

Métis Women British Columbia

STRATEGIC PLAN:
2020-2026



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Message from the MNBC Minister of Women

As the MNBC Minister of Women and the elected provincial chairperson of Métis Women BC (MWBC), I am proud to share our 2020-2026 strategic plan. This plan is the result of hours of engagement with Métis women across the province of BC, through regional and provincial gatherings, informal conversations over coffee or a meal, and community-based engagement.

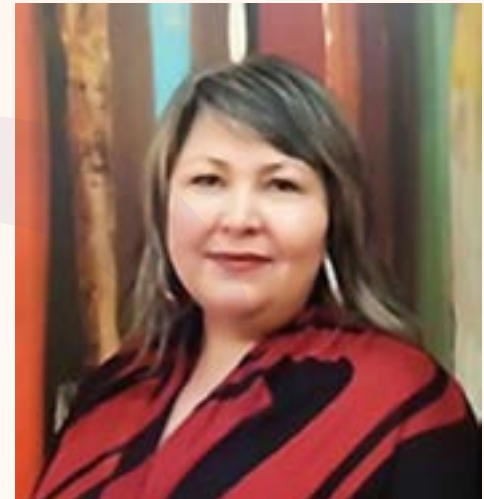
I have been involved with the Métis Women's Movement in British Columbia since 2006, as MNBC's first "Director of Women" with the Métis Women's Secretariat of British Columbia. Reflecting on the growth and change of the MNBC Ministry of Women over the years, I am encouraged and inspired by our activities and this fulsome strategic plan created in partnership with women from across the Province. After several years of limited funding and activity we have worked hard to re-energize our Ministry and access increased funding to support women's activities and engagement throughout the province.

We view this plan as dynamic, open to change, and something to be used on an ongoing basis as we continue our work, like a touchstone to show us how we are meeting the goals laid out in

the plan. This plan also contains elements that indicate a desire to re-engage the traditional role of Métis Matriarchs and Women of Wisdom and the traditional value of "Wahkotowin," which emphasizes a Michif world view of traditional kinship and interconnection.

I would like to personally thank our community and regional women's representatives for engaging with us on this plan. I also thank the Métis Elders of both genders, men, youth and children in our Nation for your strength, support and inspiration

Marsee / Kinanaskomitin,
Victoria Pruden





Message from the MWBC Regional and Provincial Representatives

As the governance arm representing the women of Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC), MWBC has a critical role to play in understanding, advocating for, and addressing the needs of Métis women. We work to support Métis women to access opportunities for healthy and fulfilling lives. We also aim to support and promote Métis women to take their rightful place as leaders in our families, communities, and regional and provincial Métis government. We provide opportunities to gather together, engage in learning and skills development, and deliver supports to emerging women leaders.

As a Nation, the Métis have always honoured the role of women as life-givers, keepers of family and culture, and teachers and nurturers of the next generation. We are a diverse group of Métis here in British Columbia, with a rich history, and many Métis who still live grassroots, speak Michif or Nehiyaw languages, and embody traditional Michif ways of life. We also have many Métis who are in the process of “coming home”—individuals are reclaiming their Métis identity, re-discovering and connecting with their Métis roots. Our Nation is making great progress in establishing our rights as a proud and independent people and forging a path towards greater self-governance across multiple jurisdictions. Métis women are playing a key role in these

developments, and it is critical that they receive the support they need at the community, regional and provincial level.

Throughout the process of developing this strategic plan, we heard loud and clear that Métis women are craving opportunities to gather together and learn about and celebrate their culture. They are embracing opportunities to act as leaders and they find joy and fulfillment in this work. Yet they face challenges in continuing to do this work, such as, lack of resources, geographical distance, and the need for training and resources. As MWBC, our job is to connect with Métis women across BC to identify those challenges and work to address them.

As such, we are very excited to release this strategic plan which will provide much needed support and connection between Métis women. Some of the activities we are excited about over the next six years include: regional and provincial gatherings of Métis women, the development and delivery of a provincial training strategy, the creation of toolkits with resources to support Métis women, enhanced communication streams, a greater focus on the needs of women in MNBC governance and programming, and the development of cultural resource databases and cultural spaces in Métis communities.



