# TOGETHER FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

2022-2027

GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN

FOR THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL WELLNESS

**OF THE FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT** 



# Québec 🕷

## TOGETHER FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

2022-2027

•

GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN

FOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL WELLNESS

OF THE FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT

We thank **Tourisme Autochtone Québec** for the photographs appearing in this document. An exploration of its website (<u>tourismeautochtone.com</u>) will reveal the diversity and depth of the Indigenous tourism sector in Québec.

This publication was produced by the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit in collaboration with the Direction des communications. <u>https://www.quebec.ca/en/government/departments-and-agencies/secretariat-premieres-nations-inuit</u>

An accessible version of the document is available online. If you experience technical difficulties or wish to obtain an adapted version, please contact the Ministère du Conseil exécutif at <u>communic@mce.gouv.qc.ca</u>.

For more information: Direction des communications du ministère du Conseil exécutif et du Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor 1<sup>er</sup> étage, secteur 400 875, Grande Allée Est Québec (Québec) G1R 4Y8

Telephone: 418 781-9530 Email: <u>communic@mce.gouv.qc.ca</u> Website: <u>https://www.quebec.ca/gouvernement/ministere/conseil-executif</u>

Legal deposit – July 2022 Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec ISBN : 978-2-550-92219-3 (print version) ISBN : 978-2-550-92220-9 (electronic version)

All rights reserved for all countries. © Gouvernement du Québec – 2022

## MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER



This year, the Québec government is taking an important step by renewing its commitments to Indigenous nations, clearly and unequivocally. The 2022-2027 Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Wellness of the First Nations and Inuit reflects both the evolving context and the aspirations of Québec's Indigenous peoples.

Québec's growth requires the active participation of all in achieving our shared objectives. To implement this vision, we must ensure that Québec's First Nations and Inuit communities, which have shown their resilience on numerous occasions, have an opportunity to thrive economically, socially and culturally. Their contribution to Québec society is unique and must be promoted and encouraged.

For this reason, I want us all to move forward, guided by an effective and far-ranging action plan that applies to the government as a whole. Together, we can build an inclusive society that will stand as a model and make all its inhabitants proud to live in and represent Québec.

I thank all our Indigenous partners for their involvement, their dynamic contribution and their determination. With no more delay, it is time to take action!

Leant

François Legault



## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR RELATIONS WITH FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT

My first goal, when I was nominated as Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs in October 2020, was to build a link of trust with Québec's First Nations and Inuit communities by going out to meet them. Despite the obstacles created by the pandemic, these visits to 55 Indigenous communities provided me with some invaluable insights, and I would like to offer my sincerest thanks to my hosts for their warm welcome and willingness to share.

The underlying aims of the 2022-2027 Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Wellness of the First Nations and Inuit arise directly from the conclusions I was able to draw from these visits and from my consultations with our Indigenous partners. They showed how the social and cultural needs of First Nations and Inuit communities have continued to evolve, just as their expectations with regard to the Québec government and their relationship with it have changed.

The reports filed by the commissions of inquiry have also set some fundamental guidelines and highlighted several issues that have been made into priorities by the present government. The issues include those listed in the six fields of action plan, the adoption of a culturallyappropriate approach and, of course, the successful completion of several key projects in the housing, education, wellness and security sectors, among others.

Our government's response reflects the complex nature of the issues, rather than a fixed and final solution; history has taught us that adjustments are often needed to achieve an ideal conclusion. Maintaining a sustained dialogue, and applying a partnership-based approach with Indigenous organizations and communities, will assist us over the coming years, and our approach will be systematically adapted to the unique realities observed on the ground. We will listen actively to ensure that the situation of Indigenous peoples continues to improve, in the best interest of current and future generations.

lan Lafrenière, CD

## COLLABORATING ARTIST TANYA MESHER JONES

Tanya Mesher Jones is a young Inuit artist from Kuujjuag, Québec, and is known throughout Nunavik for her abstract paintings, which use acrylics to depict northern scenes with simplicity, vivid colours and movement. Tanya illustrates traditional Inuit culture but is not afraid to explore and create new concepts, allowing others to discover her nation and the ways in which it has adapted to the modern world. Her goal is to merge the past with a contemporary focus.





*"I would like to inspire the non-Indigenous peoples to learn more about us and respect everything we have experienced in such a short lapse of time."* 

### Kuujjuaq by Night

The work shows the beauty and magical light of the aurora borealis dancing in the sky above the boundless immensity of the land.

Les Productions Feux sacrés

## COLLABORATING ARTIST JOSÉPHINE BACON

Joséphine Bacon, a poet, director, documentary film-maker, lyricist, translator, storyteller and Innu-Aimun teacher, is from the Innu community of Pessamit.

She is a leading, internationally-renowned author in Québec and a well-known ambassador for First Nations culture, both within Québec and abroad.

She is deeply involved in the Indigenous literary and artistic world, and has helped give younger generations a feeling of Indigenous pride and a desire to defend their language and culture.

A translator-interpreter and teacher of Innu-Aimun (the Innu language) for over 40 years, Joséphine Bacon has dedicated her life to listening to the knowledge of the elders and handing it on.



Photo: Mélanie Crête

Her writing springs from the depths of her memory as she recorded the stories of the ancestors for whom she acted as an interpreter.

By enriching the literary canon with works written in Innu and transposed into French, she has inscribed a new page in the history of poetry in Québec while helping to ensure the ongoing vitality of the Innu language.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| INTRODUCTION1   |  |
|---|--|
| A NEW   | / START  |
| 1.1   | Key events   |
| 1.2   | A government focused on action                                     |
| UNDERLYING AIMS   |  |
| 2.1   | Nation status  |
| 2.2   | Cultural safety  |
| 2.3   | The Canadian constitutional framework                              |
| 2.4   | Responsibility of the Québec government                            |
| A COMMITMENT OVER TIME  |  |
| 3.1   | The key tool for government actions                                |
| 3.2   | A flexible action plan11   |
| ACTIONS IN SIX FIELDS OF ACTION   |  |
| 4.1   | Fields of action on culture, Indigenous languages                  |
| 4.2   | and reconciliation   |
| 4.2   | Fields of action on issues and challenges facingIndigenous women17 |
| 4.3   | Fields of action on the overall development of children            |
| 110   | and families   |
| 4.4   | Fields of action on socioeconomic conditions                       |
|   | and social inclusion   |
| 4.5   | Fields of action on the health and wellness                        |
| of In<br>4.6  | Idigenous people   |
| 4.0   |  |
| CONCLUSION  |  |
| APPENDIX 1  |  |
| List  | and descriptive summary of measures                                |
| APPENDIX 2  |  |
| Measures announced as part of the <i>I have hope</i> initiative                                       |  |
|   |  |
| APPENDIX 3  |  |
| Consultations completed for the purpose of this action plan<br><i>Together for Future Generations</i> |  |

## QUICK REFERENCE CHART

### **TOGETHER FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

## 2022-2027 GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN FOR THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL WELLNESS OF THE FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT

#### Overview

- 6 fields of action
- 52 measures
- ♦ Over \$141 million in investments
- 13 government departments and bodies
- Numerous partnerships with Indigenous communities

#### The outcome of rewarding consultations

- The commitments largely stem from consultations with Indigenous stakeholders
- Indigenous languages and cultures are of pivotal importance in every way
- The issues must be grasped from a holistic perspective
- A distinct approach is required to respond to Inuit issues

#### An active dialogue with Indigenous partners

A desire to report regularly and transparently on the advancement of the implementation of the measures A flexible approach to facilitate adjustment and ensure appropriate implementation

#### **Clear goals**

- Take into account Indigenous peoples' status as Nations
- $\diamond$  Implement the principles of cultural safety
- Work within the Canadian constitutional framework
- Recognize the responsibility of the Québec government

#### An initiative that hinges on six fields of action

- The Québec government is committing itself to focusing in the long term on an array of targeted issues by way of every lever available, such as programs, public policies, and legislative or regulatory initiatives
- It is seeking to go beyond the specific vocations of government departments
- The measures are intended primarily to respond to the practical needs of the First Nations and the Inuit

#### Culture, indigenous languages and reconciliation (8 measures)

measure Issues

Indigenous languages Indigenous cultures and arts Reconciliation Fight against racism and discrimination Departments and bodies: MCC, MES, SRPNI

Socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion (12 measures) Issues Educational success (CEGEP and university)

Social inclusion Employment and professionalization Citizen involvement and community action Departments and bodies: DCPP, MES, MSSS, MSP, MTESS, SRPNI, SAJ Issues and challenges facing Indigenous women (10 measures) Issues Conjugal, family and sexual violence Mobilization and leadership Departments and bodies: MJQ, MSP, MSSS, SRPNI, SCF

Indigenous Peoples' health and wellness (5 measures) Issues

Homelessness Public health Mental health and suicide prevention Cultural safety in the health and social services network Departments and bodies: MSSS, SRPNI Overall development of children and families (9 measures) Issues Education and educational

