programming outside of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan services.

Alberta

Research in Alberta's employment and training service sector identified twenty-three different service providers in the province. Five of these service providers responded to the Environmental Scan, giving a response rate of approximately twenty-two percent. Four of the twenty-three service providers are Métis organizations or institutes. Almost half of these service providers are located in Calgary or Edmonton, with many others being located on-reserve offering service to First Nations clients only. This leaves a large gap in service provision for Métis families living in rural and remote communities of Alberta.

Two of the service providers LFMO connected with only served First Nations clients. One of these organizations would not respond to the Environmental Scan survey and referred LFMO to Rupertsland Institute for this research. Another organization noted they do serve Métis clients but did not demonstrate any culturally-based programming from a Métis lens, and did not understand how to apply a Métis lens to employment and training services. All of the above-mentioned organizations do not provide distinctions-based or Métis specific programming.

The one Métis focused organization that LFMO was able to connect with is affiliated with MNA and offers services to Métis and non-status Indigenous entrepreneurs. At this organization, Métis clients must offer proof of citizenship within the Métis Nation to be eligible for their services. They are the only organization in Alberta to offer a federal grant program to Métis entrepreneurs. Outside of funding support, this organization provides a variety of supports to new business owners. This is a service by and for Métis people and should be held up as a best-practice model. There is one similar service provider in the region that serves Métis Settlement clients only but LFMO was unable to connect with this service provider.

British Columbia

LFMO discovered eighteen different employment and training service providers while researching in British Columbia. Eight of these service providers responded to the survey, giving a response rate of approximately forty-four percent. Only one of these service providers was located in Vancouver, while the rest are geographically dispersed around the province. Many of these agencies are associated with

different First Nations bands and are inaccessible to Métis clients. Of the eight agencies LFMO connected with, four were only accessible to First Nations clients.

Four of the agencies LFMO surveyed serve Métis clients. Two of these organizations operate from a pan-indigenous lens. Both of these organizations recognized the need to have distinctions-based supports and are working towards creating this programming, recognizing this is a gap within their service provision. The other two organizations, while open to all Indigenous clients, work from a client-centred approach, creating unique programs for each Métis client based on their individual needs. One of these two organizations

work closely with the Métis Nation of British Columbia to develop Métis specific services. These client-centred and Métis-specific programs should be looked to as best-practices for service provision.

Housing

Ontario

In Ontario, LFMO attempted to survey eleven different housing providers. Five of the eleven agencies responded to the survey, giving a response rate of approximately forty-five percent in this category. Ten of the eleven providers are located in either Ottawa or Toronto, and the last provider is located in Thunder Bay, creating a very large gap in service provision in southern Ontario (outside of the two major cities) and many rural and remote communities in northern Ontario. The service providers in the housing sector ranged from emergency and transitional housing to home-buying support programs.

Two of the eleven programs in Ontario are restricted to on-reserve First Nations clients, and LFMO was able to directly connect with one of these providers. Another two of the service providers use a pan-indigenous approach to service provision. Both of these pan-indigenous providers noted that they often work with the Métis Nation of Ontario to provide cultural supports to Métis clients. The pan-indigenous service providers offered transitional and long-term housing supports

One of the organizations LFMO connected with is a Métis-specific housing provider. This provider works directly with the Métis Nation of Ontario. They offer a variety of different housing supports such as affordable rental accommodations in rural and remote communities, provide home-buying assistance, home repair-assistance, property management and energy-saving programs. These services were created by and for Métis families and should be considered a best-practice model in front-line housing services.

Manitoba

In the Manitoba housing sector, LFMO identified fourteen different service providers. Seven of these service providers responded to the Environmental Scan survey, giving a response rate of fifty percent in this category. Half of these service providers are located in Winnipeg and the other half are spread out in smaller towns or rural communities of Manitoba. Similar to Ontario, there is a range of housing services offered by different providers. Some agencies provide emergency and transitional housing support, others provide social housing and rental support, and one organization supplies emergency medical housing for patients that have to travel long distances for treatment.

All of the organizations that LFMO contacted use a pan-indigenous or First Nations lens when developing programming. None of these service providers would exclude serving Métis clients, but they did not provide distinctions-based services for Métis families. One of these service providers noted that they do not work from a harm-reduction approach and all drugs and alcohol are banned from their housing units and anyone that is found violating these rules is removed from the program. This demonstrates there is a large gap in distinctions-based or Métis specific housing services outside of what is offered by the Manitoba Métis Federation.

Saskatchewan

Similar to other service areas, there were very few housing service providers identified in Saskatchewan. LFMO discovered four agencies through Environmental Scan research. Two of the four agencies responded to the survey, giving a fifty percent response rate in this category. All of the four agencies were located in Regina or Saskatoon, meaning there is a large gap in service provision to rural and remote Métis communities. Two of these service providers are mainstream and serve any clients. One of the service providers is only accessible to status First Nations clients. There was only one Métis focused housing provider identified in the province. This housing provider is also open to non-status First Nations clients but serves primarily Métis clients. Again, there is a range of services offered by different housing providers such as low-income or social housing, seniors housing, emergency and transition housing, and home-buying and renovation support.

The one distinctions-based program offered in Saskatchewan (outside of MNS programs) is run by and for Métis families. This organization applies for federal grants and programs and assists communities and organizations in developing their housing supports. This includes wrap-around supports that extend beyond the housing sector, for example, employment and training services. Grassroots Métis women identified a need for distinctions-based and wrap-around services, therefore, this type of model should be held up as a best-practice for housing services.

Alberta

LFMO identified five housing providers in Alberta. None of these service providers responded to the Environmental Scan survey after trying to connect with these organizations by email and phone. One of the organizations, specializing in senior housing support, had their phone line disconnected, likely indicating they are no longer a service provider. Four of these five service providers are (or were) located in Edmonton and one was located in Lethbridge. This leaves a large gap in service provision for rural and remote Métis families in Alberta. One of the service providers identified is a Métis specific service provider and is affiliated with the MNA. Therefore, outside programming offered by the Métis Nation of Alberta there are no accessible distinctions-based housing services for Métis families in Alberta.

British Columbia

Sixteen different housing service providers were identified by LFMO's Environmental Scan. Nine of these service providers responded to the survey, giving a response rate of fifty-six percent in this category. Four of the sixteen providers are located in Vancouver or Victoria, while the rest were spread

out in smaller communities across the province. Housing services offered by various types of services included low-income or subsidized housing, emergency and transitional housing, rental housing, accessible housing options for seniors, and wrap-around supports.

One of the service providers LFMO contacted was unreachable, as their number was no longer in service. This organization has most likely closed its doors. Another organization was inaccessible to Métis clients. This organization was operated by a First Nations band council and only serves status First Nations clients.

All of the other organizations LFMO contacted operate from a pan-indigenous lens. Two of these service providers noted that they have some distinctions-based programming even though they operate from a pan-indigenous lens. One of these organizations noted that they have a distinctions-based focus for children and youth programming. Another organization operates very similarly, but it originally started as a Métis local and evolved into a Métis housing provider before expanding to a pan-indigenous housing provider. This organization does not want to exclude any Indigenous people from their programming so they evolved from a Métis-specific lens to a distinctions-based lens.

Legal Assistance

At the LFMO Women's Forum, Métis women stated clearly that they need Métis advocate programs to help navigate legal matters and the justice system. None of the service providers LFMO contacted offered this type of program. There is a gap in service provision if there are no service providers across the Métis Nation homeland that can hear Métis women's concerns and create programs to meet their unique needs.

Ontario

It proved challenging to connect with legal service providers in Ontario. LFMO identified seventeen different organizations providing legal services; only two of these organizations responded to the survey. This is a response rate of only approximately twelve percent. The majority of these organizations had multiple locations, dispersed across northern and southern Ontario. These organizations provide a wide range of services, including legal support on different matters, advocacy, education, court support, post-incarceration supports, and many other services.

One of the organizations that responded to the survey provided primarily legal support such as litigation on a variety of different topics. This organization works one on one with clients and adapt their services to be specific to Métis, First Nations or Inuit clients. Also, in the development of their programming they are inclusive of Métis perspectives and represent Métis culture. The other organization that responded to the survey focused their work on court supports and post-incarceration supports. They did not offer any culturally based programming or an Indigenous lens to their services. With the limited response from legal service providers, it is difficult to understand if there are and where gaps in services exist for Ontario Métis families.

Manitoba

Similar to Ontario, it was challenging to connect with legal service providers in Manitoba. Only two of ten identified service providers responded to the Environmental Scan survey, providing a response rate of twenty percent in this area. Service provided by all ten organizations ranged from court support, legal assistance, post-incarceration reintegration, police complaints, search and rescue, among many other legal services. All of these organizations are located in Winnipeg. This leaves a large gap in service provision for Métis families living in rural and remote communities of Manitoba. The two agencies that did respond to the survey did not apply a Métis or Indigenous lens to their programming and demonstrated no understanding of Métis history or culture. This demonstrates that there is another gap in service provision, with little to no distinctions-based or Métis specific services available in Manitoba.

Saskatchewan

There was a much higher response rate from legal service providers in Saskatchewan. LFMO identified eight different legal service providers and four of those providers responded. There was a fifty percent response rate in this category. Like other provinces, there was a wide range of services offered in this category. Some organizations provided legal advice, others were focused on incarceration issues and supports, and other provided outreach and advocacy services. All of the service providers identified are located in Saskatoon or Regina, leaving a large gap in service provision in all other areas of Saskatchewan. Two of the organizations LFMO connected with did not offer any culturally based services. One organization noted that they work from a client-centred approach and offer cultural support to Métis clients. Another organization noted that they have a cultural coordinator on staff that connects Métis clients with Métis-specific support.

Alberta

The Environmental Scan identified eight legal service providers in Alberta. Three of these service providers responded to the survey, allowing for a response rate of approximately thirty-eight percent. Service providers offered programs in education and advocacy, support for incarcerated persons, legal advice, and research. All of these organizations, except one, are located in Calgary or Edmonton, making them inaccessible to Métis families in rural and remote communities of Alberta. Two of the service providers that LFMO spoke with use a pan-indigenous lens when creating programs. One service provider confirmed that they use a distinctions-based approach with a Métis specific lens applied to services for Métis clients.

British Columbia

In British Columbia, LFMO identified thirteen legal service providers. Five of these service providers responded to the survey, giving a response rate of approximately thirty-eight percent. Service providers in this category provide programs focused on legal advice, court programs, supports for incarcerated persons, and programming specific to women. Six of these service providers are located in Vancouver, with the rest dispersed in smaller communities across the province. Two organizations LFMO spoke with work from a pan-indigenous perspective, with one organization referring out clients that require Métis specific supports. One organization does not apply any cultural lens to its programs and offers the same

lens to all clients. Two of the organizations offer distinctions-based programming and their Métis cultural supports are developed in conjunction with Métis communities and Elders.

