



Crown-Indigenous Relations
and Northern Affairs Canada

Relations Couronne-Autochtones
et Affaires du Nord Canada

Fourth Annual Statutory Report (2023) Pursuant to Section 10 of the Department of Crown- Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Act, Statutes of Canada, Chapter 29, 2019



Canada

From the Ministers

The Minister of Northern Affairs and I are pleased to jointly present the 2022-23 report on the measures taken to support reconciliation and advance Indigenous self-determination.

This report highlights the progress made in collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023.. As the new Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, reconciliation is a top priority for me and the Department. While there is still much to be done, I am proud of the progress the Department has made and look forward to continue working toward strengthening the Government of Canada's relationships with Indigenous communities from coast to coast to coast.

This past year, the Department continued its work to address past wrongs against First Nations by resolving outstanding specific claims through negotiated settlements. During the 2022-23 fiscal year, 56 specific claims were resolved to the sum of \$3.5 billion in compensation. Additionally, Canada and the Assembly of First Nations launched the Specific Claims reform co-development process in November 2022, which will work to accelerate the resolution of specific claims and instill more trust in the process.

Budget 2022 provided \$209.8 million over five years towards implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action (CTAs) 72-76 to address the harmful legacy of residential schools. Of this investment, \$60 million has been allocated in 2022-2023 to support the construction of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's new and permanent home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. CIRNAC continues to lead a whole-of-government approach to addressing the impacts of residential schools, including identifying and sharing residential schools-related records and supporting efforts and approaches that are Indigenous-led, Survivor-centric and culturally sensitive.

The endorsement of the [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#) by the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and federal and Inuit leadership this past April also signified great strides in advancing Inuit self-determination. This historic Policy provides guidance to ensure that federal employees carry out their work in a manner that supports greater socio-economic and cultural equity between Inuit and other Canadians.

A key highlight of this year was the release of the first [Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report](#) in June 2022, which outlined the progress made towards a number of programs that support families and survivors of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people (2SMMIWG+). CIRNAC also began the process of establishing an Indigenous Ombudsperson to oversee initiatives that support 2SMMIWG+ in response to Call for Justice 1.7. We will continue to work with Indigenous partners, families, and Survivors to ensure their priorities and visions are supported by the Government of Canada.

In July 2022, his Holiness Pope Francis visited Canada and delivered a formal apology to residential school Survivors for the Catholic Church's role in the residential school system. The broadcasted events



were interpreted into 12 Indigenous languages and was a historic moment for Survivors, families, and communities across the country.

In December 2022, leaders from the Métis National Council and Governing Members met with federal cabinet Ministers to advance work on priorities outlined in the Canada Canada Métis-Nation Accord, renewing the government-to-government relationship based on rights, respect, cooperative partnerships, and collaboration.

Over the last fiscal year, progress has also been made towards supporting the rights and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples through the co-development of Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy. Co-developed with Indigenous Modern Treaty partners, this policy will support the full, effective, and timely implementation of all modern treaties in Canada by increasing understanding and awareness within the federal public service to advance a systemic shift in federal behavior and culture. In so doing, it will contribute to addressing institutional legacies of colonialism. This policy is also part of Canada's commitment to advancing work with Indigenous partners to implement the aims and objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The advancements made this year highlight the importance of collaboration with Indigenous partners and organizations to advance reconciliation and support the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples. I affirm my commitment to advancing these shared priorities in my new role and look forward to continuing this important work with partners as we renew our relationships with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis.

The Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, PC, MP
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and I are proud to present the fourth annual report on measures taken to advance reconciliation and self-determination with Indigenous Peoples.

Supporting the self-determination of Indigenous communities in the north and across Canada remains a top priority of the department. The following report reflects the work done between April 1st, 2022 and March 31st, 2023 to ensure the unique needs of Northerners are met in full collaboration with Indigenous, territorial, and provincial partners, as well as highlights where there is still work to be done.

Over the last year, CIRNAC has continued to work towards reconciliation in the north with a number of initiatives, including the transfer of responsibilities for lands and rights in Nunavut. The devolution of responsibility over lands and resource management to the Government of Nunavut ensures that decision-making authority is in the hands of Nunavummiut, who share close cultural and economic ties to the land, air, and waters around them. Once implemented, the Final Agreement will signify an important step towards self-governance and economic development in the region.

Advancements in the implementation of the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework have also worked towards advancing reconciliation in the north. Investments from Budget 2022 continue to support the goals and objectives of the Framework with respect to housing, food security, economic development, and hydroelectric energy. The Government of Canada continues to move forward with the implementation of the Framework in partnership with Indigenous, territorial, and provincial collaborators.

Indigenous communities are on the front-lines of climate change, particularly in the North and Arctic. The Government of Canada has been working with national and regional Indigenous partners to co-develop the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda in order to ensure Indigenous Peoples are at the forefront of decision-making processes in regards to climate action.

Progress towards combatting food insecurity in the north has also been made this year with the signing of grant agreements between Nutrition North Canada and 23 regional Indigenous Governments and organizations. The grant agreements provide over \$120 million in funding from the Harvesters Support Grant and the Community Food Programs Fund to eligible communities in the region. In order to advance local food security while supporting long-term and community-led solutions, Nutrition North Canada has also expanded its subsidy program to include food banks and charities, such as Harvest Manitoba. Addressing food insecurity is a critical part of self-determination by ensuring northern organizations and communities develop solutions based on local priorities that work in their communities. In addition, NNC is continuing to support Indigenous-led research projects as part of phase 1 of the Food Security Research Grant with an investment of \$1.5 million until April 2024.

The shared journey on the path to reconciliation is one we must take together to support the vision of Indigenous and northern communities. I am confident in our ability to work collaboratively towards



reconciliation and self-determination in full partnership with Indigenous communities, Northerners, and all Canadians.

The Honourable Dan Vandal, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and
Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

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Introduction

The *Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Act* (the “Act”) came into force on July 15, 2019 and established Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC).

Under the Act, the Minister must table a report on the measures taken to advance self-determination and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Inuit, and Métis – in each House of Parliament, within three months after the end of the fiscal year or, if the House is not then sitting, on any of the first fifteen days of the next sitting of the House. The first report was tabled on October 5, 2020. The present report is the fourth since the Department was established, and covers activities by the Department over the period from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

The whole-of-government approach to reconciliation and supporting Indigenous self-determination is rooted in three pillars: acknowledging and addressing the past; closing socio-economic and service gaps; and, supporting visions for self-determination and renewed relationships. Together, they drive specific measures to be undertaken to advance reconciliation and support Indigenous self-determination. This report addresses progress being made by CIRNAC to achieve the pillars of acknowledging and addressing the past, and supporting visions for self-determination and renewed relationships. The final pillar, reporting on “closing socio-economic and service gaps”, is included in the [annual report](#) that is submitted by the Minister of Indigenous Services.

Mandate of the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs

CIRNAC has a mandate to advance Nation-to-Nation, Inuit–Crown, and government-to-government relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis based on affirmation and implementation of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership. CIRNAC promotes respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples as recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as legislated through the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (2021). Key activities include:

- Facilitating collaboration and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples and with the provinces and territories in relation to entering into and implementing agreements, including through Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination agreements;
- Addressing historical wrongs and injustices, through the fair and timely resolution of litigation and claims, acting on the National Inquiry’s Calls for Justice, and coordinating the Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People as Canada’s contribution to the National Action Plan;
- Implementing historic and modern treaties and Self-Government agreements concluded between the Crown and Indigenous Peoples and continuing to renew fiscal policy that supports Self-Government through the Collaborative Fiscal Policy Development Process;
- Collaborating on shared priorities with representatives of the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the 4 Inuit Nunangat regions, as well as the Métis National Council and its governing members through the permanent bilateral mechanisms;
- Coordinating 6 policy priority area working group tables through the Canada-Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Political Accord;; and,

- Promoting self-determination, prosperity and well-being for the residents and communities of Inuit Nunangat and the North and Arctic, taking into account their respective needs and challenges.

The Department coordinates the Government's relationships with national Indigenous organizations – namely the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, the Native Women's Association of Canada, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada – as well as with other local/regional Indigenous organizations and rights holders.

It also consults and works with Indigenous Peoples, provinces and territories, and other stakeholders on policies, initiatives and legislation that affect or could affect Indigenous communities.

To achieve a coherent whole-of-government federal approach to Crown–Indigenous relationships, the work of CIRNAC is always conducted in partnership with other government departments. Among federal departments, the effective delivery of CIRNAC's work is highly dependent upon the close cooperation and collaboration with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). CIRNAC and ISC are mandated to work together on a wide range of activities, such as capacity building and to bring control of and jurisdiction for service delivery back to Indigenous communities. Whereas CIRNAC is responsible for de-colonizing and modernizing institutional structures and governance so that Indigenous Peoples can build capacity that supports the implementation of their vision of self-determination, ISC's primary responsibilities are focused on capacity building to improve access to high-quality services, and to support Indigenous Peoples in assuming control of the delivery of services at the pace and in the ways they choose.

The Department guides the Government of Canada's work to ensure strengthened relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, using different approaches to respect the unique situations of each of these three distinct groups. The Department, with the support of Justice Canada, plays a leadership role in ensuring that the Government of Canada is respecting its obligations as set out in agreements and the application of section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, which provides constitutional recognition and affirmation of the Indigenous and Treaty rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, as well as the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

Reconciliation

As stated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), reconciliation is the ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. Reconciliation is a collective responsibility, and one that all Canadians share. Advancing reconciliation for the federal government encapsulates two broad categories of federal actions:

- Repairing damaged relationships; reconstituting new and stronger relationships; addressing and atoning for past wrongs; recognizing and affirming Indigenous rights; upholding Canada's Treaty and constitutional obligations; and,
- Supporting Indigenous Peoples, communities, and nations in eliminating the socio-economic disparities and inequities between Indigenous Peoples and other Canadians by targeting the gaps and shortcomings of services and socio-economic outcomes, supporting the revitalization of Indigenous cultures, eliminating systemic racism and other barriers in programs, and supporting Indigenous Peoples to enact their visions of self-determination.