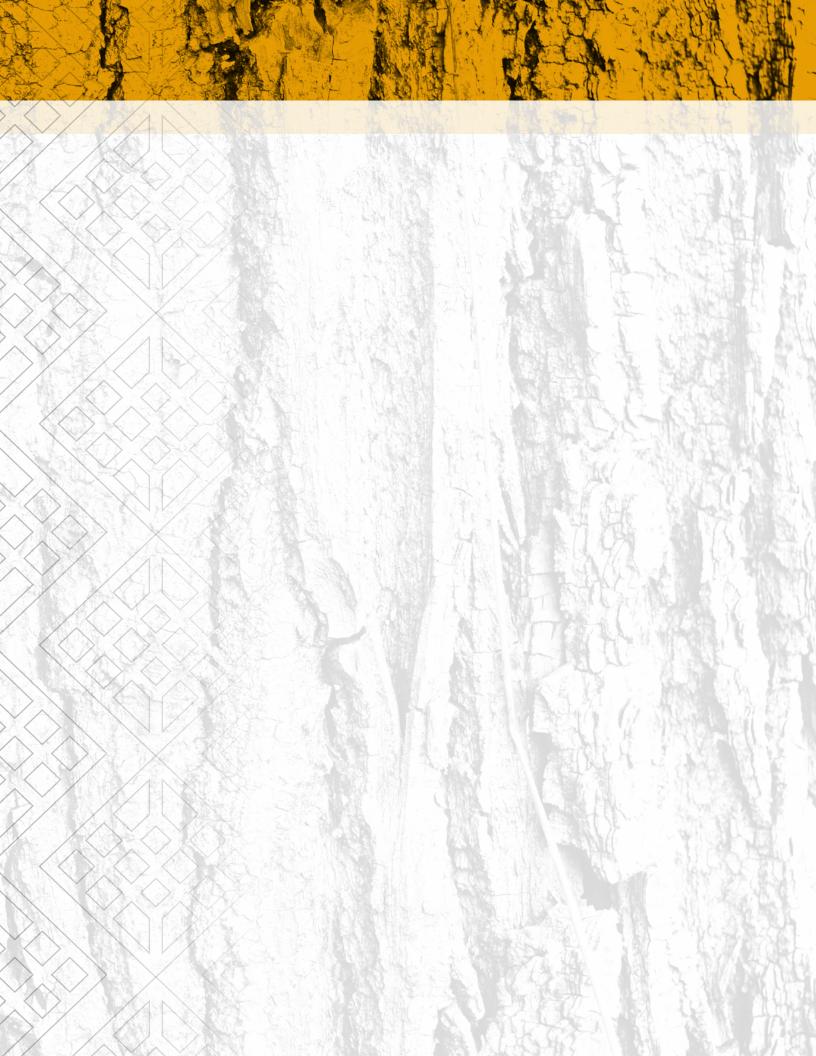
success in elementary and secondary schools Support for children and families Departments and bodies: MEQ, MFA, MSSS, SRPNI

> Justice and public security (8 measures)

#### Issues

Correctional services Access to justice Emergency services Departments and bodies: DCPP, MJQ, MSP

···· XI ·····



# INTRODUCTION



Québec's Indigenous nations face numerous challenges, most obviously in social and cultural terms. As we know, the negative impacts of the colonialism of the past still affect the health, wellness and lifestyles of Indigenous societies; but we also know that they have historically displayed outstanding vitality and adaptability. Indigenous nations are moving forward; driven by the dynamic attitude of the rising generation, they are enthusiastically and proudly engaged in a process of reconstruction and healing.

The Québec government, determined to contribute to this movement, issued an action plan in 2017 for the social and cultural development of the First Nations and Inuit. The plan, *Do More, Do Better,* marked a turning point in the relationship between the government and Indigenous nations, explicitly setting out the government's goal of focusing as a priority on the social and cultural realities of the First Nations and Inuit. This was presented as a firm commitment.

The renewal of the action plan, which expired in April 2022, once again confirms the government's commitment. It is largely based on consultations, during the winter of 2022, with political leaders and various Indigenous organizations, and also on the conclusions issued by two commissions of inquiry: the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec (referred to here as the CERP) and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (the NIMMIWG).

With this new action plan, Together for Future Generations, the Québec government aims to demonstrate its commitment over the long term. The process will involve over \$141 million and the implementation of measures in six fields of action covering the fields in which the government undertakes to work with Indigenous stakeholders over a longer timeframe. The fields of action are: culture, language and reconciliation; issues and challenges facing Indigenous women; overall development of children and families; socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion; health and wellness; and justice and security.

#### For Alanis, my mother

On a night of a full moon, the mother of so many children gives new hope to a child

5

.

an image gives a multitude of colours to a river diverted from its place of birth

it alone knows its course to the sea that rocks us on the waves of sleep.

....

Joséphine Bacon From Message Sticks / Tshissinuatshitakana Mawenzi House Publisher

# **A NEW START**

The action plan *Do More, Do Better*, published in 2017, was the first plan issued by the Québec government to focus exclusively on the social and cultural challenges facing Indigenous societies. It expired in April 2022, and the government must now renew its actions.

It goes without saying that this new start must reflect new realities. Over the last five years, the context has evolved substantially, both in the public sphere and in terms of the Québec government's departments and bodies' own outlook.

## 1.1 ····· Key events

More than ever before, the realities experienced by Québec's Indigenous citizens are on everyone's radar and are at the forefront of Québec's societal issues. Some key events deserve to be mentioned here.

In June 2019, the NIMMIWG, under a mandate given by the federal government and all the provincial and territorial governments, published a far-ranging report on the abuse of and the specific vulnerabilities affecting Canada's Indigenous women. A separate report for Québec was even issued. In September of the same year, the CERP filed its own, eagerly-awaited report, which set out some of the deficiencies in the delivery of services for Indigenous people by the Québec state. The CERP also made numerous recommendations designed to correct the situation in a permanent way.

Other major reports mentioning the social realities faced by Indigenous people were published during the same period, including the reports by the *Groupe d'action contre le racisme* (December 2020), the Select Committee on the Sexual Exploitation of Minors (December 2020) and the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection (April 2021). All these reports highlighted major difficulties, and the need to work harder to ensure the wellness of Indigenous societies.

Other dramatic events received widespread media coverage. The heartbreaking death of Joyce Echaquan, and the discovery of anonymous graves in Western Canada close to former residential schools, made Quebecers increasingly aware of the need to do more to improve the living conditions of Indigenous people and to combat the prejudice, racism and discrimination they still encounter in Québec society.

### 1.2 ····· A government focused on action

The context has led to one important change: the departments and bodies of the Québec state are increasingly aware of the need for concerted action, betteradapted to First Nations' and Inuit's specific realities. This new awareness has resulted in a better understanding of the needs involved and an increased willingness to take action. More resources are now devoted to Indigenous issues, and more actions are being specifically designed to deal with the realities faced by Indigenous people.

In its 2020 budget, the government released \$200 million to begin to implement the recommendations made by the CERP and by various other commissions of inquiry that have looked at the Indigenous situation in recent years. In addition to the measures set out in the 2017-2022 Action Plan, the Québec government has, since the fall of 2020, announced a range of investments, in each case destined to fund concrete actions with tangible effects for the individuals and groups targeted.1 This major initiative, referred to as I Have Hope, has already led to the spending of almost \$170 million out of the \$200 million budgeted. The remainder, around \$30 million, will be used to fund certain measures under this action plan.

The Québec government is resolutely focused on action, with the aim of directly influencing realities on the ground. Actions must also be differentiated—in other words, they must also be designed to reflect the specific context of each community in which they

## Consideration for the specific realities of the Inuit

The Inuit of Nunavik, the Nunavummiut, face numerous challenges on a daily basis. As they have moved from a semi-nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle, their living conditions have undergone profound change over the course of the 20th century. In just a few decades, they have had to adapt to a completely new reality.

After signing the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the Inuit now have a large degree of autonomy in the fields of health and education. Under the Agreement, and other agreements signed with the Québec government, they have responsibility for their own social and community development. They have always had a heartfelt interest in preserving their culture, values and language, and in protecting their lifestyle.

Because of their geographic location and the sometimes harsh conditions in which they live, the Inuit face specific social challenges that are often not the same as those faced by Indigenous nations in the south. Facing these challenges requires sustained support from the Québec government. This action plan, with many measures devoted wholly or partly to the Inuit, reflects the government's goal of continuing to make the necessary efforts, jointly, to ensure the development of the Inuit nation.

<sup>1.</sup> A total of 29 initiatives have been announced, in particular in the field of public security, education, the status of women, the justice system and healthcare. See Appendix 2 for a full description of the initiative *I Have Hope*.

are implemented. The government wants to take a flexible approach, working with Indigenous communities, in order to adapt its actions to the specific realities of each group with which it works: the First Nations, Inuit and Indigenous people living in urban settings.



Photo: LEO

#### Alanis umenu

Uetakussiti shakassineu pishim<sup>u</sup> nuapamau ukaumau ka mitshetushet e minat peik<sup>u</sup> auassa pakushenitamunnu

> innitsheuau mamitshetuait ishi-uashteshiu anite shipit anite ut kuepitak

uin muk<sup>u</sup> tshissenitam<sup>u</sup> nete tshe ishi-shatshituaunit tshetshi uinipek<sup>u</sup> nipekakuiak<sup>u</sup> natutuakut kashkanat.

#### Joséphine Bacon

From Message Sticks / Tshissinuatshitakana Mawenzi House Publisher

.....

