

The logo is contained within a white circle with a grey border. It features the word "MIRR" in large, bold, black capital letters. Below "MIRR", the number "10" is enclosed in a teal circle, followed by the word "YEARS" in smaller, red capital letters. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic of several curved lines in orange, yellow, and teal, radiating outwards.

MIRR

10 YEARS

# IN THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION

.....

The Ministry of Indigenous Relations  
and Reconciliation's First 10 Years

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Premier	4	Wealth Creation	25
Message from the Minister	5	<i>Sharing Gaming Revenue</i>	25
Message from the Deputy Minister	6	<i>Aboriginal Procurement Program</i>	25
A New Beginning: The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs	7	<i>New Relationship Fund</i>	26
Indigenous People in Ontario	8	<i>Indigenous Community Capital Grants Program</i>	27
<i>Demographics</i>	8	<i>Indigenous Economic Development Fund</i>	28
<i>Socio-economic Indicators:</i>	10	<i>Métis Voyageur Development Fund</i>	28
Building Stronger Relationships: Agreements and Action	12	<i>Keeping the HST Point-of-Sale Rebate</i>	29
<i>Agreements Towards Relationship Building</i>	12	<i>Resource Benefits Sharing</i>	29
<i>Supporting Indigenous Postsecondary Education</i>	15	<i>Investing in Clean Energy</i>	29
<i>Advancing Skills Training</i>	15	<i>First Nations and Hydro One</i>	30
<i>Strengthening the Treaty Relationship</i>	15	<i>Ring of Fire</i>	30
<i>Advancing Reconciliation with the Métis Nation of Ontario</i>	16	<i>Community-based Regulation</i>	31
Supporting Strong Indigenous Women	18	Land Claims & Reconciliation	32
<i>Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women</i>	18	<i>Facts</i>	33
<i>National Indigenous Women's Summit</i>	20	<i>Algonquin Agreement-in-Principle Sets Path for</i>	
<i>Improving Access to Indigenous Midwifery Care</i>	20	<i>Ontario's First Modern Treaty</i>	33
Stronger, Healthier Communities	21	Justice Matters	34
<i>Improving Drinking Water</i>	21	<i>Creating a Culturally Relevant and Responsive</i>	
<i>Social Emergencies</i>	21	<i>Justice System</i>	34
<i>Ontario's First Nations Health Action Plan</i>	22	<i>Iacobucci Report</i>	35
<i>Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy</i>	22	Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with	
<i>Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy</i>	22	Indigenous Peoples	37
<i>Indigenous Youth and Community Wellness Secretariat</i>	23	<i>Understanding the Legacy of Residential Schools</i>	38
<i>Promoting Life-Skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY)</i>	23	<i>Closing Gaps and Removing Barriers</i>	38
		<i>Supporting Indigenous Culture</i>	38
		<i>Reconciling Relationships with Indigenous Peoples</i>	39
		Continuing the Journey	40
		A Decade of Reflection	41

# MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

---

I am honoured to recognize the important work accomplished since the creation of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, now the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and the great strides the ministry has made in its first decade of existence towards building a better today and a brighter tomorrow for First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples across the province. I join in celebrating this milestone not only as Premier, but also as a former minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

It is sometimes said that it takes much time to realize positive societal change but, in reflecting on the history and accomplishments of the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, I recognize that a great deal of good can be brought about in the space of only 10 years. For the ministry, it has been a decade marked by an unprecedented level of engagement with Indigenous peoples and by numerous great moments, among them the signing of a historic new Political Accord to guide the relationship between First Nations and the province, and the release of *The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*, a framework for bringing meaningful change to the lives of Indigenous peoples and communities.

The work of the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation—and its collaborative efforts with government ministries and with Indigenous peoples and their leaders—has allowed the province to enter a new era of Ontario-Indigenous relations. I believe it is imperative that we sustain the momentum that the ministry has generated over the past decade, and that we continue to achieve real and positive change with Indigenous communities.

I offer Minister Zimmer, ministry staff and First Nation, Inuit and Métis partners my warmest congratulations on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

**Kathleen Wynne**  
Premier



# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

---

As we mark the first decade of a standalone ministry devoted to Indigenous issues, it is important to look back, take stock and rededicate ourselves.

In 2007, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs was established in response to recommendations from the Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry following the tragic dispute at Ipperwash Provincial Park. The report called for the creation of a standalone ministry dedicated to Aboriginal affairs that acknowledged the need for respectful relationships between the government of Ontario and Indigenous peoples.

At the time, there was little recognition of the true history of Canada or acknowledgement of the systemic barriers and racism Indigenous peoples face. Until very recently, Ontario schools did not adequately teach students the impacts of colonization, including efforts to assimilate and eradicate Indigenous peoples—the federal Indian Act and Indian Residential Schools being significant elements of this approach—or the legacy these actions continue to have today.

This has started to change over the past decade. Several initiatives have heightened all Canadians' consciousness of Indigenous issues, with the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, perhaps, having the largest impact. Its 94 Calls to Action provide a roadmap for governments, institutions, and individuals to make meaningful changes.

In 2016, the ministry's name was changed to demonstrate the importance of reconciliation. Reconciliation is a journey and is based on building respectful relationships and taking collaborative action. The work that we have done together, so far, can only be seen as a start as we continue to work with Indigenous partners and all Ontarians on these efforts.

During my five years as Minister, I am proud to share that I have visited nearly every First Nation community in the province. I have paddled with Métis leaders and young people along lakes and rivers. I have met with Inuit organizations and community members. I have learned about the distinctive experiences of Indigenous peoples in urban areas. My ministry and I take our responsibilities very seriously, and embrace this work in a manner that values the unique histories, experiences, contributions and challenges of all Indigenous peoples.

To all who have played a part in the ministry's history, to all who have enriched us with your wisdom and experience, you have my gratitude, and the commitment of this ministry to capitalize on the momentum we have built together to achieve even more in the next decade to come.



**David Zimmer**

Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

# MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER

As Deputy Minister, my vision is to work with Indigenous governments and other partners to improve the lives of Indigenous peoples in Ontario, from now towards the seventh generation. We do this by recognizing the impacts of colonialism and changing the course of history, remaining in step with Indigenous communities and peoples.

This report highlights the work of the ministry in its first decade developing and maintaining important relationships with Indigenous partners, and the role we have played in leading reconciliation on behalf of the government of Ontario.

But there is much more work to be done. To get to a place that Indigenous peoples recognize as reconciliation requires a sustained, collaborative effort. As public servants and engaged citizens, we must continue to ask ourselves: are relationships and partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples improving? Are Indigenous governments supported to ensure they can create the foundation for their people to enjoy the same benefits as non-Indigenous Canadians? Are we adequately addressing barriers that Indigenous peoples continue to run up against?

This last question is particularly motivating to me in the context of Indigenous peoples accessing and fully benefiting from provincial government services and supports, as well as being given the space to design and create their own.

The challenges before us are longstanding, complex, and structural, and stem from the collective impact of generations of harmful policies. To provide the responses to these immediate and longer-term challenges, comprehensive, cross-government actions are required. With the needs of Indigenous peoples and communities in the far north being distinct from those in more southern or urban settings, unique geographic circumstances also need to be considered.

We are just at the beginning of the work that must get done. The brave actions of Indigenous peoples, communities, organizations, and individuals and governments, have set us on the right path forward.

Moving towards reconciliation will be the collective sum of our individual actions and, big or small, we all have roles and responsibilities to undertake. I challenge my colleagues at the ministry and throughout government to reflect on the work of the past decade and consider what more we can achieve.

In friendship,

**Deborah Richardson**

Deputy Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation



# A NEW BEGINNING: THE MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs was created on June 21, 2007 as part of a response to Justice Sidney B. Linden's recommendations following the Ipperwash inquiry.

Before the ministry was created, Ontario had a Native Affairs Secretariat. The secretariat's primary role was to negotiate and settle Ontario's outstanding legal obligations arising from land claims, as well as to provide corporate policy guidance and coordination.

With its establishment as a stand-alone entity, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs gained significant new policy and relationship capacity, all with an understanding of the lasting legacy of Canada's colonial history and how Indigenous peoples continue to be impacted by historical policies. It also began work within government to increase cultural competency and to promote new and more collaborative relationships with Indigenous partners. This new, dedicated ministry worked to develop an across-government approach to guide Ontario's relationship with Indigenous communities.

Through its first 10 years, the ministry's role has evolved and expanded, reflective of a strong commitment to Indigenous issues and the need for reconciliation. The ministry has led and provided significant support to government initiatives where they intersect with Indigenous peoples and priorities.

