

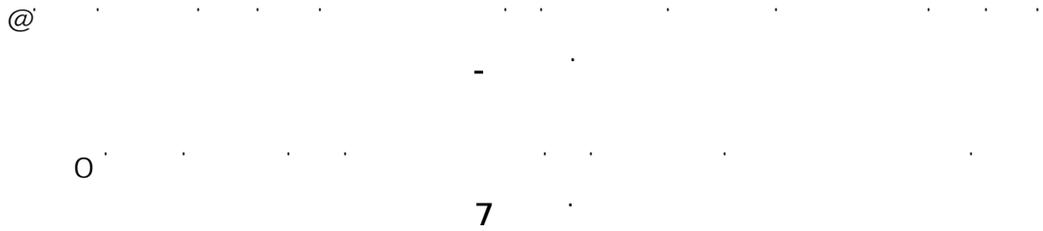


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*Reclaiming Power and Place: Final Report of the National Inquiry  
into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*

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Kīspīn ki nitawihitīn ē nīhīyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

**Cree**

Tłıchq yatı k'èè. Dı wegodı newq dè, gots'o gonede.

**Tłıchq**

ʔerihł'ı́s Dēne Sų́líné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔą ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yółtı.

**Chipewyan**

Edı gondı dehgáh got'ıe zhatıé k'éé edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahlı́.

**South Slavey**

K'áhshó got'ıne xədə k'é hederı ʔedıhtl'é yerınıwę ní dé dúle.

**North Slavey**

Jii gwandak izhii ginjı́k vat'atr'ıjáhch'uu zhit yinothtan jı́', diits'át ginohkhı́i.

**Gwich'in**

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqłuta.

**Inuvialuktun**

Ċ<sup>b</sup>dĎ ĠĠ<sup>sb</sup>Δ<sup>c</sup> Λ<sup>r</sup>LJΔ<sup>r</sup> Δ<sup>o</sup>ĠĎĎ<sup>c</sup> <sup>sb</sup>ı<sup>r</sup>L<sup>ı</sup>Ġ<sup>o</sup>, Đ<sup>o</sup>Ď<sup>c</sup>Ġ<sup>a</sup> Đ<sup>c</sup> Đ<sup>sb</sup>Ď<sup>c</sup>Ď<sup>a</sup> Δ<sup>sb</sup>Ď<sup>c</sup>.

**Inuktitut**

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarłutit.

**Inuinnaqtun**

Indigenous Languages and Education Secretariat: 867-767-9346

Francophone Affairs Secretariat: 867-767-9343

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## A Message from the Minister

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) acknowledges and recognizes the contributions of the many people who shared their experience and made recommendations for change as a part of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the development of the Final Report: *Reclaiming Power And Place*.

There are many Calls for Justice within *Reclaiming Power and Place*, which have significant implications for the GNWT and residents of the Northwest Territories. They are far-reaching and complex; they ask for nothing less than systemic change within society; and they ask us to examine the paths of colonization we have walked as individuals and as governments, and to choose new pathways to address the underlying inequities within Canadian society and the resulting intergenerational traumas, marginalization, and violence.

The GNWT is in a unique position to respond to and support the actions that address these Calls for Justice.

In the GNWT's initial response (entitled *Doing Our Part*) to *Reclaiming Power and Place*, this government made a commitment to review and analyze the Calls for Justice. This work plan outlines how that work will be carried out and how it will guide the development of a detailed GNWT Action Plan.

The development of the Action Plan will not only require careful thought and consideration but it will also require each of us to examine our own behaviours and attitudes. Missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA (Two-spirited, lesbian, gay bi-sexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual) people is a subject that is painful for many in the north.

It took courage for survivors and family members to come forth and share their stories. They deserve to see changes being made to address the violence in our society and they deserve to be called on to offer solutions that take into account their healing journeys.

Changes will take time. Work is being done to address the needs of women experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence; however, much remains to be done.