# UNDERLYING AIMS

The measures set out in this action plan are intended to be concrete, adapted, flexible and focused on realities on the ground. However, their design and implementation also reflect certain underlying aims.

### 2.1 ····· Nation status

Inuit people, and the members of Québec's First Nations, are not only Québec citizens; they also form nations in the sociological and political meaning of the term. These nations are coherent societies that maintain complex political relationships, have their own histories, and possess a distinctive culture and identity.

This reality gives Indigenous people a status that cannot be compared to that of other minority groups in Québec resulting from immigration. They constitute authentic political entities, recognized as such, and the organs of the Québec state must take this status into account when designing and implementing public policies.

## 2.2 ····· Cultural safety

The services provided by the state must, if they are to be truly accessible for Indigenous people, be designed in a way that takes into account the specific identities and cultures of the First Nations and Inuit. All too often, Indigenous people feel out of place in the service network, which not only reflects values and mindsets that are foreign to them, but is also sometimes prejudiced against them.

It is important to fight prejudice vigorously and adapt the services provided by the state to the specific cultural features of the Inuit and First Nations. Over time, the goal must be to establish service delivery points that are safe, characterized by trust and respect, and offer services in tune with Indigenous peoples' needs and particular realities. Obviously, the principle of cultural safety must also apply when public policies are being drafted.

## Indigenous people in urban environments

Indigenous people are increasingly mobile, and can decide to settle in cities for many different reasons: to continue with their education, look for work, receive medical care, and so on. However, when they leave their communities, they do not relinquish their identity, and when they arrive in a city, many lack points of reference and experience major culture shock. Despite being uprooted from their communities, most of them adapt well to their new environment, but some experience difficulties that cannot be ignored.

This creates challenges for the Québec government, the municipalities concerned and Indigenous partner organizations: they must assist people who fail to find a place in the socioeconomic fabric of their adopted city; create spaces where Indigenous people can experience their culture and share it with others; and ensure that services are accessible to and adapted for Indigenous citizens.

### 2.3 ..... The Canadian constitutional framework

The *Constitution Act, 1867* gives the federal parliament a specific role to play with respect to Indigenous peoples. It is given exclusive powers over "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians". This means that the federal government's responsibilities are not limited to reserves, but also cover Indigenous people living off-reserve.

The Québec government cannot take the place of the federal government, in particular with respect to its financial responsibilities towards Indigenous peoples. However, the Québec government firmly intends to continue to play an active role in the growth and wellness of the Indigenous societies living in Québec. Taking the constitutional framework into account, its goal is to deploy significant resources in a way that complements

the actions of the federal government and, in suitable cases, in collaboration with the federal government.

It is important to remember that, in keeping with this approach, the Québec government already funds major initiatives on reserves, such as the construction of early childhood centres, the operation of police forces, the payment of wages to cultural development officers and various measures relating to the justice system.

## Providing training for government employees

Cultural safety must be addressed when making government employees more aware of the realities faced by Indigenous people. The Québec government intends to provide training for all employees who, as part of their duties, come directly or indirectly into contact with Indigenous citizens.

Over the last year, 120,000 employees have completed online training modules prepared with input from Indigenous communities. In addition, over 2,000 employees have taken part in monthly seminars for public servants organized by the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit\*.

These figures do not take into account the people who have taken part in "in-house" training sessions offered by other government departments and bodies.

Lastly, the 125 Members of the National Assembly also attended a sensitivity training session on Indigenous realities.

\*As of May 15, 2022

## 2.4 ..... Responsibility of the Québec government

In various areas of social development, the Québec government has a responsibility towards the First Nations and Inuit that is primarily based on citizenship. Indigenous peoples belong to distinct nations while also being fully-entitled Québec citizens and, from a general standpoint, the duty of the Québec state is to work to create an equality of opportunity for all members of Québec society.

The Québec state also has a historical responsibility. Indigenous people form nations and, for this reason, occupy a unique place in Québec's history from both a cultural and a political point of view. They must be treated as partners in the construction of Québec society and, as a result, the Québec government must support their efforts to ensure their economic and social development.



Photo: Tourisme Autochtone Québec

Your life off course The rivers retreat From their mouths You come home to a land that respects you You don your dreams The four directions Your sisters The horizon makes you the gift of an earth With no end to the world

#### Joséphine Bacon

From A Tea in the Tundra / Nipishapui nete mushuat BookLand Press

# A COMMITMENT OVER TIME

This action plan demonstrates the quality and durability of the government's commitment. It covers the next five years (2022-2027) and provides for investments totalling \$100 million, in addition to the \$30 million remaining from the *I Have Hope* initiative. More investment may come from the regular budgets of the government departments and bodies concerned.

## 3.1 ..... The key tool for government actions

This action plan is the main tool for government actions concerning the social and cultural wellness of Indigenous people, but not the only tool at its disposal aimed at achieving these objectives. Given that government departments and bodies in various sectors are increasingly taking Indigenous needs into account, other policies, strategies and action plans for which they are responsible will include measures designed specifically to deal with the realities faced by the First Nations and Inuit. When possible and relevant, the actions of the state in specific sectors will therefore include initiatives tailored to the First Nations and Inuit. It is also important to emphasize that the measures contained in this action plan do not exhaust the list of possible government interventions and contributions in the areas concerned.

This differs from the approach taken in the previous action plan (2017-2022), which grouped all the measures proposed by all government departments and bodies for Indigenous communities in the various areas of social development<sup>2</sup>. In this action plan, in contrast, the government has chosen an approach based on the complementarity of government actors, each of whom remains accontable to their Indigenous "clientele"<sup>3</sup>.

## 3.2 ····· A flexible action plan

Since the fall of 2020, the Minister Responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit has met with Indigenous stakeholers from the political and community sectors on numerous occasions. In addition, in January 2022, the Minister organized a consultation session with First Nations leaders to discuss the issues that the action plan needed to address. Other meetings were held with representatives of the leading organizations of the Inuit nation. Lastly, during the winter of 2022, other meetings were organized with several Indigenous organizations.<sup>4</sup> The measures set out in this action plan are directly based on all these consultations.

### 2. See: Do More, Do Better : Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit (2017-2022), 9-10.

3. An exhaustive list of government actions in the field of social and cultural development, bringing together all initiatives by government departments and bodies, will be made available online on the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit website by the end of 2022.

···· 11 ····

4. See Appendix 3 for a list of the Indigenous stakeholders that took part in the consultations.

The government is aware that demands by communities and organizations cannot all be met. It is also aware that, on the ground, needs can change and that some previously unsuspected aspects can arise quickly. The action plan must therefore be flexible. During the five-year period it covers, new measures may be added while some of the actions defined may be redirected. These adjustments will reflect ongoing discussions with the communities concerned. For this purpose, the government intends to hold annual working

meetings with Indigenous leaders and organizations (like the consultations organized during the drafting of the action plan) to assess the relevance of the initiatives proposed in the action plan on a regular basis and the need to improve them, in light of emerging needs. Over the longer term, the government hopes that its actions will reflect this ongoing dialogue with its Indigenous partners.

### A substantial level of investment

The socioeconomic problems experienced in Indigenous communities are well known, and several were once again highlighted in the CERP and NIMMIWG reports. In 2020, the Québec government announced \$200 million in funding to begin to implement some of the recommendations made by the commissions of inquiry.

With this action plan, it now adds \$100 million to its commitment to Indigenous social and cultural development, bringing the latter to \$300 million.



Itshepanu tshitinniun Unatina shipua Anite ka ut shatshituat Kau tshinatuapaten assi Ka shatshitain Kau tshipuaten Nutina Tshishik<sup>u</sup> tshitatamishkak assinu Anite eka nita tshe punassiut

#### Joséphine Bacon

....

. .

From A Tea in the Tundra / Nipishapui nete mushuat BookLand Press

# ACTIONS IN SIX FIELDS OF ACTION



The initiatives set out in this action plan are divided into six groups, representing the six fields of action that the government wants to address with the First Nations and Inuit.

The projects reflect the Québec government's commitment to address all targetted sectors on a long-term basis using every mean at its disposal (programs, public policies, legislative or regulatory actions, etc.). The six fields of action extend well beyond the scope of this action plan, and the measures they contain may be enhanced at any time in response to emerging needs and the ongoing dialogue with communities.

It is important to highlight the need for direct efforts in each fields of action. During the consultations, the Indigenous communities regularly pointed to the need for sustained work on all fronts. The approach must be comprehensive. No one project constitutes a closed or circumscribed field; on the contrary, all six are interrelated and interact with each other, and cannot be dissociated from Indigenous people's individual and collective wellness. The fields of action must be addressed as a *whole*.

#### A project-based approach

This action plan organizes the government's actions into six fields of action covering all the key areas of social and cultural development:

- Culture, Indigenous languages and reconciliation
- Issues and challenges facing
  Indigenous women
- Overall development of children and families
- Socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion
- Health and wellness of Indigenous
  people
- Justice and public security

Last, it is important to note that each fields

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

of action includes measures that respond to the issues faced by specific groups, including women, seniors, Inuit people, Indigenous people in urban environments, etc.<sup>5</sup>

# 4.1 ..... Fields of action on culture, Indigenous languages and reconciliation

Language and culture provide a people's oxygen and act as the vectors through which a people projects itself in the world and into the future. Indigenous peoples are no exception, and their languages and cultures must be valued. Simultaneously, they must be allowed to occupy their rightful place in Québec, safe from all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

5. See Appendix 1 for an exhaustive list of the measures included in this action plan, along with a brief description of each measure.