Friendship Centres

Ontario

LFMO identified twenty-eight Friendship Centres in Ontario; ten of these Friendship Centres responded to the survey, providing a response rate of approximately thirty-six percent. Friendship Centres offered programs ranging from prenatal care to palliative care, including healing and wellness, children's programs, mental health and addictions, education and employment support, housing and homeless support and justice services. Friendship Centres were fairly evenly dispersed across the province, with several of these Friendship Centres operating in northern Ontario, such as Thunder Bay, Timmins and Sudbury or in urban centres such as Toronto and the surrounding areas, such as Mississauga and Peterborough. None of the Friendship Centres surveyed use a Métis lens in their programs; instead, they apply a pan-Indigenous lens or a First Nations lens to their programs and services. Three stated that they partner with the Métis Nation of Ontario for Métis-specific support if "needs present themselves". Rather than building Métis-specific programs within the Centres, the onus is on the client to identify this need and seek it out.

Manitoba

Connecting with Friendship Centres in Manitoba proved to be much more successful. LFMO identified twelve Friendship Centres in the province and was able to connect with eight of them, giving a response rate of approximately sixty-seven percent. Programs at the Friendship Centres included employment training services, youth programs and parent-child programs. One Friendship Centre provides a hot lunch program throughout the school year. Three identified using the Partners for Careers program. Two were located in Winnipeg, and the majority were in smaller cities, such as Portage La Prairie, Brandon and Riverton. Three were in smaller towns, demonstrating that rural Métis clients have less access to Friendship Centres compared to those in urban centres. Métis-specific programs existed in one Friendship Centre, with jigging and dancing, but this was not stated explicitly as Métis to participants; rather, it was heaped under an Indigenous lens. While Métis culture may be integrated into the programs, it is not named specifically.

Saskatchewan

It was difficult to connect with Friendship Centres in Saskatchewan; of the twelve that LFMO identified, only three responded, giving a response rate of twenty-five percent. Programs offered ranged from employment services, homelessness services and family violence programs. One Friendship Centre that was surveyed had a community garden to provide lower-income families with fresh food. The majority were located in urban centres, two were in towns and three were operating in northern villages. Of the three respondents, one Friendship Centre identified that teachings were equally split between Métis and

First Nations; the rest stated that their approach was that of a pan-Indigenous lens. While it is heartening to see that the Centres were spread more fairly across the province, although there is indeed room for improvement, it was disappointing to see the lack of attention paid to Métis identity, history and culture.

Alberta

It was also difficult to connect with Friendship Centres in Alberta; only six responded of the twenty that LFMO found, giving a response rate of thirty percent. Programs ranged from family support, early learning and children's programs, youth programs and senior support. However, one Friendship Centre noted that its youth program had since ended due to a lack of funding. Three who responded stated that they have women-specific programs. The majority were located in northern Alberta. Of those surveyed, rather than having a distinct Métis lens, employees again were cited Métis as sources of Métis culture. One Friendship Centre noted that they do typically take a pan-Indigenous approach but also highlight Métis history and traditions. Many of the respondents stated that they do have a high Métis population, which demonstrates there is indeed a need for distinct Métis services in the provinces.

British Columbia

Of the twenty-four Friendship Centres identified in British Columbia, fifteen responded, giving a response rate of approximately sixty-three percent. Programs included Elders programming, youth programming, employment support, health and mental wellness support and visitation support. One acknowledged the desire to hopefully begin a women's program in the future, as their men's program was opening soon. Another Friendship Centre provided a roots program so that individuals could access support when researching their ancestry. All of the Friendship Centres cited an encompassing approach that considered the 3 distinct groups in Canada; four of these noted that while that is the case, their approach is more First Nations specific. Many of the women's programs were centred around preventing violence, while the men's programs focused on empowerment. This pathological approach is noted in its absence of employing strengths-based language for women accessing these Friendship Centres.

Policing

LFMO found it extremely challenging to connect with policing service providers across the homeland.

Ontario

In Ontario, LFMO identified thirteen potential respondents; however, none of them responded to outreach. Services provided ranged from frontline services to the advocacy offered by one First Nation policing service.

Manitoba

LFMO identified two policing services for this survey; as was the case in Ontario, neither of them responded to outreach. Services included prevention, emergency response, recruitment and criminal record checks; one of the identified policing services also provides research and advocacy support.

Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, LFMO identified three potential policing services survey respondents; one responded, giving a response rate of approximately thirty-three percent. The one survey respondent was a First Nations policing service, who stated they did have one Métis employee, a special constable, who will later be receiving police officer constable training. Rather than a Métis lens, this policing service wholly provides First Nations specific support, noting that they rarely serve Métis clients. Services included prevention, emergency response, recruitment and criminal record checks.

Alberta

As was the case in many of the provinces surveyed regarding their policing services, none of the three identified policing services responded in Alberta. Services included prevention, emergency response, recruitment and criminal record checks. It should be of note that each of the potential respondents was located in smaller towns, providing access to non-urban residents in the province.

British Columbia

The one policing service identified in British Columbia was unable to respond to outreach; services included prevention, emergency response, recruitment and criminal record checks.

Women's Shelters/VAW Services

Ontario

LFMO identified one hundred and two potential women's shelters and violence against women services in Ontario; fifty-nine responded, giving a response rate of fifty-eight percent. Services provided included crisis lines and counselling, sexual assault services, advocacy and court support, emergency shelter and second stage housing support for women and children fleeing domestic violence and abuse. Six noted that they have programs focused on life skills, such as budgeting, healthy food and healthy relationships, also, to support related to fleeing domestic violence and abuse. Another noted that it travels to communities that require further support and outreach to better assist rural residents. While many shelters stated they had Indigenous support - mostly by way of offering to smudge - these supports were not Métis-specific and as a result, several shelters referred out if a client expressed a need for Métis support. Shelters stated that this is because of insufficient funding and because services are offered on an individualized basis, or are offered from a harm reduction, anti-racist or anti-oppression perspective.

Manitoba

There were nineteen women's shelters and violence against women services that LFMO identified in Manitoba. Of those nineteen, seven responded, giving a response rate of approximately thirty-seven percent. Services provided at these centres included immediate residential safety and housing support for women and their children fleeing violence and abuse, counselling, legal support and parenting workshops. Five were in Winnipeg, four were situated in First Nations communities, while the rest were in smaller cities across the province. None of the services were explicitly Métis-specific, but one did state that they will ask Métis clients if they are interested in culturally appropriate programming. Many stated that they operate from a client-centred approach rather than from a cultural background. One of the First Nations services works with Métis Elders in their programming.

Saskatchewan

Ten of the nineteen shelters that LFMO identified in Saskatchewan responded to the survey, giving a response rate of approximately fifty-three percent. Services ranged from safe housing for women and children fleeing violence, providing clothing and counselling. One shelter assisted in paying off client bills and utilities if needed. Another shelter explicitly served clients who are looking to leave gangs. The lens the shelters used were primarily First Nations, or an Indigenous lens as a whole that was not distinctions based, with efforts in one shelter to increase their Métis cultural support. As has been the case in many of the provinces surveyed, if a client expresses a need for Métis support, the shelters surveyed have stated they will do their best to assist; however, this puts the onus once again on the client to identify themselves and to more deeply navigate these processes.

Alberta

In Alberta, LFMO identified forty-four possible survey respondents who were women's shelters or violence against women services; twelve responded, giving approximately a twenty-eight percent response rate. These organizations provided services ranging from assisting women and children fleeing violence by way of emergency and second-stage housing, outreach and case management. One shelter stated that there are no Métis people in their region, and reiterated this statement even after discussing the local Métis association in the area. The lenses used, rather than Métis-specific, were instead focused around Indigenous awareness and inclusivity and being trauma-informed. Several were interested in learning more about what Métis-specific support would look like to expand their programming but cited a lack of capacity to put this into action.

British Columbia

It was a bit more challenging to connect with British Columbia's women's shelters and violence against women services. LFMO identified seventy-two in British Columbia; fourteen responded, giving a response rate of approximately nineteen percent. Eight of these organizations are located in Vancouver.

Services included housing support for women and children fleeing domestic violence and abuse, clothing exchange, youth programs and counselling services. Two noted that they were interested in expanding their cultural knowledge and support in addition to their already established approach of being trauma-informed and intersectional. Métis staff, in one shelter, were cited as the means for Métis cultural support once again; another shelter served only Métis clients if they were referred, otherwise, they only served those with status. In mainstream shelters, cultural support was not provided in-house but was referred out.

Youth Programs

Ontario

LFMO identified one youth program in Ontario; this youth program responded to the survey, giving a response rate of one hundred percent. This organization offers Canada's only 24/7, bilingual professional counselling, information and support service for young people. They have phone services (including texting), live chat support, connect youth with resources in their local community, and Indigenous initiatives. Through the Indigenous initiative's program, this organization is working in partnership with Indigenous peoples and allies to reduce barriers to access and ensure that every Indigenous young person can access our service offerings from coast to coast to coast.

However, they noted that there is an issue in Métis-specific data and has put in place practices to remedy this issue, including counselling training and updated survey questions to ask clients. In this organization, all Indigenous initiatives are led by an advisory council which includes Métis members and Métis subject matter experts to ensure that a Métis lens is applied to each of their programs.

Manitoba

Six youth programs were identified in Manitoba and four of these responded to LFMO, giving a response rate of approximately sixty-seven percent. One organization operated very similar in structure to the youth program in Ontario, as it is a branch of that very same organization. It had the same advisory council to inform its programs and initiatives to ensure Métis-specific needs were met. Services ranged from housing support, parent reunification, counselling and cultural support. Métis support within other organizations in Manitoba centred more around jigging and dancing. Five of the six organizations surveyed are in Winnipeg, leaving gaps for rural youth residents needing these services.

Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, LFMO identified one youth program who was unable to respond to survey questions, which led LFMO to research the organization. Located in Regina, this organization serves children with behavioural issues such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and oppositional defiant disorder. Operating from a similar approach as other youth organizations, instead of applying a distinctions-based approach, this organization employs an individualized approach to each client. Another area of focus for the organization is addressing barriers that clients face in accessing these services, in partnership with community members, professionals and external agencies. The organization provides services in a way that is culturally affirming.

Alberta

LFMO identified four youth-centred organizations in Alberta, two of whom responded, giving a response rate of fifty percent. Services included supported independent living and group homes, transportation and supervised visits with guardians and family. Both of the organizations that responded were Indigenous-led and designed, were non-distinctions-based and focused instead on case-by-case approaches with clients. Organizations were located in one of two urban centres, either Edmonton or Calgary, demonstrating a gap in access for rural Métis youth residents. One of the organizations surveyed had a Cultural Resource Coordinator who was responsible for overseeing cultural teachings and ceremonies.

British Columbia

In British Columbia, LFMO identified five youth organizations; four responded, giving a response rate of eighty percent. Services provided ranged from counselling, alternative schools, health and wellness program and housing and transitional services. One of the respondents had a Two-Spirit program in place. Another respondent had an innovative approach in its outreach to youth as it designed Indigenous comic books to bring awareness to Indigenous youth's health and social issues; coming out later this year is a Métis suicide prevention comic book. None of the respondents had Métis-specific cultural programming in place, instead opting for a pan-Indigenous approach for its clients. One respondent noted that if a youth expresses curiosity about their roots, the organization will do their best to research them. Three of the organizations were in Vancouver, and two were in Fort St. John and Courtenay.