Marsee, and in the spirit of Wakohtowin,

Nancy Larkin,
Vancouver Island & Powell River

Lee Fraser,
Lower Mainland

Cheryl Dodman,
Thompson Okanagan

Wendy Schneider,
Kootenays

Dawna Lee Short,
North Central

Alicia Fernando,
Northwest

Carol Paynter,
Northeast

Victoria Pruden,
Provincial Chairperson

*Métis Women of British Columbia Regional
and Provincial Representatives*





Overview

This document provides a pathway forward for MWBC over the next six years (2020-2026). This document is the result of extensive consultations with Métis women across BC, and reflects the shared goals brought forward.

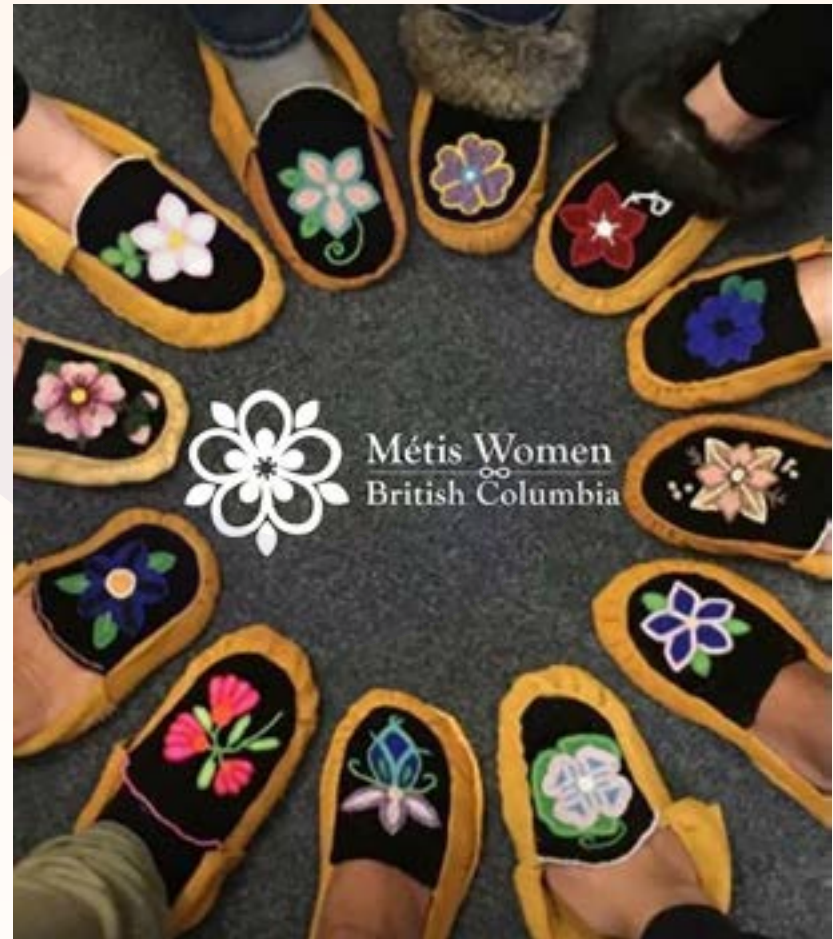
In 2018, MWBC began the process of strategic planning through a needs assessment of Métis women in BC. Métis women from across the province came together in September 2018 in Richmond BC to participate in a brainstorming session on the following themes relevant to Métis women: Education, Economic Development and Employment; Health and Wellness; Housing, Food Security and Poverty; Culture, Language, and Heritage; Children and Families; Métis Rights, Land Use and Harvesting; Relationship between MWBC & MNBC; and Women's Safety. The input from this session was summarized in a report that identified broad themes and proposed actions in each of the priority areas.

In the fall of 2019 MWBC held a full-day planning session in Prince George, BC that was attended by community women's representatives from Métis Chartered Communities from across BC, the MWBC regional and provincial representatives and four Elder advisors. During this session, participants

brainstormed and prioritized their goals and action items for the next six years. As such, this strategic plan is built on the foundation of input from Métis women representing all regions of BC.