The Calls for Justice are complex and directed to all levels of government and to all citizens of our great nation. They represent a path forward a path that moves towards the goal of ensuring a safe, secure, equitable, and healthy future for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

While this living document is subject to change, the intended result is clearly spelled out. It is our responsibility to honour the ideal and work towards a social change, not just as northerners or Canadians but together as a unified society of individuals, regardless of race, creed, or sexual orientation.

**The Honourable Caroline Wawzonek  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women**

## Introduction

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (National Inquiry) was officially launched on August 3rd, 2016. On October 4th, 2016, the GNWT registered an order under the *Public Inquiries Act* to provide the National Inquiry with the authority necessary to fully examine matters within the jurisdiction of the NWT.

Inquiry commissioners were tasked to examine and report on the systemic causes behind the higher levels of violence that Indigenous women and girls experience by looking for patterns and underlying factors.

The commissioners were also mandated to examine the underlying historical, social, economic, institutional, and cultural factors that contribute to the violence. They were required to examine the practices, policies, and institutions such as policing, child welfare, and other social or economic conditions.

In addition to this, the commissioners were directed to examine and report on institutional policies and practices put in place as a response to violence and to indicate those that have proven to be effective in reducing violence and increasing the safety of Indigenous women and girls.

The inquiry was directed to:

- recommend definitive actions to remove systemic causes of violence and to increase the safety of Indigenous women and girls in Canada;
- recommend ways to honour and commemorate missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls; and
- provide its recommendations to the Government of Canada through an [interim report](#) by November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and a final report by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

The National Inquiry held nine institutional hearings, 15 community hearings and additional statement gatherings in communities across Canada and heard from more than 2,300 people who shared their experience and offered recommendations for change. A visit to Yellowknife occurred on August 28th, 2017 and a community hearing was held between January 23 - 25, 2018.

The Final Report is explicit in describing and explaining its subject as a deliberate race, identity and gender-based genocide:

***“Violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people is not an individual problem, or an issue only for certain communities. This violence is rooted in systemic factors, like economic, social, and political marginalization, as well as racism, discrimination, and misogyny, woven into the fabric of Canadian society.”***

—Page 56 from the Introduction to *Reclaiming Power and Place*

## Recommendations

The Final Report contains 231 'Calls for Justice' or recommendations under 18 themes that are directed at:

- All governments:
  - *Human and Indigenous Rights and Governmental Obligations*
  - *Culture*
  - *Health and Wellness*
  - *Human Security*
  - *Justice*
- Industries, Institutions, Services, and Partnerships (some of which would also fall within the GNWT):
  - *Media and Social Influencers*
  - *Health and Wellness Service Providers*
  - *Transportation Service Providers and Hospital Industry*
  - *Police Services*
  - *Attorneys and Law Societies*
  - *Educators*
  - *Social Workers and those involved in Child Welfare*
  - *Extractive and Development Industries*
  - *Correctional Service Canada*
- All Canadians
- Distinctions-based (some of which would also fall within the GNWT):
  - *Calls for Justice for Inuit*
  - *Métis-Specific Calls for Justice*
  - *2SLGBTQQIA-Specific Calls for Justice*

An initial assessment suggested there may be recommendations that will require careful review and consideration. We also must take into consideration the development of a National Action Plan and what that will mean for

how we work on implementing the Calls for Justice in the NWT.

The Native Women's Association of the NWT must also be recognized for its tireless work with the National Inquiry and the steadfast support they gave to the families involved. The GNWT supports the four primary recommendations put forward by the Native Women's Association of the NWT in its closing submission.

The recommendations are as follows:

1. We must acknowledge that violence against Indigenous women and girls including members of the 2SLGBTQQIA communities is a crisis that demands an urgent and active response.
2. We must re-establish, build, and foster trust between all levels of government, service providers, communities and every one of their citizens.
3. We must ensure that the purpose and objective of all government services is to be community and person-centered.
4. We must establish a meaningful entity with accountability to monitor and evaluate the acknowledgement by governments, efforts towards rebuilding trust and establishment of and outcomes from community and person-centered government services.