In 2016, the ministry changed its name to the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. This new name is reflective of its commitment to working with Indigenous governments, organizations and communities that represent the interests of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people living in Ontario.

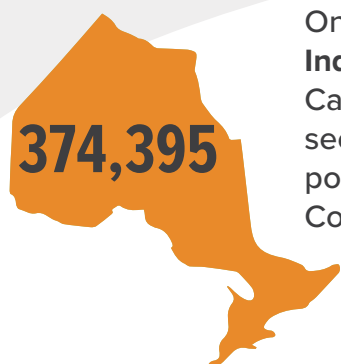
**The ministry's mandate is to strengthen relationships, improve social conditions and build economic opportunity for Indigenous communities across Ontario. The ministry does this by working across government, with Indigenous partners and with the federal government.**





# INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN ONTARIO

## DEMOGRAPHICS



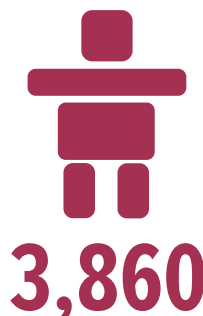
Ontario has the **largest Indigenous population** in Canada (**374,395**)\*. The second largest Indigenous population is in British Columbia (270,580).



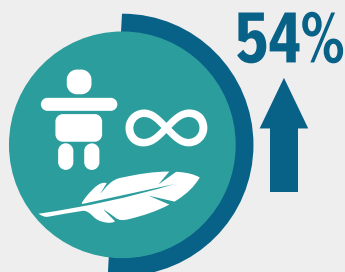
Ontario has the largest First Nations population in Canada (**236,685** or **24** per cent of the total First Nations population in Canada).



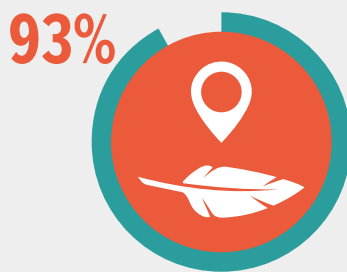
There are **120,585** self-identifying Métis people in Ontario, which is a **40** per cent increase from 2011 and an increase of **64** per cent since 2006.



With a population of **3,860**, the Inuit represent **1** per cent of the total Indigenous population in Ontario.



The Indigenous population in Ontario **increased by 54** per cent from 2006 to 2016. There are two explanations for the large growth in the Indigenous population: natural growth and an increase in people voluntarily self-identifying as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis.



Of the **58,100** people living **on reserve** in Ontario, **93** per cent identify as **First Nations**. Approximately 7 per cent identify as **Métis, Inuit, other Indigenous or non-Indigenous**.



**23** per cent of First Nations people in Ontario live on reserve.

\* The Indigenous population figures do not include the residents of eight Ontario First Nations reserves that were incompletely enumerated in or omitted from the 2016 Census.

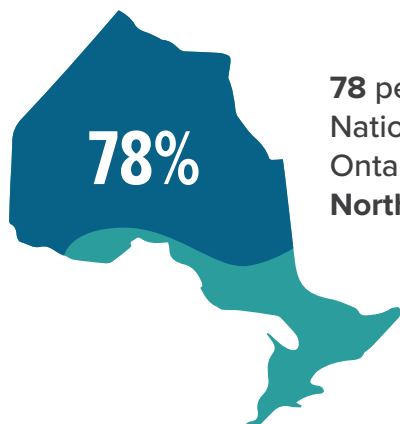
\*\*The original Census statistics uses "Aboriginal" rather than "Indigenous" to refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people.

\*\*\* All statistics are based on self-identification as Indigenous.



**133**

**133** First Nation communities are located in Ontario, the **second-highest** number in Canada after British Columbia (source: Chiefs of Ontario).



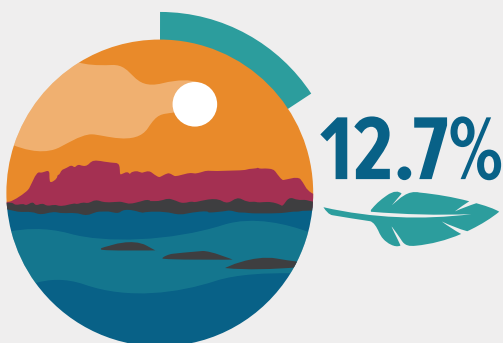
**78** per cent of First Nation communities in Ontario are located in **Northern Ontario**.



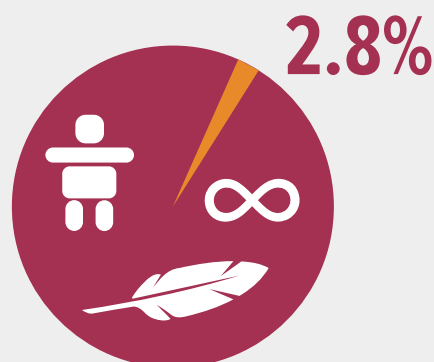
**1 in 4** First Nation communities in Ontario is a **remote community**, accessible only by air year-round or by ice road in the winter. Ontario has the **highest number** of remote First Nation communities in Canada.



The average age of the Indigenous population is **33.6** years compared to **40.7** years for the non-Indigenous population in Ontario.



**Thunder Bay** is the Census Metropolitan Area with the highest proportion of Indigenous people in Canada (**12.7** per cent of the population).



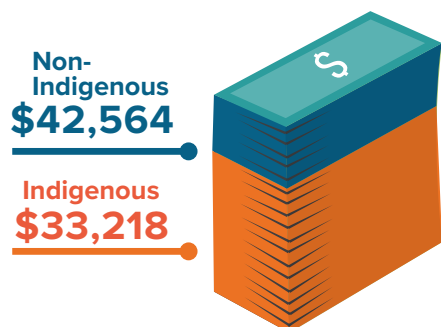
Indigenous people represent **2.8** per cent of the total population of Ontario.

\*\*\*\* While the Census of Population is the most comprehensive data source available, some Indigenous organizations question the cultural appropriateness of the methodology used by Statistics Canada for the Census, resulting in possible over- and under-counting of certain Indigenous populations. Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



# SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS:

## INCOME:



The median annual income for Indigenous people in Ontario (aged 25-64) is **\$33,218** (\$30,819 after-tax) compared to **\$42,564** for the non-Indigenous population (\$37,779 after-tax).

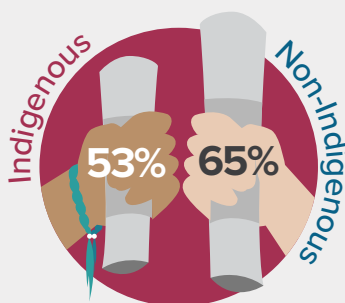
The prevalence of low incomes for the Indigenous population in Ontario (aged 25-64) is **21** per cent, which is higher than the rate for the non-Indigenous population at 13 per cent.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

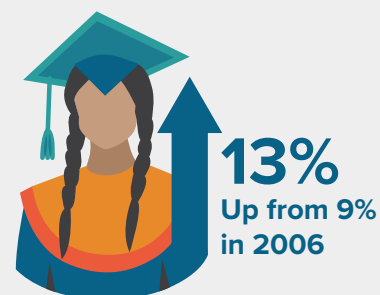
## EDUCATION



The high school completion rate of Indigenous people (aged 20-24) is **76** per cent, below the rate of the non-Indigenous population at **93** per cent. For First Nations living on reserve, the rate is 45 per cent.



**53** per cent of the Indigenous population vs. **65** per cent of the non-Indigenous population in Ontario (aged 25-64) has attained some form of post-secondary education (apprenticeship, trades certificate, diploma, college or university).



**13** per cent of Indigenous people in Ontario hold a university degree (aged 25-64), up from 9 per cent in 2006.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

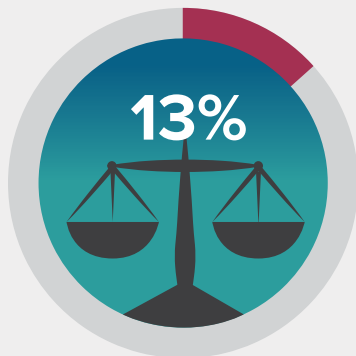
## LIFE EXPECTANCY:



Life expectancy for Indigenous people remained about **10 years lower** than for the non-Indigenous population (71 years compared to 81 years).

Source: Statistics Canada, Vital Statistics custom tabulation

## JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT:



The 2017 Independent Review of Ontario Corrections found that “Indigenous peoples account for approximately 2 per cent of Ontario's population and yet in 2016 represented **13** per cent of those in provincial custody. One in three Indigenous people admitted to Ontario's correctional institutions last year, and over half of the Indigenous people admitted to segregation, were flagged with a suicide risk alert. Both of these rates are higher than in the non-Indigenous population.”