This field of action includes initiatives to achieve this goal. It also reflects the wish of the Québec government to continue to take the necessary steps towards reconciliation. Some recent milestones should be mentioned here, including the report by the Groupe d'action contre le racisme in December 2021<sup>6</sup>, and the passage of the *Act to authorize the communication of personal information to the families of Indigenous children who went missing or died after being admitted to an institution* in June 2021.

In this action plan, the field of action on culture, Indigenous languages and reconciliation includes the following measures:

- Develop, promote and preserve Indigenous languages in Québec
- Foster the development of selfsupporting learning courses for the transmission of Indigenous languages
- Enhance assistance and the appropriate support for Indigenous media
- Contribute to the vitality and outreach of Indigenous cultures
- Issue a call for projects on Indigenous languages, cultural projects for schoolage children, and Indigenous media
- Increase the number of cultural development agreements, strengthen existing agreements, and continue to hire cultural development officers in communities
- Support the construction of infrastructures of the "cultural centre" type
- Launch an awareness-raising campaign for the population of Québec about Indigenous realities

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

## A tool marking a historic reconciliation

On June 3, 2021, the National Assembly passed the Act to authorize the communication of personal information to the families of Indigenous children who went missing or died after being admitted to an institution. The new legislation responds to the suffering expressed during testimony at the NIMMIWG hearings, and aims to help families in their search for truth and their healing process. For the first time, the Québec government has passed a law to implement a genuine process of reconciliation. The law, which among other things creates the new Direction de soutien aux familles as part of the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit, reflects a desire to increase collaboration between families, Indigenous organizations and the Québec government, in a spirit of cultural safety and duty towards our collective memory.

6. See: Groupe d'action contre le racisme, Le racisme au Québec : tolérance zéro, 14 December 2020.

# 4.2 ..... Fields of action on issues and challenges facing Indigenous women

In addition to the NIMMIWG report, several other expert reports have highlighted the difficulties and vulnerabilities of Indigenous women<sup>7</sup>. For this reason, it appeared essential to devote a field of action to women's issues and challenges, approached from separate angles: the assistance the assistance that must be provided for victims of abuse, violence or discrimination; and the full empowerment of Indigenous women and girls. In other words, a two-edged approach will be applied that combines assistance for a vulnerable

group with empowerment for the same group, which is recognized as an essential driving force behind community progress. The Québec government wants to continue to work closely with its partners, including Indigenous women's organizations and the Aboriginal Women's Working Committee.

Several measures have been announced in recent months to support Indigenous women, in particular as part of the *I Have Hope* initiative<sup>8</sup>. These measures are in addition to the measures set out in this action plan, and also to the measures that will be implemented under two strategies by the Secrétariat à la condition féminine (SCF).

In this action plan, the field of action on issues and challenges facing Indigenous women includes the following measures:

> Provide emergency financial assistance for the victims of violence

#### Other initiatives for women

The SCF has implemented several actions and initiatives focusing on the issues specific to Inuit and First Nations women.

The Government Strategy for Gender Equality 2022-2027 contains four actions in the field of equality adapted to the specific needs and realities of Inuit and First Nations women, including an action to perpetuate and make permanent the work of the Aboriginal Women's Working Committee.

The SCF will also coordinate another strategy, the *Stratégie gouvernementale intégrée pour contrer la violence sexuelle, la violence conjugale et rebâtir la confiance 2022-2027,* which proposes eleven actions to meet the needs of Indigenous women and girls and take action against the problems of conjugal and family violence, sexual assault and sexual exploitation.

- N.....
- Support the integration of services for Indigenous victims of conjugal, domestic and sexual violence
- Establish a crisis line, a chat-line, and referencing line specific to the First Nations and the Inuit
- Establish legal services for Indigenous women who are victims of violence

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

<sup>7.</sup> See, in particular, the report of the Expert committee on support for the victims of sexual assault and domestic violence (*Rebâtir la confiance*), December 2020, and the report of the Select Committee on the Sexual Exploitation of Minors, December 2020.

<sup>8.</sup> See Appendix 2.

- Establish psychosocial support services, in connection with judicial proceedings, for Indigenous women who are victims of conjugal, domestic or sexual violence
- Support conjugal and family violence fields of action implemented by Indigenous police forces
- Establish specialized intervention services for Indigenous women in prison with a history of sexual or conjugal victimization
- Support for Cree and Inuit women organizations
- Support initiatives that promote mobilization and leadership among Indigenous women
- Assess the needs of Indigenous women subjected to conjugal violence and their children exposed to violence in terms of the residential resources provided in urban environments

# 4.3 ..... Fields of action on the overall development of children and families

As we know from statistics, First Nations and Inuit have large families. Nearly 60% of the Indigenous population is under the age of 35, and this percentage is increasing faster than in the general population. It is also clear that a family's health and wellness are an essential component in the growth of a healthy community.

Families must be supported, the conditions in which they raise their children must be improved, and children must be given the tools they need to advance confidently in their lives. This field of action obviously touches on several interrelated fields such as educational success at the elementary and secondary levels, child and youth protection, the fight against bullying, and wider support for families (perinatal support, parenting skills, etc.).

Investments have already been made in connection with these issues, including funding to support family housing in Indigenous communities and to support the educational success of Indigenous students in the Québec school system.

In this action plan, the field of action on overall development of children and families includes the following measures:

- Support initiatives that target student retention and the success of Indigenous students
- Implement the program La cour d'école in Indigenous communities
- Support the introduction of "Turaartaviks", early childhood outreach workers (the Agir tôt program), in Inuit communities in Nunavik for children up to six years of age and their families
- Improve access to and the continuity of culturally relevant and safe perinatal care and services for the First Nations and Inuit

- Support the hiring of community-based, culturally-aware caseworkers in urban environments
- Help communities become autonomous in the area of child and youth protection by supporting and promoting the signing and implementing of agreements
- Support the adaptation of clinical practices to the realities, cultures and needs of Indigenous children and families
- Ensure that more managers, caseworkers and foster families receive training on cultural safety in the area of child and youth protection and community-based services for young people in difficulty, to improve their knowledge of Indigenous realities and enhance their cultural skills
- Implement the recommendations in the Report of the Committee on the Application of Bill 21 in Indigenous Communities, An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions in the field of mental health and human relations

# 4.4 ..... Fields of action on socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion

Many different indicators show that the conditions in which Indigenous people live are generally less advantageous than those of the Québec population in general. First Nations and Inuit communities often face significant psychosocial and socioeconomic challenges that reduce their vitality.

For this reason, it is important to take the necessary steps to create a context of equal opportunity in which each person has a way to overcome disadvantage, affirm his or her dignity and build a rewarding life. Many issues must be addressed: educational success, vocational education, workplace integration, the fight against poverty and social exclusion and community mobilization, for example, all require attention.

Here, it is important to note a major new initiative that the Québec government is currently implementing with the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) and that involves the construction of student housing for Indigenous students in Sept-Îles and Trois-Rivières. A similar residence will be built in Québec City, and other projects of the same type are being considered for other cities in Québec.

In this action plan, the field of action on socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion includes the following measures:

- Support projects and initiatives for the retention and educational success of Indigenous school students
- Help the Société immobilière du Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec establish a new community living environment project for Indigenous students and their families in Chibougamau

- Develop educational programming for English-speaking First Nation and Inuit detainees
- Improve the First Nations and Inuit Faculties of Medicine Program to extend it to other professions and nations
- Provide training for employees of the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale on Indigenous realities (Mikimowin)
- Fund positions for Indigenous employment development liaison officers
- Support joint action among Indigenous youth partners and the implementation of projects with their input
- Enhance the mobilization, development and support of Indigenous youth
- Continue funding for the program to hire coordinators responsible for community involvement, citizen involvement and the promotion of healthy lifestyles
- Consolidate and develop the Local tables on accessibility to services in urban settings for Indigenous Peoples
- Introduce direct support for Indigenous students planning to continue in higher education
- Fund the upgrading of residential buildings in the community of Kitcisakik to prepare for the electrification of the community by HQ

#### Local tables on accessibility to services in urban settings for Indigenous Peoples

To improve the accessibility, complementarity and continuity of services for Indigenous people in urban environments, the Québec government, working with the RCAAQ, has set up a network of local tables on accessibility to services in urban setting for Indigenous Peoples.

The network now has seven local tables in the following cities: Montréal, Maniwaki, Sept-Îles, Val-d'Or, Trois-Rivières, La Tuque and Chibougamau. They bring together regional representatives from Québec public services and members of local Native friendship centres to discuss and continue work on way to increase the use of public services by Indigenous users, while improving their experience. The involvement of various Native friendship centres and other community partners ensures that the work is firmly anchored in local needs and respects the principle of cultural safety.

# 4.5 ..... Fields of action on the health and wellness of Indigenous people

In Québec, the delivery of health and social services is one of the state's fundamental functions. Considerable needs exist within the Indigenous population, and the First Nations and Inuit must be offered accessible and efficient services based on the principle of cultural safety.