These four recommendations will be addressed in the GNWT Action Plan. Working in partnership with the Native Women's Association of the NWT in responding to their recommendations and the Calls for Justice will demonstrate the value and importance of working with our partners across the territories.

## The NWT Context

The Northwest Territories (NWT) covers a vast geographical area of 1.17 million square kilometres with a small population of 44,541<sup>1</sup> spread over this large area. Approximately 20,607<sup>2</sup> people live in the capital city of Yellowknife and the remainder of the population is spread out amongst 32 smaller communities.

Most small NWT communities are remote. Four communities are fly in only (no road access); ten communities have winter road access only; seven communities have all weather roads with seasonal disruptions; and twelve communities have uninterrupted year round road access. This geographic isolation has a significant impact on the cost of living and cost of doing business in those areas. The remoteness of communities in the NWT, the diversity of cultures, and the broad spectrum of challenges the communities face on a daily basis requires creative, realistic, community-based responses.

Approximately 51% of the NWT's population is Indigenous – Dene, Metis and Inuvialuit. These cultures and their languages are recognized in the *NWT Official Languages Act*. The Legislative Assembly of the NWT reflects this population: a majority of members in the Chamber and three of the seven Cabinet members, plus the Premier, are Indigenous.

The Government of Canada began negotiating Aboriginal rights agreements in the NWT in 1973. Since that time, several agreements have been concluded: the Inuvialuit Final Agreement,

the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Tłı̨chǫ Land Claims and Self-government Agreement, the Salt River First Nation Treaty Settlement Agreement, and the Délı̨ne Self-Government Agreement.

Negotiations continue in all regions of the NWT as Indigenous governments seek to confirm their Aboriginal and treaty rights in the NWT.

As the GNWT works to address the Calls for Justice, the historical, multigenerational and intergenerational trauma, social and economic marginalization, racism, and sexism that continue to be experienced by Indigenous peoples will have to remain a necessary part of the discussion. We must recognize and find a way to incorporate the lived experience of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

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<sup>1</sup> NWT Bureau of Statistics: "NWT Population July 2018"

<sup>2</sup> NWT Bureau of Statistics: "Population Estimates by Community 2018"

## GNWT Response to Date

### *Doing Our Part*

“*Doing Our Part*” is the GNWT’s initial response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This document states:

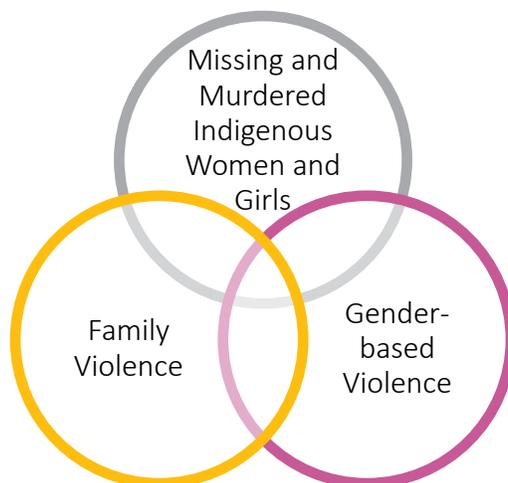
***“The GNWT is committed to working with all Northerners and with partners across Canada to begin to address systemic causes of violence, inequality and racism so that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people can feel safe and empowered in our country and in our territory...”***

The GNWT remains committed to responding to the Calls for Justice. Recognition of the important work to be done with the Government of Canada, Indigenous governments, business sectors, and non-governmental organizations is noted in the GNWT response:

***“We have to be open to examining the Calls for Justice from various perspectives.”***

The initial review shows that many GNWT programs and services already address some components of the Calls for Justice as outlined in the *Doing Our Part* report. An in-depth review and analysis will provide the GNWT with an opportunity to closely examine how the current programs and services are provided and determine if it is meeting the needs of the NWT residents and measure that against what is recommended through the Calls for Action. We need to keep in mind that the Calls for Justice are recommended actions and not necessarily a requirement to make wide sweeping changes.