This strategic plan will be used to guide MWBC activities over the next six years, and to communicate with partners and funders about our priorities and proposed actions to meet our objectives

We are grateful to all of the women who volunteered their time to participate in engagement sessions, contributed feedback and reviewed drafts of the plan. We present this plan in honour of your voices and in service of your goals. We thank you for your strength and support as we endeavor to improve the lives of Métis women and families in B.C.





Background

The Métis Women British Columbia (MWBC) is a governance arm of the Métis Nation of British Columbia (MNBC). MWBC is made up of:

- A community women's representative from each of the Métis Nation British Columbia Chartered Communities (elected at the community level)
- One elected regional women's representative from each of the seven MNBC regions, three of whom serve as vice-chair, secretary and treasurer
- A provincially elected chairperson (who holds the position of MNBC Minister of Women and sits on the MNBC Board of Directors)

The regional representatives (including vice-chair, secretary and treasurer) and the provincially elected chairperson are known collectively as "the MWBC Provincial Council."

MWBC was established in 2005 as the "Métis Women's Secretariat- BC" with the purpose of empowering Métis women in all aspects of their lives. Since inception, MWBC has worked to:

- Support Métis women to fulfill their potential in health and well-being, cultural connections, community involvement, family wellness, education, and economic security

- Ensure that Métis women's voices and political representation are prioritized at the community, regional, provincial and national level
- Advocate for programming that reflects the needs of Métis women
- Promote Métis culture, language and traditions; healthy families and communities; and respect for the diversity and uniqueness of all Métis people

As a governance arm, MWBC is generally not focused on the delivery of programs and services for Métis women, but whenever possible we do provide direct support through gatherings, trainings, and cultural events for Métis women. Bringing women together to share knowledge, build connections, establish priorities for advocacy and planning, and celebrate culture is one of the key roles of MWBC.

In the recent past, MWBC has been under-resourced and has not been able to operate at capacity due to a lack of funding and a lack of staff supports within MNBC. In 2018 MWBC was granted multi-year funding from the Status of Women Canada and Indigenous Services Canada. The funding is allocated to re-building the capacity of MWBC with a three stage-process that includes:

- 2018-19: Needs assessment and community engagement and provincial gathering (complete)
- 2019-20: Strategic planning and regional women's gatherings (complete)
- 2020-21: Begin implementation of strategic plan with creation of women's resources and toolkits

This strategic plan is part of MWBC's journey to rebuild and rejuvenate our structure to better meet the needs of Métis women in BC. MWBC recognizes the immense contribution Métis women make as leaders in their families, communities and regions, and strives to provide the tools, resources and support that Métis women require for this work.





The following questions and answers provide further background information on Métis women in B.C.:

Who are the Métis?

The Métis are a distinct Aboriginal Nation, recognized under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. The ancestral roots of the Métis culture and Nationhood date to intermarriages between European men and First Nations women during the time of the Canadian fur trade in the 1700s and 1800s. However, the term Métis is not a racial category and does not encompass all individuals with mixed Aboriginal and European heritage. Rather, it refers to a distinctive Nation of people connected by a shared lineage, culture, language, and governance system. A Métis person is someone who:

- Self-identifies as Métis
- Has a proven ancestral connection to the historic Métis Community
- Is connected to a contemporary Métis Community

How many Métis people live in B.C.?

MNBC represents almost 90,000 self-identified Métis people and 20,000 (at time of publication) registered Métis citizens in British Columbia. Self-identified Métis people have indicated that they are Métis on Canadian census forms but may or may not hold or be eligible for Métis citizenship. Métis citizens have registered for citizenship with MNBC and have met the criteria for citizenship outlined by the Métis Nation. Many Métis families chose to hide their Métis identity for generations to avoid racism and colonial oppression, and as a result there are large number of people who do not know they are Métis. As increasing numbers of Métis citizens rediscover and reclaim their culture and identity, it is likely that many more will come forward to claim Métis citizenship.