Key Informant Interviews

Ontario

In Ontario, LFMO spoke with one key informant. This informant had many years of service in a variety of frontline service organizations, both in mainstream and Indigenous-focused organizations. This informant has experience in a wrap-around service centre, a VAW shelter, a women's resource centre, nursing, social services, and rehabilitation centres. Additionally, this informant is a Métis woman, active in Métis governance structures and has always been connected to women and women's issues. This key informant spoke about their lived experience accessing and providing frontline services in a variety of different fields.

When discussing what types of services are accessible to Métis families in Ontario, the key informant prefaced the discussion with a note that the services available in Northern and Southern Ontario are very different. The North West has unique needs, requiring more services and having different challenges related to geography. The majority of this key informant's experience as a service provider was in Kenora, Ontario. Services in this area are centralized in Kenora, with many surrounding communities and

reserves, accessing services in Kenora. The key informant suggested that this is not uncommon in northern communities, often smaller communities have to travel long distances to larger cities to access services.

Through our discussion, the key informant outlined a variety of service providers including the MNO, ONWA, WNHAC, Kenora Chiefs Advisory, CMHA, the local Friendship Centre, women's shelters and women's centres. The services provided by the Métis Nation of Ontario were held up as best-practices by this key informant. The informant even stated that while resources are often limited, staff go above and beyond to make a difference in the lives of the Métis families they serve. Additionally, this informant mentioned that the MNO has expanded services over the past few years and with this, there has been an increased level of staffing. Although capacity has increased in recent years, this informant suggested that there is still a need for greater capacity at different organizations, as services and resources are depleted quickly when new programs are introduced.

Outside of the MNO, many other service providers meet the needs of Métis women. ONWA was mentioned as another good service provider in the area. The key informant noted that ONWA actually recognizes Métis women, and other organizations often need to do more work in this area. Recently ONWA has also expanded in the region, but this is still not enough to keep up with the growing demands in the region. Similarly, the Waasegiizhig Nanaandawe'iyewigamig Health Access Centre (WNHAC) is another place where Métis families can access services, but due to capacity challenges, they are not currently taking on any new patients. The Kenora Chiefs Advisory recently have expanded programming to Métis people and this change has been welcomed by the community, but due to the organization's First Nations mandate, not all programs are accessible to Métis people. The local Friendship Centre also has a variety of programming, including a new emergency shelter in Kenora.

At CMHA in Kenora, there is a variety of mental health supports available, but they do not have programs built for Métis women and their families, meaning there is still a lot of education work that needs to occur in this organization to make their service culturally-safe for Métis families. Likewise, Women's Shelters and Resource Centres also provide supports and services to a large number of Métis women, but only one of these organizations has Indigenous-specific programming and partners with the MNO to provide this programming. One of these women-specific service providers has challenges maintaining Indigenous representation on their Board of Directors, and are slowly working to address issues related to cultural understanding with different Indigenous peoples. Additionally, one of the women-specific service providers in the area was described as excellent with a deep understanding of Métis culture and protocols, and working well with Métis women in the community. Another mainstream service, Victim's Services, was also highlighted as a great service provider. They assist people with court processes and other types of services and have a history of flying into different communities, I have heard a lot of positive response.

When discussing how Métis data is tracked and if a Métis lens is applied to service provision, the key informant noted that this will differ from organization to organization. That being said, this informant suggested that very few organizations track and store this data, with many mainstream service providers only tracking pan-indigenous data, rather than collecting distinctions-based data. Additionally, the key informant suggested that it is more likely for women's service providers to track data on gender, and these organizations are currently looking to change their data collections method to be more inclusive of gender-diversity, rather than focusing on male/female binary. Furthermore, it was suggested that while many of the organizations mentioned are very progressive, but unless partnering with the MNO, it is unlikely there is a Métis lens.

Throughout this key informant interview, a variety of gaps in service provision were identified. The informant identified that there are shortages of staff at almost every organization providing frontline services. For Métis families that can access services, the quality is good, but there is still a huge need for those that can't access and long wait times for those that cannot access services. As stated earlier, there are little to no programs that are specific to Métis women. Also, mental health support was another key area where a gap was identified. While MNO does have some mental health supports, programs are geared towards youth and not adults, only serving adults in crises. CHMA has demonstrated a lack of cultural knowledge around Métis communities and may not be appropriate for Métis families. This leaves a rather large gap for Métis women that require mental health supports. There is a huge need for prevention and intervention services in the region. This informant stated "prevention is where it's at!" in regards to mental health services.

Education and schooling were also identified as gaps. Education is so important for the future and our youth. The local school board in Kenora is interested in partnering with Métis for Métis specific education for teachers, but there is limited capacity at MNO to do this work in schools. Additionally, this informant noted that there is nothing to support students in PSE. There is one local Indigenous school, Seven Generations, but they are First Nations focused and the staff there are struggling to get Métis recognition. Comparably, police service was another area that this informant suggested that there needs to be Métis cultural education or training. Within the local policing agencies, there is no knowledge of Métis and they have no desire to learn, there needs to be a push to increase this awareness. This also reflected by the limited response LFMO received from policing agencies that were provided with the Environmental Scan survey. Police are often gatekeepers to Métis women's safety and a concerted effort is required by police forces to take steps towards reconciliation with the Métis Nation.

Healthcare is another area that was discussed at length by the key informant. In Kenora, most Indigenous healthcare providers are First Nations focused. This is often due to restrictive funding processes and agreements. Healthcare services need to be a priority in the Kenora region. The key informant described addictions as a growing issue in the community. With increasing levels of addiction in the area, there has also been an increase in crime, gang activity, and human trafficking. While healthcare services are currently a huge gap, the key informant did identify that there is a new hospital being build called the All Nations Hospital, and they are seeking input from MNO and Métis people. This hospital is a few years away from completion.

Transportation was another gap identified in the Kenora region. The key informant discussed how transportation funding is often restricted to shorter distances and this creates challenges for service provision to the smaller surrounding communities outside of Kenora. For example, Grassy Narrows is served by Kenora service providers, and they are about two hours away from the city. It was not until the recent suicide crisis in that community, that transportation funding was increased. Métis families should not have to wait until a crisis to have accessible transportation options to access frontline services.

After discussing various service providers and gaps in service provision, the discussion turned to best-practice models for service delivery. The Métis Nation of Ontario was the only organization using best-practices, according to the key informant. The process being used by MNO for service delivery is

reaching outwards. MNO has taken the lead in Métis-specific services and Métis-specific analysis in the province. While MNO was described as a best-practice service provider, the key informant noted that there needs to be more hiring of Métis people, especially for educational workshops that focus on history and culture. There needs to be more effort in hiring our own people in our governments and organizations. Additionally, the informant suggested while there may be heightened awareness at other organizations, there are no best-practices outside of the MNO.

Manitoba

LFMO was able to connect with a key informant that works as a frontline Residential Care Worker in the healthcare sector, specifically working in addictions treatment. This key informant is a Métis woman that works for an organization that is provincially recognized with multiple different locations across Manitoba, the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba. She is located in one of the smaller communities of Manitoba. This organization is not Indigenous or Métis-focused but is open to the general public. Another key informant is a Métis woman working as an Outreach Counsellor to women working in the sex trade. This key informant is located in Winnipeg working at a women's drop-in centre that delivers services to women involved in survival sex work, Sage House. This service provider offers medical services, resources, research and advocacy. With one informant being located in a more rural community and one informant located in the capital city of the province, this allows for a diverse geographic representation of service providers in Manitoba.

There are many challenges facing workers in the addiction treatment sector. One of the challenges outlined by a key informant was the number of treatment spaces and the duration of treatment programs in the addictions sector. At the location where this key informant worked, there are a limited number of beds and only twenty-one-day treatment programs. There is often a shortage of beds and there are no long-term spaces available. This key informant noted that their employer does not have any Indigenous or Métis specific beds in treatment facilities. The front-line worker suggested that it would go a long way to have Métis-specific programming and beds. Additionally, this key informant noted that they apply their cultural lens and knowledge to their work, but there are no formal culturally-based programs for clients or cultural competency training opportunities provided by the employer. However, this key informant did note that Métis clients find it to be a blessing when they have Métis support workers such as the informant.

There are also many challenges facing workers in the women's advocacy and sex worker support sectors. One of the challenges noted by a key informant is that the majority of these services are centralized in Winnipeg. A key informant in this sector noted that their organization only serves women and women-identified individuals. This organization provides cultural support as part of their programming. These supports are developed by working with Elders and local Métis communities. This key informant noted that women's drop-in centres, the provincial Métis women's organization, VAW shelters and the two-spirit Métis locals are the only service providers or outreach organizations that focus on gender-based services for Métis families. These service providers and outreach organizations are often overworked and under-resourced and a key informant suggested that there are never enough service providers available to meet the needs of Métis families and communities.

When discussing the intake process for Métis families accessing various services, key informants noted that it is unclear if organizations collect distinctions-based and gender data on their clients. Many

organizations do track this data, but it is inconsistently tracked or often tied to restrictive funding agreements that focus on providing services to First Nations clients. One key informant noted that they would be comfortable disclosing that they are a Métis woman when accessing services, while another key informant was less sure if they would disclose this information and noted that it would depend on the type of service, the specific service provider, and other factors. One key informant suggested that sometimes this data is shared between organizations but this is happening on an inconsistent basis.

Most of the services available in Manitoba are located in larger cities, this was noted by a key informant and confirmed by the Community Engagement participants and the Environmental Scan research. A key informant indicated that unless it is a program run by the Manitoba Métis Federation, there are little to no distinctions-based services for Métis women and their families in Manitoba. There are pan-indigenous service providers such as Friendship Centres and some universities with Indigenous Student Centres. Other mainstream service providers serve Métis clients such as community centres, health centres, housing programs, homeless shelters, VAW shelters, and education and training programs. This key informant also noted that lots of Métis women work in these different service sectors, doing their best to apply their cultural knowledge to service provision.

When discussing what types of services and resources are available to Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people in the province of Manitoba, a key informant noted that there is a difference in mainstream services and MMF services. Some of the mainstream service providers that Métis women are accessing include shelters (homeless and VAW), employment and training support, child and family services, and healthcare services. The Manitoba Métis Federation also offers many services to Métis families including housing, employment and training, seniors support, early learning and childcare, child and family services, citizenship/membership, harvesting services, and outreach to different Métis locals. However, a key informant indicated that currently, they are unaware of any MMF programming that is specific to women, girls or gender-diverse people. Both informants from Manitoba suggested that there is a large gap in services for Métis women at large, but even more so for Métis women and their families located in rural and remote communities.