The federal path forward for advancing reconciliation is about creating the systemic conditions for the recognition and implementation of Indigenous rights, supporting Indigenous visions of self-determination, transforming service delivery and closing socio-economic gaps so Indigenous Peoples can achieve substantive equality and prosperity. This work is guided by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*; the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Declaration); the Attorney General of Canada's Directive on Civil Litigation Involving Indigenous Peoples; the TRC's Calls to Action; the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan and the Federal Pathway; the Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples; decisions of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal; and, the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. Reconciliation must also be informed by clear policy considerations and strive to achieve broad strategic objectives that reflect Indigenous priorities, and collectively comprise the federal government's understanding and approach to reconciliation.

At the same time, an ongoing commitment to dialogue, joint priority setting and co-development, decolonizing federal structures and institutions, meaningful consultation and accommodation, collaborative resolution of litigation and claims, and initiatives to inform and engage non-Indigenous Canadians are essential to building productive and respectful relationships.

CIRNAC recognizes that while many strides have been made to achieve its mandate with Indigenous partners, significant work remains.

Self-Determination

Federal measures that respond to and support the rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination are needed to strengthen Indigenous communities by addressing core public services, improving economic opportunities and access to lands and resources. In the context of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and as indicated in the Declaration, self-determination can be defined as the ability to determine political status and to freely pursue economic, social, and cultural development. In exercising their right to self-determination, First Nations, Inuit and Métis might exercise the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal local affairs and for financing their autonomous functions. Self-determination can be advanced in several different ways, through: treaties (modern and historic); self-government agreements; sectoral agreements (e.g. health, education); constructive arrangements; local/regional governance; and, taking part in decision-making processes (e.g.; environmental assessments and international Treaty negotiations).

Advancing reconciliation by acknowledging and addressing the historic and ongoing injustices

The historic relationships between the Government of Canada and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis are challenging and complex. Harmful policies, such as those rooted in the *Indian Act*, other colonial and racist policies, and the failure to live up to the obligations set out in Treaties, continue to impact First Nations, Inuit and Métis today. These impacts manifest in many ways, including socio-economic gaps, intergenerational trauma, and systemic discrimination. The Government of Canada has an obligation to address these past wrongs in order to rebuild trust, renew our relationships with Indigenous Peoples, and move forward on the path of reconciliation.

The Papal Visit to Canada

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 58 called "...upon the pope to issue an apology to Survivors, their families, and communities for the Roman Catholic Church's role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in Catholic-run residential schools." At the Vatican, on April 1, 2022, Pope Francis apologized to a small delegation of Indigenous representatives for the actions of some members of the Catholic Church in Canada's former residential schools. Alongside these statements, the Pope expressed his intention to travel to Canada in July 2022 to offer a formal apology on Canadian soil. The Papal visit that took place from July 24-29, 2022 at three separate locations - Alberta, Quebec and Nunavut - was an historic and internationally significant event, observed not only by Survivors of residential schools, but Indigenous Peoples throughout Canada, Canadians coast-to-coast-to-coast, Catholics, the international community, and survivors of the other Catholic Church abuses in Canada and around the world.

Together, CIRNAC and ISC secured a total of \$48 million in 2022-23 to ensure Indigenous Peoples across Canada had access to the supports required for the papal visit, including community-led trauma informed and culturally grounded approaches for Survivors and community members. This included \$30.2 million for ISC to provide direct support to Indigenous communities and organizations to address the mental wellness and healing needs of Survivors and community members related to the Papal visit, including healing activities, ceremonies, events, gatherings for Survivors, and travel.

CIRNAC ensured that broadcasting of the Papal visit in Alberta, Quebec, and Nunavut would be available throughout the country, and supported the simultaneous interpretation of the Pope's addresses into 12 Indigenous languages, French, American Sign Language, and Quebec Sign Language. Interpretations of the Pope's addresses are housed online at the Pope's Visit to Canada [website](#).

CIRNAC continues to work with our diplomatic mission to the Holy See and other federal government departments on the efforts to repatriate Indigenous artefacts and support the Catholic Church in delivering on the other commitments made during the visit. CIRNAC worked closely with National Indigenous Organizations and many diverse Indigenous communities across the country to make the visit a reality. CIRNAC also worked closely with colleagues in several government departments to ensure the success of the Papal visit, including the Privy Council Office, Global Affairs Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Public Safety, Public Services and Procurement Canada, and Indigenous Services Canada.

On March 30, 2023 after decades of demands from Indigenous Peoples, the Vatican formally repudiated the "Doctrine of Discovery," a legal concept based on 15th-century papal documents that European colonial powers used to legitimize the seizure and exploitation of Indigenous lands. Canada also formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery with the passage of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2021)*.

Addressing the Legacy of Residential Schools

The destructive legacy created by residential schools is complex, and addressing these intergenerational impacts requires sustained whole-of-government coordinated action across federal departments and agencies, as well as cooperative relationships with Indigenous communities and across all other levels of government. At the federal level, CIRNAC is leading a whole-of-government horizontal initiative to

support the advancement of key commitments addressing the ongoing legacy of residential schools. It also includes identification and sharing of residential schools-related records, expanded trauma-informed support services for all residential school Survivors and their communities, as well as commemoration and education initiatives.

CIRNAC secured significant new investments in 2022-23 to address the legacy of former residential schools. This included \$207 million over five years in Budget 2022 to support the continued implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action 72 to 76: Missing Children and Burial Information, and to support to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) in the fulfillment of its mandate, including \$60 million in 2022-23 to support the overall cost of construction of the NCTR's new, permanent home.

New funding will also go to the NCTR and the National Advisory Committee on Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials (National Advisory Committee) to support the continued development and maintenance of the Residential School National Student Death Register and the publicly available Memorial Register, and to support the National Residential School Cemeteries and Burial Sites Registry.

Residential Schools Missing Children - Community Support Fund

Launched on June 7, 2021, following a series of sixteen national engagement sessions, the [Residential Schools Missing Children - Community Support Fund](#) is a responsive, request-driven contributions program intended to support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners and communities in designing and implementing community-led, Survivor-centric and culturally appropriate initiatives seeking to locate, document, and memorialize burial sites associated with former residential schools, and honour families' wishes to bring children's remains home. Funding is available to all communities (First Nations, Inuit and Métis), including Modern Treaty and Self-Governing groups, Survivor associations and representative organizations.

Since June 2021, CIRNAC has received 136 formal requests for funding from Indigenous communities and organizations under the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund, totaling over \$281 million, and 109 funding agreements have been put in place, providing allocating over \$124 million to Indigenous communities and organizations supporting 72 investigations at former residential schools. The variance in requested versus approved funding demonstrates the need for a phased approach to funding agreement implementation, as some communities wish to complete initial research, knowledge gathering and engagement activities to inform subsequent activities, such as fieldwork investigations (i.e.; field surveys and mapping, ground penetrating radar, archeological investigation, on-site ceremonies). Additional information can be found on the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Funding Recipients [website](#). An additional \$21.8 million has been contributed to these approved initiatives from other government funders and the respective provincial and territorial governments.

In 2022-2023, CIRNAC funded 97 funding agreements for a total of \$63.2 million. An additional \$8.8 million has been contributed to these approved initiatives from other government funders (including Indigenous Services Canada) and the respective provincial and territorial governments.

In July 2022, CIRNAC and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) established the National Advisory Committee on Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials to serve as an independent and trusted source of technical advice for communities in their efforts to locate, identify, honour, and memorialize children who died while in the care of residential schools. The National Advisory Committee brings together a diverse range of expertise on matters such as Indigenous laws and protocols, archival research, search technologies, privacy laws, and preservation of evidence. The Committee is co-administered by CIRNAC and the NCTR. In 2022-2023, the National Advisory Committee launched its [website](#), held a series of information webinars and published its Navigator Document intended to support communities efforts undertaking initiatives to search for their missing children.

Access to the Full History and Truth Around Residential Schools

The Government of Canada continues in the commitment to do all we can to share the residential school-related documents we have, while respecting Survivors' wishes, legislation, court orders, settlement agreements and ongoing litigation processes.

Following the Minister's commitment to further sharing of residential school documents with the NCTR, former Cowessess First Nation Chief Cadmus Delorme was named as Chairperson of the Residential School Documents Advisory Committee in 2022-23. In his independent role, former Chief Delorme worked with Committee members to guide further document sharing with the NCTR. Under the direction of Chief Delorme, the Indigenous Committee members have been selected. The fulsome Advisory Committee is met in June 2023. In 2022-23, CIRNAC and other Government departments met regularly with the NCTR, to discuss ongoing document scoping exercises. As such, significant progress to finalize the departmental scoping exercise has now been accomplished.

Indigenous Childhood Claims Litigation

Childhood Claims are historic claims against the Crown that stem from harms committed against Indigenous Peoples in various educational and care settings. Key activities captured under this program include strategic management of litigation, negotiations, implementation of settlement agreements, and engagement with survivors and other Indigenous stakeholders. The program's objective is to address historic harms committed against Indigenous Peoples outside of the courts, and to recognize and resolve past injustices.

CIRNAC continues to support the implementation of several class actions settlement agreements, totaling over \$8.6 billion in compensation. Notably, the McLean Federal Day Schools Settlement agreement is expected to provide compensation to over 150,000 survivors.

In 2022-23, an agreement-in-principle was reached to resolve the Federal Boarding Homes litigation. Negotiations are ongoing. On March 9, 2023, the Federal Court of Canada approved the Gottfriedson Band Class Settlement Agreement. Through this settlement, Canada will transfer \$2.8 billion into an Indigenous-led trust to allow for communities that have opted in to the class action to support work around the revitalization of Indigenous languages and cultures. The Federal Court described the settlement as 'monumental', 'historic' and 'transformational.'

Exploratory discussions also continued through 2022-23 ongoing to develop paths to resolution on a number of files including Indian Hospitals, Métis and Non-Status Indians Sixties Scoop and Ile-a-la-Crosse boarding school.

Qikiqtani Truth Commission

In 2019, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations formally acknowledged the findings of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission Final Report and [apologized to Qikiqtani](#) Inuit for the effects of federal policies undertaken in the Qikiqtani region from 1950 to 1975. Through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Canada and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, a commitment was made to continue collaborating to implement the findings of the Final Report.

This past year, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and the President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association signed an addendum to the original Memorandum of Understanding that affirms Canada's ongoing commitment to address the findings of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission and to advance discussions towards a final financial contribution for the Saimaqtigiingniq Fund.