Gender-based violence, family violence, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls are overlapping and intersecting issues. In order to be effective, the GNWT Action Plan must address each of these issues, as well as the underlying issues of gender equality and discrimination against 2SLGBTQIA persons.



# Responding to the Calls for Justice

## Purpose of the Workplan

The purpose of this workplan is to document a transparent process that outlines how the GNWT will prepare an Action Plan in response to the Calls for Justice presented in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

## Development of an Action Plan

The 231 Calls for Justice are far-reaching and complex. Developing a response is not a simple matter of reviewing and signing off on work already being done. This process will take a careful and thorough review of what we are doing currently; realistically and honestly assessing its effectiveness; and setting measurable targets to assess progress on the implementation of the Action Plan. This workplan represents the first step towards addressing the complexity of this work.

It should be noted that some of the Calls for Justice may not be realized for a number of years and the GNWT may choose to implement a different response to a Call for Justice designed specifically for the unique nature of the territory.

This workplan is a living document and may change over time and is meant to guide the GNWT as it works to develop the Action Plan. Feedback on ways to improve the process is welcomed.

## The Workplan Lens

The Workplan Lens was developed as a review tool to support GNWT departments and agencies when they review and analyse the Calls for Justice. The lens accesses information in chart-form regarding departmental responses to specific Calls for Justice and includes the following:

- programs/services currently in place;
- need for new programs/services;
- possible opportunities for interdepartmental collaboration;
- funding information regarding current programs and new programs/services;
- participation and engagement of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people in current and/or planned programs/services;
- participation and engagement of Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations and community and territorial organizations in the development and evaluation of current and proposed programs/services; and
- anticipated timelines.

The following Workplan lens sample provides an overview of the questions that departments would take into consideration when reviewing how their current programs and services responds to the Calls for Justice.

## Sample: Workplan Lens

### **Call for Justice 18.32**

We call upon child welfare agencies to engage in education regarding the realities and perspectives of 2SLGBTQQIA youth; to provide 2SLGBTQQIA competency training to parents and caregivers, especially to parents of trans children and in communities outside of urban centres; and to engage in and provide education for parents, foster families, and other youth service providers regarding the particular barriers to safety for 2SLGBTQQIA youth.

### **Department of Health and Social Services**

Questions to be Asked:	Response:
<p>Are there current program(s)/services in place that address this Call for Justice?</p> <p>Are there plans to develop a new program/service or enhance current program/services to address this Call for Justice?</p> <p>What are these plans?</p>	
<p>Does the current program/ service address other Calls for Justice?</p> <p>If so, which ones?</p>	
<p>Are there other GNWT departments that could collaborate on this Call for Justice?</p> <p>What role will other departments have in addressing this Call for Justice?</p>	
<p>Is the current program funded? What is the source of current funding?</p> <p>Is there financial support to proceed at this time to enhance or develop new programs/services to address this Call for Justice?</p>	
<p>When the current program(s)/services were developed were the views of Indigenous women and LGBTQ people included?</p> <p>What measures will be taken to ensure their participation in the development of programs/services that address this Call for Justice?</p>	
<p>Is the current program periodically evaluated? Are the views of Indigenous women, LGBTQ people, Indigenous governments, community organizations included in the evaluation process?</p> <p>Are the key findings of the evaluation shared?</p>	
<p>If this is a new program /service what is the anticipated timeline for implementation?</p>	
<p>Other Comments</p>	

## Community Engagement

Community engagement is a key component to many of the Calls for Justice. The intent is to include the input, guidance, and direction from Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, community/territorial organizations, and people with lived experience into the development and delivery of programs and services that evolve from the National Inquiry.

As over 50 percent of the NWT population is Indigenous, community engagement, collaboration, and partnerships are critical considerations. Formal bilateral agreements are in place with a number of Indigenous governments which can provide a forum for the exchange of information and input as work proceeds on the Calls for Justice.

Accurate information sharing during community engagement and collaboration is vital. The use of the Indigenous languages of the NWT during community discussions will better allow for meaningful engagement of Elders and people with lived experience. Traditionally, this is typically done with interpretation during meetings and translation of materials.