What are the needs of Métis people in B.C.?

Due to the impacts of colonization, Métis people face wide-sweeping health and socio-economic challenges. MWBC's need assessment identified needs in areas such as education, employment, health and well-being, housing, child welfare, and economic security. Métis women are also disadvantaged by gender and face further challenges to their well-being, including being at increased risk of experiencing violence. In the face of these challenges Métis women are resilient. They play leadership roles in their families and communities, and advocate for improved programs and services to meet their needs. MWBC supports women to achieve equitable opportunities and to heal from the impacts of colonization.

What part do Métis women play in Métis culture?

Women are highly valued in Métis culture, which is often described as matriarchal. Women have always had important and distinct roles in Métis society, and are seen as keepers of the land and culture. Métis historian, Dr. Fred Shore, explains the role of Métis women throughout history in his book "Threads in the Sash: The Story of the Métis People" (2017), saying "Métis women were an intrinsic part of the Métis world, and were not relegated to a subservient role, something they never would have tolerated. As the Nation developed, women's roles developed equally with the men. More importantly, the extended family became the basic building block of the Nation, and in this way, women played a major role in the development of the Nation, since they were essentially the managers of the extended families. Through the women, the extended families became the source of wealth, honour, status and resources" (p. 44). As leaders in their families and communities, Métis women have always made a vital contribution to Métis society.



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision, mission and values communicate our core reason for being and the way we strive to operate in the world as we work towards our goals.

VISION

Métis women are thriving and find nourishment and joy through participation as empowered leaders in the Métis Nation. They take pride in their identity as Métis women and their voices are heard and honoured in our communities and Nation.

MISSION

The Métis Women of BC brings Métis women together to build community and connectedness, pass on cultural knowledge and spiritual healing and wellness. Our role is to support and promote women's voices in Métis governance, provide leadership, training and support, and advocate for the needs of Métis women.

VALUES

- *Guided by culture:*

In all that we do, we are guided by the teachings of our ancestors and our Métis culture

- *We are all related (Wakahtowin):*

We embrace each other and our communities as family and find strength in our kinship

- *Safe and trauma-informed:*

We communicate respectfully, with boundaries, and work to create safe spaces for women's voices

- *Open hearts and minds:*

We are non-judgemental, accepting and inclusive, and welcome diverse people with open arms