A key informant in Manitoba identified some best-practice service delivery models that meet the needs of Métis women and their families. One of the programs mentioned is the seniors and Elders program by the MMF. This program connects people to the community and elders, growing friendships and support networks. One component of this program is the wild meat program for seniors, this provides access to traditional foods for those that can't hunt anymore. This program also has a large focus on cultural connections and activities. Another best-practice model that was discussed was in the child and family services sector. A key informant suggested that service providers using the wrap-around support model for child and family service provision have Métis women working as frontline service providers. The wrap-around model is supportive of diverse Métis families and offers programs that include the whole family. One key informant from Manitoba noted the wrap-around child and family service models should be held up as a best-practice and could be replicated by other service providers across the Métis Nation homeland. Additionally, a key informant noted that the Brandon School Division hosts an annual gala called Honouring the Good Road, celebrating Indigenous people in the community who live by the seven sacred teachings. One key informant suggested that this gala is looking to create more Métis-specific awards and that this should be held up as a best-practice in communities. Métis women need to celebrate their strength, resilience and be recognized for achievements in their communities.

Saskatchewan

One key informant interview was conducted in Saskatchewan. This key informant has been active within Métis governance and Métis women's organizations and is an experienced disability advocate. This key informant works for a community organization that promotes inclusion in all aspects of society and works towards creating programs in areas such as housing and transportation. This organization looks to break down barriers for people living with a disability. They take a person-centred approach that focuses on the unique needs of each individual client. Some of the main principles of the organization include self-advocacy, independence, dignity and respect.

When discussing what programs and services are available specifically for Métis women, the informant noted that there are not a lot of Métis-specific programs and even fewer programs for Métis women. Some of the organizations that serve Métis women are Les Filles de Madeline, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, the Native Women's Association of Canada's regional affiliate (Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation), SaskMétis Economic Development Corporation and Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc.

Les Filles de Madeline is the provincial organization representing the voices of Métis women in Saskatchewan. Within the organization, there is a Provincial Secretariat and each region has a President that serves on the Secretariat. The organization focuses on advocacy and often will run independent programs or partner with MNS to offer programs to Métis women. Programs are dependent on whatever the organization can secure funding. Right now, they are working on an event to commemorate the missing and murdered women in their communities. In the key informant's home region, they have been fundraising and have hosted cultural days specifically for women's health and wellness. The informant noted that Les Filles de Madeline often struggles to offer things when there are no grants or funding available. The key informant was hopeful to see new opportunities to access funding for Métis women's programs in the future. When discussing if a Métis lens is developed and applied to Les Filles de Madeline's programs the informant suggested that this was not a conscious decision, but as a Métis women's organization, their worldviews are Métis, meaning a Métis lens was developed without even thinking about it. They stated at both LFDM and MNS "we might not have even been conscious of this lens, we just do it because that's how we see the world."

The key informant also said that Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is another service provider that serves Métis families. While the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan does not only serve women, they are one of the only Métis-specific service providers and sometimes offer programs specifically for Métis women in partnership with Les Filles de Madeline. Some of the Métis locals also have programs specifically for Métis women. The informant noted that currently, MNS is currently rebuilding. They went on to state that while challenges were on-going, there was not a lot available in terms of programs and services for Métis families. The informant also noted that now everything is starting to get back on track and there are new programs in housing, education and other areas. The informant suggested that they haven't reached all of their goals yet, but are definitely progressing towards those goals.

Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation was another organization that the key informant suggested serves Métis women in the province. They noted that this organization takes a pan-indigenous approach and serves all Indigenous women. While the informant did suggest this organization is a resource for Métis women, the informant had never actually accessed any programs or services from them and did

not know anyone that had. They were unsure where they were located or if they have any Métis-specific or distinctions-based programs. They were also unsure how to find out more about the organization.

Other organizations discussed are affiliated with MNS, Metis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (MACSI), SaskMétis Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO), and Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI). The key informant explained that these organizations serve Métis families, but are not exclusive to women and gender-diverse people. MASCI provides drug and alcohol counselling and rehabilitation services. MEDCO is for economic development and they provide services such as grants and loans for Métis entrepreneurs. The key informant noted that MEDCO sometimes has grants and programs targeted for women entrepreneurs. GDI provides education and training opportunities to Métis families. All three of these affiliated organizations have multiple locations across the province. The key informant was not sure what the data collection processes are in place for these organizations but assumed as Métis organizations, that this data would be collected. When it came to a Métis lens, again the informant was not sure about the specific development processes in each organization but assumed that as Métis organizations that a Métis lens is unconsciously developed and applied.

This key informant also noted that there are some major gaps in services for Métis women in Saskatchewan and often it is difficult to advocate for Métis women's needs due to a lack of Métis-specific data. One example the informant mentioned was a lack of data around health care. They indicated that provincially if you are registered with a First Nations band, you get a distinction on your health card so that data is automatically collected. Métis people do not have any distinction on their health cards. The informant went on to suggest that data collection can be used to identify problems allowing communities to take a different approach to health awareness or treatment. They stated, "without the Métis data, it is difficult to present an argument that we need more or unique services, right?"

When discussing service gaps in their local community, they noted they live in a rural area and there is not a lot available generally. Regionally and in communities, the informant noted that there is a lack of cultural activities available and they would like to see this change. Some examples given were emergency shelters and housing for Métis women and their families. Again, the informant suggested that the region and province are trying to move in that direction but aren't there yet. Another area the key informant identified a gap in service provision was related to health and dental benefits. They suggested that often people ask if MNS or LFDM can cover things like prescription drugs or eyeglasses. The informant believes that those types of basic needs programs are not yet in place and they are important areas to look at.

Due to the growing capacity of Métis-specific service providers, the key informant was not sure that there are any best-practice models to highlight at this time. With the rebuilding of programs for Métis families on-going, the informant was not comfortable suggesting a local program. Additionally, this informant was less familiar with other programs across the homeland and did not feel comfortable suggesting programs from other provinces as best-practices. This informant believed the best-practice for service provision to Métis families in Saskatchewan was for Métis people to lead their own way forward.

Alberta

In Alberta, LFMO conducted interviews with two key informants. One of the key informants was employed by Shining Mountain Living Community Services. This is an organization that provides a wide range of community and housing services for clientele that is largely made up of Métis women; however, its services are not exclusive to Métis women and are open to all Indigenous individuals. Another key informant was a Métis Elder with experience working within Victim Services in Alberta. Victim Services are supports provided by the Alberta Government to victims of crime. Our key informant focused much of their discussion around how Victims Services works with families of MMIWG.

A key informant told LFMO that SMLCS has found that to ensure Métis-specific services, it is essential to begin from the ground up. In doing so, SMLCS continually applies a Métis lens to each of its programs and services. This includes Métis-specific cultural information, traditions and history, as well as Métis-specific information related to homelessness, domestic violence and health, such as HIV/AIDS, addictions, Hep C and other STBBIs. This lens has been developed by the Board of Directors, which is comprised primarily of Métis members from each of the four directions. Furthermore, many of the Board Members identify as women, allowing the lens to more accurately encompass the lived experiences of Métis women.

SMLCS also applies a plain-language approach to the information it circulates to its clients and the public. Because of this, important health information that the general public often finds hard to understand is made much more accessible. Because language is so important not only in terms of accessibility but also concerning Métis traditions, SMLCS is also opened a Michif class in Fall 2019. As discussed, there is a dearth of information surrounding Métis people. Because Métis-specific information and research is greatly lacking, SMLCS continually tracks data regarding whether a client is Métis, First Nations or Inuit as well as their preferred gender.

Shining Mountain Living Community Services also holds education and prevention workshops in small groups of no more than fifteen participants, which allows for greater safety and encourages more interaction. SMLCS has noted improvements in holding more intimate workshops, especially when discussing issues related to sexual health and culture. Our key informant also highlighted the need for constant education regarding Métis people as rights-bearing people in addition to explaining what it means to be Métis. This education should not only take place in workshops such as the ones SMLCS holds, but should also extend into the school curriculum and should cover topics such as knowledge of who Métis people are and their contributions to the province, country and world. This way, Métis children are better able to gain some pride and knowledge about who they and their ancestors are.

Victim services used to provide information to Métis families on support available to victims of crime and their loved ones. Victim services used to have a pamphlet with information on services when our key informant was a volunteer providing cultural support to families. Our key informant spoke with colleagues that still work in the field and noted that now they don't even have that. The key informant suggested that Victim Services in the province only tracks if clients are Indigenous, non-Indigenous, or immigrants. They do not have a clear picture of how many Métis clients they serve. When discussing the collection of distinctions-based statistics this key informant noted that getting lumped in with other Indigenous cultures can be unsafe for Métis women. The informant suggested that often Indigenous is conflated with First Nations. The informant stated: "I'm not Indian, I'm Métis!" and "No government is

going to tell me who I am!”

This key informant indicated that there are no culturally-based services for victims. There is a lack of understanding of Métis history and culture in law enforcement and legal services, meaning they are ill-equipped to provide culturally-based programming. For example, the key informant spoke of one incident where a family had lost a child to AIDS. The family asked for an Elder to be present, once they arrived, Victim Services said okay you're here now and left, providing no additional information on what services and resources were available. The key informant stated: “They have the professional resources, I'm an Elder, I have my own set of professional resources that are not the same as other professional resources.” It was clear that Victim Services could have provided more support to this family in need.

There is a lack of Indigenous service providers and no Métis-specific/distinctions-based outside of what is offered by the Métis Nation of Alberta. Rather than describe the experiences Métis women face in accessing services as gaps, our key informants both explain them as “giant holes”. There is a great lack of knowledge about Métis processes and protocols, as well as the distinct cultures of Métis people. Among many service providers, Métis and Indigenous are repeatedly treated as mutually exclusive categories, as if Métis are not Indigenous people themselves. There is also a great lack of understanding of Métis history, community, the contributions Métis people have made, Métis political organizations and rights.

What is often the case is that if a Métis person is hoping to connect with Métis-specific services, they often are directed to First Nations-specific services and programs, continuing the erasure Métis traditions and experiences. It was also suggested by one informant that future research should focus on asking service providers what they are doing for Indigenous cultural competency training, as it can make a huge difference to Métis women if they are accessing services that are culturally-appropriate and safe.

British Columbia

In British Columbia, LFMO interviewed one key informant. This individual is staff at Bridges for Women Society, an organization specializing in trauma-informed resources for Métis women. Currently, the organization is looking for new funding avenues after a two-year pilot program on creating trauma-informed resources completed. The organization is still sharing these resources within the Métis community but could reach a far larger audience with additional funding. This key informant, due to their background in trauma-informed work, has experience working with many different counselling services, child and family services, and other frontline service providers in the region. The informant also provided LFMO with insights into their lived experience as a Métis woman accessing service providers in their home community.

Bridges for Women Society works from a Métis lens. This lens was developed through analysis of past research and in collaboration with lived experience experts, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and grassroots Métis women. The trauma-informed resource project allowed BFWS to interview Elders, Knowledge Keepers, filmmakers, and other lived experience experts to develop a trauma-informed lens based on Métis culture. Through this work, BFWS staff discovered that because Métis women don't have “status”, access to professional counselling is a large barrier. Many can't afford counselling and don't have benefits or money to pay for these services, so they are suffering in silence. Métis women fall outside of First Nations health authority in the province, therefore, Métis women have to

disproportionately advocate for themselves. These women have to tell people what is culturally safe and what their specific cultural needs may be. This key informant indicated that it is very difficult to get funded programs for non-status Indigenous peoples. It is even more difficult for Métis women to advocate for themselves, women are not listened to by medical professionals in the same way as men.