Nanilavut, 'Let's find them'

Nanilavut is a reconciliation initiative between Inuit and the Crown that acknowledges the past for those families who lost loved ones when they were sent away during the tuberculosis epidemic of the 1940s to the 1960s by helping Inuit families find information on loved ones who never returned. This past year, the Government of Canada collaborated with Inuit partners to begin drafting the renewal of a five-year data-sharing agreement, along with ongoing discussions to support the eventual transition of the Nanilavut database from CIRNAC to Inuit.

In 2022-23, Project Managers in each of the four regions of Inuit Nunangat carried out community commemorative events and monuments, and, where available, provided important information to families about their family members who were sent away for treatment. Support was also provided to families to properly identify the graves of Inuit who died of tuberculosis by marking gravesites with headstones and installing plaques and monuments in cemeteries.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls (MMIWG) and 2SLGBTQIA+ People

Through funding provided by [Budget 2021](#), a permanent MMIWG Secretariat was established to work in collaboration with Indigenous partners and continue to lead a whole-of-government approach to oversee the coordination of federal efforts regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. In 2022-23, the MMIWG Secretariat's work related to reconciliation focused on increasing transparency and accountability through reporting and improving data, actioning two critical Calls for Justice, as well continuing to develop relationships built on trust and respect with Indigenous partners, families, and survivors through funding programs that reflect their priorities on issues that impact their lives.

As a way to increase transparency and accountability on the federal government's actions to support the National Action Plan and implement the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice, on June 3, 2022, the Secretariat coordinated and published the first [Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report](#) to outline progress to date on federal government initiatives related to MMIWG. In order to improve data gaps related to Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people and increase the quality of reporting,

particularly in urban settings, CIRNAC funded 22 Indigenous-led data research projects from Métis, Inuit, First Nations, Non-Status, urban and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations and researchers. The MMIWG Secretariat also organized and hosted the first Federal-Provincial-Territorial-Indigenous roundtable on MMIWG on January 10th, 2023, where Indigenous partners discussed issues related to MMIWG with federal, provincial, and territorial governments.

In response to the priorities set forth by Indigenous partners, families, and survivors, CIRNAC began work on Call for Justice 1.7 to establish an Indigenous Ombudsperson and human rights Tribunal and 1.10 to develop an oversight body for the work to address MMIWG. To support the development of an oversight body, the MMIWG Secretariat began engagement with Indigenous partners in 2022-23 to determine their priorities and perspectives on the overall goal and vision for the oversight body. To advance work on the Ombudsperson, Ministerial Special Representative Jennifer Moore Rattray was appointed to engage Indigenous partners, families, and survivors and provide recommendations to the federal government.

In 2022-23, CIRNAC funded several initiatives and programs that support Indigenous partners, families, and survivors to self-determine the issues and priorities and develop relationships built on trust and respect in the spirit of reconciliation. For example, through the [Support for the Wellbeing of Families and Survivors of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People program](#), which provides culturally-relevant and Indigenous-led programming for those impacted by the MMIWG2S+ crisis, \$3,069,394 was allocated in 2022-23 to fund 13 new programs.

Similarly, the [Supporting Indigenous Women's and 2SLGBTQIA+ Organizations program](#), which creates opportunities to empower and engage Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations in decision-making processes that impact their lives, funded over \$11.5 million to 40 organizations to support the capacity of Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations to engage in the development of policies, programs and legislation.

Cultural Spaces in Indigenous Communities program

Through Budget 2021, \$108.8 million funding was invested over two years, starting in 2021-22, to re-establish and revitalize Indigenous cultural spaces. This investment was part of the Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People, the Government of Canada's contribution to the National Action Plan.

An enthusiastic response to a call for proposals led the government to secure additional funding. As a result more than \$112.1 million was delivered to 66 recipients across 11 provinces and territories in 2022-23.

National Council for Reconciliation

The Government of Canada remains committed to reconciliation and accelerating the ongoing implementation of the Calls to Action. CIRNAC plays a dual role regarding the Calls to Action: a whole-of-government role for tracking, monitoring and reporting on the Calls to Action; and, as the lead on 15 calls to action. Of the 94 Calls to Action, 76 are under federal or joint-federal responsibility. Over the past year, CIRNAC has taken new steps to advance the Calls to Action, including on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action 53-56 which called for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation through legislation.

On June 22, 2022, Bill C-29, an *Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation*, was introduced in the House of Commons. It was unanimously passed in the House and referred to the Senate in December 2022. At the end of 2022-23, Bill C-29 was at second reading stage in the Senate. The Bill respects the vision of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and aligns with the advice provided by the independent, Indigenous-led Interim Board and Transitional Committee for the National Council for Reconciliation.

Establishing the National Council for Reconciliation has been a key priority in terms of enacting important reconciliation legislation in Canada. The National Council for Reconciliation will serve as an important independent oversight body that will monitor and promote progress on reconciliation in Canada. It will provide an important formal mechanism to share and create dialogue, monitor and celebrate progress as well as recommend areas to improve upon. This formal structure is critically important to advancing reconciliation and leaving a lasting legacy.

Settlement of specific claims

The resolution of specific claims, through the acknowledgement of and compensation for past wrongs, is a key element in advancing reconciliation with First Nations. Specific claims are grievances that First Nations have against the Government of Canada for its failure to discharge its lawful obligations with respect to pre-1975 treaties or its management of First Nations lands, funds and other assets. Between January 1, 2016 and March 31, 2023, compensation totaling \$8.6 billion was paid to settle 255 claims. In 2022-23, compensation totaling \$3.5 billion was paid to settle 56 claims.

As of March 31, 2023, the Specific Claims inventory included a total of 648 claims, of which 186 were under assessment, 323 were under negotiation, 79 awaiting a response to Canada's offer negotiate, and 60 were active before the Specific Claims Tribunal.

The Minister's 2021 Mandate Letter included direction to accelerate the ongoing work of reforming the Specific Claims Policy and process. In November 2022, Canada and the Assembly of First Nations officially launched the Specific Claims reform co-development process. Through this co-development process, Canada is working with First Nations to develop options for a Specific Claims Resolution Centre that facilitates and accelerates the resolution of specific claims and instills more trust in the process.

Canada has implemented several approaches to accelerate claim resolution, such as common settlement frameworks for similar claims, and offering First Nations the option to bundle multiple claims into a single, global settlement agreement. In 2022-23, Canada continued to improve internal processes to obtain financial mandates and execute settlement agreements more quickly. In addition, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations can now issue apologies to Indigenous Peoples as part of the resolution of historic grievances.

Additions of Land to Reserve and Reserve Creation Act

Since 2009, the Department has been working with First Nations to explore policy, process, and legislative options for improving additions to reserve and reserve creations. After various consultation and legislative efforts, the *Additions of Land to Reserve and Reserve Creation Act* was enacted and came into effect on August 27, 2019. The Act streamlined the approval for the additions to reserve and reserve creation and enabled First Nations to designate pre-reserve lands and address third-party interests prior to lands being set apart as reserve. Additionally, the Minister now has the authority to

grant reserve status in all cases, which decreased the amount of time required for the approval of an addition to reserve or reserve creation proposal. These legislative changes contribute to advancing reconciliation and improving the Treaty relationship through the fulfillment of Canada's outstanding historic obligations to First Nations. Between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023, 42 additions to reserve or reserve creation submissions were approved.

Budget 2021 identified \$43 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, for CIRNAC and Indigenous Services Canada to work with Indigenous partners and other stakeholders to respectively redesign the Additions to Reserve Policy and to accelerate work on existing requests from First Nations across the country. Of the \$43 million, CIRNAC received \$10.8 million to work with Indigenous partners and other stakeholders to redesign Additions to Reserve. Preliminary engagement between the Government of Canada and key Indigenous partners concluded in Fall 2022.

The Government of Canada is conscious of the need to accelerate the implementation of outstanding commitments to return land to First Nations and to ensure that future policy, process, and legislative options are informed and developed in partnership with First Nations. In March 2023, a call for proposals to fund First Nation-led engagement on policy redesign was launched and it is anticipated that as a result of this engagement work, the Government of Canada will continue to work with First Nation partners to co-develop options to redesign Additions to Reserve.

Creating Conditions for Self-Determination and Renewed Relationships

Supporting self-determination of Indigenous Peoples and renewing relationships between First Nation, Inuit and the Métis Nation and the Crown are guideposts for the reconciliation process. This past year, CIRNAC has continued to support First Nations, Inuit and Métis might exercise the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal local affairs and for financing their autonomous functions.

Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration) was adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly in 2007. Many of the principles expressed in the Declaration, such as non-discrimination, equality and rights to practice religion and to express one's culture, already find expression in both international and domestic treaties ratified by Canada as well as in domestic law. Indigenous self-determination and self-government are affirmed in the Declaration and are central to addressing the history of colonization and forming new relationships based on recognition, respect, partnership, and co-operation. Indigenous self-government is part of Canada's evolving system of cooperative federalism and distinct orders of government. Recognition of the inherent jurisdiction and legal orders of Indigenous nations is a starting point of discussions aimed at interactions between federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments.

On June 21, 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA) became law. The Act affirms the Declaration as a universal international human rights instrument with application in Canadian law and provides a framework for the Government of Canada's implementation of the Declaration. Under the Act, Canada must fulfil three inter-related legal obligations in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples: identifying measures for consistency of federal laws with the

Declaration; developing an action plan by June 2023; and, developing annual reports on progress and submitting them to Parliament.

Under the Act, one of Canada's legal obligations is to develop an action plan by June 2023. The process to inform the draft Action Plan (Phase 1), led by the Department of Justice, followed a broad consultation and engagement process with Indigenous Peoples. This phase took place between December 2021 and the spring of 2023, following which a draft action plan was developed. Over 11,300 proposals were submitted by Indigenous partners in advance of the draft. Proposals relevant to CIRNAC's mandate or purview are under review by various CIRNAC Sectors to assess their feasibility for inclusion in the draft Action Plan. In response to partner proposals, CIRNAC officials engaged in direct bilateral work with key partners, including the Assembly of First Nation, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Métis National Council, and Modern Treaty partners, to work collaboratively to co-develop and refine proposals for inclusion in the Action Plan. The department further proposed a number of measures for the draft Action Plan to take into account priorities raised by partners both through the engagement process and elsewhere.