It is important to note that information shared during community engagement must be treated in a trauma informed way. Private information shared for the purposes of undertaking this work will be treated with sensitivity and not shared in an identifiable manner.

In addition to providing the GNWT with the opportunity to develop partnerships within its own departmental structure, the Calls for Justice are also integral to developing and

strengthening partnerships with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, community/territorial organizations, as well as trans-boundary relationships with other jurisdictions such as the Yukon, Nunavut and Alberta. While building these relationships may take time, many steps have already been taken on this path and the Calls for Justice also exist to help to formalize these partnerships.

## Communications Strategy

A clear and defined communications process is necessary as the GNWT moves forward in its response to the Calls for Justice. This communications strategy will be an important element in the Action Plan.

Communication with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, community/territorial organizations, residents of the NWT should be a two way street. Information on how the GNWT is working to address the Calls for Justice must be shared with these groups and, in return, the views of these governments, organizations and people must be respected and included in future plans and actions.

## Timeframe

The Women's Advisory Unit intends to coordinate the GNWT's efforts to develop the Action Plan according to the following Critical plan within the timeframe presented:

## Timeline for the GNWT Action Plan to Address the Calls for Justice

**November**  
2020



**Nov 4** – The Minister Responsible for the Status of Women tables the work plan for the development of the GNWT Action Plan in the Legislative Assembly.

**Nov 10** – The MMIWG Working Group leads a review of the Calls for Justice with all GNWT departments. Each department provides an update on the programs and services it currently offers (one week).

**Nov 27** – Policy directors review each Call for Justice (two weeks). Similar sessions can be held with AOC and Indigenous governments.

The review will identify:

- which department(s) it applies to;
- which thematic area(s) from *Doing Our Part* it applies to;
- whether the Call for Justice is currently addressed—in part or in full—by existing programs/services; and
- new programs and services required to address the Call for Justice, and whether they:
  - *can be implemented immediately,*
  - *can be implemented within one year, or*
  - *require long-term planning*

**December**  
2020



**Dec 8** – The Women’s Advisory Office conducts a jurisdictional scan of federal, provincial and territorial responses to the Calls for Justice, identifying programs and services offered by other jurisdictions that can be accessed by NWT residents (one week).