The Québec government has already taken action in this area, in particular through major investments to strengthen front-line services in Native friendship centres based on the Mino Pimatisi8in model developed in Val-d'Or. Work to complete the Isuarsivik Centre is also part of this drive.

The tragic death of Joyce Echaquan has highlighted the need to ensure welcoming, safe spaces in the healthcare system that are free of prejudice. The Québec government has begun work on this aspect, in particular through investments made under the *I Have Hope* initiative. An increase in the funding provided for the local discussion tables on access to services for Indigenous people in urban environments is another example of the measures implemented.

In this action plan, the field of action on Health and wellness of Indigenous people includes the following measures:

- Enhance the accessibility, continuity and quality of services in the realm of general psychosocial, mental health, addiction, homelessness, and suicide prevention needs, in particular by supporting the signing of cooperative agreements between communities not covered by an agreement and institutions belonging to the health and social services network in their region
- Invest in solutions for vulnerable people in Montréal, including the homeless, put forward by the Indigenous community
- Support community street patrols working with the homeless population in Montréal
- Support the deployment of fifteen additional liaison officers in the health and social services network to strengthen cultural safety capacity
- Incorporate cultural safety in public health actions targeting health and prevention, including suicide prevention, with the First Nations and Inuit

### 4.6 ..... Fields of action on justice and public security

In the field of justice and public security, the difficulties experienced by Indigenous people are well known. For example, it is harder for them to access the justice system; the provision of police services is challenging; and the conditions they face in prison do not reflect their own realities. Several issues need to be considered here: community justice, victim support, access to justice, the development and quality of Indigenous police forces, correctional services, prevention, rehabilitation, adapted police interventions, and so on.

The *I Have Hope* initiative has made it possible to finance a number of measures relating to several of these issues, in particular in the field of police services and access to justice.<sup>9</sup> However, much remains to be done, and the Québec government is aware that it must continue to work with its partners on the whole court, police and corrections structure. It is also aware that because of the distances and particular socioeconomic context involved, the same matters must be addressed differently in Nunavik.

In this action plan, the field of action on justice and public security includes the following measures:

- Offer culturally adapted support and assistance to the Indigenous clientele subject to judicial control in collaboration with specialized organizations
- Provide services and conditions for Indigenous people in detention facilities that are more likely to promote a process of rehabilitation or healing, using a culturallyadapted approach
- Help maintain a mixed intervention team in Sept-Îles and Indigenous liaison officers in urban environments
- Improve services in the court system for the First Nations
- Enhance access to justice in Nunavik
- Support the coordination of activities by the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission in the area of justice
- Implement an emergency call service pilot project in Nunavik
- Provide training on Indigenous realities for criminal and penal prosecuting attorneys in connection with the criminal justice system

9. See Appendix 2.

## CONCLUSION

This action plan is based on many different discussions, including those that took place during a tour of all Indigenous communities and Indigenous urban living environments by the Minister Responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit, as well as a broad-based consultation during the winter of 2022 with political leaders and representatives from several Inuit and First Nations organizations.<sup>10</sup> It reflects the aim of the Québec government to work over the long term, with the Indigenous communities, to improve the social and cultural wellness of the First Nations and Inuit. It defines six fields of action, covering a set of crucial topics that the government hopes to address in a durable fashion.

The measures set out in the action plan will require significant investments and effort, but do not exhaust the range of the possible actions that the Québec government intends to implement in the six fields of action over the coming five years. Other commitments may be made in response to emerging needs and subject to budget availability. The action plan is designed to be flexible, and the measures it promotes will be reviewed regularly with the communities concerned. The Québec government hopes that the dialogue will continue and that the action plan remains "open-ended". Adjustments and additions will be possible.

It is important to recall that the various departments and bodies of the Québec state will still be able to propose measures, in each field of action, via their own strategies, action plans or sectoral programs. This action plan acts as a spearhead for governmental initiatives designed to ensure the social and cultural wellness of the First Nations and Inuit, but does not include all possible measures.

Last, the action plan is intended not only as an effective tool for Indigenous people but also as a demonstration of a willingness to establish an ever-stronger relationship and ever more dynamic level of cooperation between the Québec state and the First Nations and Inuit of Québec

10. See Appendix 3.

···· 23 ····



Photos: Tourisme Autochtone Québec



#### List and descriptive summary of measures

| List of abbreviations and acronyms |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| IPF                                | Indigenous police force   |
| CQLC                               | Commission québécoise des libérations conditionnelles                         |
| FNQLHSSC                           | First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social<br>Services Commission |
| DCPP                               | Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions                                   |
| DYP                                | Director of Youth Protection  |
| ÉMIPIC                             | Mixed intervention team (police officers and community workers)               |
| HQ                                 | Hydro-Québec  |
| МАМН                               | Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation                         |
| МСС                                | Ministère de la Culture et des Communications                                 |
| MEQ                                | Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec  |
| MES                                | Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur   |
| MF                                 | Ministère de la Famille   |
| MJQ                                | Ministère de la Justice du Québec   |
| MSP                                | Ministère de la Sécurité publique   |
| MSSS                               | Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux                                 |
| MTESS                              | Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale                 |
| HSSN                               | Health and social services network  |
| SRPNI                              | Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit             |
| SAJ                                | Secrétariat à la jeunesse   |
| SCF                                | Secrétariat à la condition féminine   |
| SHQ                                | Société d'habitation du Québec  |
| SPN                                | Société du Plan Nord  |
| SQ                                 | Sûreté du Québec  |
| UQAT                               | Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue                                 |
|                                    |   |

N.B. Measures marked with an inuksuk ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) apply, in part or in whole, to the Inuit<sup>11</sup>.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

11. Inuksuks are the cairns built since time immemorial by the Inuit to act as markers in the immense northern territories. Their traditional, human-like form has become emblematic today.

#### 1. Fields of action on culture, Indigenous languages and reconciliation

#### 1.1 Develop, promote and preserve Indigenous languages in Québec (MCC) =

As part of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032, the Québec government intends to support Indigenous nations in their efforts to revitalize, promote, protect and develop their languages. One of the main actions under consideration is to draft a support strategy for Indigenous languages, working with the nations and partners concerned. Other federative, structuring projects for Indigenous languages will also be implemented.

### 1.2 Foster the development of self-supporting learning courses for the transmission of Indigenous languages (MES)

The MES, working with the MCC, will design self-supporting learning courses for Indigenous languages to qualify more professionals to teach an Indigenous language and guide more speakers of that language. The measure will be implemented in close collaboration with the Indigenous organizations concerned.

### 1.3 Enhance assistance and the appropriate support for Indigenous media (MCC) $\hbar$

Media outlets (radio, newspapers, TV, and digital social media) are an essential channel for expressing, disseminating and transmitting Indigenous languages and cultures. The goal of this measure is to broaden the scope of the assistance provided for media outlets and help professionalize and diversify Indigenous media. The MCC will create a new assistance program for media operations to support specific initiatives and establish training possibilities.

#### 1.4 Contribute to the vitality and outreach of Indigenous cultures (MCC) =

The plural and original nature of the Indigenous nations is reflected in their cultures, which must be developed and protected. To respond to the realities, priorities and needs determined by and for the Indigenous nations, specific initiatives connected with art, culture and heritage, including pilot projects in particular, will be supported.

### 1.5 Issue a call for projects on Indigenous languages, cultural projects for school-age children, and Indigenous media (MCC)

This measure continues the *Aide aux projets pour les Autochtones* program, created under the previous action plan (*Do More, Do Better*), to increase the range of activities, services and products made available to consolidate and develop Indigenous cultures and communications in a concrete way. A call for projects will lead to the creation of original content by community media outlets, activities to develop Indigenous cultures for young people in communities, and activities or products that promote the learning and use of Indigenous languages.

## 1.6 Increase the number of cultural development agreements, strengthen existing agreements, and continue to hire cultural development officers in communities (MCC)<sup>±</sup>

These two measures will be implemented under the *Aide au développement culturel autochtone* program, with the main objective of contributing to the growth or consolidation of cultural vitality, as reflected in all the stimulating, diversified cultural practices and activities that are made available and involve community participation. Partnership agreements remain the tools of choice for completing structuring actions covering all the communities of a nation.

### 1.7 Support the construction of infrastructures of the "cultural centre" type (SRPNI)

The SRPNI undertakes to make a contribution to projects to build infrastructures of the "cultural centre" type to host activities involving the creation and dissemination of culture (theatres and historical museums) and the learning of languages, in addition to various other cultural events. The actual location of the infrastructures concerned has yet to be determined.

#### 1.8 Implement a campaign to make the Québec population in general more aware of Indigenous peoples (SRPNI)

The Québec government will, in coming years, organize a society-wide awarenessraising campaign designed with input from Indigenous partners. The goal of the campaign will be to inform and raise awareness among the population of the historical and contemporary realities of Québec's Indigenous peoples, their cultural diversity and the issues of racism and discrimination that affect them.