Treaties and Aboriginal Government

In recent years, Canada has been advancing interest-based discussions and ensuring that co-development is at the core of all negotiations and discussions with Indigenous Peoples. The goal is to bring greater flexibility to negotiations based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. At these tables, Canada and Indigenous Peoples are exploring new ideas and ways to reach agreements that will recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples and advance their visions of self-determination for the benefit of their communities and all Canadians.

During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, CIRNAC and Indigenous partners established 2 new discussions tables, increasing the total number of active tables to 188. CIRNAC continues its review of the policies that guide the negotiation and implementation of treaties and other rights agreements and strengthen and enhance the Indigenous institutions that support self-determination.

West

Treaty negotiations under the British Columbia Treaty process, a tripartite, collaborative process involving Canada, British Columbia and First Nations, made significant progress, notably at four Treaty tables that are at an advanced stage.

Progress towards reconciliation also continues under the Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination (RIRSD) process, including three tables with transboundary claims in the Yukon.

Both the British Columbia Treaty process and RIRSD negotiations yielded results in 2022-23. Notable achievements include:

- A total of 12 public engagement sessions, either in-person or virtual, took place to inform community members and other stakeholders of the progress at these tables.
- Three Letters of Understanding were signed with a negotiating First Nations.
- The Transition to Stage 5 and Treaty Revitalization Agreement was signed with the Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'xw Nations.

Central

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, CIRNAC and Indigenous Peoples continued discussion at its tables. The following were some key accomplishments during that period:

- On April 6 2022, Canada and Anishinabek Nation signed the [Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement](#), a historic agreement affirming Anishinabek control over governance and the law-making powers of the signatory First Nations in key areas. One piece of the enabling legislation came into force for the agreement in the fall of 2022.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the Treaty Education Alliance (Spring of 2022), which is [set to advance joint work with Canada towards achieving better education outcomes for First Nation students](#).
- A framework agreement was signed with [Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation setting out a process for further collaborative dialogue between the parties](#).
- [Canada and Fox Lake Cree Nation signed an MOU](#) which marks key steps towards reconciliation and renewed nation-to-nation.
- Canada signed updated self-government agreements with the Métis Nation of Alberta,, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and Métis Nation of Ontario on February 23 and 24, 2023. These Updated Agreements officially recognize the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, and Métis Nation of Ontario as Indigenous Governments, are binding on the parties, and commit Canada to negotiating replacement self-government Treaties.
- A signing ceremony was held with the Prime Minister of Canada and Siksika Nation to announce the signing of a historic land claim settlement, which aims to address past wrongs through a \$1.8 billion land claim settlement agreement with Siksika Nation, dating back over a century when the Government of Canada broke its Blackfoot Treaty (Treaty 7) promise and wrongfully took almost half of Siksika Nation's reserve land, including some of the most productive agricultural and mineral-rich lands, to sell to settlers.

North and East

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, CIRNAC and Indigenous Peoples have continued to hold innovative discussions at its tables to advance priorities identified by Indigenous partners and conclude constructive arrangements based on the parties' shared interests.

Première Nation Wolastoqiyik Wamsipekuk, signed a Rights Reconciliation Agreement on National Parks

CIRNAC, Parks Canada, and the Première Nation Wolastoqiyik Wamsipekuk, signed a Rights Reconciliation Agreement on National Parks in 2022, which seeks to recognize and implement Wolastoqiyik Treaty and Aboriginal rights with respect to federal National Parks and historic sites in their traditional territory, the Wolastokuk. This agreement will provide funding over a ten-year period to promote and increase the Wolastoqiyik participation in Parks Canada activities such as recreational tourism, cultural, scientific, and environmental protection in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park, the Lévis Forts National Historic Site, the Grosse Île and the Irish Memorial National Historic Site, and the Pointe-au-Père Lighthouse National Historic Site.

Education Jurisdiction Initiative

The Education Jurisdiction Initiative allows First Nations to exercise self-determination through law-making authority in the area of primary and secondary education, and by operating their schools under their own laws.

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) is a policy and advocacy organization that represents and works on behalf of First Nations in British Columbia, with a mandate to support First Nations students and advance First Nations education in British Columbia. The First Nations Education Steering Committee coordinates negotiations of sectoral education self-government arrangements with Canada. Notable 2022-23 achievements include:

- Four British Columbia First Nations (the Cowichan Tribes, Lil'wat Nation, ʔaq'am, and Seabird Island First Nation) ratifying and signing education jurisdiction agreements, which came into effect on July 1, 2022. This followed financial offers made in 2021;
- Three more First Nations (Ditidaht, Lower Kootenay and Squamish) have ratified their agreements which are expected to come into effect on July 1, 2023;
- One other First Nation has accepted their offer but has not yet held a ratification vote, and Canada has renewed fiscal offers to four more First Nations;
- Seven First Nations currently negotiating agreements; and,
- Approximately 50 additional First Nations are following the British Columbia Education Jurisdiction Initiative with interest, ten of which are actively seeking an opportunity to participate.

Improving education for Indigenous Peoples through these agreements is an important step on the path to reconciliation. Indigenous Peoples' diverse histories, worldviews, languages and cultures are often not reflected in the education system and the current system continues to require Indigenous youth to move away from their families, leading to a further breakdown of the continuity of culture within Indigenous communities. One of the ways Indigenous communities have started to reclaim their identities, cultures and governance systems is through education.

Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy

For 20 years Modern Treaty partners have been asking for an implementation policy. Since 2003, the Land Claims Agreement Coalition (LCAC) has advocated for government to put new policy tools and accountability mechanisms in place, including the development of a federal Modern Treaty Implementation Policy and an independent oversight mechanism to hold the government accountable to Parliament. In 2020, the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC) land claims working group adopted the development of an Implementation Policy and the creation of an independent oversight mechanism as its two main priorities. In 2021, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations received a mandate to "work in partnership on the implementation of the spirit and intent of treaties, and land claim and self-government agreements with appropriate oversight mechanisms to hold the federal government accountable". In March 2022, the Minister and Modern Treaty nations agreed to undertake

collaborative work to inform a comprehensive proposal on these two priorities to advance within the federal system. A Common Process with Indigenous Modern Treaty Partners was created and mandated to co-develop an implementation policy and appropriate oversight mechanisms.

In February 2023, Canada announced and adopted *Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy*. This policy will support the full, effective, and timely implementation of all modern treaties in Canada by increasing understanding and awareness within the federal public service to advance a systemic shift in federal behavior and culture. In doing so, it will contribute to addressing institutional legacies of colonialism. This policy is also part of Canada's commitment to advance work with Indigenous partners to implement the aims and objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Some key tools will be essential for bringing the new policy into effect and transforming Canada's approach to implementation. This includes an Intergovernmental Leaders Forum, comprised of the Prime Minister, relevant federal ministers, and Indigenous Modern Treaty and self-government leadership, which will create the opportunity for leaders to come together to work on shared priorities. It also creates an Intergovernmental Policy Circle, which will help build relationships and advance matters of importance to all parties, and provide a space for Modern Treaty partners and federal departments to work collaboratively on cross-cutting implementation challenges and the development of legislative, policy and program initiatives.

The Implementation Policy also outlines the responsibilities of public servants, at all levels, to implement modern treaties which includes fulfilling their Modern Treaty obligations in a broad and purposive manner to uphold the honour of the Crown; recognizing Indigenous Modern Treaty Partners as a distinct element within a distinctions-based approach; fostering cultural competency, education, knowledge and understanding of modern treaties; ensuring legislation, policy and program proposals are consistent with obligations and responsibilities under modern treaties and removing any policy or procedural barriers that are inconsistent; advancing Modern Treaty objectives and strengthening intergovernmental relationships. It also includes commitments to future work so that the co-development of solutions to the implementation of Modern Treaties can continue and remain a priority.

For Canada to fulfill its obligations under Modern Treaties, a whole-of-government approach is necessary. Federal public servants, including deputy heads, must understand and meet their obligations, roles, and responsibilities in fulfilling Canada's Treaty obligations, advancing Treaty objectives, and strengthening intergovernmental relationships. An Implementation Policy now provides direction to public servants in forging these relationships while also creating supporting tools and outlining commitments to future work all designed to advance the evolution of a transformational shift towards genuine reconciliation with Canada's Modern Treaty partners.

Implementation of the Cabinet Directive on Modern Treaty Implementation

In 2022-23, CIRNAC delivered 12 training sessions to over 600 federal officials from six departments, as well as members of the public. The primary focus of the training is on Modern Treaty and self-government implementation in order to promote awareness across federal departments and to provide advice and guidance on the Assessment of Modern Treaty Implications (AMTI) for Cabinet proposals to reinforce and institutionalize the process of ensuring Modern Treaty rights and obligations are considered in federal policy making.

Together with Modern Treaty partners, CIRNAC also examined performance indicators through the Performance Measurement Framework on socio-economic and environmental importance measure outcomes for the implementation of modern treaties.

The Modern Treaty Management Environment (MTME) version 2.0 provides a comprehensive working environment for federal departments and agencies to track, monitor, and reflect on responsibilities concerning Modern Treaty implementation. During 2022-23 fiscal year, the Modern Treaty Implementation Office has been offering training sessions, guidance documents, including a step-by-step user guide, timely MTME-related communication through a dedicated mailbox, and support from leadership. It also hosts a federal Community of Practice,, which provides for a venue best practice and knowledge sharing on Modern Treaty implementation among the federal departments and agencies, and helps explore a collaborative approach to think through solutions and improvement of the system. These initiatives have all contributed to a significant increase in accepted obligations by federal departments and agencies in MTME over the 2022-23 fiscal year.

The Department has also continued working with the Deputy Ministers' Oversight Committee on Modern Treaty Implementation (DMOC) to improve oversight mechanisms, and continue efforts and opportunities to pursue a whole-of-government approach to Crown-Indigenous relationships. Discussions in DMOC meetings help strengthen the relationships between Canada and Modern Treaty and self-governing Partners, and supports the advancement of common priorities. Topics of discussion range from implementation issues, funding matters, economic opportunities, to program policies and more. A total of three DMOC meetings were held during 2022-23, with two having Indigenous partners participation. The Directors' General Implementation Committee,, which supports DMOC and acts as its operational arm, also held three meetings during the 2022-23 fiscal year, facilitating horizontal collaboration and the sharing of lessons learned between departments.