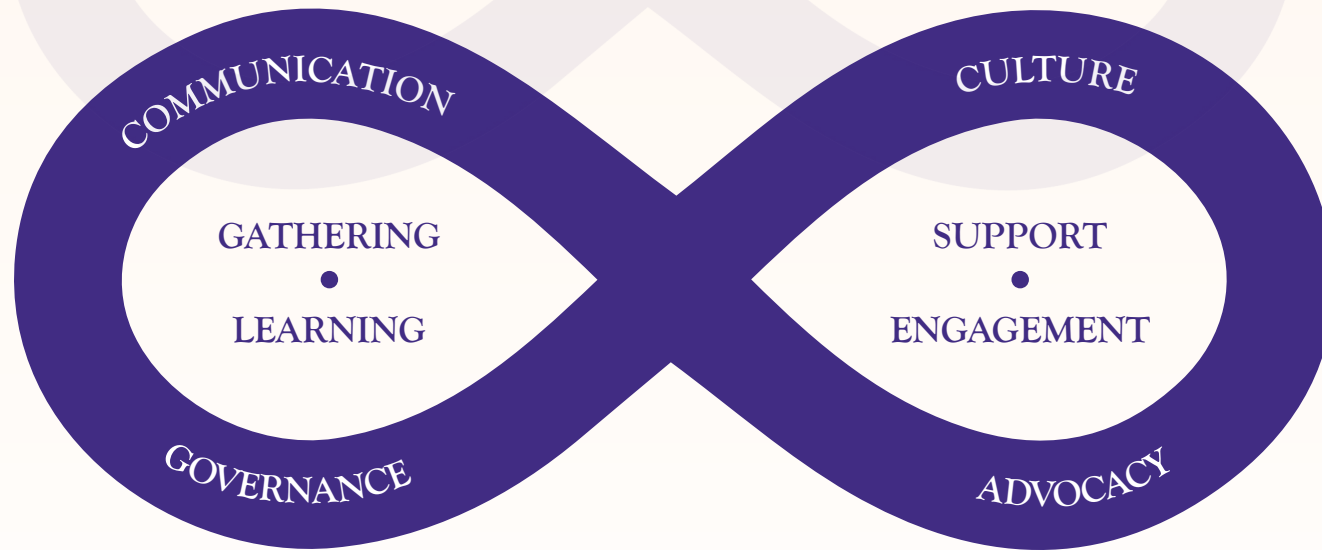
- *Community-led:*

Our decisions and actions are guided by the input of Métis women in communities across BC

The Four Strands

The MWBC Strategic Plan is based on a framework of four strands: Communication, Culture, Governance and Advocacy. These four strands are portrayed through the Métis infinity symbol, which represents the interconnections between them and the continuous cycle of our commitment. Like threads in a sash or a braid of sweetgrass, the four strands are woven together to create a whole. Each of these four strands is an integral component of MWBC's work.

The four strands rest on the foundation of our guiding principles: Gathering, Learning, Support, and Engagement. MWBC provides a vehicle through which Métis women can gather together, learn from each other and in relationship with each other, and support each other. MWBC's key function is to support these guiding principles through activities centered around the four strands.



Summary of Principles, Goals and Actions

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



GATHERING

Métis women meet together and connect with each other while celebrating our culture

- Host gatherings between Métis women, including:
 - o Digital gatherings
 - o Regional women's gathering in each region
 - o Provincial gatherings



LEARNING

Métis women gain new skills and abilities to contribute to their communities

- Support the delivery of training on each of the four strands (communication, governance, culture and advocacy) through:
 - o Development of a provincial training plan
 - o Training delivered by MWBC
 - o Funds to support communities to arrange their own training sessions



SUPPORT

Métis women have tools and resources that support them in their roles as leaders

- Create tools and resources that respond to the needs of Métis women in communities, including:
 - o Welcome package for MWBC representatives
 - o Toolkits each of the four strands: communication, governance, culture and advocacy
 - o Guidebooks, such as how to plan and host community-based gatherings, how to access cultural funds, how to organize a training session, etc.



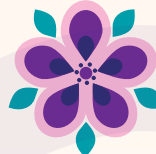



ENGAGEMENT

Métis women participate in dialogue and decision making about issues that matter to them

- Conduct ongoing engagement between the MWBC council and community and provincial women's representatives to identify and respond to priorities
- Create opportunities for Métis women's voices to be represented in the development of programs, services, and policies that impact them

GOALS AND ACTIONS

	 <u>COMMUNICATION</u>	 <u>GOVERNANCE</u>	 <u>CULTURE</u>	 <u>ADVOCACY</u>
Goal	<i>Métis women are connected with their Nation, their communities and each other.</i>	<i>Métis women's voices are enhanced at all levels of governance.</i>	<i>Métis women have the supports and resources in place to practice, learn about and celebrate their culture.</i>	<i>Métis women have the services in place to address their needs and know how to access support.</i>
2020-2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute MWBC Newsletter • Develop MNBC branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create online community of practice about Métis women's governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight Métis women's culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver campaigns that promote positive role models
2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify communication channels • Increase gender diversity awareness • Create and manage MWBC website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase connections between provincial and community level • Develop a "Grandmothers Wisdom Council" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a database of cultural resources • Implement a strategy to support cultural connections for women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a resource list for programs and services • Advocate for support for women, children and families
2024-2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access communications funds for communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBA+ lens applied to governance and programming decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access funding for cultural workshops and spaces in Métis communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create positions for regional Métis women's liaisons/advocates





Guiding Principles for the Four Strands

MWBC exists to support Métis women. In engagement sessions with women across BC, we've heard that women want four things from us:

1. **GATHERING:** Create opportunities for Métis women to meet together and connect with each other while celebrating our culture
2. **LEARNING:** Support Métis women to gain new skills and abilities to contribute to their communities
3. **SUPPORT:** Provide Métis women with tools and resources that support them in their roles as leaders
4. **ENGAGEMENT:** Create opportunities for Métis women to have their voices heard in decisions that impact them

These guiding principles address all four strands of our work and create the foundation for everything that we do. Over the next six years, we will focus on living out these guiding principles through the following activities.