Source: Statistics Canada, Adult correctional services



Rates of Indigenous incarceration appear to be especially high in northern Ontario. Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, speaking with CBC News in February 2017, claimed that **90** per cent of inmates in the provincial correctional centre in Kenora were Indigenous.

# BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS: AGREEMENTS AND ACTION

Ontario is committed to working towards government-to-government relationships with First Nation and Métis communities, and understands the importance of engaging in dialogue. This approach is not symbolic: it is necessary for strengthening respectful relations and fundamental to ensuring that services and supports best meet the needs of Indigenous peoples and communities. More and more, supports, services, and programs are co-designed and co-implemented with Indigenous partners. In some cases, these co-developed initiatives are formed with a transfer of authority to Indigenous partners as the goal.

There is much work to do in order to repair broken relationships caused by generations of mistrust, disappointment, attempts at assimilation and the systemic racism that exists. By setting the terms of relationships in formal agreements and by moving forward together with real action, we have begun this work.

## AGREEMENTS TOWARDS RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

In recent years, Ontario has signed a number of formal relationship agreements with First Nation and Métis organizations across the province to solidify our commitment to working in a better way with Indigenous peoples.

In August 2015, the Chiefs-in-Assembly and the government of Ontario signed an historic First Nations Political Accord, establishing a formal bilateral relationship, anchored by the treaty relationship and the recognition of First Nations' inherent right to self-government.

The Political Accord affirmed a commitment by Ontario and First Nations' leadership to continue to work together in areas of common interest and mutual priorities.

An example of this in action is Leaders in the Legislature, an annual event where key issues are addressed through a series of roundtable discussions. The open dialogue and collaborative approach continues to foster and strengthen the government-to-government relationship.

*"While we recognize that progress is being made on resource revenue sharing and other important issues, due in part to the 2015 Political Accord, we also must acknowledge that we cannot let our guard down or become complacent in addressing the outstanding concerns, but must work together and strengthen our resolve to continue down our shared path. We look forward to the next decade and even greater progress with MIRR in order to finally secure our rightful place in Ontario."*

-Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day





**The Political Confederacy comprises the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, Independent First Nations, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Union of Ontario Indians, Grand Council Treaty #3, Mushkegowuk Council, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mohawks of Akwesasne and the Chiefs of Ontario**

In September 2017, the **Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians (AIAI)** signed a terms of reference with Ontario. This agreement affirms the government-to-government relationship and highlights both parties' mutual commitment to work together to give AIAI communities more control over child welfare decisions and to improve health care and housing.

In August 2017, 23 participating First Nations of the Anishinabek Nation, the Kinooamaadziwin Education Body and Ontario signed the historic **Master Education Agreement** at the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. The agreement supports Anishinabek student success and well-being in the Anishinabek Education System and the provincially funded education system.

In order to sign the Master Education Agreement, a First Nation must first ratify at the community level and sign the Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement with Canada, under which Canada

recognizes participating Anishinabek First Nations' jurisdiction over primary, elementary and secondary education. This agreement between Canada and the 23 participating First Nations was also signed in August 2017.

The Master Education Agreement is essential for the implementation of the Anishinabek Education System: the first education sectorial self-government in Ontario and the largest in Canada. The Anishinabek Education System is designed by Anishinabek First Nations for Anishinabek students and supports the advancement of Anishinaabe language, culture history and perspectives.

In response to the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Declaration of Health and Public Health Emergency in 2016, Ontario, Canada and Nishnawbe Aski Nation formed the Joint Action Table and signed the **Charter of Relationship Principles Governing Health System Transformation**.

The charter sets out common objectives and the intention of the partners to work collaboratively to design innovative solutions to transform the delivery of healthcare, and support First Nations-driven health systems throughout Nishnawbe Aski Nation member communities.



In March 2016, Nipissing First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** to sustainably manage the Lake Nipissing walleye fishery.

The MOU supports the recovery of the walleye population and the implementation of Nipissing's Fisheries Law. In 2018, the Institute of Public Administration Canada recognized the collaborative efforts between Ontario and Nipissing First Nation with a Gold Award.

In May 2014, Ontario announced a commitment to improve socio-economic outcomes for Indigenous peoples living in urban communities.

In response, **The Urban Indigenous Action Plan** was co-developed in partnership with the Métis Nation of Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and the Ontario Native Women's Association, with input from urban Indigenous communities across Ontario.

This significant co-development effort focuses on providing guidance across government, and advice for broader sectors which service Indigenous peoples, on how to engage and develop policies and programs which meet the needs of local urban Indigenous communities. The plan is targeted for release in 2018.

In April 2014, Ontario and the Métis Nation of Ontario renewed a five-year **Framework Agreement** to facilitate the recognition and advancement of Métis people in Ontario, and to provide a forum for discussion on matters of mutual concern.

First signed in 2008, the renewed agreement reinforces a commitment to work together to improve the well-being of Métis children, families and communities.





## SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

As a result of a co-creation process between the province and Indigenous Institutes sector, Ontario passed the Indigenous Institutes Act. The historic legislation recognizes Indigenous Institutes as a pillar of the postsecondary education system. This legislation transfers functions of managing a postsecondary education system, including approving and granting postsecondary credentials, to the Indigenous Institutes sector.

Indigenous Institutes play an important role in the postsecondary education system in Ontario by providing accessible education and training to Indigenous learners in culturally safe learning environments.

## ADVANCING SKILLS TRAINING

The Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program delivered by Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services helps improve access for graduates to employment opportunities related to the development of chromite and mineral deposits in the Ring of Fire area. The program helps students get their high school diploma and the academic credits they need to pursue college, university or skilled trades training.

## STRENGTHENING THE TREATY RELATIONSHIP

Ontario and Indigenous partners across the province have worked diligently together towards building a better, more responsive action in our shared relationship efforts. The ministry works directly with partners at the Political Territorial Organization level through existing tables and broader-level engagement with Indigenous communities and Indigenous organizations to build and support revitalizing the treaty relationship. The ministry held a series of forums with a focus on the treaty relationship that included more than 300 participants. These discussions were an opportunity for Ontario to listen to diverse Indigenous voices speaking to their knowledge and understanding of treaties. These efforts move us forward on the path to respecting treaty relationships so that we can ensure the treaties benefit everyone while remaining responsive to modern-day realities.



The ministry's Treaty Strategy facilitates treaty awareness, constructive engagement and revitalization of treaty relationships. It also promotes better opportunities and improved outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

As part of the effort, Ontario worked with partners to develop an education and awareness campaign. It includes:

- The Anishinabek Nation's high school treaty kit designed as a teaching resource for Grades 9 to 12.
- A First Nations and Treaties map of Ontario. More than 11,000 copies of the map have been delivered to schools and the general public.
- Treaties Recognition Week, a week-long event to be held every November. This initiative passed in the Ontario legislature in May 2016 and responds to the TRC's Calls to Action for governments to raise awareness of treaties, assimilative laws and policies aimed at the cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous histories.

There is a long history of treaty making between First Nations and the British Crown in Ontario, from 1701 to the present day (Algonquin land claim). Ontario is unique in Canada for the number and variety of treaties between First Nations and the Crown, with 46 treaties and land purchases covering the province.



**In November 2017, there were 310 Living Library events in schools across the province. The Living Library program works with educators to bring treaty presentations into classrooms and libraries.**

**Ontario will be expanding Living Library events to more schools and communities throughout the province.**

*"It's important for people to know that treaties involve more than one partner; that's the core principle whether we're talking about older treaties or modern ones, whether they are in the south or in the far north."*

-Peter Ittinuar, the first Inuk Member of Parliament and Living Library presenter

More information on treaties is available by visiting [ontario.ca/treaties](http://ontario.ca/treaties).

## ADVANCING RECONCILIATION WITH THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

Through ongoing work like the joint identification of historic Métis communities with the Métis Nation of Ontario, the province pursues its commitment to advancing reconciliation with the Métis. Guided by the bilateral Framework Agreement from 2014 and consistent with Ontario's constitutional obligations to the Métis, Ontario and the Métis Nation of Ontario have worked together to identify historic Métis communities in Ontario.





Since 2010, Ontario and the Métis Nation of Ontario jointly reviewed various reports prepared by independent, professional historians and ethno-historians, identifying information that demonstrates the existence of historic Métis communities that meet the criteria provided by the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Powley*. As a result of this work, in August 2017, the Métis Nation of Ontario and the province were able to announce six jointly identified historic Métis communities that meet the Powley criteria in addition to the historic Sault Ste. Marie community recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada.