#### 2. Fields of action on issues and challenges facing Indigenous women

#### 2.1 Provide emergency financial assistance for the victims of violence (MJQ) $\hbar$

The emergency financial assistance provided for in the *Act to assist persons who are victims of criminal offences and to facilitate their recovery* began to be distributed in some regions during the fall of 2021. A consultation of various Indigenous organizations identified the need to adapt some of the parameters for granting emergency financial assistance to respond more effectively to Indigenous realities, and ensure that the assistance covered all the needs connected with air travel. The extra funding will mainly cover the cost of air travel for Indigenous victims and the reimbursement of certain specific services provided by Indigenous organizations that are not covered under the current rules for emergency financial assistance.

### 2.2 Support the integration of services for Indigenous victims of conjugal, domestic and sexual violence (MJQ) $\hbar$

In accordance with the spirit of recommendations 24 and 169 in the report *Rebâtir la confiance*, this measure will ensure better coordination of the services and actions provided for Indigenous victims of conjugal, family or sexual violence. Achieving the objective will involve supporting the creation of positions for integrated service advisors, with two positions under the responsibility of First Nations organizations and two under the responsibility of an Inuit organization. The advisors' role will be to help Indigenous communities establish protocols to build collaboration between various community organizations and with outside services in the field of conjugal, domestic and sexual violence, in order to facilitate swift action and limit the steps that victims must take themselves.

### 2.3 Establish a crisis line, a chat-line, and referencing line specific to the First Nations and the Inuit (MJQ) $\frac{1}{27}$

Currently, no conjugal violence offering services specifically for Indigenous people is available on a 24/7 basis. This measure will support the creation of a service that reflects Indigenous needs. The service will also be responsible for creating culturally-relevant awareness-raising tools. Funding will cover the hiring of four people, two for the First Nations and two for the Inuit. The creation of a culturallysafe response and referral service will contribute to the repudiation of violence and the healing of victims and the people close to them.

#### 2.4 Establish legal services for Indigenous women who are victims of violence (MJQ)

This measure will give Indigenous women who are victims of conjugal or family violence or sexual assault access to information, guidance counselling and legal representation services, tailored to their needs in a culturally safe manner. In a context in which it is especially difficult for Indigenous women to report violence, in particular because of mistrust of the justice system, support for victims of violence at all stages in the judicial process and also outside the process will improve their access to justice.

## 2.5 Establish psychosocial support services, in connection with judicial proceedings, for Indigenous women who are victims of conjugal, domestic or sexual violence (MJQ) $\hbar$

This measure will establish support and psychosocial assistance services alongside legal consultations requested by Indigenous women who are victims of violence. First, immediate psychosocial support will be offered to Indigenous women requesting legal services; and, second, psychosocial support workers will be available to accompany Indigenous women who are victims of violence in some of the steps they undertake, and ensure that they are suitably monitored and have adequate safety nets in their living environment. The organization responsible remains to be determined, but it will have two psychosocial support workers and a budget allowing it to sign service agreements with other workers to cover the whole of the territory.

#### 2.6 Support conjugal and domestic violence projects implemented by Indigenous police forces (MSP)

The MSP plans to add specialized staff members to Indigenous police forces to work on conjugal violence. The approach will involve subsidizing projects put forward by Indigenous police forces that wish to acquire extra expertise in the field of conjugal violence. This financial assistance will help the police forces support and adapt their services to combat conjugal violence and its consequences. Each project must match one of the two outlines defined by the MSP: improving support for the victims of conjugal violence, or increasing the surveillance of offenders. In short, the goal is to hire staff members specializing in socio-community services or police detectives working specifically in the field of conjugal violence.

## 2.7 Establish specialized intervention services for Indigenous women in prison with a history of sexual or conjugal victimization (MSP) 荒

The MSP will ask an Indigenous organization with the ability to work with Indigenous women in prison who have been victimized, in order to help them on the path to recovery and facilitate their return to the community. In conjunction with detention facilities for women, the organization will have a mandate to help draft intervention strategies adapted to the needs of the Indigenous women concerned, create links with residential facilities for women, and facilitate access to adapted services when women leave a detention facility.

#### 2.8 Support organizations for Cree and Inuit women (SCF) $\pm$

This measure, under the responsibility of the SCF, will ensure continuity in the application of two Indigenous agreements in the Nord-du-Québec region. Financial support will be provided for multi-year (2022-2025) administrative agreements with Cree and Inuit women's groups targeting increased equality between women and men and improved living conditions for Indigenous women in the Nord-du-Québec region.

#### 2.9 Support initiatives that promote mobilization and leadership among Indigenous women (SRPNI)

This measure will offer support for projects organized by and for Indigenous women to promote their empowerment. The projects must offer a response to the issues raised by Indigenous women in various fields: equality, education, family, citizen involvement, and social, political, cultural and economic development. It is important to note that this measure cannot overlap with financing offered under other similar government initiatives.

# 2.10 Assess the needs of Indigenous women subjected to conjugal violence and Indigenous children exposed to violence in terms of the residential resources provided in urban environments (MSSS)

This measure will support the documentation of the needs of Indigenous women who are victims of conjugal violence, and the needs of their children, in terms of residential resources in urban environments. The necessary research and assessments will be conducted in collaboration with organizations on the ground and other relevant groups, based on their knowledge of the needs of Indigenous women and the issue of conjugal and domestic violence. It will also involve the government departments and bodies working on the issues, including the SRPNI, SCF and SHQ. Over time, the assessments will guide the drafting of measures to adapt or develop the resources needed to meet victims' needs.



### 3. Fields of action on the overall development of children and families

### **3.1** Support initiatives that target student retention and the success of Indigenous students (MEQ)

The Table nationale sur la réussite éducative des élèves autochtones has defined priorities that include the implementation of actions to ensure the retention and academic success of Indigenous students, in collaboration with Indigenous partners and the schools network. The measure will lead to the hiring of staff, training for school staff members on Indigenous realities, and support for the projects of Indigenous partners and the schools network.

### 3.2 Implement the program *La cour d'école* in Indigenous communities (DCPP) $\hbar$

The program *La Cour d'école* is offered by criminal and penal prosecuting attorneys to Grade 5 classes in elementary schools, to enable students to make good life choices and to introduce them to the fundamental principles of the justice system. The main topics addressed are the court system, the social and legal consequences of criminal activity, dropping out from school, bullying, sexual violence and sexual exploitation, racism and drug and alcohol consumption. The Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions will offer the program in schools in Indigenous communities, especially in remote regions, and has begun to consult with Indigenous organizations on ways to adapt the program content to an Indigenous perspective. One criminal and penal prosecuting attorney position will be required to ensure that the workshops are offered in the most geographically remote regions of Nord-du-Québec and Côte-Nord.

# 3.3 Support the introduction of "Turaartaviks," early childhood outreach workers (the *Agir tôt* program), in Inuit communities in Nunavik for children up to six years of age and their families (MSSS) <sup>‡</sup>

"Turaartaviks" are local community outreach workers, and they play an essential role in the mixed intervention teams of the *Agir tôt* program as cultural experts in the field of child development. They offer appropriate local services that are culturally adapted to program users and their families. These outreach workers help parents "navigate" the health and social services system and support them to ensure that they obtain the services best adapted to their needs. "Turaartaviks" are also cultural guides for new professionals arriving from the South. They ensure continuity of care, which could not be maintained otherwise with newly-hired professionals. Over time, all the villages in Nunavik should be able to benefit from the services of "Turaartaviks" under the *Agir tôt* program.

## 3.4 Improve access to and the continuity of culturally relevant and safe perinatal care and services for the First Nations and Inuit (MSSS)清

Many Indigenous women have to leave their community and culture to give birth and receive perinatal services. This measure will support the creation of positions for midwives in communities, the development of support services for Indigenous women giving birth in hospitals, and assistance for medical teams so that they can work with Indigenous families in a way that respects their needs and culture. The aim of the measure is to improve the experience of families during an event of fundamental importance in their culture, and to increase their trust in health and social services.

### **3.5** Support the hiring of community-based, culturally-aware caseworkers in urban environments (MF)

Because of linguistic and cultural barriers, Indigenous families living in urban environments sometimes have difficulty accessing services. To reach out to isolated families, make them aware of the services available and help them get access, the MF will support the hiring of culturally-aware outreach workers who will act as interpreters if required. The outreach workers must understand the needs of Indigenous families and work in a way that respects cultural differences.

## 3.6 Help communities become autonomous in the area of child and youth protection by supporting and promoting the signing and implementing of agreements (MSSS) $\frac{1}{2}$

This measure will support the signing of agreements to allow communities to take charge of some DYP responsibilities and some institutional responsibilities for managing foster families. It will also support the signing and implementation of agreements to set up a specific child and youth protection system in an Indigenous community or nation. The guidelines for establishing a specific child and youth protection system for Indigenous communities will also be reviewed, and the administrative conditions required for signing an agreement will be made less strict.

### **3.7** Help adapt clinical practices to the realities, cultures and needs of Indigenous children and families (MSSS)

This measure will support the establishment of partnerships with communities and other Indigenous partners in order to design guides, tools and pathways that ensure cultural continuity for Indigenous children who are monitored under the child and youth protection system. It will also support institutions in their work to draft and implement a strategy to provide training on cultural safety that matches the needs in their region.



**3.8** Ensure that more managers, caseworkers and foster families receive training on cultural safety in the area of child and youth protection and community-based services for young people in difficulty to improve their knowledge of Indigenous realities and enhance their cultural skills (MSSS)

The MSSS has given UQAT a mandate to design and provide a specific training program on interventions with Indigenous young people and families. UQAT will also be responsible for setting up a network of in-house instructors to deliver the program in institutions. The measure will aim to increase the number of people trained, based on the needs expressed by institutions. It will also support UQAT in adapting training content to the needs in each region.