GATHERING:

We will host gatherings between Métis women, including:

- Digital gatherings (ongoing): Host videoconference gatherings on topics relevant to Métis women, such as healthcare, culture, mentorship, education, etc.
- Regional women's gathering in each region (ongoing): Bring together women within each region to share knowledge and best practices, provide training, and connect with provincial governance level
- Provincial gatherings (ongoing): Create more opportunities for women to gather provincially to share and connect across communities and regions

LEARNING:

We will support the delivery of training on each of the four strands (communication, governance, culture and advocacy) through:

- Development of a provincial training plan (2020-21): Create a comprehensive training plan that addresses all four strands
- Training delivered by MWBC (2021-23): Plan and implement training sessions in communities
- Funds to support communities to arrange their own training sessions (2024-26): Provide funds for communities to plan and deliver their own training sessions in line with the provincial plan



Potential Learning Topics for Training Plan

- *Governance*: The Societies Act, Roberts Rules of Order, MNBC Governance Structure, Community governance roles and responsibilities, leadership and empowerment, self-governance, Métis rights, grandmother's teachings.
- *Advocacy*: Grant writing and fundraising; self-advocacy for financial, legal and health issues; social media use; interacting with municipal governments.
- *Cultural workshops*: Cultural teachings from Elders and Knowledge Keepers at women's events.
- *Communications*: How to develop and implement a communications strategy, branding.

SUPPORT:

We will create tools and resources that respond to the needs of Métis women in communities, including:

- Welcome package for MWBC representatives (2020-2021): Create a welcome package that will provide an overview of MWBC and MNBC and explain the roles and responsibilities of an MWBC representative
- Toolkits and guidebooks on each of the four strands (2021-2024): Create toolkits on each of the four strands: communication, governance, culture and advocacy



Potential information to be included in toolkits

- *Communications toolkit:* A variety of documents with MWBC branding and information, including presentations, logos, banner, key messages, quotes, artwork, photos, Michif words, templates for newsletters and postcards. A listing of free communication tools (such as surveys, videoconferencing, etc.). A guide for how communities can develop communications strategies
- *Culture toolkit:* Information on how to host community gatherings of women (for example “living-room get together,” jamming sessions, women’s circles). Listing of grant opportunities (for example a grant deadline calendar) for cultural workshops such as beading groups, plant walks, storytelling, etc. Listing of training opportunities, such as having FPCC to deliver grant-writing workshops at Métis events.
- *Advocacy toolkit:* Presentations with info-graphics, a guide to engagement and advocacy, ideas on how to strengthen community partnerships between Métis communities and with other Indigenous organizations and municipalities, etc.
- *Governance toolkit:* Resources and guides to Indigenous and mainstream governance practices.



ENGAGEMENT:

Part of our mission as MWBC is to empower Métis women's voices and advocate for their needs. To that end we will:

- Conduct ongoing engagement between the MWBC council and community and provincial women's representatives to identify and respond to priorities (ongoing): Through gatherings at the provincial, regional and local level; community visits; social media and digital communication; and face-to-face meetings or get-togethers, we will gather input from Métis women across BC and ensure that the goals and activities of MWBC are guided by input from communities.
- Create opportunities for Métis women's voices to be represented in the development of programs, services, and policies that impact them (ongoing): We will fight for and create opportunities for women to participate in policy tables, community input sessions, and other forms of engagement about policies and programs developed by provincial, federal, municipal or indigenous governments, including MNBC.





*Métis Women:
Strong and Beautiful*

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Goals and Activities for the Four Strands

In this section we outline our goals and activities for the four strands that will be supported by the foundational guiding principles. These four strands include:

- COMMUNICATION
- GOVERNANCE
- CULTURE
- ADVOCACY

The activities outlined in this document are not comprehensive to all of the work that we do. Rather, they lay out strategic priorities that will be carried out in addition to, and in support of, ongoing work.