In 2015, the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act passed with the support of all provincial parties in the legislature. The act recognizes the Métis Nation of Ontario's governance and democratic structure, and allows it to operate more effectively under corporate law. The secretariat is the corporate and administrative arm of the Métis Nation of Ontario and is incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation.

Ontario was pleased to be invited by Canada and the Métis Nation of Ontario to participate in a federally led process to develop a new tripartite Framework Agreement on Advancing Reconciliation. Signed on December 11, 2017, this agreement establishes a forum for future discussions on developing a government-to-government relationship between the Crown and the Métis Nation of Ontario. Under the tripartite agreement, the parties will work together to address a range of issues to improve outcomes for Métis people, including in the areas of health, housing, education needs, and children and youth. The agreement also sets out a process for negotiations about the Métis Nation of Ontario's decision-making authority regarding its governance structure, and a tripartite consultation protocol to clarify the roles, responsibilities and processes of all three parties.

*"By working with Métis Nation of Ontario as a government and provider of programs and services to Métis across the province, MIRR has accomplished a great deal in the last 10 years."*

-Margaret Froh, President, Métis Nation of Ontario

## MÉTIS VOYAGEUR CANOE EXPEDITION

In May 2017, 12 Métis youth from across Ontario embarked on a 100-day, 2,200-kilometre canoe expedition to retrace historic fur trade routes. The group stopped in communities along the way, where they were welcomed by well-wishers and provided an opportunity to connect and teach.

The Métis Voyageur Canoe Expedition traversed waters from Ottawa to Kenora, with each paddle stroke connecting the youth to their culture, history and identity as Métis people.



# SUPPORTING STRONG INDIGENOUS WOMEN

---

Indigenous women are a tremendous source of strength and resilience, and have helped shape and influence their communities as nurturers, caregivers, providers, teachers and leaders. However, the ongoing impact of colonialism, systemic discrimination and racism perpetuate behaviours that lead to violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Across Canada, Indigenous women are three times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women<sup>1</sup>. These alarming statistics and the need to address the root causes of violence were the key drivers in leading Ontario's response to the national crisis.

## ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN

---

In February 2016, in collaboration with Indigenous partners, Ontario released *Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women*. The strategy, co-designed and developed with Indigenous partners, focuses on:

- Raising awareness and preventing violence
- Providing programs and community services that reflect the priorities of Indigenous leaders and communities
- Ensuring young people and families get the support they need to promote healing within Indigenous communities

The strategy was the result of collaborative work with five Indigenous organizations and several ministries: Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Ontario Native Women's Association, the Métis Nation of Ontario, Independent First Nations, the Chiefs of Ontario, and 10 Ontario government ministries. The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation co-led the province's involvement in this work, along with the Ontario Women's Directorate (now the Ministry of the Status of Women).

<sup>1</sup>Shannon Brennan (2011). *Violent Victimization of Aboriginal Women in the Canadian Provinces*, 2009. Statistics Canada – Catalogue no. 85-002-X.



Since 2016-17, Ontario has been investing \$100 million over three years to implement the strategy and focus on six key action areas:

- Supporting children, youth and families
- Community safety and healing
- Leadership, collaboration, alignment and accountability
- Improved data and research
- Policing and justice
- Prevention and awareness

Together with Indigenous partners, Ontario ministries have worked alongside the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation to make significant progress in implementing the following initiatives:

- The Family Well-Being program supports Indigenous families and helps communities begin to heal from the impacts of intergenerational violence and trauma. The program provides workers with supports to address frontline needs and to deliver community-based programming based on their local contexts. The program also offers communities the opportunity to design safe spaces where holistic, culturally safe and prevention-based services can be sought and received without stigma by Indigenous women, children and youth at risk of family violence.
- The Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres' Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin: I Am A Kind Man program expanded from five locations to 24 Friendship Centres and two additional sites to support Indigenous men through healing and violence prevention programming.
- The ministry is working with Indigenous partners and relevant ministries to develop and deliver mandatory Indigenous Cultural Competency Training to all Ontario public servants by 2021. To date, more than 750 senior executives and political staff have received training.



*“Programs like Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin work to end violence against Indigenous women and girls by helping Indigenous men address trauma in their lives and create opportunities for healing. It is an example of the great work that Friendship Centres do every day to help improve the lives of urban Indigenous people.”*

-Sylvia Maracle, Executive Director, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres



## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S SUMMIT

Ontario successfully hosted the fifth National Indigenous Women's Summit in March, 2017 with the theme of "Empowering Indigenous Women: Now and Into the Future."

The province welcomed approximately 300 First Nation, Inuit, and Métis delegates, including youth, as well as federal, provincial and territorial representatives to the event. The summit was an initiative under the Long-Term Strategy, and a key commitment of the 2nd National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO INDIGENOUS MIDWIFERY CARE

Ontario is improving access to culturally appropriate child and pregnancy care by supporting a new Indigenous midwifery program, starting with six Indigenous midwifery locations across the province.

Indigenous midwives provide a full range of culturally safe midwifery primary care, support services, language and community education.

## OTTAWA INUIT CHILDREN'S CENTRE FAMILY WELL- BEING PROGRAM

The Family Well-Being program is about communities identifying solutions that are meaningful to them. It's what makes the program a success, according to Janice Messam, the manager of the Family Well-Being program at the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, which is one of 250 service delivery sites across the province where First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous partners are co-implementing the program.

*"It's a new way of government approaching working with Indigenous communities. It's driven by the community," said Messam. "It's tailored to what we need and not a top-down imposed [approach]."*

The centre is a community hub providing services to Inuit families in the Ottawa area since 2005. Since implementing the Family Well-Being program, it has worked with over 100 families and tailors the delivery of the program to the individual needs of each family that it serves.

While there have been positive results, Messam said that there's no quick fix for addressing some issues and that supports for community members will require a long-term commitment.

*"I look at it as a long-term commitment of providing support, developing trust and having positive moments with people," said Messam.*



# STRONGER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

Ontario has set out to develop and implement programs and actions that are developed and evaluated in close partnership with Indigenous communities. Ontario is also working to incorporate Indigenous Elder and youth perspectives into decision-making across government, with the understanding that reconciliation cannot be compartmentalized. Only through unlearning the patterns of previous generations and replacing them with new, healthy relationships can we work towards stronger, healthier communities.

## IMPROVING DRINKING WATER

Too many First Nations people living on-reserve don't have access to safe, clean drinking water that others living in Ontario take for granted. In mandate letters to the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, the Premier directed the ministers to work with the federal government and First Nation communities towards a five-year plan to provide First Nation communities with access to safe drinking water.

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has been providing engineering and technical support to communities, including conducting onsite assessments of existing drinking water systems to support communities in achieving long-term

sustainability. The ministry has also provided funding to support operator training, as well as source protection planning in communities. In 2017, Ontario and Canada announced funding that has been committed to 239 projects in 117 First Nation communities across the province.

## SOCIAL EMERGENCIES

Ontario is working with First Nations and the federal government to ensure remote communities receive support to manage social emergencies.

In March 2017, the Mushkegowuk Tribal Council hosted the Social Emergencies Summit in Thunder Bay, where delegates from Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Grand Council Treaty #3, Mushkegowuk, remote independent First Nations, provincial ministries, federal departments and social service providers came together.

Ontario continues to work with First Nations partners and the federal government to finalize a tripartite social emergencies protocol that would clarify roles and responsibilities of each jurisdiction.



# ONTARIO'S FIRST NATIONS HEALTH ACTION PLAN

The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation is working alongside the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, which is leading government work on Ontario's First Nation Health Action Plan. The action plan is working to ensure First Nations people have access to more culturally appropriate care and improved outcomes, focusing on the North, where there are significant gaps in health services.

## Ontario's First Nations Action Plan includes:

- The creation of 16 new or expanded Indigenous-governed and community-driven inter-professional primary care teams across Ontario, which will provide culturally safe primary health care services and programs to more than 70,000 Indigenous people, including individuals and families living in remote and fly-in communities.
- Direct funding to each of the 133 First Nations communities in Ontario to strengthen access to culturally appropriate home and community care services, including at-home nursing visits, help with bathing and preparing meals, or transportation for people with mobility challenges. First Nations can use this funding at their discretion, based on the needs they identify.
- Funding 34 Indigenous-led mental health and wellness programs that include traditional healing, and funding more than 100 new mental health workers. Programs will serve more than 69 First Nations communities, as well as urban Indigenous communities in cities such as Toronto, Kenora, Thunder Bay, Barrie, Midland, Sudbury, Ottawa and London.