#### **3.9** Implement the recommendations in the Report of the Committee on the Application of Bill 21 in Indigenous Communities, *An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions in the field of mental health and human relations* (SRPNI)

This measure aims to create a long-term solution by developing First Nations and Inuit skills, and ensuring the availability of qualified workers in communities along with the delivery of culturally-relevant and culturally-safe services. More specifically, the measure will ensure that First Nations and Inuit workers receive specific training to help them gradually acquire skills and obtain the authorizations needed to exercise certain legally-reserved activities.

#### 4. Fields of action on socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion

#### 4.1 Support projects and initiatives for the retention and educational success of Indigenous school students (MES)

This measure will allow educational organizations and institutions to implement initiatives to promote the retention and educational success of Indigenous school students. It will cover creating structures for collaborative action by various parties involved with students, making school staff more aware of Indigenous realities, organizing workshops to empower students and stop them dropping out, hiring staff to provide support for students throughout their time at school, developing pilot, field research and action research projects, and providing support for the delocalization of training.

# 4.2 Help the Société immobilière du Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec establish a new community living environment project for Indigenous students and their families in Chibougamau (MES)

The MES, working with the Société immobilière du Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec, the Native Friendship Centres that are members, higher education institutions, the SRPNI, the SHQ, the MF and all local partners concerned, will establish a new community living environment project for Indigenous students and their families in Chibougamau. After Sept-Îles, Trois-Rivières and Québec City, this will be the fourth project of this type. Each living environment is culturally adapted to support student success and the transition to city living, and will offer housing along with many other services.

#### 4.3 Develop basic education programs for English-speaking members of the First Nations and the Inuit in detention (MSP) $\frac{1}{2}$

To support English-speaking men and women of the First Nations and Inuit who are in detention centres, the MSP will work with partners in the education system to provide more basic education programs. The objective will be to help inmates obtain a secondary school diploma in general or vocational education, or to have access to social integration programs to support their social rehabilitation. The support will be provided both during detention, and following inmates' release.

#### 4.4 Improve the First Nations and Inuit Faculties of Medicine Program and Inuit Faculties of Medicine Program to extend it to other professions and nations (MSSS) =

This program has been in operation at four faculties of medicine since 2008. Its main objective is to increase the number of First Nations and Inuit physicians, who can then help improve the quality of care provided for the Indigenous population in Québec. The program is under the responsibility of the MSSS, working with the FNQLHSSC and the MES, and the measure will support the coordination of the program and joint actions by the stakeholders in order to extend it to other professions and nations and maximize the benefit for the population.

### 4.5 Provide training for MTESS employees on Indigenous realities (Mikimowin) (MTESS)

The MTESS has given UQUAT a mandate to develop a training program on Indigenous realities (Mikimowin). The program will be offered to almost 4,000 employees (over a four-year period) following its implementation in September 2022. It will ensure that employees acquire certain basic notions in the area of cultural safety, develop culturally-relevant skills for interactions with First Nations and Inuit people, and adapt their interventions with Indigenous "clients". The objective will be to facilitate communication, mutual understanding and the creation of a relationship based on respect and trust for the delivery of MTESS services.

#### 4.6 Fund positions for Indigenous employment development liaison officers (MTESS)

The MTESS will set aside funding to hire fifteen liaison officers and two coordinators. The liaison officers will provide concrete support for Indigenous communities and their businesses, as well as for Québec businesses and Services Québec agents, in order to better integrate Indigenous people into the labour market. This action will consolidate the collaboration and partnership between the Services Québec offices and First Nations communities concerned.

### 4.7 Support joint action among Indigenous youth partners and the implementation of projects with their input (SAJ) $\frac{1}{2\pi}$

This measures aims to support and nourish collaborative actions by organizations that assist First Nations and Inuit youth in order to promote the creation of complementary solutions that respect the values and priorities of Indigenous youth. The joint actions will bring together government departments, Indigenous organizations and non-Indigenous organizations in activities such as a biennial gathering of Indigenous youth partners, training sessions on the realities of Indigenous young people, the sharing of good practice, the administration of a joint budget, a workshop on the inclusion of young people in governance systems, and so on.

#### 4.8 Enhance the mobilization, development and support of Indigenous youth (SAJ)

The aim of this measure is to support and encourage the commitment, ability to act and development of Indigenous youth by funding the projects of organizations that work with them. The initiatives supported will be linked to the priorities stated by Indigenous youth (such as school retention, the fight against discrimination, access to culture, prevention in the field of mental health, etc.) and will contribute to their inclusion and involvement by giving them an opportunity to play an active role in their community and take charge, depending on their ability, of designing and implementing solutions adapted to their needs.

## 4.9 Continue funding for the program to hire coordinators responsible for community involvement, citizen involvement and the promotion of healthy lifestyles (SRPNI)

This measure will continue the funding provided to 27 Indigenous communities to hire a coordinator with the task of building community involvement, citizen participation and the promotion of healthy lifestyles among young people. The coordinator will help local partners and the general population determine priority issues and plan, implement and assess the actions to be implemented. First Nations communities and northern villages will themselves be able to define the issues on which they wish to act.

#### 4.10 Consolidate and develop the tables on accessibility to services in urban settings for Indigenous Peoples (SRPNI)

This measure will consolidate the operations and capacity of the local tables to improve Indigenous access to services in urban environments. The SRPNI funding must be used to hire a coordinator for each local table. In addition, the SRPNI may, depending on the needs expressed, provide financial assistance for local tables for one-off projects to improve the accessibility, complementarity and continuity of services for Indigenous people in urban environments.

#### 4.11 Introduce direct support for Indigenous students planning to continue in higher education (SRPNI, MES)

This measure will support access to higher education for Indigenous students by providing direct support. The relevant Indigenous partners will be consulted and the criteria for the support provided to students will be determined with their input.

## **4.12** Fund the upgrading of residential buildings in the community of Kitcisakik to prepare for the electrification of the community by HQ (SRPNI, MAMH/SHQ)

HQ will build a 25 kV transmission line between the Louvicourt station and the village of Kitcisakik, and will install a local distribution network in the community. The Québec government will finance work to upgrade residential buildings to ensure a safe connection to the grid, while the Government of Canada will contribute to the upgrading of community buildings.

### 5. Fields of action on the health and wellness of Indigenous people

5.1 Enhance the accessibility, continuity and quality of services in the realm of general psychosocial, mental health, addiction, homelessness, and suicide prevention needs, in particular by supporting the signing of cooperative agreements between communities not covered by an agreement and institutions belonging to the health and social services network in their region (MSSS)

This measure targets the creation of permanent service corridors and mechanisms for liaison, coordination and communication, based on the signing of agreements to promote the transfer of knowledge and expertise, the adaptation of clinical tools to reflect cultural specificities, the forwarding of information, and the raising of awareness among HSSN personnel about the realities faced by First Nations members. The funding may, for example, support the hiring of extra navigators, the implementation of outreach interventions, and the implementation of initiatives to meet needs identified by communities and the HSSN. For this purpose, a resource person will be hired by the FNQLHSSC and Indigenous respondents in the HSSN will be mobilized.

## 5.2 Invest in solutions for vulnerable people in Montréal, including the homeless, put forward by the Indigenous community (MSSS)

To fight homelessness and support vulnerable Indigenous people in urban environments, the MSSS will provide funding for the implementation of projects by Indigenous organizations in Montréal. The funding will be consistent with the funding announced in the *Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance 2021-2026*, in particular as regards support for the accommodation and housing continuum and improved access to health care and social services. The joint definition of solutions with Indigenous partners is still, for the MSSS, the best way to improve conditions for vulnerable individuals, since it makes it possible to respect the aspirations of Indigenous populations while ensuring an effective response to their needs.

### 5.3 Support community street patrols working with the homeless population in Montréal (SRPNI) $\hbar$

This measure will support initiatives under the responsibility of Indigenous organizations to deploy street patrols working with the homeless Indigenous population in Montréal. The Native Friendship Centre of Montreal and Makivik Corporation have established initiatives to offer essential assistance, such as accompaniment to day centres and shelters and referrals to public services, using a culturally-safe approach.

## 5.4 Support the deployment of fifteen additional liaison officers in the health and social services network to strengthen cultural safety capacity (MSSS)

The deployment of liaison officers within the HSSN is a priority action to ensure the culturally-safe delivery of health and social services. The liaison officer is a resource person for managers, communities and Indigenous organizations in the region, and the liaison officer's assistance and support role helps increase and maintain cooperation, promote the transfer of knowledge and expertise, and enhance the delivery of culturally-safe services.

## 5.5 Incorporate cultural safety in public health actions targeting health and prevention, including suicide prevention, with the First Nations and Inuit (MSSS)

This measure complements the initiative for Indigenous people in the *Stratégie nationale de prévention du suicide 2022-2026*. It reflects the goal of drafting and supporting a culturally-safe approach in the promotion and prevention actions deployed before care and services. The expected outcomes include a better understanding of the impact of historical and recent trauma on the health of Indigenous people, and the gathering of relational and communicational skills by public health employees. The measure will involve regional public health departments and their partners (in the community, school and municipal sectors, among others).