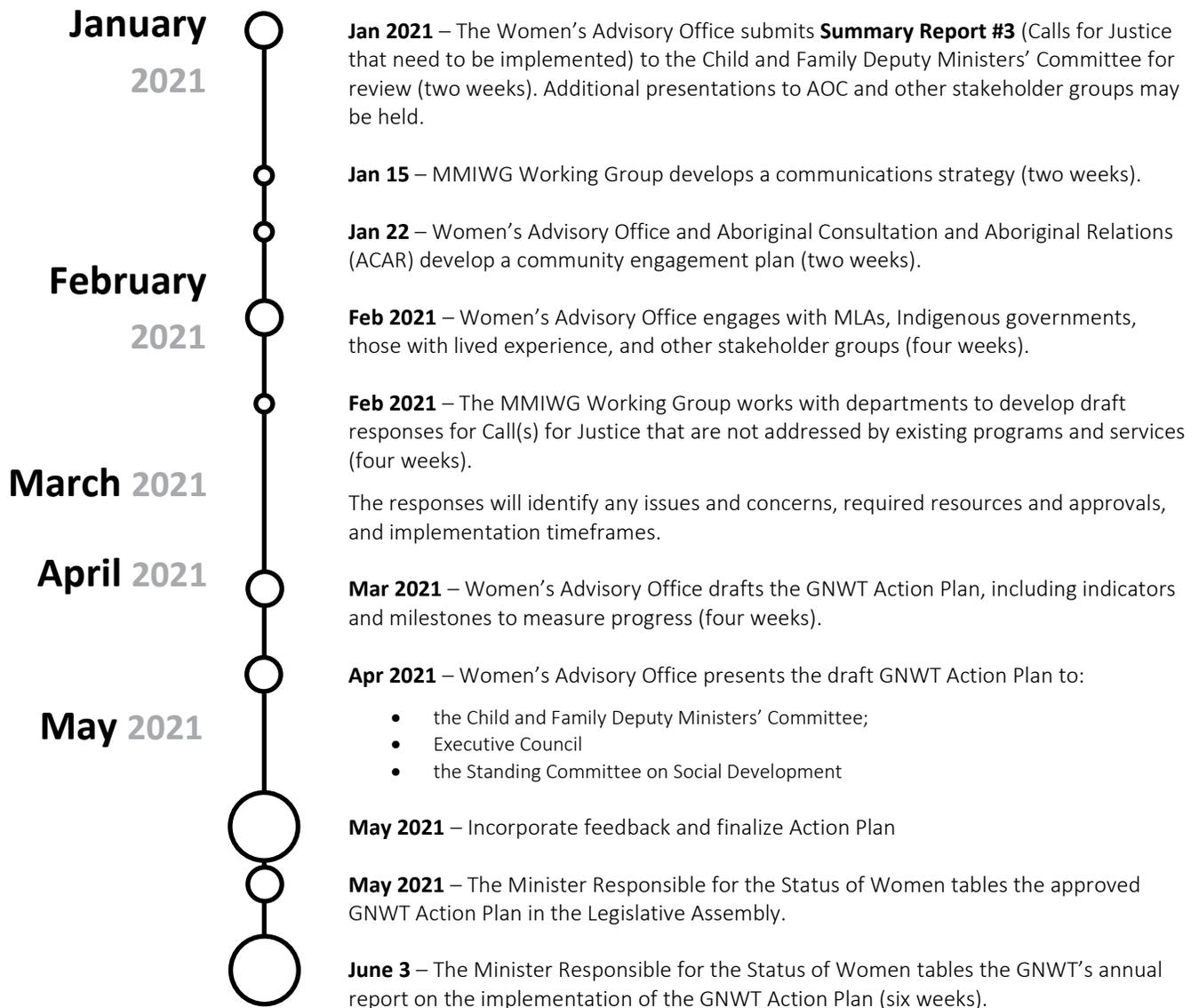
**Dec 2020** – The Women’s Advisory Office develops summary reports (two weeks).

The reports will identify:

1. programs and services that fully address one or more of the Calls for Justice; and
2. programs and services that partially address one or more of the Calls for Justice (i.e. they do not exactly match the specific intent of a Call for Justice)
3. programs and services that need to be implemented to address one or more of the Calls for Justice, noting those that:
  - *can be implemented immediately*
  - *can be implemented within one year, or*
  - *require long-term planning*

**Dec 11** – The Women’s Advisory Office submits **Summary Report #1** (programs and services that fully address one or more of the Calls for Justice) and **Summary Report #2** (programs and services that partially address one or more of the Calls for Justice) to the Child and Family Deputy Ministers’ Committee for review (two weeks).

**Dec 18** – The Women’s Advisory Office submits **Summary Report #1** (programs and services that fully address one or more of the Calls for Justice) and **Summary Report #2** (programs and services that partially address one or more of the Calls for Justice) to Standing Committee on Social Development (two weeks).



### Ongoing Activities conducted by the Women’s Advisory Office:

- Review and identify those Calls for Justice related to Family Violence and Gender-based violence
- Hold regular meetings with MMIWG Working Groups
- Regularly brief community contacts on MMIWG-related activities and progress on the GNWT Action plan
- Regularly update the Standing Committee on Social Development, as requested
- Participate in federal-provincial-territorial activities to monitor and report back on progress toward the National Action Plan

## Conclusion

The GNWT is committed to responding to the Calls for Justice and taking the necessary steps in order to address the systemic causes of violence, inequality and racism that contribute to the problem of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

The development of a comprehensive Action Plan must be prioritized by all levels of government, including all GNWT departments and agencies, and involve the residents and communities of the Northwest Territories.

This workplan represents an important starting point and commitment to effectively respond to the Calls for Justice in order to continue to provide support to all NWT residents and to raising awareness about issues of family violence and violence against women and girls.