# ABORIGINAL HEALING AND WELLNESS STRATEGY

One of the longest-running strategies to support culturally appropriate healing and wellness programs is the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy, which launched in 1994 and is led by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The strategy provides Indigenous-designed and -delivered residential and non-residential services and supports to individuals, families and communities.

# ONTARIO INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND YOUTH STRATEGY

In partnership with the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services is working with First Nation, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners to co-implement the Ontario Indigenous Child and Youth Strategy. The strategy seeks to improve outcomes for Indigenous children and youth by transforming the past system of services to one that is rooted in culturally appropriate, preventative, and community-based programs and services that are designed, delivered and governed by and for First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples.

The strategy is guided by the vision of ensuring Indigenous children are healthy, happy, resilient, grounded in their cultures and languages, and thriving as individuals, as well as members of their families and Nations or communities.



To date, Ontario, as represented by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, has signed two relationship agreements with Grand Council Treaty #3 and Anishinabek Nation-Union of Ontario Indians to strengthen their bilateral relationships through the Strategy.

## INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS SECRETARIAT

In the summer of 2017, Ontario established a new Indigenous Youth and Community Wellness Secretariat to work closely with Indigenous partners, other ministries and the federal government. The secretariat, which is part of the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, has offices in both Toronto and Thunder Bay.

The secretariat is working to improve the well-being of Indigenous communities and youth through engagement of Indigenous partners, and the co-development of an action plan. This plan will support youth and their communities as they move from crises toward recovery and wellness.

By organizing and optimizing the efforts of ministries and partners, the secretariat's aim is to ensure that resources and efforts go where they are most needed. The goal is for Indigenous youth and their communities to get the services and programs they need, where and when they need them.

## PROMOTING LIFE-SKILLS IN ABORIGINAL YOUTH (PLAY)

Ontario partnered with Right To Play by investing in the PLAY program, which uses the power of play to promote healthy lifestyles, build self-esteem and improve life-skills.

Right To Play is a Canadian-based international organization that trains and supports community mentors, who are responsible for delivering the programs at the community level. Programs are tailored to reflect the needs and vision of individual First Nations or urban Indigenous organizations.

The PLAY program started in three communities in Ontario. Leveraging financial support from the province to attract additional supporters, the program has grown to serve young people in more than 60 communities across the province.

The programming creates positive spaces for young people to play, share and grow. It also strengthens communities by building healthy cross-generational relationships between community mentors and young people.



*"This initiative will provide our youth with an opportunity to build relationships while learning important life skills. Building resilience and confidence of our youth is a priority for the Kenora Chiefs Advisory."*

- Joe Barnes,  
Executive  
Director, Kenora  
Chiefs Advisory





## RIGHT TO PLAY IN ACTION

When the PLAY program was launched in Whitefish River in 2011, it made a huge difference in Crystal McGregor's life. Crystal remembers how then-community mentor Candice Assiniwe created a comfortable space within the program: "We talked about issues that were happening in our community, that we felt like we needed to address at that time," she said.

Crystal has now made the ambitious leap from program participant to program leader. After pursuing the Indigenous Wellness and Addictions Prevention program at Canadore College, Crystal returned to Whitefish River where she became the new community mentor of the PLAY program. Running both an after-school program and a youth leadership program, Crystal is working hard to foster positive relationships with the 25 youth who attend regularly, as well as to encourage the youth to have a voice.

## TEAM ONTARIO DELIVERS IMPRESSIVE FINISH AT THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS GAMES NAIG 2017

With outstanding performances and 137 medals, Team Ontario achieved third place in the medal standings at the 2017 North American Indigenous Games.

For the first time in NAIG history, Ontario played host to more than 5,000 Indigenous athletes, coaches and officials from across Canada and the United States. Athletes proudly represented their communities—from Pikangikum to Walpole Island—competing in 14 sports and winning 52 gold, 42 silver and 44 bronze medals.



*"The Toronto 2017 North American Indigenous Games have been an incredible experience for the athletes and coaches, especially since Ontario was hosting for the first time. Apart from the new records, games played, and medals won, these talented athletes were able to make lasting friendships and memories. I know everyone involved was inspired by the Indigenous youth who proudly represented their communities, especially playing lacrosse, which is the Creator's Game."*

- Amy DeJonge, Team Manager of the U16 and U19 male and U19 female Team Ontario lacrosse teams

# WEALTH CREATION

---

With regards to opportunity and security, a disturbing gap exists between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population; a gap created by generations of abuse and betrayal. The ministry has worked with entrepreneurs and leaders in Indigenous communities to create jobs, provide job training and spark new business development.

Workforce participation rates are up; unemployment rates are down; median annual incomes are increasing and more Indigenous businesses are showing a profit. A recent Statistics Canada survey shows Indigenous women with postsecondary degrees or diplomas are now earning more than their non-Indigenous peers.

## SHARING GAMING REVENUE

---

In February 2008, the province and First Nations, through the Ontario First Nations Limited Partnership, signed the Gaming Revenue Sharing and Financial Agreement. Since funding under the agreement began in April 2011, the partnership has received approximately \$740 million, providing a stable revenue source to invest in community priorities.

## ABORIGINAL PROCUREMENT PROGRAM

---

In 2015, Ontario launched the Aboriginal Procurement Program, enabling provincial ministries to apply procurement preferences for Indigenous-owned businesses.

Participating in the Ontario tendering process and doing business with government provides Indigenous entrepreneurs with valuable experience developing tenders and building successful relationships with government buyers. Indigenous procurement initiatives also enhance partnerships between First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and government, and are an important part of economic reconciliation.



## ABORIGINAL PROCUREMENT PROGRAM IN ACTION

In March 2017, the Ministry of Transportation entered into a rock crushing and gravel haul contract with Bearskin Lake First Nation. As a result of the procurement, 18 community members were employed and eight members received training.

*"This is by far the best partnership I have ever been involved in. The community is proud to be able to say that the local people can now operate a rock crushing plant on their own. It is only through the flexibility and openness of the partners that we can achieve this."*

-Tom Kamenawatamin, Project Manager

## WHITESAND FIRST NATION COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

Whitesand First Nation developed a proposal to build a biomass cogeneration facility to provide district heating as part of a Community Forest Proposal. The New Relationship Fund played a role in supporting Whitesand's efforts to realize its plan, covering some of the costs involved in moving the project through development and approvals. When completed, the project would create approximately 60 full-time and 60 seasonal jobs, generating around \$3.5 million in wages.

## NEW RELATIONSHIP FUND

Early in its mandate, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation worked with Indigenous partners to design a program that would ensure communities and organizations could effectively participate in meaningful consultations with government and the private sector.

Established in 2008, the New Relationship Fund provides capacity to Indigenous communities and organizations to better engage with government and private sector.

The fund provides support to First Nations, Métis communities and Indigenous organizations to build capacity, create jobs, develop business partnerships, and to take advantage of economic opportunities.

Since it was created, Ontario has committed approximately \$140 million to the fund. Its current annual budget is \$14.5 million. In 2017-18, the ministry is funding a total of 109 projects in 158 Indigenous communities.

*"The project's gained not only provincial but also national recognition. It's creating jobs where there are no jobs."*

-David Mackett, visionary behind Whitesand First Nation's Community Sustainability Initiative



# INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM

.....

The Indigenous Community Capital Grants Program has filled a significant gap in funding for capital planning in Indigenous communities by providing flexible support for planning, renovation and construction of community buildings.

From 2003 to 2017, the program committed more than \$38 million to Indigenous communities through 162 major and minor capital grants including renovations to provide safe, local access to education and childcare spaces, and building community centres and small business centres.

## DENNIS FRANKLIN CROMARTY HIGH SCHOOL

In February 2017, the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council celebrated the grand opening of the newly renovated First Nations Trade School at the Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay.

The council received \$500,000 from the Indigenous Community Capital Grants Program, which provided enough funding to renovate three trades classrooms that now better prepare students for careers in welding, transportation, and food and nutrition.





# INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Ontario is investing up to \$95 million over 10 years into the Indigenous Economic Development Fund to support jobs and skills training and to increase access to financing.

Announced in 2014, the fund improves economic opportunities for Indigenous businesses, communities and organizations. The fund continues to address key barriers to economic development, particularly access to financing and skills training through three streams: Business & Community Fund; Economic Diversification Grants; and, Regional Partnership Grants. The fund has supported 81 projects since it began.