When discussing what resources exist for Métis women in B.C., this informant noted that there are no programs targeting services for Métis women. There are Métis-specific programs, but as far as the informant was aware, there are no gender-specific programs for Métis families. Moreover, this informant stated that all services are located in cities, there are almost no service providers available in rural and remote communities of the province, and women in these areas face many barriers trying to access service providers.

The informant mentioned that many of the Métis child and family services providers in B.C. do offer a variety of wrap-around programs to Métis families, but often Métis women without children are unable to access these programs and have to find other available options. Another wrap-around service provider that was discussed by this informant was Indigenous Friendship Centres. The informant noted that Centres located in communities with larger Métis populations and Centres with Métis staff and board members were much more accessible to Métis women. Additionally, the informant suggested that in B.C. there are still tensions between some First Nations and Métis communities, meaning these centres may not always be culturally-safe options for Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people.

Another topic of discussion that came up in this interview, was around distinctions-based data collection. The informant noted in their personal experience working with other frontline service providers, often the service providers did not understand the importance of collecting distinctions-based data. This statement was also supported by the findings of the Environmental Scan research. Many service providers and frontline workers do not understand that there is a huge difference in programming available to Indigenous with “status” and those without. As Métis women fall outside of status laws, many frontline service workers will direct Métis women to programs that they are ineligible for.

This informant also discussed organizational capacity as a challenge that many service providers are facing. The described the landscape of service providers in the province as having a “hodgepodge of capacity.” Even when Métis-specific or distinctions-based services do exist, these organizations are not without capacity challenges. Greater levels of funding for all areas of service provision are required to address the patchwork of services and organizational capacity.

One of the goals of this interview was to identify best practices for service delivery. Two organizations that were identified as using a best-practice model were the Métis child and family service agencies in Quesnel and Williams Lake B.C. Both of these agencies partner with the community to develop programs to meet their needs, work with Elders and Knowledge Holders to develop culturally-based programs, work directly with the government (Métis, federal and provincial), and provide a wrap-around service model. Within this discussion five criteria were listed for best-practices service delivery to Métis women: community-led development, partnerships with funders, Elder and Knowledge Holder incorporation, using trauma-informed, harm-reduction and prevention-focused service lens, and strengths-based and culturally safe service delivery.

Themes Identified in Project Findings

While conducting this research, LFMO began to see several themes arise. Among mainstream service providers, and often even in Indigenous service providers, there are very few distinctions-based services available and as a result, the Métis experience is often overlooked. Often where there are Indigenous programs available, they are centred on First Nations teachings, traditions and history. While these programs are incredibly valuable and important to communities, the problem lies in that they take a pan-Indigenous approach based only upon First Nations culture which is intended to represent all Indigenous people. In addition to this flagrant misrepresentation, another issue is that this approach conflates the three distinct groups entirely, erasing their unique traditions and teachings and overlooking their distinct identities. When Métis people seek services that represent them and their unique circumstances, they are unable to because of this commonly used pan-Indigenous approach. In cases where organizations did indicate that they had Métis-specific programs, these programs were jiggling and fiddling, rather than focused on Métis traditions and history, and often took place only at events rather than year-round. What's more, is that respondents often confused the three distinct groups with each other, could not identify them at all or misunderstood the categories, i.e. one respondent stated that they have First Nations and Indigenous programs as if they are mutually exclusive categories.

Another troubling theme that LFMO identified when conducting this research is that when a significant number of service providers were asked if they apply a Métis lens to their work, the most common response was no; another common response was that these organizations have Métis staff on board. This was the only form of Métis-specific support for these organizations, and so the burden falls on Métis staff to deliver culturally appropriate training regarding Métis history, culture, traditions, teachings and so much more, in addition to the position they already hold. Expecting Métis staff to be the only Métis support is a form of tokenism. It also indicates that Métis-specific support is delivered on an ad-hoc basis rather than built into the organization's structure, and so consistency cannot be assured and results cannot be measured.

It also became apparent across the homeland that due to a lack of government funding and poor funding models, many organizations have had to close programs or close entirely. Organizations that did once service the Métis community, such as Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Centre and White Buffalo in British Columbia, have had to close their doors. Other organizations have had to close women's programs because they simply did not have the funds. Upon closure, other organizations in the community are at capacity or over capacity as clients are forced to find alternative programs to meet their needs. In other cases, some organizations only served status First Nations clients as their funds only cover those with status, leaving nearby Métis who need these services in the lurch.

Repeatedly throughout LFMO's research, it became clear that many service providers employ a deficit-based model in their approach to Métis services, rather than one based on strengths. Typically, programs were focused on 'vulnerable' youth and women in areas such as domestic violence and emergency shelter, poor parent-child relationships, addictions, STBBIs and court support. This is not to say these programs are not important; indeed, they meet the needs of many Métis women and youth and are incredibly valuable to the community. However, there is a great lack of organizations and programs that seek to empower Métis women and youth and to teach them of their history and traditions as rights-bearing people. As an example of a strengths-based program and approach respectively, one organization

arranged annual trips for youth to travel to Batoche and staff regularly spoke Michif, with Michif sayings and signage on the walls of the building, which in turn was in the shape of an infinity sign.

Many organizations were in urban centres or large cities, leaving little access for Métis people living in remote and rural communities. Because transportation is often difficult in these areas, individuals are cut off from receiving extremely important and even necessary, life-changing services. To mitigate this, one health organization routinely goes to remote communities to provide services to those often unable to reach them. However, this practice was the only one of its kind as far as LFMO's research goes.

Gaps in Research and Services

This multi-pronged research approach discovered that there are large gaps in the available data on Métis women, girls and even more so for gender-diverse people. During community engagement, grassroots Métis women identified that the Governing Members serve their needs and while mainstream and pan-indigenous services are available, many of these agencies lack cultural-competency and are not culturally-appropriate or culturally-safe for Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people. Moreover, the Environmental Scan research identified large gaps in service provision to Métis families with even larger gaps for women, youth and rural communities. Furthermore, key informants that work as frontline service providers in different sectors, described the gaps in services as “giant holes” rather than gaps in service provision.

Within the community engagement, Métis women identified a variety of gaps in service provision. Throughout the different engagement sessions, Métis women identified that there are gaps in the following service sectors: education/training, childcare, housing/VAW shelters, physical/mental health supports, transportation, cultural supports and access to ceremony. When looking at education and training, Métis women pointed out that many programs for Indigenous peoples are restricted to “status” holding First Nations and Inuit peoples. Métis women also noted similar restrictions are seen in many medical and mental health service providers. Transportation is a common barrier that Métis women identify when accessing services. Many rural and remote communities have no access to public transportation and many provinces have little to no transit connecting various cities. Participants stated that the lack of accessible transportation puts Métis women at a higher risk of experiencing violence, something that must be taken seriously and addressed immediately.

Childcare was an area that was not covered by the Environmental Scan but was identified as a very prominent gap in service provision across the Homeland. Future research efforts should focus on Métis families and Indigenous Early Learning and Childcare programs to better understand this gap and provide recommendations to address this service gap. Housing and emergency women's shelters were also identified as a service need for Métis families. Participants focused discussion around emergency services (for preventing homelessness and assisting women in violent situations) rather than other housing needs such as mortgage support or home repair programs. Further research is needed to better understand the unique housing needs of Métis families. Additionally, delegates suggested that there is limited access to cultural supports for Métis families. While LFMO's research asked organizations if they apply a cultural lens to programming, the Environmental Scan did not identify any organizations that provide strictly cultural supports or programs, and this is an area that should be considered in future research endeavours.

The Environmental Scan identified many gaps in service provision to Métis women, girls, gender-diverse people and their families. Some service sectors that exhibited common themes across different regions of the Homeland include Violence Against Women Services, Crisis Lines and Policing Services. Both crisis services and police services posed challenges connecting with actual frontline workers. In both of these areas, often the contact information available was limited to emergency support lines, and LFMO did not believe it was appropriate to call emergency lines with questions regarding a research project. Many women's shelters and VAW service providers use a trauma-informed lens, which is an excellent practice. It was clear from the Environmental Scan research that there is little or no distinctions-based services or Métis-specific shelters or service providers. What is challenging about this is that many First Nations communities have access to VAW or women's shelters, but due to funding policies that only recognize "status", Métis women do not have access to the same level of services that First Nations women do. Furthermore, many mainstream service providers are culturally-unsafe for Métis families and there is little to no access to these services for families in rural or remote communities.

As suggested earlier, it was challenging connecting with crisis lines and police services. Many crisis lines do not have any contact information available other than the crisis line itself. This led to low participation rates in this category of the Environmental Scan. Furthermore, there were no regional crisis lines identified in Ontario and Alberta. While some distinctions-based programs were identified, the overall poor response rates from crisis line service providers means it is difficult to understand how effective these services are. Similarly, there was little to no response from police agencies. Only one First Nations police service agency in Saskatchewan responded to LFMO's research requests. Major policing agencies such as the RCMP and the OPP did not provide any response to the multiple requests from LFMO. With the limited response, LFMO was not able to collect enough data to understand if there are any distinctions-based or Métis specific policing programs or identify any best-practice service models. The unwillingness of policing organizations to respond to multiple research requests demonstrates that there is little to no interest in embracing reconciliation and addressing the issues Métis families face when encountering the colonial justice system.

When looking at many of the service categories, there were unique circumstances in different provinces of the Métis Nation homeland. Many services are under the authority of provincial governments, meaning different regions will have different levels of funding, and different styles of programming based on the different rules imposed by different legislatures. Even more complex, when looking at Indigenous service providers some receive support from federal and provincial governments, meaning service providers are shaping their programs based on the funding opportunities from various levels of government. Complex funding arrangements often impede the types of services that organizations can provide to their clients.

Most HIV/AIDS service providers created similar barriers for Métis families trying to access these services. Generally, these service providers do not use a culturally-specific lens but take a pan-indigenous approach. Even more troubling, most of these services are inaccessible to rural and remote communities. When looking at variations between regions, in Alberta and British Columbia, LFMO cannot conclude if there are distinctions-based or Métis-specific HIV/AIDS programming. Overall, there is a gap in Métis-specific or distinctions-based programming and an even larger gap for Métis families living in rural and remote communities.

Child and family services varied significantly between regions. Children's services fall under provincial jurisdiction, with each province operating different service provision models. Some provinces fully delegate authority to Indigenous service providers, while some provinces use other more rigid service delivery models. In Ontario, the Children's Aid Society is responsible for CFS service delivery. There

was only one pan-indigenous Children's Aid Society location identified in this research and they do not use a Métis lens when developing programs. Therefore, there are no Métis-specific or distinctions-based CFS programs in Ontario, leaving a very large gap for Métis families in the region. In Manitoba, there are delegated agencies with a Métis focus to CFS provision. The three Métis Child and Family Service providers identified in this research were held up as a best-practice model offering culturally-based wrap-around support to Métis families. The research in Saskatchewan identified one Métis-specific service provider, but the phone line for this organization was disconnected, meaning it is likely they are no longer providing services, creating a gap in distinctions-based or Métis-specific child and family services. Similar to Manitoba, Alberta has three Métis CFS agencies, all recommended as best-practices that should be replicated across the homeland. British Columbia also has Métis-specific or distinctions-based CFS agencies, and participants in this research suggested that these agencies also employ best-practices that should be replicated in other communities.