As outlined in *Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy*, the tools created through the *Cabinet Directive*—DMOC, the Modern Treaty Implementation Office, and Assessment of Modern Treaty Implications—need to be further reviewed and refined to ensure departments understand and coordinate their whole-of-government obligations. As such, Canada will collaboratively work with Indigenous Modern Treaty Partners to implement and, where necessary, revise or replace the *Cabinet Directive* in accordance with Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy, evaluations, lessons learned and the experience of all Modern Treaty Partners to date.

Guidance, Tools and Information Services on Consultation and Accommodation with Indigenous Peoples

Consultation activities are key opportunities for Canada to demonstrate its continued commitment to rebuilding and maintaining collaborative relationships with Indigenous Peoples through meaningful involvement in decision-making. CIRNAC provides funding for the co-development and implementation of consultation tools for Indigenous partners, such as Consultation Protocols and Resources Centres Agreements, thus enhancing foundational capacity for Indigenous Peoples to manage consultation consistent with their self-determination objectives. Additionally, CIRNAC offers guidance, systems, and tools to federal officials in order to support Canada's whole-of-government approach to the Duty to Consult.

In 2022-23, co-development continued for nine Consultation Protocols, with two Protocols expected to be finalized in 2023-24. Consultation Protocols foster stronger relationships while clarifying engagement

processes, laying out important parameters and standards necessary to the planning process. Implementation is ongoing for the 10 signed Consultation Protocols, currently supporting 44 Indigenous communities and 15 Métis regions in Ontario and Alberta, while five Resource Centres are supporting 62 Indigenous communities and 18 Métis regions in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Resource Centres support Indigenous partners to meaningfully engage in consultation by ensuring that they have the tools and capacity to manage and coordinate requests for consultation.

CIRNAC expanded its consultation learning strategy in 2022-23 to address the importance of reconciliation. Building a stronger relationship between the Crown and Indigenous Peoples is the cornerstone of reconciliation, as such CIRNAC has enhanced the existing consultation training tools to incorporate the 10 Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples, expanded the definition of Duty to Consult to include United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) clauses on Free, Prior and Informed Consent, and co-development and co-management. Further, the training delivery format has transitioned from in-person to virtual delivery resulting in over 2,900 federal public servants receiving training on the importance of reconciliation through consultation. So far in fiscal year 2022-23, 7 Consultation and Accommodation training sessions were offered to 481 federal consultation practitioners, 15 executive-level Consultation Fireside Chats which facilitated approximately 170 participants and 1 event, co-delivered with the Canada School of Public Service, on Meaningful Consultation that had over 2500 participants. As well, in 2022-23, the Strategic Triage team distributed 12 information packages to support federal departments and agencies.

The Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Information System supports assessments of Duty to Consult obligations by detailing the geographic location and nature of potential and established Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Between April 1st, 2022, and March 31st, 2023, 58 Aboriginal Treaty Rights and Information System webinars and 14 tailored coaching sessions were delivered to 448 federal officials to support data needs, and 5 cartographic services on emerging issues were provided.

Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia

Since 2019, the Government of Canada, the province of British Columbia and the First Nations Summit continue to implement the co-developed Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia (Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy). The Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy replaces the Comprehensive Land Claims and Inherent Right policies in the context of treaty negotiations in British Columbia. A central feature of the Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy is basing negotiations on the recognition and continuation of rights without those rights being modified, surrendered, or extinguished when an agreement is signed. Where there is interest, Canada is ready to discuss using the approaches found in the Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy with negotiation partners elsewhere in the country.

In 2022-23, CIRNAC continued working with the province of British Columbia and participating Indigenous Nations to begin addressing the Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy's Schedule A: Commitments to Further Work, with a focus on land-related issues, including the constitutional status of lands.

Further, CIRNAC continued working closely with the First Nations Summit and the province of British Columbia on the first review of the Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy. This externally conducted review is examining successes and challenges in implementing the Recognition and

Reconciliation of Rights Policy at negotiation tables, and will help identify opportunities to support its implementation going forward. A final report is expected in August 2023.

Collaborative Fiscal Policy Development Process

Since 2016, Canada and representatives from 25 Self-Governing Indigenous Governments (SGIG) have worked together to co-develop Canada's Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy in the Collaborative Fiscal Policy Development Process. The Process including regular "in-person" meetings and key working groups, involves over 150 SGIG representatives, 90 federal employees and impacts over 38,000 individuals from SGIG communities. During this reporting period, the Process also expanded to include another new self-governing Indigenous Government. This process has continued to strengthen relationships and trust between Indigenous Governments and the Government of Canada and across Indigenous Governments themselves.

Introduced in August 2019, the Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy addresses the fiscal relationship between Canada and SGIGs and focuses on the actual expenditure needs of self-government, rather than linking funding to previous levels under the *Indian Act*. Expenditure need is a measure of the estimated cost of performing a set of services, functions, or activities to meet a set of responsibilities, based on comparative measures or standards.

Over this reporting period, fiscal policy work has continued in the areas of (1) capital infrastructure, (2) language revitalization and (3) land management.

For capital infrastructure, Canada and self-governing partners have completed a first stage policy approach to ensure adequate lifecycle capital and operations and maintenance funding for existing core community infrastructure assets in every self-government community. Work continues on the development of a community infrastructure proxy model designed to establish the capital core funding levels for required (as opposed to existing) infrastructure as informed by benchmarks established in communities of comparable size and circumstance.

Regarding language revitalization, Canadian Heritage and CIRNAC have worked closely with SGIGs on the development of an expenditure need model for this responsibility - an area which lies at the core of Indigenous Governments' interests in self-determination.

In the area of land management, SGIGs and Canada have worked together to identify and measure the key policy elements required to establish a land management expenditure need model.

The Collaborative Fiscal Policy Development Process also includes a shared focus on working towards closing socio-economic and wellness gaps. Tailored initiatives, supported with funding from Budget 2018 continue with on-going evaluation and reporting to assess progress. One project of note is the [Indigenous Data Toolkit](#) and its enhanced supports, which has assisted self-governing Indigenous Governments build data collection and management capacity on the ground within each community.

Fiscal transfers to SGIGs are guided by the Collaborative Fiscal Policy framework co-developed by Canada and self-governing partners. Between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023, regular meetings were

held and fiscal transfer payments of over \$2 billion were made to Indigenous signatories in support of their jurisdictional responsibilities and governance activities.

In Summer 2022, Canada finalized Canada's Collaborative Policy on Institutional Capacity to directly address the needs of Modern Treaty partners without self-government arrangements. Canada recognizes that the demands on these partners' organizations has increased over the years and that they require increased funding to implement their respective comprehensive land claim agreements, fulfill their Treaty obligations, and strengthen the Crown-Indigenous relationship. The Collaborative Policy on Institutional Capacity was co-developed over three years alongside five Indigenous partners and will provide increased ongoing funding to support the implementation of their respective land claim agreements. This policy represents a step forward in renewing our relationships with these partners and creating conditions for self-determination. With the conclusion of the policy co-development process, Canada also secured a source of funding to implement the policy. As of March 2023, Canada is finalizing new fiscal arrangements with these partners in accordance with the policy.

First Nations Fiscal Management Act

The First Nations Fiscal Management Act (FNFMA) supports economic development for opting First Nations, particularly in the areas of taxation, fiscal and financial management, and access to financing on the capital markets. The institutions created under the legislation provide First Nations with the institutional supports and tools they need to exercise jurisdiction in these areas, to build their communities and economies.

Between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023, 21 First Nations "opted-in" to the FNFMA and an additional 6 are in the process of being added to the schedule to the Act for a total of 348 communities or 60% of all First Nations participating in the regime to advance their self-determination and socio-economic development.

Building on gaps laid bare by the COVID pandemic, national engagement and pilot projects with communities and infrastructure stakeholders, CIRNAC, in collaboration with FNFMA institutions and the First Nations Infrastructure Institute Development Board, brought forward enhancements to the FNFMA regime. These enhancements included finalizing the co-development of legislative amendments to the Act that would expand and modernize the mandates of the First Nations Tax Commission and the First Nations Financial Management Board, stabilize their operations and establish a national First Nations Infrastructure Institute under the Act. The legislative amendments were introduced via Bill C-45, *An Act to amend the First Nations Fiscal Management Act, to make consequential amendments to other Acts, and to make a clarification relating to another Act*, on March 23, 2023. Canada also invested \$64.9 million over 5 years to support these enhancements and to close Indigenous institutional infrastructure and support gaps.

The Department continued to work with the fiscal institutions, partner Modern Treaty First Nations and the Province of British Columbia on draft regulations to enable Treaty and self-governing First Nations to benefit from the Act, with policy development now concluded for the regulations needed to leverage other revenues. Work continues on the drafting of regulations for the use of local revenues (property taxes) as well as on the policy approach for public service-centered Indigenous organizations, such as health or education authorities, to benefit from the Act.

Finally, the Department continued to support FNFMA institutions as they explored innovative ways of supporting Indigenous communities, including options for additional fiscal revenues, enhanced access to pooled insurance, and investment and assets management for communities. Together, these new tools will support First Nations better leverage FNFMA institutions and achieve economic prosperity and self-determination that is consistent with UNDRIP.

Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management

On February 12, 1996, Canada and thirteen First Nation chiefs signed the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management (Framework Agreement) relating to First Nation land governance outside of the *Indian Act*. In 1999, the *First Nations Land Management Act* came into force to ratify the Framework Agreement.

The Framework Agreement is a First Nations-led nation-to-nation agreement that supports in creating the conditions for self-determination and renewed relationships by enabling First Nations to manage and govern their land, environment and resources using a community approved land code rather than through the *Indian Act*.

There are currently 203 First Nations who have signed adhesions to the Framework Agreement with 102 First Nations fully operating in accordance with their community approved land codes. Together, the Framework Agreement and the federal ratifying legislation form the First Nation Land Management regime.

In March 2020, the Lands Advisory Board, representing First Nations that are signatories to the Framework Agreement, initiated work with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada to replace the *First Nations Land Management Act* with more concise legislation that better respects the central importance of the Framework Agreement. From April to December 2022, the Department and the Lands Advisory Board finalized the co-developed new legislation to replace the *First Nations Land Management Act*.

On December 15, 2022, the Framework Agreement on *First Nation Land Management Act* received Royal Assent through the passage of the Fall Economic Statement *Implementation Act, 2022*. This more concise legislation repeals and replaces the *First Nations Land Management Act* and provides the Framework Agreement with the force of law, resituating it as the central authority on First Nation Land Management and recognizing it as a First Nation-led process. The new legislation also removes the need for complex legislative amendments to amend the Framework Agreement unless consequential changes to federal legislation are required.