## ANISHINABEK EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SERVICES

The AETS in Thunder Bay received support of \$250,000 from the Indigenous Economic Development Fund to deliver a program that prepares participants to pursue apprenticeships incorporating life skills, pre-employment training, hands-on construction craft worker training, and interview preparedness.

*"Along with the great direction and support from the staff responsible for the program and the new friendships with the other trainees, this was a very rewarding and positive experience."*

-Sage Thompson, Participant

# MÉTIS VOYAGEUR DEVELOPMENT FUND

Ontario is providing up to \$30 million over 10 years to the Métis Voyageur Development Fund, a developmental lender that offers loans and grants to Métis businesses. The Fund addresses barriers faced by Métis individuals, communities and businesses in securing financing for economic development, and is a new source of developmental financing for Métis entrepreneurs.

Since it began operation in 2012, the fund has provided more than \$18 million in loans and contributions, leveraged over \$16 million in additional funding, and helped create or sustain more than 340 jobs in Ontario.

## MONARCH STABLES

Monarch Stables offers boarding services and 32 acres of trails for riding, and sells fresh, farm-raised chicken eggs. With MVDF funding, owner Sarah Duval, who purchased the company in 2016, was able to finance the operation of the stables and eventually purchase farming equipment.

*"Moving 500-pound bales of hay with a tractor is easier than rolling them into the fields by hand," said Duval. "[The MVDF] has changed my life."*

-Sarah Duval, Owner





## KEEPING THE HST POINT-OF-SALE REBATE

.....

As part of the transition to the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) in 2010, Ontario worked with First Nations to provide a point-of-sale rebate for the provincial portion of the HST for off-reserve purchases by Ontario Status Indians, Indian bands, and councils for qualifying property and services.

## RESOURCE BENEFITS SHARING

.....

Ontario is committed to working with Indigenous partners on ways to close socio-economic gaps and increase participation in the resource sector by advancing resource benefits sharing opportunities.

In 2017, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, with support from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, engaged with First Nation organizations to support collaborative development of resource revenue sharing in the forestry and mining sectors. Feedback from these discussions has helped to advise the next steps of this initiative.

## INVESTING IN CLEAN ENERGY

.....

A partnership between Ontario Power Generation and the Moose Cree First Nation resulted in 438 MW of clean, renewable electricity—enough electricity to power more than 300,000 homes. The \$2.6-billion Lower Mattagami River Hydroelectric Project doubled the output of four existing hydro stations on the Mattagami River flowing into James Bay.

During peak construction, 1,600 people worked on the project, including more than 250 Indigenous workers. The Moose Cree First Nation owns 25 per cent equity share in the project.

## FIRST NATIONS AND HYDRO ONE

In July 2016, the province and First Nations in Ontario, as represented by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, announced an agreement-in-principle for the province to sell to First Nations for their collective benefit, up to approximately 15 million shares of Hydro One Limited, and up to \$45 million in cash, depending on the level of First Nation participation.

In January 2018, the province announced that it completed the sale of approximately 2.4 per cent of the then-outstanding common shares of Hydro One Limited to OFN Power Holdings LP, a limited partnership wholly owned by Ontario First Nations Sovereign Wealth LP, which is in turn owned by 129 First Nations in Ontario. The province also provided seed capital of approximately \$29 million in cash to a new investment fund wholly owned by Ontario First Nations Sovereign Wealth LP. This transaction fulfills the province's commitment in its agreement-in-principle, and will provide meaningful opportunities to First Nations for collective wealth creation and to advance economic development initiatives.

This transaction is unprecedented and truly reflects the spirit of the Political Accord in strengthening Ontario's relationship with First Nations.

## RING OF FIRE

The Ring of Fire is a mineral development opportunity in Ontario with multi-generational mineral production capabilities of chromite, as well as a significant production of nickel, copper and platinum.

The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, through the Ring of Fire Secretariat, works with all levels of government, Indigenous partners and industry to encourage responsible and sustainable development in the region.

Since 2011, Ontario has contributed more than \$114.3 million to communities and tribal councils to support community readiness and capacity-building activities that will help them prepare for proposed mining operations and other development opportunities.

In August 2017, the Premier announced the province's plan to support Webequie, Marten Falls and Nibinamik First Nations to plan and construct all-season access roads into their communities and the Ring of Fire.

In October 2017, the Government of Canada and Ontario made a joint announcement of funding up to \$69.2 million to install about 880 kilometres of new fibre optic cable to five Matawa-member fly-in communities





in Northern Ontario in the Ring of Fire region, with Ontario's contribution of up to \$30 million to the Matawa First Nations Management Inc.

Ontario has been working with communities in the region and the federal government to support community wellness and readiness, including work on improvements for drinking water and winter roads.

## WATAYNIKANEYAP POWER

Ontario has selected Wataynikaneyap Power LP, a partnership between 22 First Nation communities and a transmission partner, Fortis Ontario, to connect 16 remote First Nation communities that currently rely on diesel power to the province's electricity grid.

Once complete, the project will provide more than 10,000 people living in remote First Nation communities in northwestern Ontario with access to Ontario's clean electricity supply.

## COMMUNITY-BASED REGULATION

The government remains committed to an ongoing dialogue with First Nation communities and leaders on tobacco. Since 2012, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Finance have worked with two First Nation communities, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, on a pilot project basis regarding tobacco self-regulation on reserve and revenue sharing, and have expanded conversations to include other First Nation communities and organizations.

In July 2017, Ontario signed an agreement-in-principle with Chippewas of the Thames to help support community growth and prosperity and advance self-regulation. In December 2017, Ontario signed a similar agreement with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

The province also signed an agreement-in-principle with the Anishinabek Nation, which represents 40 communities, on tobacco and gasoline regulation and revenue sharing.

Working together towards community-based regulation of tobacco provides a basis for mutually beneficial outcomes for the province and First Nation communities. This cooperation builds relationships and trust, supports economic development and diversification of First Nation communities, and improves business certainty for on-reserve sales.



# LAND CLAIMS & RECONCILIATION

The Ipperwash Inquiry looked into the events surrounding the death of Dudley George, an unarmed First Nation man, who was shot and killed by an Ontario Provincial Police officer during a protest at the Ipperwash Provincial Park in 1995. The inquiry highlighted the need for the province to dramatically shift its approach to land claim disputes and led to the forming of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, recently renamed Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

Land claims often involve multiple parties and interests. Some of the treaties underlying the land claims were negotiated hundreds of years ago. The Crown and First Nations often have different understandings of what was intended by the treaties.

The ministry has worked with negotiating partners to improve the land claims process and have claims resolved more quickly and efficiently. This includes the ground-breaking agreement-in-principle with the Algonquins of Ontario, which the parties hope will lead to the province's first modern-day treaty.

These successes stem in part from Ontario's commitment to working in partnership with First Nations and other Indigenous partners to ensure that treaty relationships are modern and mutually beneficial. The Treaty Strategy is part of this work, promoting public awareness on treaties, facilitating constructive engagement, revitalizing treaty relationships and promoting improved socio-economic outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

Resolving historic grievances is at the heart of the ministry's strategic direction of which land claims and reconciliation plays a critical part.

*"The immediate catalyst for most major occupations and protests is a dispute over a land claim, a burial site, resource development, or harvesting, hunting and fishing rights. The fundamental conflict, however, is usually about land."*

—Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry

## WHAT IS A LAND CLAIM?

In a land claim, an Indigenous community sets out to prove that the community is legally entitled to reserve land and/or financial compensation, or that they never surrendered to the Crown their rights in lands and natural resources.

The land claims that Ontario deals with are about Indigenous communities' rights to land and to the use of land. Canada may address other kinds of claims, including claims about how the federal government has managed money that belongs to a First Nation.



# FACTS

**22:** Number of land claims resolved since 2007

**19,522 hectares:** Amount of Crown land transferred to Canada by Ontario for the use and benefit of First Nation communities

**\$130 million:** Compensation paid to First Nations since 2007

**2x:** Rate of land claims settlements since 2007

**145 years:** Amount of time the Lac des Mille Lacs flooding claim was in dispute before a settlement was reached in May 2017

**5 years:** Time it took from filing date for Ontario to sign a land claim agreement with Mishkosiminiziibiing First Nation and the Ojibways of Onigaming in Northwestern Ontario.

## ALGONQUIN AGREEMENT-IN-PRINCIPLE SETS PATH FOR ONTARIO'S FIRST MODERN TREATY

The Algonquin claim of Aboriginal rights and title covers an area of 36,000 square kilometres of the Ottawa drainage basin in Eastern Ontario and has its roots in Algonquin petitions to the Crown dating back to 1772.