COMMUNICATION

Goal: Métis women are connected with the Nation and with each other and have the tools and resources they need to communicate with their communities

Short-Term:

- **Distribute MWBC Newsletter:** Create regular MWBC newsletter and circulate in multiple formats

Medium-Term:

- **Diversify communication channels:** Develop a strategy to diversify communication channels so as not to rely primarily on emails. The strategy may include: Mailouts (important for Elders or those without internet access), social media (for example both public and private Facebook groups) and other streams. It is important that MWBC communications be widely publicized, for example through a postcard mailout to all communities, as currently many people don't know about existing communication channels

- **Increase gender diversity awareness:** Develop and deliver training on gender identity, create an MWBC position specifically related to raising awareness of gender identity, develop a policy guideline for appropriate terminology
- **Create and manage MWBC website:** Create an MWBC website that can be used as a clearinghouse of information, including but not limited to updates on MNBC business and happenings, sharing of event and resources, tools for communication, cultural resources, governance resources, programs and services to address the needs of Métis women, etc.

Long-Term:

- **Access communications funds for communities:** Advocate for and secure communications funds that communities can use for cloud storage, databases, office support, design and printing, etc.



GOVERNANCE

Goal: Women's voices are enhanced through governance structures and principles that enable their participation in all aspects of governance.

Short-Term

- Create online community of practice about Métis women's governance: Offer a study group that will involve reading and discussing books on Métis politics and governance and webinars with guest speakers

Medium-Term

- Increase connections between provincial and community level: Develop a strategy to increase connections and transparency between Chartered Communities and MNBC. Some activities could include having MNBC Board members attend community meetings, using community events for feedback to MNBC, reports and/or a newsletter from MNBC to community level, etc.

Long-term

- Develop a provincial "Grandmothers Wisdom Council": The Grandmothers Wisdom Council would be a group of female-identified Knowledge Keepers MWBC can call on to provide support, for example with conflicts, decision-making, and cultural input. The Grandmothers Wisdom Council will honour the cultural and historical roles of matriarchs in our communities and kinship systems.
- GBA+ lens applied to all governance and programming decisions: Develop a GBA+ (Gender-Based Analysis Plus) framework for MNBC governance and operations and promote the importance of this framework being applied all governance, policy and programming decisions.

CULTURE

Goal: Métis women have the supports and resources in place to practice, learn about and celebrate their culture.

Short-Term:

- Highlight Métis women's culture: Develop and/or participate in campaigns to highlight the cultural talents of Métis women (such as a Métis women's art calendar or speaker series with Métis women).

Medium-Term

- Create a database of cultural resources: Create a database of resources that could include books, websites, guidelines (for example on how to do ceremonies such as sashing), etc. It would also include profiles and contact info for Knowledge Keepers, Elders, teachers and artisans, etc.
- Implement a strategy to support cultural connections for women: Create and implement a strategy to promote cultural connections, which could include hosting cultural gatherings to celebrate and learn about culture, bringing genealogists to communities

and creating Métis-specific archives, developing a Métis women's welcome wagon program, etc.

Long-Term

- Access funding for cultural workshops and spaces: Advocate for and secure long-term funding for cultural activities and spaces in Métis communities. Build relationships with new funders to support this work.



ADVOCACY

Goal: Métis women have the services in place to address their needs and know how to access support.

Short term

- Deliver campaigns that promote positive role models: Deliver and partner with campaigns to promote positive Métis women role models, such as a poster, social media campaign or awards (ex: Sophie Morigeau awards) to promote strong Métis women.
- Create a central resource list for programs and services: Create an accessible online list of resources for programs and services available to Métis women in B.C.

Medium-Term

- Advocate for support for children and families, women's health and education: At the provincial level, advocate for programs and supports such as life skills training for youth, support for youth aging out of care, access to healthcare for those without

work, affordable transportation, childcare, and funding for post-secondary education. This may involve the development of a provincial action plan based on input from Métis women across B.C.