Inuit Nunangat Policy

The [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#) was co-developed with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the four Inuit Treaty Organizations and was endorsed by federal and Inuit leadership at the April 21, 2022, Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee Leaders Meeting, co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. The endorsement of the Policy was accompanied by an announcement of \$25.4 million to support early and accelerated Policy implementation, which will also support the co-development of the long-term, whole-of-government implementation plan (to 2030 and beyond). The Inuit Nunangat Policy applies to all new or renewed federal policies, programs, services or initiatives that apply to Inuit Nunangat and/or which benefit Inuit of Inuit Nunangat. It is the first overarching,

whole-of-government policy co-developed between the federal government and Inuit. The Inuit Nunangat Policy is intended to promote prosperity and support community resilience and individual well-being to create socio-economic and cultural equity between Inuit of Inuit Nunangat and others living in Canada. It promotes Inuit self-determination by providing guidance to all federal departments and agencies to improve the creation and implementation of their programs, policies and initiatives in Inuit Nunangat and for Inuit, and improves coordination across federal departments, agencies, programs and operations with the goal of facilitating equitable eligibility and access across Inuit Nunangat and for all Inuit.

Initial funding of \$5.4 million has been secured to establish baseline capacity at Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and within CIRNAC to staff an Inuit Nunangat Policy Implementation Secretariat. CIRNAC continues to work with Inuit to access the \$20 million committed to a Central Implementation Fund, which will further support Inuit partners and key initiatives across government to support accelerated Policy implementation in line with Inuit priorities.

Infrastructure Investment

Housing Investments

In 2022-23, CIRNAC entered into fiscal transfer arrangements totaling \$560.7 million over five years in support of Indigenous Housing Investments with self-governing and Modern Treaty partners. These investments will help address critical housing needs, as well as support the provision of adequate and affordable housing to achieve better health and socio-economic outcomes. This initiative extends and enhances distinctions-based Budget 2021 Infrastructure Investments. Both Budget 2021 and Budget 2022 Housing and Infrastructure funding are being administered in a self-determination style approach that relies on partners to develop action plans to identify infrastructure and housing needs which reflect community priorities.

Métis Nation Housing Strategy

In 2018, the Métis Nation Housing Strategy was put in place with an initial investment of \$500 million over 10 years. This Housing Strategy aims to address the housing crisis faced by Métis Nation and Manitoba Métis Federation communities in a culturally appropriate and distinctions-based manner. The goal of the Strategy is to reduce the gap in Core Housing Need between these Métis communities and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada by 50% by 2028. Budget 2022 announced an additional \$190.2 million over seven years to improve housing in Métis communities, of which approximately \$127 million will enhance implementation of the Métis Nation Housing Strategy.

Over the past year, great progress has been made by Métis Nation Governing Members (the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, Métis Nation-Ontario, Métis Nation of British Columbia and the Manitoba Métis Federation) to improve housing conditions for their citizens by further developing their housing programs and capacity to deliver. Final reporting numbers have not yet been received for 2022-23, but so far, 1,377 housing units have been bought or built; 963 households have been provided down payment assistance; 2,906 housing units have been renovated; and 8,533 households have been provided rental supports.

CIRNAC regularly meets with Governing Members of the Métis National Council through the Métis Housing and Homelessness Technical Working Group, and bilaterally with the Manitoba Métis

Federation to address the housing needs of Métis communities. The Technical Working Group is Métis-led and provides a productive forum for parties to collaborate, support the implementation of the Housing Strategy, and improve data collection practices. In this reporting year, over 22 housing-focused meetings were held with Métis partners, annual reporting templates were updated in consultation with partners, and a housing needs assessment survey was designed.

Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund (ICIF) – Métis Nation Projects

Budget 2021 announced the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund (ICIF), a \$4.3 billion investment and the first federal, distinctions-based infrastructure investment (outside of housing) for Métis. Of this, \$240 million over four years is being delivered by CIRNAC to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, Métis Nation Ontario, Métis Nation of British Columbia, the Manitoba Métis Federation, and the Métis Settlements General Council through flexible grant and contribution funding agreements to support self-determined project selection and delivery.

Métis partners have received funding allocations for 2021-22 and 2022-23 fiscal years, which is beginning to address the infrastructure gap that perpetuates the economic and social inequities that exist between Métis and non-Indigenous Canadians. In the last year, funding has been used by Métis partners to support critical infrastructure projects including road work, wastewater management, health centers, senior centers, and addictions treatment facilities.

Inuit Housing and Infrastructure

CIRNAC continues to deliver distinctions-based housing and infrastructure investments to Inuit partners for Inuit-led strategies to address housing and infrastructure gaps. The Department continues to work with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Inuit Treaty Organizations to implement the co-developed Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy. These initiatives are helping to create conditions for self-determination and renewed relationships.

In support of Canada's commitments to improve housing and infrastructure in Indigenous communities, CIRNAC has been delivering direct, distinctions-based investments to Inuit land claims organizations since 2016. Budgets 2016, 2018, 2021 and 2022 included direct investments in support of this commitment.

Housing and infrastructure funding for fiscal year 2022-23 has been delivered to Inuit partners for supporting housing and infrastructure needs based on plans developed by Inuit. This funding is delivered through flexible grant agreements ensuring that partners are able to deliver results based on their needs, and alleviates some of the significant challenges associated with construction in remote, isolated Inuit communities. In addition to supporting new and improved housing and infrastructure, self-determined delivery is also leading to greater local benefit through Inuit driven contracting, employment and capacity enhancement.

Housing and infrastructure are standalone priorities of the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC). Federal and Inuit partners continue to collaborate, including at the political leadership level, to assess progress and direct joint work to deliver on this shared priority. Federal partners such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Infrastructure Canada and ISC are key partners in advancing housing and infrastructure priorities.

Permanent Bilateral Mechanisms

Assembly of First Nations

The Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM) between the Assembly of First Nations and Canada was established in 2017 through the signing of a [Memorandum of Understanding on shared priorities](#). The PBM serves as a forum to identify joint priorities, co-develop policy, and monitor progress, and is guided by Senior Officials and Leaders Meetings. Impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic along with governance changes within the Assembly of First Nations resulted in a pause on PBM meetings.

This past year efforts focused on re-establishing the PBM process, leading to a Senior Officials Meeting held on November 9, 2022. The meeting was co-hosted by CIRNAC and the Assembly of First Nations, and included participation from Indigenous Services Canada, Public Safety Canada, Justice Canada, and Canadian Heritage to enable meaningful discussion on the joint priority areas:

- UNDRIP Implementation
- Review of Federal Laws and Policies
- Implementation of TRC Calls to Action
- Policing and Community Safety
- Indigenous Languages
- New Fiscal Relationship
- Closing Gaps

This meeting achieved progress towards these priority areas, including developing a common understanding of outcomes and next steps, positioning a future Leaders Meeting for success.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

The Government of Canada and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Makivvik Corporation, and the Nunatsiavut Government all participate in ICPC, which enhances Canada's whole of government approach to engaging with Inuit partners through cooperation, implementation, and accountability. The ICPC currently has 15 joint priority areas, each with associated work plans and tangible deliverables.

This past year, there were two Senior Officials Meetings and two Leaders Meetings, one of which was co-chaired by the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Prime Minister of Canada in April 2022. Key accomplishments during 2022-23 were the endorsement of the co-developed Inuit Nunangat Policy at the Leaders Meeting in April 2022, and the ICPC Co-development Principles in December 2022.

Métis National Council

The Government of Canada and the Métis National Council and its Governing Members are advancing work on the joint priorities identified through the [Canada-Métis Nation Accord, which forms the basis for](#) their PBM.

The PBM was on hold for several years due to governance changes within the Métis National Council, its Governing Members, and the COVID-19 pandemic, but was reinitiated this year through a Senior Officials Meeting on May 19, 2022, and a Leaders Meeting on December 13, 2022, to discuss the shared priorities of Canada and the Métis Nation. Canada and the Métis Nation affirmed these shared priorities

to include: Housing, Infrastructure, UNDRIP, Métis Claims, Benefits Sharing, Economic Development, Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care, K-12 Education, Indigenous Languages, and International Engagement. The successful discussions were made possible by effective collaboration with other government departments (e.g., Indigenous Services Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, Infrastructure Canada, Justice Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Heritage, and Global Affairs Canada) to ensure all participants were adequately prepared for each meeting.

Through the PBM, CIRNAC and the Métis National Council continue to work towards finalizing Co-Development Principles and a Terms of Reference for the PBM, which will support continued effective working relationships.

Child and Family Services

Since its enactment, CIRNAC has collaborated with Indigenous Services Canada in *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. At the end of this reporting period, 12 Indigenous governing bodies provided a notice or a request to exercise jurisdiction under the Act.

Further, Canada concluded coordination agreements with Splitsin, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, Founding First Nations, Peguis First Nation and a fiscal agreement with Louis Bull Tribe in this reporting period.

Implementation of the Canada-Congress of Aboriginal Peoples' Political Accord

The implementation of the Canada-Congress of Aboriginal Peoples' (Congress) Political Accord (signed in 2018) launched on March 4, 2020. Through the Accord, Canada and the Congress have committed to identify, discuss, and advance joint policy priorities aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions for the Congress' constituents. The process for implementation was co-developed by Canada and the Congress to address joint priorities through working groups co-led by various Departments and the Congress. There are six working groups that met regularly through 2022-23 on: post-secondary education, justice, Indigenous languages, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, family programs and housing.

The Congress' role and contributions are invaluable in ensuring that the perspectives of Non-Status First Nations and other off-reserve Indigenous Peoples are considered in policy and program design.

Indigenous Peoples Space – 100 Wellington Street

Ottawa's 100 Wellington Street building is a classified heritage building located directly across from Parliament Hill. The building was constructed in 1931 to 1932, and was occupied by the United States embassy until 1992, but has since remained vacant. Following a nation-wide consultation of over 7,000 participants it was announced that the building would be transformed into a national space for Indigenous Peoples. CIRNAC, in collaboration with Public Services and Procurement Canada, is working with the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council on the development of an Indigenous Peoples' Space and the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation Tribal Council (AANTC) on the development of a Dedicated Algonquin Space.

