

Government of British Columbia

Introduction

In response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, on June 3, 2021, the Province of British Columbia released [A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for B.C.](#) (the Path Forward) outlining early commitments to address the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The Path Forward reflects priorities identified during a total of 17 engagements undertaken in 2019 and 2021 with Indigenous communities across the Province. The result was the prioritization of 28 actions which were included in cross-government mandate letter commitments. These actions align with the Calls for Justice resulting from the National Inquiry. The Province of British Columbia provided an update on progress on June 3, 2022, and intends to provide a further update on progress on June 3, 2023.

Progress and Key Highlights from June 2022 – 2023

The progress reports describe key highlights over the previous year. The number one priority identified through the Indigenous community engagements in 2019 and 2021 was the need for safe spaces and safety planning with Indigenous communities creating and implementing their own solutions. In response, in 2022 the Province made a foundational investment of \$5.34 million to create a [Path Forward Community Fund](#) that would be accessible to First Nations communities, urban/off reserve communities, Métis, Inuit citizens, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities. The Path Forward Community Fund provides grants to support community safety planning and capacity building activities. The intent is to ensure the self-determination of Indigenous communities to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Through a provincial request for proposal process the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres was selected to develop and administer the fund, including developing the application process and performing grant distribution. A cornerstone of its work is a fully inclusive approach that honours and respects the expertise, agency, and leadership of Indigenous peoples no matter what their status and no matter where they live, throughout all stages of implementation. The distribution of grants is guided by a panel of diverse Indigenous people whose service on the adjudication committee reflects the various regions, on and off-reserve, urban and rural, disabled

community members, 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities, and Elders and youth, First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and non-status communities throughout British Columbia.

The Path Forward funds activities such as:

- Hosting engagement and facilitation;
- Supporting the development of crisis response plans;
- Materials for communication plans;
- Information sharing and tools to navigate the justice and public safety systems;
- Culturally appropriate safety training; and,
- Cultural support and healing.

In January 2023, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres announced the successful first round of projects funded through the Path Forward Community Fund. In the first round of funding \$2.75 million was allocated to 20 organizations to deliver Indigenous-specific anti-violence programs. In early March 2023, an additional 13 agencies were funded for \$1.9 million in projects, for a total of 33 organizations funded for \$4.67 million. Crisis response and search funds were not applied for by communities, so BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres has held funds to make them available on an individual basis, when requested.

Priorities June 2023 – 2024

British Columbia will continue to advance work on the Path Forward's 28 early commitments and actions as well as Minister's mandate letter commitments to address the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in British Columbia.

Linkages to National Action Plan Priorities and Calls For Justice

The Path Forward's 28 early commitments and actions are centred around four key priorities, identified from the Indigenous-centred community dialogues held throughout British Columbia in 2019 and 2021.

These priorities include:

- Safe spaces and safety plans (6 actions)
- Healing supports (10 actions)
- Strengthening relationships with our partners (4 actions)
- Access to resources and recommendations (8 actions)

Each of the 28 commitments and actions are reflected in cross-government Minister's mandate letters and align with the Calls for Justice.

Closing Statement

The Province of British Columbia continues to advance work on the Path Forward's 28 early commitments and actions to address the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in British Columbia. The Province acknowledges the continued advocacy of family and community members and is committed to addressing the key sources of systemic causes of violence identified through the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: historical, multi-generational and intergenerational trauma; social and economic marginalization; maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will; and ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people.

Reports and Publications

The results of Inquiries, reports, and other publications are posted publicly on the British Columbia Government's webpages.

The following link includes the Path Forward, British Columbia's submission to the commission of the National Inquiry into MMIWG, reports related to the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, and other key and reports: [Ministry of Attorney General public inquiries - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/speical_inquiries/MWCI/Ministry_of_Attorney_General_public_inquiries_-_Province_of_British_Columbia_(gov.bc.ca).).

The 2022 Status Update on the Path Forward can be found at the following link: [A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for B.C. | June 2022 Status Update \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/speical_inquiries/MWCI/Ministry_of_Attorney_General_public_inquiries_-_Province_of_British_Columbia_(gov.bc.ca).).

The Province intends to post the 2023 update on the same webpage.