There were very limited services available in the mental health sector across the homeland. In Ontario and Alberta, LFMO was unable to connect with any service providers. Although LFMO did not connect with service providers in these regions, the insignificant number of services available in these provinces, and even more limited trauma-informed indigenous-focused services, demonstrate a clear gap in service provision. Service providers in Manitoba do not use any distinctions-based or Métis specific lens when developing programs and services. Further to this challenge, LFMO was unable to identify any rural or remote service providers, creating another large gap in service provision. The research in Saskatchewan turned up similar results. There are no distinctions-based services identified by the Environmental Scan in Saskatchewan and some service providers conflated First Nations and Métis cultures, meaning these services may be culturally unsafe for Métis families. British Columbia was similar to many regions, with no Métis-specific or distinctions-based services outside of what is offered by the Métis Nation. While service providers in B.C. acknowledged that the lack of distinctions-based programming was a gap in services, these organizations rely on Métis staff to fill this gap, without recognizing the harm that this can cause to staff, clients and the organization.

Moving from mental health to physical health, there are similar challenges in service provision. Generally speaking, there is very limited distinctions-based or Métis-specific services or resources. In Ontario and Alberta, participants suggested that there are limited distinctions-based service providers, and even more limited access for rural or remote communities. In all of the other three provinces, there are limited Métis-specific health programs and a complete gap in service for rural communities. In Saskatchewan, while there were no distinctions-based services identified, one organization has a patient advocate or navigator service and this was identified as a best-practice for service provision by grassroots Métis women.

LFMO identified large gaps in the employment and training service provision sector. Generally speaking, many service providers struggled to understand how to apply a Métis lens to their programming and why a cultural lens would be important to employment and training services. To address the unique needs of Métis women and their families, basic cultural competency and historical background is a necessity. When looking at the employment and training services provided across the homeland, there were large gaps in distinctions-based services and even larger gaps for families living in rural and remote communities. The only exception to this was in Ontario and B.C. where some reserves have employment and training services, but these services are inaccessible to Métis clients due to funding and "status" regulations.

When it comes to housing services, there are limited distinctions-based or Métis-specific programs. In Ontario and Saskatchewan, there are some distinctions-based services available to Métis families seeking

housing support, but there are large gaps in rural and remote regions of both provinces. Additionally, in Manitoba LFMO was unable to identify any housing providers (outside of the Métis Nation) that operate from a distinctions-based approach. At this time, LFMO cannot make any statements about the current services in Alberta, as none of the housing providers responded to any of our requests for information. British Columbia's Métis residents also have limited access to Métis specific services, but the service providers are more geographically dispersed, allowing more rural and remote Métis communities to access these services. With little to no Métis-specific or distinctions-based programming in the housing sector, there is a clear gap in service provision to Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people.

Legal service providers were also surveyed through Environmental Scan research. In Ontario, there was a very low response rate from service providers in this category. At this time, it is not clear if gaps exist. Further research is needed to identify any service gaps in the Ontario legal sector. The prairie provinces all demonstrated large gaps in service provision to rural and remote communities. LFMO was unable to identify any Métis-specific or distinctions-based programming in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Alberta and British Columbia do have some distinctions-based programming, but a very limited number of service providers are using this approach. Overall, there is no access to legal services for Métis women in rural and remote communities of the homeland and in larger urban centres there is a limited amount of Métis-specific programming. Much work needs to be done to close this large gap in service provision for Métis families.

When discussing who serves the needs of Métis women, community engagement participants discussed Friendship Centres at length. Most Friendship Centres across the homeland operate from a pan-indigenous or First Nations lens. Many of the participants (in various stages of the research) identified these spaces as service delivery hubs with wrap-around supports. While the wrap-around model has been recommended as a best-practices, there are some challenges that Métis women may face when accessing services at Friendship Centres. Many of these organizations rather than building Métis-specific programs within the Centres, the onus is on the Métis client to identify this need and seek it out. In many cases, Métis culture may be integrated into the programs, it is not named specifically. In Centres with Métis board members and large Métis populations in the local community, there is often a higher level of cultural competency regarding Métis history and culture. It was noted by some organizations that they rely on Métis staff as the only Métis-specific resource for Métis clients. This is an unfair burden to place on Métis staff, as one individual does not represent an entire culture. What was even more troubling, is the lack of attention paid to Métis identity, history and culture by most centres, especially those without any Métis staff. A majority of centres are using an encompassing approach that considers the three distinct groups in Canada. However, many noted that while that is the case, in theory, their approach is more First Nations specific in practice. Unlike other service sectors, Friendship Centres are more geographically dispersed and are more accessible to rural and remote areas of the Métis Nation homeland.

Compared to other service areas, LFMO found it challenging to identify programs for Indigenous youth. In all of the provinces, there were huge gaps for Métis youth seeking programs in rural or remote communities. Saskatchewan was the only region that LFMO did not receive any response from youth service providers. In Ontario and British Columbia, there were no Métis-specific or distinctions-based programs identified. When it came to Manitoba, there are more youth programs available than other regions, but all of the programs identified in the Environmental Scan were located in Winnipeg, leaving the rest of the province with a service gap. With limited youth programs across the homeland, young Métis women, men, girls and boys are unable to access the supports and service they need.

The two largest gaps identified in this research are related to geography and funding. Rural and remote communities across the homeland do not have equitable access to services. With limited affordable, accessible and reliable public transit options in rural and remote communities, many Métis families are unable to access service providers in large urban centres. This creates an even larger barrier for rural families seeking these supports and services. Moreover, many organizations that were surveyed in this research indicated funding as the main barrier to providing Métis-specific or distinctions-based services. Many organizations rely on federal or provincial funding to assist with day-to-day operations and service provision. Funding from the federal government and respective provincial governments, is often tied to status laws, meaning Métis-specific programming is ineligible for any funding tied to status. While this trend is beginning to be reversed with the current federal government approach (nation-to-nation), historically there have been large service gaps for Métis communities, and it will take time and funding to create programs to fill these gaps. Furthermore, LFMO community engagement participants stressed the need for more in-depth analysis of each service area, and specific engagement with various groups including but not limited to: single parents, those that have been involved in the child welfare and justice systems, LGBTQ2S+ people, and people living with disabilities.

Conclusion

LFMO Priorities

As stated in LFMO's first strategic plan in 2013, our vision is to be an organization of strong Métis women who are the voice of women across the Métis Nation homeland, with a significant role in enhancing the socio-economic and cultural wellbeing of all Métis people. We want to ensure that Métis women from across the homeland are safe, connected, empowered and have the capacity to work with other Canadian and Métis organizations to help create the conditions for healthy, vibrant and productive communities throughout the Métis Nation.

The priorities for LFMO moving forward were discussed at the Women's Forum. Many of these priorities align or are closely related to the priorities and objectives listed in the 2013 Strategic Plan. These priorities include:

1. Engagement with Grassroots Métis Women, Girls, and Gender-Diverse People
2. Advocacy and Research
3. Communication and Information Sharing
4. Enhancing the Socio-Economic and Cultural Wellbeing of all Métis People

Engagement with Grassroots Métis Women, Girls, and Gender-Diverse People

Métis women have identified grassroots approaches as a foundation of the work LMFO must be doing to represent and advocate for their unique needs. Distinct from First Nations and Inuit, Métis women have unique political and organizational approaches. Although Métis women experience the impacts of colonization, residential schools, and the 60's scoop in different ways, we share common experiences of various socio-economic determinants such as poverty, criminalization, and intersecting violence. This is further amplified by a long history of non-recognition by various levels of Canadian governments and a

general lack of awareness of the unique and vibrant Métis culture, history, and ways of knowing and being. Lack of available data on Métis communities makes engagement necessary to fulfill LFMO's mandate. Métis women have clearly stated that a top-down approach is not the way of our people and the work that LFMO does has to be community-based focusing on grassroots perspectives of Métis women, girls, gender-diverse people and their communities.

Advocacy and Research

Grassroots Métis women believe LFMO must continue to be the voice of Métis women across the homeland. Continuing to build research and data that are distinctions based on a GBA+ lens is essential to LFMO's advocacy work. As identified in this research project, there are still significant gaps in data surrounding the lived experiences of Métis women and LFMO will continue to work towards filling these gaps to effectively advocate on behalf of the women we represent. Additionally, with continued research LFMO will be able to develop policy papers, positions, and identify areas where more research is necessary to adequately meet the needs of Métis women and their families across the homeland. LFMO will continue to work towards the development of a strong, effective and sustainable dedicated Métis women's organization to advocate for, and represent the interests and needs of Métis women at a national level through full and equal participation with greater capacity to deliver informed substantive outcomes and policy positions.

Communication and Information Sharing

Métis women would like to see enhanced communication and information sharing from LFMO on current programs and priorities that the Government of Canada is bringing forward. Métis women have identified that it is often challenging to find and navigate federal programs that are dedicated to meeting their needs. LFMO works closely with the Government of Canada and many federal departments allowing us to flow information to Métis women on programs and services available to them, their families and their communities. Through partnerships with provincial Métis women's organizations, LFMO will continue to facilitate communication and information sharing between the Government of Canada and Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people. Additionally, LFMO recommends that the Government of Canada and provincial governments should look into new communication strategies around funding and program opportunities for Métis people, as suggested by participants in this research project.

Enhancing the Socio-Economic and Cultural Wellbeing of all Métis people

One of the primary objectives of LFMO since our first strategic plan has been to enhance the socio-economic and cultural wellbeing of all Métis people. At the Women's Forum, Métis women reaffirmed that LFMO is on the right path with this objective. Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people continue to push for the preservation and protection of cultural knowledge and traditional ways of knowing. LFMO will continue to advocate for the cultural wellbeing of our women. Furthermore, Métis women identified a variety of socio-economic issues that they want to see LFMO focus on moving forward. Some of the issues identified include: education, employment, income support, safe affordable housing, supports for GBV, supports for physical mental emotional and spiritual wellbeing, early learning and childcare, elder care, justice issues and how to navigate the justice system, child and family services, food and nutrition among other areas. All of these priorities have been renewed and reaffirmed by these research findings. By continuing to focus on these issues and advocate for change, LFMO will enhance

the socio-economic and cultural wellbeing of all Métis women, girls, gender-diverse people and their entire communities.

Best-Practice Service Delivery Models

As hypothesized, there were a variety of best-practice service delivery models identified by Métis women and frontline service workers. The service providers using the following principles should be considered best-practice service providers: led by and created for Métis families, culturally-grounded, distinctions-based, wrap-around services, trauma-informed, harm-reduction, prevention over intervention, flexible and sustainable funding mechanisms. One of the key insights provided through this research is that Métis communities are experts in the needs of their communities, consequently, service providers that have Métis leaders are much more well equipped to understand the needs of a community and provide services that meet those needs. Likewise, principles that encompass a Métis worldview, were consistently brought up in different parts of the raw data. Culturally-based, Métis-specific, trauma-informed, harm-reduction and prevention-first models of service delivery were discussed concerning a variety of service sectors and were always recognized as best-practices for service delivery to Métis women.