On October 4, 2022, the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council were advised that they would be provided with short-term access and use of 100 Wellington;

the AANTC were provided with similar authorization and access for 119 Sparks . Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council accepted keys to 100 Wellington for immediate use and have both hosted events in the space. At the end of March 2023, the Assembly of First Nations and AANTC were waiting until an agreement was reached on the Dedicated Algonquin Space before using 100 Wellington or 119 Sparks respectively. Negotiations with the AANTC towards a final agreement advanced significantly during the year, resulting in options being presented to Algonquin Chiefs.

Advancing Northern Relationships

Arctic and Northern Policy Framework

Co-developed with Indigenous, territorial and provincial partners, and with more than 33 federal government departments, , the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework (ANPF) was launched in 2019 to guide Government of Canada priorities, activities and investments in the region to 2030 and beyond, and to align Canada’s national and international policy objectives with the priorities of Indigenous Peoples in the North and Arctic and all northerners. The ANPF is now being co-implemented with partners. Implementation measures include the establishment of national, regional, and distinction-based governance mechanisms to facilitate targeted identification and implementation of partner priorities. Northern Indigenous partners to the ANPF include over 37 national and regional governments and organizations. The ANPF supports the Government’s commitment to renewing Inuit-Crown and government-to-government relationships based on a recognition of rights, respect, collaboration and partnership.

The Government of Canada held its most recent annual political level ANPF Leadership Committee meeting in Yellowknife, chaired by the Minister of Northern Affairs and co-hosted by the Government of Northwest Territories, in September 2022. The meeting was attended by ANPF partners, including northern Indigenous Governments and organizations. Priorities identified by partners at the meeting included: mental health and addictions supports; infrastructure including housing and community infrastructure; economic development, including clean energy and green economic measures, critical minerals, and economic reconciliation; climate change; education and training; the high cost of living; northern and Arctic security, sovereignty and defense; and, Indigenous cross-border mobility.

The ANPF includes reconciliation-related objectives to: provide ongoing learning and skills development opportunities, including Indigenous-based knowledge and skills; address the systemic causes of all forms of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people; end the over-representation of Indigenous Peoples in our criminal justice systems; implement culturally appropriate approaches to justice issues; and, support community safety through effective and culturally appropriate crime prevention initiatives and policing services.

Implementation of the reconciliation goal of the ANPF will also be achieved through various collective actions across federal portfolios, including implementing the UNDA, implementing the Inuit Nunangat Policy, negotiation and implementation of Modern Treaties, other supports to self-determination and representation, strengthening Indigenous languages, completing devolution, and continuing to redress past wrongs against Indigenous Peoples.

Budget 2022 announced new spending commitments that will contribute to the implementation of ANPF goals and objectives, in relation to, for example, Indigenous economic development in the North, improved northern Indigenous housing and community infrastructure, expansion of available hydroelectric energy to the North, supports for the transition off diesel to cleaner energy sources and support for communities seeking to locate burial sites at former residential schools. CIRNAC is making progress with partners to implement these targeted investments across Arctic and Northern communities.

Northern Post-Secondary Education

Access to post-secondary education, without discrimination, for Indigenous Peoples is a key component to meaningful reconciliation and is recognized by both UNDRIP and the TRC's Calls to Action. Since the release of the ANPF, the Government of Canada has supported a number of targeted investments to support the accessibility of post-secondary education for Indigenous and non-Indigenous northerners.

The early measures noted below are aligned with the final report of the independent Task Force on Northern Post-Secondary Education, [A Shared Responsibility: Northern Voices, Northern Solutions — Report of the Task Force on Northern Post-Secondary Education](#), released in March 2022. The Task Force was established in October 2020 with the mandate to study post-secondary education in the Arctic and North. The Government of Canada welcomed the core findings of the task force's report and is giving careful consideration to its comprehensive set of 37 Calls to Action, in collaboration with northern and Indigenous partners.

In Budget 2019, the Government of Canada committed to investing \$26 million over five years starting in 2019-20 to support the construction of a new science building at Yukon University, to enhance learning opportunities for its students – more than 25% of whom identify as Indigenous. In 2022-23, Yukon University received its pre-design report for the building and has initiated a two-phased procurement process for the building's construction, scheduled to begin early in 2023-24.

Through Budget 2019, the Government of Canada also committed to an investment of \$12.8 million over five years from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to the Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning to expand the delivery of its land-based, Indigenous-led, post-secondary research and education programming. In 2022-23, Dechinta hosted the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) Conference in Whitehorse, Yukon and Yellowknife, Northwest Territories which brought together professional academics, students, independent scholars, community-based educators, and Elders to engage in discussions of Indigenous issues and communities.

Harvesters Support Grant & Community Food Program's Fund

The Harvesters Support Grant (HSG) was implemented in early 2020, its design directly informed through feedback and consultation from northern and Indigenous partners. The HSG is one of the first co-developed initiatives recognizing a decolonized model recommended by the TRC and MMIWG final reports/recommendations. It encourages self-determination and local decision making by helping recipient organizations and communities develop and deploy their own solutions to improve food security in the North and Arctic, based on traditional decision-making and local priorities. In 2022, with

investments from Budget 2021, the Community Food Programs Fund (CFPF) was implemented. The HSG and CFPF provides grant funding through partnerships with Land Claim Organizations, self-government entities and Indigenous organizations to support hunting, harvesting and food sharing activities and networks in 112 eligible communities. Recognizing the connection between traditional and market foods, the CFPF expands the scope of the HSG to initiatives such as school food programs, elders' meal programs, and group ordering; supporting and strengthening the work communities do to support local food security through culturally appropriate, locally led solutions. The program provides flexible funding, allowing communities to respond to individual needs and evolve local food systems over time. In 2022-23, [Nutrition North Canada](#) (NCC) signed grant agreements with 23 regional Indigenous Governments and organizations to distribute over \$120 million in new funding from the HSG and the new CFPF to eligible communities.

Food Security Research Grant

There has long been a disconnect between NNC's retail subsidy program delivery and feedback from communities, northern and Indigenous partners, and academics. To address concerns raised and increase access to more affordable, healthy foods and essential items, NNC has invested \$1.5 million through Budget 2021 into phase 1 of the Food Security Research Grant and has successfully funded 5 projects. The Food Security Research Grant is supporting Indigenous-led research projects looking at food access inequality, the dynamics of existing federal food access programs and food insecurity among Indigenous Peoples living in eligible communities under the NNC program. The research will inform the ongoing evolution of NNC to meet the program's food security mandate and inform the enhancement and redesign of the subsidy model to support equitable access to market (store-bought) food.

Expansion of the retail subsidy to include food banks

The NNC retail subsidy is applied against the cost of eligible food and essential items in 122 isolated communities that lack year-round surface transportation (road, rail, marine), with the goal of increasing affordability and access to market food. In 2022-23, through Budget 2021 funding, NNC adopted the recommendation by the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs and expanded its subsidy program eligibility to food banks and other charitable organizations. As a result, charities and food banks are now able to claim subsidies for transporting and distributing food and essential household items in eligible northern communities. In December 2022, Harvest Manitoba became the first registered food bank with NNC. The inclusion of food banks and charities in the subsidy program is a welcomed step and implemented with the help and consultation of Indigenous partners. This expansion will help address the immediate needs of the most vulnerable residents in northern and isolated communities as the Government works with communities and Indigenous partners to develop toward develop long-term solutions.

Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program

The [Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program](#) continues to address the eight largest and highest risk abandoned mines in the North. The Program has allowed the Department to implement long-term remediation contracts, which provide greater certainty and economic opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, Northerners and communities affected by these projects. In the past, Indigenous communities located near these large mines did not realize meaningful benefits from the operation of the mines and were left with contamination on their lands following abandonment. The Northern Abandoned Mine

Reclamation Program ensures communities and Indigenous Peoples are involved in all aspects of remediation projects through employment, training and business opportunities. This is one aspect which has helped to support economic opportunity in northern Indigenous communities while promoting self-determination and reconciliation.

In 2022-23, the Department made progress towards these goals through consultation and engagement with affected Indigenous communities throughout the full project lifecycle.

- For example, February 2023 marked the second anniversary of the Canada Déłıne Governance Agreement for the Great Bear Lake Remediation Project. Under this Agreement, Canada met throughout the year with representatives of the Déłıne Gotine Government through the established governance committees culminating in a Joint Technical Workshop organized to co-develop the Remediation Framework. While the project planning advances, CIRNAC provided nearly \$1 million in funding to support training and capacity building for Déłıne residents to prepare for the upcoming remediation activity.
- Similarly, on the Clinton Creek Remediation Project in Yukon, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation Chief and Council and the Department worked collaboratively with staff from the First Nation and the Government of Yukon to prepare one-page, plain language, summaries of key topics and returned to the community in 2022-23 for additional discussions following concerns expressed with the volume of technical content in the remediation planning process.
- Furthermore, at the Giant Mine Remediation Project in the Northwest Territories, the Department signed a Community Benefits Plan Agreement with an affected First Nation, which includes over \$3.8 million in funding over ten years to support socio-economic development opportunities. Building and maintaining strong relationships with Indigenous partners is essential to the success of the Program.

Indigenous Climate Leadership

Indigenous Peoples have long been climate leaders, but often face significant barriers in addressing their self-determined climate priorities, and are left out of key climate-related decision-making processes. Indigenous Peoples have communicated that more must be done to truly support Indigenous climate leadership and uphold rights that are impacted by a changing climate. In response, Canada has committed to co-developing with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis an Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda that ensures Indigenous Peoples have a seat at the table in federal climate decision-making and have the resources and authorities to take action on their self-determined climate priorities. Over the course of 2022-23, CIRNAC worked with Environment and Climate Change Canada and national and regional Indigenous partners across Canada to begin the collaborative process for this Agenda. In 2024-25, whole-of-government, distinctions-based recommendations will be put forward to federal decision-makers to renew the relationship between First Nations, Inuit, and Métis on climate change.

CIRNAC's climate change programs continue to support Indigenous and northern communities, governments, and organizations to take a leadership role in climate action through participation in policy, project feasibility and planning, and implementation of climate adaptation and clean energy priorities and projects.