#### 6. Fields of action on justice and public security

## 6.1 Offer support and assistance culturally adapted to the Indigenous clientele subject to judicial control in collaboration with specialized organizations (MSP) =

This measure covers a range of culturally-adapted services for Indigenous people subject to judicial control established by the MSP, the CQLC and other partners. To provide suitable support, the actions under the measure must lead to the hiring of liaison officers by Indigenous organizations and the CQLC (to work with the various Indigenous communities), community reintegration officers specializing in detention facilities and social workers to provide culturally-adapted follow-up for clients living in the urban environment of Montréal. Another action will be to ensure the availability of specific services and housing places for Indigenous clients in community residential centres in urban environments in several regions of Québec.

# 6.2 Provide services and conditions for Indigenous people in detention facilities that are more likely to promote a process of rehabilitation or healing, using a culturally-adapted approach (MSP) <sup>±</sup>/<sub>π</sub>

This measure will provide support services for people in detention facilities and visits to Indigenous seniors in detention facilities by resource persons from Indigenous communities. Cultural workshops will be offered for inmates, along with individual support, to meet certain needs during the period of imprisonment. The services will also target the start of a healing process and support for individuals during this process. Ultimately, the measure will maintain or re-establish connections with actors in the community and promote social reintegration when an inmate is released.

#### 6.3 Help maintain a mixed intervention team in Sept-Îles and Indigenous liaison officers in urban environments (SQ)

This measure will maintain two promising initiatives: the joint work by mixed intervention teams with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in the Sept-Îles area, and the deployment of Indigenous liaison officers. SQ police officers and MSSS community workers work jointly and share their expertise, acting preventively and supporting the work of various organizations that intervene with individuals in crisis or dealing with mental health problems. The approach facilitates access to appropriate services and quick referrals of vulnerable clients to adapted resources for assistance. The recent addition of employees to the Uashat-Maliotenam Indigenous police force will allow it to apply an effective mixed-team approach in the community. The SQ is continuing to deploy Indigenous liaison officers and broaden the scope of the services they provide to a growing Indigenous population in urban environments. The municipalities of Roberval, Sept-Îles and Joliette have access to similar resources.

#### 6.4 Improve services in the court system for the First Nations (MJQ)

The improvement of communications tools and spaces for the benefit of people facing the justice system is essential during court activities. In addition to the ongoing translation of certain forms and the development of legal lexicons, people facing the justice system must have access to movable spaces to improve service delivery to citizens in certain communities.

#### 6.5 Enhance access to justice in Nunavik (MJQ) 清

The question of access to justice in Nunavik has been covered in numerous recent recommendations made by the commissions of inquiry. It has also been highlighted in other reports and presented in various demands made by the Inuit community. Analysis is under way on this topic, and the measure will provide input and make it possible to assess the legal and administrative impacts of solutions to promote local justice. These solutions will help support stronger community justice in Nunavik, training and skills upgrading for players in the judicial system in Inuit communities, and solutions to give individuals facing the justice system more access to professional resources and the ability to participate more effectively in the various stages of the judicial process.

#### 6.6 Support the coordination of FNQLHSSC activities in the area of justice (MJQ)

The FNQLHSSC is a key player in joint actions by First Nations communities on justice-related issues. Regular collaboration between the MJQ and the FNQLHSSC is already well established, in particular concerning the search for solutions for services that need improvement and the implementation of the recommendations by the commissions of inquiry and in other major reports. The measure will make it possible to continue to support the role played by the FNQLHSSC on behalf of the First Nations in the field of justice, and its role as a partner of the MJQ.

#### 6.7 Implement an emergency call service pilot project in Nunavik (MSP)清

This measure will provide funding for a pilot project to route emergency calls from four villages (Kuujjuarapik, Umiujaq, Inukjuak and Puvirnituq) in Nunavik to an emergency call centre. The measure will also significantly improve the process for deploying emergency services in the area and provide more safety for the population.

## 6.8 Provide training on Indigenous realities for criminal and penal prosecuting attorneys in connection with the criminal justice system (DCPP)

Since 2018, mandatory basic training and specialized training on Indigenous issues and realities in the criminal justice field, on cultural safety and on Indigenous notions of justice, has been made available to prosecutors during their professional training, in collaboration with several Indigenous partners. The DCPP wants to maintain and increase the availability of this training, while improving the course content and strengthening links with Indigenous partners, in particular with respect to their involvement as instructors.



#### Measures announced as part of the *I have hope* initiative

### 1. Fields of action on culture, Indigenous languages and reconciliation

- 1 Facilitate the inclusion of Indigenous course content by developing and promoting supplementary materials
- 2 Draft an implementation plan for Indigenous course content in the Québec school curriculum, working with the First Nations and Inuit
- 3 Establish an awareness campaign to combat racism and discrimination against Indigenous people
- 4 Design online training sessions on Indigenous realities for government personnel in the public and parapublic sectors

### 2. Fields of action on issues and challenges facing Indigenous women

- 5 Update the skills of Indigenous police force personnel in the area of conjugal and domestic violence, and investigative skills
- 6 Ensure financial support for prevention and intervention projects, by and for Indigenous women and girls, to combat sexual exploitation and other forms of sexual violence
- 7 Support services to combat conjugal and domestic violence in Indigenous communities that can be used in community dispute resolution mechanisms or the court process
- 8 Enhance calls for projects in the area of conjugal and domestic violence, sexual violence and men and healing
- 9 Establish a legal and psychosocial support service for Indigenous women who are victims of violence

#### 3. Fields of action on the overall development of children and families

10 Ensure suitable support for Indigenous students in the Québec school system

#### 4. Fields of action on socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion

11 Support the creation of new housing centres for adult students, youth students and their families

#### 5. Fields of action on the health and wellness of Indigenous people

- 12 Implement, with partners, a culturally-safe approach in the health and social services network
- 13 Support the implementation of projects to strengthen front-line services in friendship centres, based on the model developed in Val d'Or
- 14 Ensure recurrent funding, in Val d'Or, for an innovative urban model for health and social services delivery, rooted in Indigenous knowledge, traditions, identity, culture and values

#### 6. Fields of action on justice and public security

- 15 Ensure joint action, support and reinforcement for Indigenous police forces
- 16 Give more Indigenous police officers access to professional skills upgrading at the École nationale de police autochtone
- 17 Give prospective police officers hired by Indigenous police forces more access to basic training in police patrolling
- 18 Hire Indigenous liaison officers at the office of the Police Ethics Commissioner and the Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale
- 19 Develop and provide training sessions for correctional services employees
- 20 Establish mixed intervention teams in areas covered by the SQ
- 21 Contribute to the hiring of a community officer for the mixed policing project in Montréal
- 22 Purchase a computerized call dispatch system in Uashat
- 23 Add staff to the Indigenous police force in Uashat for the mixed patrol
- 24 Hire Indigenous caseworkers to offer assistance services for victims of crime, working with the network of assistance centres for victims of crime
- 25 Enter into agreements with Indigenous organizations to train, accredit and hire interpreters for Indigenous languages in the court system
- 26 Increase funding for the services provided by parajudicial advisors from the community for the First Nations and Inuit
- 27 Support new initiatives in the field of community justice in First Nations communities (justice committees) and increase the operating budgets for existing committees
- 28 Establish new community justice initiatives in urban environments to meet the needs of the First Nations and Inuit
- 29 Increase the pay for Gladue report writers under contract, provide funding to allow certain Indigenous organizations to hire more Gladue report writers, and increase funding for training





#### **Consultations completed for the purpose of this action plan** *Together for Future Generations*

In July 2021, the Minister Responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit began a tour of Indigenous communities in Québec. The tour took him to all the communities, all the northern villages and all the Indigenous urban environments in Québec, where he had an opportunity to discuss concerns with Indigenous leaders and the challenges to their social and cultural wellness.

In addition, the Minister Responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit invited all the Chiefs and Grand Chiefs of Indigenous communities and nations to a consultation meeting on the action plan, which was held on January 18, 2022. Representatives from the following communities and nations attended:

- ♦ Akwesasne
- Ekuanitshit
- Essipit
- Gespeg
- Gesgapegiag
- Cree Nation Government
- Kebaowek-Kipawa
- ♦ Lac-Simon
- Nutashkuan
- Odanak
- Pessamit
- Pikogan
- ♦ Waswanipi
- Wendake
- Winneway

Some Chiefs who were unable to attend the January 18 meeting requested and obtained an individual consultation:

- ♦ Kanesatake
- Kawawachikamach
- Wolf Lake

Representatives from the following organizations in Nunavik were met individually during the winter of 2022 :

- ♦ Makivik Corporation
- ♦ Kativik School Board
- ♦ Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services
- Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik

Also during the winter of 2022, individual meetings were held with representatives from the following Indigenous organizations:

- ♦ First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission
- ♦ First Nations Education Council
- ♦ Quebec Native Women
- ♦ Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec
- ♦ Institut Tshakapesh
- Montreal Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (which brings together several Montréal-based Indigenous service organizations)

Last, the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and the communities of Wendake and Essipit filed written comments and concerns.



Photo: Tourisme Autochtone Québec

•••• 44 ••••