Long-Term

- Create positions for regional Métis women's liaisons/ advocates: Develop and fill positions for new regional liaisons who would connect with Métis women in chartered communities and help them access resources and support, navigate systems (such as education and healthcare systems) and stay grounded in culture.







Promise for the future

Métis women have sustained their communities through triumph and hardship throughout time. In the early days of the development of Métis Nationhood, Métis women shaped Métis culture and family life through their roles as providers, knowledge keepers, artisans and nurturers. Throughout the rise of the Métis Nation, Métis women contributed to the strength of the Nation, which is built on strong family relationships, loyalty, and pride in our identity. Through the dark days as the forgotten people, Métis women kindled our culture and identity in wait of a brighter future.

At this moment in history, Métis women are in the process of regaining and reclaiming our strength and cultural pride. We contribute to our communities in service of our families, our culture, our ancestors and our future generations. This is a labor of love, borne from our desire to see our people empowered, happy and fulfilled.

MWBC has a role to play in supporting us to work together so that all members of our community have the support and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. The goals and actions in this plan have been thoughtfully and lovingly selected to build up our women and enrich our Nation. Through this work, we will build a strong and beautiful future together.

APPENDIX

ACTIVITY		YEAR					
		20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
GUIDING PRINCIPLES							
GATHERING	Host digital gatherings						
	Host regional gatherings						
	Host provincial gatherings						
LEARNING	Develop a provincial training plan						
	Implement provincial training plan						
	Provide community training funds						
SUPPORT	Create welcome package for MWBC representatives						
	Develop toolkits and guidebooks on each of the four strands						
ENGAGEMENT	Conduct engagement between MWBC council and communities						
	Create opportunities for Métis women's voices to be represented						
FOUR STRANDS							
COMMUNICATION	Distribute MWBC Newsletter						
	Diversify communication channels						
	Increase gender diversity awareness						
	Create and manage MWBC website						
	Access communications funds for communities						
GOVERNANCE	Create online community of practice for Métis women's governance						
	Increase connections between provincial and community level						
	Develop a "Grandmothers Wisdom Council"						
	Apply GBA+ lens to governance and programming decisions						
CULTURE	Highlight Métis women's culture						
	Create a database of cultural resources						
	Develop strategy to support cultural connections for women						
	Access funding for cultural workshops and spaces in communities						
ADVOCACY	Deliver campaigns that promote positive role models						
	Create a central resource list for programs and services						
	Advocate for support for women, children and families						
	Create positions for regional Métis women's liaisons/advocates						





THE COLOURS OF THE SASH

The sash is one of the most recognizable symbols of the Métis people. Today the beautiful woven sash is mostly used ceremonially, as decoration and to show pride in Métis heritage. The Order of the Sash is a symbol of our highest honour and respect, and is awarded to individuals who do important work to support Métis citizens. Along with being hand-woven pieces of art, historically sashes had practical uses serving as ropes, washcloths, towels, saddle blankets, and the threads were sometimes used as an emergency sewing kit. The colours of the sash all have meanings to the Metis people-some are historical or traditional, and some are modern. In recent years, the Metis women across Canada have developed ceremonial provincial sashes based on colors and meanings that resonate for their women. The MWBC developed our own sash using the modern colors that represent our strong and beautiful Metis women.

Historical Metis Sash Colours and what they stand for:

- Red - the blood shed over many years of Métis people fighting for their rights
- Blue - the depth of spirit among Métis people
- Green - the fertility of our great nation
- White - our connection to the earth and creator
- Yellow - prosperity
- Black - the dark period of suppression and dispossession of Métis land

Modern Metis Sash Colours of the MWBC Provincial Sash and what they stand for:

- Magenta - Respecting and honoring our ancestors and life givers, provides strength and comfort
- Pink - Promising to protect, love and nurture the women and girls in our lives
- Purple - Honoring our Grandmothers and matriarchs, we show our respect for their wisdom, hardships, love, and way of life
- Three shades of blue - The depth of spirit among Métis women
- White - Peace and Hope