CIRNAC's climate change programs include First Nation Adapt, Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring, Climate Change Preparedness in the North, Northern Responsible Energy Approach for

Community Heat and Electricity (REACHE), and Engaging Indigenous Peoples in Climate Policy. In 2022-23, these programs combined to invest over \$56 million in 325 community-driven projects in Indigenous and northern communities across Canada that support climate mitigation and adaptation.

The examples below highlight projects undertaken in 2022-23 that are community led, build local capacity, and yield economic opportunities for Indigenous communities.

- The Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring program is funding the Métis Nation of Alberta's Askîy initiative, a community-based environment and climate change monitoring program. Askîy was developed based on extensive engagement and responds to key priorities identified by Métis citizens across Alberta. Using an Indigenous-led approach, the project has tracked climate impacts to birds, fish health and abundance, vegetation, and berry health. The project has enhanced the capacity of the Métis Nation of Alberta to understand climate impacts on traditional lands and to generate critical data to fill gaps in knowledge to support climate action.
- The Climate Change Preparedness in the North program is funding the Hamlet of Arviat for the implementation of a Community Drainage Plan to improve drainage and meltwater management as the impacts of climate change worsen, affecting the community's quality of life and safety, and increasing road and facility maintenance requirements. The project will strengthen the climate resilience of the community by contributing to the preservation of permafrost around critical infrastructure as well as offering additional training, capacity building and economic opportunities to community members.
- The First Nation Adapt Program funded Eel River Bar First Nation Flood Risk Assessment project to conduct an assessment of community infrastructure to protect the community against future potential climate change impacts. This project includes identification of impacted areas, updating climate models, community engagement, and the development of a conceptual storm surge protection plan. The study will define extreme water levels and wave conditions within the study area and the development of design criteria for the proposed shoreline protection project.
- The Northern REACHE program funded Nihtat Energy Ltd. to install a 1 Megawatt solar project in Inuvik, which will sell power under a Power Purchase Agreement with the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the territorial government-owned utility. The project is the largest one developed to date by an Indigenous energy champion for the Gwich'in Nation after years of building strong relationships with the utility, government, and local stakeholders. Revenues from the project are reinvested to advance renewable energy development and to sustain the operations of their development corporation, Nihtat Corporation. The solar power project was installed with the help of local Gwich'in contractors.

Wah-ila-toos — Indigenous and remote communities clean energy hub

In 2022-23, CIRNAC, through REACHE, worked closely with Natural Resources Canada, ISC as well as Infrastructure Canada, and Environment and Climate Change Canada to develop an Indigenous and remote communities' clean energy hub – gifted the Indigenous name 'Wah-ila-toos' – that delivers federal clean energy funding using a community-centered, single-window approach. Wah-ila-toos simplifies access to funding and resources, and prioritizes Indigenous governance and decision-making, capacity building, and locally driven energy solutions and projects.

An Indigenous Advisory Council centers and elevates Indigenous voices in the Hub's governance by providing advice and guidance on policy and program design, and directing engagement and implementation of Indigenous climate leadership in the clean energy space.

Addressing Northern Housing Needs

Canada's northern, remote and isolated communities face unique housing and infrastructure needs.

In 2022-23, the Government of Canada, through Budget 2022, provided \$150 million dollars to the Governments of the Northwest Territories (\$60 million), Yukon (\$30 million) and Nunavut (\$60 million) to respond critical housing and infrastructure needs. Territorial governments have indicated most of their housing activities will be in support of social housing. Through Budget 2022 investments and ongoing partnerships with Canada's territorial governments, the Government of Canada is supporting territorial partners to deliver on the shared priority of ensuring all Northerners (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) have access to affordable housing using "made-in-the-North" solutions.

The Government of Canada has also committed \$190 million over the next seven years for housing and infrastructure in Métis communities including \$34 million that will be provided to Métis communities in the Northwest Territories. These investments support social outcomes and respond to high priority needs to address such as urgent and long-term infrastructure gaps.

Nunavut Devolution

The devolution of responsibility over lands and resource management to the territory is a long-standing federal priority and involves the transfer of responsibilities for lands and rights with respect to waters from the federal government to the Government of Nunavut. Nunavut remains the last territory without control of its own lands and resources, and Devolution follows through on the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement in 1993, and the creation of the territory of Nunavut in 1999.

Devolution is reconciliation in action and will align Nunavut with other provinces and territories by placing the administration of lands and resources in the hands of northerners. It is a key step for the self-determination of Nunavummiut and Inuit and will allow for stronger public governments that can be more responsive to local issues and priorities while ensuring Nunavummiut realize the full socioeconomic benefits of resource development in the region. It places decision-making authority over lands and resources into the hands of Nunavummiut, whose culture, economy, and aspirations are closely linked to the lands around them. Devolution fosters reconciliation by renewing the Inuit-Crown relationship strengthens the Territories' role in Canada.

Since the signing of the Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) in 2019, Parties have been negotiating a Final Agreement. As an initial priority, a Transitional Human Resources Development Strategy (the Strategy) was approved by all parties in September 2020 and supports self-determination and self-governance among Inuit. The Strategy outlines an approach for the transfer of staff, training, and support for human resources, and meeting the needs of legislated responsibilities under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*.

Northerners, including Nunavut Inuit, are represented in the negotiation process by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Nunavut. The process will include a Final Agreement, which envisions a three-year period to implement the Agreement and transfer of authorities. The ongoing

negotiation of the Final Agreement includes extensive consultations with Indigenous Peoples with established or asserted section 35 Aboriginal or Treaty rights within Nunavut, communities and the Government of Nunavut. Major advancements in the negotiation and the consultation process were achieved during 2022-23.

Yukon Region

Financial Transfer Agreement Amendments

In 2022-23, 44 Financial Transfer Agreement amendments were successfully ratified in the areas of infrastructure, housing, and water/wastewater; and 42 Program Service Transfer Agreements for programs and services in the areas of education, mental wellness, family violence, and smoking cessation. This work continues to support the Government of Canada's commitment to work in partnership with northern and Indigenous partners to ensure the rights and needs of Indigenous Peoples are addressed by providing a framework for local control over local programs and services.

Representative Public Service in Yukon

Canada continued to advance the development of a Representative Public Service Plan in accordance with obligations contained in Chapter 22 of the Yukon First Nation Final Agreements. This Plan is designed to ensure the federal public service in Yukon is representative of Yukon First Nations people. The Plan is in its near final version and is currently under-going engagement and consultation with Self-Governing Yukon First Nations before entering final approvals.

Enhancing client services to Yukon First Nations

The CIRNAC office provides direct client services to Indigenous clients in the Yukon. Recent successful enhancements to these services have provided clients with higher quality of programming through innovative partnerships and new internal service delivery processes.

- The CIRNAC Client Services team developed an innovative partnership with Council of Yukon First Nations that allowed Income Assistance clients to access additional, targeted support services through the Council for costs specifically related to increased cost of living due to inflation and the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed over 300 clients to receive additional financial supports specific to their direct needs. Funding made available to clients was over \$1 million.
- Through partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, CIRNAC staff undertook an outreach campaign to deliver services from off-site locations, resulting in an increase in registrations from individuals who faced barriers to registration and were not accessing services.

Self-Government Agreement Amendments

The Yukon Self-Government Agreements contain provisions under Section 6.0 to address amending the agreement. An Order-In-Council was approved in October 2022 for an amendment to Section 15.0 for each of the 11 self-governing Yukon First Nation with respect to tax relief measures. These amendments will result in beneficial tax treatment, simplify the compliance for the Indigenous government and qualifying entities in the course of exercising a function of government, and also provide for the same tax treatment in respect of Registered Payment Plans that is available for Indigenous Peoples defined as

Indians under the *Indian Act* that continue to benefit from the tax exemption under section 87 of the *Indian Act*.

Northwest Territories Region

Advancing the Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation

In 2022-23, Canada continued to advance the Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. Signed in 2021, the Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement guides how Canada and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation will work collaboratively to address the request for an apology and compensation regarding the historical operation of the Giant Mine. The Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement outlines the approach for the co-development of a factual record and information-sharing with respect to the operation of the Giant Mine located on the Yellowknives Dene First Nation's territory. The work completed by Canada and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation on the Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement advances reconciliation by acknowledging and addressing the past.

To advance the Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement CIRNAC's Northwest's Territories Regional Office led a Consolidated Estimates Authorities Attestation submission to release the funds announced in Budget 2022. The process provides \$2 million over two years, starting in 2022-23, to support this work including \$1.5 million provided directly to the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. CIRNAC's Northwest's Territories Regional Office disbursed \$750,000 in funding to the Yellowknives Dene First Nation in 2022-23. With the remainder of the funding to be disbursed in 2023-24, this funding will support the first phase of the Collaborative Process Protocol Agreement where Canada and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation intend to develop a shared understanding of the claim for Canada to seek a mandate to negotiate a settlement.

In addition, in 2022-23 a Working Group comprised of the representatives from Canada and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, met bi-monthly to review the priorities identified by the Yellowknives Dene First Nation's Chiefs and Council. As a result of the work completed by the Working Group, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation was able to advance their economic and social priorities. Furthermore, the work completed by the Working Group created conditions for self-determination and a renewed relationship between Canada and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

Nunavut Region

Implementation of Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement

Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement specifies Inuit employment obligations. In an effort to meet Article 23, CIRNAC continues to implement and update its departmental Inuit Employment Plan with input from northern and Inuit partners and support the development of the Whole-of-the Government Inuit Employment Plan. As the federal lead in the implementation of the Nunavut Agreement and the largest federal employer in Nunavut, CIRNAC has taken on the leadership role in implementing the federal commitments.

In 2022-23, CIRNAC met its short-term targets and is on track to meet its medium-term targets as outlined in the departmental Inuit Employment Plan. CIRNAC increased Inuit employment from 23% in April 2017 to 35% in April 2020, and then to 48.5% in March 2023.

Conclusion

Moving forward, genuine collaboration and working in partnership continue to be key factors to delivering meaningful results that will lead to improved outcomes for First Nation, Inuit and Métis in Canada. Equally, a whole-of-government approach will continue to be an integral part to strengthening relationships with Indigenous Peoples. While significant progress has been made over the past year in advancing reconciliation and supporting self-determination, considerable work remains to be done to support Indigenous Peoples in Canada, including non-status and off-reserve Indigenous communities. CIRNAC will continue to be accountable and is committed to this ongoing journey. Measures taken in 2022-23 demonstrate the strength of the government's commitment going forward.