In October 2016, the government of Ontario signed an historic agreement-in-principle with the Algonquins of Ontario. This agreement paved the way for continued negotiations toward a constitutionally protected treaty that will define the ongoing rights of the Algonquins of Ontario to lands and natural resources within the settlement area.

*"This major step toward Ontario's first modern treaty shows what's possible when strong partners work together in the spirit of reconciliation. More than a million people share this land with the Algonquins of Ontario, and a modern treaty will clear a path for neighbours to become partners, bringing new economic opportunities to their communities."*

-David Zimmer, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

## SETTLING THE CHAPLEAU CREE TREATY LAND ENTITLEMENT CLAIM

Treaty Land Entitlement negotiations are intended to resolve land disputes where First Nations did not receive the full amount of land they were entitled to under historical treaties. This was the case for the Chapleau Cree First Nation under Treaty 9, signed in 1906.

After negotiations, the 2016 settlement included \$21.5 million from Canada for loss of use of the reserve lands, 4,000 hectares of Crown land, and almost \$353,000 in compensation from Ontario.

The ultimate goal is to create a modern treaty that provides clarity for all who live and work in the claim territory, balance the rights and interests of all concerned, and create new economic opportunities.

# JUSTICE MATTERS

As a result of systemic discrimination and ongoing inequity, many Indigenous peoples have lost confidence in the justice system. Ontario is committed to addressing issues facing Indigenous people in all aspects of the justice system—as victims, as accused persons and as communities. As part of this commitment, Ontario has established an Indigenous Justice Advisory Group to provide advice on justice issues impacting Indigenous peoples directly to the Attorney General, created a separate division within the Ministry of the Attorney General dedicated to Indigenous justice issues, and established an Elders’ Council to guide the work of the Indigenous Justice Division.

## CREATING A CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Ontario is investing in services to close gaps for Indigenous persons involved with the criminal justice system through the provision of culturally appropriate services. As part of the government’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Final Report, Ontario committed to an investment of \$45 million over three years to create a culturally relevant and responsive justice system. Ontario is also supporting Indigenous communities to revitalize Indigenous legal systems, legal principles, autonomy and cultures.

### Recent Progress:

- The Ministry of the Attorney General engaged with Indigenous communities to identify gaps in the delivery of victim services for Indigenous peoples. Feedback is being used to inform the design and delivery of Indigenous-specific victims’ services, developed and delivered by Indigenous communities and organizations for Indigenous peoples.
- 24 Indigenous communities and organizations have received funding to support their work in revitalizing Indigenous legal systems and principles, with additional projects expected to be funded.
- In 2016, the Ministry of the Attorney General began developing Indigenous bail and remand programs, including the Bail Verification and Supervision Program to address some of the unique issues and barriers faced by Indigenous persons at the bail stage. New Bail Verification and Supervision Programs are being developed in 10 locations and Indigenous Enhancement Support Services have been developed in five locations.

# IACOBUCCI REPORT

Despite the accomplishments of the last decade, there remains a tremendous amount of work to do to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the justice system. That's why creating a culturally relevant and responsive justice system is such an important part of Ontario's commitment to reconciliation.

Juries are one of the cornerstones of the justice system in Canada and it is integral that the jury roll is representative of all members of society, including Indigenous peoples. In 2011, the Honourable Frank Iacobucci was appointed to review the systemic exclusion of First Nations people who reside on reserve from the jury rolls. Mr. Iacobucci looked at the existing process in the selection of jury rolls, held consultations with Indigenous stakeholders, and evaluated best practices from Ontario and other jurisdictions.

In February 2013, Mr. Iacobucci released the First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries report (Iacobucci Report), an independent review that highlighted systemic injustice and the underrepresentation of First Nations people on the Ontario jury roll. Mr. Iacobucci's report includes 17 recommendations across a range of issues intended to help Ontario increase the representativeness of Indigenous individuals on the jury roll and strengthen the province's justice system overall.

In response, the Attorney General announced the establishment of the Debwewin Jury Review Implementation Committee and the Indigenous Justice Advisory Group. The Debwewin Committee submitted advice to the Deputy Attorney General at various times throughout its three-year mandate with the last piece of advice being submitted in early 2018. The committee's final report is expected to be released in spring or summer 2018.

Recommendation five of the Iacobucci Report was to appoint the first-ever Assistant Deputy Attorney General (ADAG) of Indigenous justice. In March 2014, the Debwewin Committee submitted advice to the Deputy Attorney General on this recommendation and, in December 2014, Kimberly R. Murray was appointed as ADAG of the Indigenous Justice Division.

In accordance with Recommendation two of the Iacobucci Report, the Indigenous Justice Advisory Group was established as an advisory body to provide advice to the Attorney General on matters affecting Indigenous people and the justice system. The group has met six times to date, including two meetings with the Attorney General in September 2017 and January 2018, respectively. Among the group's identified priorities are bail reform, improved services for Indigenous language speakers involved in the justice system, and the establishment of mandatory Indigenous cultural competency training for justice sector workers.





The Nishnawbe Aski Nation led a pilot project to seek on-reserve volunteers who could serve as jurors in the judicial districts of Thunder Bay and Kenora. The pilot surpassed its original goal and more than 450 volunteers came forward. The volunteer list has been used in several inquests to date, and the regulation authorizing the use of the volunteer juror list has been extended two additional years to December 2018.

## GLADUE PRINCIPLES

Gladue principles direct decision-makers to consider how systemic discrimination has contributed to the over-incarceration of Indigenous people in Canada. This requires that case-specific information about an Indigenous person, which may have contributed to bringing them before the courts, be understood within the context of colonialism. It also requires that Indigenous restorative approaches for achieving justice be considered in order to fashion a fit and appropriate sentence. Gladue principles are remedial and apply in any legal proceeding where an Indigenous person's liberty and interests are engaged. To date, the availability of Gladue Writers and Aftercare Workers has increased from 21 to 35 and four to 35, respectively, across Ontario.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Since Ontario released its response in June 2016, the number of Indigenous restorative justice programs operating across Ontario has increased from nine to 58. These programs provide an opportunity for Indigenous accused persons to be diverted out of the criminal justice system into culturally relevant dispute resolution processes.

# ONTARIO'S COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Programs applied to Indigenous peoples that are designed without the input or support of Indigenous peoples do not work. With the help of efforts like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, clear evidence has been presented that shows paternalistic policies were, at best, often destined for failure and, at worst, instruments of repression.

Since governments have started working with Indigenous peoples, opening up opportunities for more impactful inclusion and leadership in the design and delivery of programs, results have begun to improve. Successes that were once only anecdotal can now be measured and are proving beyond doubt that culturally relevant programs are far more effective.

The journey of reconciliation means understanding Canada's true history and working together to improve outcomes and opportunities for Indigenous people. This means clearing space for Indigenous people to develop, build, teach and lead in these initiatives. The commitments outlined in Ontario's Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission include new actions over five key areas:

- Understanding the Legacy of Residential Schools
- Closing Gaps and Removing Barriers
- Creating a Culturally Relevant and Responsive Justice System
- Supporting Indigenous Culture
- Reconciling Relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

Ontario released a one-year progress report to highlight major milestones and status of the commitments made under its response. Major progress on reconciliation commitments is ongoing and extends across ministries and government initiatives.





# UNDERSTANDING THE LEGACY OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Working with Indigenous partners, Ontario is committed to commemorating the memory of survivors and preserving historical records related to residential schools, as well as to addressing systemic racism targeting Indigenous peoples.

## Recent progress:

- To honour and respect some Indigenous nation's traditions, recent legislative changes mean parents can now register the birth of their children with a single name. Until January 2022, the Ontario government is also waiving name-change fees for residential school survivors and their families who want to reclaim names changed by the residential school system.
- The Ontario government supports the Woodland Cultural Centre in its efforts to restore, repurpose and create a significant international Indigenous and national heritage site based on the former Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford.

# CLOSING GAPS AND REMOVING BARRIERS

Ontario's 2016 Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission set out additional actions that specifically address the root causes of social disparities experienced by Indigenous populations across the province.

These efforts span a range of social services, including childcare supports, mental health and addiction support and suicide prevention initiatives, among others.

## Recent progress:

- Implemented prevention initiatives in First Nations like Pikangikum First Nation and Sandy Lake First Nation with the goal of improving outcomes for children, youth and their families.
- Supported the new Mino Ayaa Ta Win Healing Centre in Fort Frances to increase access to culturally appropriate mental health and addictions services for First Nations communities in Northwestern Ontario.

# SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS CULTURE

The forcible removal into residential schools robbed Indigenous children of their identity and reduced parents' ability to share language and culture. This has led to intergenerational trauma in many families across Indigenous communities. That's why supporting efforts to restore and celebrate language and culture are so important to long-term reconciliation efforts.

## Recent progress:

- Following successful pilot youth culture camps in Fort Albany First Nation and Pikangikum First Nation, the province is supporting the delivery of 12 regional youth leadership camps and more than 40 community-led cultural camps by 2019.
- Launched in summer 2017, the Indigenous Culture Fund supports First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities, culture and way of life. The goals of the fund are to support cultural priorities and activities as defined by Indigenous peoples.

# RECONCILING RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Non-Indigenous people in Ontario, most particularly Crown governments, need to re-build and revitalize relationships with Indigenous peoples based on respect and understanding. This is why Ontario is taking steps to apply a model of reconciliation to the work done every day by all public servants.

Ontario's approach to Indigenous relations and reconciliation is rooted in a commitment to establish and maintain constructive, co-operative relationships based on mutual respect that lead to improved opportunities for all Indigenous peoples, which is consistent with the values reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Since 2009, Ontario has called on the federal government to endorse the declaration. Ontario is committed to working in partnership with Canada and Indigenous partners as the federal government moves forward on its national plan to implement the declaration.

## Recent progress:

- Using the term "Indigenous" in government ministries and programs, where appropriate.
- Acknowledging treaties within ministers' statements, the Public Service Oath of Office and government-issued documents.
- Establishing processes to incorporate Elder and youth advice into government decision-making.
- Translating government documents into Indigenous languages where feasible.



# CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

---

The advent of a standalone ministry dedicated to Indigenous priorities and efforts in 2007 significantly assisted in building meaningful relationships, which in turn have created opportunities to improve outcomes. However, sustainable progress towards true reconciliation is only possible if respect for Indigenous peoples becomes embedded in every level of government. This process is underway, with individual ministries working more collaboratively with Indigenous partners, from consultation to transfers of authority.

Within government, efforts to increase cultural competency among the public service ensure relationships with Indigenous communities continues to evolve. Indigenous partners now have greater roles in designing and delivering programs and policies that directly impact communities. This is imperative. Indigenous peoples know what policies and programs will best meet the needs of their peoples and communities.

Measurable, lasting reforms in the justice system will only be identified through meaningful reductions in the incarceration rate of Indigenous peoples. Continued adoption of traditional practices means Indigenous communities play an increased role in the administration of justice. A combination of justice system reforms and culturally relevant programs will make women and their families feel safer in their own communities.



Economic reconciliation also means that Indigenous workers can access increased training and have greater opportunities in their own communities. Communities now play a more direct role in working with proponents who come to the negotiating table with a better understanding and respect for the role of treaties in this country. That better understanding in conjunction with clear guidelines for consulting with Indigenous communities means that Indigenous communities will benefit more directly as they share in the benefits of investments made by businesses and governments.

Ontario is committed to ensuring meaningful progress as we move into the next 10 years and beyond. This commitment can only be fulfilled if we journey forward with respect born of a mutual understanding, and by ensuring that we lead with partnerships that are as empowered as they are impactful. Above all, success will be defined by Indigenous peoples.

# A DECADE OF REFLECTION

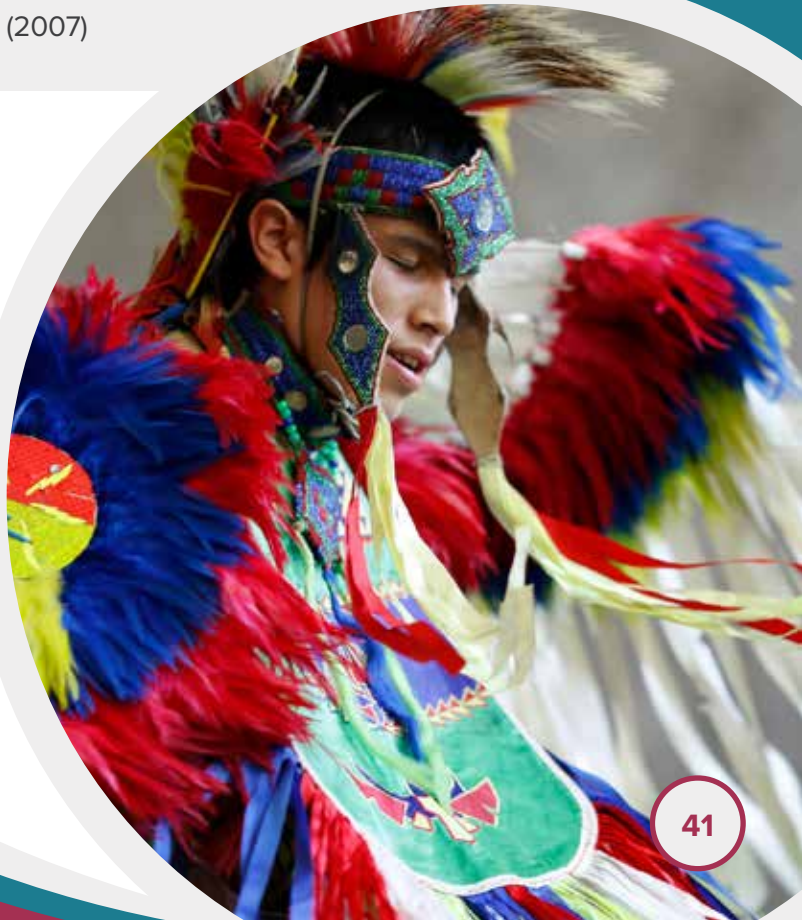
.....

*"In 2007, our government created a stand-alone ministry with high hopes to improve Ontario's relationship with Indigenous Peoples. We have come a long way in 10 years. The ministry has a new name, a stronger mandate and a firm resolve to right wrongs and forge relationships built on trust and respect. I am grateful for all those who have worked in the ministry under the strong and determined leadership of Minister David Zimmer, Deputy Minister Deborah Richardson, and their predecessors. I especially want to thank all leaders of Indigenous Peoples who have guided the ministry over the years, ensuring its work is the result of a genuine partnership."*

-Dalton McGuinty, Ontario's 24th Premier

*"I am extremely proud and honoured to have been the first minister to lead this ministry, at the time the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. It was during my time as Minister of Natural Resources that I became very interested in the issues facing First Nations communities across Ontario. As I became more involved in the issues, I approached then-Premier Dalton McGuinty and asked to head up, at the time, the Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat. Upon the release of the Ipperwash Inquiry Report, Premier McGuinty established the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and named me minister. Now the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, this ministry is furthering the important initiatives and work started more than a decade ago."*

- David Ramsay, former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (2007)





*"Becoming its own ministry in 2007 was an important symbolic gesture arising out of the Ipperwash Commission. A decade later, MAA/MIRR has proven the operational necessity of having a stand-alone portfolio. It's a tribute to the great professionals working within it, and Indigenous communities' willingness to partner. It remains a highlight of my 10 years at Queen's Park, and I wish MIRR many fruitful decades to come."*

-Michael Bryant, former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (2007-2008)

*"It is incredibly humbling to see how far we have come in repairing a shared history steeped in injustice and inequity to bring meaningful change to Indigenous peoples in Ontario. I commend the ongoing dedication and passion of the whole team, current and past, at the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation in the invaluable work that you do. As we enter a new decade of partnership with Indigenous peoples and communities, I know we will continue to work together to build on this legacy and continue the journey of reconciliation."*

-Brad Duguid, former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (2008-2010)

*"Congratulations to all who have worked at the ministry over the past 10 years. The road to reconciliation will be long and challenging. Your willingness to listen, openness to new approaches, energy and determination have helped us take important steps along that road. Thank you for your efforts."*

-Christopher Bentley, former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (2010-2011)

*"My time as deputy of this great ministry was a privilege and a highlight of my career in government. Throughout that career, I've been profoundly affected by my opportunities to work with Indigenous leaders, seeing firsthand the passion they have for their communities. And while I was deputy, we launched a multi-pronged approach to raise awareness about treaties, starting with the first widely available map of treaties in Ontario. Through that effort, we addressed curriculum and had an interactive social media campaign. Thank you to all the staff at MIRR and your colleagues across government for the passion you bring to this important work every day."*

-David de Launay, former Deputy Minister

*"What struck me from the onset was just how passionate the employees at the ministry were about their work and dedicated to improving the conditions of Indigenous peoples. Miigwetch to all staff and the Indigenous communities in Ontario."*

-Lori Sterling, former Deputy Minister







**ISBN978-1-4868-0874-8**

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation 10 Year Anniversary Report