Many of the service providers and informants that LFMO spoke with throughout this research, identified programs and services offered by the Métis Nation Governing Members as best-practice. One informant discussed at length the Elders and Seniors programs at MMF and specifically mentioned the senior-oriented parts of the Garden Bed program. This individual has personal experience using the program and stated the program had a huge impact on their general well-being having that support and connection to other Métis seniors. Not only does this program involve seniors, but it brings in support from the entire community. Younger members of the community that are still able to hunt and prepare traditional foods, share their harvest with the seniors that may not be able to participate in these activities anymore.

Some organizations outside of the Métis Nation were also cited as using best-practice models for service delivery to Métis women and their families. In many regions, child and family service agencies were praised, specifically for wrap-around and prevention-based service models. While some of these agencies are run by Métis Nation Governing Members, others are run by provincial governments or non-profit organizations. As stated previously, two specific agencies in British Columbia were cited as providing excellent frontline service to Métis women and their families. Similarly, the four child and family service agencies run by the MMF also were recommended as best-practice models. Both of these examples have programs run by and for Métis families, are created in collaboration with communities and Elders, are focused on prevention over apprehension, and offer culturally-based wrap-around services to Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people.

Policy Recommendations

Throughout this project, several common themes and gaps in service provision were identified by grassroots Métis women. From these findings, LFMO has developed clear policy recommendations for all levels of Canadian and Métis governance. The recommendations that have been brought forward by this

research project include the following themes: data, funding, transportation, and frontline service provision.

Data

One of the recurring challenges that LFMO faces when researching and advocating for Métis women, is the large data gaps surrounding the experiences of Métis families and communities. Part of this challenge is the different definition of Métis used by Statistics Canada. Métis governments and organizations do not have the capacity and tools to collect the same data as Statistics Canada. Until Statistics Canada accepts the Métis definition of who is Métis, it is difficult for LFMO to use any statistics or research that comes from the Canadian Government. Currently, the MNC and Statistics Canada are working collaboratively to find a solution to this challenge.

LFMO represents the needs and interests of Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people. Currently, there is little to no data available that explores gender beyond the traditional male and female binary. Until 2018, all Statistics Canada surveys asked respondents to check the male or female option in the gender-related questions. Therefore, all data collected before 2018 did not recognize trans, two-spirit, non-binary or gender-diverse Métis women and girls. In 2018, Statistics Canada updated its methodology to include a gender-diverse option, but there has been little data published to date since this change has come into effect. The problem here is that this approach conflates and relegates all of these identities into an ‘other’ category and ignores their differences. Furthermore, WAGE released its GBA+ to ensure that federal policies are more equitable in their approach and outcomes; a crucial step of this analysis includes recognizing gender identities beyond the binary. More data and research are required to understand the unique needs of trans, two-spirit, non-binary or gender-diverse Métis women and girls. Gender is not a box that can be checked; it is fluid and can change over time, creating a need for less rigid data collection methods on gender identity.

Additionally, LFMO has a recurring challenge accessing reliable disaggregated data. It is important to analyze both aggregated and disaggregated data to get a clear understanding of the needs of Métis women. Aggregated data would look at whole populations (for example, the entire Métis population) and look at trends from a big-picture perspective. Disaggregated data would allow LFMO to understand how different subsets of a population (for example Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people) fit into the bigger-picture perspective. Access to reliable disaggregated data would allow LFMO to make policy recommendations that are evidence-based and statistically significant.

Therefore, LFMO recommends:

1. Statistics Canada must agree to use the Métis Nation definition of Métis to have a clear understanding of what are the needs of Métis communities and families through the census and other surveys;
2. Statistics Canada must engage with gender diverse Indigenous individuals and groups to determine necessary identities that must be included in data collection; and
3. Statistics Canada uses the technology available to create online user-friendly tools to allow external researchers to easily access disaggregated data. Additionally, LFMO will establish a working relationship with the department to allow for the exchange of information relevant to Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

Funding

Funding was another major barrier for service provision to Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people. As noted by many organizations and key informants, funding is often tied to status laws, meaning Métis-specific programming is far less likely, due to much more restrictive funding opportunities. In almost every service sector, Indigenous service providers noted they take a pan-indigenous approach to be eligible for more funding opportunities. Even when funding is available for distinctions-based or Métis-specific programming, it often falls short of addressing the gaps in service provision for many Métis communities. This research has identified a clear gap in service provision to Métis families and grassroots Métis women have indicated that distinctions-based and Métis-specific programming are essential to addressing this gap. Furthermore, LFMO will not support taking away from funding made available to First Nations and Inuit communities but instead wants to see more funding opportunities made available to all distinctions-based programs.

Participants at LFMO's Women's Policy session also identified a need for more clear communication around funding programs and opportunities from all levels of government. Many of the women that participated in the engagement are members on boards or staff at one of the Governing Members, Local or Regional Métis Councils or provincial Métis women's organizations, giving them first-hand experience in the processes involved in applying for government funding or grants. Many women indicated that they find out about opportunities after calls for proposals have closed, by hearing second-hand from other organizations or regions about the proposals they have submitted. The participants suggested that all government departments and agencies should develop new communications strategies around funding opportunities or calls for proposals. Many organizations have limited capacity and cannot seek out various funding opportunities within all levels of government.

Therefore, LFMO recommends:

1. Improve access to all services for all Métis families by the introduction of long term and predictable forms of funding;
2. Allow for funding opportunities to include capital investments to create new infrastructure when necessary and repair any outdated infrastructure;
3. Funding must be controlled by communities, with enough financial resources provided to implement sustainable culturally-relevant solutions and strategies appropriate each community; and
4. All government departments and agencies must develop new communications strategies around funding opportunities or calls for proposals, allowing funding opportunities to reach grassroots Métis communities, ensuring that anyone that wishes to apply for funding has the opportunity to do so.

Transportation

Although this research project did not survey any transportation service providers, transportation was consistently identified as a barrier that many Métis women face when trying to access services. The data from the Environmental Scan indicated transportation was an issue in almost every service category, in every region. Access to transportation was even more critical when speaking with women's shelters and VAW service providers. For many women trying to access these services, accessible transportation is a huge factor in their immediate safety.

Geography was one factor that created huge gaps in service provision. For many Métis families in rural and remote communities, there is a complete absence of service providers, meaning these families require transportation to access services away from the community. Many families do not have access to a personal vehicle and need to use public transportation options to access service providers. While LFMO recognizes the challenges that service providers face trying to maintain their organizations/businesses in smaller or rural communities, funding for frontline services should include support for individual transportation costs or to allow for capital purchases such as vans and buses. This would allow service providers to assist with transportation on a needs-basis and fill a huge gap for many Métis families living in rural and remote communities across the homeland.

Therefore, LFMO recommends:

1. All levels of government explore creating more accessible, affordable, public transportation services.
2. All levels of government allow funding opportunities to include dedicated budgets for individual transportation support or creating transportation infrastructure to support access to programming.

Service Provision

As identified by various participants in this research project, while there are limited service options available, some best-practice models do exist and should be used as models for new programs and service agencies. Several criteria that came forward in different aspects of the research, including community-led development, partnerships with funders, Elder and Knowledge Holder incorporation, using wrap-around, trauma-informed, harm-reduction and prevention-focused service lens, and strengths-based and culturally-safe service delivery. Métis families are best served by Métis organizations and the Métis Nation. This is not to say that Métis families do not want to access other service providers, but Métis-specific service providers are preferential because there is an assumption of cultural awareness and safety in these spaces.

Often mainstream and pan-indigenous service providers serve the needs of Métis families. These service providers often have varying levels of Métis cultural-awareness. Additionally, pan-indigenous service providers often have funding agreements tied to status laws meaning many programs for Indigenous peoples are restricted to “status” holding First Nations and Inuit peoples. Additionally, as identified by a key informant, in some communities there are still high tensions between First Nations and Métis people and often pan-indigenous service providers in areas with high tensions are not culturally-safe for Métis families. Furthermore, some mainstream service providers conflated First Nations and the Métis Nation demonstrating that many mainstream service providers are also culturally-unsafe for Métis women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

Cultural competency training with a Métis lens is one way to help mainstream and pan-indigenous service providers to become more culturally-safe for Métis families. Federal and provincial governments should collaborate with LFMO and the Métis Nation to develop a Métis lens to cultural-competency training. This should include history, culture, contemporary realities, kinship structures, historical and contemporary trauma and other concepts specific to service provision. This training should include Elders, Knowledge Keepers and guest speakers. Training programs must be evaluated on an on-going basis by Métis communities, Elders and Knowledge Keepers to ensure that training

efforts are making a difference to Métis families accessing frontline services. These steps will help to reduce racism that Métis families experience when accessing mainstream and pan-indigenous services.

One of the largest gaps discovered in this project is the extremely limited services available to Métis families in rural and remote communities. Many participants in this research stressed that the lack of accessible, affordable and reliable transportation options in these areas can put Métis women's safety at-risk in emergencies. While LFMO recognized the challenges of delivering services in rural and remote areas, there needs to be either service hubs or transportation to service centres in larger cities.

Therefore, LFMO recommends:

1. Métis governments and organizations are funded first for service delivery programs.
2. Governments must fund the development of Métis cultural-competency training and that the curriculum in this training will be developed in collaboration with LFMO and the Métis Nation.
3. Métis cultural-competency training must be delivered to all government, mainstream, and pan-indigenous service providers. The efficacy of this training must be evaluated by grassroots Métis people.
4. Governments must explore new service delivery models to increase access to service providers in rural and remote communities of the Métis Nation homeland.

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Appendix - Definition of Terms and Glossary of Acronyms

Definitions

Aboriginal/ Indigenous – refers to “*Indigenous peoples*” is a collective term for the original peoples of Canada. Often, “*Aboriginal peoples*” is used interchangeably. Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indians (more commonly referred to as First Nations), Inuit and Métis.

Child Apprehension – refers to if a provincial government agent or delegated authority believes that a child needs protection and there are no other, means of protecting the child, then the agent can take steps to remove the child from their caregiver(s) and placing the child in a foster home or group home. In the case of Indigenous children, most children are apprehended for living in poverty, poverty created by systemic and colonial discrimination of Indigenous peoples.

Cisgender/Transgender – refers to a term used to describe people for whom their gender identity and assigned sex match, and who fit the societal expectations surrounding their birth-assigned sex. Transgender refers to the opposite.

Colonizers – refers to agents of a colonial government.

Confidentiality – refers to the safeguards used to protect the privacy of research participants and their information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss, and theft.²

Contemporary Trauma – refers to the emotional harm of an individual or generation caused by a contemporary traumatic experience or event.

Culturally-Relevant/Culturally-Based/Culturally-Specific/Métis Specific – refers to applying a Métis lens to create distinctions-based policies and programs that meet the unique needs of Métis families.

Daniels Decision – refers to the Canada. v. Daniels decision in 2016, this Supreme Court ruling decided that Métis and non-status Indians are "Indians" for the purpose of s 91 of the Constitution Act, 1867.

Dehumanization – refers to the process of depriving a person or group of positive human qualities.

Distinctions-Based – refers to The Government of Canada recognition of First Nations, the Métis Nation, and Inuit as the Indigenous peoples of Canada, consisting of distinct, rights-bearing communities with

² “Guidelines on Anonymity and Confidentiality in Research.” Ryerson University. November 2017. Accessed June 05, 2019. <https://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/research/documents/ethics/guidelines-on-anonymity-and-confidentiality-in-research.pdf>

unique histories. They recognize that a one-size-fits-all approach does not respect the distinct of rights and the unique interests, priorities and circumstances of each of the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Emergency Shelters – refers to shelters for women and children experiencing homelessness or fleeing violence. This also includes transitional and second-stage housing.

Feminist/Intersectional/GBA+ Lens – refers to the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination.³

Half-Breed – refers to a term, now considered derogatory, historically used to describe anyone, in the North American context, who are of half First Nations and half European descent. The term "Half-Breed" was used almost exclusively by the Canadian federal government throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries when referring to Métis people.

Harm-reduction – refers to a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing the negative consequences associated with drug use.

Historic Trauma – refers to the cumulative emotional harm of an individual or generation caused by a traumatic experience or event.

Holistic – refers to all aspects of life are interconnected, are not considered in isolation but as a part of the whole. The world is believed to be an integral whole. Indigenous knowledge incorporates all aspects of life - spirituality, history, cultural practices, social interactions, language, healing.⁴

Indian Act – is a Canadian federal law that governs in matters pertaining to Indian status, local First Nations governments and the management of reserve land and communal monies.⁵

Intergenerational Trauma – refers to the intergenerational transmission of historical and contemporary trauma.

Kinship – refers to attachments, kinship, and family tell us who we are and where we come from. They give us a sense of dignity, a sense of belonging, right from birth. In Indigenous cultures, family units go beyond the traditional nuclear family living together in one house. Families are extensive networks of strong, connective kinship; they are often entire communities.⁶

Lateral Violence – refers to abusing other people in similar ways to personal past experiences of abuse. In the context of the Métis Nation, abuse is learned from historically traumatic experiences of discrimination and the on-going colonial violence Métis people experience in Canada.

³ Hawk, Taylor. "What is 'Intersectional Feminism'?" Denison. July 26, 2016. Accessed June 05, 2019. <https://denison.edu/academics/womens-gender-studies/feature/67969>.

⁴ Joseph, Bob. "What Does Indigenous Knowledge Mean? A Compilation of Attributes." Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. April 06, 2018. Accessed June 05, 2019. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-does-indigenous-knowledge-mean>.

⁵ Definition by William B. Henderson in the Canadian Encyclopedia (2018).

⁶ Talaga, Tanya. "The Power of Indigenous Kinship." The Walrus. December 21, 2018. Accessed June 05, 2019. <https://thewalrus.ca/the-power-of-indigenous-kinship/>

Manitoba Act – refers to legislation that presumed to extinguish the Métis share of “Indian title” in the region in exchange for a 1.4 million-acre land reserve. This land was set aside for Métis communities and this promise of land was replaced, without any involvement of Métis leaders or any form of consent from Métis people, with a different form of policy – a scrip policy – which was used as a tool used to extinguish Métis rights in exchange for individual land grants.⁷

Métis – refers to the Métis National Council definition of “Métis”:

“‘Métis’ means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Indigenous peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry and who is accepted by the Métis Nation.

In 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that Métis are a rights-bearing Indigenous people. Its judgement in R. v. Powley set out the components of a Métis definition for the purpose of claiming Indigenous rights under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. These are:

- *Self-identification as a member of a Métis community.*
- *Ancestral connection to the historic Métis community whose practices ground the right in question*
- *Acceptance by the modern community with continuity to the historic Métis community.”*⁸

Métis Elders/Traditional Knowledge Keepers – refers to individuals that are the foundation from which Métis traditions, customs, laws, and spirituality are taught. They are the keepers of Indigenous knowledge that has been passed down from generation to generation since time immemorial. It is an Elder’s duty to preserve this knowledge for their communities and their nation. These individuals work towards achieving balance and harmony within their communities through the practice and preservation of Indigenous knowledge and culture.⁹

Métis Nation – refers to the creation of the fur trade in North America during the 18th century was accompanied by a growing number of mixed-race offspring from the relationships between Indigenous women and European men. As this population established distinct communities separate from those of Indigenous peoples and Europeans and married among themselves, a new and distinct population emerged – *the Métis people* – with their own unique culture, traditions, language (Michif), way of life, collective consciousness and nationhood.

Métis National Council – refers to the national representative body of the Métis Nation. It receives its mandate and direction from the democratically elected leadership of the Métis Nation’s governments from Ontario westward. Specifically, the MNC reflects and moves forward on the desires and aspirations of these Métis governments at the national and international levels.

Métis Nation Homeland (or homeland) – refers to five provinces within Canada: Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia.

⁷ Adam Gaudry, “Better Late Than Never? Canada’s Reluctant Recognition of Métis Rights and Self-Governance” The Yellowhead Institute Accessed June 05, 2019. <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/2018/08/21/better-late-than-never-canadas-reluctant-recognition-of-metis-rights-and-self-government/#1534789703987-3c284fb5-1996>

⁸ “Métis Nation Citizenship.” Métis National Council. Accessed June 05, 2019. <http://www.Métisnation.ca/index.php/who-are-the-Métis/citizenship>.

⁹ The Wicihitowin Conference Committee. “Authentic Engagement of First Nations and Métis Traditional Knowledge Keepers.” 2017. Accessed June 05, 2019. https://uakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Wicihitowin_AuthenticEngagementBooklet_V8.pdf.

Michif – refers to a language spoken by Métis peoples that is derived from a combination of Cree and French languages.

National Inquiry/the Inquiry – refers to Canada’s *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*.

Nation-to-Nation/Government-to-Government/Crown-Inuit Relations – refers to a new approach to working with Indigenous peoples under the Trudeau government. The Government of Canada is committed to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through a renewed, nation-to-nation, government-to-government, and Inuit-Crown relationship based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership as the foundation for transformative change.

Pan-Indigenous – refers to a one-size-fits-all approach to creating and implementing Indigenous policies and programs. Generally speaking, it refers to the treatment of Indigenous peoples as a homogeneous group without acknowledging the distinct groups or nations of Indigenous peoples.

Patriarchy – refers to a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.

Powley Decision – refers to the R. v. Powley decision in 2003. This Supreme Court decision laid out criteria for who could be considered Métis rights-holders.

Prevention-Based – refers to a service delivery model that focuses on prevention over interventions. Preventative models usually focus on public awareness and education initiatives. For example, in the child and family service sector this would mean focusing on providing parenting and other educational programs rather than intervening when a problem arises in a family situation.

Racism – refers to the belief that all members of each race possess characteristics or abilities specific to that race, especially to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races.

Residential Schools – refers to schools created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture—the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society, led by Canada’s first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald.¹⁰

Section 35 Rights – refers to Métis treaty rights enshrined in the *Constitution Act of 1982*.

Self-Determination – refers to the recognition of Indigenous peoples as inherent rights holders under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Self-determination includes the inherent right of self-government for the Métis Nation. For the federal government, this responsibility includes changes in the operating practices and processes of the federal government to be Indigenous-led. For the Métis Nation, this responsibility includes how to define and govern ourselves as nations and governments and what are the parameters of our relationships with other orders of government.

¹⁰ *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Canada: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Website, 2015.

Settler Colonialism – refers to a distinct type of colonialism that functions through the replacement of Indigenous populations with an invasive settler society that, over time, develops a distinctive identity and sovereignty.

Sexism/ Sex Discrimination – refers to prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, based on sex.

Sixties Scoop – refers to the taking of Indigenous children from their families and communities for placement in foster homes or adoption. Despite the reference to one decade, the Sixties Scoop began in the late 1950s and persisted into the 1980s. Approximately 20,000 Indigenous children were taken from their families and fostered or adopted out to primarily white middle-class families in Canada, the United States and Europe as part of the Sixties Scoop.

Systemic Discrimination/Systemic Racism – refers to patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate disadvantage for racialized persons.

Trauma-Informed – refers to a strengths-based approach with an awareness of the prevalence of trauma. Trauma-informed work demonstrates an understanding of the impact of trauma on physical, emotional, and mental health as well as on behaviours and engagement with services/materials. Additionally, trauma-informed work understands that people can be triggered or retraumatized and minimizes the risk of triggering or retraumatizing in services/materials.

Two-Spirit – Two-Spirit, a translation of the Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe) term *niizh manidoowag*, refers to a person who embodies both a masculine and feminine spirit. Activist Albert McLeod developed the term in 1990 to broadly reference Indigenous peoples in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community. Two-spirit is used by some Indigenous peoples to describe their gender, sexual and spiritual identity.¹¹

Women – in this report “women” refers to anyone that identifies as women including but not limited to both cis and transgender women, girls, gender-diverse or gender non-conforming, and LGBTQ2S+.

Wrap-Around – the term wrap-around services refers to a holistic approach that encompasses client supports across a range of service delivery areas (e.g. health, housing, childcare).

Glossary of Acronyms

AIM – Adopt Indian-Métis Program

ASET/ISET – Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training/Indigenous Skills and Employment Training

¹¹ Definition written by Michelle Filice in the Canadian Encyclopedia (2015).

BOD – Board of Directors
CAPC – Community Action Program for Children
CAS – Children’s Aid Society
CFS – Child and Family Services
CMHA – Canadian Mental Health Association
CWW – Community Wellness Worker
DOJ – Department of Justice
ELCC – Early Learning and Childcare
GBA+ or CCGBA+ – Gender-Based Analysis Plus or Culturally-Competent Gender-Based Analysis Plus
GBV – Gender-Based Violence
GTA – Greater Toronto Area
HIV/AIDs – Human immunodeficiency virus infection/Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
IAAW – Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women
IHWS – Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy
LFDM – Les Filles de Madeline
LFMO/WMN – Les Femme Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation
LGBTQ2S+ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirited, Plus (other marginalized sexualities/gender identities)
MCSBC – Métis Community Services Society
MFWB – Métis Family Wellbeing
MOHLTC – Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (ON)
MMF – Manitoba Métis Federation
MMIWG – Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
MNA – Métis Nation of Alberta
MNBC – Métis Nation of British Columbia
MNC – Métis National Council
MNLA – Métis Nation Legislative Assembly
MNO – Métis Nation of Ontario
MNS – Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
OICYS – Ontario Indigenous Child and Youth Strategy
ONWA – Ontario Native Women’s Association
OPP – Ontario Provincial Police
PHAC – Public Health Agency of Canada
PMC – Provincial Métis Council
RCMP – Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SMLCS – Shining Mountain Living Community Services
STBBI – Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections
SWC – Status of Women Canada (now the Department for Women and Gender Equality)
TRC – Truth and Reconciliation Commission
VAW – Violence Against Women
WAGE – the department for Women and Gender Equality
WNHAC – Waasegiizhig Nanaandawe’iyewigamig Health Access Centre





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